KnoWear
[Peter Allen+Carla Ross Allen]

The New Adornment

The New Adornment was created as part of an invitation to provide provocations for the international biennale Experimenta Design (EXD '11) illustrating the topic Useless. KnoWear's contribution included the following short essay and image:

Adornment is useless, or so thought the Modernist who maintained that additions of ornamentation masked rather than embellished.

It was left on the sidelines as we committed to building grids of high-rises on our cities boulevards, erasing the curve of a line, arched ceilings, parquet floors with steel and glass and undressed white gypsum walls.

We should take a cue from the bodies that inhabit these spaces, tattooed men and women who use their body as a baroque canvas carving up sections of their skin to bare personal tableaus in contrast to the stark surroundings they inhabit.

I am told it is done for pleasure. We Modernist should take notice.

Bring back Adornment. You might find some use for it.

Skinthetic Redux

Skinthetic Redux is a photography series commissioned for the UK art book, Made In Code, to be published in 2011.

KnoWear was asked to create editorial inspired fashion photographs decorated with iconic brand identity typical of the Skinthetic series. At the author's request KnoWear used the Chanel quilt as the basis of the manipulation.

The photoshoot was a KnoWear production that included casting the model, styling the shots including the look for hair and makeup, taking the photographs, the 3D modeling of the quilt pattern as well as the final photo retouching. The end results of the daylong shoot were a series of 25 photos four of which are featured in the book.

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The Emperor's New Clothes

As the Emperor in the Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale 'The Emperor's New Clothes' is fooled into believing he is wearing the finest suit of clothes, the American public has been fooled into believing through the act of consumption, personal happiness and self worth can be obtained through material possessions.

Using the Hans Christian fairy tale as a metaphor to describe America's addiction to consumerism, the proposal 'The Emperor's New Clothes' objective is to create a multifaceted installation using three very distinctive components to arrive at an end result that will be viewed as a critique on the extent consumers will extend themselves to become surfaces, blank slates awaiting the arrival of the latest commercial fad. Specifically the proposal will use branding, logos, photography, and the world of fashion as the vehicle to examine this phenomenon. In much the way the Emperor in the Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale was fooled in to believing his naked body had been clothed in finery, this proposal intends to illustrate a hyper-vision of an American public stripped bare by consumption.

'The Emperor's New Clothes' has three components integral to the proposal. The proposal will focus on the prototyping and design of a line of skin based prosthetics with the addition of three-dimensional logos derived from high-end couture brands that will transform the female silhouette.

The second component will be a fashion advertising campaign featuring three-dimensional logo infused prosthetics. The prosthetics will be photographed on models and distributed through the means of an advertising campaign.

The third component will be a fashion show with models wearing the line of three-dimensional logo infused prosthetics ending climatically with a final model dressed in single prosthetic that will fully consume the model's body rendering the human form unrecognizable.

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BrandX

BrandX is a series of three-dimensional sculptures illustrating what a skin disease caused by brand addiction might look like.

KnoWear illustrates three scenarios of brand addiction with full size mannequins each one depicting an area of the body ravaged by disease created of logos.

The Three-Dimensional Sculptures are mannequins displayed as tall modern girls in languid editorial stances with big glamour poses. The mannequins are sculpted with logos growing out of the skin as depicted in the digital sketch to the right.

Fendi - Logo Scenario will focus on an area of the face and neck illustrating a rash of logos streaming from an expensive pair of designer sunglasses.

Louis Vuitton - Logo Scenario will focus on the arm with logos streaming from an expensive designer handbag.
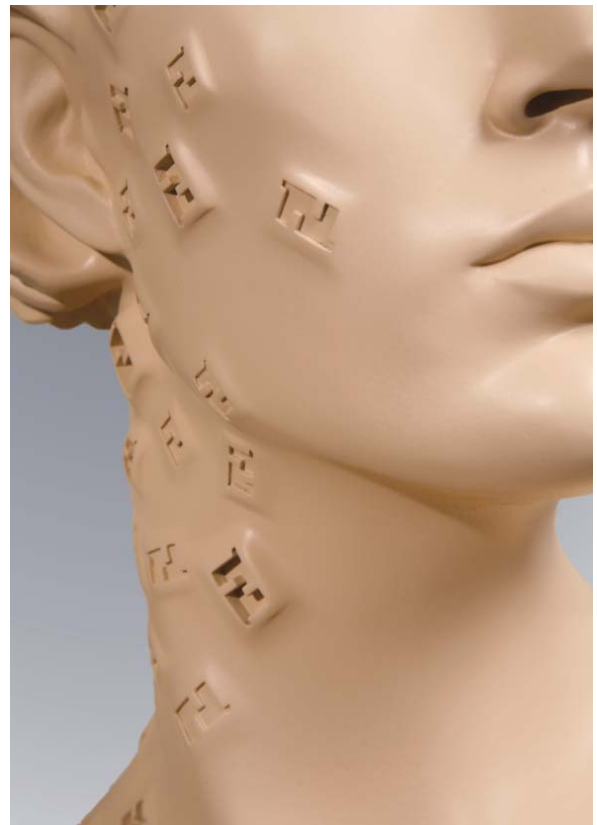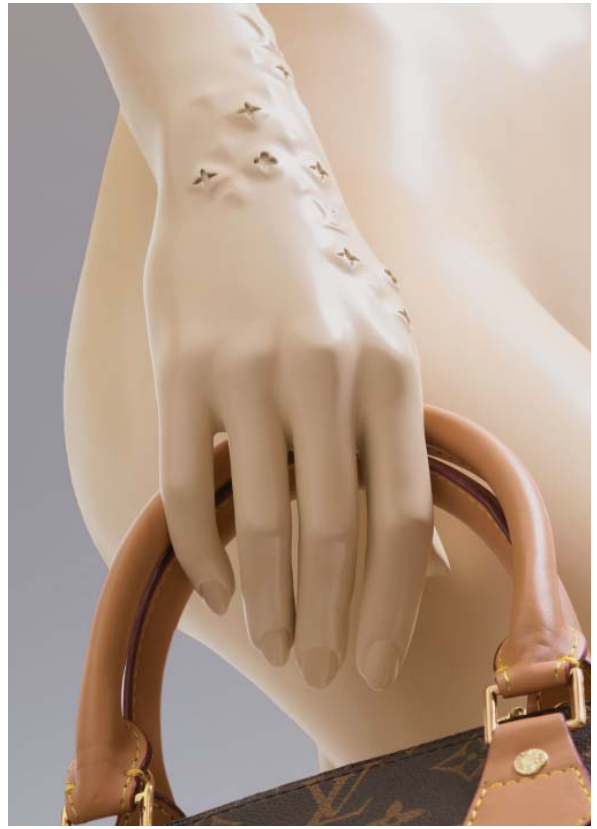
Gucci - Logo Scenario will focus on the foot, ankle, and calf with a rash of logos streaming from expensive couture stilettos (detail on right).

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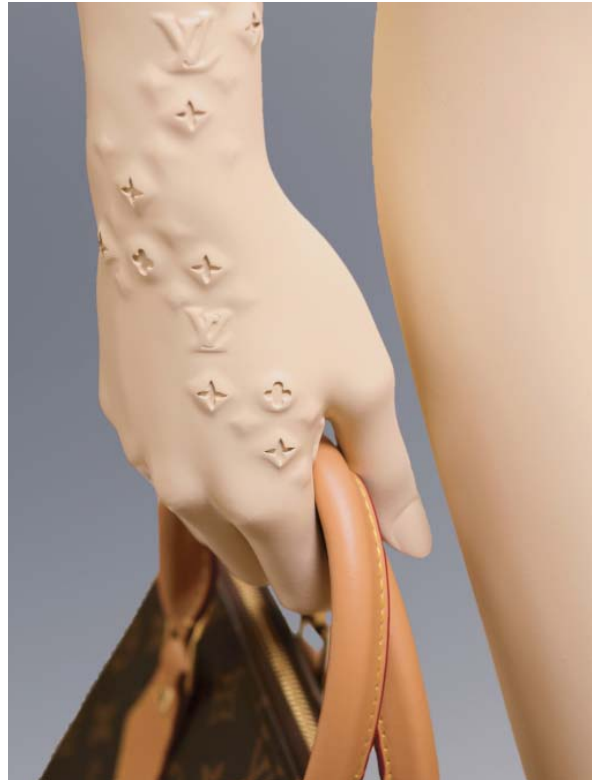
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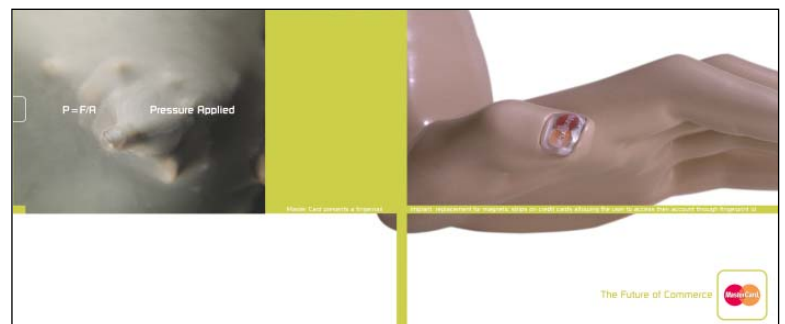
Skinthetic

Skinthetic is a series of design proposals suggesting how in the near future consumer branding will extend to the human body. Given that in the next twenty years as 'implant and explant' technology becomes more sophisticated and branding more intertwined into our commodity driven culture, labels and bodies will become one. Where in 2011 we as consumers put labels on our bodies through the act of clothing by 2021 consumers will be implanting designed body parts that are not only genetically coded but also will bare the signs and identities of the couture and product house which have created them.

Skinthetic uses three brands as case studies:

Chanel - using the iconic quilt motif and Chanel double 'C' logo, KnoWear introduces a scenario where instead of the Chanel brand and logo being integrated into clothing, Chanel would design a new body part each season to be finished with the classic iconic quilt pattern and accessorized with a three-dimensional Chanel logo tattoo.

Nike - the new way to be a step ahead of your competition. No longer is it about the technology in your shoe but the designer calf implant that will put you ahead of your game. KnoWear introduces a scenario where Nike will sponsor pro-athletes and embed their patented bladder technology into the athlete's calves in exchange the athlete would also have the Nike swoosh three-dimensional tattoo implanted to show the athlete's allegiance to the brand.

MasterCard - the ultimate in credit card use ease. KnoWear introduces a scenario where through biometric technology one would no longer have to carry a wallet with credit cards, instead the credit card would be planted into one's fingernail allowing the user with a swipe of a finger to shop till they drop.

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D.N.A.

D.N.A. stands for Digital Nomadic Apparel. D.N.A. is a garment with integrated nomadic technology such as a digital wireless communication device and digital wallet. The garment allows the user to shop and communicate without carrying such additional devices as a cell phone, Blackberry, or wallet. The scarf is programmed to recognize the owner's DNA, introducing a new tool to combat theft identity.

Garments created under the KnoWear label explore the idea that as technology gets smaller and more flexible it will migrate on to the body. KnoWear is interested in examining how garments of the future will take on new functions: not only will the protection aspect be far superior than garments of today, but physical exposure and protrusions will dictate the aesthetic of a line.

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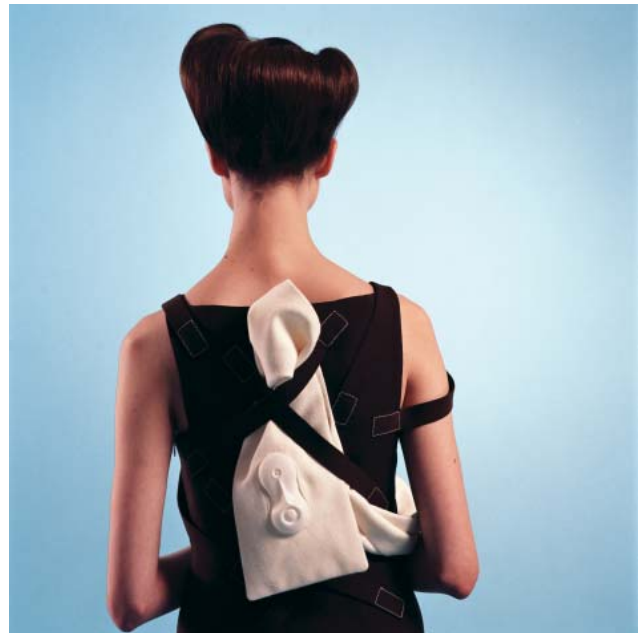
Aerial

Aerial is a personal media garment. Working with satellite radio technology, Aerial allows the user to create their own personal media space using the body as the point of conductivity. Aerial consists of three components; a receiver located in the lower front portion of the dress, a glove controller and soft speakers integrated into the hood. The hood can be used to create a private space for listening to music when the hood is zipped around the head and can be used as a broadcasting device when unzipped and worn on the back.

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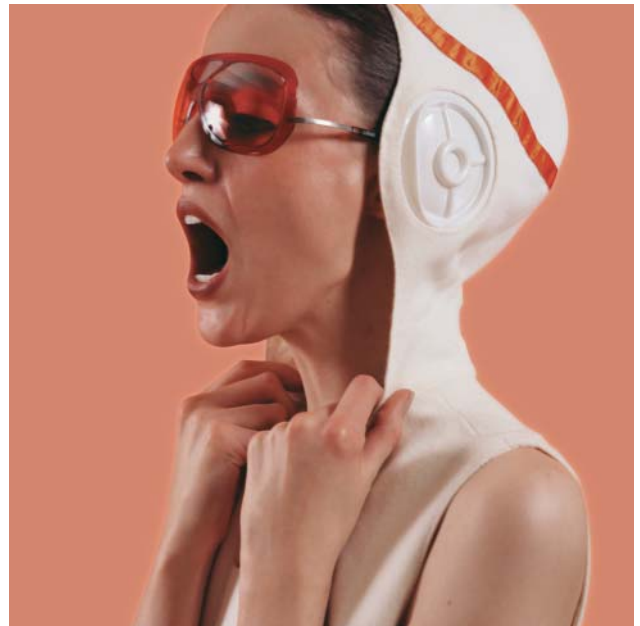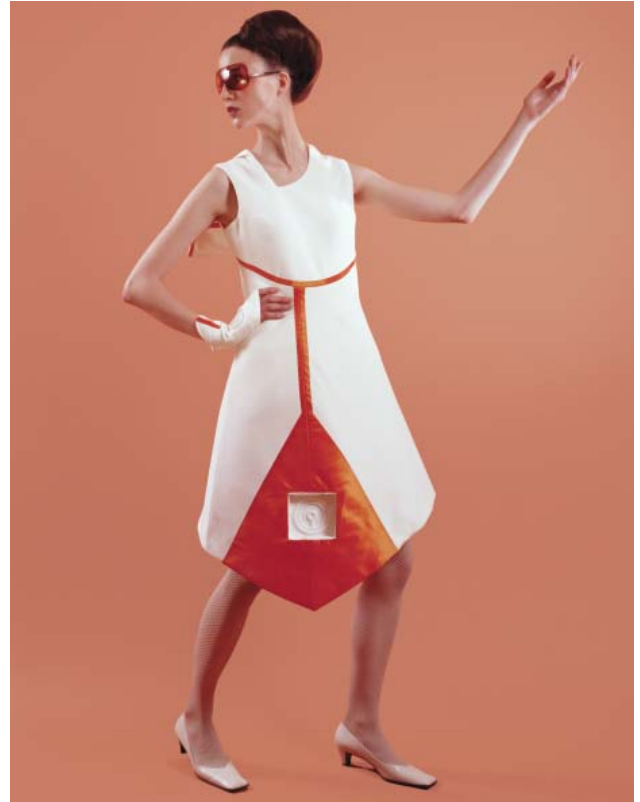
The Facade of the Synthetic

'The Facade of the Synthetic' (FTS), puts forward the concept that Post-Modern identity has changed from identifying with the human form as a natural organism to the idea that the human form has become a synthetic product.

To illustrate this idea KnoWear has created a prototype garment featuring graphic moving images in video form called 'Body Billboards', a series of classically inspired tattoos hybridized with every day product brand names and logos.

The 'Body Billboards' are small electronic areas of advertisements placed on the skin surface, formed to follow the contour of the human body. The digital tattoos use the skin as the canvas, while the garment has framed openings to allow viewing of the tattoos. FTS suggests that the next frontier of advertising will not be print; rather skin will be rented out for branding opportunities.

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TechnoLust

TechnoLust is a wireless, self-sufficient gaming suit, designed to allow the user play virtual dating games. Conceptually TechnoLust was conceived as a reaction to the advancement of handheld technologies such as smart phones and the necessary functions these objects perform in our daily lives. TechnoLust is the future of such communication technology by merging the softness of skin with the hard lines of consumer electronics. The design of the suit is deliberately erotic suggesting the replacement of erogenous zones with electronic ports thus bringing together a line between hardware and clothing.

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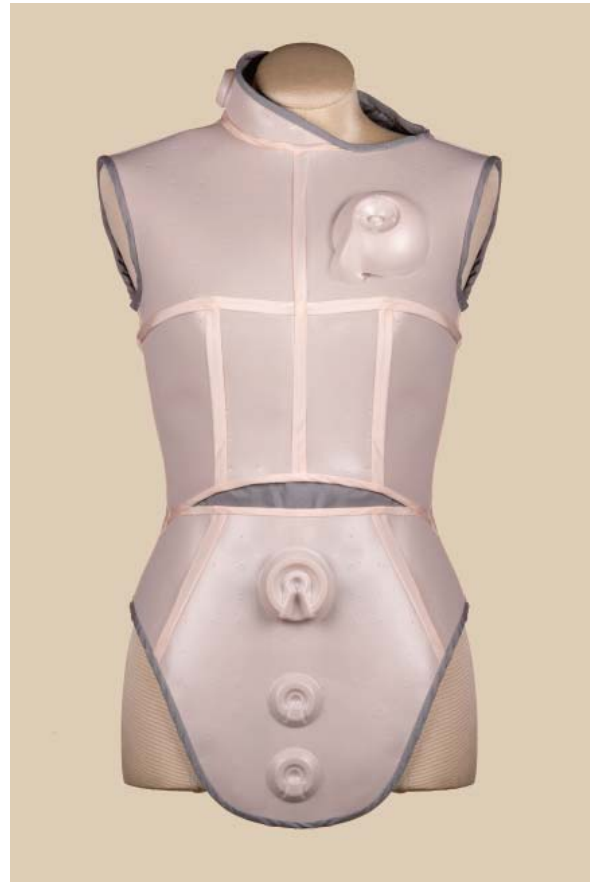
Ecofect

Given that the Earth's environment is in decline due to the effects of mass consumption, mass production, and mass disposal we as citizens of the world must think of new ways of consumption that give back to the Earth. EcoFect is a commerce system, which answers this dilemma by changing consumers buying habits at the point of purchase, through the use of visual reinforcements. EcoFect is an electronic card such as a credit, or money card that visually reconfigures itself at the point of purchase to remind consumers to buy goods that add to the sustainability of the Earth.

Using Smart Card Technology, the EcoFect card contains an animated planet Earth that changes depending on one's purchase. When a purchase is made which benefits the Earth, the planet animation will immediately begin to glow, if the purchase effects the decline of the Earth the image begins to fade and eventually disappear.

EcoFect commerce system works on two levels:

The first level is through store sponsorship, where each store that participates in the EcoFect Commerce Systems agrees to donate a certain percentage of their annual sales to a non-profit ecology based program.

The second level is by changing consumers buying habits at the point of purchase, through the use of visual reinforcements.

Digital Garden

'Walled gardens' in cybernetic terminology are environments on the Internet that controls the user's access to Web content and service. As a reaction to this restrictive control of the web KnoWear conceived the idea of a series of public gardens, a lush green respite, a communal place that visually demonstrates a free and democratic use of the Internet. Using the public WiFi nodes located in Lower Manhattan, KnoWear proposed to create a lush gardenscape planted with a combination of green grass and wet-location LED interactive panels. The panels would be outfitted with a digital protocol that captures and displays graphically interpreted snippets of wireless communication transmitted from said WiFi Networks.

An example of how the interaction between the public WiFi nodes and the Digital Garden is as follows: a protocol would be set up to react to such words as 'WE' and 'US'. The protocol would send a message to the LED Panels that would trigger an animation of flowers growing which in turn would be displayed on the LED panels. Other words included in the protocol would trigger more animations, rendering a random number of images.

Digital Garden would be realized with sitting height aluminum structures that would contain grass and vertically standing LED Panels. The panels will appear to be growing out of the grass. KnoWear proposed to work with community garden groups to maintain the grass during the installation.

Digital Garden was proposed as part of the LMCC Social Sculpture Commission.
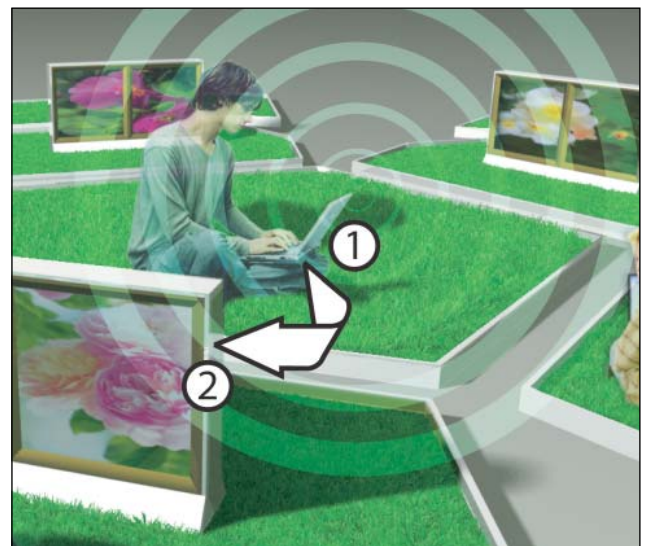
1. Wi-Fi transmits information from wireless communication device.

2. Antennas located on LED Panels pick-up information and convert data to moving images.