

***Silly Canvas***



Silly Canvas  
Centre for Style exhibition for Utopian Slumps

Silly Canvas invites a selection of practitioners to create new work restricted to the parameters of two 70cm x 170cm rectangles of material attached to one another to form both flat dresses for a runway performance on the opening night and as static wall hangings for the duration of the exhibition. Silly Canvas looks at the most rudimentary of garment shapes: the sack dress. The form apes the easy, ocular objectives of a canvas as a worn “2D” tent. Quelling design’s usual goal, that of “fit,” the exhibition has set the dictatorial task of dealing with surface alone. The works are seen as a collection of worn canvases each imprinted with the designer’s attempt to influence and affect the blank-slate rectangular form.

The canvas is one of contemporary fashion’s silly levers to broker garments as Art (which often appear closer to textile pieces than “legitimate” garments). The famous example of Yves Saint Laurent’s 1965 Mondrian shift dress, highlight the gimmicky humor of this lever. The exhibition plays with the crude seesaw between the putative epistemological gain promised by art and the nonchalance—and possible victimhood—of fashion.

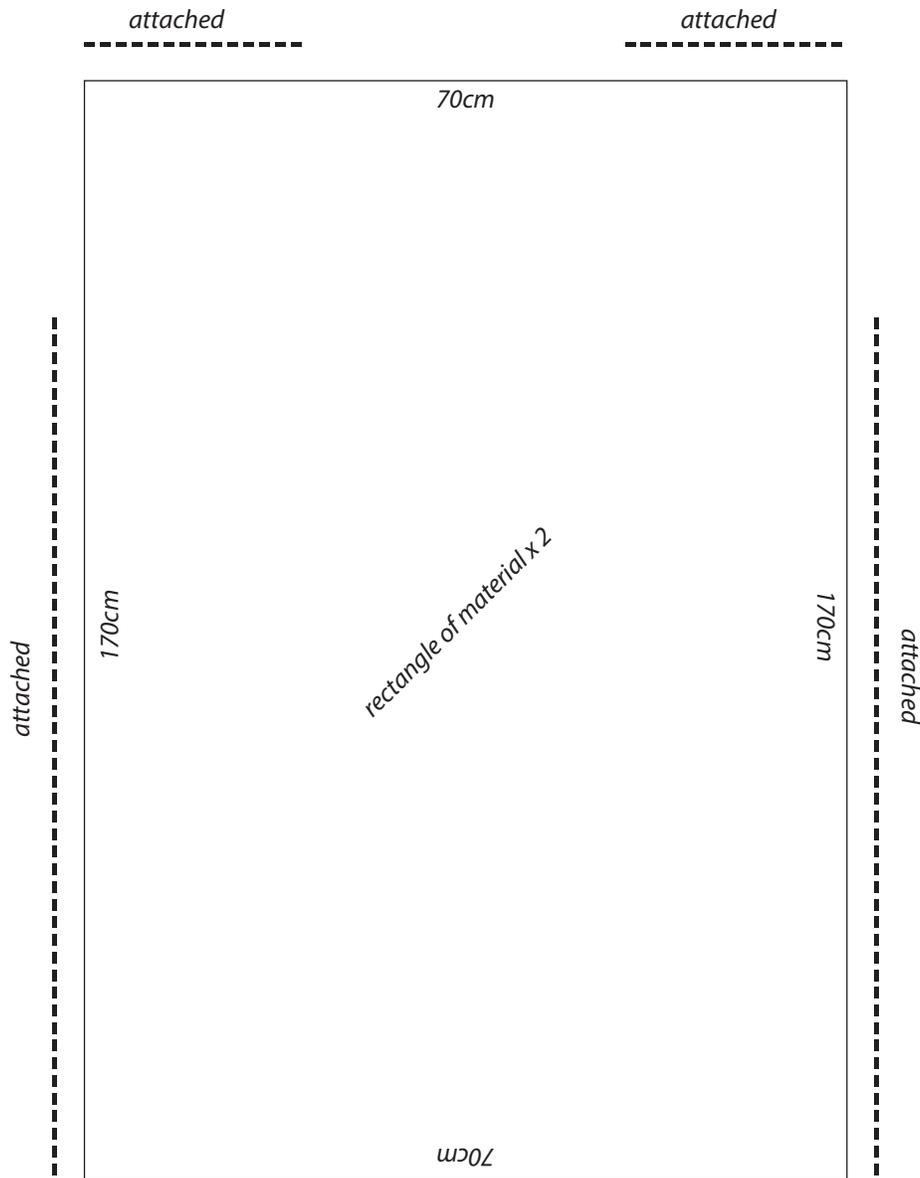
Each work is first revealed in a catwalk performance on opening night, worn by a lone model. She glides through the gallery along a set path before returning backstage to don the next canvas. Once the procession ends, the garments are lifted as wall hangings—hung from suspended poles threaded through their armholes.

The practitioners express various engagements with fabric and the human form within their work and have been invited to explore their processes through the constraints of the sack dress. They are free to use whatever combinations of materials they desire while adhering to the prescribed dress measurements: two 70cm x 170cm dimensions of material with openings for head and limbs (schematics attached).



Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, 1984

# Silly Canvas Schematics



## Notes:

Materials can be anything of any combination:  
malleable, rigid, fabric, porous, treated, collaged etc.

Attachment can be any method of high-tenacity strength:  
gluing, stitching, welding, clipping etc.

Attachment lines are approximate guides only and can vary as long as they accommodate reasonable space for the head and arms