

fashion is



a contemporary art project organized by



fashion is



project description

This summer, THREAD for ART unleashes FASHION is ART, a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional project featuring nineteen specially commissioned artist projects that range from outrageous to transcendent.

The project, organized by curator Rhonda Howard, artist Yuki Nakamura, and graphic designer Rebecca Richards, encourages artists to engage in an ongoing dialogue about fashion, from gender bending to the socio-political role of clothing in the global economy.

Challenged to fill in the blank in “Fashion is _____,” emerging and well established artists have responded with self-inflating pants; edible, deep-fried underwear-shaped desserts; an all-girl, all-Asian punk band in matching outfits; a make-up firing cannon; and many other smart, comical, and coy examinations of the intersections between fashion, art, and performance.

Organized in four parts and presented in the greater Seattle area over the course of six weeks, FASHION is ART will influence and inspire estimated audiences of over a quarter of a million people.

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project components

/// GALA FASHION SHOW

August 27, 2003

On August 27, at Bumbershoot's Visual Arts Exhibition Gala opening, THREAD for ART unveils nineteen new contemporary art projects presented in the guise of a fashion show. This one-night-only special runway performance is set to attract between 2000 and 3000 curators, critics, collectors, gallery dealers, artists and arts-interested individuals from the Northwest arts community.

/// SPECIAL EXHIBITION

AT BUMBERSHOOT

August 27 - September 1

Bumbershoot is one of America's largest urban arts festivals and **the** largest music and arts event in the Northwest. It features over 2500 artists and is attended by over a quarter of a million people over Labor Day weekend. FASHION is ART is one of twelve visual arts exhibitions that will appear in special Bumbershoot exhibition spaces from August 27 through September 1. The artworks presented at the Gala Fashion Show will be on display in a dynamic exhibition format on view in the Olympic Room during the run of the festival.

/// SEATTLE STOREFRONT

WINDOW PROJECTS

September 8 - October 5

From September 8 through October 5, the nineteen FASHION is ART projects previously exhibited at Bumbershoot will be installed in a new context for the entire public to view. The artworks will appear in the storefront windows of clothing stores, salons and unleased spaces dispersed throughout Seattle in neighborhoods such as Belltown, Capitol Hill, Eastlake, Fremont, Ballard, Pioneer Square, the International District, and Wallingford.

/// ART PUBLICATION

available late August

THREAD for ART will produce a lush, poster-size, 32-page, full color art book, documenting each of the FASHION is ART projects. The publication will feature an introductory essay by the exhibition organizers as well as a feature essay by an outside curator and short articles on each artist project. This publication will be released the evening of the Gala Fashion Show and be available during the Bumbershoot exhibition as well as at selected FASHION is ART storefront venues, art museum and independent bookstores, and at THREAD for ART.

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artist projects:

/// Sami Ben Larbi	Fashion is <u>SELF.</u>
/// Dylan Bolles & Nathan Lynch	Fashion is <u>HEAVY ACCESSORIES.</u>
/// Jana Brevick	Fashion is <u>BAGGAGE.</u>
/// Leslie Clague	Fashion is <u>AN INTERFACE.</u>
/// Claudia Fitch & Stephanie Skura	Fashion is <u>SUBTERRANEAN.</u>
/// Mandy Greer	Fashion is <u>HUMAN NATURE.</u>
/// Jean Hicks	Fashion is <u>FASCISM; Style is SELF-DEFENSE.</u>
/// Elizabeth Jameson	Fashion is <u>THE SARTORIAL EDGE.</u>
/// Julie Johnson	Fashion is <u>SENSATE.</u>
/// Sheila Klein	Fashion is <u>FURNISHING.</u>
/// Michelle Kumata	Fashion is <u>CONVERSATION.</u>
/// Paul Margolis	Fashion is <u>LOVE.</u> Fashion is <u>INTIMACY.</u>
/// Cathy McClure & K.D. Schill	Fashion is <u>RIDICULOSITY.</u>
/// Saya Moriyasu	Fashion is <u>CONTRADICTION.</u>
/// Yuki Nakamura	Fashion is <u>FORM.</u>
/// Gary Owen	Fashion is <u>GLAMBLASTER - LOCK & LOAD.</u>
/// Susan Robb	Fashion is <u>PLACE.</u>
/// Toi Sennhauser	Fashion is <u>DELICIOUS.</u>
/// Juniper Shuey	Fashion is <u>WORK.</u>



fashion is SELF.

artist: **sami ben larbi**

ART

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Ben Larbi has created inflatable couture that pointedly limits physical contact with others and enforces an isolated personal environment for reflection. Complete with an air compressor in a handy carrying case, shirts balloon to encapsulate the body from torso to toe and fully inflated pants create

a convenient seat. Both pieces alter the environment of the wearer, extending and manipulating the physical confines of 'self.' Inflated attire allows for increased personal space and a soft buffer to the outside world that facilitates quiet introspection.

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fashion is HEAVY ACCESSORIES.

artists: **nathan lynch & dyllan boles**

fashion is **ART**

The Northern California duo "Airpocket" argues that helmets are appropriate and fashionable attire for all situations. Lynch and Bolles assert that helmets deserve a place at the forefront of the fashion industry alongside such fashion icons as the coon-skin cap and the polka-dot bikini or other functional

clothing that has made the crossover into the realm of the stylish: army boots, camouflage, chain mail, and bowling shoes. The allure of fashion is often the narrative it seems to suggest. Lynch and Bolles posit the helmet as an attractive new accessory that suggests movement, action, speed.

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fashion is Human Nature.

artist: **mandy greer**

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Greer examines humankind's place in the animal kingdom as defined by the need to cover our bodies with clothing. It is inherent human shame, she attests, that clearly separates us from other species, yet we are still animals. With a series of elaborate costumes and animal head masks, Greer's theatrical

performances deal with the dilemmas and contradictions of the human as animal. Her hybrid creations, influenced by mythology, burlesque, and fantasy, are a hodge-podge of the gaudy, the refined, the beautiful, and the repulsive.

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fashion is CONVERSATION.

artist: **michelle kumata**

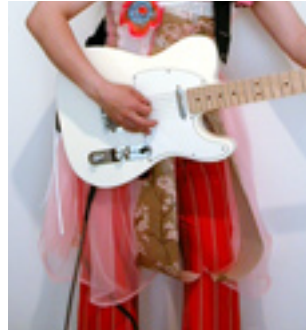
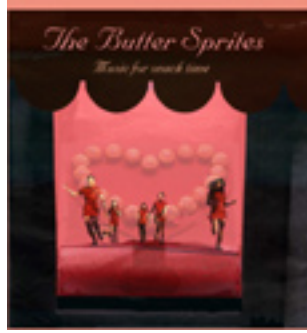
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Through dance and movement and intricate costumes, Kumata stages a non-verbal conversation representing human communication through attire. The image we project through our clothing becomes our inside self, externalized. Like packages to be opened, Kumata's costumes reveal a range of emotion, truth,

and vulnerability as performers interact in carefully choreographed performance. Pleats, scarves, knots and cocoons of fabric move with the performers in an exquisite visual dialogue.

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fashion is contradiction.

artist: **saya moriyasu**

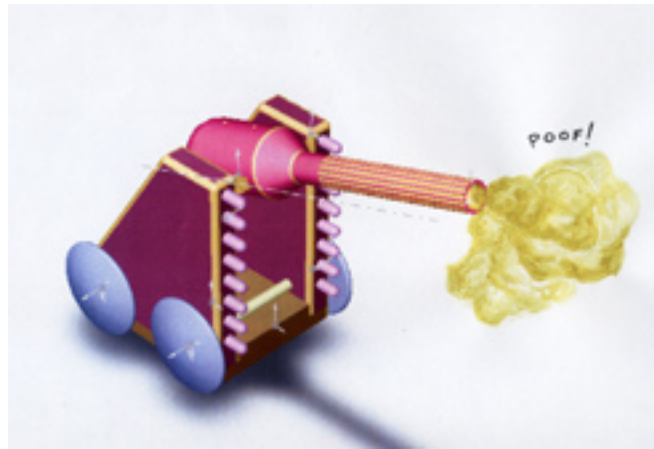
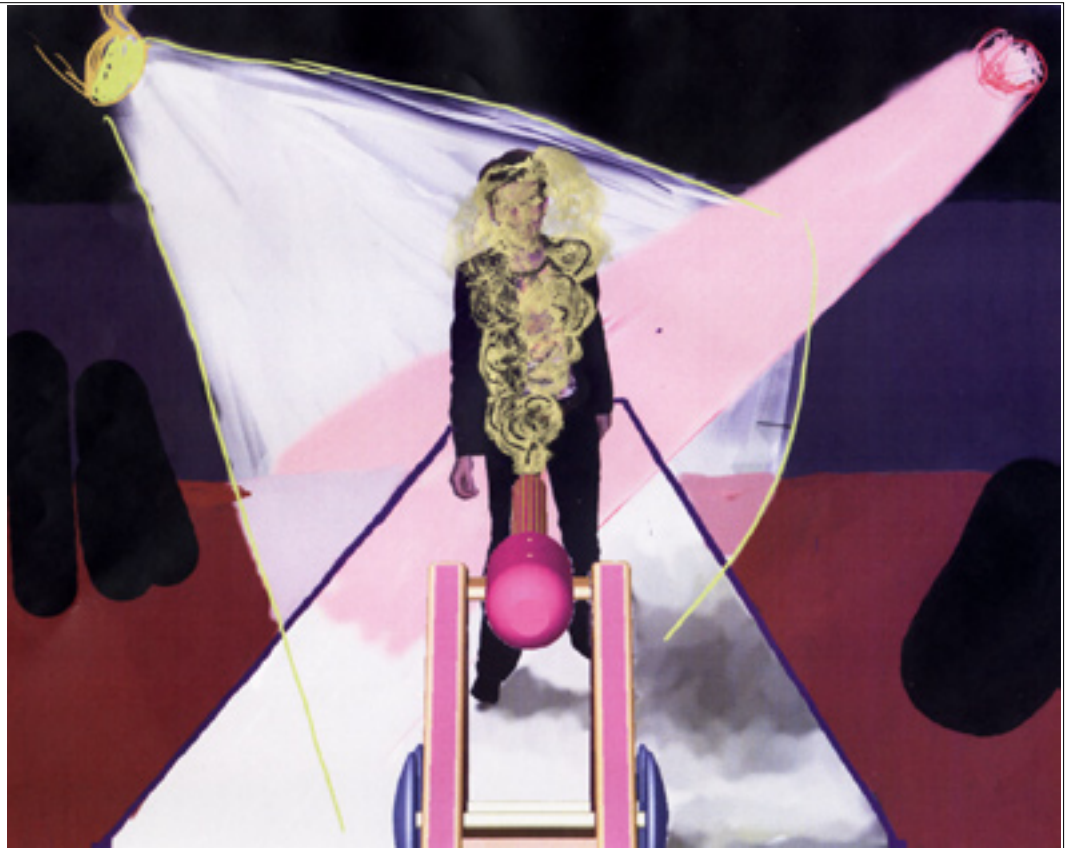
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Delighting in myriad contradictions of image, fashion, and perception, Moriyasu is part of a "faux" rock group called the Butter Sprites. Confounding the conventional perceptions of East and West, old world and new world, female and male, dark and light, sweet and sour, and high-tech and low-tech, the band

is made up of people who don't consider themselves musicians. Five women of Asian descent sing dark, punk-inspired tunes in matching German-style dirndl dresses embellished with LED lights.

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fashion is GLAMBLASTER-LOCK & LOAD.

artist: **gary owen**

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Owen delves into issues of gender-bending in fashion with a comical enactment of the immense power—and even violence—of the beauty industry, of self-mutilation for style, and the aggressiveness of much body art. The Glamblaster is a weapon of mass distraction, a phallic power tool crafted in sleek glossy contour to reference the packaging

for women's cosmetics. In a carnivalesque performance, Owen subjects himself to his own creation, standing in front of the barrel while his 'lovely assistant' ignites a firecracker in the cannon's chamber. After a loud POP, a cloud of gold eyeshadow powder blasts from the cannon, enveloping the artist in a "nebula of shimmering glamour."

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gary owen