



LEATHER
LACE &
LUSTER

JULY 23
THROUGH
JAN. 25

GROUP EXHIBITION

“The black dress for me is an enigma — you could create anything within its concept. With a black dress, every woman can be a stylist, a designer, each time constructing something new and unique around the elegant abstraction that is a black dress.”¹



Installation view, *Leather, Lace, & Luster*, SCAD Museum of Art, 2019. Center: **Ulyana Sergeenko**, *Long dress with peplum*, embroidered lace, Fall/Winter Haute Couture 2012. SCAD Museum of Art Permanent Collection, gift of Ulyana Sergeenko, Paris, France. Balenciaga-inspired fascinator designed by SCAD alumna **April Rivers** (B.F.A., fibers, 2011).



Fashion's fascination with black extends back to at least the 16th century, where the color first became associated with stylish sophistication.²

One clue to its enduring appeal is revealed through the lens of physics. Black objects absorb all light, reflecting none in return. In many ways, black has always been everything and nothing — the very definition of cool assertiveness — signaling an attitude that is simultaneously commanding and at ease.

Francisco Costa for Calvin Klein, *Sleeveless dinner dress*, laser-cut wool mesh and glass beads, Fall 2012. SCAD Museum of Art Permanent Collection, gift of Calvin Klein, New York, New York.

Alike in refined black, these evening dresses are each the work of a different designer. Note the range of silhouettes represented and begin a visual study. Observe designer decisions regarding neckline, waistline, hemline, and their relative fit or fullness. How do these choices combine to affect a garment's overall proportions?

Expand your analysis beyond shape to include line and texture. How are they used and to what effect? For instance, do these separate elements create movement, emphasis, balance, variety, rhythm, or unity?

Finally, observe nuances within the color black. Since it absorbs all light, black contains all colors and is capable of amazing depths. How many distinct shades of black can you discern? How is their appearance influenced by texture and reflection? Discuss your findings with friends — for instance, determine the darkest and lightest values. What names would you give to these shades?

Mimi Plange, *Long-sleeved knee-length dress*, lambskin leather and spangles, Fall/Winter 2011. SCAD Museum of Art Permanent Collection, gift of Mimi Plange, New York, New York.



CITATIONS

¹Ulyana Sergeenko in Talley, A. L. (2013). *Little Black Dress*. New York: Rizzoli International (US).

²Bain, M. (2018, February 04). Only black is the new black: A cultural history of fashion's favorite shade. Retrieved from qz.com/quartz/1194798/only-black-is-the-new-black-a-cultural-history-of-fashion-favorite-shade.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS - 6th through 12th grade

Responding 8.1

Anchor: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

6: Interpret art by distinguishing between relevant and non-relevant contextual information and analyzing subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

7: Interpret art by analyzing art-making approaches, the characteristics of form and structure, relevant contextual information, subject matter, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

8: Interpret art by analyzing how the interaction of subject matter, characteristics of form and structure, use of media, art-making approaches, and relevant contextual information contributes to understanding messages or ideas and mood conveyed.

HSI: Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts.

HSII: Identify types of contextual information useful in the process of constructing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works.

HSIII: Analyze differing interpretations of an artwork or collection of works in order to select and defend a plausible critical analysis.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6-8.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-12.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.



Oscar de la Renta, *Robe de style*, tulle and silk taffeta, Fall/Winter 2012. SCAD Museum of Art Permanent Collection, gift of Oscar de la Renta, New York, New York.

ABOUT THE ARTIST AND THE EXHIBITION

Throughout history, black clothing has come to symbolize everything from wealth to bereavement to teenage angst. Today, dressing in all black can be less about making a statement than merely making life more practical. However, the absence of color doesn't necessarily correspond to simplistic, lackluster designs. In this installation of black evening wear from the SCAD Permanent Collection, drama and interest come from the expert choice of materials: the slickness of latex, the dimension achieved by layers of tulle, or the play of light and shadow inherent in lace or laser-cut mesh.

By utilizing weave structures, embellishments, and finishings, the designers featured here — Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel Haute Couture, Diane von Furstenberg with her famous wrap dress, and Oscar de la Renta, among others — are able to create a dynamic, varied palette out of a single color. Many of the garments in the collection have been generously donated by friends of the university, from fashion designers of international acclaim to philanthropists who have set the standard for style. Studied and admired by SCAD students and museum visitors alike, the SCAD Permanent Collection is exceptional in terms of its sartorial sophistication, elegance, and fashion-forward style.

ABOUT SCAD AND SCAD MUSEUM OF ART

Offering more degree programs and specializations than any other art and design university, SCAD is uniquely qualified to prepare talented students for creative professions. The SCAD Museum of Art, a resource for SCAD students and alumni during their academic careers and beyond, features emerging and established international artists through commissioned works and rotating exhibitions, and involves local communities with special initiatives of international scope.

SCAD Museum of Art educational materials engage K-12 audiences in activities that enhance understanding of art and design — investigations that reveal relevant personal, historical, and cultural connections while promoting cross-disciplinary links necessary for today's innovative careers.

For more information, visit scad.edu and scadmoa.org.

SCAD: The University for Creative Careers

The Savannah College of Art and Design is a private, nonprofit, accredited university, offering more than 100 academic degree programs in more than 40 majors across its locations in Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia; Hong Kong; Lacoste, France; and online via SCAD eLearning.

For more information, visit scad.edu.

Cover image: **Oscar de la Renta**, *Robe de style*, tulle and silk taffeta dress, Fall/Winter 2012. SCAD Permanent Collection, gift of Oscar de la Renta, New York, New York.



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