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journal@dresshistorians.org
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“A New Kind of Menswear for a New Kind of Man:” Constructs of Masculinity at JW Anderson and Loewe, 2008–2017

Georgina Ripley

Abstract

Once radically dividing critics with his lace shirts and knee-high boots for men, JW Anderson’s conscious cross-pollination of menswear and womenswear elements has earned his eponymous label a cult following, precipitating a dizzying ascent. In 2013, LVMH investment in his label coincided with his appointment as Creative Director of the Madrid luxury house, Loewe, where his ingenious interweaving of the masculine and feminine has brought modernity and vigour to the heritage brand. With feminised menswear now a pervasive trend at fashion weeks, Anderson’s oeuvre reflects how gender ambiguity is a broader cultural issue. This article explores Anderson’s agenda-setting designs as a catalyst for provocative experimentation in menswear, and how his singular vision is redefining notions of masculinity on the catwalk.

Introduction

Jonathan Anderson’s meteoric rise, from head of a fledgling eponymous label to an agenda-setting industry leader, has made him one of fashion’s most feted designers. Bursting onto the scene with his namesake label in 2008, the former Prada apprentice broke new ground with his radically unisex clothing, dividing critics with his lace shirts and leather knee-high boots for men. His conscious cross-pollination of menswear and womenswear elements earned his label a cult following and precipitated a dizzying ascent: he launched womenswear in 2010; became Creative Director of heritage basics brand, Sunspel, in 2011; designed a sell-out collection with Topshop in 2012; and a collection for the Versace diffusion line, Versus, in 2013. That same year, LVMH investment in his label coincided with his appointment as Creative Director of the Madrid luxury house, Loewe, and in 2015 Anderson became the first-ever person to win British Designer of the Year in both womenswear and menswear categories at the British Fashion Awards.

As the designer most widely associated with giving men permission to wear feminine things, a trend now so pervasive it is a menswear catwalk norm, Anderson’s body of work reflects how gender ambiguity has become a bigger cultural issue in our wider society. The New York Times reported that if 2015 was the year unisex became a trend in fashion, 2016 may be the year the question of gender and dress enters an entirely different dimension.¹ Tim Edwards was correct in 1997 when he wrote that “men’s fashion is ... something to take seriously in itself ... as a microcosm of the macrocosm of men, masculinity, and society.”² Today, a quick scroll through Instagram shows male models sporting floral-print, kick-flared suits, pussy-bow blouses, and skirts; while women’s fashions champion menswear-inspired, oversized tailoring. This article sets out to explore to what extent Anderson’s agenda-setting designs were a catalyst for this provocative experimentation in menswear, considering the cultural context that renders

Anderson's approach so innovative, and the role his singular vision has played in redefining constructs of masculinity.

JW Anderson: The Early Years

Described variously as “[the] wake-up call that sounds the trumpet for extremity at London’s menswear week,”³ the “must-know, must-watch name on the contemporary London fashion scene,”⁴ and “a cunning strategist and a brilliant poster boy for meaningful fashion in the age of Instagram,”⁵ JW Anderson is one of London’s most sensational fashion brands. However, at first his unique “appropriation and recombination of imagery,” didn’t deliver critical or commercial results.⁶ His debut collection in September 2008, which intentionally addressed gender confusion, was subject to such negative attention that Anderson himself admitted he briefly considered giving up fashion altogether. Speaking to Dazed about his inauspicious start, Anderson questioned whether, “A few years ago, maybe society wasn’t ready. Or maybe my concept was too hard core and not refined enough. Or maybe both.”⁷

Nevertheless, he now refers to this show as his most important one, identifying gender as a cultural issue even then, and keenly feeling the designer’s duty to reflect the issues that surround us. His response was to strive to give the customer something they did not even know they wanted — indicative of his subsequently proven talent for reading his customer.⁸ Anderson has honed his idiosyncratic approach to blending gender codes across subsequent collections, with feminine sartorial signifiers permeating his menswear. The Autumn/Winter 2011 menswear catwalk showed a flash of wrist revealed by an awkwardly shortened cardigan sleeve, the use of saccharine pink and bright turquoise, bold jacquard prints, sequinned embellishments, and skirts for men; all evidence of Anderson’s postmodern play with conventional gender norms. Anderson said, “I feel like menswear has gotten to a point for me where it had to be thrown out the window and dragged back in. There’s something that has gone stale for a while in men’s, and I think you have to blow it up — then you’ve spawned a look.”⁹

Masculinity as a Socio-Cultural Construct

The idea that men could embrace their feminine side is not new. The eighteenth century was characterised by extravagantly embellished garments for men, while Christopher Breward’s research reveals that men were enthusiastic consumers of the dandy aesthetic from 1790–1840.¹⁰ Tim Edwards turns to an earlier period in history, to consider that there is no “intrinsic masculine essence to men’s clothes,” but that “they develop masculine meanings and associations when worn upon the male physical form.”¹¹ His argument focuses on some of the most effeminate eras of men’s dress: the grandiose extravagance of the Renaissance man’s doublet, trunk hose, and plumed headwear, for example, Figure 1.



Figure 1
King Henry VIII,
Workshop of
Hans Holbein the Younger,
circa 1537, oil on panel,
2390x1345mm, Walker Art Gallery,
Liverpool, England, WAG 1350.

The flowing locks and falling ruff of the early seventeenth-century cavalier were replaced later that century with Louis XIV's image of masculinity, which included powdered wigs and painted faces, complete with beauty spots. Fast forward to the latter half of the twentieth century, and Mods and Rockers had their individual interpretations of dandyism, while 1960s' counter culture brought an upsurge of androgynous dressing to coincide with the women's liberation movement. Mick Jagger wore a white dress designed by Mr Fish for a Rolling Stones gig at London's Hyde Park in 1969, while Marc Bolan and David Bowie became the poster boys for androgynous beauty, and Jean Paul Gaultier put skirts on men's catwalks in 1984. By the early 2000s, the metrosexual male was, according to Diana Crane, "normalising rather than marginalising the dandy," with Hedi Slimane's collections for Dior Homme a key catalyst for renewed interest in menswear.¹² The slim-tailored aesthetic, Slimane proposed, renounced the athletic muscularity of the Nineties catwalk, promoting a new prototype for men's fashion throughout the subsequent decade.¹³

In the recent past, luxury houses such as Hermès, Lanvin, Gucci, and Prada have introduced men-only flagship stores, and menswear sales are reportedly growing at nearly double the rate of womenswear.¹⁴ With an increased focus on menswear, new questions are inevitably being asked around masculine codes of dress. In 2015, journalist Lindsay Baker asserted that, "'The girlfriend look' is all the rage on the catwalk ... for the devotedly fashion-conscious man it is currently all about feminisation."¹⁵ That same year, Selfridges launched their "Agender" floor, which featured gender-fluid labels such as Ann Demeulemeester, Yohji Yamamoto, and the unisex line, Nicopanda. Zara released their 16-piece capsule collection, "Ungendered," the following year, and in March 2017, H&M rolled out a collection of unisex denim. In today's luxury fashion industry, the traditional catwalk model is crumbling, with some designers moving towards a see-now, buy-now model; others, the integration of menswear and womenswear lines into one blockbuster collection. Ruth La Ferla's perception of this shift is that it "reflects a rising receptivity, if not an outright prurient fascination, with topics that were once strictly off limits."¹⁶ Boundaries are seemingly beginning to break down in other ways, too, with transgender narratives entering the mainstream, spearheaded by the success of transgender models Andreja Pejic, Lea T, and Hari Nef, who fronted Gucci's Spring/Summer 2018 advertising campaign.

What does this mean for masculinity? If the catwalk is anything to go by, the new masculine ideal is "lithe limbs, cheekbones that could cut glass, and long, flowing hair."¹⁷ According to Rebecca Gonsalves, writing for The Independent, "It's fair to say that many modern models don't conform to old-fashioned ideas about masculinity, and, these days, nor do the clothes they're paid to show off."¹⁸ Men's fashion has only been perceived as a lucrative consumer market since the 1980s, when menswear was first introduced to the international fashion week circuit and men's fashion magazines became established, with the arrival of GQ and Arena. Marketing discourse at that time created what was termed "The New Man," in response to second-wave feminism, and which was closely followed by the Nineties' "New Lad," and the "Metrosexual" of the early 2000s, a new generation of male that took conscious control of their image.¹⁹

Gender had become a polarising issue and "masculinity of the late 1980s and 1990s was located as a crisis-ridden space."²⁰ The same period sparked academic interest in gender and a proliferation of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of sex, gender, and sexuality. Most appear to agree that while "maleness" might be considered a biological factor of difference, masculinity is a cultural construct, with the suggestion that gender is not something we *are*, but something we *become*. This is at the heart of Judith Butler's seminal text *Gender Trouble* (1990), which introduced the theory of performativity to explain how gender is socially constructed through fashion, and that "seemingly stable gender expressions are actually the result of constant negotiations between an individual's sense of self and the feedback acquired through social interactions."²¹ The overriding consensus is that there are, in fact, a plurality of coexisting and diverse masculinities, with differences of experience felt according to the interaction of various cultural patterns of oppression, such as race, social class, and sexual orientation.

Masculinity is not a concept easily unpicked. One of the problems in doing so is Jo B Paoletti's observation that "many cultural manifestations of 'masculinity' ... are based on a binary, heteronormative view of sex."²² Gender fluidity can be equally misconstrued, and is less about androgyny than it is about fluctuating between a multitude of socially constructed genders. While the trend for androgyny has certainly influenced current modes of menswear, the new sartorial construct of masculinity is neither androgynous, nor metrosexual, but characterised, in the words of Llewellyn Negrin, by "a greater reciprocity in the crossing of gender borders" and "freewheeling play with the binary logic of gender distinctions."²³

John Beynon writes that "Perhaps what we are currently witnessing at the start of the twenty-first century is nothing less than the emergence of a more fluid, bricolage masculinity, the result of "channel-hopping" across versions of "the masculine."²⁴ This is particularly pertinent to what The Business of Fashion describe as Anderson's "cultural cut-and-paste" approach.²⁵ However, Anderson refutes the suggestion that he is preoccupied with gender, telling *Fantastic Man* that "Nothing is more boring than the idea of that ... I hate androgyny. That's something that really bugs me."²⁶ Instead, he is driven by the impetus to create something of cultural value. However, his contrary approach has often gone against the grain of commercial viability. He confessed:

I have major issues with menswear ... Not in a negative way, but is it relevant anymore? ... With women you can build a character and architecture and a woman will take the risk. I don't see any woman who buys my clothing would sleep with a man who is wearing my menswear. My issue is believing in men in fashion ... I would rather exercise extremities, obscurities, and ugly on men.²⁷

In many ways this statement subverts Anderson's assertion that he is not obsessed with gender, as challenging our perception of traditional sartorial signifiers of the sexes seems to be at the crux of his entire approach. Certainly, borrowing from womenswear is part of the progression of Anderson's style. Referring to his Spring/Summer 2012 show, Jo-Ann Furniss noted that by "splicing together the genetic codes of clothing ... he seemed almost to be genetically modifying menswear and womenswear," building the architecture of one into the other.²⁸ This synergy between his women's and men's collections is clearly illustrated by the strikingly similar knitted dresses that appear in both the Pre-Fall 2012 ready-to-wear collection and his Autumn/Winter 2012 menswear line. Equally, the frilled hemlines and knee-high boots of the men's Autumn/Winter 2013 line (Figure 2) are found in both the Spring/Summer 2012 ready-to-wear and the Pre-Fall 2013 womenswear collections; the similarities between the two collections serving to emphasise the cultural differences.

Critical Reception

Despite his clarity of vision, during these years JW Anderson's work received a mixed critical and commercial reception. Reporting on Spring/Summer 2013, Matthew Schneier wrote, "It's not that Anderson is creeping close to the edge with his menswear collections. He's already pushed well off of it."²⁹ With men in coats teamed with bare legs, sandals and headscarves, or sporting lace onesies, not to mention an abundance of organza and taffeta borrowed from womenswear, it was not financially successful. An oversized bright pink coat buttoned on the bias to reveal an acre of thigh was intended by Anderson to express machismo, with his view that "the thigh is a part of a man that's quite macho, like a rugby player's thigh;" but instead it was interpreted as wholly effeminate.³⁰ The tabloids made fun of it and others inevitably pointed out comparisons to Jean Paul Gaultier, whose transgressive fashions crossed boundaries between cultures, subcultures, and the sexes.³¹ Incidentally, when Gaultier showed skirts on men for the first time, fashion editors walked out en masse in protest. Similarly undeterred by his critics, Anderson proceeded with ruffled neoprene lederhosen-inspired shorts and leather tabards for Autumn/Winter 2013 (Figure 2). It attracted a particularly scathing review in the *Daily Mail*, reflecting that, for the most part, the world was still not ready for Anderson's peculiar approach:



Figure 2
British top and shorts of
neoprene, boots of leather,
JW Anderson,
Menswear Autumn/Winter 2013,
image courtesy of JW Anderson.

At JW Anderson the humiliation of the models was made truly complete, as the designer sent out his clan of put-upon male beauties wearing frilly shorts, leather dresses, and frill-trimmed knee-length boots ... One blonde looked so down in the dumps it's a wonder he didn't tear the offending garment off and run for the hills.³²

By the time Burberry sent lace shirts down the men's catwalk for Spring/Summer 2016, it received a far more favourable reception. Tim Blanks acknowledged that "Lace shirts and ties paired with precisely cut jackets and pants made for a subtly dandified look. And a lace collar on a trench was a timely way to update a Burberry classic."³³ Lace has become something of an accepted trend for menswear, with Alessandro Michele embracing it for his Autumn/Winter 2015 debut as Creative Director at Gucci, and Alexandre Herchcovitch seemingly taking direct inspiration from JW Anderson for his men's oversized white lace shirts for Spring/Summer 2015. This is partly in deference to the fact that, as Vanessa Friedman notes, society has been "in a renewed ferment about genders, with culture wars raging over bathrooms, and the notion that men or women have to choose one of two fixed genders."³⁴

When Anderson set his Spring/Summer 2015 menswear catwalk on a pink carpet and claimed "the personality of the bourgeois woman" as his inspiration, Blanks felt it to be "scarcely a promising scenario for a collection of *menswear*," but that it yielded clothes "whose softness and languor were ... oddly appealing, especially in the bias-cut tops that slipped off the shoulder or the hip into loose scarf-ties."³⁵ This collection perverted classic men's shapes, with coats morphing into coat dresses, and cable knit cardigans cropped and zippered with disconcertingly low scooped necklines. However, it was not the first to do so, the latter detail being referential of Hedi Slimane's groundbreaking menswear silhouette at Dior Homme, described by Charlie Porter in The Guardian in 2001 as "provoking a radical rethink in the stagnating ateliers of menswear."³⁶ The comparison is telling, for a decade later it is Anderson

who is shaking up the status quo of menswear. By 2016, Nick Carvell reported for GQ that while some designers are “still getting a handle on the current gender-bending that’s gripping menswear, JW Anderson has been doing it for seasons, and honed it to a fine art.”³⁷

This acceptance is evidence of wider socio-cultural changes, and the reciprocal relationship between fashion and culture. As fashion designer Alessandro Michele contemplated, “What is truly original? A language — whether it be verbal, visual or gestural — doesn’t develop in a vacuum, but originates from a sort of chemical reaction sparked by something already existing.”³⁸ Trend forecaster Geraldine Wharry observes that with men’s silhouettes now being updated with floral embellishments, impractical handbags and off-the-shoulder silhouettes, “Menswear has become a pool for new ideas and fashion paradigms; twisting dogmas and preconceived notions of virility, body image, tailoring and casuals.”³⁹ However, she believes it has already reached tipping point, with what was once considered eccentric now assimilated into the mainstream, resulting in commercial success endorsed by the high street and the luxury markets.⁴⁰ This is evidenced by the recent overwhelming success of Gucci, where Alessandro Michele’s sexually ambiguous menswear has led to a year-on-year sales increase, reportedly up 49.4% on a comparable basis for the third quarter of 2017.⁴¹ According to Vogue, Gucci has become “the encyclopaedic temple of narrative and maximalist fashions ... that glorifies outcasts, skanks, queers, and beautiful freaks.”⁴² From his debut Autumn/Winter 2015 show, featuring distinctly feminine-coded ensembles comprised of chiffon and lace, pussy-bow blouses, and high-waisted flares, to the “blooming gender-fluid image” presented for Spring/Summer 2018, Michele has asserted a “very deliberate sissiness,” for which there was already an existing framework in place, arguably thanks to Anderson.⁴³

The Reinvigoration of Loewe

Michele’s success was preceded by Jonathan Anderson’s debut for Loewe. The London-based, Northern Irish Anderson seemed an unpredictable match for LVMH-owned Loewe. Founded in 1846, it is a favourite of the Spanish Royal family, and best known for its luxury leather goods. Yet Anderson’s ingenious interweaving of the masculine and feminine has brought modernity and vigour to his Loewe lines, articulating his desire to “make it a brand that articulates the period I am in now.”⁴⁴ In marrying his avant-garde approach with Loewe’s 170-year heritage, Anderson is breathing new life into the world-famous brand: clothing sales at the house reportedly increased 380% following Anderson’s overhaul of everything from the logo and branding, to the progressive redesign of the retail spaces.⁴⁵

His Spring/Summer 2015 menswear debut was critically well received. Notes of JW Anderson crept into the new Loewe lines, with evidence of his characteristically off-kilter pattern cutting and Tim Blanks identifying “a jolt of Andersonian ambiguity in a piece as frankly feminine as the two striped silk scarves sewn together to create a top.”⁴⁶ He followed it up for Autumn with a collection combining knitted palazzo pants, and Lurex-threaded mint tweeds which Blanks felt were “provocative expressions of his feminised masculine ethos.”⁴⁷ However, more traditional elements drew on Loewe’s leather legacy, such as a hand-painted motor-cross jacket, a navy nubuck trench, and a shearling-collared coat in napa leather.

For the critics, it is “the confidence with which Anderson straddles both worlds” that is “the mark of a major talent.”⁴⁸ His Spring/Summer 2016 collection for Loewe was described as “Menswear? Not as we know it,” comprising as it did Disney images, princess motifs, and manga graphics, accessorised with gold potato chip brooches; these humorous touches contrasting with carefully researched new fabric technologies.⁴⁹ Autumn/Winter 2016’s cardigans with trains and slouchy, oversized leopard-shearling beanies, not to mention Spring/Summer 2018’s striped summer shirt dresses for men, are hallmarks of Anderson’s purposefully obtuse approach to menswear. But despite this, his self-confessed mission at Loewe is to find new classics, and by-and-large his overhaul of the label is considered a long-awaited show of relatable clothing. Before Anderson, Loewe didn’t have a menswear collection; under him, is emerging a culturally relevant and authentic brand, accessible to a new generation. As Sarah Mower observed:

Somehow, Anderson's ability to enrich the pleasures of product with meaning, tactility, and things to learn has transformed Loewe into the first brand to realise that human, experiential values are the antidote to a high-tech era ... Loewe, under Anderson, has beaten everyone else to the post.⁵⁰

JW Anderson's Legacy

Inspired by trailblazers as diverse as Raf Simons, Hedi Slimane, Vivienne Westwood, *Comme des Garçons* and Muicca Prada, Anderson and his peers have created a menswear catwalk which consistently experiments with notions of masculinity. It is now less unisex, and more outright borrowing from the opposite sex. In Thom Browne's Spring/Summer 2018 menswear collection, the clothes were adapted from Browne's seasonal womenswear collection, and included skirts of all varieties, short shorts and culottes, cropped jackets and long dresses. The twist lay in their being rendered in typically "masculine" grey and traditional menswear materials, such as seersucker, wool, and poplin, which, as Luke Leitch reported, "[increased] the impact of the garments" transgressiveness, and simultaneously, also made it feel much less like drag.⁵¹

Other provocateurs who have toyed with the gender divide include Saint Laurent, Prada, Louis Vuitton, and Givenchy, who have all shown menswear collections with skirts, high heeled boots, chiffon blouses, and a general prevalence of pink. Labels such as Charles Jeffrey's Loverboy, Grace Wales Bonner, Meadham Kirchoff, and Astrid Andersen, who is "injecting gender confusion" into the essentially macho culture of street style, are among those now carrying the baton for new representations of masculinity.⁵² Rad Hourani's "Unisex" couture, tailored to fit the anatomy of both sexes, is exceptional for the fact that it is backed by the establishment: Sidney Toledano, Chairman and CEO at LVMH fashion group, and formerly the longstanding President of Dior, has been mentoring him. Meanwhile, Jeremy Scott has long been defined by his irreverence for normative sartorial definitions of gender, and urban luxe labels such as Hood By Air, Public School, and brand-of-the-moment Vetements, have pushed gender-neutral streetwear to the fore, worn by everyone, no matter what it says on the label.

Equally, the influence of Anderson and his peers is permeating the work of recent graduates, including Central Saint Martins alumni Joshua Walter and Robert Wallace. Walter's collection of genderless garments under his 3Mårn label "seeks to subvert modern ideals of beauty by proposing a new relaxed, purposeful and gender-neutral silhouette."⁵³ Wallace completed his BA in womenswear before switching to menswear for his MA; consequently, his graduate collection is inherently representative of the current synergy between male and female codes of dress. It features trousers made from wool and the boning from a corset, paired with distinctly feminised T-shirts, no doubt informed by his undergraduate womenswear internships at JW Anderson in London and John Galliano in Paris. Interestingly, what links the new generation of emerging designers is a marked shift towards a fearless but arguably less experimental, more nuanced and altogether more sophisticated blurring of men's and womenswear, which reflects new constructs of masculinity for a new generation. Nick Paget believes that "Unlike fashion fads before it, this feels like it is not just the preserve of art school experimenters, tooth-pick thin and donning more-than-just-a-cuban-heel and a bit of boho chic in the wake of Gucci's new aesthetic."⁵⁴

JW Anderson's trademark gender-fluid style has earned him a reputation for the unexpected. His Autumn/Winter 2016 collection was streamed live on the gay dating app Grindr, and included chokers for men, satin pyjamas in pastel colours, and cropped floral bed jackets worn with knitted trousers. It made good PR sense: according to the company, the platform has one million active users worldwide every minute, and many of Anderson's fanbase are gay or bisexual men.⁵⁵ To Lauren Cochrane, writing for *The Guardian*, this collection was significant because it demonstrated that Anderson, who "pioneered androgynous trends," was still "leading the way when it comes to all things gender and sexuality."⁵⁶ Three years into LVMH investment and following his appointment at Loewe, and the tides showed no sign of turning, or of Anderson succumbing to the pressures of retail and commerce. It is interesting then, to see a definitive shift in his work over the last few seasons away from gender blending, towards something



Figure 3
British T-shirt
and shorts of cotton,
JW Anderson,
Menswear Spring/
Summer 2018,
image courtesy
of JW Anderson.

much more inherently gender neutral. Speaking to Elle magazine in 2016, Anderson said, “The minute you see that everything is going one way, you get the hell out.”⁵⁷ Granted, a homoerotic awareness remains the lynchpin of his menswear catwalks, but there is now, in the words of Nick Carvell, “an inherent masculinity in even the most feminine items.”⁵⁸ Perhaps we ought not to be surprised by the sudden cultural shift to “no-fuss fashion basic-ness” for his tenth anniversary collection in Spring/Summer 2018 (Figure 3).⁵⁹

Reporting on the show, Sarah Mower questions what it takes to shift the needle on what men will want to wear, asking, “Ought directional fashion be operating on the level of taboo-breaking avant-garde, like frilled neoprene shorts and one-shoulder evening tops?”⁶⁰ Anderson’s transgressiveness now lies in setting himself apart from an industry which has latterly embraced his earlier gender fluidity, promising an unpredictable future for menswear in his hands. As Mower observes, “The ease of ordinariness ... is an avant-garde trend just waiting for someone as revered as Anderson to declare it okay.”⁶¹

Conclusion

In reality, constructs of masculinity through fashion are influenced by a number of factors; not least changing socio-economic conditions and the prevailing hegemonic masculinity, which shifts according to cultural context and thereby resists eradication.⁶² In the past three decades a body of literature has emerged to reveal the links between fashion and broader social and cultural processes. However, Jay McCauley Bowstead concludes that “they have tended to underplay the significance of fashion as an *authored* text in which the designer, in particular, may consciously employ dress not only to reflect upon but to actively intervene in culture.”⁶³ The catwalk, much like the red carpet, is a safe and artificial space, which to return to Butler’s concept of performativity, allows men, or the menswear designer, a brief opportunity to present alternative modes of dress. Marc Jacobs famously wore a black lace dress by Rei

Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons to the Met Gala ball in 2012. Kanye West has been photographed in a leather kilt on stage in Hyde Park, while the male actor and rapper Jaden Smith appeared in women's clothes for Louis Vuitton's womenswear advertising campaign in 2016. It may seem reassuringly progressive, but as Nick Paget is quick to point out, "It's not ... going to matter much beyond the trendier inner-city enclaves, nor will it carry much truck on provincial streets on a Saturday night,"⁶⁴ and men must still engage in "a high level of self-reflexivity to manoeuvre gender norms."⁶⁵ Yet diversification of men's fashion, cultural shifts, and a postmodern, freewheeling attitude to gender distinctions have renewed interest in men's fashion, opening a new dialogue around masculinity for a new generation. As Jo-Ann Furniss remarked, in her review of Anderson's Autumn/Winter 2013 collection, "Womenswear has known this kind of experimentation for years. Now it is time for boys to have their turn, or otherwise be doomed to the terminal boredom of the standard men's wardrobe."⁶⁶

Endnotes

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Email: g.ripley@nms.ac.uk

Georgina Ripley is Senior Curator of Modern and Contemporary Fashion and Textiles at National Museums Scotland. She was lead curator for the permanent Fashion and Style Gallery, which opened in 2016, and cocurated Express Yourself: Contemporary Jewellery (2014). She has also contributed to exhibitions including Jean Muir: A Fashion Icon (2008–2009) and Mary Queen of Scots (2013) at National Museums Scotland, and The House of Annie Lennox (2012), a V&A Touring Exhibition at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Ripley has previous experience working with National Galleries of Scotland, Museums Galleries Scotland, the Institute of Conservation, the Warner Textile Archive, and the Royal Academy of Arts. She is a member of the Advisory Board of The Journal of Dress History.