

FASHION MEETS ART

Global exhibition-maker Judith Clark breaks new ground.

BY LAUREN PELLERANO GOMEZ

Judith Clark transcends the fields of architecture, academia and curatorial practice through her acclaimed work as an exhibition designer. Having staged more than 40 exhibitions worldwide—including the critically acclaimed “Chloé. Attitudes” at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris—Clark is one of the leading figures in sartorial exhibition making. For her latest venture, the first installment of Fashion Project at the Bal Harbour Shops in South Florida, Clark traces the evolution of experimental fashion in a space inspired by a jewel box.

Could you tell us a little bit about the project you are working on for Bal Harbour? The project for Bal Harbour Shops is very exciting as it allows me to rethink my predominantly museum practice for a series of very site-specific installations. Bal Harbour is such a fashion destination with its own history. The overall project is an experiment in that it attempts to create three sets, each made up of two exhibitions, which explore an aspect of a century of both fashion exhibitions and of fashion itself.

How did you connect with Bal Harbour and how did this exhibition materialize? The project came about very much thanks to Cathy Leff. We met in London as she knew that I had worked both inside and outside the museum space and that I was keen to work in new environments. **You mentioned being in an archive in Paris this week, what are you researching?** I was in the very extraordinary luxury brand archive in Paris. Fortunately, a lot of brands these days are focusing on their heritage and, as such, are creating archives for research. I travel to Paris often for this reason.

You have been referred to as an “exhibition-maker,” how would you describe the difference between this title and that of a “curator”? I trained as an architect so I have always seen what I do ‘in the round,’ so to speak. I always conceive of the projects both in terms of the garments and how they will be experienced by the public. This is key for me.

What impact has your background in academia had on your concept of the exhibition process? Whenever you have had to discuss things within an academic context, you consider how an idea has evolved, how the concept might be best protected and represented and you remain aware of how the many processes and collaborations might be described and documented.

What are the greatest challenges of exhibition making, in your opinion? My practical skills do not match my ideas so one of the great luxuries and challenges is the coordination of collaborative practice.



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Above, an installation from “Washed Up” at Selfridges, London, 2011; a still from the 2014 film *Il Vestito Antineutrale*, featuring Judith Clark, along with three other curators.