

<b>Institution:</b> UAL
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 32
<b>Title of case study:</b> Helen Storey: UNHCR Artist in Residence, Za'atari Camp, Jordan.
 <p><i>Dress For Our Time Dubai Humanitarian Aid and Development conference and exhibition, 22 March 2017.</i></p>

<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> [dates]		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Professor Helen Storey MBE RDI	Professor of Fashion and Science, Centre for Sustainable Fashion	2008–present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2015–2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> Yes.		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words) <p><b>Storey</b> is the first person to be appointed United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) Artist in Residence, based at Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan (2019). Her extensive body of evidence-based practice research has had global impact at political and individual levels, in particular, on the understanding of the relationship between climate breakdown and the global migration of people. <b>Storey's</b> established practice of using fashion to engage people in complex global challenges continues to bring together artists and scientists with a view to sharing with public, education and professional audiences contemporary issues in science in ways that create new types of engagement.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words) <p>UAL's relationship with the University of Sheffield, through <b>Storey</b> and Professor Tony Ryan OBE, Professor of Physical Chemistry, was cemented through a collaborative project that explored how clothing and textiles can be used as a catalytic surface to purify air (Catalytic Clothing, 2011–2016). This ongoing partnership brings together art and design with science, and has produced a sustained programme of research work; most pertinent to this case study being the work at Za'atari (the largest refugee camp in the Middle East, home to 78,000 refugees).</p>		

For **Storey**, whose research is located within socially situated practice, fashion is employed not as a commodity but as a vehicle to change the way that we think—as individuals, and as organisations and institutions. Supported by UAL, **Storey's** engagement with connecting fashion and science has continued since 2014, through *Dress for Our Time (D4OT)*, and projects resulting from her Artist in Residence role at Za'atari.

In 2012, UAL was approached by the UK MET Office to participate in a programme exploring the impact of climate change in different industries, with specific reference to the future of the fashion industry. This work sharpened **Storey's** focus on exploring how, in conjunction with science, fashion, art and design might lead to a wider understanding of the climate crisis, and open up to audiences including artists, scientists and the public, ways to consider the relationship between this and global migration.

*Dress For Our Time* ('the dress') came out of this work. [3.1.] A focus for an approach and a set of methods to illustrate complex concerns, to provoke responses and to change behaviour, the dress was conceived as a way to humanise refugee data. A symbolic garment made from a gifted, decommissioned UNHCR tent, the concept was initiated, developed and led by **Storey**. The collaborative project involved more than 100 people and 15 partners, including pattern-maker Mark Tarbard and UAL technicians. Researching the type of garment that would be suitable for the project, the solution—using a refugee tent as its foundation—resulted from a recognition that, rather than creating a new piece of clothing onto which information might be projected digitally, what was required was a textile that had humanity and history already embedded in its fibres. UNHCR Jordan supplied the tent—once home to a family of six who had fled Syria for Jordan in 2012, and who were living in Za'atari. Data extracted from a MET Office global study of the risks arising from future shifts in ecosystems were visualised digitally on the dress, depicting our planet in 2015 and as it will be if insufficient action is taken to combat climate breakdown.

*D4OT* has taken multiple platforms and forms, being an interactive, performative and activist work that speaks to the contemporary social milieu, supporting other related research projects in the various situations in which it was installed, or performed as a work that bears witness 'to our times'. The *D4OT* project led to an extensive programme of research and collaborative work at Za'atari, outlined below.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

3.1. Storey, Helen, (2015–2019) *Dress For Our Time*. Flame-proofed canvas fabric, dimensions on display: 3 x 5m. Weight: 15 kilos. Key enabling partners: Unilever (funding: six consecutive years over the project's lifetime—£215,000), Helen Storey Foundation, Production at St Pancras International and Science Museum, HS1 Ltd (St Pancras International Station as a venue), Holition (data design partner) and David Betteridge (filmmaker, photographer).

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words).

The impact of **Storey's** work is both at a personal level, reaching individuals and small groups, and at scale, with audiences (physical and digital) for individual projects regularly in the tens of thousands. Since 2014, **Storey** has been awarded Honorary Professor at University of Bournemouth, appointed an RDI (Royal Designer for Industry, 2014), appointed the first Designer in Residence at the College of Human Ecology, Cornell University (2016), followed by the appointment as UNHCR Artist in Residence at Za'atari (2019).

The *D4OT* project has had a number of iterations, displayed in public places at times of social significance. The first installation of the dress was at St Pancras International, London (26–29 November 2015), at the entrance to Eurostar. The location was key to the project as the staging was timed to coincide with the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP21, in Paris. Through the world's first digital couture dress, delegates passing through the station were confronted with a digital depiction of climate breakdown and its human impact.

The dress was positioned to capture the attention of the maximum number of people passing through St Pancras international—politicians and decision-makers travelling to COP21, as well as the general public. Audience numbers: 1,204 visitors (actual); 136,600 (Twitter and Facebook combined); social media reach to over 289,000 (1,600 Instagram 'likes'); online media coverage: 180 million unique page views. There was extensive media coverage in newspapers, magazines and online totalling over 207 million unique visitors per month. To date, *D4OT* has over 2,000 followers on Instagram and 4,500 on Twitter. Network Rail commented "It was great having the Dress For Our Time at the station and I feel that the event brought a very important message about the future environmental concerns to the forefront, and need for action towards sustainability." [5.1.]

At the Science Museum, London (August–September 2016), the second major installation, the dress was shown as part of the museum's *Our Lives in Data* exhibition. UNHCR data was used to visualise global migration, with each pixel of light representing 100 migrating people. Head of Exhibitions and Programmes at the Science Museum: "The beauty of the display and the use of visually appealing moving representation of large-scale data drew visitors to it. Once engaged with *Dress For Our Time*, the installation evoked an immediate and personal response in our visitors...". For this iteration, visitors were interviewed by invigilators in the gallery: "... so different to when we watch the news on TV, although the information itself might be the same." "A work of art that beautifully, heartbreakingly and unflinchingly expresses the reality of the refugee crisis." "...this was a great way to address an issue like this... it was human and beautiful." [5.2.].

Further appearances of *D4OT* followed. By invitation of UNHCR, it was shown, with the *D4OT* film as the backdrop, to the UN Geneva TEDX conference 'Transforming Lives' (The Grand Palais, Geneva, 11 February 2016), trailed on Twitter as "A refugee tent from Za'atari given a second life to send a powerful message at TEDxNations". Live audience: 1,000; 21 live viewing parties worldwide: 3,000+ viewers. *D4OT* project ambassador Louise Owen explained some of the reactions to the dress: "Everyone responded really positively to it. Its presence created a lot of intrigue about the whole project." [5.3.]

Rokia Traoré, Malian singer-songwriter and UNHCR Regional Goodwill Ambassador for West and Central Africa, wore the dress when performing on The Pyramid Stage to open Glastonbury Festival (24 June 2016). "There's no better place than Glastonbury to wear the incredible *Dress For Our Time*. We're in the middle of a huge pop-up tented city and I'm wearing a dress made from a UNHCR tent, which sheltered a Syrian refugee family for months. I've seen myself the work of UNHCR supporting refugees from Mali and the difference that shelter can make to people who have lost their homes... I stand with refugees; will you stand with me?" *D4OT* appeared at No. 10 Downing Street (27 September 2019) as part of the London Climate strike, at the first ever London Peace Talks (3 November 2016) and at the Venice Biennale 2019.

Media coverage of the dress has been extensive, consistently reaffirming its message. Lucy Siegle, *The Guardian* (daily average unique browsers: 7 million) commented: "It's rare that there's a piece of fashion which is designed not to influence what you buy but to shift the way you think. It's even rarer to find a piece created to promote the discussion of climate science. But that's Helen Storey for you." [5.4.] Working with fashion celebrity Lou

Teasdale, who has 4.2 million Instagram followers, and using the hash tag 'Look Mum No Future', a social media campaign for the dress was launched to engage the public. More recently, an interview with *Times Higher Education* [5.5.] gave **Storey** a platform to describe her work—including the dress—and the most recent UKRI-funded project designing and distributing PPE across Za'atari.

During *D4OT* at St Pancras International, many children and young people asked incisive questions about the dress, often about the family that used to live in the tent. Feeling that the answers to these questions were important to public understanding of the issues communicated through the dress and, in order to answer them, **Storey** visited Za'atari refugee camp (March 2016). Her work there ran for nearly three years, when the relationship was formalised, with **Storey's** appointment as UNHCR's first Artist in Residence, at Za'atari. The invitation came on the basis of the work that she had carried out at the camp, which UNHCR Jordan said has, "...promoted refugee women's emerging role by delivering new opportunities, driving innovation and contributing to improving life in the camp for the communities we engage with." [5.6.].

The reach and significance of **Storey's** work is demonstrated by her academic and professional reputation. She is invited regularly to collaborate with partners and maintains long-term relationships across extensive, complex projects. **Storey's** ability to bring relevant partners together with UAL is evidenced in the following examples. For *D4OT*, she gathered a group of 15 collaborators, including UNHCR (UK and Jordan), Unilever, MET Office, Science Museum and St Pancras International; **Storey's** 15-year-old ongoing collaboration with Sheffield University on a range of projects, including the current UKRI-funded (through the UK Government's Global Challenges Research Fund and the Newton Fund), 18-month project (£800,000, from August 2020), 'People's PPE: Dealing with a Crisis by Building Livelihoods in Za'atari Refugee Camp', also known as 'PPE4Refugees'. By the end of 2020, this project, which involved a number of NGOs and two Jordanian Universities had designed and distributed 60,000 face masks. To reflect the potential and achievements of the collaboration, hand in hand with the refugee population, a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNHCR, University of Sheffield and UAL was signed in 2017.

**Storey's** methodology at Za'atari has been to co-define and co-create works, using 'deep listening' and problem-solving to improve the lives of the refugees in situ and in real time, rather than bringing pre-held approaches, or design methodologies, or pre-conceived ideas as to how the relationship would work. The projects across the camp have a clear focus on women and young girls. The examples of the projects at Za'atari chosen for this case study are the 'Soap and Perfume Making Lab' (in partnership with Swiss multi-national company, Givaudan) and 'The Tiger Girls' (These Inspiring Girls Enjoy Reading).

Part of a larger Za'atari initiative, Made in Za'atari—a lab space co designed for training and the production of products, crafts, a Hydroponics Garden (with Sheffield University), a beauty salon, a crèche, a café and a retail/gallery space, to sell produce to the camp and to camp visitors—the soap and perfume making project brought a group of Givaudan employees from France, Dubai and Egypt to provide training for groups of women to make and sell fragranced soap (100 women over the period). A member of the Givaudan team commented: "Working with the women in Za'atari has been an inspiration to all the Givaudan team. Their enthusiasm and resilience in the face of extreme hardship, their desire to learn and determination to build a better future for their families is incredible. They have a lot to teach us." [5.7.]

**Storey's** ability to create productive relationships is evident in the soap-making initiative, where she has made links with local industry to upscale production. In a related initiative, the School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is working on an experimental project looking at the impact on hand hygiene for children if a toy is buried in soap; a local



industrial partner in Jordan has been found to manufacture the soaps, involving the trained Za'atari women in the production.

At least 10,000 of the 80,000 refugees at Za'atari are adolescent girls. The Tiger Girls are a group of young women (aged nine–17) who engage in a programme of high-quality learning in order to provide an alternative to early marriage. The greatest long-term impact is on the girls—and now boys—engaged in the programme. LOVECOATS is a collaborative project through which the girls designed and made coats for themselves around their specific needs and wishes (to be warm in winter, to learn new making skills, to enjoy their love of fashion, to have something to gift). The co-design workshop format brought together other makers, NGOs and camp teachers and, in July 2016, they worked with 29 girls, teaching new making skills to create coats which reflected their own identities and sense of self. “Now I know I am important because I got to make my own coat and I walked on the catwalk. I feel confident.” [5.8.]

Film has played a key part in the recording and dissemination of **Storey's** work, including *Dress For Our Time: The Next Chapter* by David Betteridge. The films also form a crucial part of the development of the projects, central to **Storey's** work at Za'atari, showing the complex and detailed work taking place there in compelling and illuminating ways. In 2020, the cameras were given over to the refugees to record their own lives. The films are used by the UNHCR to communicate the work, with the film made around the soap-making project reported as the most watched UNHCR film for years, while the camp manager has had the most requests for how that project was set up than any other initiative. Za'atari is one of the most visited UNHCR camps, with visits from the Jordanian Royal Family and members of government, and international dignitaries. UNHCR officers visit from around the world, to see how Za'atari is managed and to understand how it has become so innovative.

The work at Za'atari continues, developing and expanding established projects and creating new initiatives, with ongoing impact on the lives of the individuals who live there.

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 5.1. *Dress For Our Time: Chapter One Evaluation Summary*, Imogen Slater, Centre for Urban and Community Research, Goldsmiths College. UAL on request.
- 5.2. van Rees, Cindy, ‘*Dress For Our Time* at the Science Museum, August 17th to September 4th 2016: Evaluation Report quotes and comments’. UAL on request.
- 5.3. [Dress For Our Time displayed at the UN Geneva TEDxPlace des Nations event, UAL announcement, 24 February 2016.](#)
- 5.4. [Lucy Siegle, The Guardian. \(3 January 2016\)](#)
- 5.5. *THE*, ‘Interview with Helen Storey: The British artist on working with refugees, the similarities between art and science and growing up next door to Twiggy’, 7 January 2021. UAL on request.
- 5.6. Letter from UNHCR Jordan to Professor Frances Corner (then Head of the London College of Fashion, now Warden, Goldsmiths, University of London) inviting Storey to become the first Za'atari Artist in Residence (4 July 2018). UAL on request.
- 5.7. [‘Jordan Soap workshop for women in a refugee camp’. Givaudan Foundation.](#)
- 5.8. [LOVECOATS at Za'atari Refugee Camp, 27 July 2017.](#)