

# (RI)PENSARE LA MODA // (RE)THINKING FASHION at Notte dei Ricercatori 2023. An exhibition on today to tackle the challenges of tomorrow\*

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The 29th of September the exhibition took place within *Notte dei Ricercatori*, a European initiative held annually to bring the public closer to scientific research. The inclusion of fashion-related projects in *Notte dei Ricercatori* highlights the intersection of fashion and research, showcasing the importance of academic inquiry and innovative thinking.

The exhibition (RI)PENSARE LA MODA // (RE)THINKING FASHION gathers the projects produced in recent years by students of the Bachelor's degree program in Cultures and Practices of Fashion and the international Master's program in Fashion Studies at the University of Bologna – Rimini Campus. Under the supervision of professors from both programs, students have addressed various themes, ranging from the reinterpretation of traditional costumes to strategic communication for fashion, from product design to the enhancement of company archives. With their diversity, the works aim to illustrate both the complexities of the fashion system and the many challenges that its future professionals — students today — will face.

## The relevance of student's work

Delving into the pieces on display, the exhibition has been divided into several sections, each highlighting a specific area of study and project — some already presented in previous editions together with new ones.

Framing the exhibition space, there was a banner from “Fashion Identikit. The future creative director” curated by Luca Fabbri and Leandro Palanghi. Creative directors hold a crucial position, not just in designing collections, but also in crafting a comprehensive present and future vision for the brand. This

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\* Thanks to Ines Tolic and Andrea Serrau for curating the exhibition.

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vision serves as a guiding force for all business strategies. Students have delineated the identity of notable creative directors, emphasizing the personal and professional qualities that have played a significant role in the success of their creative works.

The most interactive section and loved by the public was dedicated to the project “Mirror Identities” curated by Mattia Candiotti with Noemi Manzotti. A series of small face-sized mirrors is uniquely decorated with a photograph of a portion of another person’s face. When the viewers look into the work, their face becoming part of it, will see their facial features merging with someone else and reflect on temporarily acquiring a new identity.

Mannequins and dresses can’t be missing and were represented by the project “Costume Meets Fashion” curated by Simona Segre Reinach with Marianna Balducci, Marzia Bia, Cristiana Curreli. The aim of this ongoing project responds to the need to deconstruct one of the most widespread stereotypes, considering European, Western fashion as modern and costume in the rest of the world traditional and unchanging. After understanding the socio-cultural contexts of non-European dresses, the students designed collection moodboards “fused” with global trends. The students of the seminars then made the garments, inserting them in the communicative frame of a catalogue.

Furthermore, “New Memories, New Identities” curated by Ines Tolic with Andrea Serrau, presented the results of the 3rd ZoneModa Design Competition alongside a freshly printed catalogue mentioning the other editions as well. This time, the project consisted in the creation of a monogram able to interpret the language of the brand and its spirit, both deeply rooted in the film and music culture of the late 20th century. The design proposal was tested on a hoodie, the iconic garment of the brand partnering for the competition — *Throwback* — in the colours of the palette defined for 2021.

The latest addition opened towards the most far-reaching objectives of Rimini’s courses, involving the application of new technologies to fashion studies, in this case tackled by Chiara Pompa during the course “Valorization of fashion archives”. After studying the heritage of some fashion houses, students customized a virtual space that reflected their recurring values and images. By combining their theoretical studies, they developed a curatorial perspective focusing on various organizational phases of a virtual exhibition, seen as an effective tool for communication and valorization of the heritage preserved in the archives.

## The University as a Place for Fashion Display

The University of Bologna during the event of *Notte dei Ricercatori* has always played an active role in showcasing the talent and creativity of its students (for example with the exhibitions #T-Fashion Garden, 2018 and #Athleisure, 2019).

During the broader event, the exhibition — hosted in the central location of the courtyard of the Alberti complex — featured a diverse range of works that aimed to illustrate the complexities of the fashion system and the challenges that future professionals will face. These works not only showcased the students’ skills and innovative thinking but also highlighted the importance of fashion as a cultural and artistic expression.

In exhibiting fashion, displacing design works somewhere else from their original context has often demonstrated to be beneficial. Many Universities organize exhibitions of fashion design student’s works within their spaces - whether in a library, a hall or a courtyard. While the *Notte dei Ricercatori* event at the University of Bologna may not have the same goals, it still serves as a valuable platform to offer to the city of Rimini an insight into the work of the university’s fashion studies students and their potential contributions to the fashion industry.

Here below, in a list divided by project, all the student’s names as recognition for their practice and creative achievements:

*Fashion Identikit. The future creative director*

(Course on Fashion system organisation and Seminar on Smart graphics for fashion, degree in Fashion

Cultures and Practices, University of Bologna)

Projects by: Alona Belis, Margherita Biagetti, Aisyah Sofia Bravi, Romina Camilloni, Maria Cannata, Annalisa Caselli, Annalisa Antonietta Cosentino, Carla Crema, Silvia Falcier, Benedetta Ferri, Emanuella Foschi, Caterina Granci, Francesca Laudante, Carlotta Marola, Francesca Massarino, Noemi Multari, Piergennaro Murgese, Nicolò Fraternali Meloni, Noemi Manzotti, Mariella Di Nunzio, Ailen Pasos, Costanza Proietti, Beatrice Puccia, Camilla Renzi, Federica Salarci, Sofia Santacroce, Angela Tonini, Virginia Valente, Giulia Viappiani

*Mirror identities*

(Seminar on Technique and photographic workflow, degree in Fashion Cultures and Practices, University of Bologna)

Projects by: Anna Alianelli, Linda Barbiero, Kunduz Botaeva, Margherita Campana, Mirella Capuozzo, Cecilia Fangareggi, Grazia Grosso, Nicolò Incerti, Noemi Manzotti, Laura Mardollo, Piergennaro Murgese, Chiara Polliani, Cecilia Ricci, Serena Santo, Antonella Toma, Claudia Trinchini, Uladzistan Zhuk

*Costume Meets Fashion*

Projects by students attending Global Fashion, master's degree in Fashion Studies and Seminars on Fashion collection design; Event organisation; Communicating fashion, degree in Fashion Cultures and Practices, University of Bologna

*New Memories, New Identities, 3rd ZoneModa Design Competition*

(Design Cultures, International master's degree in Fashion Studies, University of Bologna)

Projects by: Veronika Anikanova, Aina Bovet, Eleonora Cortesi, Natsumi Endo, Linda Galota, Fatemeh Ghanbarzadeh, Madhuri Mallesh, Anna Matteucci, Margherita Nicolò, Raavi Prabhukumar, Filippo Ricci, Pegah Sobhi, Bei Ye

*Valorization of Fashion Archives*

(Valorization of Fashion Archives, degree in Fashion Cultures and Practices, University of Bologna)

Projects by: Eleonora Castellari, Lorenzo Traversini, Federico Agostino e Bianca Gori, Filippo Iarocci

At this moment when fashion must be increasingly sustainable, inclusive, and culturally sensitive, the aim is to look forward to future exhibitions to give space and voice to the reflections and practices of future students. They, as young professionals, can provide a fresh and innovative perspective on addressing the challenges of tomorrow.



Figure 1: Installation view of the exhibition in Università di Bologna – Campus di Rimini. © Photos Irene Calvi





Figure 2: Installation view of the exhibition in Università di Bologna – Campus di Rimini. © Photos Irene Calvi



Figure 3: Installation view of the exhibition in Università di Bologna – Campus di Rimini. © Photos Irene Calvi