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Second Paper



In "The Rhetoric of the Image" Roland Barthes

analyzes an advertisement for a French product. An ad can give people a lot of information about the product and what the advertiser wants them to see. He decomposes a lot of information that the advertisement will bring to people, such as linguistic messages, non-coded iconic messages, and coded iconic messages. And his analysis can also be used to analyze the advertisements we see every day.

This ad is from Spring 2022 Own Your Style magazine sent to me by Macy's. The three perfumes this time have the same bottle design as the previous ones, with a glass bottle with a black cap. Three fragrances are featured in this ad as foreground. They chose to use a blurred rose as the background, which also matched the theme and fragrance of the new fragrance. The color of the fragrance is also a different pink. The blurred background makes the three bottles stand out and ensures that people's eyes are locked on the fragrance. There is some text in the upper right corner, introducing these fragrances. The fragrance notes are also marked in the lower-left corner of the fragrance. At the bottom are the specifications and prices of these fragrances.

In Roland Barthes' article "The Rhetoric of the Image" there are three important messages in the ad. They are Linguistic messages, Non-coded iconic messages, and coded iconic messages. The linguistic message is denotational, connotational, anchorage, and relay. The linguistic message from this ad is the text on the right corner and the text on the bottles. The text in the upper right corner refers to perfume, or it can be said to be denotational. The text in the upper right corner explains the scent of this new fragrance, rose. The text on the bottle is about the brand's logo, fragrance type, and scent (name). It can be clearly noticed that the words "Tom Ford's" in the upper right corner of the text are enlarged, which may be relaying to everyone that this perfume is from this brand. Or as an anchorage to draw attention to three of Tom Ford's new fragrances.

Non-coded iconic message Roland Barthes mentions is objective, innocent, denotational, perceptual, quasi-tautological, and syntagmatic. In this ad, we can see three bottles of perfume and several flowers. Without reading the text, we can conclude that these perfumes are floral

fragrances from the flowers in the background. Below the perfume on the far left is a small icon that looks like a painting, telling us that the perfume is a floral type.

The coded iconic message is cultural, connotational, and symbolic. We need a little knowledge and thought to understand the connotational information it brings us. For example, the pink liquid in this ad gave me the first thought that it came from flowers. The flowers can be roses from an expansive estate or pink perfumes that have long been refined with rose essential oil and other scents and volatiles. Different varieties of roses have different fragrances and colors. Most of the volatile agents are commonly used in alcohol because it evaporates quickly. But it may also be made from other alcohol-water mixtures. Pink and flowers conjure up two things, one is spring and the other is romance. Because spring is the season when spring flowers bloom, and the blooming season of roses is also around April to May, just when spring comes. Roses are also flowers that people send to express their love during festivals.

With this information, advertisers hope to get people to see the ad and make people want to buy the product. He made the protagonists stand in front of the three fragrances and blurred the background behind them to make the fragrances stand out more and catch the audience's eyes all at once. The glass bottle allows people to better see the color of the fragrance. The tagline in the upper right corner uses the serif typeface. The slogan calls on people to try the three different rose fragrances and tells them they offer a range of options. This also echoes the three fragrances below. The prominent "Tom Ford's" text tells everyone that this is a fragrance from this brand. The text below is not only about the name, specification, and price of the perfume, but also adds

the top notes, middle notes, and banknotes of the fragrances so that interested people can better understand the taste of these fragrances.

Work Cite

Barthes, Roland, Rhetoric of the image, 1977

Macy's Spring 2022 April WK1 Booklet "Own Your Style" page 5