

Admittedly when I had gone to The MET I did not have a clear idea as to what piece of art I was going to attempt to focus on. There were so many different and in their own right, beautiful pieces of art that I had grown quite fond of during my trip. So on I went with over 37 images stored on phone, trudging down 5th avenue to find a companion piece that would set off trigger so I would know for sure which one of these masterpieces I could attempt to analyze to the best of my abilities. That is when I stumbled upon the fabled window display that would call out to me. Sitting adjacent to Trump Tower, the Gucci store had a bag display with colors of gold and white that seemed so similar it had to have been inspired by a piece i had seen few hours earlier at the MET. That piece was Erte (Romain de Tiroff)'s *Modes d'Hiver* a piece that had been made in 1921 for the cover of *Harper's Bazar*. With my pair of companion pieces together I was finally able to take the next steps to developing my analysis.



These two pieces instantly struck me as having very similar concepts. The backing of Gucci's bag display is made from fabric which gives it a very soft feel which is complimented by the circle shape, a soft round shape. This places a stark contrast between the sharp triangular background of Erte's piece. In my opinion this is what makes these images companion pieces because I feel that Gucci's display mirrors the effect that Erte's piece so clearly presents. In both

pieces the your eyes immediately fall upon the white part as the center of focus as they begin to develop shape. The light shade of whiteness that our cinderella in Erte's piece and miniature ottomans in the gucci display both build towards the entirety of the rest of their pieces flow. Erte's use of the roundness of cinderella's dress creates a smoothness that we see turn sharp as your eye continues to go upwards and is even alluded to in the the triangular form of cinderella's upper body to foreshadow the sharpening of the triangle's point. In a similar way Gucci has mirrored this effect by positioning these circular and smooth ottomans into a pyramid like structure which is further emphasized by the black bags that make a mini triangle pattern within. The conversion of the triangle form into a smooth circular form is brilliantly foreshadowed by the use of a soft texture to create the last triangle that we see before more circular shapes flood the background establishing the change in texture.

In almost a counterintuitive way, I decided that shape would be the best element to talk on first. The basis of shape is rooted in the use of lines. Both the Gucci art director and Erte clearly have a great understanding of how to use lines especially as a way to display motion. The use of lines to direct the viewer on how they should digest it. Both in Gucci's display and Erte's piece an arc filled in by lines directing towards the centerpieces really gives a strong sense of where the pieces would be going even if the top half of the view was cut off. The lines quite literally do this with the Gucci lines being attached to lights and the Erte piece's lines leading to the starformed vegetables over the background.

Space is a very important aspect to composition. Grasping this concept and utilizing it properly is the sign of an artist truly understanding the limitations of a canvas and working to optimize it. In the Gucci store, the use of space can most vividly be seen by the implied tunnel

vision created by the arrangement of the circles in the background. It almost feels like you can walk into the fixture. The idea of these images being opposites to each other makes it very interesting that in an almost reversed action, Erte's piece uses space to seeming display a cinderella walking towards the viewer. *Oberlin.edu* space should use positive and negative areas to define a sense of depth and definition to a work of art. By this definition it would be safe to say the composers of both of these pieces clearly understand this element.

Texture is an important part of deciding an overall tone for a piece. The necessity of defining a specific tone through the use of lines, shapes and colors is important to determine how our eyes digest things. The idea of these two pieces displaying some form relationship in the terms of their conception has been harkened back to numerous times in this analysis so allow me to do it once again for the last time. The soft background of the gucci display with is emphasized by its warm yellow and gold coloring and various soft shapes like circles as well as the softness in the fabrics themselves. Ironically what truly emphasizes this softness is the use of clearly hard stands for the bags and their colder, harsher shade. In almost a mirror to this image Erte's piece had forced all of its softness to the forefront of the image with the dress on his cinderella and the fabric like design that follows her. Yet where the fabric design ends we are left with the harshness and sharpness of the orange background. I find it very interesting that these two pieces deal with such similar ideas in such different ways.

Both this project and this class has always been about understanding the intricacies and potency of a canvas and what an artist can do in it. When working on a canvas the artist is limited and as such what they are able to do on one is very important. As visual merchandisers it will be our duty to catch somebody's attention very quickly and reach a subconscious

understanding of our underlying message. Like art, a window or a setup should be able to convey a message and if it doesn't then there was no point in ever even creating it.