

# WESTMINSTER MENSWEAR ARCHIVE

2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024



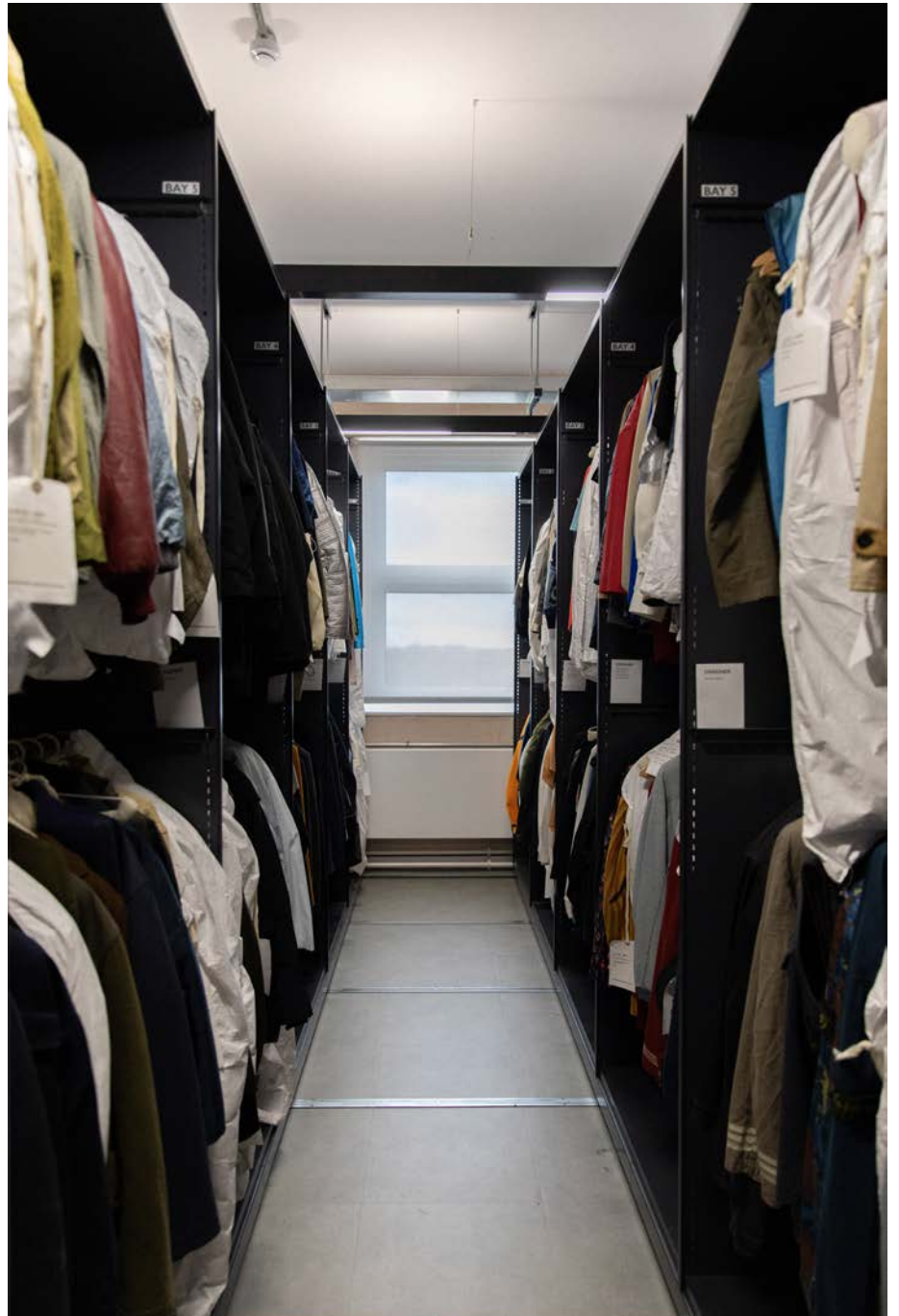
## ANNUAL REVIEW 2023/24

UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTMINSTER

- Pull knees up to chest.
- Grip fingertips over shoulders.
- Place hands securely in shoulder pockets.
- Fasten hood shut.

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# FOREWORD



Photo: Giovanni Benvenuto

The 2023/24 academic year has been a remarkable period of growth and achievement for the Westminster Menswear Archive (WMA), marked by an unprecedented number of external exhibitions featuring items from our collection.

One of the highlights was the launch of our exhibition, *Umbro 100: Sportswear x Fashion*, in April. This exhibition was the culmination of a five-year project aimed at acquiring examples of sportswear produced by the British company Umbro, founded in 1924. We successfully acquired over 240 examples of the company's output ranging from a 1936 football shirt to a collaboration with the streetwear brand Aries in 2024.

The project not only resulted in a significant exhibition and a 200-page catalogue but also established a substantial new collection of sportswear. This collection offers researchers valuable insights into the evolution and adoption of sportswear as everyday dress over the past century.

The WMA is also renowned for its extensive collection of garments by the Italian designer Massimo Osti, including his work for brands such as Stone Island, C.P. Company, and Left Hand. This year saw the fruition of a project that we embarked on back in 2022, to document the development of the Massimo Osti Studio, a new brand launched by Massimo's son, Lorenzo Osti. As part of this initiative, the WMA committed to accession a sample of each garment produced in the brand's first year, despite the fact that none of the garments had been designed or prototyped

at the time. This approach represents a radical departure from traditional curatorial practices, allowing students and researchers immediate access to some of the latest developments in menswear. We are grateful to Lorenzo Osti and the company for their generous donation and ongoing support of the WMA's educational mission.

In addition to our own exhibitions, the WMA has supported several other institutions by loaning menswear items for inclusion in their displays. In some cases, we collaborated closely with curators to acquire specific works, which are now part of the WMA's permanent collection. Notable contributions include a man's smock dress by Gucci and a patchwork plaid windbreaker by Palm Angels, which both featured in the *Tartan* exhibition staged by the V&A Dundee.

The WMA also played a pivotal role in supporting the MA Menswear course at the University of Westminster through a tailoring project in partnership with Alexander McQueen. Our substantial and growing collection of McQueen's early menswear from 1996-2000 provided students with invaluable resources to study Lee McQueen's approach to cutting, which was informed by his Savile Row training.

Our AHRC-funded network, *Locating Menswear*, concluded with a two-day forum in Manchester and Liverpool. This event brought together academics, industry partners, and the public to examine how the cultural and industrial links between these cities have shaped the production, display, and consumption of British menswear.

Finally, this year saw the publication of our book, *Inside the Westminster Menswear Archive*, published by Bloomsbury. It showcases over 140 key garments from our collection, photographed in close-up detail and annotated with curator commentary. It is designed to provide students and researchers who cannot visit the archive with access to a wide range of objects from our collection. This publication was made possible by our ongoing digitisation of the collection, which in the future will be supported Research England as part of the Higher Education Museums, Galleries, and Collections Fund. This financial support will enable the WMA to enhance our digital systems and engagement, thereby improving access to the collection and better serving the wider research community.

Andrew Groves,  
Director, Westminster Menswear Archive



Tartan Smock Shirt Dress, Gucci, 2020

# WMA IN NUMBERS

503 enquiries received

514 in-person visitors to the archive

2,035 attendees for teaching sessions and talks

28 garments loaned to exhibitions in the UK and internationally

169,032 visitors to exhibitions featuring WMA garments

7,136 followers on Instagram

9,312 unique visitors to our website

6 publications to which WMA curators contributed

512,000 estimated views of press coverage





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EMPORIUM  
LTD.  
GLASGOW

**FAST DYE**  
**UMBRO**  
REGD NO 5230A1  
GUARANTEED  
BRITISH MADE

St Vincent Boys Guild Football Shirt, Umbro, 1938



# UMBRO 100: SPORTSWEAR X FASHION

Ambika P3

11- 28 April 2024

2752 visitors

Marking the British sportswear company's centenary, Umbro 100 investigated the relationship between sportswear and fashion, and how this relationship has evolved. It featured over 120 examples of Umbro garments drawn exclusively from the Westminster Menswear Archive, following a five-year collection programme.

Designers featured in the exhibition include Kim Jones, Aitor Throup, Aries, Palace, Paul Smith, Vetements, Supreme, Bikkembergs, Eliminator, Philip Treacy, Slam Jam, Factory Records, FORSOMEONE, Peter Saville, Patta, Off-White, John Smedley, Nigel Cabourn, Christopher Raeburn, Rowing Blazers, NOWHERE FC, Gio Goi, Hanon, House of Holland, KANGHYUK, New Order, Numerals, Sweet Sktbs, R. Newbold, Pretty Green, and N.HOOLYWOOD.



Above: Umbro 100, Replica section . Below: Umbro 100 Timeline 20022 - 2024



# EXHIBITION LOANS



Tartan Bondage trousers, BOY, 1987

# TARTAN

V&A Museum, Dundee

1 April 2023– 14 January 2024

96,784 visitors

Tartan was the first major exhibition in Scotland in thirty years to focus solely on the iconic textile and pattern, with more than 300 objects illustrating tartan's universal and enduring appeal with examples of fashion, architecture, graphic and product design, photography, furniture, glass and ceramics, film, performance, and art.

The exhibition included several garments from the Westminster Menswear Archive, such as a CC41 tartan sweatshirt, a 1980s kilt by Boy London, and a tartan print jacket from Palm Angels. Additionally, we contributed two outfits from our Westminster alumni collection: a deconstructed trench coat by Priya Ahluwalia, an MA Menswear alumnus, and a recent acquisition by Owen Edward Snaith, a BA Fashion Design graduate from 2022.



Fisherfolk ensemble, Owen Snaith, 2023



Deconstructed trench coat, Priya Ahluwalia, 2018

# WORKWEAR

Nieuwe Instituut, Rotterdam.

25 March – 9 September 2023

27,131 visitors

Curated by Eldina Begic, *Workwear* examined the distinct appeal of workwear through its design language, durability, and symbolic significance. It emphasized the historical, functional, and cultural impact of clothing originally intended for labourers, which has since permeated mainstream fashion and continues to inspire designers globally.

The exhibition showcased a variety of garments from the Westminster Menswear Archive, including both original industrial apparel and its reinterpretations by contemporary designers. Featured items included an industrial beekeeper's suit and a jacket by C.P. Company, known as the 'Beekeeper' due to its large mesh hood that echoes that worn by an apiarist.

Other notable pieces on display included a butcher's chainmail apron, a diver's immersion suit, a Japanese firefighter's jacket, and the archive's iconic firefighter proximity suit and helmet.



Chainmail Butchers Apron, 1970



Firefighters Proximity Suit, Globe, 2010



1. Костюм защитный  
 близкого действия, 2010  
 с защитными свойствами  
 для защиты от ИИЗ  
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Firefighters Proximity Suit, Globe, 2010



Brocade Tassled Jacket, Irvine Sellars, 1967

# FASHION CITY

**How Jewish Londoners Shaped Global Style**  
**Museum of London, Docklands, London**  
**13 October 2023 – 7 July 2024**  
**Visitors 42,365**

While Jewish people have long been associated with making clothes, the full extent of the contributions they made to London's growing reputation as a global fashion capital and the democratisation of fashion through the development of ready-to-wear clothes in the 20th century have been widely forgotten. Spanning all sectors of the fashion industry – from homeworking to haute couture, the exhibition uncovered the major contribution of Jewish designers in making London an iconic fashion city.

The exhibition presented a diverse selection of items from the Westminster Menswear Archive, including a notable gold kaftan by Mr Fish and a brocaded jacket with tassels by Irvine Sellars. Additionally, it showcased an array of shirts, ties, jackets, and capes from the archive from prominent Carnaby Street boutiques of the 1960s, such as I Was Lord Kitchener's Valet, Mr Fish, Irvine Sellars, and Sportive Male by Paul.

Many of these items from the WMA were also featured in the accompanying book published by Bloomsbury.



Gold Kaftan, Mr Fish, 1970

Left: Shirt with Gold Trim, I Was Lord Kitchener's Valet, 1967. Right: Cape, Sportive Male by Paul Cape, 1967



# RESEARCH



Prototype, Massimo Osti Studio, 2023



# MASSIMO OSTI STUDIO

In 2023 the Westminster Menswear Archive partnered with the Massimo Osti Studio in Italy, providing both historical and contemporary contextual research to support the launch of their new brand in Paris in January 2024.

Recognised as one of the most influential menswear designers of the 20th century, Massimo Osti (1944-2005) launched numerous brands including Stone Island, C.P. Company, Boneville, and Left Hand. Through his multiple innovative methodologies, Osti reimagined the industrialised processes developed in 20th-century Italy for the mass production and construction of clothing, integrating the technological machine with the human hand.

Robert Newman, the Head of Design at Massimo Osti Studio, is an alumnus of the MA Menswear course at the University of Westminster and was one of the first students to use the archive in 2016. As part of our partnership with the Massimo Osti Studio, a sample of each garment produced in the brand's first year will be donated to the Westminster Menswear Archive.



Alcantara Parka, Massimo Osti Studio, 2024



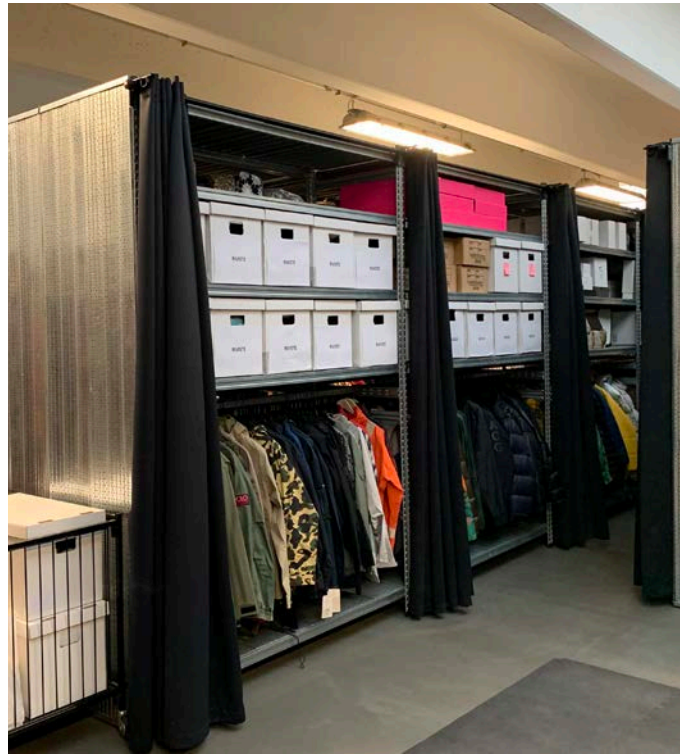
Massimo Osti Studio Installation, Paris Menswear Week, 2024

# LOCATING MENSWEAR

Locating Menswear is an international network investigating the cultural and industrial links between London, Liverpool, Manchester, and Milan, Italy, and their impact on British menswear. Led by Professor Andrew Groves, Director of the Westminster Menswear Archive and Jo Jenkinson from Manchester Metropolitan University, this AHRC-funded initiative ran from October 2022 to July 2024.

The network hosted a series of workshops that brought together curators, designers, retailers, and fashion industry professionals to explore the connections between local (Liverpool and Manchester), national (London), and international (Milan) menswear industries.

The culmination of this research was a two-day forum held on 4-5 July 2024 in Manchester and Liverpool. This final event, supported by industry partners C.P. Company and Sevenstore and academic partners Liverpool John Moores University and Manchester Metropolitan University, focused on the dynamic interplay between these key menswear hubs.



Slam Jam Archive, Ferrara, Italy, 2023



C.P. Company Archive, Italy, 2023





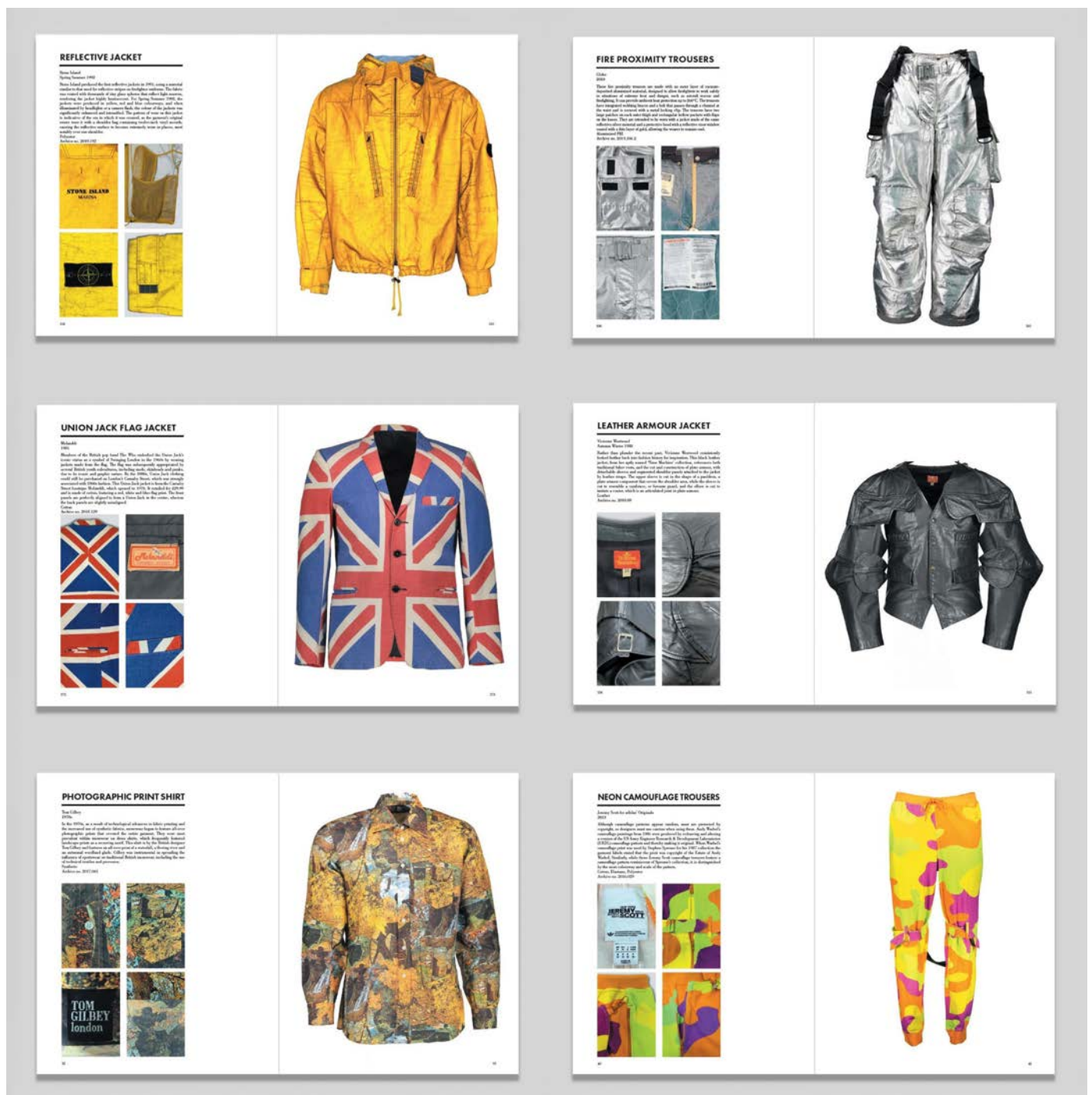
# INSIDE THE WESTMINSTER MENSWEAR ARCHIVE

Andrew Groves and Danielle Sprecher

Inside the Westminster Menswear Archive, released by Bloomsbury, provides an in-depth examination of the role that garment archives play as essential resources for designers. This scholarly guide explores how such archives enable designers to research and analyse both historical garments and contemporary works by their peers.

The book analyses over 140 garments from the Westminster Menswear Archive, which spans the last 275 years. Each piece is presented with high-resolution close-up photography and detailed curator annotations, offering valuable insights intended to inspire future generations of designers.

Designers and brands featured include A-COLD-WALL\*, Ahluwalia, Aitor Throup Studio, Alexander McQueen, Belstaff, Burberry, Casely-Hayford, C.P. Company, Carol Christian Poell, Comme des Garçons, Craig Green, Dior Men, Fred Perry, Helmut Lang, Jean Paul Gaultier,, Louis Vuitton, Martine Rose, Meadham Kirchhoff, Nigel Cabourn, Paul Smith, Prada, Stone Island, Umbro, Undercover, Vexed Generation, and Vollebak.



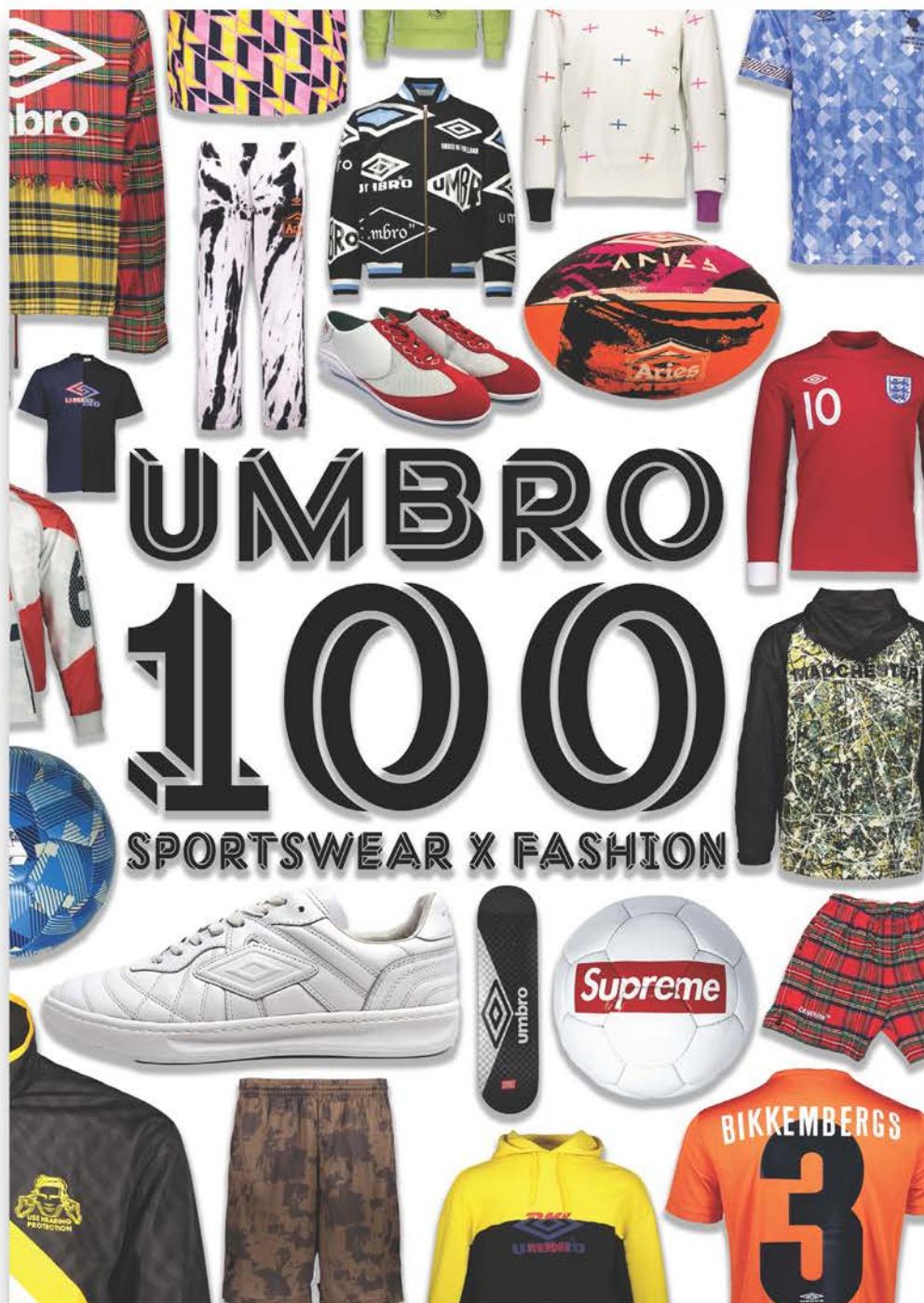
# UMBRO 100: SPORTSWEAR X FASHION

Andrew Groves and Danielle Sprecher

To coincide with the exhibition Umbro 100: Sportswear x Fashion, a comprehensive 200-page catalogue was published in April 2024. The catalogue documented all 118 garments featured in the exhibition organized into five distinct sections: Manchester, England, Tailored, Replica, and Diamond. Each garment is meticulously photographed using our advanced StyleShoots technology and accompanied by a detailed description.

Additionally, the catalogue includes two fully illustrated timelines—spanning 1924-2002 and 2002-2024—that trace the evolution of sportswear from a functional garment to a fashion statement. These timelines highlight the influence of collaborations with British designers such as Kim Jones, Paul Smith, Aitor Throup, and Palace, which have contributed to Umbro's repositioning of sportswear as a global standard of dress.

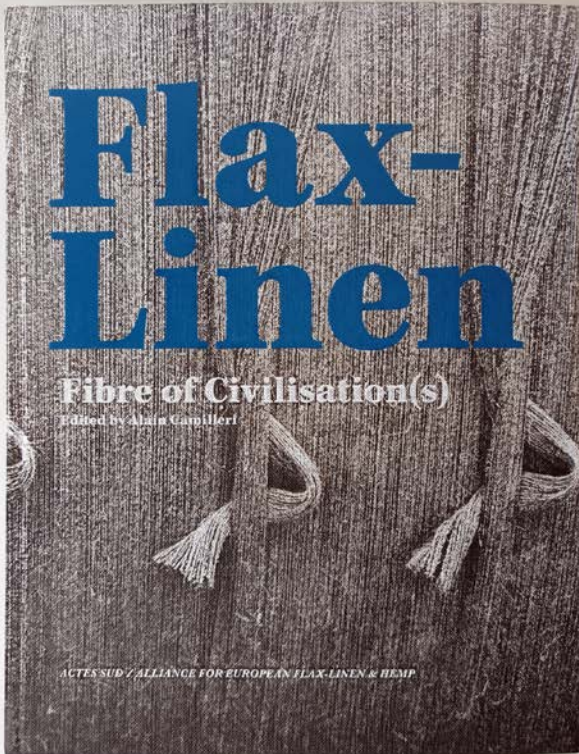
In addition, the catalogue presents a selection of Umbro sportswear from 1936 to the present, covering a range of sports including rowing, boxing, athletics, hockey, and basketball.





# FLAX-LINEN, FIBRE OF CIVILISATION(S)

Edited by Alain Camilleri



The Westminster Menswear Archive contributed a chapter on Linen in Menswear from 1800 – to the present day, with photographs illustrating a range of linen garments from the Archive.

Linen has been the underpinning of men's working dress and men's fashions, whether practical or industrial, summer or winter. Everything from the farmers' smock to the officer's tropical uniform, the sailor's blouse, and the tailored suit has been cut and constructed from linen. It's no surprise that linen has inspired generations of designers, given that archetypal workwear in all its forms is the foundation of contemporary men's fashion. Armani's soft tailoring, Carol Christian Poell's modern undergarments, and C.P. Company's Rubber Flax; all have been inspired and seduced by this most enduring of fibres and cloth.





# ACQUISITIONS



Alcantara Pant, Massimo Osti Studio, 2024

# ACQUISITIONS

During the 2023/24 academic year, the Westminster Menswear Archive substantially expanded its collection by approximately 10%, acquiring a total of 260 new garments. Of these, over 110 items were donated. Pictured here are a selection of those new acquisitions.



Illustrated shirt, Nothando Ngwawaira, 2023



Swimming Trunks, Vince Man's Shop, 1968



McDonalds Logo T-Shirt Palace, 2023



Double breasted coat, Oswald Boateng, 1996



Horlick Argyle Vest S.S. Daley, 2023



Nylon boxing shorts, Umbro, c1970



St Vincent Boys Guild Football Shirt, Umbro, 1938

# DONATIONS

Over 110 garments were donated to the Westminster Menswear Archive this year. Among these donations were several leather garments donated by Dunhill from their Spring/Summer 2019 collection; an Arc'teryx jacket and trousers donated by Sevenstore; a rare 1950s Teddy Tinling tennis shirt donated by Umbro and a collection of 20 menswear pieces donated by Dirk Bikkembergs spanning his career.

The archive also received several individual donations, which included 1930s rowing sportswear originally worn at the University of Oxford, a pair of 1960s velvet trousers by Male by Paul, and a selection of deadstock children's tailored garments from the 1890s.



Cable knit jumper, Dirk Bikkembergs, A/W1997



Leatherman ARC® Tool, Massimo Osti Studio, 2024



Modular down outer jacket, Seven Layer, 2020



Servants greatcoat, c.1910



Concours leather gilet, Dunhill, 2019



Harris Tweed tartan jacket, Vivienne Westwood c.1990

# TEACHING



Three-piece suit - Jacket, Alexander McQueen, 1998

# ALEXANDER MCQUEEN TAILORING PROJECT

This year's MA Menswear tailoring project was delivered in collaboration with the team from Alexander McQueen, offering students a unique opportunity to engage with archival fashion history. The project began with an in-depth research phase, where students examined early McQueen tailoring pieces housed in the Westminster Menswear Archive.

The focus was on Lee McQueen's use of Savile Row cutting techniques in his ready-to-wear collections from 1996 to 2000. These pivotal years in McQueen's career saw him blend the precision of Savile Row craftsmanship with his avant-garde approach to menswear. Students analysed the structure, materials, and cutting methods, exploring how traditional techniques were transformed into bold, modern interpretations. By studying this, they gained insight into the evolution of menswear and McQueen's lasting influence.

This research inspired the students' design development, culminating in tailored outcomes that were reviewed by the McQueen design team, providing invaluable feedback and enhancing their learning.



Black nylon jacket, Alexander McQueen, 1997



Medieval priest dress, Alexander McQueen, 1998

# VISITORS

In the 2023/24 academic year, the Westminster Menswear Archive recorded 372 visits from University of Westminster students, representing a 14% increase from the previous year. Additionally, there were 123 research visits from industry professionals, external students, academics, and other professionals.

The total number of attendees for teaching sessions, engagement activities, and talks reached 2,035. This includes group visits from the following universities:

- London College of Fashion
- New York University, London
- University of East London
- Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen
- Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- Fashion Retail Academy

Individual visits to the WMA were also made by a number of students from:

- Central St Martins
- University of the West of England
- Bath Spa University
- London College of Fashion
- Glasgow School of Art





# AWARDS

In March 2024, the Westminster Menswear Archive (WMA) was awarded funding from Research England as part of the Higher Education Museums, Galleries, and Collections Fund. The WMA will receive an annual allocation of £33,426 for the next five years, totalling £167,130, subject to government funding. This financial support will enable the WMA to enhance its digital systems, thereby improving access to its collections and better serving the wider research community beyond the institution itself. The award acknowledges the WMA's exceptional contributions to national and international research, innovative collections-based teaching and learning, digital engagement, and public programs.

The Higher Education Museums, Galleries, and Collections Fund is designed to support higher education museums, galleries, and collections, enabling them to meet the costs associated with serving the broader research community beyond their own institutions.

Also this year, the WMA was also awarded funding from the Pasold Research Fund to support research into the history of Umbro and its connections to Manchester.

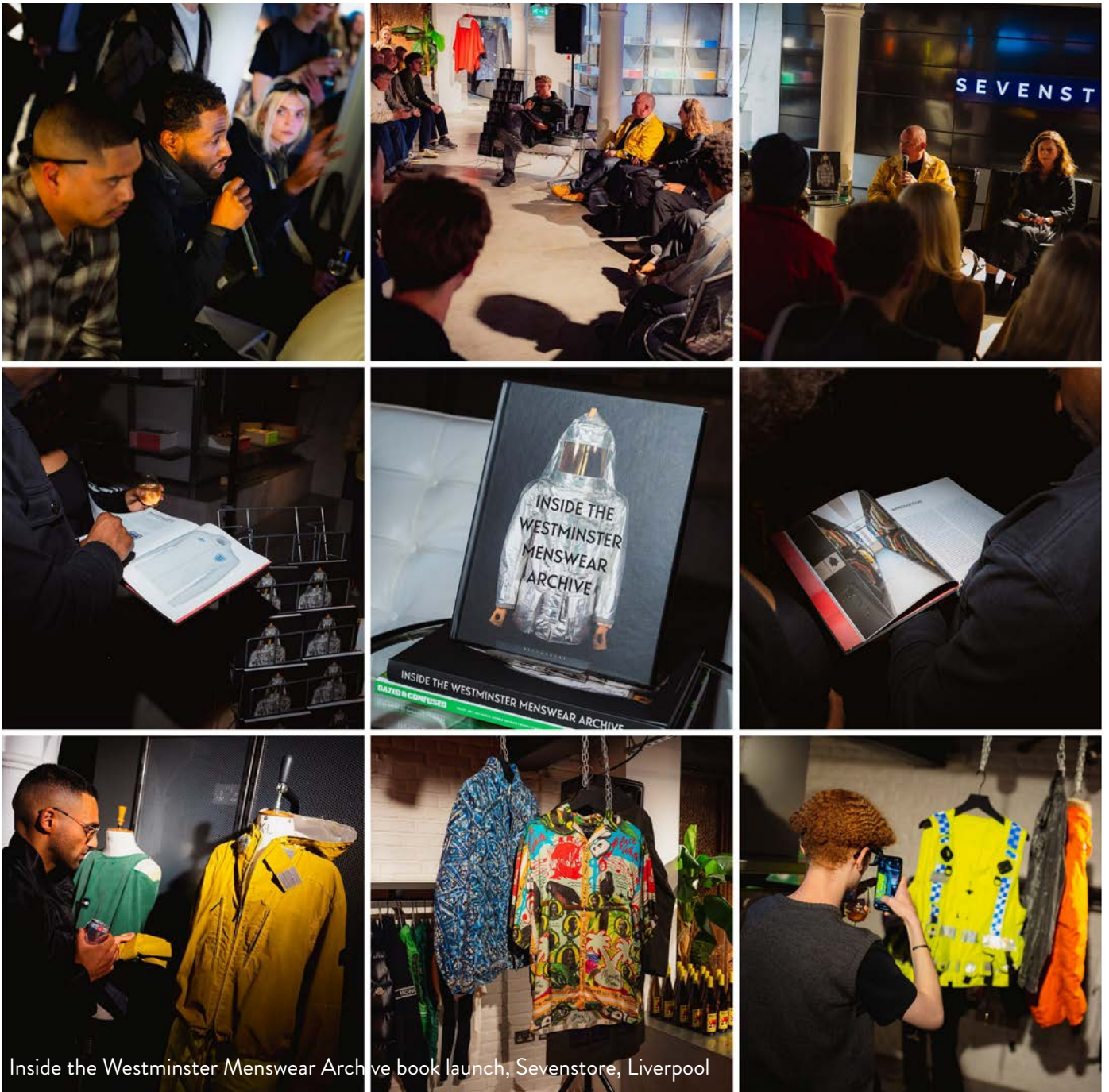


# ENGAGING OUR AUDIENCES

This year, the Director of the Westminster Menswear Archive was invited to deliver lectures at both the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge. At Oxford, the lecture focused on the archive's history and its development, providing insights into its significance within menswear. Meanwhile, at Cambridge, the presentation delved into the Archive's remarkable collection of military and fashion camouflage, offering a detailed exploration of this unique intersection of utility and style.

As part of the Umbro 100 exhibition, we hosted a celebratory party attended by Umbro representatives from around the globe. The exhibition also included a series of curated tours designed for a wide range of audiences, including students, sports enthusiasts, and museum professionals, showcasing the breadth of interest in the Archive and its collections.

Additionally, we publish our book, *Inside the Westminster Menswear Archive*. The book was launched at both Sevenstore in Liverpool and Waterstones, Piccadilly. Significantly, the Piccadilly location was once the home of the iconic menswear store Simpsons, which also features within in the book.





Umbro 100, launch party, Ambika P3



Inside the Westminster Menswear Archive book launch, Waterstones Piccadilly



2002 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

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