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## ABSTRACT VISION IN FASHION

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**Purpose and objectives.** The purpose is to demonstrate how abstract forms and structures could be used in art and fashion.

**Object of research.** Yves Saint Laurent's Mondrian collection.

**Methods and means of research.** There have been used methods of observation, description and generalization.

**The scientific novelty** of the presented paper is that for the first time the author tried to demonstrate how abstract forms and structures could be used in art and fashion on the basis of Yves Saint Laurent's Mondrian collection.

**Results of the research.** Abstract art uses a visual language of shape, form, colour and line to create a composition which may exist with a degree of independence from visual references in the world. Western art had been, from the Renaissance up to the middle of the 19th century, underpinned by the logic of perspective and an attempt to reproduce an illusion of visible reality. The arts of cultures other than the European had become accessible and showed alternative ways of describing visual experience to the artist. By the end of the 19th century many artists felt a need to create a new kind of art which would encompass the fundamental changes taking place in technology, science and philosophy. The sources from which individual artists drew their theoretical arguments were diverse, and reflected the social and intellectual preoccupations in all areas of Western culture at that time.

Abstraction indicates a departure from reality in depiction of imagery in art. Abstraction exists along a continuum. Even art that aims for verisimilitude of the highest degree can be said to be abstract, at least theoretically, since perfect representation is likely to be exceedingly elusive. Artwork which takes liberties, altering for instance colour and form in ways that are conspicuous, can be said to be partially abstract. Total abstraction bears no trace of any reference to anything recognizable. In geometric abstraction, for instance, one is unlikely to find references to naturalistic entities. Figurative art and total abstraction are almost mutually exclusive. But figurative and representational (or realistic) art often contains partial abstraction.

Both geometric abstraction and lyrical abstraction are often totally abstract. Among the very numerous art movements that embody partial abstraction would be for instance fauvism in which colour is conspicuously and deliberately altered vis-a-vis reality, and cubism, which blatantly alters the forms of the real life entities depicted [1].

Incorporating architectural structures and geometric shapes into the design of an outfit is a fantastically creative way to add artistic elements to the overall look, abstract clothing designs of modern day runways are becoming more like art exhibits.

The most alluring aspects about abstract designs is the fact that you ordinarily aren't able to discern what the overall appearance or object is actually meant to represent. The use of bold shapes and structures, odd frames and often three-dimensional features serves to make these clothing designs look more fitted for art galleries than fashion stores.

From Sci-Fi menswear looks that feature bold geometric forms to contemporary zen couture that showcases multiple layered frocks, these abstract clothing designs are serving to bring fashion to a new and artistic level.

The Mondrian Collection was designed by French fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent (1 August 1936 – 1 June 2008) in 1965. This collection was a homage to the work of several modernistic artists. Part of this collection were six cocktail dresses that were inspired by the paintings of Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) [4].



The six wool jersey and silk A-line Mondrian dresses comprised graphic black lines and blocks of white and primary colour, directly referencing the work of Mondrian. Rather than being printed, the dresses were made of pre-dyed fabrics, each colour in their design being an individual piece of fabric. Saint Laurent experimented with the interplay of lines by integrating them in the seams of the garment and giving a seemingly seam-free construction. The weight of the fabrics used ensured that the dresses hung straight, without draping or movement to distort the simplicity of the effect - features that enhanced the Modernism theme of the designs. In interviews Saint Laurent acknowledged that Mondrian inspired him to focus on simple dresses with minimal decoration. Although the overall effect appeared simple, the technique was complex and required precision cutting and work-intensive haute couture techniques to achieve successfully, making the dresses expensive [3].

Although Saint Laurent's Mondrian dresses were very successful, it was noted that several other designers had produced very similar works beforehand. In 1965, a New York reporter noted that the Mondrian dresses closely resembled two-colour jersey dresses that had already been produced and widely retailed by the French designer Michèle Rosier. The New York Times claimed that the effect of the Mondrian dresses had been achieved two years previously by the American designer John Kloss [2].

**Conclusions.** The essential difference between abstract art and design is that abstract art, like all fine art, is something to be encountered on a contemplative level. It might be intellectual, visceral, inspirational, or aesthetically beautiful. It's intended to get us to think, to feel, to consider, to evolve, and to wonder about the meaning of our experiences. Design's function is quite different. It's a way of increasing the usefulness or enjoyment of consumer products. Design must serve a function, or it is, as Judd said, absurd.

The profound influence abstract art tendencies like Abstract Expressionism, Op Art, Neoplasticism and Minimalism have had on all of the applied arts, from fashion design to furniture design to architecture and beyond, cannot be exaggerated. And happily today we live in a time when we can quickly access the history of both abstract art and design, and see for ourselves the profound effects the aesthetics and philosophy of abstract art exert on design tendencies.

Interestingly, we also live in a time when we can see those effects play out in an immediate way. An abstract painter can upload a photograph of her new painting on Instagram and seconds later a fashion designer in Milan can use that image as the inspiration for his new spring line. Or vice versa. A fashion designer can upload a picture of a new dress, and it may have a visceral effect on an abstract artist, who might then make headways into new realms of abstract art. Today everything is able to influence everything else, as our culture goes happily leapfrogging forward to meet the new.

**Key words:** *Abstract art, fashion, design, modern vision, art tendencies.*

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