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Physically Attractive

By Bel Jacobs, Metro

Somerset House relaunches its Embankment Galleries with Skin + Bones, a landmark exhibition devoted to ideas shared by fashion and architecture. It examines themes of geometry, identity, tectonic strategies and more, using breathtaking examples of structural play from some of the most innovative designers in the world.

Everywhere, thrilling connections are drawn: for instance between Boudicca's quasi-Edwardian Black Lowry ensemble (1994, pictured) and the undulating facade of Lars Spuybroeks/NOX's Maison Folie in Lille; or, in the section entitled Shelter, **Yeohlee Teng's haunting 'urban nomad' cape** and Shigeru Ban's paper tube shelters at a Rwandan refugee camp.

Sometimes, form follows function; sometimes, function is a mere starting point for boundary-challenging flights of imagination. Shown in this format, the architecture is harder to enjoy: despite a plethora of architectural photographs, film and models, the desire to experience Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum or Gehry & Partners' IAC Building in their three-dimensional glory can be overwhelming, while the physical extravagance of the fashion, displayed on mannequins, immediately captures the eye.

Visually striking and atmospherically presented, the exhibition is a formidable celebration of the engineered form in two of its key manifestations.

Until Aug 10, daily 10am to 6pm (Thu to 9pm), £8, free to £6 concs. Tel: 020 7845 4600.