**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 unfavorable 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.

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**RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE**

**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.

**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

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**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.

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**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.

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**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-access with access to a tool for research, teaching, and learning.