Danielle Daniel-Ramsey

October. 29, 2021

BUF 4900

Dr. Adomaitis

Museum Midterm Essay Exam

 Daniel Day opened Dapper Dan’s Boutique in the Harlem neighborhood located in uptown Manhattan in 1982. Day was inspired by the power of branding symbols and logos to express prestige and status. “Day silkscreened the trade mark logos of European luxury houses onto tailored suits and jackets, finding a strong following among hip hop artists” (Met Museum, 2021). This coat is made from leather screen printing with the Louis Vuitton “LV” monogram. This coat demonstrates the reuse of a concept rather than a fabric or garment.

 Ten years later in 1992, Daniel Day was forced to close the Dapper Dan Boutique after one of the European fashion houses took legal action to stop the streetwear designer from using the company’s logo in his creations. “Day’s creations which incorporated the logos of fashion houses like Fendi, Gucci and Louis Vuitton and which were quickly adopted by rap stars, have since become synonymous with the golden age of hip-hop” (Marchese, 2019). Fashion critics found it easy to compare Day’s use of logos to the sampling going on in music at the time. Just decades later, Daniel Day continued to collaborate with those same high-fashion houses that once legal carried out their issues with the designer.

 The color or hue of this garment is dark chocolate brown with the “LV” monogram printed all over. “Color is to be consider the biggest motivation for shoppers before size or price” (Visual Merchandising pp, 2021). The fashion house Louis Vuitton is known for their use of the neutral hues like brown and beige on their garments. Streetwear designer Daniel Day takes that iconic logo and prints it on his jackets. This garment would fall under the category of earth tones. This coat falls under the neutral color family that consist of white, gray, black and brown. The color value of this garment is a brown shade, this means black has been added to it to give it that dark brown hue.

 When it comes to crafting a beautiful garment, there is essential elements that must be adhered to, to meet the standard of design. A line is a direction, the way they are arranged determines the effectiveness of the presentation. For the Louis Vuitton “LV” monogramed coat the placement of the tan letters are going in a horizontal line and four petal flower images going in a diagonal line . To the person looking directly at the monogram, the logo contains both horizontal and diagonal lines. The rhythm is the movement of the eye through the related elements of a garment. When looking at the garment one’s eyes follows the placement of the “LV” logo placed strategically all over. “The form element is the particular body shape placed on the stand used for fittings” (Garner, pg. 388). The form of this mannequin is very much relaxed and cool. To wear the LV coat, one must be confident and sure of themselves to pull of this chic coat. “Balance is defined as a sense of stability or equilibrium” (Garner, pg. 254). This coat shows balance in the fact that the left matches the right. The sleeves are the same length, the collar is symmetrical and the base of the coat is also the same length on both sides. This brown leather coat is symmetrical.

 Juxtaposition means to show similarities or differences between two elements (Garner, pg. 256). The only juxtaposition happening on this coat designed by Daniel Day is the “LV” monogram that was screen printed on the leather. The way the LV is placed next to the three different four petal tan flowers all over this 1988 coat. “The composition dominance which is centered around the idea that some element should be dominant and its often the mannequin”. The dominant quality about this coat is the coast itself. The mannequin is standing in a strong and confident pose. The arms are directly at its sides while the legs are also parallel to each other and pointing forward. The proportion relates to the relationship size, scale and weight elements. Judging from the proportion of this leather coat. It indeed has an oversized fit. It’s a long coat so comes down pass the butt almost to the knees of the mannequin. The sleeves hang close to the wrist of the mannequin. Regarding this garment, repetition is the repeating or reiterating of an idea or motif. This coat is such a classic but chic piece the only repetitive element going on is the “LV” monogram that’s placed all over the exterior of the leather coat

 When it comes to the texture, texture is defined as the surface treatment or “feel”. Texture can be visual or physical. This brown leather coat with the “LV” monogram directly printed on it appears to be smooth and shiny. Though smooth this coat appears heavy and absorbs a lot of light. Because the coat is leather the texture is smooth but heavy and rich. The “LV” is printed all over isn’t rough after being printed on the coat. It is also in fact smooth which just increases the quality of the leather coat. The appearance of the leather coat is both feminine and masculine due to the smooth yet heaviness of the garment. The leather coat appears heavy which gives it that rich masculine quality and smooth to the touch which gives it a feminine quality.

Daniel Day otherwise known as Dapper Dan was the originator of luxury streetwear. Thankfully, he created clothing the marginalized high fashion lovers. His designs put him at icon status in the city of New York and all other the world. Day opened his boutique in Harlem during the early 1980’s. “At the time, it was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year, street hustles and rappers kept to no man’s watch” (Browne, 2017). The rise of Daniel Day came at a time during the 1980’s when hip hop was finally becoming commercial and mainstream. Hip hop was now looking as legitimate genre of music and the success of Dapper Dan rose with it. During this time, low income communities like Harlem was plagued by the crack cocaine epidemic. At the same time, these factors created more money and a local economy that kept Dapper Dan’s boutique a thriving business.

During the 1980’s in New York City the everyday life of these Harlem citizens was greatly impacted when Daniel Day appeared on the scene. Because of the rise of hip hop and rap culture, people living in African American communities was greatly influenced by attitudes and demeanor of these successful artist emerging on rap scene. This leather coat says im high fashion but with this sense of realness. “Realness is the quality or state of being real” (Met museum, 2021). The non-verbal communication this garment reflects is the art of dressing authentically. This Dapper Dan original says, “one can’t get this anywhere else”. Daniel Day is known for his custom designs and to wear an original piece says you are soon on your way to becoming a staple in the hip hop community.

Fashion isn’t just history within fabric. Fashion reflects the time, place and mood of the people living at that time. Through clothing there are social, political and economic changes being communicated. “The clothes we wear are not only the truest forms of self-expression, but also a reflection of the world in which we exist” (Militano, 2020). Since right now we are in year two of a pandemic, fashion in retail or on the runway reflects the sense of relaxed and laid back nature to the ensembles. The social values of today are self enhancement, being open to change and transcendence of one self. With today’s fashion, one wants to be ready for the office, to lounge on the coach or a fun outing with friends. More shoppers value time and flexibility these days so consumer shopping reflects that.

References

Browne, B. (2017). Dapper Dan: Harlem’s Hip Hop Tailor. Retrieved from. <https://therake.com/stories/icons/dapper-dan-harlems-hip-hop-tailor/>

Figure 1. (1988). Dapper Dan LV Monogram Coat. Retrieved from. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/850920>

Marchese, D. (2019). Dapper Dan on Creating Syle, Logomania and Working with Gucci. Retrieved from. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/07/01/magazine/dapper-dan-hip-hop-style.html>

Museum, Met. (2021). In America: A Lexicon of Fashion. Retrieved from. <https://www.metmuseum.org/press/exhibitions/2021/costume-institute-in-america>

Militano, H. (2020). History in Fabric: Fashion’s Reflection of Society. Retrieved from. <https://www.crfashionbook.com/fashion/a32950305/fashion-society-trends-economy-protest/>

Visual Merchandising, PP. (2021). Visual Merchandising Ch. 1-4. Retrieved from. Blackboard.