

# **A Digital Future for Fashion Archives: Digitizing Historic Dress Using 3d Visualization Tools**

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## **Abstract**

The digitization of historic objects through photography and text has enabled fashion archives to disseminate their collections to broad audiences. Though detailed and accessible, critical details like drape and fit are difficult to conceptualize without viewing garments in the round and in motion. This paper queries how digital re-creations of historic dress using 3D visualization software offer fashion archives innovative ways to enliven historic objects for their digital platforms, while tracing new inroads for object-based analysis. Existing research has investigated the use of 3D tools in virtual costume museums, yet scholarship on the use of 3D re-creations for digital fashion archives remains underdeveloped. Through the digital re-creation of two objects from Toronto Metropolitan University's Fashion Research Collection, this research examines engaging ways to display digitized dress and create immersive experiences for users with high levels of accuracy and detail using a methodology of reconstruction. Additionally, as the re-making of historic fashion and dress is recognized as an embodied and valid research approach, this paper considers the construction of 3D digital re-creations as a viable method of object-based analysis. Fashion archives are invaluable repositories of material culture and history. The research and digitization of their contents through engaging methods of re-creation is essential to advancing fashion history.

Keywords: Digital Fashion, Fashion History, Archives, 3D, Object-Based Analysis