

Power Mode: The Force of Fashion

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The theme of the Power Mode: The Force of Fashion Exhibition was when putting on these particular pieces, they showed the person's wealth and what they stood for. There were five categories that made up the exhibition such as dressed for battle, suited up, status as style, fashioning resistance, and sheathed in sex. Each category had about six to seven fashion pieces to support its theme. However, the one category that seems to resonate with the overall theme of the Power Mode was the fashioning resistance. Its pieces of work that were displayed showed the designer and which political issues they stood with. The impact of the exhibition correlates to the current situations we go through today with political issues. Through fashion, the designers are emphasizing the discrimination that is faced amongst race, gender, and sexual preference.



Figure 1: "Pussyhat"

From the Women's March to Treyvon Martin's murder, these designers such as Virgil Abloh and Christian Dior was not afraid to show their support for these social issues. One design that supported the Women's March/feminism was the pink "pussyhats" (see Figure 1). The hats designers, Krista Suh and Jayna Zweiman, started a website to show knitters how to make the pink "pussyhats" in December 2016 for the Women's March in 2017. The "pussy" ears were represented as cat-like to symbolize women taking back their female power.

Another design that supported the Women's March/feminism was the t-shirt "We Should All Be Feminists" by Maria Grazia Chiuri's debut of the Dior collection. That saying happened to be the title of the famous, personal essay by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie about rallying a cry for why we should all be feminists. These pieces of fashion reignited with the Power Mood

theme to bring back the female power that society has taken away from them. These designers showed that they support the cause and decided to take a stand in a fashionable way.



Figure 2: Off-White "HOODIE"

Another design from the collection that supported the theme and the Black Lives Matters movement was the Off-White “HOODIE” sweatshirt (see Figure 3). This sweatshirt represented Treyvon Martin’s death in 2012; he was a black teenager whom was in a black hoodie and was shot to death for looking suspicious. Therefore, the sweatshirt made by

Virgil Abloh, the Off-White creator, became a symbol of systemic racism and civil resistance. This allowed Virgil to bring awareness to the movement and show the power of protests. Also, it gave black people a voice that they didn’t really have before. For example, the t-shirts that says, “I Can’t Breathe,” were worn by athletes, specifically professional basketball players during their pregame workout. These shirts were worn in the NBA in 2014 first due to the death of Eric Garner, whom before he died from a chokehold by the arresting officer, spoke those last words. According to ESPN senior writer Adande (2014), James said “It’s more of a shout out to the family, more than anything, because they’re the ones that should be getting all the energy and effort.” This also brought awareness to the Black Lives Matter movement which was similar to the Off-White “HOODIE” sweatshirt Virgil designed.

Bibliography

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