

## **International Travel Award Report**

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### **ATINER**

Athens Institute for Education and Research  
2nd Annual International Conference on Visual and Performance Arts  
June 6-9, 2011 Athens, Greece

The Institute was established in 1995 as an independent association of academics with a mission to become a forum where academics and researchers from all over the world could meet in Athens and exchange ideas on their research and discuss the future developments of their discipline. International attendees presented research in the areas of Arts Education, Technology, Historic Costume, Environmental Issues, Iconographic Considerations, Studio Issues, Architecture, Music, Dance, and Photography.

### **PRESTIGE BRANDING: The Role of Elitism in Jazz Dress**

The generous support of the Office of International Studies, Associate Vice Provost Dr. Julie Mostov and Program Manager Heidi West, Fashion and Design & Merchandising Department Head Roberta Gruber, and Dean of the Westphal College Allen Sabinson provided me with a unique opportunity to present my research on product branding, nostalgic representations, dress, behavior, and jazz attributes. It was critical for me to establish a framework of early jazz resistance, to document the visual and behavioral construction of prestige, and to demonstrate elite jazz signifiers in a century of advertising. I concluded that the aesthetics of jazz had been purposely coded with qualities of elitism in opposition to the art's humble origins. My presentation received praise with colleagues expressing interest in dress psychology, jazz demonization, and the vital role of style in the development of jazz. Furthermore, I was able to initiate a peer relationship with a colleague at the School of Music at Boston University.



The ATINER conference presentation directly supported the manuscript that I am preparing titled *Fashion and Jazz: Dress, Identity, and Subcultural Style* with Berg Publishers. Athens was an important location for its momentous contributions to historic costume construction techniques and aesthetics, proving that the fine arts are vital to cultural, economic, and political development. Comparably, jazz has been instrumental in transforming popular culture from the

late 1800s to contemporary times. My on-going research examines through visual and behavioral means the birth, practice, fragmentation, and moderation of this American art form.

## Athens

During my visit, I witnessed daily political protests concerning the economic rank of this magnificent city. Labor strikes took place to oppose recommendations of austerity. Yet, the beauty and history of Athens could not be diminished.



National Guard



Erechtheion



Caryatid



Church near Monastiraki



Ruin near Hephaestus



Ancient Agora

For more information on the conference:  
<http://www.atiner.gr/docs/2011Conferences.htm>