

Reviews

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***Disegno per la Moda /
Drawing for Fashion***

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Within the framework of recent reflections on Drawing in university education and interdisciplinary research, *Disegno per la Moda / Drawing for Fashion* is a contribution of particular interest to the academic community of Drawing and, more generally, to scholars in the fields of representation, visual culture, and fashion studies. This work belongs to a line of research that has recently expanded the discipline's scope to include the fashion system, a field in which Massimiliano Ciammaichella has played a pioneering role, and to whose impactful research this issue of the scientific journal *disegno* is dedicated. We owe much to his perspective and studies, through which he has helped to investigate fashion using the theoretical and practical tools of representation, exploring the relationships between body, identity, design, and image, and the expressive potential of Drawing across analog practices, digital processes, and scenarios opened up by new technologies.

Published in 2025 by Sapienza Università Editrice as part of the *Materiali e documenti* series, this bilingual Italian-English volume, edited by Emanuela Chiavoni, Giulia Pettoello, Giorgia Potestà, and Federico Re-

becchini, is deeply rooted in this field of research. It compiles and organizes nearly a decade of teaching and experimental activities from the bachelor's degree programs in *Fashion and Costume Sciences* and *Fashion Studies*. Additionally, the volume includes the proceedings of the *Disegno & Moda* exhibition, which serves as an archive of educational experiences and methodological reflections, showcasing the outcomes of a journey that has positioned Drawing at the heart of knowledge-building processes.

The book's main value resides in its capacity to document the scientific, methodological, and technical advancements achieved within the discipline, showcasing how Drawing transcends the conventional boundaries of architecture and engineering. It presents a vision of the discipline as more than just a representational practice; rather, it is framed as a cognitive tool, an interpretive instrument, and an interdisciplinary language that can effectively read, analyze, and communicate the complexities of fashion-related cultural phenomena.

From the very first pages, the authors clearly articulate the aims of the editorial project, born of the intention "to record, in a single volume, the

content, methods, and techniques of Drawing within university education" (p. 7) and, at the same time, "to provide an initial overview of the teachings, methods, and tools used in Drawing education over the past decade, balancing cultural tradition with technological innovation" (p. 7). This programmatic statement effectively defines the scope of the work, serving as a tool for reflection on the teaching of Drawing and as an archive of practices, experiences, and results intended to form a foundation for future research developments.

One of the most significant aspects of this volume is its documentation of a positive and productive inter-faculty and interdepartmental collaboration within Sapienza University of Rome between the Faculties of Architecture and of Letters and Philosophy. This experience represents an interesting case of integration between the humanities and the disciplines of representation. The collaboration initiated by Alessandro Saggiaro and Emanuela Chiavoni has made it possible to introduce Drawing as a structural component of fashion-related degree programs, demonstrating the interaction between teaching and research, and reflecting this synergy not only in the creation of new courses but also in the development of a group of young scholars and researchers—Gaia Lisa Tacchi, Francesca Porfiri, Alekos Diacodimitri, Giulia Pettoello, Federico Rebecchini, and Giorgia Potestà—who have contributed to the development of a scientific and educational project that is now well-established.

The structure of the volume consistently reflects the educational and scientific framework that underpins it. After the introductory contribu-

tions by Romana Andò, Alessandro Saggiaro, and Emanuela Chiavoni, the book presents the activities developed in the various courses within the Drawing scientific disciplinary sector offered in fashion-focused degree programs. The sections dedicated to Theory and Techniques of Drawing - Drawing 1, Theory and Techniques of Drawing - Drawing 2, Fashion Illustration - Track 1, and Fashion Illustration - Track 2 illustrate the curriculum of the bachelor's degree program, while the courses Science of Drawing - Science 1 and Science of Drawing - Science 2 document the experience of the international master's program in Fashion Studies. The volume is rounded out by a section dedicated to graduation theses, documentation of the *Drawing & Fashion* exhibition, and concluding reflections.

The interpretive framework that runs throughout the entire publication is the centrality of Drawing as a vehicle for knowledge. Throughout the volume, the notion emerges that Drawing transcends the purely technical dimension of representation and takes on epistemological value. This approach is particularly well-articulated in Romana Andò's contribution, where she draws on Emanuela Chiavoni's insights to present drawing as a powerful language that enhances our ability to "think and understand" (p. 10). Andò underscores its role as "a bridge between cultures, a builder of perceptions, and a facilitator of interpretations" (p. 10).

The outcome of this process is the definition of Drawing as a "space for symbolic mediation" (p. 10), an expression that effectively summarizes the entire volume from a theoretical perspective. From this perspective,

Drawing becomes the tool through which to read, interpret, and communicate the complexity of the fashion system, connecting objects, bodies, cultures, social practices, and collective imaginaries. Andò further observes that "in our degree programs, drawing becomes the actual connective tissue linking different fields of knowledge and disciplines" (p. 10). This statement clearly highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the experience described in the book. Drawing, in fact, serves as a meeting point between art history, anthropology, semiotics, sociology, visual culture, design, and communication, demonstrating an extraordinary ability to bridge different disciplinary contexts.

An analysis of the individual courses reveals the methodological progression that characterizes the educational program. In the Drawing 1 and Drawing 2 courses, the focus is on acquiring the fundamental skills of representation: observation, perception, proportion, form construction, spatial organization, and the development of a conscious graphic language. In this context, Drawing retains its traditional cognitive value and is directly linked to the practice of field surveying, understood as a process of analyzing and interpreting reality.

Although operating in a context different from that of architecture, students are guided to use drawing as a tool for critical observation. The body, clothing, accessories, and textile artifacts become objects of study through which to experiment with established methods of representation. Here, we recognize the continuity with the scientific tradition of the discipline, which has always attributed a central role to survey and

direct observation in the processes of knowledge acquisition.

In Fashion Illustration courses, drawing progressively evolves toward more interpretive and communicative approaches. Traditional techniques are integrated with digital tools, multimedia languages, and innovative methodologies. This volume effectively documents the integration of analog and digital, demonstrating how the discipline of drawing can adapt to technological transformations without compromising its theoretical foundations.

Particularly innovative is the experiential section dedicated to the *Science of Drawing* courses. Aimed at students in the international master's program in *Fashion Studies*, these courses take on a fully intercultural and interdisciplinary dimension. In this context, drawing serves as a universal language that transcends linguistic and cultural differences, functioning as an essential tool for communication, research, and constructive dialogue.

The international focus of the *Science of Drawing - Science 2* course is another innovative aspect of the educational project. The works collected in the volume indeed reflect a diversity of approaches, sensibilities, and cultural references that find a common ground for exchange in the language of graphics. Drawing thus becomes a tool for cultural mediation and the building of dialogue, concretely confirming the definition proposed by Romana Andò.

The archival dimension is examined in Alessandro Saggioro's contribution, which underscores the key strengths of the exhibition and catalog: their remarkable ability to transform educational outputs into a

shared cultural heritage. The scholar observes, in fact, that "the ability to collect and enhance the products of many students, to make them an archive for future reflection, and a method for research and study, constitutes the essential value of the exhibition and now of the catalog that arises from it" (p. 14).

This statement highlights a significant aspect of the educational experience undertaken. The volume not only showcases the educational outcomes achieved but also serves as a comprehensive record of research aimed at preserving and providing access to materials that will be invaluable for future investigations into drawing, fashion, and educational methodologies.

The section dedicated to thesis projects is also of interest. The list of works produced by the students not only documents the growing academic maturity achieved by the educational programs but also attests to the courses' ability to generate new lines of research. The theses demonstrate how Drawing has become an autonomous field of inquiry within *Fashion Studies* and how it can be used as a framework for the critical analysis of contemporary visual culture. The breadth of the topics addressed—from the representation of the body to digital technologies, from exhibition practices to visual communication—demonstrates the fruitful relationship between Drawing and Fashion and its capacity to generate interdisciplinary knowledge.

The exhibition *Disegno & Moda*, from which this volume originates, plays an equally important role. It represents the public presentation of a research and educational journey that finds its critical systematization in the catalog. While the exhibition showcases the

students' work, the volume organizes its contents, interprets the results, and presents them to the academic community, transforming the exhibition experience into a tool for disciplinary reflection.

In this context, the book's visual content takes on a significant role. The quality of the images, the richness of the graphic documentation, the variety of techniques represented, and the careful layout are among the book's key strengths. Life drawings, sketches, surveys, digital renderings, mood boards, design drawings, and visual experiments transcend mere illustration; they contribute significantly to the development of scientific discourse. This underscores the research tradition intrinsic to Drawing, where visual representation becomes a vital form of knowledge.

Taken as a whole, the work effectively captures the maturation of a scientific and educational experience that has transformed Drawing into a forum for dialogue among different disciplines, languages, and design practices. The documentation of the activities carried out, the reflection on the methods adopted, and the quality of the results presented highlight the discipline's ability to engage with emerging areas of contemporary research, expanding its fields of application without compromising its theoretical and methodological foundations. From this perspective, *Disegno per la Moda / Drawing for Fashion* serves simultaneously as a testament to a significant educational and scientific research experience, providing valuable insights for future discussions on the relationship between representation, design culture, and fashion studies. It serves as an exemplary model for the academic

community, demonstrating the successful integration of research, teaching, and the 'third mission', while reaffirming the productive dialogue between the humanities and the disciplines of representation.

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