

Internship Midterm Essay Exam

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Figure 1. (own photo)



Figure 2. (Museum at FIT)

In terms of history, Hip Hop music can be traced back to the 1970s (Kennedy Center, n.d.). Hip Hop music is characterized by its rhythmic and poetic elements accompanied by a musical accompaniment that adds a layer of depth to the song. Over the past few decades, hip-hop has gained a lot of popularity among African-Americans and Latinos from all over the world. In spite of the fact that hip-hop was the genre that spread the trend the fastest, fashion also played an important role in spreading the trend. Hip-hop artists did not necessarily strive to make a place for themselves in the luxury fashion industry. However, image, the manner in which one

presents oneself through one's style choices, carries a certain level of social capital in black communities (Berlinger, 2018).

On March 24, I attended the "Fresh, Fly, and Fabulous: Fifty Years of Hip Hop Style" exhibit at FIT. Being an African American woman myself, I could not help but feel nostalgic while walking through the exhibit. One of the pieces that stood out the most to me was the jeans jacket with the graffiti print on the back where the lady in the Gucci shirt was sitting (figure 2). The significance of the colors stood out to me the most. The *hue* of the jeans jacket was a dark blue-green color based on the color wheel (Bell, 2022). While the *hue* of the image involved colors like yellow and orange-yellow. As you can see Figure 2 is an image of an African American woman wearing *neutral* tones. In the middle of her shirt is an *earthy-toned* Gucci symbol. On her feet, she wears knee-high tan boots and her jewelry is embellished with gold. The designer used rust, black, and a touch of yellow colors according to color psychology (Bell,2002). As a result of the combination of all those colors, this image creates a mood. An *intriguing, rich, and happy* mood is conveyed by the young lady drawn on the jeans jacket. Despite the fact that the *texture* of the jeans jacket appeared rough to the touch, the light made it appear smooth and shiny. In this case, the *value* was determined by the black shirt and the yellow shading on the young lady's body. A more vertical line was evident in the jeans jacket, and the seams were a sign of pride, particularly concerning the image on the piece. The piece was characterized by a *rhythm* that focused on the back of the jeans jacket. There was another jeans jacket positioned similarly to that shown in figure 2. On the right-hand side, the *rhythm* returned to the front. In this case, the back of the jeans jacket was displayed on a bust mannequin, allowing the audience to focus on the entire design on the back of the jacket. Since all of the pieces next to it were facing the same direction, the *balance* of the piece was symmetrical. In this

piece, the light gray color jeans jacket stands next to a dark blue jeans jacket, which is a stark *contrast*. The shoulders were adorned with Gucci symbols in white that were surrounded by black trimming. In terms of *proportion*, the style garment seemed to be placed higher than the garments adjacent to it due to its location in the middle. In addition, I think that the white-tone lighting highlighted the yellow outline of the lady to its best advantage, creating a sense of *dominance*. On the style garment, there is a *repetition* of white Gucci symbols surrounding the woman at the center (Bell,2002).

In the Hip-Hop community, all elements of design play a key role. Hip Hop fashion emphasizes making a statement and being bold in Hip Hop fashion. In a similar fashion to what we call "Ghetto Fabulous". In figure 2, the girl wearing a jeans jacket sits pretty with her hands on her sides. All of her jewelry is large and bulky, and her hair has a long black middle part. Additionally, she is wearing an off-the-shoulder Gucci shirt. On close inspection, you can see a gold ring on her finger, as well as a gold bust attached to a large chain. Currently, hip-hop and jewelry have a symbiotic relationship. Taking a cultural perspective, it is near impossible to discuss one without mentioning the other, as both have a profound influence on how we perceive the other. The artists' outfits served to flaunt their status, wealth, and overall "flynness" to their audience, with their jewelry being one of the most significant elements of the fit (Barnett & Writer, 2022). I believe that hip-hop artists deserve recognition since they provided a blueprint for going beyond conventional boundaries and making bold statements that have shaped our fashion world for the better. Elena Romero and Elizabeth Way, the curators of the exhibition Fresh, Fly, Fabulous: Fifty Years of Hip-Hop Style, say it aims to raise awareness about segregation and oppression in American urban centers against communities of color. It is also

estimated that the fashion industry in hip-hop is now worth more than a billion dollars, and the Grammy awards stand as a testament to hip-hop's cultural impact (Trebay, 2023).

References

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