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Fashion Institute Midterm Essay

In the late 1960s the term “Deconstruction” was coined by French philosopher Jacques Derrida who initially named the process of breaking down established forms in lieu of the original word “Construction” which was the creation of established forms. This idea of deconstruction referenced an unheard of ideology of contradicting and challenging and the universal truth of the world as we knew it. This thought process spread to a multitude of art forms such as architecture, music, arts and eventually fashion. Deconstruction fashion can usually be described as a clothing item that looks unfinished or looks as if the designer is still in the midst of experimenting with the product. Normally a product that is unfinished would not be considered a beautiful item or a “piece” but the very idea of Deconstruction fashion is meant to challenge the traditional perception of beauty. The perfect example of this concept is the Gift of Ann Demeulemeester : Collection Fall/Winter 96-97 found in the “*Reinvention and Restlessness: Fashion of the Nineties.*” Exhibit at The Museum of Fashion Institute of Technology.



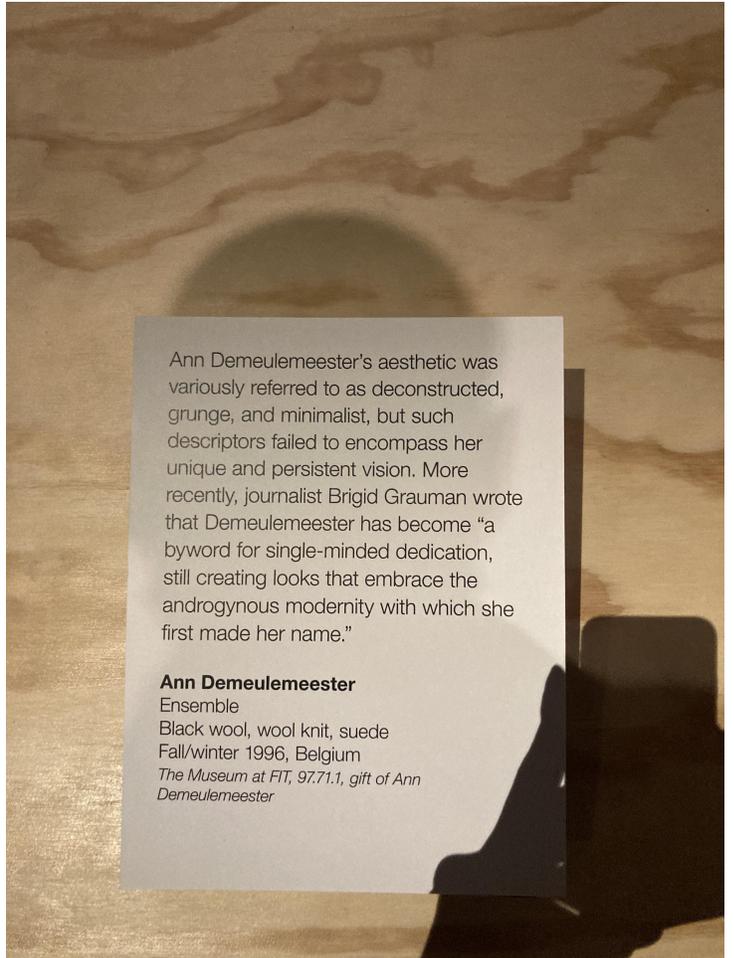
The color of a garment says a lot about what it stands for and what its purpose was for the original creation. For Ann Demeulemeester's deconstruction piece the usage of black depicts a multitude of tones mainly mystery, death, intrigue and sophistication. Using repetition (1) by repeating or reiterating an idea or motif of the values of black allows for Ann Demeulemeester to create a contrast (2) between the garment and the mannequin accentuating a sharp difference in the balance(3) of the form from the left side of the garment to the right side. This asymmetrical appearance destroys the typical fashion ideal of fashion where a well-designed display should be in balance by taking the sleeve off of the right arm completely and maintaining the left arm entirely covered . The purposeful deconstruction of the piece alters the proportion (4) of the display by relationship size, scale, "weight" among the elements (Adomaitis, A. D. (2022, April) (Pg. 58). Using the mannequin as the dominant (5) feature by extending the piece far beyond the height of the mannequin to the floor and shorting the dress portion of the legs on one side to manipulate the rhythm(6) leading the viewer's eye from dominant object (the mannequin) to subordinate object being the (ensemble) Demeulemeester uses this technique in order to draw lines (7) throughout the entire mannequin utilizing diagonal lines to create action, forceful, strong, and dynamic impact in the display seen in the slit on the bottom portion of the dress and the arm hole on the left side of the ensemble. This ultimately creates a new idea of form (8) and a very different sense of beauty within the garment rejecting fashion in its natural state expressing the ideas of anti fashion through composition and deconstruction.

The textures are defined as the surface treatment or feel of an item or material. The Ann Demeulemeester ensemble is in black wool and wool knit: one armed asymmetrical jacket; long asymmetrical cut black wool skirt with long train and diagonal silver metal zipper; one armed

asymmetrical black knit blouse; single right hand glove in black knit; and signature black suede boots. The two major textures being the black knit and wool knit textiles with a hint of suede. Both the wool knit and pure wool had a very smooth surface that was subtle in the light opposite of the types of wool that we utilize in modern day clothing. There is a light feel that lays on the mannequin the type of wool Ann Demeulemeester used was a virgin wool identical to cashmere which is a natural fiber known for its extremely soft feel and insulating properties (Kadolph & Marcketti, 2016). Cashmere fibers are very fine and delicate, and almost feel like silk to the touch. Suede is a very durable and tough fabric when compared to cloth fabrics (Kadolph & Marcketti, 2016). The thin nature of suede gives it a smooth appearance. Suede is very soft, and its smooth nap gives it an appealing fabric texture which in this case was a great contrast for the ensemble.

The nineties zeitgeist is the mood, ideology and spirit of a particular period of history shown by the ideas and beliefs of time in the nineties. Dress is one of the main attributes of what creates a time period and what makes a particular period of history memorable by any standard. The music of the time period being teen pop (Britney Spears and Spice Girls), Hip-hop (Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre) and Grunge music (Nirvana and Guns 'N' Roses) which influenced the way that people dressed a significant amount. CNN stated in their style article on the 1990s “ Meanwhile, for a generation of teens raised on MTV and the fictional lives of fellow adolescents -- Beverly Hills, 90210 and Bel-Air, to name just a couple -- fashion came to be defined as a mix of preppy garments (duster coats, plaid miniskirts, knee-high boots) and slouchy cardigans, ripped jeans and snapback hats.” (CNN, 2020). This showing of artistic expression through the use of media and art forms outside of fashion to dictate the trends and fads of fashion is directly

related to the deconstruction ideal that Ann Demeulemeester was projecting with her garments in the 90s. Expressing that fashion is not linear and that there is no one basis for fashion whether it comes to form or composition. The fashion of the 90s took on many different shapes and visions fighting against the societal norms presented in earlier years and challenging the idea that fashion is and should remain ever changing.



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