

The Museum at Fashion Institute of Technology

Dior + Balenciaga: The Kings of Couture and Their Legacies

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We are taking a look into a magnificent exhibition at The Museum at Fashion institute of Technology. The garments specifically designed by Christian Dior, Dior and Cristóbal Balenciaga, Balenciaga. As current exhibition critiques it is ones job to take a deeper look into the garments. In this case we are only taking a look at one specific garment. That garment being, “Cristóbal Balenciaga dress. Ivory and black pinstriped cotton, 1938, Paris, a gift of Rodman A. Heeren” .

Breaking down the dress through specific elements of design while incorporating mathematical concepts all throughout. For the dress itself everything that the dress shows is specifically placed onto the garment based on the silhouette it composes as well as how the pleats on the skirt fall. The silhouette is a a line almost empire silhouette in where the pleats are evenly separated and arranged on the skirt of the dress.

Beginning with color, the colors on the garment are very neutral and tame. Including colors such as Nude, an earth tone with black stripes. The intensity towards the color is not illuminated enough to create a bold statement to the dress. In the color system, in order to reach the level of nude you would need to subtract the primary colors in a specific standard. However, all though there is a lack of color, the garment has to stand out one way or another. A stronger enhancement of the garment comes from the lines that is showcased.

The lines on the garment are important especially when thinking about direct composition and placement on the dress. As we take a close look at the dress we can see how each line

connects perfectly at what looks like an obtuse angle towards the top of the dress. The lines themselves are diagonal which create an illusion since the lines are precise. On the skirt of the dress, the lines change direction and become vertical. Vertical lines create an elongated illusion to the person wearing the garment making them appear taller than they really are, as stated on previous slides, (Adomaitis, 2022)

Aside from the lines being precise and creating illusions, they also conduct balance. The dress is designed to make the designs symmetrical. If you were to cut the dress in half you can tell that both sides are mirrored from each other making them equally structured all throughout. Looking more into the details on the dress we can tell that the skirt contains a strong rhythm and repetition to draw attention in simplicity and elegance (dominance).

Towards the bottom of the dress, the dress has a pattern of lines going from vertical to horizontal, back to vertical and then to horizontal. When it comes to proportion on the dress, the torso of the dress is much shorter compared to the proportion of the skirt. All though on a scale the dress is fit for an individual, the exact proportions might be a bit off, mathematically speaking.

Soriano- 4

Figure 1: Cristóbal Balenciaga (2022) dress. Ivory and black pinstriped cotton, 1938, Paris,



Figure 2: Guadalupe Soriano (2022) At the Museum at Fashion Institute of Technology



Sources

Figure 1:

Cristóbal Balenciaga (2022) *dress. Ivory and black pinstriped cotton, 1938, Paris, gift of Rodman A. Heeren, Museum at Fashion Institute of Technology, New York City, NY, United States.* <https://www.fitnyc.edu/museum/exhibitions/dior-balenciaga.php>

Dr. Adomaitis (2022, June 12) *Visual Merchandising Chapters 1-4 [presentation. pdf]*. The New York City College of Technology, Brooklyn, NY, United States.

Figure 2: Guadalupe Soriano (2022) At the Museum at Fashion Institute of Technology