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1. Pattern
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3. Colour

Proposed question for independent inquiry: 'How do designers spread awareness through fashion?'

For my independent inquiry I will be looking at three keywords within my practice. The three keywords I have chosen to research and write about are Pattern, story, and colour. I will be looking at how these keywords link in with fashion and how history and cultures have influenced fashion throughout the years. I will also be looking and researching about designers that are relevant to the key words that I have chosen, and this will then help me discover other keywords that could be helpful for when I create my question at the end of this independent inquiry. By researching and learning about these keywords and designers, it will help me lead up to a question for my dissertation in my own practice area in which I am passionate about.

Pattern is 'A repeated decorative design' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). By looking at the definition of pattern and understanding the context of the word 'pattern' I wanted to explore the keyword and have more research on the culture and history behind 'pattern' and how it has influenced designers through many years. "Patterns are arrangements of shape or colour. (Taylor, 2003, p4). This second definition gives a different point of view on what pattern means. By looking at two definitions, it will help me get a better understanding of the keyword I am researching and writing about. Pattern is important to my practice as a Surface pattern designer.

Looking at Alexander McQueen Fall 2020 Ready-To-Wear Collection (Figure 1) the pattern is designed rich in history and culture that was inspired by St Fagan in Wales. The Wrexham Tailor's Quilt by James Williams (Figure 2) which is located in St Fagan's that inspired the garment in (Figure 2). "Although the quilt is one of the most familiar and necessary articles in our households, its story is yet to be told. In spite of its universal use and intimate connection with our lives, its past is a mystery which—at the most—can be only partially unravelled." (Webster, 2008, p1). By looking at this Quote about the history of the quilt with its outstanding patterns, rich colours and its mysterious history that intrigued me to do further research on The Wrexham Tailor's Quilt by James Williams (Figure 2) . After looking at The Wrexham Tailor's Quilt by James Williams (figure 2) and the story and meaning behind the images with their bold colours and hidden story. It also made me look for symbolic meaning in the quilt. Therefore, upon further research and by looking closely at the patchwork I discovered that the images are depicting the story of biblical scenes such as Jonah and the Whale, Noah's Ark and other biblical scenes. It also had another symbolic meaning to the Industrial revolution that was trying to overtake the idea of Handcraft in that era. "Across the nineteenth century, fear about the damaging effects of the industrialisation, urbanisation, and mass consumption on social conditions and culture became increasingly prevalent." (Thomas, 2020, p2).

"The quilt has a tradition of long centuries of slow but certain progress. Its story is replete with incidents of love and daring, of sordid pilferings and generous sacrifices. It has figured in many a thrilling episode. The same type of handiwork that has sheltered the simple peasant from wintry blasts has adorned the great halls of doughty warriors and noble kings. Humble maids, austere nuns, grand dames, and stately queens; all have shared in the fascination of the quilter's art and have contributed to its advancement. Cottage, convent, and castle; all have been enriched, at one time or another, by the splendours of patchwork and the pleasures of its making." (Webster, 2008, p1). By reading this quote it talks about the history of patchwork that had been around for years. In my research I discovered (figure 2) In which the piece was inspired by this historical ancient art that has now been modernised for today's society.

“recycling old clothing into new” (Fletcher, Tham, 2019, p14). Upon further research on The Wrexham Tailor’s Quilt by James Williams (figure 2) I discovered that the quilt was made by a variety of recycled clothing such as felted woollen cloths and off cuts of broadcloth from military uniforms that he made. This shows the sustainability in how he used recycled material to create his work and to stop waste from precious material.

The questions that I have after looking at pattern is, does every pattern have a meaning, symbolise or history behind it? how can pattern tell a story?



Figure 1



Figure 2

My second keyword which is story because during the research for pattern and seeing the hidden stories, I want to research more on stories and meaning in a fashion context. I am going to explore this more by looking at my key word but also looking at how garments can also tell a story and have a hidden meaning behind them. Story is ‘An account of imaginary or real people and events told for entertainment’. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). By looking at this definition of story, it tells me how important story telling is on rising awareness on certain topics so we can avoid them in the future. “Story-telling is almost the oldest Art in the world—the first conscious form of literary communication.” (Shedlock, 2020, p1).

“Our common ground is an interest in how people use stories over time and what prompts them to remember and retell.” (Schneider, 2008, p2). In the runway fall 2021 collection by Christian Dior (Figure 3). Their collection is based on well know fairy tales but with a dark twist. “When we live with stories and actually think about how we use narrative, we see how accounts are a resource to talk about what we think is important; they are our way of relating experience to the present, and we recognize that stories are as much about the present as the past. Telling our stories is how we construct meaning from memory, but the process is selective, and many factors influence how we tell stories and why we choose to retell certain stories.” (Schneider, 2008, p2). (figure 3) on further research on the runway collection the stories are based on original fairy tales that are uncensored and helps raise awareness to young people. By doing this in a fashion context this is a different type of storytelling, but It

makes the reader think about the possible stories behind them and this makes you want to do further research on the meanings with its dark and alluring atmosphere.

The runway 2019 Fall collection by Stella McCartney (figure 4). Her collection tells. Story and has a meaning about the sustainability of clothing. With the sustainable clothing she is trying to raise awareness of how fashion is affecting our environment. “The awareness about sustainable fashion makes one realise several forms of sustainability that can be adapted in a lifestyle. All strategies promoting more environmentally, socially, and ethically conscious production and consumption are important steps towards a more sustainable industry and, hence, a sustainable future.” (Shrivastava, Jain, Paul, 2020, p1). Being aware will help people understand the damage fast fashion or textile waste is having on the environment. To be aware will help action take place to stop it from getting worse in the future. “The scale and speed of change required means that genuinely systemic efforts are needed. In the fashion context this means addressing not only the environmental impact of a fashion product and the processes of making it, but also the psychology behind fashion use, our systems of economics, finance and trade, how we fashion local and global infrastructures around clothing, how we construct meaningful lives and livelihoods. Rethinking fashion outside the economic growth logic shifts power from multinational companies to organisations, communities and citizens. It invites fashion creativity to flourish far beyond the confines of a garment, into visions of new relationships between people, other species, artefacts and technologies.” (Fletcher, Tham, 2019, p14). By researching and looking how this awareness on textile waste that is affecting the environment and having a designer that is trying to spread the awareness and tell a story through a sustainable fashion collection that will inspire the audience and other designers.

The 2018 Fall COUTURE collection by Valentino (figure 5) which is based on mythologies and history. “In a certain respect, that the middle ages preserved ancient mythologies has been well known ever since sixteenth- and seventeenth century scholarship undermined archaic notions of the geocentric cosmos, the flat earth, the animism of nature, and attendant myths like magic, witchcraft, and demonology. “Mythography,” more than any other discipline, preserved the few Greek and Roman Legends, heroes and motifs that were known.” (Gellrich, 1985, p39). After further research on the collection is based on your vision of beauty with a twist of history, dreams and stories. This collection gives a sense of awareness of not being apologetic on who you are and what you wear as you are your own beauty and nobody else’s.

The questions that I have after looking at story is, how can fashion raise awareness? How can this awareness influence other people? How can the audience recognise the stories/awareness in fashion?



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

My third Keyword that I will be looking at is colour because I like how you can tell a story, emotion, expression and communicate through colour. Colour is ‘The property possessed by an object of producing different sensations on the eye as a result of the way it reflects or emits light.’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2021). After looking at the definition of colour, I will be looking at my research to gather a better understanding on the keyword and an understanding of the definition in my practise area and how colour can be seen in different ways than it just being colour. I will be looking at how colour can be seen as a symbol, emotion or awareness. By looking more thoroughly into the keyword colour this will help me gather different keywords that could help me generate question for my dissertation.

When looking at Ashish fall 2021 collection (Figure 6) which is colourful and gives a demonstration of comfort and joy of growing used to isolation through this tough year of Covid. “Colour is one of the great joys of life, its exploration and uses never ending. Colour is involved in life, art, design, lifestyle, and fashion. Fashion is colour, colour is fashion, giving feeling and emotion to ever changing trends and is an essential part of our everyday life. Colour has been an important part of our lifestyle, expression, decoration and design since the dawn of civilisation”. (Diane and Cassidy, 2005, p.7). By looking at this quote it tells me that colour is very important to us as a person. Colour can give us feelings of emotions. Colour has its own language around the world as each colour would mean something different in each country. I see colour as a sort of communication, an expression, awareness and symbolism. As a designer colour is one of the most important tools, as the colour in our designs can help us get the certain aesthetic that we are looking for in our work. Looking at Zandra Rhodes (Figure 7), colour is her brand with her bright pink coloured hair and her colourful fashion sense. Colour is a sort of expressionism for an artist or designer. It helps to show the feeling of the artist just by using colour in our work. “Although the idea of ‘colour’ may seem a simple concept, it conjures up very different ideas for each of us. To the physicist, colour is determined by the wavelength of light. To the physiologist and psychologist, our perception of colour involves neural responses in the eye and the brain, and is subject to the limitations of our nervous system. To the naturalist, colour is not only a thing of beauty but also a determinant of survival in nature. To the social historian and the linguist, our understanding and interpretation of colour are inextricably linked to our own culture. To

the art historian, the development of colour in painting can be traced both in artistic and technological terms. And for the painter, colour provides a means of expressing feelings and the intangible, making possible the creation of a work of art.” (Lamb and Bourrian, 1995, p1). This then show how colour is important to us, it shows awareness and how colours are used as a symbol as red is a symbol of danger, so we keep away from it to avoid getting hurt. Then for a painter it helps to express emotions into a painting. Therefore, with fashion it helps designers put a message through or to set a theme using colours. This also relates to (Figure 6) and (Figure 7) because they are expressing themselves and creating a brand through colour.

The questions that I have after looking at colour is, how does colour expressionism work? Does colour actually affect your mood or how you feel? How do we communicate with colour?



Figure 6



Figure 7

In conclusion to my independent inquiry, I have explored my keywords by looking at them closely and by doing research. Also, by looking at my key words I can see that they link up and harmonize with each other. When looking at pattern I see history, culture, stories, awareness and meaning. Also, when looking at story I see awareness, tales, history and meaning. Looking at colour I see expressionism, communication/ language, awareness and emotions. By looking at sustainability (figure 4) and seeing how designers tell a story to the audience, this has influenced me to look further into it and to see how it has influenced other people or designers to do the same and to spread the awareness of fast fashion that is destroying the environment. By looking at my research on my chosen designers and how they all helped to led me to my final question and how they all had a story behind their work in which I will research and write about in my dissertation because I feel passionate about learning about the meaning behind their collections and the influence it has on the audience. I also like to see if the story they are trying to tell is visible to the eye or a secret message

hidden in the pattern like Alexander McQueen's collection (Figure 1) that had history secretly in their patchwork that was inspired by (Figure 2) a Welsh quilt located in St Fagan's that was full of culture, stories and colour. After doing my research I also discovered that colour can also help spread awareness of the story they are trying to get through to the audience. Therefore, for my dissertation I want to research more on this topic so I can get a better insight of designers and their storytelling. After looking at all of my research and keywords, it had finally led me to a question for my dissertation 'How do designers spread awareness through fashion?'.

Figures

Figure 1- McQueen, A. (2020) Fall 2020 READY-TO -WEAR [Online]. Available at: <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2020-ready-to-wear/alexander-mcqueen> [Accessed 15th April 2021]

Figure 2- Williams, J. (1842-52) The Wrexham Tailor's Quilt [Online]. Available at: <https://museum.wales/articles/1377/The-Wrexham-Tailors-Quilt-1842-52/> [Accessed 15th April 2021]

Figure 3- Dior, C. (2021) Fall 2021 READY-TO-WEAR [Online]. Available at: <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2021-ready-to-wear/christian-dior> [Accessed 15th April 2021]

Figure 4- McCartney, S. (2019) Fall 2019 READY-TO-WEAR [Online]. Available at: <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2019-ready-to-wear/stella-mccartney> [Accessed 15th April 2021]

Figure 5- Valentino. (2018) Fall 2018 COUTURE. Available at: <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2018-couture/valentino> [Accessed 15th April 2021]

Figure 6- Ashish. (2021) Fall 2021 READY-TO-WEAR [Online]. Available at: <https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2021-ready-to-wear/ashish> [Accessed 16th April 2021]

Figure 7- Rhodes, Z. (2021) Biography [Online]. Available at: <https://zandrarhodes.com/bio/> [Accessed 16th April 2021]

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