UNDRESSING
FASHION METADATA

RYERSON UNIVERSITY FASHION RESEARCH COLLECTION

NAOMI EICHENLAUB
RYERSON UNIVERSITY, CANADA
NEICHENL@RYERSON.CA

MARINA MORGAN
RYERSON UNIVERSITY, CANADA
MARINA.MORGAN@RYERSON.CA

INGRID MASAK-MIDA
RYERSON UNIVERSITY, CANADA
INGRID.MASAKMIDA@RYERSON.CA

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this poster is to provide insight into the processes involved in making a unique fashion research and teaching collection discoverable in an online environment at Ryerson University. The online collection will provide a means for the users to identify what artifacts are available for research purposes and facilitate teaching in the classroom. The poster will highlight effective metadata standards and elements, cross-domain metadata uses, metadata mapping and implementation.

KEY GOALS

The key goals of this online collection are to promote research, teaching and learning at Ryerson University, and to connect with a broader community by building scholarly, online exhibitions. Once finalized, it will be used as a pedagogical tool and it will inspire fashion students and scholars to undertake research into fashion history.

Cream satin wedding slippers, c.1889–1890. FRC1987.04.001A+B

Close up of beading on Lanvin wedding veil, FRC2013.99.004

ABOUT THE COLLECTION

It consists of several thousand donated garments and accessories, designer clothing and millinery donated from private collections dating back to the latter part of the nineteenth century and early 20th century. The collection was housed in unfavourable conditions in a locked room in the library for many years and was relatively unknown to students. It was recently relocated to a series of rooms in the School of Fashion building. The collection is now in the process of being curated by its collection coordinator, who received a grant to digitize a portion of the collection in 2012. Currently, only very limited amount of information is available about the Ryerson Fashion Research Collection through a blog and a Pinterest site.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

1. Will provide a venue for a greater expanse of fashion online exhibits, a pedagogical tool that will allow Ryerson students to learn and research, to foster students' interaction and participation, and to explore a rich yet previously inaccessible fashion collection at Ryerson University.

2. Will allow us to build on and implement future specific collections, to foster a connetion between external and internal users, to promote and improve online access that would add value to the existing colletion.
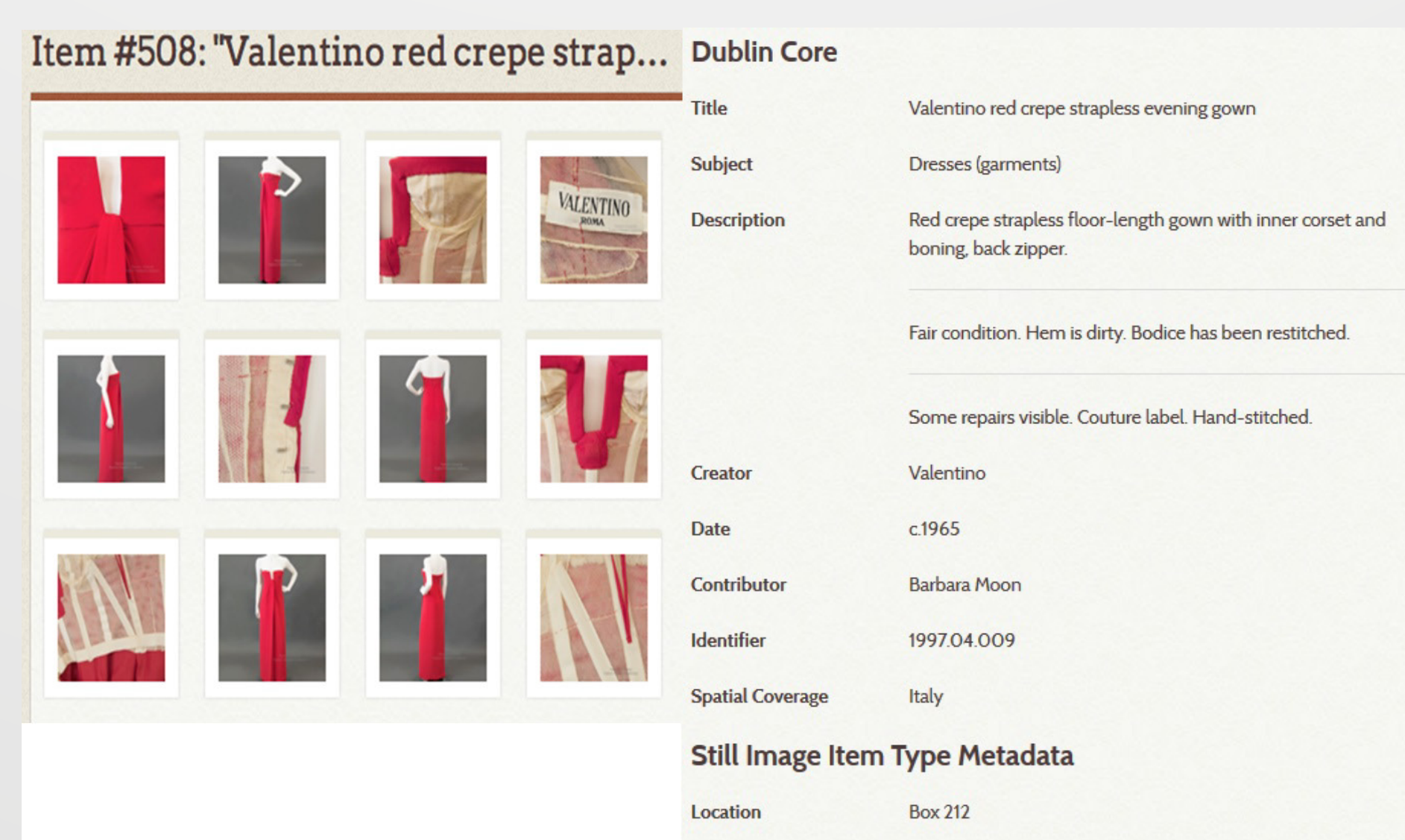
3. Digital access will preserve the valuable collection, but at the same time will allow researchers, students, and the public to have "visual access to an entire collection without needlessly disturbing the garments and their accessories".

METADATA IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES

· Three-dimensional nature of fashion artifacts
· Assessing various feature sets of different systems
· Import and export functionality of specific standard data formats
· Metadata element selection and metadata mapping / highlighting the benefits of certain metadata elements
· Match image loading
· Discoverability of collection

	METADATA STANDARD	CUSTOMIZABLE	ONE TO MANY RELATIONSHIP	OAI-PMH	COST
ATOM	VARIOUS	NO	NO	YES	FREE
SHAREDSHELF (ARTstor)	VRA CORE	YES	NO	YES	SUBSCRIPTION
OMEKA	DUBLIN CORE; VRA	YES	YES	YES	FREE

Item #508: "Valentino red crepe strap...

Dublin Core

Title	Valentino red crepe strapless evening gown
Subject	Dresses (garments)
Description	Red crepe strapless floor-length gown with inner corset and boning, back zipper.
	Fair condition. Hem is dirty. Bodice has been restitched.
	Some repairs visible. Couture label. Hand-stitched.
Creator	Valentino
Date	c.1965
Contributor	Barbara Moon
Identifier	199704.009
Spatial Coverage	Italy

Still Image Item Type Metadata

Location	Box 212

SEARCH STRATEGY

Primary search terms would be for a particular type of garment (corset, dress, coat, hat), period (1920s, 1950s, 1960s), designer (Balenciaga, Dior, Balmain), construction type (bias cut, inset sleeves), colour (yellow, orange, red), or textile (silk, linen, cotton).

This possible usage pattern directly influenced the item description and metadata elements. What fits the faculty curricula vs. what fits the interest of the student or researcher directly impacted those choices.

Strapless red wool crepe evening gown Spring/Summer 1965, VALENTINO Roma FRC1997.04.009

NEXT STEPS

· Fine-tune metadata (subject and tags)
· Develop front-facing Omeka site
· Make collections public and launch site
· Plan for future content uploads including additional items currently held in Ryerson Fashion Research Collection as well as future acquisitions.

CONCLUSION

This project met its overarching goals of increasing access and discoverability to a unique collection of mixed-provenance but mostly Canadian fashion items. Furthermore, the collaboration between the School of Fashion and Ryerson University Library and Archives allowed for subject matter experts in fashion, cataloguing and metadata standards to collaborate on a project that will provide community members and the public-alike with access to a tool for research, teaching, and learning.