

Danielle Daniel-Ramsey

BUF 4900

Dr. Adomaitis

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Professional Development

1. What was the name of your Professional Development seminar? From whom taught the seminar? What was the seminar about overall?

The name of my professional development was Ravishing: The Rose in Fashion currently on view at the FIT Museum in Manhattan. Valerie Steele is the director and chief curator of this museum. The Ravishing: The Rose in Fashion exhibit considers how roses have influenced the way we look, feel, dress and fantasize. “The rose and the savage thorns that protect it – along with the symbolism and myths it has inspired – have long affected designers of fashionable dress, textile and accessories” (de la Haye, 2021). Bringing the centuries of fashion together, this exhibition focuses on innovative and experimental designs while recognizing how transformative it is to wear and even hold a rose. This exhibition includes more than one hundred items that were selected from the museum’s collection featuring hats, gowns, ensembles, coats and accessories. Some of the themes that in interpreted from the exhibition was love, beauty, sex and death.

2. What did you actually learn in this seminar? What was the time duration? What were the activities?

The Ravishing: Rose in Fashion exhibit was quite romantic but edgy at the same time. The different ensembles were arranged by color which also doubled as the theme in parts of the exhibition. The theme of the first group of ensembles were centered around the red rose named “crimson joy”. I learned that the red rose is often associated with love, passion and devotion particularly among women. This section includes garments from women designers such as Dior, Halston and Comme des Garçons. Another part of the exhibit displayed the use of white and pale pink roses. Since Ancient times, white and pale pink roses were symbols of birth in a marriage, the loss of virginity and even death. White and pink roses have also been associated with young women or debutantes. The black rose, though not found in nature, symbolizes fated love, tragedy and death. There are a lot of black roses depicted in fashion design that has a glamorous or transgressive allure, one example of that is black lace. Featured was a cocktail ensemble designed by Balenciaga in 1963.

Lastly, the final group of garments were themed the mixed bunch roses in yellow, orange and other colors. The section highlights the significance of the rose to men’s fashion and gender neutral designs. Roses have been seen in creative director of Gucci designs, Alessandro Michele. The section of the exhibition features a suit by Michele that was made of blue silk and woven with pink rose designs. Other ensembles in this section included a man’s coat with a rose printed fabric using bold colors and graphic patterns. Lastly, a two-piece ensemble made from lace with a rose pattern and trousers spray painted in shades of brown, grey, red and orange. I spent about twenty-five minutes at this museum and there were no activities presented.

3. How does this professional development seminar assist in your career? Would you recommend it to other students?

This Ravishing: Rose in Fashion exhibition was great because I finally have a better understand of the use of roses in fashion design and how just the different colors can have such a historical meaning behind them. This will assist in my career because knowing the symbolism of the rose will assist me conversations in the future regarding the history of the rose in fashion in the 19th, 20th and 21st century. I would definitely recommend to other students. I personally love going to fashion exhibits throughout New York City and attending and exhibit like this adds to the curriculum being a New York City college student. After attending, I can now identify the meaning of the different color of roses and what the designer was trying to say by using it in their designs.

References

De La Haye, A. (2021). *Ravishing: The Rose in Fashion*. Retrieved from.
<http://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/ravishing-the-rose-in-fashion.php>