

The Aesthetic Rebellion of Male Softness in Retro and Natural Contexts



A collage of my own design

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I. Introduction and Research Context

In contemporary society, discussions surrounding masculinity have long transcended the confines of traditional gender frameworks. They no longer dwell solely within singular symbolic dimensions such as 'strength, control, and rationality,' but have instead entered a more diverse and complex research environment. With the ongoing advancement of sociology and gender studies, we are able to comprehend the generative logic and cultural significance of masculinity from a deeper, more systematic perspective. As revealed by the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' proposed by (Connell, 1995), an inextricable interplay exists between male identity and social power. This relationship not only determines men's position within the social structure but is also perpetually maintained and perpetuated through cultural discourse, institutional arrangements, and social practices. In other words, masculinity is not a natural, inherent essence but a power mechanism produced, legitimised, and reproduced within specific contexts. Concurrently, (Butler, 1990)'s theory of gender performance further elucidates that gender identity is not an innate, fixed fact but is constructed and affirmed through the continual re-enactment of everyday behaviours, linguistic practices, and social symbols. These theories collectively emphasise the disciplinary effects of masculinity within visual culture and

social life, demonstrating that it functions not merely as an external manifestation of individual identity, but as a symbolic operation designed to maintain social power structures and cultural hierarchies.

Against this theoretical backdrop, fashion studies and design practice offer new academic pathways and practical possibilities for rethinking masculinity. Garments are not merely bodily coverings or functional commodities; they are social symbols and externalised representations of identity. Silhouettes, fabrics, colours, and even wearing contexts within clothing consistently embody society's understandings and expectations of gender and culture. Through the rewriting and reimagining of garments and imagery, design practice can effectively question and subvert established visual norms, challenge singular gender symbol systems, and explore alternative “new masculine archetypes” that society can comprehend, accept, and even champion. In this sense, fashion transcends passive compliance with consumerist trends, becoming a culturally expressive medium imbued with critical and rebellious spirit. By integrating fabric, silhouette, colour, and visual narrative with AI technology, this research seeks to construct an experimental and innovative aesthetic rebellion. This aims to open new possibilities for gender identity diversity and provide tangible pathways for society to comprehend and embrace ‘masculine softness’.

Thus, this study centres on the core proposition: ‘The Aesthetic Rebellion of Male Softness in Retro and Natural Contexts.’ It aims to demonstrate that expressions of male softness are neither peripheral appendages within societal discourse nor merely passive opposites defined by hegemonic logic. Rather, they constitute an independent aesthetic and ethical stance imbued with critical force and rebellious spirit. This study emphasises that softness possesses not only distinct contemporary cultural significance but also historical legitimacy and continuity. The incorporation of retro elements allows tracing back to 18th-century and earlier fashion and sartorial cultures, where male attire similarly embraced recognition of opulence, softness, and sensual expression. Concurrently, the integration of natural elements offers an alternative visual and aesthetic coordinate for masculinity: natural hues, botanical motifs, and environmental interaction serve as pivotal points for reconstructing masculine femininity, while also establishing a framework for this study that transcends binary gender logic.

Methodologically, this research centres on autoethnography, emphasising the interweaving of the researcher's personal experience, the societal challenges faced by surrounding men, and scholarly reflection. As both researcher and design practitioner, I not only assume the role of creator but also transform personal experiences into vital research material through sustained writing, documentation, and reflection. This approach is particularly suited to exploring the highly gender-identity-related topic of ‘masculine grace,’ as it reveals contradictions, struggles, and re-creations within cultural contexts through the researcher's lived

experience (Ellis, 2004).

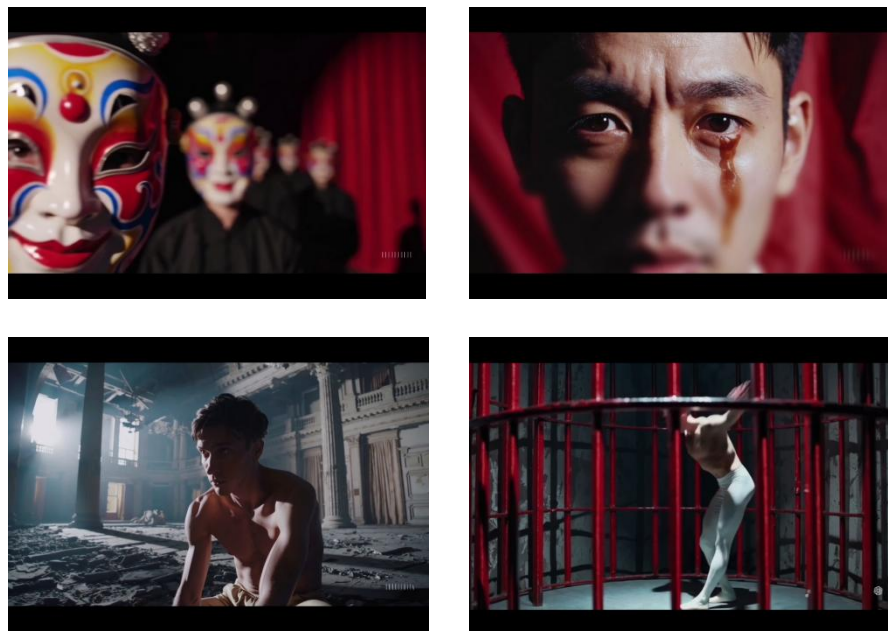


Image 1 Video frame combining AI technology with autoethnography

In practical application, I transformed my experiences within cross-cultural fashion education and gender norms into research texts through designing and producing visual materials alongside maintaining a research journal. These experiences were systematically organised and contrasted with historical costume studies, natural aesthetics, and design outcomes, thereby continually refining theoretical hypotheses (Chang, 2008). Adopting a “practice as research” approach (Barrett & Bolt, 2019), this methodology not only reveals the design logic behind sketches, AI-generated imagery, and immersive film-interactive garments, but also highlights how the researcher continually negotiates their identity through practice and reflection. Thus, whilst sketching and generating AI-powered video imagery, I documented my perceptions of the boundaries between ‘effeminacy’ and ‘masculinity,’ contemplating how to foster greater audience understanding and acceptance of non-stereotypical masculinity. Through this dual approach, this research constructs a visual language for effeminate males whilst integrating the researcher’s personal experience into academic discourse, thereby positioning ‘effeminacy’ as a culturally resonant force within contemporary society.

During the garment presentation phase, I refined the tension between softness and structure through iterative adjustments to the models’ poses, translating these experiential insights into theoretical discourse. The exhibition’s audience engagement provided an external reference point for my autoethnography, allowing my personal narrative to resonate with societal feedback and thereby enhancing the persuasiveness of my research exhibition.

II. Theoretical and Historical Context

In academic research, the establishment of a theoretical framework serves not only as the logical starting point for my inquiry into research questions, but also as a crucial basis for providing critical tools and interpretative pathways. As revealed by Butler's (1990) theory of "gender performativity", gender is never a natural or a priori essential attribute, but rather the result of continuous repetition, confirmation, and reproduction through language, bodily gestures, practices of dress, and social interactions. Within this framework, masculine grace is no longer perceived as an immutable natural trait, but rather as a performative practice that is continuously generated, socially understood, and reconstituted within the socio-cultural sphere. This understanding has helped me recognise that so-called grace is not an inherent label attached to individuals, but rather a result that is continually produced and sustained through the combined effects of visual symbols, cultural norms, and social customs. Therefore, "femininity" ought to be reinterpreted as a dynamic cultural construction rather than a static entity.

Complementing this, the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" proposed by (Connell, 1995) provides a critical lens for my research. Connell emphasises that social structures often suppress the existence and expression of other forms of masculinity by establishing strength, toughness, and rationality as the only legitimate masculine traits. This theory deepened my understanding of why effeminacy has long been marginalised: it is not a deficiency of masculine qualities, but rather an alternative possibility deliberately excluded from the "orthodoxy" by power structures and cultural discourse. In other words, the marginalisation of effeminacy stems from societal mechanisms maintaining hierarchical order, not from natural selection. Thus, by synthesising Butler and Connell's theories, I constructed a dual research framework: revealing how effeminacy emerges performatively through social-cultural interactions, while critiquing how hegemonic structures continually construct and perpetuate the hierarchical order of masculinity.

Building upon this theoretical foundation, historical contextualisation further deepens the research, demonstrating that 'femininity' is not absent from the historical narrative but rather reappears and circulates in diverse forms. During the Baroque and Rococo periods, male attire was characterised by lace, embroidery, elaborate silhouettes, and vibrant colours. These ornamental visual symbols not only signified social status and authority but also implicitly challenged contemporary society's emphasis on "minimalist, rigid" masculine norms (Hameed, 2025; Hollander, 1993). Entering the nineteenth century, the 'dandy culture' emerged as another pivotal historical juncture. Through exquisitely tailored attire and meticulously crafted social performances, it transformed clothing into a stage for personal style and societal identity (Moers, 1960). During the twentieth-century 'Peacock Revolution,' men's attire briefly transcended singularly masculine aesthetic constraints. Through liberated use of colour, ornamentation, and style, effeminacy returned to the public stage in an assertive and experimental manner (Beward, 2003; Evans, 2013). These

historical threads reveal that masculine grace is not merely a marginal phenomenon, but has constituted a significant element of mainstream aesthetics across diverse cultures and eras.

Yet despite history providing ample legitimacy for grace, contemporary society's acceptance of graceful men remains limited. Stereotypes persistently equate effeminacy with “femininity” and “fragility”, linking it to perceived weakness and loss of masculine identity. This societal response reveals that hegemonic masculinity continues to dominate cultural discourse in modern contexts, setting universal expectations for men while implicitly erecting barriers to the representation of effeminacy. Confronting this reality, merely introducing retro elements proves insufficient. If retro aesthetics merely stagnate as superficial imitations of historical attire, such practices readily devolve into uncritical nostalgia, reproducing an aesthetic style incapable of engaging with contemporary realities.

At this juncture, the distinction proposed by Boym (2001) between ‘reflective nostalgia’ and ‘restorative nostalgia’ offers valuable insights for my research. Restorative nostalgia aims to reconstruct an imagined ‘golden age’ through the direct reproduction of past forms, whereas reflective nostalgia emphasises reinterpreting history to critique contemporary society, thereby generating new cultural meanings through this critique. This study leans towards the latter approach, employing ‘reflective nostalgia’ to transform retro elements into fresh visual languages and aesthetic logics rather than directly replicating historical decorative styles. Consequently, soft aesthetics not only gains renewed cultural legitimacy within contemporary contexts but also contributes fresh value to the reconstruction of modern masculinity through the interweaving of history and reality.

Thus, the interweaving of theory and historical context establishes a robust dual foundation for my research: on one hand, it reveals the social genesis of effeminacy and the institutional causes of its long-term marginalisation; on the other, through historical reflection and the introduction of nostalgia theory, it provides an aesthetic and ethical fulcrum for effeminacy's contemporary rebirth. This synthesis enables my research to operate simultaneously within the dual dimensions of critique and creation, fostering a dynamic academic dialogue between theoretical exposition and practical exploration. It thereby opens new possibilities for the revival of yuemei within contemporary society.

III. Natural Aesthetics, Abstract Art, and the Reconstruction of the Feminine Male

3.1 The Inspiration of Abstract Art and the Reinterpretation of Feminine Aesthetics

In my research and creative practice, the construction of the effeminate male figure relies not solely upon the reinterpretation of historical sartorial language, but is more profoundly inspired by natural aesthetics and modern abstract art. Artistic expression frequently furnishes fashion design with novel visual logics and conceptual frameworks. Take Henri Matisse as an example: his art is renowned for its vivid colours, simplified forms, and decorative expression. He did not pursue representational realism, but rather conveyed emotion and energy through the free combination of colour blocks and lines. This “de-figurative” artistic approach offers crucial insight: softness and resilience need not be constructed solely through symbols of fragility or sweetness. Instead, abstracted colour, silhouette, and structural logic can express a rebellious stance that embodies both gentlemanly warmth and resilient strength. This approach injects fresh pathways for expressing “softness”, endowing it with greater visual independence and critical agency.

This philosophy also resonates with Stuart Davis's modernist painting. Through vibrant colours, abstract geometric structures, and rhythms inspired by urban advertising and jazz, he forged an intensely modern, metropolitan aesthetic (Davis, 1964). This design philosophy led me to move away from over-reliance on floral or ornamental figurative symbols in my fashion work. Instead, I began experimenting with geometric divisions, abstract juxtapositions, and the reconfiguration of forms to convey nature's rhythmic pulse. Concurrently, Patrick Heron's work emphasised planarity, dismantling the traditional dichotomy between subject and background by assigning equal significance to all areas within his compositions (Heron, 1998). This principle prompted me to recognise that natural elements in fashion design should not merely serve as adornments, but become integral to the core logic of silhouette and structure. This approach enabled me to reconstruct the visual identity of the effeminate male, allowing it to transcend established cultural boundaries under the inspiration of abstract art, forging a new image imbued with rebellious spirit and singularity.

Notably, abstract art's influence extends beyond formal and chromatic exploration to intellectual enlightenment. Through de-figurative strategies, artists liberate visual expression while challenging entrenched gender aesthetics at a cultural level. This provides a rebellious foundation for studying effeminate masculinity, enabling clearer practical understanding of how “effeminacy” integrates as a visual and cultural idiom within fashion design.

3.2 Theoretical Foundations of Natural Aesthetics and Biophilic Design

The insights from abstract art resonate with the theoretical underpinnings of natural aesthetics. Wilson's (1984) ‘Biophilia Hypothesis’ emphasises that humans have developed deep psychological connections with nature through evolutionary processes, with natural landscapes subconsciously evoking feelings of tranquillity and healing. This theory provides a robust foundation, enabling me to recognise nature not merely as decorative material but as an entity bearing profound

psychological and cultural significance. Furthermore, the 'biophilic design' theory proposed by Kellert & Calabrese (2015) indicates that integrating natural elements into spaces and objects transcends mere aesthetic choice, concerning both physical and mental wellbeing alongside ecological ethics. This perspective made me realise that incorporating natural elements into fashion design actually drives dual innovation in ecological and social ethics.

Specifically, this theory provides crucial support for redefining the effeminate male. By establishing connections with nature, the effeminate image can shed stigmatised labels of 'fragility' or 'femininity,' instead becoming an embodiment of psychological solace and social resilience. Such an image represents not only an innovation in sartorial aesthetics but also a legitimate expression within the socio-cultural context.

In design practice, I translate these theories into concrete methodologies. Regarding silhouette shaping, I emphasise the interactive relationship between body and garment, ensuring designs possess both the stability of strength and the fluidity of softness. For instance, in sketches, I simulate garment seams and darts using petal curves and leaf vein extensions, allowing natural logic to mirror sartorial structure. In structural design, I emulate nature's generative processes through segmented lines and layered forms. This resonates with Heron's concept of "homogenisation"—where no distinction is made between primary and secondary design elements, and every line and fold contributes equal value to the overall structure. This logic liberates garments from reliance on ornamental additions, achieving aesthetic integrity through organic, holistic growth.

3.3 Visual Translation and Symbolic Exploration in Design Practice

By integrating abstract art with natural aesthetics theory, I have gradually developed a new methodology in my design practice. In this process, the reconstruction of the effeminate male form does not rely on the layering of decorative symbols, but rather emerges organically through the natural growth and organic generation of the overall structure. This signifies that the expression of effeminacy possesses an inherent logic, rather than being merely an external display.

In the dynamic presentation of garments, I place greater emphasis on silhouette transformations during movement. When clothing flows with bodily motion, it conveys not only formal beauty but also an energy imbued with a rebellious spirit. For instance, in a series of works, I employed abstract purple petals, green stems, and intersecting yellow lines. These symbols are not direct reproductions of natural forms but abstract reconstructions that express energy and rhythm. Their visual impact is dynamic and powerful, conveying to the viewer that soft masculinity is not weakness, but an existence brimming with vitality and tension.



Image 2: The Practice of Integrating Natural Floral Elements with Abstract Art

These explorations demonstrate that the aesthetic of the effeminate male can be fully expressed through abstract and symbolic translation. It resides not only in garment silhouettes and structures but also holds significant ground within visual symbols and cultural narratives. Through abstract design and expression, the effeminate style gains heightened critical resonance and more readily connects with contemporary art and cultural contexts.

3.4 Exhibition Practice and the Cultural Reconstruction of Feminine Masculinity

Finally, within the immersive exhibition practice, I shall endeavour to externalise the logic of integrating natural aesthetics with abstract art into the audience experience. In recent years, much so-called “eco-fashion” has often been reduced to labelling and commercialisation, thereby losing its inherent criticality and ethical dimension (Shields, 1992). To circumvent this predicament, I incorporate sound and interactive mechanisms into the exhibition, enabling audiences to form perceptions of soft masculinity through multiple sensory channels of sight and hearing. This approach transforms nature from superficial decoration into an integral part of the audience's bodily experience.

This exhibition strategy not only enhances immersion but also facilitates the cultural reconstruction of soft masculinity. Nature endows them with qualities of stability and empathy, while abstract art provides avenues for expression and rebellion. Thus, effeminacy transcends the stereotype of “fragility”, instead manifesting dual creative and critical forces. Within this framework, the image of the effeminate male ceases to be a marginalised symbol and instead becomes a pivotal point of cultural diversity. Their presence challenges traditional gender hierarchies, offering fresh narrative

possibilities for gender diversity and cultural innovation within fashion.

This cultural reconfiguration extends beyond the fashion sphere, offering insights for broader societal discussions on gender. Through interdisciplinary convergence, the image of the effeminate male can emerge as a new subject within cultural construction. They represent not merely aesthetic innovation, but a cultural force capable of driving shifts in social cognition and ethical understanding.

IV. The Process and Methodology of Practice-as-Research

The core of this research lies not solely in theoretical deduction, but in achieving interaction and generation between theory and design through continuous cycles of practice. This process fully embodies the bidirectional logic of 'Practice-as-Research' and 'Research-as-Practice.' Within this framework, each stage is not merely a creative step, but also an opportunity for critique and reflection.

In my research, sketching is not merely the initial phase of garment design but a crucial stage for conceptual development and intellectual evolution. Traditionally viewed as blueprints for ready-to-wear garments, recording proportions and silhouettes, my practice elevates the sketch to a deeper significance: it serves both as a tool for exploring form and as a mental experiment testing conceptual viability. Each stroke enables me to simulate the interaction between garment and body on paper, further contemplating how the tension between softness and masculinity is expressed through structure. As Spence (1978) observes, gender characteristics are often conveyed through cultural visual language, with sketches serving as transitional ground between aesthetics and concept in this process.

In silhouette design, I drew upon defining characteristics of the Baroque and Rococo periods. Baroque attire emphasised power and authority through its weighty, symmetrical, and structured appearance (Hameed, 2025), while Rococo cultivated a sense of lightness through slender proportions, intricate drapery, and graceful curves (Simončič, 2015). During the sketching phase, I sought to synthesise these seemingly contradictory elements: retaining broad shoulders and outward-expanding silhouettes to convey stability and strength, while introducing curves and soft draping to express agility and a gentle resilience. This juxtaposition of "heaviness" and "lightness" offers new structural possibilities for expressing feminine masculinity. Concurrently, Dandy fashion's emphasis on bodily proportions and tailored silhouettes profoundly influenced my sketch development. As a cultural response to 18th-19th century British menswear, Dandyism articulated individual identity and aesthetic stance through meticulously cut jackets and refined detailing (Cole & Lambert, 2021). Within my design logic, this tradition of emphasising proportion and refinement is transformed into a means of highlighting bodily posture

and gentlemanly bearing. Consequently, the sketches not only bear historical imprints but also integrate contemporary reinterpretations of gender expression.



Image 3 Sketches and development

Throughout the structural evolution, sketches played an irreplaceable role. Through experiments with spline curves and seams, I simulated the logic of natural growth, endowing the structure with an organic order reminiscent of plant veins. Through persistent experimentation and successive revisions, the sketches yielded increasingly refined designs and developments. They enabled me to observe, on paper, how structural stability and suppleness coexist, allowing timely adjustments and optimisation of design concepts. As emphasised by Geczy & Karaminas (2013), fashion's power lies in continually subverting symbolic systems and redefining cultural contexts – sketches being the vanguard experiments of such subversion.

Ultimately, these sketches evolved into garment renderings and ready-to-wear proposals. They not only preserve my reinterpretation of Baroque, Rococo, and Dandy aesthetics but also document how I reshape the image of the rebellious, effeminate male through structural logic within a contemporary design context. Thus, the sketch transcends being merely a 'preliminary' stage; it becomes central to both research methodology and design philosophy. It carries the translation of historical garments, the deduction of aesthetic logic, and my ongoing exploration of gender identity boundaries.



Image 4 Final lineup

Secondly, the integration of AI-generated imagery significantly accelerated the pace and expanded the scope of my research experiments. On digital platforms, diverse colours, textures, and backgrounds can be rapidly combined and validated within moments. While this approach enhances practical efficiency, it simultaneously exposes AI's inherent biases regarding gender aesthetics. Generated imagery often fixes “femininity” within a sweet, fragile paradigm, perpetuating the reproduction of gender stereotypes. To address this, I adopted a “human-machine collaborative negative screening” approach: retaining not only successful AI-generated samples but also using failed ones as reverse references. This allows me to identify algorithmic biases and correct them in subsequent designs. This approach harnesses AI's efficiency while mitigating the risks of aesthetic narrowing in practice. It has deepened my understanding of the power inherent in fabric textures and structural elements. Each adjustment step redefines the boundaries and tensions of ‘femininity’. Thus, the garment becomes a dynamic medium—not only conveying the designer's vision but also offering wearers space for self-definition.



Image 5 Fashion show with AI technology

Finally, an immersive interactive exhibition constitutes the culmination of this research practice. Within the Residuum virtual exhibition and AI Art & Design Festival displays, I established a dual-narrative space: one side evokes historical memory through the visual language of vintage craftsmanship, while the other constructs an immersive experience by cultivating a natural ambience. Visitors transcend passive observation, actively participating in the generation of meaning through interactive installations and a question-and-answer wall. Within this process, the connotations of male soft beauty cease to be unidimensional, instead undergoing continuous negotiation, reshaping, and expansion through audience experience and feedback.

This iterative practice not only deepened my understanding of soft beauty, but also

achieved a theoretical and methodological closure in my research. Through successive stages—sketching, AI generation, garment production, and exhibition—my work demonstrates the critical potential of ‘practice as research’: soft beauty, as an aesthetic and cultural force, can be both empowered by historical reflection and natural contexts, and continually reconstructed and renewed through practical application.

V. Immersive Exhibitions, Audience Engagement and Critical Dialogue

As a pivotal component of this research practice, immersive interactive exhibitions transcend mere display of outcomes. Their significance lies in guiding audience participation through immersive spaces, thereby catalysing critical societal discourse. Within the exhibition framework, immersive experiences integrate audience feedback into the research process: immediate reactions and questionnaire responses collectively encapsulate contemporary attitudes towards the “effeminate male”. Notably, this feedback did not reveal a singular trend but exhibited marked divergence. Some visitors perceived the effeminate gentleman aesthetic as breaking free from traditional frameworks of coldness and authority, offering fresh aesthetic pleasure and psychological solace. Others, however, continued to reference hegemonic masculine stereotypes, questioning its perceived ‘excessive femininity’ and even associating effeminacy with fragility and passivity. This divergence in responses reveals the underlying tensions within contemporary gender discourse – precisely the public dialogue this exhibition seeks to provoke.

Through questionnaire surveys and qualitative analysis, several core perspectives emerged. Firstly, respondents widely acknowledged that men embodying graceful postures with rebellious spirit demonstrate courage and inclusivity in challenging gender narratives, representing a breakthrough from conventional masculine aesthetics. Secondly, regarding the theme of ‘constraints of social norms,’ some responses emphasised that men often endure self-repression in daily life, yet when they transcend these limitations, they exhibit a certain ‘heroic’ aspect. This aligns with Butler's theory of gender performance, which posits that gender is not a fixed essence but is continually constructed through performance and social practice.

Regarding fashion and clothing as expressions of rebellion, most visitors perceived attire not merely as personal style but as a vital means to challenge social norms and reshape masculinity (Entwistle, 2015). Feedback on the immersive experience further indicated that through interaction, audiences developed greater understanding and respect for men embodying both grace and resilient rebellious spirit. This shift reflects the interplay between aesthetic perception and social cognition. Such feedback reveals contemporary society's multifaceted attitude towards effeminate men: encompassing both scepticism and pressure, yet increasingly giving rise to new empathy and recognition. This outcome highlights the value of exhibitions as

critical spaces, providing crucial theoretical leverage for subsequent design practices and endowing the aesthetic rebellion of effeminacy with greater sociological and cultural significance (Bourdieu, 1984).

VI. Reflection and Conclusion: The Power of Femininity and Future Prospects

Reflecting on the entire research process, I gradually came to realise that the value of 'feminine grace' as part of the rebellious spirit of masculinity lies not merely in its visual breakthroughs, but more profoundly in the cultural critique and potential for social transformation it embodies. Through comprehensive examination of historical costume contexts, natural aesthetics, and abstract art, coupled with practical exploration in AI-generated imagery, sketches, ready-to-wear design, and immersive exhibition interactions, I continually forged new connections between theory and design. This research prompted me to reflect that effeminate and resilient qualities have never truly been absent from male history, but have been marginalised, misinterpreted, and stigmatised due to the long-standing dominance of hegemonic masculinity.

Feedback from the immersive exhibition and audience interactions revealed diverse societal attitudes: some visitors perceived effeminate men as more approachable, capable of evoking emotional resonance; others remained sceptical, questioning their perceived 'excessive femininity'. This dichotomy not only reveals society's contradictory expectations regarding gender expression but further demonstrates the complexity of femininity as a cultural practice: it functions both as a rebellious stance challenging established norms and as a crucial entry point for public dialogue and societal re-evaluation (Gill, 2007). Thus, this study contributes to fashion theory by revealing how clothing functions as a critical medium; to gender studies by highlighting the theoretical potential of effeminacy as a cross-gender expression; and to artistic practice by offering insights into how immersive exhibitions can guide audience engagement with gender discourse.

Regarding the next phase of research and practice, I shall focus more intently on the connection and innovation between historical costume evolution and contemporary expression. The research will commence with male attire from periods such as the Baroque, Rococo, and Dandyism, systematically tracing the evolutionary logic of their silhouettes, structures, and decorative language. It will further explore how these historical styles are reinterpreted and deconstructed within contemporary culture (Arnold, 2001). Through analysis of archival garments, portraiture, and relevant historical materials, I plan to establish a visual archive of masculine feminine silhouettes, providing formal and theoretical foundations for subsequent design experiments.

Practically, I shall explore novel methods for generating silhouettes. This process

avoids mere replication of historical symbols, instead transforming them into contemporary design language through structural reconfiguration, proportional adjustments, and material innovation. For instance, contrasting the expansive shoulders of eighteenth-century menswear with modern minimalist lines, I seek to create a tension between ‘grace and strength’. Simultaneously, flora will serve as a vital source of inspiration: the opulence of peonies, the elegance of orchids, and the expansive nature of vines will all be translated into structural logic and sculptural elements. Shoulder expansions may draw from the layered order of petals, while seam lines mimic the growth of leaf veins, allowing silhouettes to resonate with natural order (Foster, 2002). Thus, I aim to chart a clear trajectory: drawing inspiration from history, using nature as a medium, and centring on silhouette, establishing continuity between critique and innovation to advance the evolution of feminine menswear within contemporary fashion discourse.



Image 6: Immersive Interactive Exhibition

Future research objectives lie in elevating femininity and rebellion beyond mere visual symbols to become integral components of cultural construction. Practically, this will transcend experiments in silhouette and ornamentation, extending into expressions of lifestyle and social attitudes. Academically, it will foster interdisciplinary dialogue between psychology, sociology, and posthuman studies. Within this framework, effeminacy becomes not merely an aesthetic stance but a “de-hegemonic” cultural force, capable of continually disrupting and reconfiguring established social orders through performative practices involving the body and clothing.

Overall, this study not only validates the significance of soft masculinity as an

aesthetic rebellion within male aesthetics but also reveals its critical potential within sociocultural contexts. Moving forward, the power of soft masculinity will manifest further through practices that simultaneously critique and construct, propelling masculinity towards a more inclusive and creative future.

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