

Stories
of the World



ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Call for Papers for
**The World
at Your Feet**
Footwear Conference



NORTHAMPTON MUSEUMS
& ART GALLERY
history arts shoes



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHAMPTON



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

'The University of Northampton and Northampton Museum and Art Gallery supported by Northampton Borough Council invite you to submit papers for a World Footwear conference at the University of Northampton. This builds on the successful sneaker symposium developed by the museum in 2011.

The mission

Encourage debate and discussion about the design and making of footwear from across the world.

The conference will celebrate the World Footwear collection held by Northampton Museums and Art Gallery. This unique collection consists of over 1000 pairs of shoes from across the world from all continents. Shoes are essentially complex objects that bridge both a functional and cultural role. Although the human foot has remained unchanged for thousands of years, shoes have shown incredible diversity. It is in these differences that some of the most interesting aspects of culture are revealed.

A shoe is influenced of course by terrain, climate and available materials, but also by cultural aesthetics, religion, cultural status and practise, gender, trade and conquest.

Many of today's current shoe designers are influenced by world footwear. Vivienne Westwood revealed through her blog that her 'rope thong sandals' were inspired by Japanese geta shoes.

Who is this for?

This is a cross disciplinary conference and we aim to attract those from different academic disciplines including, but not exclusively, fashion and design, sociology, anthropology and ethnography, history and psychology.

We aim to bring together those interested in design and fashion but also those interested in the history, social and cultural significance of shoes. The conference aims to foster debate and discussion under the theme of 'World Footwear'



Themes

Submissions are solicited in, but not limited to, the following areas:

- Designing and making shoes
- Distributing and consuming shoes
- Impact of world footwear on contemporary design
- Aesthetics of shoe beauty and sculpture of the shoe
- Cult of shoe designers
- Challenge of global markets and shoemaking today.
- Personal and collective identity and shoe design
- Social rituals and shoes
- Shoes as polluting and purification agents
- Role of religion and moral values in shaping footwear design
- Appropriateness of shoes and design
- Shoes as tools in gender relations
- Shoes and social status
- Shoes as commodities within consumerism
- Presence or absence of shoes
- Cultural, social, economic, and personal meaning of shoes
- Shoes as symbols of cultural understanding
- Shoes and the relationship between the West and other civilisations
- Shoes as tokens of material culture
- Shoes in performance
- Displaying shoes



Why Northampton?

Northampton is the home of shoe making.

The heritage of Northamptonshire's towns and villages is defined and influenced by its internationally recognised boot and shoe industries, providing one of the clearest examples in Britain of a regional concentration of specialised industrial activity. The volume of footwear produced and the number of companies and individuals engaged in the industry has declined in recent decades, but the county still benefits from the significant and tangible impact of the remaining designers and manufacturers. The pivotal influence of this heritage is captured in the footwear collection at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery (NMAG) which houses the largest collection of shoe heritage in the world run by Northampton Borough Council and which is designated as being of national and international importance.

The University of Northampton's Institute of Creative Leather Technology is supported by The Worshipful Company of Leathersellers and is a nationally and internationally recognised centre of excellence for its work in leather. Its tannery is the only working tannery in a UK university, further highlighting the University's USP in leather and design. Its Fashion Department within the School of The Arts offers a BA (Hons) Fashion (Footwear and Accessories) and recently launched MA Design with pathways in Footwear and Accessories. The School of The Arts offers a diverse range of industry links enabling students to earn, apply their skills to benefit regional social enterprise and significantly enhance their employability.



The University of Northampton won the award for the most 'Outstanding Higher Education Institution Supporting Social Entrepreneurship 2011 (UnLtd/HEFCE)

BA Fashion (Footwear and Accessories) continues Northampton's proud tradition of shoemaking and leather design by producing some of the world's most innovative footwear and accessory designers. We have enviable links with leading designers and offer students world-class internships.

UON was the first UK University to showcase our design graduate's work at Lineapelle in Bologna, the International Leather fair In Chennai, India, and Ningbo Fashion Festival and on home ground Footwear Friends with the British Footwear Association in London and attracts significant funding from The Worshipful Company of Cordwainers, The Worshipful Company of Curriers and The Worshipful Company of Leathersellers as well as private scholarships and bursaries.

Publication

There is funding available to publish this conference

What to Submit

Papers must not substantially overlap with papers that have been published.

Papers should be written in English. Papers must not exceed 15 pages total (including the references and appendices).

This Call for Papers is being issued by the University of Northampton and Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. The Conference intends to bring together and publish the work of those interested in footwear.

Papers will be subject to peer-review and selection based on relevance to World Footwear. There will be an accompanying poster session open for researchers and companies that would like to highlight or demonstrate their work.

Funding

This conference is funded by Arts Council England as part of the Cultural Olympiad 'Stories of the World' Project. The conference is linked to the exhibition 'The World at Your Feet' which runs until 23 Sept 2012 and will then become a touring exhibition.

Conference Dates

To be held in March 2013 at The University of Northampton

Abstract submission

If you would be interested in presenting a paper please submit a short abstract of your presentation to Jane Seddon at janeseddon@northampton.gov.uk by 21st November

The abstracts will be reviewed by a panel of academic staff at the University of Northampton.

Important Dates

Titles and abstracts of papers due:

21st Nov 2012

Author notification: **15th Jan 2013**

Conference **March 2013**

Contact information

For further information please contact

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or on 01604 838111.

Or Vicki Dean on

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