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Art and Expression

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Art and Expression

INTRODUCTION

ARTe: Art and Expression is a biannual book chapter, published under collaboration of Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Art & Design, UiTM Perak Branch with Galeri Al-Biruni under the supervision of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. 'ARTe' is an amalgamation of english word 'Art', and malay word, specifically Perak slang 'Ate' which translate as conversation starter. 'ARTe' uses the concept of book chapter that platform art enthusiasts to express their inner-creativity in the form of literacy conjecture

VISION

Art and expression as aspiration towards stylistic and artistic practices

MISSION

- To enhance the culture of research and academic publication among academician and artist for international recognition
- To promote intellectual, cultural and knowledge sharing through artistic expression
- To celebrate the diversity and differences in arts practices thus creating and intellectual platform for artist to express their interest in art

PUBLICATION FREQUENCY

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CHAPTER 6

FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY: CONCEPTUAL AND UNDERSTANDINGS THROUGH IMAGE

Fahmi Bin Samsudin

Abstract

Fashion photography has been misunderstood usually by only selling clothes and accessories, however in reality it is more than that. History started in the early age by interpreting fashion photography as composition on image of model complete with apparel to show how the clothes works on human body. This somehow has change into massive amendments on concept and styling from creative well-known creators that have change the whole perception towards fashion photography into becoming more than what it was. At the present the term of fashion photography has revolve, rather than only an image of model wearing clothes to deliver story and lifestyle of current trends and with the help of technology, fashion photography is now evolving into a different new level of perception.

Keywords: Fashion photography, conceptual, social media, evolve

6.0   Introduction

When it comes to the familiar thoughts of fashion photography, many assumed that it is only related to models posing with nice apparel in front of the camera (Singh, 2020). Let's discuss the topic from the history itself, where it started around 1891 where few of the commercial fashion photography was invented around the year, where the real meaning on that time was a photograph displayed garment on a mannequin-like figure (Kruger. 2001). After a few years after, the terms began to expand where fashion photography has been more than an image addressing garments, but were almost exclusively made purposely for magazine publications whereby (De Wit, 1998:5) the earliest publications of French magazines started with "Les Models" started to appreciates the photography illustrations.

Nowadays, the term fashion photography is more than just that. According to Nam (1998) stated that fashion photography is a package that involves roles in delivering effectively of whole information that related to the fashion trends in certain era to the public through the image, and one as the photographer needs to express through the image by using the symbols and characters that it represents a current period of time. Fashion photography comes all the way as a platform to expressing, collaborating, culturing the views and thoughts with another perspective such as design, graphics, music, film, and art. The authority that editorial vision gives the best of these magazines ensures that their content becomes part of the broad cultural continuum that weaves through art, music, movies, and design (Sloman & Blanks, 2012). Even though many photographers tend to use this genre to create their own expression of art, one must know that the real meaning is a match and not accidentally go through in one another way around. Even a photo having been shot by using a model for introducing a series of items related to fashion like make-up, hairstyle, and accessory, as well as clothes, is regarded as a kind of fashion photography (You & park, 1996, p. 327).

6.1   Technology and Current Trends

Since the technology has been moving forward, others as well in line with the trends. With the introduction of social media nowadays, it has grown at an accelerated rate in every part. The previous style of fashion photograph needs to consult with professionals and only occurred with those who have the vast background and experience, but not now. Social media trends have been generating more new styles of appreciating the brands and the whole concept of the image. By contrast, the new media model of social media breaks down the hegemony of media diffusion, and changes to a networked communication system (Athique, 2013; Miller, 2011; Levy, 2001). With the help of new move of these social media culture nowadays, it will help the industry of fashion photography to be more vast and various with more understanding in terms of the terminology into fulfilling the needs of industry. Since the system enables users to present themselves with another identity, the launch of social media-induced growing interest from cultural theorists in the discussion on identity and representation (Lovint, 2011).

For example, fashion photography as we know previously only produces the image that contains the garments and models that pose with what has been ordered just for the sake of selling

and marketing the garments themselves to the user. But with the current new trends from the social media influence, the trends have already changed to selling the trends, concept, lifestyle, and more than that. Today fashion bloggers normally diversify their exposure by managing a network of image-sharing social media platforms including blog, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, or Pinterest (Choiu, 2016). By doing this, every person can be expressing themselves as a brand, feeling, or marketing the products by showing the lifestyle or concept through the fashion photography genre without being consulted with the professional and only published on magazines and billboards. Fashion bloggers take belongings as their platform of self and artistic expression, the feature of interaction enabling bloggers to express themselves and construct identity on a new form of 'public space' (Chittenden, 2010; Kietzman, et al., 2011; Rocamora. 2011).

For instance, the picture below titled 'The beauty within Smiles' by Fahmi Samsudin (2013) is portraying the concept of glamour and beauty that used to be viral on the internet, but little they know the behind of every trend have its own risk and deterioration to make it looks good on the surface. The trend of fake braces has been circulated around for some period, and up till now still going on without further awareness on the side effects of these dangerous beauty trends. According to Mohd Nor et. al., (2020) the phenomenon of this fake braces trend starts as early as 2006 whereby the media first reported on a case from Thailand, then spread to neighbouring countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, because this trend happen from the perception of their own by an understanding of wearing fake train tracks is a symbol of style, status, and wealth among teenagers in Southeast Asia countries.

Figure 36: The Beauty Within Smiles (Fahmi Samsudin, 2013)

6.2   Fashion Photography Concept

In fashion photography, the understanding on the meaning of it is always related to marketing apparel, selling accessories, and promoting a lifestyle, but it does more than that. It reflects and

comments on the times and 'conceals the essence of the now' (Wilson, 2003), but it does so through "incomplete visual statements" (Maynard, 2008). While the image above shows the concept of beauty behind the fake braces through fashion photography, the image below lies on the same conceptual theme of beauty in pain, showing the exaggerated accessories on a person.

Figure 37: Ornaments Groovy (Fahmi Samsudin, 2013)

'Ornaments groovy' by Fahmi Samsudin (2013) is based on the concept of the hazardous of accessories trends that used to viral over the internet a while ago. According to Joseph (2019), the trend of using accessories made of copper will help on copper deficiency in the body, but the trends tend to change to overusing it that will lead to copper toxicity, causing vomiting, nausea, and muscle weakness.

Instead of delivering the real meaning of the image, concept and meaning, fashion photography has not only focus on the lifestyle but beyond. From selling the apparel and looks, the image above is showing more public health awareness through high fashion theme, exaggerating valuable lesson that can benefit the viewers. It doesn't stop to deliver its main objective of fashion photography by selling and marketing, but by the advancement on new era of technology ,the lifestyle and concept of an idea portrayed thru photography is now more relevant and acceptable. In the hands of talented individuals, fashion photography has always been an alchemical blend of artistic creation, function, and commodity form - an image of fashion as its ideal self (Perthuis, 2019).

6.3 Conclusions

Every image contains thousands of hidden meanings and everyone has their own interpretation and understanding. One may suggest their opinion by looking at an image, however only the creator knows its true meaning. Everyone could produce the same image with the same concept or photography styles, but what makes the difference between this image is the meaning behind it. For an instance, the portrait painting of Monalisa is the most iconic art piece ever made and thousands of paintings has been made inspired from it. Other artist will try to copy the whole style of the original painting, but it will not be the same as the original because only the creator knows the true meaning behind the artwork. Fashion photography need to be delivered in a simple way, as long as the meaning is delivered to the viewers clearly. The use of concept and props make it even more effective and enhance it than other photography technique thus making the final product more creative and interesting.

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