

A Study on Fashion Art

- Focused on Surrealistic Expression Method -

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· 목 차 ·

- I. Introduction
- II. Background
- III. Method
- V. Work description analysis
- VI. Results and outcomes

<요 약>

It is possible to say that origin of fashion is same as that of art. It is result of detailed creativeness which is in more close relation to everyday life, and it reflects the attitude towards pursuing, as well as original will and consciousness, being exterior modelling. Fashion Art is developing into an area of formative art, by emphasizing harmony between human body and soul, fashion, and realizing creative function.

The study aimed to reinforce the fact that fashion is an artistic genre, and investigated Surrealistic expressions in fashion art. It also examined how surrealistic characteristics have been absorbed in fashion art, and how it was realized in fashion, an exterior expression.

Surrealistic expressions in fashion art were realized in various forms and materials according to expressive techniques, and by actually producing practical work, demonstrated the possibility of expression of images in future and application of it. On the other hand, there seems to be possibility of difficulty in generalizing, concerning application methods when applying surrealistic image in fashion art, since it was categorized from a subject viewpoint. Also that the way of thinking and carrying out of ideas, and expressive techniques are developed.

Key words : Surrealism, Surrealistic Expression, Fashion Art

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I. Introduction

1. Objects of study

The study is to find new ways of visual expressions in fashion art. Contemporary fashion as an artistic medium which expresses and conveys sensitivity and ideology has become influential. At the same time it is expanding its domain as a new artistic realm by becoming more closely related to areas of formative arts. Surrealism as a way of thinking and a way of expression is especially reinforced in fashion art, changing its aspects. The study analyses formative characteristics of surrealist expressions and it also considers how visionary Surrealism can be connected to fashion art and the practicality of such connection. It also suggests new directions for fashion art in relation to surrealist expressions. This is to contribute in activating fashion art and related fields.

2. Contents of study and the process

The study will be considering Automatism,¹⁾ which developed by development of chance, and depaysment,²⁾ which developed by application of object.³⁾ The study looks at formation of Surrealism and its ideology as an ideological background. It also looks closely at aspects of automatism and depaysment, by looking at works using these expressions, as they were results of theory in practice which tried to realize the ideology of Surrealism.

The study process used both theoretical research and demonstrative research side by side in order to achieve the objects of study raised above. Theoretical research was carried out, by examining related publications and analysing examples appeared, on expressions of Surrealism, aspects of Surrealism in fashion art and how it was applied. As a demonstrative research and practical work will be produced in order to understand expressions of Surrealism and present more active applications in fashion art in future.

1) Automatism means pure psychic automatism and the omnipotence of dream, and it is a method of dictation of consciousness, eliminating control of reason, aesthetic and moral prejudices. Automatism is spontaneous writing, drawing, or the like practiced without conscious aesthetic or moral self-censorship. Automatism has taken a great many forms, from the automatic writing and drawing that was the initial automatism practiced by surrealism to later adaptations to the computer. There are many similar or perhaps parallel phenomena, such as the improvisation of free jazz.

2) Depaysment is a way of Surrealist expression, and held a view that by depaysment one can free psychological inherent world of unconsciousness when they are looking at familiar object.

3) An object is anything that has a fixed shape or form, that you can touch or see, and that is not alive.

II. Background

The times were to provide many other examples of scandal.⁴⁾ Surrealistic art was reflected in fashion.⁵⁾ It was simply that the surrealists conceived of the revolution only in terms of ideas.⁶⁾ This is a strange kind of world, also world of illusions, dreams and unconsciousness. Guille Aume Apollinaire(1880-1918) used the term 'Surrealistic Drama' in introduction of his play *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* which was performed in 1917, and became the first to use the term,⁷⁾ and it was defined in 1924 declaring of 'First Surrealist Manifesto' by André Breton⁸⁾(1896-1966) also ideology and expressions of the new movement was made Patrick Waldberg.⁹⁾ It is a view which acknowledges unconsciousness and imagination, and also believes them to be superior to logic and reason, and that those which cannot be solved by logic can be solved in world of imagination. Surrealism is not just an artistic aestheticism but is a more broad movement which created new form of humanity or attitude to life. It strive to achieve ultimate freedom of human spirit by uniting dream and action, and art and life. Surrealism also was active in assessing the value of dreams or visions, so that it might be possible to understand reality in more depth, by finding a point where world of reality and world of vision are not in contradiction. Surrealism denied traditional artistic expressions by using psychoanalysis of Freud, which shocked contemporary academic world, as its basis, and drew surrealistic proposition focusing on meanings of dream, world of vision and inner world of human mentality such as subconsciousness and unconsciousness.¹⁰⁾ The union between Surrealism and fashion was at its peak in 1930s.¹¹⁾ Surrealism denied traditional expressions of art and explored world of subconsciousness¹²⁾ and unconsciousness¹³⁾, by doing so aimed to achieve the liberation of the human soul. Expressive techniques used by surrealist

4) René Passeron (2001), *Surrealism*, Terrail, p. 194.

5) Black, J. Anderson and Madge Garland (1980), *A History of Fashion*, London: Orbis Publishing Limited, p. 241.

6) René Passeron (2001), *Surrealism*, Terrail, p. 51.

7) Herbert Read (1964), *A Concise History of Modern Painting*, New York: Fredric, A. Praeger Inc, p. 132.

8) André Breton, 1896-1966: French poet and critic, a leader of the surrealist movement. He was born in Tinchebray, Orne Department, studied medicine, and worked in psychiatric wards in World War I. Later, as a writer in Paris, he was a pioneer in the antirationalist movements in art and literature known as Dadaism and surrealism, which developed out of the general disillusionment with tradition that marked the post-World War I era. Breton's study of the works of Sigmund Freud and his experiments with automatic writing influenced his initial formulation of surrealist theory. He expressed his views in *Literature*, the leading surrealist periodical, which he helped found and edited for many years, and in three surrealist manifestos (1924, 1930, 1942). His best creative work is considered the novel *Nadja* (1928), based partly on his own experiences. His poetry, in *Selected Poems* (1948; trans. 1969), reflects the influence of the poets Paul Valéry and Arthur Rimbaud.

9) Patrick Waldberg (1965), *Surrealism*, London: Thames and Hudson, p. 16.

10) Oesterricher Mollwo (1979), *Surrealism and Dadaism*, Amsterdam: Phaidon Press Ltd, p. 2-14.

11) Palmer White (1986), *Elsa Schiaparelli*, New York: Rizzoli International Publication, Inc, pp. 71-81.

12) The state in which mental processes take place without the conscious perception of the individual.

13) A state of impaired consciousness in which one shows no responsiveness to environmental stimuli but may respond to deep pain with involuntary movements.

had distinctive features, unique to each artist. As well as suggesting detailed methods in depicting the world of unconsciousness, dream and vision, they expressed in their painting and sculpture images conceived from basic human needs and desires.

As such surrealistic ways of thinking¹⁴⁾ and expressive techniques and methods were investigated and researched, and influences on design nowadays. It also suggests that abstract expressions are possible in fashion design¹⁵⁾ as well as in fashion art.

III. Method

1. Fashion art work progress methodology

The fashion art work process used both theoretical research and demonstrative study side by side in order to achieve the objects of study raised above. Theoretical research was carried out, by examining related publications and analysing examples on expressions of Surrealism, aspects of Surrealism in work and how it was applied in ideas, design and modelling. As a demonstrative research practical work was produced in order to understand expressions of Surrealism. The process carrying out this work is as follows:

First, collecting materials and survey: To collect and survey materials and surrealistic fashion, jewellery and fashion display, images made from expressions of surrealism, references and pictures on the effectiveness of design, and other materials.

Second, classification of collected materials: To systematically classify common points and correlation of these materials with their own unique uses.

Third, development of ideas: Getting rid of factors which prevents imagination.¹⁶⁾

This work has to surpass the stereotyped ideas to the items such as fashion art which has close relationship with our daily life and dream. There was also an addition of my characteristics to this work.

fourth, expressing ideas: To make an art of work by maturing ideas through various expressions of these ideas. It is very important that I carried out this project with multi-lateral approaches of doing sketches, making formative arts, experimenting various images, using many colours with a view to

14) Colin McDowell (1984), *Directory of Twentieth Century Fashion*, London: Muller Blond & White Limited, p. 25.

15) Richard Martin (1986), *Fashion and Surrealism*, New York: Rizzoli International Publication, Inc, p. 17.

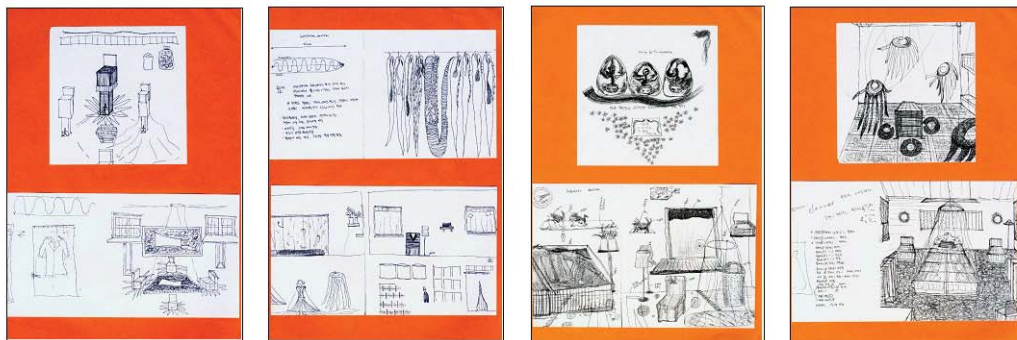
16) Stereotype, mechanical action, self-regulation, preoccupation, taboos, etc.

seeking out a new beauty of formative arts and feeling of materials.

It is very importance of this work lies in making it level up to a work of art worthy of artistic value as well as in enlarging one field of fine arts by suggesting new images and forms for design deeply related with daily life and dream. The objective is, based on a surrealistic expression method, design-making in consideration of artistic fashion and effective designing for fashion display¹⁷⁾ that is novel and striking.

2. Designing principles and methods of expressing concepts

The creative work conceptions, which aims to transcend above the dimension of established ways of thinking, can be summarized into three: First is an attempt to directly reflect image of dream and unconsciousness in fashion art. Second is to express free forms, significant in that it breaks established ways of thinking, which is bound in order and regulations. Third is to produce a form created by chance due to change of motion, in a moment<Fig. 1-8>.



<Fig. 1-8> Lyu Keunjong, Idea development sketches

Form and colours which were formed by chance and inspiration, based on dreams, world of unconsciousness and experiences. Free transformations which can be earned in natural state of unconsciousness were used as my method of design. These free forms are not the forms produced unnaturally, or intentionally. Reflected in work forms which could be captured in momentary motion, by element of chance, and preferred paper, cloth and vinyl, for being able to change freely and have momentary creases, in order to create unique forms. These ideas were based on sudden changes, free from established order and regulations. Methods in applying Surrealistic expressions in my work

17) Space presentation.

categorized above was applied, and the application methods were:

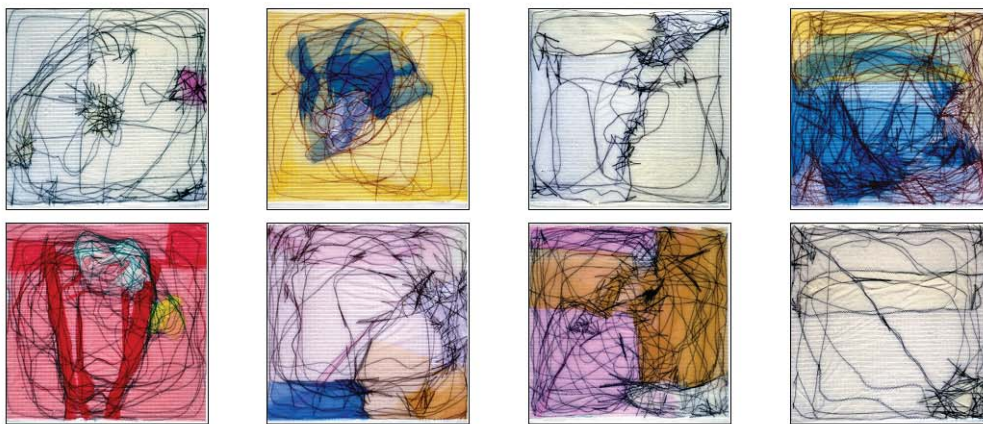
First, the structural change in morphology of fashion.

Second, expressions by altering of position and uses of fashion items.

Third, Surrealistic expression by application of collage technique.

Fourth, expression by use of Tromp l'deil¹⁸⁾ technique and automatism.

The fashion art work¹⁹⁾ prefers element of chance and inspiration, transcending logic, order and regulations of normal dimension, in order to create fresh conception of new dimension. Major materials used are as follows: Christmas tree, protection vinyl, vinyl sheet, plastic mesh, ready-made object(toy) and fabric(curtain, linen, lace), long cut papers, string, wire, copper wire, aluminum, wood, steel, acryl, lighting.²⁰⁾



<Fig. 9-16> Lyu Keunjong, Automatic drawing



<Fig. 17-19> Lyu Keunjong, Cushion / Dress, skirt

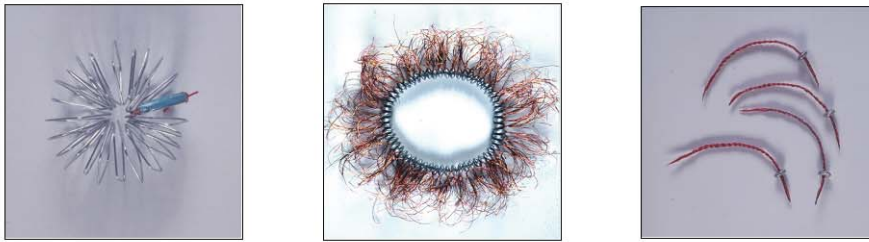
18) Tromp l'deil means optical illusion and is a design technique which contrasts design, shape, colour, line and texture to create optical illusion.

19) <Fig. 1-77> Fashion art work and photo by Lyu Keunjong, 2002, London, U.K.

20) Almost all materials employed in the work have different uses.



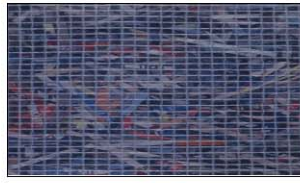
<Fig. 20-22> Lyu Keunjong, Chair covers, lamp & wall part / Dress, blouse, jacket, skirt



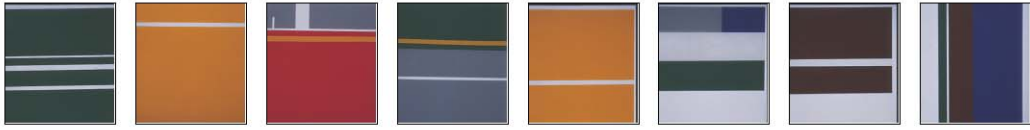
<Fig. 23-25> Lyu Keunjong, Decoration part, mirror, flower / Necklace, wall part



<Fig. 26-31> Lyu Keunjong, Curtain / Dress, skirt, bed, living room parts, vase



<Fig. 32-33> Lyu Keunjong, Automatic cut papers / Carpet, wall parts



<Fig. 34-41> Lyu Keunjong, Automatic composition / Bed parts



<Fig. 42-45> Lyu Keunjong, Installation Performance



<Fig. 46-61> Lyu Keunjong, Curtain / Dress, skirt, bed, living room parts, vase

V. Work description analysis

In front of the installation space is an object<Fig. 72> installed very much for own contentment. Symbolizing the wish for the success of this fashion art and the development of work. The object contains a special sentiment that can be felt only by Koreans. Ordinary visitors to the installation may have a subtle foreignness and curiosity about the object at the entrance.

Two rooms of a general size are built. The made clothes and accessories, and pieces of drawings are used to decorate the two rooms.²¹⁾ Of the two, the bedroom<Fig. 62-67> has a feeling of unreality because of the delicate feel and rustling noise of long cut paper carpet<Fig. 32, 74> that is laid as the floor material, and its light makes a faint impression of strangeness, but it is hardly noticeable that the decorating objects are reused as clothes or jewelries. In addition, furniture such as a drawer does not have its original functions, but works as lighting. Nevertheless, viewers attention does not reach up to there. Three suddenly emerged models give a performance<Fig. 42-45>. They pull out a flower like thing<Fig. 23-25> from a flower vase<Fig. 75> and wear it around their necks, put on a curtain, and convert a lamp stand into a dress<Fig. 20-22, 26-31, 46-61>. Viewers now can watch 8 pieces of square automatic drawings<Fig. 9-16>, which are the basic motifs of this work.

Entering the other room, a living room<Fig. 68-71>, viewers see the same long cut paper<Fig. 33, 77> but do not notice it is the same material, because the paper is in semitransparent vinyl bag. The feel and noise are felt differently. The two sets of objects hanging in the air and one on the floor represent an oriental cushion<Fig. 17-19>, and the standing rectangular object, made of a raw lumber, represents an oriental sitting table. Viewers are not aware of the use of furniture. Even they do not notice it is a living room. Instead, they think the objects suspended in the air are clothes. They think so only because the objects are put on mannequins though it is an impractical and unordinary design. Suddenly there appears an Asian couple on the screen on the wall, who sit in an oriental way in the same room, drinking tea and burning incense. Only then, viewers notice the use of the room, and another use for the objects hanging in the air. Viewers now can watch 3 pieces of rectangle automatic drawings, which are the basic motifs of this work. For effective designing, new beauties of forms and feels of materials have been rediscovered through diverse sketches, various material experiments, and approaches from many aspects have been tried through several coloring experiments.

The technique underlying this work is, in a word, a kind of automatism. It is to design the life waves originating from my heart freely through my hands. The intentional deceiving, though not so strong, makes us reconsider the essence of things. That the designing has given intense impressions to

21) The design does not deviate much from the contemporary trend, and it also considers commerciality.

the viewers<Fig. 17-19>.

The whole process from collecting and deploying ideas to making the actual work has been under extremely liberal conceptions based on a surrealist expression method. The automatism drawings decorating the walls, which are the sketches of this work, have the free-formed faces occupying a side of the screens as well as small faces and lines entangled, so is filled with excitement in a surrealist world.



<Fig. 62-67> Lyu Keunjong, Bedroom installation



<Fig. 68-71> Lyu Keunjong, Living room installation



<Fig. 72-77> Lyu Keunjong, Special object and Installation details

In other words, things strong and weak, big and small, and dynamic and static fill the screens in different looks. As for the basic composition, the semitransparent white of industrial vinyl is dominant, and it is added free-styled blackish yellow. If the forms defining the composition are the subject and body, the colors are their clothes and emotions. Through them, If the forms and colors are the basic component of the work, there should be conceptions to be represented with them first.

Contrary to a realistic work, in which the origin of a conception is a natural being, this work relies heavily on the step of conception. Of course, even if the work is an outcome of imagination and the surreal, it is still designed based on experiences and observation of natural phenomena, and through abstract will.

VI. Results and outcomes

Unexpectedness, wonders and mysteries have enabled to think out new forms and designs throughout the process. This work is a monologue about artist's free style on an indefinite surrealist illusion. It is a trial to escape from the fixed establishment and to reach a new aesthetics in which are free motions, and meetings and partings of time.

This work may be applied to all areas related to fashions such as clothes and jewelries, and have a commercial potential. Using conclusions drawn from the works the basis, fashion design, jewellery and space presentation were produced, and the result is as follows:

First, application of surrealist ideas and expressions in work made it possible for design to become

more of an formative artistic expression, and at the same time bestowed new experience and meaning on established aestheticism of fashion art.

Second, expressive techniques of automatism and depaysment in design work proved themselves as the solution which makes it possible for surrealist image to be realized in various ways.

Third, diversity in application and suggestion of object in fashion art succeeded in breaking habitual conceptions one has about commonplace objects, and at the same time confirmed that any object can be the subject of modelling.

Surrealist expressions were realized in various forms and materials according to expressive techniques, and by actually producing practical work, demonstrated the possibility of expression of Surrealist images in future and application of it. On the other hand, there seems to be possibility of difficulty in generalizing, concerning application methods when applying surrealist image in design work, since it was categorized from a subject viewpoint.

In fact, it's what we've been led to expect structural aspect of design principles, and experienced the course of understanding about raised questions. All these made feel acutely the necessity of verifying an idea through the results of work, and understand the possibility of development in the future. The aim of this work was producing fashion art based on art. The standard of creative ideology is what decides whether fashion art can be treated as art, by nature, or not. The key to success in this study was design work which did not focus on self-expression, but on self-creation and self-transcendence. It required not passive means which aimed to depict unconsciousness, but voluntary expressions which actively controlled the consciousness.

(Requisition: April, 07, 2005)

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패션아트를 위한 연구 - 초현실주의 표현방법을 중심으로 -

우송정보대학 토탈패션계열 전임강사 류근중

패션아트는 다양한 표현성을 토대로 조형상의 발전과 함께 예술의 형태로 발전하고 있다. 특히 초현실주의 미술의 표현기법은 패션아트 분야에 계속하여 반영되고 있다. 이번 연구는 패션아트의 발상과 표현에 도움을 주기 위해서이다. 이를 위해 초현실주의의 기본적인 이념과, 구체적 실현을 위한 방법으로서의 오토마티즘, 데페이즈망, 트롱블레이유를 고찰해 보았다. 또한 초현실주의적 사고와 감성, 기법을 최대한 활용한 패션아트 작업을 하여 그 효과와 가능성을 타진하여 보았다. 이번 연구의 결과는 다음과 같다.

첫째, 오토마티즘, 데페이즈망, 트롱블레이유의 표현방법은 패션아트에서 초현실적인 이미지를 다양한 형태로 구체화 시킬 수 있는 방법임을 알 수 있었다.

둘째, 패션아트 작업에 있어서 초현실적 사고와 표현양식의 적용은 새로운 조형과 사상을 표현하는 방법임을 알 수 있었다.

앞으로 본 연구에서 시도되지 못했던 연구 방법론이 개발되길 바란다. 또한 패션아트 작업에 있어서의 새로운 사고와 아이디어 전개, 표현기법에 대한 많은 시도와 연구가 이루어지길 바란다.