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BUF 4900

Midterm Essay

The Latinx Fashion Symposium at the FIT Museum in 2023 provides a good opportunity for those interested in fashion to learn about Latinx fashion culture and the meaning of its dresses. The roots of Latinx dress can date back to colonial times and are inextricably linked to the native peoples of that time (Root, 2002-2023). At that time, native people used ethnic representative elements to add to their dresses to express their unique culture, religion, and grievances to the colonists (Root, 2002-2023). Time is one of the best testimonies to the gradual evolution of Latinx dress from its roots to the runway. Latinx clothing is increasingly important in fashion, including on the runway. Latin American designers use the runway as a platform to showcase the diversity of Latinx clothing and their heritage to the world (Golbin, Monsalve, & Rivera, 2021).



This Latinx dress attracts one's attention the most in this exhibition because of its multi-colors. The combination of a variety of bright colors with a variety of pastel colors gives the dress more visual appeal. Bright colors include red and yellow on the bottom of the dress. While white and blue exist as pastel colors. The layering of this garment stands out because it is composed of multiple colors. The bright color parts of this Latinx dress will look dazzling, and the pastel parts will look comfortable.

Figure 1: Photo taken by Yinghe: Gabriela Hearst Multicolor Crochet Dress

This dress is designed with a *vertical line* to make the whole look more *strengthful*. The design of the vertical line gives the whole garment the feeling of being light on the top and heavy on the bottom. But when it comes to the hemline, there are some inconspicuous changes, and the hemline is designed with a *curved line*. This kind of design brings a *soft* feeling to the person wearing the garment (Adomaitis, 2023, Lecture Visual Merchandising, pg.52-53). The dress involved many irregular patterns in different colors, giving the dress itself a unique feel.

Visually, this dress gives a *rough* feeling to one because it is a hand-made crochet dress (Colon, 2023). However, the *rhythm* of this Latinx garment is so layered that one can notice the main and secondary patterns of the garment when one first sees it (Adomaitis, 2023, Lecture Visual Merchandising, pg.58). The most striking feature of this dress is several irregular circles in different colors in the middle of the garment. The most stands out part of the design is the staggered use of bright and pastel colors. When a person wears it, it gives them a more energetic feeling.

This is a Latin dress with a deep round neck, which gives people a close-fitting feeling. But the pattern of this dress has an *asymmetrical balance* of front and back (Adomaitis, 2023, Lecture Visual Merchandising, pg. 55). The *asymmetrical* design in the patterns may make the dress more fashionable. The use of colors is also *asymmetrical*, which expresses that the designer wants to show people a variety of Latinx cultures through this dress.

The *contrast* of different colors and patterns is particularly prominent in this design (Adomaitis, 2023, Lecture Visual Merchandising, pg.56). For example, the contrast between red and black color, which gives a person a sense of impact. The patterns are all irregular, giving the impression that the designer's ideas are elusive. Several irregular circles in the middle of the top

half of the garment *dominate* the entire design. When one sees this dress, the first thing that catches one's eye is the circle patterns within this design.

The *repetitions* also apply to this dress (Adomaitis, 2023, Lecture Visual Merchandising, pg.58). The designer was *repeating* the colors multiple times in this design. It gave one the feeling that red, black, yellow, white, blue, and teal are important in Latinx culture. So, the designer used them repeatedly to show their significance to people who are interested in or want to do some research on Latinx culture.

Latin fashion impacts life in three ways. The first is that Latin fashion has influenced fashion everywhere (internationally). Especially Latin fashion influenced European and American designers to have some new views on fashion, and some European and American fashion designs also included some traditional elements of Latinx clothing into their designs, for example, lace ruffles (Root, 2002-2023). Latin fashion is also inseparable from Latin politics. Latin fashion is also closely related to Latin politics, and some Latin leaders express their support or opposition to political positions by wearing clothes that represent different national meanings (Root, 2002-2023). At the same time, Latin fashion has also influenced Latin designers' unique views on fashion, bringing more diversity to Latin clothing that is no longer a single style or element (Betancourt & Samaha, 2022).

One believes that artists from all regions should be celebrated, especially Latinx artists. The celebration of Latinx artists can bring everyone to see the history of Latinx culture, clothing, and even music (ABullseyeView, 2022). And how those changed over time. One can sometimes also be able to analyze or read about the significance and meanings that the artists try to express to people about their cultures through their works. So that people can learn about their taboos and cultures to show respect when needed.



Figure 2: Yinghe Zhao at the Exhibition

Reference

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- Figure 2: Yinghe Zhao at the Exhibition
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