

SAFETY INSIDE - POCKET
A.B.C.D.

SIZE
No' 3

VOCAB. No. 258554

APPROXIMATE ONLY

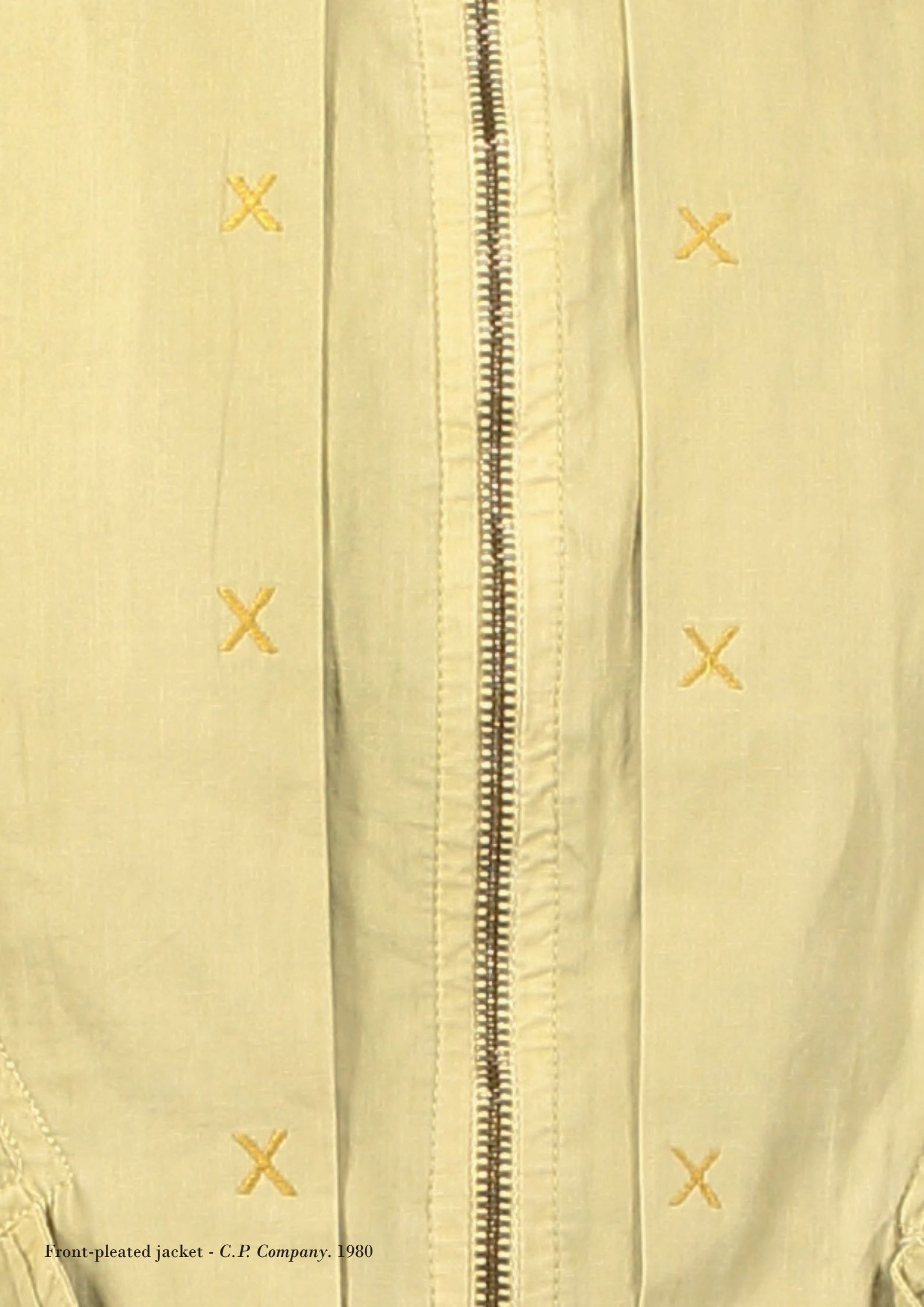
HEIGHT 1'70 - 1'80

CHEST 1'05 - 1'10

* C.P. company 1980

IDEAS FROM MASSIMO OSTI

C.P. LIBRARY



Front-pleated jacket - *C.P. Company*. 1980

C.P. LIBRARY

In association with C.P. Company, the Westminster Menswear Archive presents an archive selection celebrating the brand's 50th anniversary with a display in Darwen Library.

The first cabinet shows the brand's early design style. The focus was on natural materials such as cotton, wool, and linen with whole garment dyeing. Included is a 1986 book of press and magazine editorial coverage called C.P. Collection.

The second cabinet highlights the brand's transition to man-made materials and concentrates on the Urban Protection range. It was designed between 1997 and 2001 and repositioned the C.P. Company aesthetic from the Italian countryside to the industrial metropolis.

The final cabinet displays several issues of the C.P. Company magazine. It was first published in 1985 and adopted a new approach to fashion promotion as it was marketing material sold as a men's fashion magazine.

Cabinet one: Rural

V-NECK KNITTED VEST

C.P. Company

1980

This Fair Isle style V-neck knit features alternate stripes of cream moss stitch cotton, plain stitch brown flower motifs on a green ground, and brown and cream checks. This style of sleeveless knitted vest references hand-knitted Fair Isle of the 1930s and 1940s.

Wool, cotton, and acrylic

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2017.306

FRONT-PLEATED JACKET

C.P. Company

1980

This lightweight jacket in cotton has a military-inspired design with pleated detail on the front that is held in place by ten gold crossbar tack stitches. The military theme continues with the internal label, which lists the height and chest measurements for the intended wearer.

Cotton

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2018.102

BOMBER JACKET

C.P. Company

1980

This olive-green bomber jacket has raglan sleeves and a slightly padded shoulder with a triangular pattern overstitched on to it. After the jacket was sewn together it was whole garment dyed.

Cotton

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2017.289

APPLIQUÉD T-SHIRT

C.P. Company

Spring/Summer 1998

C.P. Company introduced their mascot, a Second World War British Royal Navy coxswain, in 1980. He has been printed on to white cotton and then appliquéd onto the front of the T-shirt.

Cotton

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2017.145

C.P. COLLECTION BOOK

1986

This book has a collection of press images, graphics, photoshoots, and fashion editorials featuring C.P. Company. It includes the Italian menswear magazine *L'Uomo Vogue* from the 1980s.

From the C.P. Company Archive



V-neck knitted vest - C.P. Company. 1980

Cabinet two: Urban

MAG-LITE TORCH

C.P. Company

1999-2000

This Mag-Lite Torch was designed to be worn as part of the Solo waistcoat for the Autumn/Winter 1999 Urban Protection range. Solo has wide webbing loops across the back in which the torch can be carried vertically.

Anodized aluminium

Made in California

Archive no. 2019.85

YO COAT SONY DISCMAN

C.P. Company

1999

The Sony Discman ESP2 was one of the most advanced compact disc players available at the time, and it was included with the YO coat as part of the Urban Protection collection. It fitted into a specially designed zip pocket on the coat's left chest.

Plastic, and metal

Made in Malaysia

Archive no. 2016.255.2

LIGHT JACKET TORCH

C.P. Company

2000

This U.S. Army style TL-142 flashlight is designed to attach to the front of the Light Jacket from the Urban Protection range designed by Moreno Ferrari. It has an angle-head and a Morse code button for emergency use.

Plastic, metal

Made in China

Archive no. 2016.287.2

METROPOLIS JACKET IDENTITY CARD

C.P. Company

1999

This identification card is intended to be clipped to the pocket of the Metropolis jacket from the Urban Protection collection. The text on the back of the card reads, 'No smog, for protection, a shell for consciousness,' a reference to the face filtration mask that came with the coat.

Plastic

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2016.181.3

METROPOLIS JACKET ANTI-SMOG MASK

C.P. Company

1999

Oval shaped anti-smog mask of black synthetic material with cut outs and black felted liner with round black plastic filter in the centre. It attaches with poppers to the hood of the Metropolis jacket, the first piece in the C.P. Company Urban Protection line.

Neoprene, plastic

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2016.181.2



Atlas jacket inflatable collar - *C.P. Company*. 1999

Cabinet two: Urban

SONY ICD-30 RECORDER

C.P. Company
1999

The C.P. Company Urban Protection R.E.M. Jacket was accessorised with this Sony voice recorder to be worn inside a mesh pocket on the left sleeve. It could record up to 16 minutes of audio.

Plastic

Made in Japan

Archive no. 2016.298.2

ATLAS JACKET INFLATABLE COLLAR

C.P. Company
1999

The Atlas jacket was part of the Urban Protection range and was intended for urban travellers. It has a high neck collar and a removable inflatable P.V.C. pillow that can be taken out of the jacket and worn around the neck for support while travelling.

Plastic

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2018.86

L.E.D JACKET POLLUTION DETECTOR

C.P. Company
2001

Manufactured by Figaro Sensors, this microcomputer is built into the L.E.D. jacket and is linked to a filter and sensor that tests the air for methane, propane, Freon, and other gases. A signal appears on an illuminated scale ranging from red to green to give the wearer an idea of the level of contaminants in the air.

Plastic

Made in U.S.A.

Archive no. 2016.093

MUNCH COAT PERSONAL ALARM

C.P. Company
1998

The Munch jacket incorporates a personal safety device manufactured by Tecnova Systems. Pulling a cord within a specially designed internal pocket activates the alarm. The coat then emits a noise like a high-pitched scream, hence the jacket's name.

Plastic

Made in Italy

Archive no. 2017.241.2

URBAN PROTECTION ADVERTISEMENT

Arena Magazine
2000

The Move jacket, which came with a foldable scooter, was featured on a double page advertisement for the Autumn/Winter 2000-2001 Urban Protection collection. It includes a list of retailers, including Originals in Blackburn.

Harrow Library, University of Westminster Library and Archives Service



Metropolis Identity card - *C.P. Company*, 1999

Cabinet three: Print

In 1985 C.P. Company printed their first magazine in three languages, Italian, English, and Japanese, with a total print run of 50,000 copies. The content is nearly all marketing material for the brand, including product pictures and fashion shoots from that season's collection. It cost 3500 lire at newsstands.

Bottom row left to right:

C.P. Company magazine 1985

C.P. Company magazine 1985

C.P. Company magazine February 1986

Massimo Osti by C.P. Company of Italy magazine January 1987

Second row left to right:

C.P. Company magazine September 1987

C.P. Company magazine February 1988

Massimo Osti by C.P. Company of Italy magazine September 1988

C.P. Company magazine February 1989

Back row left to right:

C.P. Company magazine September 1989

C.P. Company magazine 1990

C.P. Company magazine 1991

C.P. Company magazine 1993

C.P. COMPANY



OUR NEW RETAIL SHOP IN THE
FLATIRON BUILDING

475 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10010
(212) 260 1990

IDEAS FROM

MASSIMO OSTI

PRODUCED BY

C.P. COMPANY

Palliative Prototypes or Therapeutic Functionality?

Professor Andrew Groves

Towards the end of the 1990s, a reoccurring theme within contemporary fashion was of the body in trauma, decaying, degraded or ill at ease. Simultaneously, as anxiety over the physical and psychological threats of ecological, environmental, and digital catastrophe intensified, a potential panacea was being proposed by the augmentation of technology within hybrid garments to alleviate these harms. This pivotal moment within menswear design saw the proposition of a range of garments intended as syntheses, acting as multifunctional protective barriers between the wearer and a hostile urban environment.

Founded by Massimo Osti in 1971, C.P. Company is an Italian brand that for its first 25 years produced menswear using natural fabrics such as linen, cotton, leather, and wool. Even if not living in the countryside, their ideal man wore clothes that reflected romanticised ideas of nature and the use of its materials. However, in 1997 Moreno Ferrari, the brand's newly appointed designer, relocated C.P. Company's man from his rural setting and repositioned him into an urban environment. He pondered what threats and dangers the modern man faced, and in response, he created the Urban Protection line, which incorporated complex, mostly hidden technology into each garment. The clothes' specific restorative or enhanced functionality acknowledged the complexities of the environmental issues that man had both created and now had to navigate for his survival. According to first-hand reports, consumers were disoriented, baffled, and confused by the radical repositioning of the brand.

Almost 80 years earlier, in 1919, the Italian Futurist Ernesto Michahelles, under the pseudonym of Thayaht, designed the TuTa, or what we now have come to call the boiler suit or overall. This revolutionary intervention by an artist to create a rational and utopian garment can be seen as a direct forerunner for the Urban Protection range in its attempt to create clothing that aimed to be functional, democratic and transcend the restrictions of fashion. In *Looking Forwards: Historical Futurism*, curator Judith Clark writes: 'the Futurists were not dress designers but painters, sculptors and poets. Dress to them was only one more active canvas upon which to work rhetorically.'

In 1913, Giacomo Balla, one of the key proponents of the Futurist movement, stated in *The Futurist Manifesto of Men's Clothing*:

We want Futurist clothes to be comfortable and practical:

- Dynamic
- Aggressive
- Shocking
- Energetic
- Violent
- Flying (i.e., giving the idea of flying, rising and running)
- Peppy
- Joyful
- Illuminating (in order to have light even in the rain)
- Phosphorescent
- Lit by electric lamps

In addition to Thayaht's work, the Urban Protection range draws on a long history of designers who have attempted to imagine our shared future. Among them are Pierre Cardin, André Courrèges, Paco Rabanne, and Hardy Amies, the British couturier who designed the costumes for Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The use of uniformity of dress to represent an idealised utopia was central to these designers' depictions of this envisioned future. In Cardin's 1964 space-age collection Cosmocorps, the womenswear features abstract cut-outs as a decorative motif, but these are absent from the menswear that he showed. Instead, the focus of the design is on the functional elements of men's outfits, such as zips, belts, and pockets. Cardin's work echoes Thayaht's in that it proposes menswear that is stripped down to its most utilitarian and functional elements. By proposing menswear that is pared back to its utilitarian and functional elements, Cardin's work echoes that of Thayaht.

Like the Futurists before him, Ferrari purposefully discarded the past, both of C.P. Company and of preconceived notions of what fashion represented, in order to use clothing to question and create societal change. While the following garments appear to address specific problems relevant to their time, they are also concerned with more abstract concepts



that align his work with that of his contemporaries working within the discipline of fine art.

Each Urban Protection garment came with a clear plastic clip-on holder that held an identification (I.D.) card with technical information about the materiality and properties of the garment. However, each had a poetic title or phrase that alluded to the garment's more abstract properties.

Freedom of thought, poetry for the soul.

No smog, for protection, a shell for consciousness.

No noise, for inner life, a new womb to listen to silence.

These cards are critical in our understanding of Ferrari's garments. They subtly appropriate the conventions of the art gallery label (they list title, maker, and medium) to frame our understanding of these objects as an abstraction of their ostensibly functional intent.

The Urban Protection range featured multiple garments, predominantly outerwear, released over several years between 1997 and 2001. All the outerwear garments in the Urban Protection collection were made of Dynafil TS-70, a black industrial nylon material. It provided an abrasion and rip-resistant protective barrier that was also oil and water-resistant. It is the type of material that is more frequently seen on security guards or police officers than from a luxury Italian fashion house. Indeed, the overarching use of this material means that the garments appear superficially indistinguishable from each other at first glance. Only upon closer inspection does each garment reveal that it serves a specific purpose. By avoiding the use of colour, pattern, or texture, each garment is further reduced to its conceptual narrative. Though not categorised initially like this, I have divided the range into three sections:

- Air
- Sound
- Movement

AIR

In this section, there are three jackets, the Metropolis, Atlas, and L.E.D., which are concerned with air in various ways.

The Metropolis jacket, which was released in the first season of Urban Protection in 1997, features a removable anti-smog mask that is adjustable through openings in the hood and is insulated with a high-density double fleece lining. This jacket was advertised as having pockets designed to be big

enough to carry 'computers, mobile phones and documents.' These are not the utopian garments long imagined for the new millennia predicated repeatedly throughout the twentieth century by designers such as Cardin, Courrèges or Paco Rabanne. Unlike the designers of the 1960s, Ferrari was far too familiar with the realities of the year 2000 to regard it as a far-off utopia. While previous designers' predictions of the future resulted in brightly coloured and celebratory clothes, for Ferrari, his use of funereal black throughout the collection firmly rooted his work in the dystopian present.

The L.E.D. jacket features a gas detector made in the United States by Figaro Sensors. A microcomputer is linked to a filter and sensor that detects methane, propane, freon, and other gases in the air. The wearer can see the level of contaminants in the air thanks to an illuminated L.E.D. display. The L.E.D. jacket was introduced in 2001, five years after the Metropolis jacket. Unlike other fashion brands, which may change their direction or collection research each season, the Urban Protection range's overarching concept was carried out over a five-year period. This consistency of material, colour, research, and approach was a deliberate response to the fashion industry's unhealthy obsession with continuous self-reinvention. The Atlas jacket was created in 1999 for the urban traveller. It features a high neck collar with a removable inflatable P.V.C. pillow that can also be worn around the neck for support while travelling.

While the previous three garments appear to protect or care for the wearer, this simplistic reading of these objects' superficial functionality may be erroneous. Instead, they could be understood as palliative prototypes. While these garments acknowledge the underlying illnesses afflicting modern society, they also concede their inability to effect meaningful change in their fundamental causes.

The persistent narrative for wearable technology has focused on augmenting fashion with emerging technology to create a utopian future. However, the inherent obsolescence of both fashion and technology leads to the failure of both. This tension is actively explored and questioned in Ferrari's work.

There is a resemblance to Jeff Koons' early work in this philosophical approach. Koons displayed a series of air-filled or inflated items in his 1985 exhibition *Equilibrium*, all initially created to save lives but now recast in bronze. These included an aqualung, snorkel vest and a lifeboat. Koon's replication of an aqualung was based on an existing piece of lifesaving equipment. Through their new materiality, they have

been transformed into deadly objects. Furthermore, the use of bronze, a traditional statuary material, alludes to the object's ability, whether worn or not, to outlast its owner.

SOUND

The second section is dedicated to sound, with three distinct jackets: R.E.M., Life, and Munch.

On the left sleeve of the R.E.M. jacket, a Sony ICD-30 voice note recorder is concealed beneath an outer mesh pocket. It can save up to 16 minutes of audio on two files spanning 99 messages. The coat's length can be adjusted by undoing the bottom section of the lining, which is Velcro-attached inside the coat.

The Life Jacket includes a removable noise-proof headset made by Bilsom that can be worn over or inside the hood. Rather than being used to listen to music, as one might expect, these noise-cancelling headphones are designed to block out the outside world.

Finally, the Munch jacket incorporates a personal safety device activated by pulling a cord within a specially designed internal pocket. When removed, the coat makes a noise like a high-pitched scream, hence the jacket's name. The quote on its attached identity card reads, 'No panic, a cry as a bridge for a better future.' The use of the word bridge in this quote is perhaps telling. The curator Andrew Bolton writes about the Urban Protection collection in his 2002 book *The Supermodern Wardrobe*. He states that 'these clothes are designed for transitional spaces or what the anthropologist Marc Auge calls non-places. Airports, motorways, subways.'

The connection to Edvard Munch's most famous work, *The Scream of Nature* (1893) more widely known simply as *The Scream*, is intriguing. The actual location that the haunted figure depicted by Munch in *The Scream* is situated is on a bridge on the outskirts of Oslo and the Oslo Fjord. This bridge could be considered one of the first transitional spaces between nature and the newly industrialised city. The city of Oslo can be seen in the background, as well as a slaughterhouse and the mental asylum where Edvard Munch's sister was hospitalised.

MOVEMENT

The final section from the Urban Protection features three objects Move, Rest, and Hammock.

Vertical anti-wind pockets and enlarged internal cuffs with fleece half-mittens are featured on the Glove jacket. On top of this coat is a multi-pocketed

waistcoat that came with a Micro-designed aluminium foldable scooter for urban travel. With these extra accessories, the coat was called Move. The Rest backpack, inspired by military rucksacks with built-in field stools, is made of Dynalfil and mounted on a steel frame that can be adjusted to make a small folding stool, allowing the wearer to stop and rest on his travels. Finally, the Hammock was one of the most conceptual items in the C.P. Company Urban Protection line. It was a long coat that could be transformed into a hammock by adjusting thick nylon tapes at the top and bottom, allowing it to be suspended. It bears a striking resemblance to a shroud or a body bag in this configuration; thus, it could be interpreted as a final resting place, the body inside now finally motionless and inert.

Parallels to the British artist Lucy Orta can be seen in the previous examples from the Urban Protection collection, which are concerned with migration, displacement, and ultimately death. In her series of works called *Refuge Wear* (1992-2012), Orta explored how clothing serves as a negotiated space between our bodies and the external world. This transitional space can be a site for withdrawal, exclusion, serving as a physical and emotional barrier.

Do the garments within Ferrari's Urban Protection range function as palliative prototypes? In their design, do these garments simply acknowledge the underlying illnesses prevalent in modern living and concede that they are powerless to create meaningful change? Rather than framing them as examples of wearable technology, are they like Thayaht's TuTa, an intervention, a metaphysical rip within the material of the fashion system? Or, like Jeff Koons Aqualung, do they at first glance seem to offer salvation, but on closer inspection, their redundancy mocks the futility of our endeavours?

Or do they represent therapeutic functionality, not necessarily in their specific specifications, but rather in terms of proposing new value systems that, in the long-term, might address the redundancy of fashion and its environmental, physical, and emotional cost to humans? Both in their physical manifestation but also their critical and cultural meanings, these are complex artefacts. Today, in the shadow of COVID-19, we are entering a sustained period in which our bodies will become increasingly politicised, regulated, and contested. As concerns grow about technology's intrusive and pervasive role in this, these artefacts raise more urgent and critical questions about the boundaries between the physical, digital, and metaphysical than ever before.

Portrait Youth

Portrait Youth is a participatory research project, led by staff from the Manchester Fashion Institute at Manchester Metropolitan University. The project aims to document identities of youth through styling and dress, giving young people in the North West opportunity to explore how their choice of clothing reflects who they are, and impacts on their interaction with others.

For this instalment they have teamed up with the Italian sportswear brand C.P. Company and the Westminster Menswear Archive to encourage young men from Blackburn and Darwen to explore their identity through styling and portrait photography for this year's British Textiles Biennial.

With support from local youth groups, the Blackburn Youth Zone, and Inspire Motivate Overcome (IMO), they focused on menswear for their latest workshop, which is rarely analysed in fashion or dress research from the perspective of young people. Participants were interviewed about their approaches to dressing, styling their own outfits for a professional photoshoot with the acclaimed photographer Neil Bedford.

The Portrait Youth exhibition will be displayed on the digital screen in King William Street, Blackburn as part of a range of activities that will run alongside C.P. Company's CINQUANTA archive exhibition in Darwen during the British Textile Biennial 2021.

www.portraityouth.com



Adil Amin

Adil was born in Blackburn after his parents moved here from Pakistan in the late 1970s.

After graduating with a foundation degree in fine art, he lived and worked in a 24-hour convenience store in Aberdeen before returning to Blackburn for his current job as a forklift truck driver.

Despite working in jobs that he hates, to pay the bills, Adil has been developing a body of paintings he calls 'The Hoodie series'. After exhibiting at Prism Contemporary, Adil became Prism's associate artist for the British Textile Biennial, where he has developed this series into a specific body of work.

The work interrogates young Asian males who wear C.P. Company, re-appropriating the brand from the Northwest's predominantly white terrace culture, just as they had appropriated the brand from Italy in the 1980s.



Westminster Menswear Archive

The Westminster Menswear Archive was founded in 2016. It maintains a collection of garments and related artefacts to encourage and develop the study of menswear design from a technical and functional point of view; to advance the general knowledge of menswear as a design discipline, and to serve as a resource tool to inform contemporary menswear design.

Over 2000 examples of some of the most noteworthy and interesting menswear garments from the last 140 years are housed in the Westminster Menswear Archive. This includes a significant number of garments by Massimo Osti and from C.P. Company. The archive also has examples of work from the following companies:

A-COLD-WALL*, adidas, Ahluwalia, Aitor Throup, Alexander McQueen, Aquascutum, Austin Reed, Balenciaga, Barbour, Belstaff, Berghaus, Bernhard Willhelm, Blades, BodyMap, Bonneville, Bukta, Burberry, Burton, C.P. Company, Calvin Klein, Carol Christian Poell, Christian Dior, Comme Des Garcons, Craig Green, Dolce & Gabbana, Gieves, Griffin, H&M, Harrods, Helmut Lang, Huntsman, Irvine Sellars, Issey Miyake, JW Anderson, Jean Paul Gaultier, Jeremy Scott, Joe Casely-Hayford, John Stephens, Junior Gaultier, Kim Jones, Left Hand, Levi's, Lewis Leathers, Liam Hodges, Louis Vuitton, Martin Margiela, Massimo Osti, Meadham Kirchhoff, Michiko Koshino, Mr Fish, New & Lingwood, Nigel Cabourn, Off-White, Palace, Paul Smith, Paul & Shark, Penfield, Prada, Raeburn, Ralph Lauren, Rick Owens, Sibling, Stone Island, Tom Gilby, Tommy Nutter, Turnbull & Asser, Umbro, Undercover, Vexed Generation, Vivienne Westwood, Walter Van Beirendonck, Zegna Sport.

Additionally, the archive includes an extensive range of utilitarian and uniform garments from military services including army, air force and navy; civil services such as police, fire, railway and post office; and other examples of personal protective equipment and workwear.

www.mensweararchive.com
mensweararchive@westminster.ac.uk

WISLE 4

DESIGNERS S-Z
Tommy Nutter
Mixed Generation
Vivienne Westwood

WESTMINSTER GRADUATES

DESIGNER LONG

TAILORING 1900s-1960s



© 2010 Vivienne Westwood Ltd.

BAY 4

BAY 4

BAY 4

BAY 5



AISLE 5

TAILORING 1960s-2010s

SHIRTING 1940s-2010s

DENIM 1980s-2010s

LEISURE A-L

Adidas
Aquascutum
Best Company
Burberry's

Book List

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Credits

Westminster Menswear Archive

Professor Andrew Groves and Dr Danielle Sprecher

Portrait Youth

Jo Jenkinson, John Earnshaw, Neil Bedford, Tom Skinner, Samantha Thompson, and Blackburn Youth Zone

Adil Amin

Special thanks to Adil Amin and Jamie Holman

In Conversation panel talks

Lorenzo Osti, Paul Harvey, Aitor Throup, Neil Munn, David Hellqvist, Neil Summers, Danny Fahey, Gary Aspden, Chris Vandrill, and John Fendley

British Textile Biennial Education sessions

Vicky Price, Tim Bartholomew, Suzanne Wilson, and Wendy Hargreaves

Special thanks to Jenny Rutter, Laurie Peake, Alex Zawadzki, and all at Super Slow Way

And to Lorenzo Osti, Enrico Grigoletti, Giulia Pittarelli, Giovanni Benvenuto, Ilaria Pozzi, Matteo Condorelli and everyone at C.P. Company.

1 – 10 October 2021

Darwen Library

Knott Street

Darwen

Lancashire

BB3 3BU

C.P.
COMPANY
cinquanta





WESTMINSTER MENSWEAR ARCHIVE