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EDITORIAL FOREWORD

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Editorial foreword to the Special Issue on ‘Curatorial Reflections’

We are very pleased to publish this Special Issue of *CSFB* on ‘Curatorial Reflections’, and want to thank Denise Nicole Green and Kelly L. Reddy-Best for their expert and creative contributions as guest editors. Integrating theory with practice, Green and Reddy-Best offer a thought-provoking framework for this issue on curatorial scholarship and introduce the articles that underwent an anonymous peer review, as well as editorial, process.

One of the goals of this Special Issue is to shine a light on curatorial scholarship, which deserves more recognition for the kind of intellectual work it entails: theorization, research documentation,

design, narrative building. This intellectual work becomes especially imperative in critical fashion studies at a time when the need for decolonial, anti-racist, feminist and queer epistemologies and practices is urgent. The contributions to this issue represent these kinds of epistemologies and practices. Although the call for papers for this issue was international in scope, the submissions all came from scholars who curated fashion-related exhibitions in public universities in the United States, where there was already an emerging network of curatorial scholars that had presented similar kinds of reflections at special sessions at International Textile and Apparel Association conferences. Furthermore, there is a rather unique, and, at times, troubling, history of academic institutions that have fashion collections and exhibitions in the United States, as Green and Reddy-Best critically analyse in their introduction. They and other authors demonstrate that these collections and exhibitions often have roots in the gendered compartmentalization of home economics (and more specifically, fashion design) in public colleges and universities as an accessible and viable vehicle available to women by the early twentieth century. The question arises as to the extent to which fashion collections and exhibitions at academic institutions are unique to North America, given the historical circumstances and geographically spread and often rurally located public universities. For future issues, we encourage curatorial reflections from around the world to address these and other issues, from a range of venues such as museums, academic institutions or pop-up sites.

In addition to the refereed curatorial-related articles in this issue, Dyese L. Matthews reviews online fashion exhibitions of the Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC. She identifies the importance of incorporating intersectional analyses (for example, between race and sexuality) in online exhibitions, as a critical part of fostering inclusivity in museums.

Thanks again to the guest editors and to all of the contributors for sharing their critical reflections on the conceptualization, academic research, design, time and labour, institutional struggles and representational dilemmas associated with fashion-related collection and exhibition. We will carry on inviting curatorial reflections on collections and exhibitions in future issues from around the world. We thus hope to continue to make *CSFB* an inviting space for curatorial and other forms of scholarship – especially those that challenge dominant notions of fashion and beauty.

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