

Original Article

Investigating the Innovation and Application of Jackson Pollock's (Drip Painting) Elements in Fashion Design

Zhu Ziwei ^{1,*}

¹ College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

* Correspondence: 2022575649@student.uitm.edu.my (Z.Z.)

Citations: Ziwei, Z. (2023). Investigating the Innovation and Application of Jackson Pollock's (Drip Painting) Elements in Fashion Design. *International Journal of Global Optimization and Its Application*, 2(2), 117-124.

Academic Editor: Seri Rahayu Binti Kamat.

Received: 5 February 2023

Accepted: 18 May 2023

Published: 30 June 2023

Abstract: As a unique cultural carrier, clothing always reflects people's way of life and aesthetic concepts. With the continuous development of global economic integration and the mutual integration of multiculturalism, people's aesthetic needs for clothing are becoming increasingly diversified. The painting process of Jackson Pollock's "drip painting" is carried out in an unconscious mental state, which is very subjective and random. It uses a combination of lines, colors, and shapes to portray nature in his imagination. At the same time, he also pays great attention to applying comprehensive materials. His creative idea can also be used in clothing, which can enrich the artistic language of clothing and improve the artistry of clothing. This study applies acrylic and colors hot melt adhesive to clothing fabric in a way similar to Pollock's "drip painting" through practical research to test its fluidity and coloring effect on the fabric and the layering of lines. The experimental results conclude that the adaptability of hot melt adhesive stick and canvas fabric is very high, and its fluidity and stability can confirm the feasibility of applying it to clothing design. However, the performance effect of acrylic pigment in this practical research is not ideal. This study found that atypical clothing materials can make clothing more abstract and play a positive role in the personalized expression of clothing.

Keywords: Jackson Pollock; drip painting; fashion design; comprehensive materials; hot melt adhesive.



Copyright: © 2022-2023 by the author. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

The popularity of clothing is a social and cultural phenomenon that can reflect each period's artistic style (Lau, 2011; Porter, 2002). With the continuous improvement of the level of agriculture, animal husbandry, and textile, the materials and techniques of clothing are also developing and changing, directly reflecting people's living standards and way of life and embodying people's ideas and aesthetic consciousness. Costume design can also be called a process of artistic creation. Its creative ideas and expression techniques are related to other art categories but are not equivalent to painting, sculpture, and other art forms. Modern fashion design is in the trend of diversification, the development space is more extensive, things that trigger inspiration can be seen everywhere, and many art forms, such as music, literature, painting, architecture, etc., can bring inspiration to the field of fashion design. Among them,

pursuing originality in abstract painting coincides with fashion design. The pure form and color presented by abstract painting can bring people a more expansive space for reverie. The application of abstract painting in fashion design not only emphasizes individuality but also integrates solid artistic flavor. The two complement each other and inject fresh blood into modern fashion design. The expression form of abstract painting in costume design is reflected by color, line, pattern, and composition, creative activity with clothing as the main body. For example, Yves Saint Laurent, inspired by Piet Cornelies Mondrian's "Composition with Red Blue and Yellow", applied its composition to clothing to create the famous "Mondrian Dress", as shown in Figures 1 and Figure 2. It captures the combination of abstract elements and factors such as clothing style, modeling and fabrics can bring the essence of abstract paintings into full play in clothing design; In contrast, clothing has become a platform for displaying works of art, it has also become a work of art.

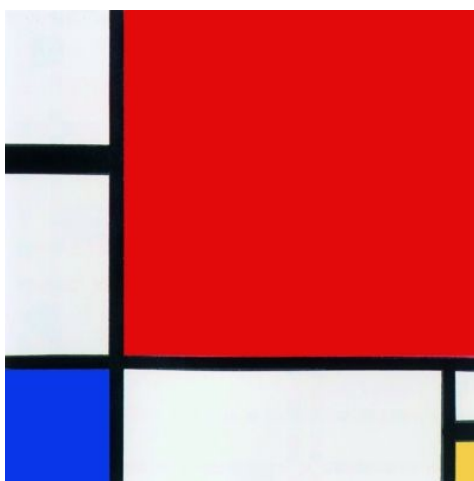


Figure 1. Piet Cornelies Mondrian, Composition with Red Blue and Yellow in 1930



Figure 2. Yves Saint Laurent, Mondrian Dress in 1965

Jackson Pollock's abstract paintings combine abstract forms and expressionist emotions (Esplund, 2018). He uses "drip painting" to sprinkle paint onto a canvas laid on the floor, create a mesh picture with crisscrossing lines and a very layered sense of layering (Hunter et al., 1956). He usually does not go through prior planning in painting but walks around at will while painting, creating a state of repeated unconsciousness, s the whole picture is endless and rhythmic (Khandekar et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2007). Therefore, this study aims to improve the artistic value of clothing, explore the characteristics and connotation of Pollock's abstract paintings, and apply elements such as formal beauty and point, line, and

plane in his abstract paintings to clothing design to meet people's individual needs. This study draws lessons from the artistic concept and expression of Pollock's abstract painting. It applies to fashion design, which can break the traditional way of thinking, bring more activity space to subjective consciousness and enrich the artistic language of clothing.

2. Materials and Methods

Considering environmental protection factors, this study did not choose the paint with a high coloring degree, strong fluidity and more suitable for the "drip painting" technique. The main materials used in this study are one piece each of black and white canvas, various colors of acrylic pigments, as well as a hot melt glue gun and a color hot melt glue stick with a diameter of 0.7cm. Other materials are 1/2 size dedicated model for three-dimensional tailoring, hard brush, soft brush and transparent tape. The two design works in this study draw colors from Jackson Pollock's abstract paintings and apply various colors, combining cold and warm tones, contrasting colors and complementary colors, and suppressing the picture with black and white as the background. So that the whole clothing presents a state of harmony and unity.

3. Results

This The acrylic pigment diluted with water has fluidity on canvas, but when it flows, it also seeps into the fabric, resulting in a color that is not obvious or even no color at all; Acrylic pigments that have not been diluted with water have poor fluidity on canvas, but have strong adsorption, and the colors are still bright until they are air-dried. Besides that, Canvas has strong heat resistance, and the temperature of the hot melt adhesive will not iron it to deformation; Hot melt adhesive has strong stability on the canvas, and the rough textile texture of the canvas can make the hot melt adhesive tightly fixed on. The color inspiration comes from Pollock's two abstract paintings, "Blue Poles 1952 No. 11" (Figure 3) and "Reflection of the Big Dipper" (Figure 4). The creative technique of this study is also similar to Pollock's technique of creating paintings: paint (material) is freely sprinkled on the canvas (clothing) and let it drop randomly.



Figure 3. Jackson Pollock, Blue Poles 1952 No. 11 in 1952

The first design is made of black canvas and black and gold interwoven mesh fabric, and the skirt version uses the most basic "A" type to test the stickiness of hot melt adhesive on flat, flat canvas fabric. First, several pieces of transparent tape are pasted longitudinally on the cloth in an irregular form to be similar to Pollock's original painting, "Blue Poles 1952 No. 11," as shown in Figure 3. Then use a soft brush to dip the acrylic paint in four colors: red, yellow, white, and orange, respectively, and apply it randomly on the fabric.



Figure 4. Jackson Pollock, Reflection of the Big Dipper in 1947

Finally, remove the tape and wait for the acrylic paint to dry naturally. After the acrylic paint is dried, use four colors of red, yellow, white, and black hot melt adhesive, and stick it to the fabric at will, allowing the hot melt adhesive to drip and flow freely on the fabric, and finally use a hard brush to dip the white acrylic paint and decorate it on the fabric. Because the transparent tape was burned to melt during hot melt adhesive, the lines similar to the thick black lines in " Blue Poles 1952 No. 11" did not appear and could only be replaced by black tape. The final effect is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Blue Poles 1952 No. 11 replaced by black tape

To test the load-bearing capacity of the hot melt adhesive, the second design uses a two-piece design. The top is a vest, the skirt is a pleated "O" skirt, and white canvas fabric is used. This design did not use acrylic paint but directly used color hot melt adhesive creation. The primary colors used are yellow, light green, orange, blue, and black and white. The way of laying color and the level of color are similar to Pollock's the "Reflection of the Big Dipper", that is, with yellow, green, orange and blue as the background colors, the black lines are sprinkled in the picture in a large range, followed by white, and the lines and colors are shown in layers in the way of painting arc, making the picture more three-dimensional. Finally, ultramarine acrylic paint was applied to the center of the dress, like the striking ultramarine in "Reflection of the Big Dipper". The final result is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Ultramarine Acrylic Paint (Reflection of the Big Dipper)

The load-bearing capacity of the hot melt adhesive is also unexpectedly high, after it can cool completely, if it does not deliberately shake the clothes, it can withstand its own multiple weight of the cloth for at least two hours. If the amount of hot melt adhesive is more, its load-bearing time can be longer. In addition, the three-dimensional feel of the hot melt adhesive is also very strong, as shown in figure 7. If all colors with high saturation and black and white are used, the contrast and layering of the colors will be more distinct. I have used other materials to show Pollock's paintings before, but the results are not ideal, as shown in figure 8. I chose to use colored wool to make the lines, but the traces of "artificial" are too obvious, because it completely requires people to control the direction of the lines, resulting in these lines have no free "flowing" form of expression, so it is slightly blunt. And the sense of layering is also weak.



Figure 7. Three-dimensional feel of the hot melt adhesive



Figure 8. Pollock's paintings drip painting in 2017

Pollock's "drip painting" creates crisscross lines with a great sense of layering (Ebert, 1978; Esplund, 2018). This study combines theory with practice, follows the formal beauty law of fashion design, and applies some features of Pollock's abstract painting to clothing design to improve the artistry of clothing and reflect the innovative points of clothing. In future research, we should have the courage to try to use more different materials; the fabric in the market sometimes takes time to meet the needs of clothing design, and the field of fashion design should pay attention to the importance of fabric reconstruction, in clothing modeling and clothing materials to achieve dual innovation and application.

4. Discussion

In the process of this creation, the author has a clearer understanding of the limitations of acrylic pigments and the stability of hot melt adhesives. Although the diluted acrylic pigment can show the characteristics of drip painting, the water permeability makes it incompatible with canvas cloth; The undiluted acrylic pigment almost completely needs to be controlled manually, which is inconsistent with Pollock's main idea of "drip painting" creation. Pollock is a painter who dares to try new things, and his art represents a spiritual force that pervades American culture in the middle of the 20th century (Zanker et al., 2016). Pollock abandoned conventional painting tools and creative methods while exploring abstract expressionist art (Taylor, 2003). His instinctively incorporated emotions, thoughts, and other unpredictable things into his paintings, giving his abstract images an extraordinary directness, and his skillful use of liquid pigments, coupled with dance-like movements and large gestures and brushes that rarely touch the surface of the canvas, have decisively broken the tradition of painting. There is also a similar concept in fashion design. Creation is a process of continuous development and action taken to express the cognition of the objective world (Nelson & Stolterman, 2014).

In the creation process of clothing, we can use various materials with different functions. Painting using comprehensive materials has become commonplace in modern times (Wolff & Wolff, 1981). Fashion design, as a kind of art, can also be viewed similarly. As long as it does not leave the essence of clothing, it can be regarded as a design that coexists with functionality, aesthetics, and innovation (Loschek, 2009; McKelvey & Munslow, 2011; Raustiala & Sprigman, 2006). The choice of suitable materials is the key to the success of works of art. Through this experiment, the functions of acrylic pigment and paint are far apart, which shows that it is necessary to break traditional thinking to innovate truly bravely. In future research and experiments, non-traditional painting and clothing design materials such as non-toxic paint and asphalt should be tried. In addition, if a large amount of acrylic is used to sprinkle on the hanging fabric, the effect will be completely different, so the amount of material is very important. The application experiment of color hot melt adhesive on canvas is successful. the fluidity and plasticity of hot melt adhesive make the process of creating pattern convenient and fast, and it is better than many painting pigments and other

comprehensive materials in terms of hygiene and environmental protection and can show a better artistic effect.

5. Conclusions

People's aesthetic level is rising with the development of society and the economy. The demand for clothing is now more comprehensive than the most basic functions such as warmth and comfort, but more and more pursue individualization to improve their dress taste. As a complete art form, fashion design is practical, aesthetic, artistic, and commercial. Therefore, more than just looking for inspiration in the clothing style is needed to meet the needs of most consumers. Suppose we want to develop on the road of design in the long term. In that case, we need to constantly explore the art forms of other art categories, compare them with clothing design, and explore how to combine the two to reflect the diversification of fashion design. Abstract art and fashion design have long been familiar on the contemporary runway. The rules of formal beauty contained in abstract art, such as the relationship between proportion and rhythm, balance and equilibrium, are also applicable in fashion design. The rich expression techniques and comprehensive perspectives of painting art can bring unlimited creative inspiration to fashion designers.

Fashion designers explore new design ideas from various aspects to meet the aesthetic needs of consumers. The unique style of abstract painting and its emotion-oriented expression make it easier for fashion designers to break through the original design thinking and convey a distinctive artistic language. Abstract painting is an art form with great personality and characteristics in many art categories, which can bring people different sensory experiences, thus stimulating fashion designers' diversified expression of beauty. Abstract painting pursues originality, paying attention to the beauty of form and breaking away from the art form of imitating nature. The simplification or extraction of figurative form by abstract painting and the creative way of depicting a character with the combination of lines, colors, and shapes are worth exploring by fashion designers.

Exploring the characteristics and connotations of Pollock's abstract painting, combining theory and practice, and applying the elements of formal beauty and dots, lines, and planes in Pollock's abstract painting to fashion design is a way to improve clothing artistry. It is helpful to meet the personalized needs of contemporary people for clothing. In the current economic globalization situation, the clothing industry competition is becoming increasingly fierce. We should constantly try new design elements and show new design concepts to stand out. The combination of Pollock's abstract painting and fashion design can not only emphasize the beauty of art but also provide more rich theoretical and practical experience for innovation in the field of fashion design. For the reference and application of its abstract elements, it is not to unthinkingly imitate but to constantly try and innovate, apply those elements to clothing in a more suitable way of expression, and form its artistic language.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, Z.Z.; methodology, Z.Z.; software, Z.Z.; validation, Z.Z.; formal analysis, Z.Z.; investigation, Z.Z.; resources, Z.Z.; data curation, Z.Z.; writing—original draft preparation, Z.Z.; writing—review and editing, Z.Z.; visualization, Z.Z.; project administration, Z.Z.; funding acquisition, Z.Z. The author has read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: The author would like to thank Universiti Teknologi MARA, Selangor, Malaysia for supporting this research and publication. The author would also like to thank the reviewers for all their constructive comments.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- Ebert, T. L. (1978). The Aesthetics of Indeterminacy: The Postmodern Drip Paintings of Jackson Pollock. *Centennial Review*, 22(2), 139–163.
- Esplund, L. (2018). *The Art of Looking: How to Read Modern and Contemporary Art*. Hachette UK.
- Hunter, S., Pollock, J., & Karpel, B. (1956). Jackson Pollock. *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art*, 24(2), 3–36.

-
- Khandekar, N., Mancusi-Ungaro, C., Cooper, H., Rosenberger, C., Eremin, K., Smith, K., Stenger, J., & Kirby, D. (2010). A technical analysis of three paintings attributed to Jackson Pollock. *Studies in Conservation*, 55(3), 204–215.
- Lau, K. J. (2011). Retro: The culture of revival. *Journal of American Folklore*, 124(494), 336–338. <https://doi.org/10.5406/jamerfolk.124.494.0336>
- Lee, S., Olsen, S., & Gooch, B. (2007). Simulating and analysing Jackson Pollock's paintings. *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts*, 1(2), 73–83.
- Loschek, I. (2009). *When clothes become fashion: Design and innovation systems*. Berg.
- McKelvey, K., & Munslow, J. (2011). *Fashion design: process, innovation and practice*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Nelson, H. G., & Stolterman, E. (2014). *The design way: Intentional change in an unpredictable world* (2nd ed.). MIT press.
- Porter, D. L. (2002). Monstrous Beauty: Eighteenth-Century Fashion and the Aesthetics of the Chinese Taste. *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 35(3), 395–411.
- Raustiala, K., & Sprigman, C. (2006). The piracy and paradox: Innovation and intellectual property in fashion design. *Va. L. Rev.*, 92, 1687.
- Taylor, R. (2003). Fractal expressionism—where art meets science. In *Art and complexity* (pp. 117–144). Elsevier.
- Wolff, J., & Wolff, J. (1981). *The social production of art*. Springer.
- Zanker, J., Jackson, J., & Stevanov, J. (2016). On the mystery of fractals in Arts—why are Pollock's drip paintings valued so highly? *Journal of Vision*, 16(12), 794. <https://doi.org/10.1167/16.12.794>