

A professor once told me a story about growing up in a small village in northern Italy, where his shirts were made by the local tailor. Though he eventually moved away to the city, he always returned to the village to have his shirts made by the tailor – not out of conservatism, he said, he just always assumed this was the way everybody was dressed. After some years, the tailor passed away, and there was no one to replace her. When he asked around to find out how people in the village now got hold of their clothing, they said they went to the new department store to purchase industrially manufactured shirts in one of perhaps ten standard sizes. He was quite devastated to find that none of the shirts fit his body, nor did they suit him, and he didn't like them either. So, he went looking for another tailor.

I only understood the urgency of his quest once I had worn clothing that was made especially for my body: sleeves that ran the length of my extraordinarily long arms were something I'd never before even dared to imagine. The cut of the waist predicts the subtle curve of my hip, after which comes a generous cavity for my greedy haunches. *Tuta II* is made of a cotton and elastane blend in steel grey, and it fits me like nothing I've ever worn before.

The word *tuta* resembles the Italian word *tutta*, which means 'everything' – the missing T is to be found in the garment, an overall with arms spread out wide. A geometric body switching back and forth between shape and figure, object and subject. The *tuta* was an overall designed by Thayaht in the 1920s as a Futurist project, intended to inspire actual social change by offering another image of the future in the form of universalised attire. Although meant for everyone, only avant-gardists wore the *tuta* as such, seeking to distinguish themselves as unconventional characters in their simple, practical clothes. There was nothing uniform about the *tuta*, really.

To wear *Tuta II* today, one century later, does not feel anachronistic in the slightest. Andrea Zabric designs each full-body suit for a particular person, their body and their occupation. Her *Tuta* designs take into consideration the way a person moves as they work, what they might carry with them and what shadows they cast in their conduct. *Tuta II* has one large pocket for my phone and a lapel collar that can be buttoned closed to cover my décolletage, as I wish. The cuffs are accented by a black ribbon detail, which gives the whole look a peculiar pyjama-like quality. In *Tuta II* the day trickles into the night, and work might start to look a little like play, until I collapse from exhaustion at my desk.

Being in some way dependent on the person who dresses you is perhaps to be expected. Like my professor, who felt so attached to the village tailor and her impeccable shirts, I wear *Tuta II* like a totem, an additional skin that encases me within a friend's protective embrace. The denim overall, *Tuta V*, is fitted with a pouch on the back that will carry a laptop, if another person will help the wearer to clip and unclip it. By encoding relation in the wearing of her garments, Andrea pulls the highly individualised subject in the *Tuta* back into reciprocal networks of compassion, trust and tendresse. She insists upon the writer, the

artist, the musician, or whoever else might wear one of the *Tuta*, as engaged bodies, the potential of which always being regulated by the boundaries constructed between them and their surroundings. In the *Tuta*, even my most productive and affirmative work is accepted as also being an act of dismantling, of disintegrating, perhaps even of self-sabotage.

There is almost nothing rational about Andrea's *Tuta*: they cannot be easily reproduced or even worn in unanticipated contexts. Each full-body suit is fabricated in Atelier Bobojević by Stanka and Gordana Bobojević, with whom Andrea works closely on every detail of these garments. They are not like the so-called *tuta* of today, a loose category that encompasses a whole range of practical items of clothing, such as overalls and tracksuits. The specificity of each *Tuta* is a patient gesture, against versatility and expediency, certainly against fashion. For the inevitability of dependency and enduring time.

Text by Miriam Stoney