

Faharia Afrin
BUF 4900: Internship Midterm Essay Exam Fall 2022
Dr. Alyssa Dana Adomaitis
11/01/22

Shoes: Anatomy, Identity, Magic

Shoes play an important role to the human anatomy. Humans' are always using their feet to walk, run, jog, and/or travel daily or frequently. Since the earliest days of humankind, shoes of many different materials such as leather hides have been worn for protection, convenience, and/or style (Barefoot Report, 2022). Shoes are mainly worn to keep one's feet safe from penetrating objects that may injure one's foot, harmful liquids, dirt that make feet unclean, harsh temperatures, etc. Certain styles or materials of shoes also demonstrate one's economic and social status such as crocodile skin leather heeled boots. When one wears shoes, their height may change slightly or drastically depending on the heel length or curve of the shoe. Shoes such as heels can make you appear taller and when one walks or stand in high heels, one's body weight is pushed forward, and the entire pressure is taken up by the ball of one's foot and ones' toes. Heeled shoes also make loud noises which draw attention from others.' Heels are mostly worn for formal events and special occasions, rather than everyday wear. Unlike heels, sneakers are more of a casual wear that one wears for comfort to take on tasks that may require walking or standing for prolonged period of time throughout the day. Sneakers are also worn by athletes or people participating in physical activities such as sports including basketball. Some sneakers have a flat oval shape while other sneakers may be wedged or have a level of height on the bottom, and other sneakers may have curves that shape the feet. Sneakers do not make the same sound has heels make but some sneakers may still make a squeaky sound when coming in contact with tiled flooring. The Puma sneakers by Alexander McQueen are high top sneakers that are made of black leather and white and red coloring on the bottom outline of the shoes. These shoes debuted in 2008 during the spring season in the United States of America and was a present to Veronica Webb (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The element of design as described in the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4, is the basic components of color, line, space, shape, form, texture, and value. The element of line as described in the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4, is the orientation and how it is placed affects the way the display is perceived (Adomaitis, 2022). The element of line used in the Alexander McQueen x Puma black high tops of 2008 are designed in a way where the ankles are covered, and the bottom is flat which raises slightly at the tip of the shoe to make the wear comfortable to the one who wears this shoe by allowing proper space for the toes to move around. Therefore, the line of the shoes is a mainly horizontal line and curved line as well due to the tip of the sneakers that raises slightly upwards. Due to the horizontal line of the shoe, the sneaker appears to look as relaxed, calming, flexible, and mellow.

The element of rhythm is described in the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4, as rhythm being an independent transition from one element to another. The audience's vision is guided by rhythm from a dominant object to a subsidiary object (Adomaitis, 2022). The element of rhythm is portrayed in the display of the Alexander McQueen x Puma black high tops of 2008 through the use of colors. The texture of the sneakers is overall black leather with an addition of sheen black texture on the toe section of the sneakers (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022). This leather material is 100% vinyl face according to the Textile Kit. (The Textile Kit, 2018). This particular design of the sneakers creates a sense of luxury and

upper-class style which demonstrates that the sneakers are not for “casual wear” that one might wear to run errands and for rough use.

From the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4, the element of form is defined as gaining perspective, volume, and dimension. The notion of form is employed by the designer to convey depth in items relating to their distance from one another within the composition (Adomaitis, 2022). The Alexander McQueen x Puma black high tops of 2008 demonstrate the element of space by way the sneakers are parallel to each other facing the same way slightly towards the right. The sneakers are placed in a display where there are no other sneakers or shoes in general next to them. This positioning of the sneakers allows one to solely focus on them without glancing at any other shoe that would be next to it. The sneakers are placed on clear see-through glass that reflects the shadows on the bottom of the glass (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The element of balance is mentioned in the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4 under the ‘Composition’ tab. There is symmetrical and asymmetrical in balance which is another word for mirror image. Another word for asymmetrical balance is formal balance and it is described as the edges of an asymmetrical balance are equivalent in mass but not identical duplicates (Adomaitis, 2022). The element of balance is displayed in the exhibition of the Alexander x Puma Black high-top sneakers of 2008 in various ways. For example, although the sneakers are facing slightly towards the right, the sneakers are still placed proportionately in the middle section of the display. Around the display there is empty space since it is only those sneakers on that part which allows the viewers to not get distracted by other shoes. The light inside the display is centered on the sneakers since they are also positioned in the middle which creates a serious ambience to focus on the shoes along with the seriousness of the dark color of the sneakers (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The element of contrast juxtaposition is defined in the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4 as including sharp disparities and the pairing of various forms or lines. The element of contrast juxtaposition is represented in the Alexander x Puma black high-top sneakers of 2008 due to the dramatic differences of the materials and colors. While the majority of the sneakers are jet black in shade, the bottom outline of the sneakers is mostly white with red coloring on the tip of the shoes as well as the bottom section of the outline. The colors black, white, and red are drastically different from one another and it makes the sneakers stand out more. Along with the different colors, the sneakers also include the shiny material on the toe section of the shoes which shows contrast with the black leather material of the majority of the sneakers that is not seen. (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The element of dominance is mentioned in the ‘Compositions’ tab of the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4 as stating that various elements should be superior or the element which stands out than the rest of them which is most often than not, the mannequin in the store displays (Adomaitis, 2022). The element of dominance is portrayed in the Alexander x Puma black high-tops of 2008 by the use of black colored materials on the sneakers. Compared to the rest of the colors, the color black is the dominant element displayed. Due to the dark black color of the shoes, the name “Alexander McQueen” on the high-top front section of the sneakers stands out more which is in white color. The dark red part of the tip of the shoe outline also shows dominance in comparison to the white colors of the sneakers (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The element of proportion is defined in the ‘Compositions’ tab of the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4. The definition of the element of proportion is described as scale, weight, and size (Adomaitis, 2022). The element of proportion is demonstrated in the Alexander x Puma black high-top sneakers of 2008 as being equally the

same size, length, weight of each shoe. Although the museum or website does not provide the exact scale and weight measurements of these sneakers, one can use visual comprehension to determine these sneakers are proportionate in these elements. The right shoe does not seem bigger, smaller, or a different shape than the left shoe (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The element of repetition is described in the Visual Merchandising PowerPoint Chapters 1-4 under the 'Composition' tab as repeating an idea or intention (Adomaitis, 2022). The element of repetition is demonstrated in the Alexander x Puma black high-top sneakers of 2008 by including nine holes for the black colored soles to go inside the sneakers so the person wearing it may tie it. Another way the element of repetition is displayed in these sneakers is that the same black, white, and red color of the sneakers are in the same location on each shoe. Lastly, the name "Alexander McQueen" is labeled on the front section of the high-tops in white lettering on a black colored background. The black shiny material is placed on the toe section of each shoe. The positions of the holes, soles, colors, materials, and lettering are all in the same location of each shoe (The Fashion Institute of Technology Museum, 2022).

The Alexander x Puma black high-top sneakers that debuted in the spring season of 2008 is a demonstration of dress and how it influences life. Shoes give one insight into who a person wearing them may be. The way one wears shoes expresses their sense of style and what message one may try to portray. For example, in hip-hop culture sneakers play an important role into one expressing their identity, mood, sense of fashion, social and economic status. Celebrities who are rappers or hip-hop artists have a particular way they style their shoes with their outfits. Majority of them tend to wear bold colors such as orange and red, and it may be contrasted with subtle colors such as white, beige, and light grey. Sneakers, especially high-top sneakers, also offer a sense of comfortability compared to other shoes such as high heels. Some women may lean more towards wearing shoes such as sneakers that are more durable and easier to walk in for long hours. While some people may enjoy the relaxation and comfortability sneakers offer, there are some who also want their sneakers to look glamorous as well. That is what the Alexander x Puma black high-tops display with its sheen material of the shoe that contrasts the black leather to give it a rich look. A celebrity who wore the Alexander x Puma sneakers is rapper ASAP Nast who was quoted saying that in his perspective, music and fashion are correlated especially in our culture and society today. He goes on to further explain his opinion that one may assume you play good music and may be more interested in listening to your music if you dress fashionable (Marty, 2022).



McQueen, A. (2008). Puma. Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City, NY, United States.



Appendix

Barefoot Report. (2022, July 19). *When did humans start wearing shoes?* Barefoot Report. Retrieved October 27, 2022, from <https://barefootreport.com/when-did-humans-start-wearing-shoes/>

Shoes: Anatomy, identity, magic. Home. (2022, October 24). Retrieved October 27, 2022, from <https://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/shoes-2022/index.php>

Marty, J. (2022, June 7). *25 celebrities wearing Alexander McQueen Sneakers 2022.* Hood MWR. Retrieved November 1, 2022, from <https://www.hoodmwr.com/celebrities-wearing-alexander-mcqueen-sneakers/>

Adomaitis, A. (2022, 27 October). *Visual Merchandising Ch 1-4.* Lecture.

The Textile Kit. (2018). *Eco Edition.* ATEXINC Corporation