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Fashioning a master's degree

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Abstract

Fashion has a varied and explosive history. Our responsibility as educators preparing students and therefore careers for this context places us in a very difficult and complex position. Do we prepare students to be successful or do we prepare them to 'invest' in their industry? In this paper, we construct our story of developing an ethical, sustainable international master's degree in Fashion Management. It is a journey of development that sees higher education establishments from Belgium and Italy join together with a 'third-party' university from an emerging third-world market in sharing and developing a group of international students willing to 'invest' and become industry transformers. Integral to our approach is context and the importance of narrative and responsibility for the learner; as such, this requires a return to old 'andragogic' versus 'pedagogic' education philosophies. Our account provides a full description of the rationale for aligning the 'pedagogic' with 'andragogic' and this involves learners to actually experience and understand in context. The principal aim of this paper is to explore the experience of introducing narratives between fashion industry and academia in these different locations as a means of 'raising' issues regarding future responsibility and thereby develop critical reflexive skills that will be valuable in other geographical and market contexts for the future.

Keywords

Cultural management education, fashion management education, education in Europe, cultural entrepreneurship, andragogic education

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Introduction

The fashion industry is indisputably the most successful in terms of volume and profitability in the creative sector. It is a rapidly expanding creative industry – employing approximately 50 million people worldwide and generating approximately 3 trillion dollars per annum (McKinsey Report, 2018). Yet, it is also an industry that reflects a troubled and mixed history – its problems regarding sustainability and exploitation represent only some of the issues it faces almost on a daily basis and as such its image is not one that is always positive. There are, therefore, two routes for its future. The first route is to join, and look to make as much money as possible from, this entrepreneurial and very profitable industry – and if the entrant is lucky then this can be achieved easily as barriers to entry across the globe are generally low. The second route is the more difficult. Certainly, this remains an industry defined by profit, but at the same time, this route offers entrants the opportunity to 'invest' – not only for themselves, but for society and for the future. This second route requires a special type of person and the ability to be aware of the issues and challenges facing the various actors in the global fashion industry. This is where Antwerp Management School (being partner of the University of Antwerp) has situated its education philosophy regarding the development of a new international master's program in Fashion Management, and in this article the authors want to share some of the issues, not only locally but globally, that were faced in order to provide support for this second route entrant.

Of course, the keen-eyed amongst the readership might have noticed that this program is not a design-led program but rather a management-led one. This difference is important for it creates its own challenges. Not least, that some readers, at this point, might think that this is simply another business and management master's program, one of many hundreds that now exist in many business and management schools across the globe and, therefore, it is not that interesting or novel. However, what this paper claims is that the special circumstances of this context (briefly outlined below) together with the challenges of attempting to be successful in a 'design-led' – creative – industry demands something different.

The goal of this new program is to develop an approach that is both pedagogic and andragogic in design. One that places narrative and engagement at the core for effective vocational learning. In the sections below, this paper will provide full detail for the rationale of its design and why educationally these two approaches can work together in order to fulfill the needs of this industry. We want to discuss the challenges of a new fashion management program on the basis of the story of development from Antwerp (Belgium). Immediately, it is important to appreciate that most fashion management programs are established and led from arts-led school environments. Yet, this program emerges from a business school context. It is important to appreciate why. Frequently, more and more creative graduates want to start their own business and, therefore, they need entrepreneurial skills and with the low barriers to entry into the fashion industry, then this becomes an attractive option. Yet, for too long the sector was based on people who loved

fashion but were simply not equipped with the necessary management skills to become successful. Thus, within this context different types of fashion management programs emerged from business schools as a response to the industry that is looking not only for creative designers but also people who are aware of the management side. This tendency is part of the professionalisation of the sector.

From a benchmark review, most of the fashion management programs in France, Italy and the UK (the fashion capitals) tend to primarily focus on luxury brands and their markets. This is understandable because it is the luxury brands that generate the largest proportion of money/turnover and they are global. However, the focus for the Antwerp program is to follow a different perspective – that is, where the emphasis is to support independent high-end designers and fits well with the DNA/tradition of Antwerp as a fashion city. What is also relevant is that the new program did not start from scratch but as a tangential development from an already existing master's degree in cultural management offered by the University of Antwerp. Therefore, it started from the base evolved through cultural management education rather than from a more general management master's degree context. This represents a fundamental difference that will be explained later. This paper provides the reader with both context and concept of the program. However, at this time (2018) it is too early to evaluate whether it has fulfilled its aims and objectives.

However, it is important to share some insights and then return to evaluation in the future. In the next sections, we look firstly at origins – why a master's degree in international fashion management offered via Antwerp? Through this explanation we draw out the influence of the cultural management program in its design. We will then share in the section that follows an overview of the structure of the degree and reveal our claims with regard to its innovation. In the closing section, we then will reveal our expectations with regards challenges and we conclude with a statement regarding future developments and the need for review following a three-year period.

Origins

The University of Antwerp has offered their master's degree in cultural management within the Faculty of Applied Economics now for almost twenty years. The goal of the program was to offer students regardless of whether they possessed an Art or Science background an appropriate set of competences (despite not possessing a creative background) to prepare them for a career across the broad cultural and creative sectors. During these 20 years, more and more cultural management students seemed to looking towards the fashion industry for internships and master's projects. Feedback from alumni and other stakeholders in the region revealed that there was a demand from this industry and furthermore, it was noted that students who were interested in fashion were not necessarily interested in the other creative sectors (e.g. the book or music industry).

This realisation led to a fundamental question being asked, that, if there was enough demand to create a separate master's degree for fashion management. The assessment was 'yes' and there were a number of features that heavily influenced thinking, not least, the dynamics of the fashion industry are different: it is a much quicker and more vibrant industry than either music, books or others (the dominance of seasonal thinking). Accordingly, very careful consideration was needed to think about what features would make Antwerp a good place to study fashion. First, within Antwerp there is a very successful and highly regarded established 'creative' fashion design school since 1963 as part of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (and this institution has existed for over 360 years). The Fashion Department of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, has a high creative reputation (3th place on the world ranking of the Business of Fashion (BOF) in 2017). This reputation is still based on the success of 'the Antwerp Six' from the 1980s (with designers like Dries van Noten, An Demeulemeester, Walter van Beirendonck, and so on). Together with Martin Margiela – often called the Seventh – they became very known because of their very personal vision and 'avant-garde' style. Since then Antwerp has been perceived as a major avant-garde fashion city and still today it is a thriving fashion centre. Together with the Flanders Fashion Institute (being part of Flanders District of Creativity since 2017), the Fashion Museum (MoMu) and a vibrant retail offer at a walkable distance, we could state that Antwerp offers a relevant and vibrant fashion ecosystem, that is attractive to creatives and other fashion actors both now and for the future (Schrauwen and Schramme, 2016).

Secondly, in order to differentiate the program for Antwerp it was decided to focus on independent designers, ones in particular who want to start their own label and therefore consequently what this might mean in terms of the interaction between the global and the local ('glocal'). However, fashion is also a global industry and one that increasingly employs techniques to move beyond the local and explore the potential of the global. This understanding also emerged via the Antwerp summer school in Fashion management that had been launched back in 2012 both to test the market and assess who would participate (what their profile is), what are the needs of the industry and what is the academic knowledge in this field.

After six successful years, it was felt that there was sufficient experience and confidence to start a new international Masters degree in Fashion Management, that looked to support independent designers, combining local with global and employing both pedagogic and andragogic education values. We argue this combination globally is currently unique in fashion management education. Certainly, it was noted above, the fashion program will be based in a management school. This location, and therefore choice of course content, reflects this origin and yet concurrently it needs to be accessible to creative people. Therefore, it was important that the program developed along hybrid lines. That is, a program that appreciates that students will likely come from a variety of backgrounds (across

the arts, humanities, social sciences and management studies) in order to study fashion.

Specificities of a cultural management education program

As already noted, the fashion management program emerged from the existing master's degree program in cultural management: this origin is significant. At the most basic level it is important to appreciate that too frequently fashion education devotes itself to developing designers or others in the creative side of this industry and yet evidence reveals that this is an industry that primarily requires effective management. Likewise, simply offering a typical mainstream, profit-led management and business education will likely be too wide and context free! Furthermore, what makes this situation perhaps most difficult is that both the creatives and the managerial people need to work together effectively, and yet their respective understandings of the industry in which they work is so different – often seemingly informed, by completely (sometimes competing) sets of knowledge. In other words, their understandings seemingly are informed by another vocabulary, and in some cases, even a different value system. Anecdotal observations of the fashion industry suggest that what is needed are people that do not follow, and remain stuck, in the above general templates – but in fact are able to traverse them. In other words, people who are able to appreciate opposing perspectives. This is necessary because the industry itself is highly volatile and still in a rapid period growth – not just locally, but globally. Therefore, any fashion management program needs to reflect and be able to encompass these challenges. In this way, the legitimacy of a specific education program in fashion management is comparable to that offered by the Antwerp cultural management program. In the next section, the rationale of cultural management at the University of Antwerp will be explained.

Compared to general management, the scientific knowledge base that is specific to cultural management is rather limited. Many authors who advocate a clear distinction between general management and cultural management do so on the basis of a distinctive or 'deviant' application of management models and theories (De Roeper, 2008; DeVereaux, 2009; Dewey, 2005; Dimaggio, 1987, Ebewo and Sirayi, 2009). However, Evrard and Colbert (2000) argued that the differences between management in general and cultural management in particular may, in many ways, is not that great, and that just as neurology and cardiology are sub-disciplines of medicine, cultural management (for them) should be considered a sub-discipline of management. Kuesters (2010) on the other hand proposes the use of theoretical frameworks that see arts managers as liaising between the worlds of finance and the arts. Brkić (2009) relied on the metaphor of the Janus head, arguing that cultural management education should include both artistic or cultural education *and* managerial education, with its basis remaining cultural. An ability to shift between the two logics, the artistic-cultural and the entrepreneurial (market oriented and/or institutional/policy oriented) is a skill that cultural managers must master if they are to fulfill their role as both a 'mediator' and a 'companion'

(Bendixen, 2000). On the basis of this Janus syndrome perspective, Brkić (2009) concludes that a simultaneous look at general management and the arts is essential to the success of an arts management education program. Therefore, arts managers need to be acquainted with both banks of the river, as well as with the techniques needed to build solid, beautiful and 'challenging' bridges (DeFillippi et al., 2007; Eikhof and Haunschild, 2007).

The practice of cultural management can be traced back many centuries, but the formal academic field devoted to its study and the training of its practitioners is still very young (Varela, 2013). In the UK, an early publication, by John Pick, defined the art administrator as a combination of practical manager, problem-solver, entrepreneur, risk bearer and idealist. In the UK, France, Germany, Finland and the Netherlands this new knowledge and education domain led to new programs and training centres. In the early 1990s, the first handbooks were published in English, which paved the way for the broader participation of arts managers, teachers and trainers. At the end of the 1990s, programs were also developed in Spain, Italy, Belgium and some Eastern European countries (as a result of the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989). While education programs were mainly focused on practice in the first phase, research is becoming more significantly developed since 2000. By comparison, fashion management education is even younger and there is still some distance from this level of sophistication and professionalisation.

Therefore, it is only recently that the literature has investigated the nature and logic of cultural management curricula and their program structure. Educational science defines four types of competences: knowledge, skills, insight and attitudes (Bloom, 1956; Hauenstein, 1998). According to Mintzberg's (1973) definition of management as a practice that combines knowledge, craft and insight, to understand the differences between general management and cultural management, is still very relevant:

Firstly, although the scientific knowledge of management is clearly one of the foundations of the practice of cultural management, an overlying narrow scholarly focus on the scientific aspect and on scientific research in graduate programs will not in insolation contribute to preparing graduate students for a career as a cultural manager. Secondly, management as a practice is also a craft, for which the main learning mode is experience. Graduate study programs in cultural management that focus on experience, for example through internships, produce students that are better prepared for the labour market. Thirdly, almost all of the qualities that distinguish arts and cultural management from general management programs are related to the 'vision' or 'insight' that managers deploy in their specific work environment and/or context. Surveys carried out in 2009, 2014 (Verbergt and Debruyne, 2015) and 2017 (Delft and Schramme, 2017) at the University of Antwerp (Belgium) of cultural management graduates across almost 20 academic years' experience, supports the view that cultural management education needs to foster the acquisition of experience and insight into the 'bridging' relationship between management and arts and cultural practices. A more intense field-

specific but also interdisciplinary type of education is required to prepare managers to cope with the huge number of challenges in the cultural and creative sectors. It is from this context that the new fashion management program was developed.

An examination into the curricular structure of cultural management programs, Brkić (2009) distinguishes four types of curricula: those that copy directly from business management; those that focus on the (technological) process of producing artwork; those that link cultural management and cultural policy; and finally, those that take an entrepreneurial approach to arts management, connecting it to the creative industries and issues of creativity and innovation. It is the last type that perhaps offers the most relevant route for a fashion management program at Antwerp. This is due to the growing attention to the creative industries and fashion is perhaps the presently the most successful (in terms of profit and size). This increased interest has mainly to do with the changing political, social and economic environment in Europe since the end of the 1990s, which will be elaborated on below.

Creative industries and cultural entrepreneurship education

Through its Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan and its Communication on 'Rethinking Education' (November 2012), the European Commission has emphasised the need to embed entrepreneurial learning in all sectors of education, including non-formal learning. One of the four strategic objectives of the Commission is: 'enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.' Both documents call on Member States to provide all young people with practical entrepreneurial experience before completing their compulsory education, highlighting the importance of *learning by doing* within education and training. This requires a way of teaching in which *experiential learning and project work* have a major role.

> Teachers do not provide students with the answers, but help them to research and identify [the] right questions and find the best answers. To inspire their pupils and students, and to help them develop an enterprising attitude, teachers need a wide range of competences related to creativity and entrepreneurship; they require a school environment where creativity and risk-taking are encouraged, and mistakes are valued as a learning opportunity. (European Commission, 2012)

As a response to this strong trend to a more entrepreneurial-minded European labour market, a large number of current cultural management programs changed their name including terms as 'entrepreneurship' and 'creative industries' or decided to include specific courses dedicated to entrepreneurship. Also the cultural management program in Antwerp decided in 2009 to create two majors: one with a focus on the (more public oriented) Arts and Culture and another other for the Creative Industries and Entrepreneurship.

Although the traditional managerial approach remains very useful in terms of teaching new graduates how to run art organisations, the question arises: How to prepare our students to be more entrepreneurial for this dynamic, but at the same time, uncertain and very volatile global world? Jacobs and Kooyman (2015) distinguish a number of dilemmas (and a more accurate educational term might be 'challenges') that teachers focusing on entrepreneurship face today:

1. *How to teach the appreciation of risk?* While management is more focused on certainty and control of organisational processes, dealing with risk is much more related to an entrepreneurial mindset.
2. *How to develop an intuitive mind?* Many studies show that (cultural) entrepreneurs are rather intuitive than rational thinkers (Kirby, 2004; Sarasvathy, 2001; Van Andel and Schramme, 2015). While in management a causal logic is much more common (starting from a vision/mission, putting goals on the long term and then see how they can be achieved), entrepreneurship is more about perceiving/creating new opportunities and to see how much money can be invested/lost in order to realise your idea(s) (Sarasvathy calls it the 'affordable loss principle'). To cope with dynamic environments, it is also important to have a well-developed sensitivity for the context in which one is working; something Jacobs and Kooyman like to call 'context sensibility' (Jacobs and Kooyman, 2015).
3. *How to prepare students for an uncertain world?* In order to prepare students for this uncertain world, one of the most important learning outcomes would have to be 'self-awareness'. This asks for personal leadership, being accountable, taking responsibility and accept failure as inherent to life and work.
4. *How to teach students to collaborate?* An 'cultural entrepreneur' who enters the professional domain will be confronted with the fact that s/he needs to cooperate with others in small scale, bottom-up networks. It is very important to create a solid network in order to survive. The cultural and creative sectors highly depend on cooperation, project-based work and interdisciplinarity and requires a communal way of thinking (Hagoort, 2016).
5. *How to 'teach' a sustainable attitude?* Cultural and creative entrepreneurs have to transform their ideas into a profitable business in a very volatile context. Project management and temporary partnerships are the new practices. Yet, at the same time they have to develop a tailor-made business model in order to respond to the new challenges and to create a sustainable growth and future. This means also that they are often confronted with moral and ethical questions, which arise in the global community. Therefore, it is important to discuss in class the social and ecological implications of entrepreneurship. Jacobs and Kooyman (2015) argue that it is 'not by preaching, but by showing students that moral awareness is part of modern entrepreneurship.'

We need to remind ourselves of the opening question at the top of this paper – should the program equip students to survive and be successful in this industry or

should they be provided with a more lasting sustainable and ethical set of values that invest in the future of the fashion industry? Therefore, ethics and sustainability in this sense goes – like in the other creative industries – to the very core values of the industry rather than the superficial efforts to 'save this' item or 'produce' or 'value' something else. It attempts to instill in students a mindset of being that goes to the essence of a viable future for fashion.

To conclude: If these dilemmas (or 'challenges') are relevant for the cultural and creative industries, then they are certainly appropriate for a fashion management program, including an entrepreneurial approach.

A new International Fashion Management Program and its educational philosophy

Andragogy versus pedagogy: In this section, the theoretical framework for the design and delivery of a fashion management program is rehearsed and clarified for the reader. Above, the discussion attempted to amplify the range of features and factors influencing the design of the fashion management program. In this section, our aim is not to provide a detailed list of content but rather demonstrate how we have converged these factors with a form of alignment of a long-held discussion regarding: andragogy versus pedagogy. Let us expand, many years ago, American practitioner and theorist of adult education, Malcolm Knowles (1984) defined andragogy as 'the art and science of helping adults learn.' Knowles had identified that the key principles of adult learning are:

- Adults are internally motivated and self-directed
- Adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences
- Adults are goal oriented
- Adults are relevancy oriented
- Adults are practical
- Adult learners like to be respected

Of course, it might be claimed that such principles are also relevant for younger or less experienced learners[1] – this may be true in certain contexts (and this is not place to argue which context these claims work for and where they do not.). However, with regard to fashion management, and taking into consideration the above description of likely backgrounds of students, it was decided to follow an aligned strategy rather than privilege only one approach.

The starting point was to consider why students might choose to undertake a fashion management program rather than say another program in the cultural or creative sector? Firstly, the student desires to be involved in the creative sector, but at the same time, not solely as the creative force (either because of recognised limited ability or perhaps, more simply, parental pressure for a vocational future) and yet at the same time appreciates that the creative is an important

part. Secondly, the fashion industry is worldwide and that it is likely that students will come from, and want to work, in different locations/contexts and therefore require challenges that reflect this variety. Working in the fashion industry is almost always a profit-centred sector (unlike some other parts of the creative sector). That is, here risk is not simply an academic exercise or part of a social experiment, but rather the difference between continuing to survive or failure (and this means 'stop' and perhaps further repercussions regarding repayment of debt, etc., see above). Thus, fashion, perhaps unlike the majority of other creative sectors is balanced on a knife-edge between success and failure. And in the present climate, no one is waiting for another brand or another fashion product in the market place – if the product fails – it fails and may also lead to the failure of the organisation as well. Thirdly, the backgrounds of the students will be varied and likely not be from the fashion sector. In these circumstances, relying only on either a pedagogical or an andragogical approach alone is unlikely to meet the needs of students studying on this program.

A pedagogic design is one that most of the content is taught and thus we can label this as a dependent learner philosophy. Dependent on others telling them what they need to learn. It is important – appreciating that the limited experience of the students entering this program together with the opportunities of the market place – that the program will need to be a mixture of pedagogy and andragogy. A pedagogic design is favoured where the context and tools required are relatively stable and, therefore, students are able to learn and develop the skills necessary to perform certain tasks. Whereas an andragogic design is often employed in environments, such as fashion, that are much more dynamic and uncertain. Here, the student is likely to be much more independent and will need to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

To enlarge further, the teaching content reflects that we do not expect (or can assume) that the learner has much experience with the issues regarding entering the international fashion industry. The program starts with an intense course on individual leadership and self-awareness that is linked to an individual career development plan. Then following this much of the first semester is concentrated on providing students with a strong foundation in the issues governing the evolution of fashion as an industry – from an overview of the eco-system dominating fashion industry across the globe and locally to sustainability and the supply chain; entrepreneurship and innovation; business modeling and the impact of technology and fashion law. Figure 1 provides a summary of the differences between andragogy and pedagogy

Shifting contexts: Nevertheless, too much emphasis on teaching creates too much dependence on the tutor and insufficient opportunity for the learner to demonstrate 'real' learning in a context that is still young and evolving – therefore, the aim is to introduce the content up to a required level, in order for the learner to possess sufficient understanding to start and engage with the topics. Thus, the focus is *not* to be exhaustive in covering all things but realistically introduce sufficient content up to a required academic level. Therefore, trying to find a

	Pedagogy	Andragogy
The Learner	• The learner is dependent upon the instructor for all learning • The teacher/instructor assumes full responsibility for what is taught and how it is learned • The teacher/instructor evaluates learnina	• The learner is self-directed • The learner is responsible for his/her own learning • Self-evaluation is characteristic of this approach
Role of the Learner´s Experience	• The learner comes to the activity with little experience that could be tapped as a resource for learning • The experience of the instructor is most influential	• The learner brings a greater volume and quality of experience • Adults are a rich resource for one another • Different experiences assure diversity in groups of adults • Experience becomes the source of self-identifv
Readiness to Learn	• Students are told what they have to learn in order to advance to the next level of mastery	• Any change is likely to trigger a readiness to learn • The need to know in order to perform more effectively in some aspect of one´s life is important • Ability to assess gaps between where one is now and where one wants and needs to be
Orientation to Learning	• Learning is a process of acquiring prescribed subject matter • Content units are sequenced according to the logic of the subject matter	• Learners want to perform a task, solve a problem, live in a more satisfying way • Learning must have relevance to real-life tasks • Learning is organized around life/work situations rather than subject matter units
Motivation for Learning	• Primarily motivated by external pressures, competition for grades, and the consequences of failure	• Internal motivators: self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, self-confidence, self-actualization

Figure 1. Character of pedagogy and andragogy compared.
Source: floridatechnet.org as reported in http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2013/05 (accessed 5 October 2018).

balance between input (and this in some cases might be theory only but will include a mix of academic content and case studies presented by practitioners and/or company visits) and the opportunity to make sense of it in a practical setting.

Of course, to suggest that all of the program in the first semester is theory or lecture-driven is too narrow and simplistic. Rather in this first semester the learners will be exposed via a number of different media and means to content that is both inside the lecture room and also beyond out in the fashion district of the city of

Antwerp. Antwerp is a central European city that possesses a strong fashion district and several, high-end independent designers (see above). Yet, at the same time, the learners need to appreciate that Antwerp provides only one context set in an affluent part of Belgium. In this way, it introduces the overall focus, which is to introduce the learners to different contexts across different locations – and thus provide the realisation of the skills necessary for understanding (and perhaps surviving in) the global fashion industry. Therefore, what occurs in the period following this largely pedagogic-driven approach is the opportunity to contextualise it.

The master's project: the portfolio is key!: A critical feature of the fashion management program is the master's project. It consists of two parts, namely the final master's thesis and the portfolio. As every respected academic master's program as well as this new master's fashion management will check if the defined goals are achieved in the master's project. The master's thesis will be a more formal academic written document based on the analysis of a management problem, normally with an international focus within the fashion industry. It provides the opportunity to demonstrate an output of the highest quality – not only academic but also creative. Therefore, the choice and process of selection is likely to be enhanced and supported by the portfolio. Thus, here the portfolio, the second and innovative part of the master's project emerges. Both the master's thesis and supporting portfolio offer varied opportunities for the learner to provide different forms of evidence of progress – both practical (in terms of industry) and academic.

In the first few years (prior to an overall evaluation), the program will benefit from working closely with one of the principal capitals of fashion – Milan – and in particular the Domus academy, and here the aim is in the first instance to contextualise some of the content introduced in semester 1 with a more company-based opportunities and real-life projects in Milan for six weeks. Thus, here the learning starts to become less dependent on the tutor and move more towards the learner taking responsibility – and this is important – for it is here that the portfolio starts to emerge as a unique document personal to the learner. The portfolio is one of the key features included in the program to provide learners with the opportunity to make sense of different contexts (but in a visual way and one that is quite different from the guise often understood in management-type programs).

Tutors will provide support and guidance in the preparation of the portfolio. The portfolio is important as a form of translator for the learner to record, highlight and reveal layers of understanding that may commence as a management-led issue but through employing different lenses of scrutiny becomes one much more visual representation. Thus, instead of problems being presented via linear, left-right text. The learner is encouraged to experiment and articulate via visual techniques a form of encapsulation of the issue that might be nonlinear, visual and perhaps includes other media of the issue or problem. The aim here is to encourage the learner to appreciate different forms of problem/solution strategies that might be employed by the different people in fashion organisations.

This opportunity will continue when the learners (as we shall now call them) leave Milan and re-site their learning in another international emerging location and in the first years this to the city of Sao Paulo in Brazil. The rationale is that our learners also need to appreciate the differences of an emerging, non-European market. Experience from prior studies (see King and Schramme, 2019) is that teaching content often assumes that knowledge is based around a 'one-size-fits-all' mentality with regards understanding different cultures denies the uniqueness of any individual location.

Sao Paulo in Brazil is a city and country going through serious economic and political crisis and yet concurrently it is a city where fashion is amongst its most important features. The local host partner is FAAP is another private institution with over 70 years' experience. Here the learners will be exposed to more practice-led exposure in local industry during another six weeks. Visits to local industry together with an introduction to context provides the learners to take the knowledge received and gained from previous locations (Antwerp and Milan) and look at their application and the implications of implementation in local understandings in Sao Paulo. Again the learners will be given opportunities to experiment and develop their non-text-led presentations. To experiment and to develop visual-led responses. In these last two locations, local industry and/or eco-system provide context. Here the richness of conversation and the opportunity to witness actions in this context provides a richness of knowing that cannot be replicated via lectures or books or media. The opportunity to employ other forms of knowledge gathering and representation (through the portfolio) presents the realisation that learners are increasingly taking control of their own learning and the manner of how this learning (and knowledge generating) is being developed. In other words, still the content from semester one might be valuable and provide basic insights and understandings but it is the different contexts, different forms of engagement (text and visual) together with the variety of context that provides the learner a rich and valuable means of developing their skills as a future employee in the fashion industry.

As described above, the portfolio provides the opportunity for the learner to demonstrate what they have learnt in a non-defined manner. It is important to appreciate that its role and status will emerge and evolve from approximately midway through the first semester. It is possible to appreciate it as a form of 'diary,' but also something more than this, and we will develop this explanation through the example presented in Figure 2 entitled 'Whole cycle learning'.

Effective communication between creative and business: The approach taken for this program is an adaptation of whole cycle learning and it is important to understand its contribution in explaining the development and content of the learner's portfolio. Not least, its role as a bridge/resource to the final project. Originally, this model was developed at Lancaster University by Don Binsted (1980) as a means of appreciating the place and role of reflection in terms of the independent learner. Its adaptation reflects its critical means to support the alignment of pedagogic principles with andragogic ones. This includes a form of translator for learners

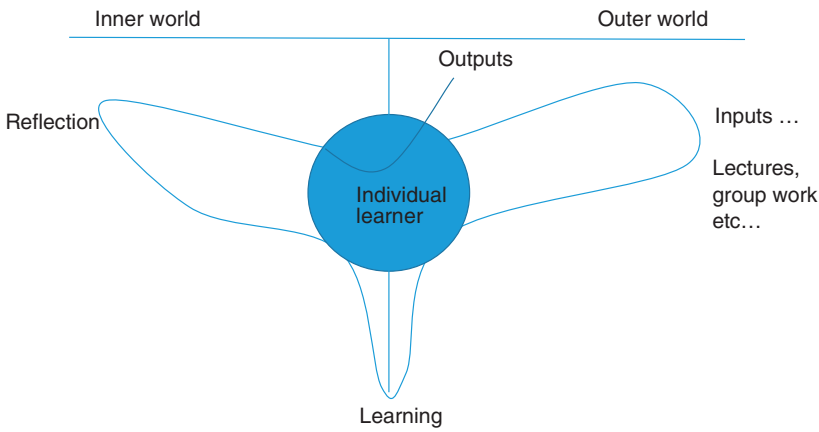

Figure 2. Portfolio philosophy (based on Lancaster model: Binsted, 1980).

to mediate between creative and business principles. What this means is that often a major contributor to the problems of fashion businesses is that the values/expectations of business are not always appreciated by creatives and vice versa. Thus, what the portfolio provides also is an alternative means (visual-led) of communication that facilitates common (organisation-based) issues to be shared via a common language. This then should lead to improved layers of understanding and mutually agreed action.

In terms of explanation, Figure 2 provides the theoretical underpinning for this sharing between the different actors. Thus the learner is depicted in the figure as the core circle in the centre of the diagram and as such they need to be aware of both their inner and outer world. The outer world is where the learner individually (and in collaboration with others) collects the various inputs – from semester 1 and the various topics provided via teaching together with experiences and knowledge gathered from experiencing fashion in Milan and then Sao Paulo in semester 2. How the learner assimilates and makes sense of these inputs is important (and often unique) via their reflective capacities in the inner world and the learning and knowledge produced we encourage to be presented via their portfolio.

Traditionally, a master's project and more particularly the student portfolio is a compilation of academic work and other forms of educational evidence assembled for the purpose of:

1. evaluating coursework quality, learning progress and academic achievement;
2. determining whether students have reached levels of learning or other academic requirements for courses, grade-level promotion and graduation;
3. helping students reflect on their academic goals and progress as learners; and
4. creating a lasting archive of academic work products, accomplishments and other documentation.

Whilst in this program the master's project performs these tasks, in addition it provides the means of performing a more important fundamental role. A role that converges thinking and yet also diverges the capacity and awareness for different forms of outputs. The program wants the learners to be creative, to challenge thinking – both for themselves but also for others (including the company who is involved in their master's project). To assist in the early stages of its development, it is envisaged that the learners will be encouraged to focus their attention/approach with a specific question. A question that moves them on from the taught elements towards a focus and responsibility for the learning phase of the program. How the portfolio can be used is not prescribed in this program. However, this will be under review as too much freedom might not be productive. Therefore, the learners will be given the opportunity to utilise their portfolio as either an 'e-portfolio' or 'physical' or perhaps a mixture of each. A way to do this might be also to employ/start the portfolio as a form of 'mood-board'; that is, as a mechanism where they can experiment and play with their understandings. Also, in the future their portfolio will form part of a future exhibition for scrutiny by industry and other interested observers – so the portfolio will need to be free-standing, possess a narrative (or different narratives) and challenge perceptions. The aim is to challenge the learners to present something that captures what they value as a contribution to their learning. In essence, portfolios are excellent means of providing a visual creative/insightful contribution that can often exceed written or verbal accounts.

Discussion and concluding comments

This paper has provided a narrative of the design and early implementation of a new program in an international master's degree in Fashion Management, that wants to invest in the future of the fashion industry. This paper has argued that the context of fashion, together with the differing narratives of managers with creatives can create tensions, and anecdotal evidence suggests that it is often this lack of appreciation for the other (and what they bring to the enterprise) that is often paramount in the decline or failure of a new fashion enterprise. To understand and knowing how to deal with this tension was also one of the primary reasons to start a cultural management program in Antwerp 20 years ago and our learning from this experience means that we can now transfer this knowing to meet mainly the needs of our new fashion management program. In addition, further support for this approach has led to attract an industry sponsor before the start of the new international fashion management program to donate an Award of 250,000 Euro as an investment for a start-up, composed of a duo of one student coming from the new master's program in fashion management with an outside creative. The rationale for this award is to encourage new effective communication and subsequent action in the establishing of a new 'start-up' between business and creative. Therefore, at the beginning of the academic year a call for outside creatives was announced to meet with the new fashion management students and through a later

type of 'speed dating' matching event hopefully a connection will occur. A connection whereby effective communication can start to occur and thus lead to a proposal for a new start-up fashion business, applying for the Award.

Furthermore, it should be remembered that uppermost in this program design are two critical features. Firstly, exposure to different narratives – from tutors, other learners and the industry itself in different locations – and secondly, to provide a balance between theoretical input and practical application. A realisation that in order to fulfill the objectives of the program that the learner must steadily gain sufficient confidence to move on from dependence on others (for the taught element) towards independence (selecting, formulating and constructing a portfolio and final master's project).

We argued moreover that an essential feature of this program is to balance pedagogic principles with andragogic ones. This claim is made in addition to the question mark over andragogy made in academic literature. However, equally the claim made here is that only relying on andragogic principles is insufficient for the needs of new entrants to this field. Simply employing andragogic in more mature, less dynamic markets might be sufficient but the immaturity of the fashion markets, together with the international dimensions requires insights and exploiting their full creative potential of learners engaged with and seeking to maximise the potential of learners in this field. Thus, employing only a pedagogic approach it is claimed fails to pay sufficient attention to key needs of how adults learn (see, for example, Knowles summaries regarding the concept of self-directed learning and readiness-to-learn, the value of experience and the need for application – see for further information, Knowles, 1980). These features are insufficiently addressed in pedagogic program and uppermost in our thinking and design is this evolution from dependent student to independent learner.

Finally, it is important to appreciate that the focus for this program is to develop for learners a familiarity and confidence to act at an international level. This reflects the needs and development of the fashion industry as a whole. Only focusing on the local for the fashion industry – even though this is in Antwerp, a fashion hub for Belgium – will not be sufficient for the future. Fashion is presently a highly attractive industry to enter. It is a sector that is continuing to be very successful although there are many threats/challenges to address. Yet, entrants to this program are also aware that a large chunk of knowing for this sector is still in its formative stages. Greater knowledge is still required in almost every area of the fashion industry and a program like the one being developed from Antwerp wants to make an important contribution to its future development. Of course, it is still too early to validate this claim, but in three years' time after a thorough critical review of where the program's strengths and weaknesses lie we can provide a more accurate update.

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Note

1. Certainly, Knowles (1980) himself acknowledged that at least four of the five were equally relevant for children.

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