

## SHOP WINDOW DISPLAY MANNEQUINS IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Peiwei Liu<sup>1,2</sup> and Oksana Lahoda<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Huaiyin Institute of Technology* and <sup>2</sup>*Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts*

**Abstract.** Showcasing is a unique marketing tool that implements the requirements for advertising products from different manufacturers for different social groups in a highly competitive environment. Shop window design is part of visual merchandising and it actively uses mannequins as exposition equipment. They help to create an attractive image of the store, which is memorable, in particular, due to the design of the mannequins themselves. A wide range of shop window functions and mannequins are conditioned by the conceptual content and mutual subordination. Shop windows are creating and operating through advertising and selling goods, and mannequins convey the image, values, aesthetic preferences of both the manufacturers and a certain group of consumers. Shop windows have long ceased to be a common display of goods, and city streets are literally full of original installations in creative showcases. As competition between brands intensifies, consumers are saturated with both goods and their representations, which can be considered as a problem that needs coverage. The aspect of shop window interaction with the environment and spectators, their image-emotional influence, connection with mannequins' design still remain unexplored. The authors use contextual-historical and comparative analysis, as well as the method of typology to reveal the variations of mannequins during the twentieth century. A retrospective review of mannequin design development is preceded by a complex theoretical and methodological basis of the expositions as a phenomenon and an art and project-based creativity sphere.

**Keywords:** aesthetics, practice of representations, costume design expositions, visual merchandising, conceptual mannequins

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3176/tr.2022.3.02>

Received 25 May 2022, accepted 19 July 2022, printed and available online 10 September 2022

## 1. Introduction

Visual and communicative aspects of design activities have become a priority area of scientific research in recent years. Design presentation outlining and regarding it as a specific art and project-based creativity sphere is the result of civilizational changes and changes in social life. As highly complex formations that synthesize different types of design experience, artistic and aesthetic creativity and visual-communicative practices, design presentations are implemented in both real and virtual world of the information age (Lahoda 2018a).

Costume design and its presentation design, which have evolved over the centuries into an extensive and multilevel system of costume design representative practices can be regarded as the most expressive impersonation of the above mentioned (Lagoda 2020: 27).

Representative practices have acquired a special meaning fulfilling a wide range of functions. They have become an integral part of the fashion industry and an important factor of its development (Koneva 2013a). Opposing views about representative practices as well as the ambiguity of their stylistically unbalanced assessments, and sometimes quasi-aesthetic patterns are associated with the formation of new intellectual and value orientations in the designers' work.

A decisive role is played by choosing the communication method as identification in the globalized world of costume (Todorović 2014). In this context, the study of both visual and visualized image of the costume becomes relevant. They actualize the symbolic and signs reality and make representative practices an effective mechanism of consumer influencing and the consumer culture formation as a whole. This encourages the fashion industry to 'produce' systematically and spread an organized flow of new images as specific visual information (Koneva 2013b). This is what is represented on mannequins in the shop windows.

Scientists have already developed general theoretical positions in the assessment of costume as a visual-informative phenomenon (Lagutina 2015); in determining the methodological approaches to the analysis of content, which are the basic condition for the occurrence, formation and functioning of design presentations (Samonenko 2011); criteria for their evaluation as art and design practices in the fields of visual, mass, everyday and even virtual cultures (Lahoda 2020). However, the project type of activity–design paradigm includes: thematization, actualization, problematization, implementation, projection (Sydorenko 2011). Each action has a direct connection with the problems of artistic image and is based on the aesthetics of feasibility and meaningfulness. Semantic image is a form of the project theme existence, it has a complex and multilevel structure as a result of the project process participants' subjectivity in a particular culture or cultural situation.

The defining place in the outlined process is given to the aesthetic reflection structure, which V. Sydorenko, for example, formulates in the paradigm of three aesthetics (Sydorenko 1992). Aesthetic reflection is a manifestation form of the project creativity personalistic beginning, that is unique and only human ability of an individual to model the socio-cultural world as a human problem, as an artistic

concept. The dominance of such modern design concepts as ‘emotional design’, ‘service design’ and ‘social design’ indicate that the efforts of designers are focused not only on the harmonization of subject-spatial environment but on its humanization too. Therefore, the design is involved in the formation processes of the subject-spatial environment, lifestyle and scenarios of consumer behavior. All this is reflected in socio-cultural transformations, in the aesthetic and ethical norms of society (Kataeva et al. 2018). The shop windows design with its arrangement and filling are also a reflection of the processes mentioned above.

However, representative costume design practices have a key difference – they are directly related to the person as the wearer of the costume (Lahoda 2018b). The history of their origin took place in two different ways:

- demonstration of clothing on a wearer or on an object that imitates it on a mannequin as a spatial presentation format;
- fixation of a costume a person is wearing by artistic means as a generalized image of a contemporary which embodies society’s aesthetic tastes in clothing and ideas of beauty ideals.

Modern design activity shows a strong interest in the clothing individualization and personalization by means of design, which provides advantages in consumer choice of goods and creates their own image and style (Balla 2001). The connection between the results of designers’ activities and the cultural, social and economic situation in society forms new strategies of artistic and design creativity, which are implemented at the figurative and stylistic level. Design as a key marketing concept conveys information about a design product to the consumer through its external qualities as if it was a personal experience. The individualization of the suit as a design product acquires axiological significance that changes the attitude of an individual and society to clothing in general.

Consequently, the costume is a creative self-expression, an individualized aesthetic reflection of designers and consumers. In the fashion industry the role of a costume representative is traditionally performed by models during fashion shows or mannequins, in particular, in shop windows. Representative practices which involve mannequins have their own specifics, primarily connected with the fact that mannequins are part of larger design objects – shop windows and also play a role of special exposition equipment (Liu 2021a).

In other words, the study of shop window mannequins as a costume representatives is the study of one design object that represents another – a costume within another design object in a shop window. The shop window design is not only a component of visual merchandising but also a product of exposition design. Therefore, the purpose of our study is to establish the relationships and subordination of these design objects in all possible contexts, for example: information-communicative, image-stylistic, constructive-compositional. It is also important to clarify and detail the shop windows and mannequins’ functions as specific exposition equipment and an element of a separate group of representative costume design practices on the basis of the obtained results.

## 2. Literature review

From the above-mentioned, the consideration of mannequin design in a shop window design (showcasing) as an element of visual merchandising is possible by studying the origin and development of exposition design. Specially organized worldwide industrial expositions, which influenced the design expositions formation and development have been conducted since 1851 with the organization of the first World Expo in London. Within its framework, *the principles of representative design practices* in particular clothing were introduced.

There are three stages in the development of World Industrial Exhibitions identified in the works of K. Berger (2005), J. Lorenz and L. Skolnik (2008) and others: 1) ten exhibitions that took place before the First World War; 2) World exhibitions between the two world wars; 3) numerous international expositions and exhibition ensembles of the second half of the 20th century (Lorents et al. 2008, Syrova and Davyd 2016). These studied various aspects of exposition effectiveness and their productivity as well as the peculiarities of their visual perception. Thus, the evolution of changes in the practice of demonstrating the creativity of designers and the efforts of organizers to exhibit a large number of diverse exhibits within a single exposition space is seen as the exposition design formation and development. Their organization has launched a unique format for demonstrating industry achievements, due to the scale, location and time; the subject of the exposition, its structuring; preparation, construction of specially equipped and specially designed exposition space, their equipment and lighting; the organization of the exposition itself in the most effective way, when the presented displays demonstrate their purpose and thus make a strong impression on the audience (Lahoda 2018b).

During the 20th century the specialized exposition practice has experienced differentiation. In the field of clothing design, it was divided into expositions of textile industry, textile and clothing equipment, accessories. Demonstrations of industrial clothing, in particular on mannequins, also took place as part of such events. And at the end of the 20th century there were regular specialized expositions of mannequins as exposition equipment and an important component of visual merchandising.

M. Maistrovskaya characterizes exposition design as an exceptionally complex, synthetic, and multidimensional sphere. It “balances on the border of clear and rational architectural thought connected with functionality and comfort, technology and economy, rapid implementation of projects, and... has virtually unlimited possibilities of artistic expression, metaphor, ability to create vivid, emotional and meaningful images” (Maistrovskaya 2002). Thanks to the images and not only to the displays and specific information, the exposition constitutes a unique communicative system that affects the viewer, especially on an emotional level. This planned influence is defined as an ‘exposure gesture’ – a whole focus of directed actions and artistic acts on the demonstration, which determines the expected reaction of perception (Minervin 2004).

Expo design as an object of research is seen as an artistic and design activity in scientific research, where typical characteristics and patterns are analyzed.

One of the most important features in modern exposition practices is that the exhibition gesture has become valuable itself. In the context of visual practices it was institutionalized in a special kind of creativity that focuses on the formation of value sets, ideas and specific methods of implementation. The designer's task is to provide its spectacularity and theatricality on the basis of creative self-realization (Litvinov 2005).

Since the exposition is a public demonstration of, a certain way of organized subject matter' (Minervin 2004), it requires thematic clarity, compositional organization, plastic certainty. Expository thinking in design practice influences the perception of any artistic activity manifestation in a variety of subject creativity areas (Genisaretskiy 1984), so an important feature of expository activity is conceptuality. A designer organizes visual connections between the subject and the object of exposition in the subject-spatial environment, develops a perception scenario, determines the accents of the exposition composition, its structure, programs navigation of the review presented in a clear sequence through the conceptual exposition approach. Thus, the presentations design is a set of systematized and purposeful actions, conditioned conceptually and agreed with the script, demonstration of displays in an artificially designed subject-spatial environment, measured by the temporality of visual perception, its emotional impact and provides creative self-realization (2020).

The unity of architectural, spatial and artistic solutions, functional tasks and aesthetic requests that combined conceptually (substantively) determines the professional exposition activity specifics and forms trends of design presentations development as a part of project culture. Any exhibition solves globally two key tasks – aesthetic and functional, related to zoning, ergonomics, scenario development, modularity and arrangement. Therefore, the aim of their solution is to share the specific information of certain content with audience, which forms an expository ensemble. Maistrovskaya believes that it is formed by all interconnected parts, objectively and figuratively constructed artistic structure (Maistrovskaya 2002).

A key requirement for modern expositions among scholars discussing this issue was the laconism and availability that provide the accuracy and clarity of perception, as well as the imagery and artistic expressiveness that shape the narrative. The narrative as a strategy includes metaphorical, figurative emotionality, informative richness, realized in visual conciseness. The exposition acquires a meaningful impact through the image-sign system, metaphors and sociocodes. Thus, Zherdev notes that design semiotics, requires a special artistic code – a dynamic system of rules for the signs consumption, language organization, which determines the artistic expression. As is an artistic image, which the main component is a metaphor plays a role of a subject meanings and meaningful signs system in design (Zherdev 2010).

Thus, the relevance of the artistic image is its metaphorical nature which generates a number of bright associative subject-object relationships, activates sociocodes as markers of socially significant content through the visual perception of the image. It is they who are the translators of the representative narrative strategy of design practices. Mannequins are the direct material carriers of artistic images and their contents in the expositions of shop windows. That is why the study on the history of

their occurrence, functions of application, manufacturing technologies, image and stylistic transformations in the context of cultural and historical progress of society, etc. is important for modern science. And from the theoretical and methodological processed material it follows that the design of mannequins must be studied in the context of shop window design and even more widely – expository design as a separate type of design as a whole. And, if the exposition design as a type of design and shop windows design is already sufficiently covered in the scientific literature in various aspects, the design of mannequins itself remains poorly studied.

### 3. Materials and methods

The research materials were divided into several groups: works on exhibition activities and exposition design (Berger 2005, Lorentz and Skolnik 2008, Litvinov 2005, Maistrovskaya 2002); publications on communication and representation themes (J. Lorentz, L. Skolnik, and Berger 2008); visual culture issue (Alfiorova 2016); works in which the costume and its representative practices are considered (Lahoda 2020).

Research methods took into account the issues of work, scientific-methodological and visual materials that were processed. General scientific methods of systemic analysis and synthesis, abstraction and generalization were complemented by correlation analysis of identical demonstration processes in design in general, clothing and its display in particular. The complex theoretical and methodological substantiation of expositions as the phenomenon and art and project-based creativity sphere was realized for that reason. The issue of interaction of shop windows with the environment and spectators, their image and emotional influence, the connection with the design of mannequins is considered in retrospect, taking into account various socio-cultural and socio-historical changes and processes. To identify the mannequins' design development patterns for shop windows the techniques of contextual-historical and comparative analysis, as well as the method of typology to reveal variations of mannequins during the 20th century were used.

In general, the complex nature of the research methodology is conditioned by the levels of its implementation:

- consideration of exposition activity formation and development, which was transformed into exposition design in the 20th century;
- shop window design studying as a component of visual merchandising and visual culture as a whole;
- analysis of the design evolution of mannequins for shop window according to their functions, art and figurative characteristics, materials and manufacturing technologies.

Visual and analytical analysis supported by a comparative and classification methods, influenced the general axiological approach to identifying key functions and principles of costume representations on a mannequin in a shop window. In the context of the study, this allowed the costume to be positioned as a visual image, and

the costume design demonstrated by a mannequin in a shop window as part of its representations as a visualized image represented by the design.

In this context, the authors relied on the K. M. Berger's (2005) statement that visual communication is the main tool for transmitting information through the sign system, symbols, images, infographics and typography. It creates a system of recognizable images and associations that accurately convey meaning and emotion. As well as the statement of Bruner that the content load of an image or three-dimensional composition in a concentrated form is focused on a stylized symbol, a figurative sign was considered (Bruner 2005).

At the same time, the authors took a clear position that the priority is to create a unique space with the help of exhibition equipment, an autonomous creative environment (Liu and Lahoda 2021). It implements the scenario development, forming the appropriate atmosphere and coloring. In such conditions, as Ya Lorents emphasized, the environment can 'tell' its own story, "... develop interest through the story that contains tactile, visual ... components. The purpose is not only to create a connection between the visitor and the brand, but also to make a lasting impression in the viewer's mind ..." (Lorents et al. 2008).

According to authors such as Koneva (2007; 2009) and Lipskaya (2012), the reflection of designers and the change in consumer attitudes of how they look, what they expect from the clothes they wear, gradually formed objective positioning by contemporaries of own 'I' through costume, in self-presentation: first in a demonstrative and provocative, then in emotional-meaningful and expressive-image, intellectual form. The authors agree with this statement and believe that the demonstration of clothing on mannequins was largely consistent with these trends as with the society demands in a particular period of time. In the 1990s, designers wishing to attract attention and stand out were developing conceptual strategies, which included models from the collections, their advertising and display in shop windows. The whole process acquired theatrical, performance and play features. For consumers, the essence of this game was wearing designer (branded) things in order to impress others, emphasize their social status, individual preferences and lifestyle. "The fashion culture has changed – its image has changed, its industry has changed," said Valeri Still (2013).

Among the positions taken into account by the authors of the study is that fragmentation, artificiality, yearning for theatricality and spectacular effectiveness indicate that all processes in clothing design are consistent with the general trends of postmodernism. The influence of postmodernism was manifested primarily in the growth of figurative and stylistic expression, which led to the aesthetic tastes plurality, eclectic manifestations, and polystylism, the context of which according to Dubrovsky was formed in contemporary art, environmental crisis, and global trends (Dubrovsky 2001). Thanks to this, the late 20th century clothing design was diverse, expressive and emotional. The communicative function has become dominant for design not only in the professional sphere but also in everyday life. Bystrova emphasized this fact: "As a commercialized child of industrial and post-industrial society, it (design – author's note) creates not only something new but also

gives additional value to the novelty ..., in addition to real novelty, even the novelty of presentation and approach become valuable..." (Bystrova 2017).

In general, determination of the importance of mannequins in the fashionable clothes representation practice requires defining the representation of the design product as a spatial-communicative object: a set of systematic targeted actions aimed conceptually at presenting an exposition, in the designed subject-spatial environment, as a sight or show that is measured by the temporality of visual perception, its emotional and sensory impact, and provides creative self-realization of the designer (Lahoda 2020).

#### **4. Results and discussion**

During the analysis of shop windows design samples it was established that the expositional decision of a separate shop window is the only environmental construction. Its image enhances the emotional impact and it is the main representation metaphor. The formation of the image-associative number includes various thematic and substantive aspects. The structure of the exposition ensemble of stylized artistic and spatial structures, including mannequins can form several plots of interaction and use. Mannequin displays can tell different stories in different environments since the viewer is influenced through the perception sign system and figurative thinking, but there is a need of clear balance between the need of creating space and communication needs.

The interaction balance between the aesthetics and functions of the shop window exposition as a design object requires a variety of techniques, which can be both standard and exclusive. For example, art objects without utilitarian functions like art installations and performances are spectacular exhibits that evoke powerful visual images-associations, performing only image tasks. Thus, we should distinguish between two means of action: the predominance of the function with its scenario, production and technological capacity; and aesthetics predominance with a figurative, psychological and emotional influence system. The designer is usually in search of a compromise between them when designing. Functional-operational and figurative-visual exposition aspects can also be differentiated. At the center of functions there is a plan that becomes a sign and a symbol. Different forms of the plan involve different event scenarios (Lorents et al. 2008).

It was confirmed in the study that visual stimuli and physical actions as expositional gestures form the experience of being in the exposition space, and hence emotional impressions and evaluations of the presented are conditioned by visual perception. Perception is characterized by form, properties and factors (circumstances). Unlike the sensation that reflects the individual properties of a thing – the clothes on the mannequin or the mannequin itself, the perception in the communication process provides information about the whole object – it is the shop window that plays the primary role. At the same time, perception is the result of a perceived visual signal message, which the designer puts into the created design-object. Therefore,



‘metalanguage communication’ between the designer and the viewer acquires special significance for designer. Such act perception understanding determines visual communication (Alfiorova 2016).

The purpose of the designer’s communication with the subject is, first of all, to convey a visually meaningful message, information and strong emotion. In our opinion, any emotional reactions can be projected (laid down as a provocation). Non-verbal communication is a communication interaction between subjects without speech. But with the help of the set of exposition equipment, the organization of exposition space and the most three-dimensional composition, such communication interaction becomes an effective and efficient influence action, in which the style of thinking is expressed in clear visual language. Using an accurate metaphor, a vivid image of a mannequin can make it convincing, memorable and unique.

The image-thematic and structure compositional specifics of the representations provide the shop window conceptual environment creation, which combines exhibits and themes, architecture and subject-spatial stylistics, didactic materials and technological modes, mannequins as independent design objects. Space, movement and memory functions are used to create multilevel communication. The understanding of communicative connections as a way of life and a system of behavior, norms and values of a certain social group dominates (Lorents et al. 2008).

The design of the shop window makes it a self-sufficient spatial and communicative object. Traditionally, there were two types of objects, art and commercial (specialized) exhibition. The fact of the synthesis of these types in the practice of modern design was revealed. The complex shop windows with information, commercial and entertainment functions has made them a spectacle. Items exhibited in the show format are participants in a certain story, which is not only about the object but about its creator, manufacturer (brand), potential consumer and the author of the exposition at the same time. The exposition itself as a spectacle is a visual narrative. The improvement of exposition techniques reveals a general tendency towards more unexpected, effective methods of complex latest technical and technological applications and open theatricalization of expositions as a show. Spectacle that was relevant for art expositions in the 1930s became dominant in the second half of the 20th century, both in art, in commercial and industrial types of exhibitions. In their synthesized form, which is typical of the beginning of the 21st century, this trend dominates.

Expositions can be exclusive, typical (standard), interactive, static or mobile, they can use multimedia and digital technologies (Liu 2021b). The interconnection between image, space and information structure is, in a broader sense, a multimedia task, a connection between virtual and real environments. Modern examples of shop window design demonstrate the commitment of designers to artistic imagery, plot, concepts and action scenarios, the tendency to theatricality and entertainment, conceptual and plot construction. The outrage became typical because the limit of provocative ideas is too small, and their effectiveness is extremely productive. Outrage instantly gives wide emotional and sensual color to representation.

Meanwhile, the provocation effect is always predictable, as it is usually a

conceptual act. Unexpected interpretation, unusual context, alternative solution of constructive conceptual and figurative organization of the shop window exposition space creates visual impressions with the help of a color combination, three-dimensional, figurative and constructive solutions. This is a kind of formation principle system and representation design planning on the basis of conceptualization and figurative expressiveness of the exposition plan.

The communication act takes place at a certain narrative level, and the process of individual product narrativization happens in the process of its design. It consists in the creation of coded symbolic values in the design of the product itself, as well as in the design of its advertising, the way of representation (Lahoda 2008). In our case, it is the narrativization of clothes, mannequins for its demonstration, shop windows, where the dressed mannequins are displayed. However, the main role in this process is given to the 'sound' of the image, as the act of visual representation is a communication in the field of fashion, where costume images dominate.

A suit in a shop window is, first of all, a thing that must be sold (Visual merchandising 2005). The representation of the costume in the window created the need for its professional design in order to attract as many consumers as possible. After all, shops, especially large department stores, have become a place for the masses, filled daily with a variety of representations, sometimes specific, which can not always be called 'artistic' and 'aesthetic'. These representations often resemble a banal setting and highlight not what is presented but how, what way, or with the help of what means. From this point of view, the design of shop windows can be considered in the same light with such formats of costume design representations as paintings and graphics, fashionable mannequins, fashion illustrations and fashion shows. All of them are based on the narrativization of the fashion goods value meanings in the space of consumer culture and lifestyle of certain social groups.

The growing role of showcasing in the fashion industry is connected with the information interpretation about fashion trends that do not have a single version of interpretation, there are many narratives that are included in science-based commercial and sales scenario projection in consumer culture. There are designers whose work is aimed at designing shop windows and who are responsible for shaping the traditions of the industry. For example, Leila Mencari has been designing shop windows for the Hermès brand in Paris since 1977. Fascinated by Oriental culture, she created unique fairy-tale and romantic expositions, broadcasting a narrative of world culture and people's diversity and uniqueness. It was natural for the designer to create the ruins of Carthage, a Byzantine harem or an African savannah or jungle in a shop window.

Architects, sculptors, masters of various folk crafts, antiques and unique authentic things, especially textiles, were involved in the work. Hermès designer items, such as bags, belts, etc., are at first glance lost in complex and cumbersome plot installations. Multifaceted thematic compositions, in which the backdrops of closed shop windows are carefully worked out, the presence of a significant number of small details, the predominance of oriental cultures, expressed through objects, their ornamentation and color, can be considered Menkari's handwriting. Another important feature in

her work is the deliberate avoidance of the mannequins. Meanwhile, the human image as a 'hero' of a shop window exposition inevitably arises in the imagination because of artistic and emotional expressiveness of the window as a work of modern art.

Lanvin shop windows are conceptual and complex intellectual plays of contents. In 2012, fountains of paint, realistic mannequins in non-standard poses and the criminal connotations of the shop window composition were shocking but attractive at the same time. The success of such results lies on the brand's showcase vision as an art installation by a creative designer of women's clothing line Alber Elbaz. Lanvin had the most elegant shop windows, which changed every two weeks in Paris in 2009. One of Elbaz's ideas was to display small porcelain mannequin dolls, hand-painted and dressed in reduced copies of clothing from the brand's collection. Porcelain dolls first appeared in Lanvin storefronts in 2008. The development of this idea, in particular, led to the creation of porcelain dolls collection as a reminder of Jeanne Lanvin postwar show. In recent years, Lanvin shop windows have been remembered for their original installations, which are based on a heterogeneous intellectual message, sometimes out of bounds. It was expressed both through the general composition of the shop window and through its individual elements, especially mannequins. This brand experience, in our opinion, requires a separate and more detailed study, as the experience of designing three-dimensional compositions, art installations with a typical approach to their conceptual solution.

Ton van der Veer should be mentioned among the masters of modern shop window art. Living in New Zealand (Auckland), this architect and designer decorates shop windows and entire stores all around the world. His showcases are characterized by clarity, conciseness, originality of the compositional solution and a special attitude to the design of mannequins as an element of exposition equipment. The designer often collaborates with mannequin manufacturers, so the design of his conceptual mannequins as art objects sets the tone of the whole window from an artistic-aesthetic and figurative-stylistic point of view,

In recent years, fashion trends in shop windows have often been realized through the sensual images of naturalistic mannequins, placed in super-complex plot compositions, which refer not only to ideas about a certain lifestyle, but to the attitude to whole layers of culture. Current trends have become 'moderate', more restrained and less outspoken. Provocation and outrage gave way to an intellectual game with gender features, with image constants that not only form complex images of the costume and its wearer, but embody specific oxymoron narratives, artificially but pathetically. This is marked by an extremely sensitive perception of the reincarnated feminine beauty which once again promotes glamor. For this purpose, mannequins with expressive sexual characteristics are used. Conceptualization of mannequin images, their hyperbolized stylization in unnatural poses and sometimes distortion dominates the minimalist mono space of brand windows. The design is concise, unified but at the same time complex.

It is important to understand that the visual environment, especially the location of mannequins in it, significantly affects the psychophysiological state of the person

who visually perceives them. If we are talking about a mannequin as an exposition equipment, it is clear that such an impact will be designed by the designer, both for the shop window which is a separate space defined in dimensional features, and for the architectural structure within which the window functions in general. Proportions, scale, stylistic characteristics, lighting will be essential. That is why shop windows with mannequins in modern practices of representation should be considered as a separate format of the costume representations. Their specificity is related to the mannequin itself, which has the primary task of replacing the human being, imitating his or her physique, age, and other important characteristics.

The image of the mannequin determines both the specific presentation of quality clothing items and the quality of informing the recipient about the style, fashion appropriateness, relevance, etc. The mannequin, as equipment, provides the fact of exhibiting things. At the figurative-associative and artistic-aesthetic level, the mannequin as a conditional visualized image of the costume wearer, provides the emergence of associative series and connotations, accompanied by expressive emotional and psychological excitement. This way the design of shop windows forms the aesthetics of their environment organization and determines the principles of video ecology in relation to them. However, the storefront must 'sell' the product, not just exhibit it. Otherwise it is not effective. The attractiveness of shop windows and things that mannequins wear are requirements of modern design, the principle of creating a comfortable, aesthetically attractive and meaningful quality product that will not leave passers-by indifferent. Therefore, a mannequin that has a subjective assessment of functional and aesthetic qualities, as well as ways of implanting it in the environment of shop windows, the materials from which the mannequin is made and the information it directly transmits, are of particular importance for representations.

As special demonstration equipment, the mannequin is primarily characterized by appearance. It is known that the modern version of shop window mannequins was formed in the 1930s in America. 'Fashion dolls' – that is how they were then called, were necessary for the trade organization and advertising in large department stores, where storefronts not only had to be filled with goods but also to demonstrate these products effectively. Slim, long-legged beauties and handsome men did not just show off fashionable clothes. Their appearance was created as a standard to be followed.

Talented artists and sculptors have dedicated their lives to the art of making mannequins. Their mannequins even have names like real people. It is interesting that the masters of mannequins refused to idealize the body from the very beginning, preferring consumers' natural forms (wide hips, dimensional features as close as possible to the standards of the garment industry), which contributed to a kind of democratic attitude to mannequins and clothing. According to the concept of the mannequins' fashion industry during the 20th century reflected the bodies of potential customers. The situation began to change radically only in the 1990s.

It is known that the mannequin was first mentioned in ancient Egyptian writings. Thanks to archaeologist Howard Carter, who excavated the tomb of Tutankhamun,

the world saw a mannequin-torso made of painted wood, which is similar in shape to modern tailor's mannequins. Since the Egyptian masters had no right to touch the 'sacred body' of the pharaoh, they used the mannequin exclusively as a device for making clothes. Clay figurines were the reduced copy-sculpture of mannequins in ancient Rome, where they achieved the function of outfit representation. In the Middle Ages, something like a mannequin served to preserve the heavy and bulky costume of the nobility.

The idea of mass usage of mannequins to promote goods originated around the second half of the 18th century, when the first firms to make them appeared: Wickenwork made headless mannequins from straw, leather and thick wire. The idea of using a mannequin from a commercial point of view is believed to belong to Ch.-F. Worth, who began to show the dresses he created for advertising and sale on the mannequin. From the mid-19th century, demonstration mannequins, which were called 'mannequin' meaning 'man', gradually began to gain popularity. They were made of wood or papier-mâché. Meanwhile, mannequins began appearing in shop windows. In the 1870s and 1880s, Gems Wax Models began producing wax mannequins in America. However, they had a significant disadvantage – they were melting from the heat or cracking when the temperature was getting lower. The mannequin dolls which were made in three different poses were among the company's innovative ideas. But unfortunately, they still had an unattractive appearance.

In Europe, wax mannequins appeared in the early twentieth century, associated with the rapid growth of the fashion industry, increasing production of industrial goods and commercial activities of shops. The concept of representing clothes on a mannequin required its maximum plausibility which met the demands of society. The mannequins were not only an exposition equipment but plausible imitators of man as a costume wearer. In the 1910s an idea was born to make mannequin faces similar to the faces of famous and popular actresses of that time.

From the beginning of the 20th century, the appearance of mannequins improved and the companies were constantly developing new models. It is known that in 1911, at the exhibition held in Turin, Pierre Imans' mannequins won the Grand Prix precisely because they were extremely realistic. To make the mannequins look like human beings the company first of all provided them with poses typical of living people. The similarity was achieved with the help of wax-sculpted face, glass eyes and wigs of natural hair.

In addition to the French company Imans, Siégel & Stockmann, which still exists today, was the leading manufacturer of display mannequins in the 1920s. Imans continued to make extremely complex and sophisticated figures, designed by sculptor Ludovic Durand. The company abandoned wax, over time, developing new materials for production – cérolaque and carnasine (a mixture of gypsum and gelatin), which were lighter and more stable. These materials allowed to create new effects of similarity, which made the mannequins luxurious "Créations artistiques" – "masterpieces of modern sculpture". Their production required not only creative but also intellectual impulses from the masters. Meanwhile, at the 1920 World's Fair of Decorative Arts in Paris, Siégel & Stockmann showed avant-garde mannequins with

abstract heads and faces reminiscent of African sculptures. They were custom-made for Coco Chanel, whose work at that time was influenced by purism. Since then, shop window mannequins have developed in parallel in two directions: realistic and avant-garde.

The next important step in the shop window mannequins development was the appearance of the Cynthia mannequin, created by sculptor Lester Gaba and made of plastic. Gaba-girls were a real breakthrough for manufacturers and it opened new perspectives for the development of shop window mannequins. The appearance of the demonstration mannequins was so close to the human appearance with the help of the latest materials – plastics, special resins, fiberglass. ‘Sex’, the types of mannequin figures and their proportions changed with the society perceptions changes of the beauty and contemporary body standard. However, the mannequins remained ‘extras’, the background and equipment for the outfit representation.

In the 1970s, the American sculptor Ralph Pucci began experimenting with mannequin sculptures in motion. An exhibition of author’s mannequins by the famous sculptor and designer entitled “Ralph Pucci: The Art of Mannequins” was held in March 2015, in the Museum of Design and Arts in New York. The exposition showed the evolution of the mannequin in the works of Pucci for more than thirty years: from the standard which is not noticeable on clothes to modern conceptual sculpture which does not need clothes. The most famous works of the sculptor are made from nature: supermodel mannequins ‘Christy Tarlington in the lotus position’ and ‘Verushka’.

In the 1990s, when mannequins became an integral part of store interior design, rather than just display equipment, stylized designer mannequins were used to display clothing in shop windows as often as ordinary, inconspicuous figures. They can be static – whole, cast, or with moving limbs, collapsible. Exposition mannequins are classified, first of all, by purpose:

- commodity mannequins – demonstrate goods and attract the consumer’s attention directly in the hall of the store;
- assortment mannequins – form compositions in the hall from a set of related products (bag and shoes for a suit; handkerchief for a coat, etc.) and advertise a whole consumer complex of goods;
- fashion mannequins – create ‘right’ feelings and impressions about the store as a whole, such as: modern, fashionable, high quality, prestigious. They are placed in storefronts and at the entrance;
- accent mannequins – they draw consumer attention to the “cold areas of the trading floor,” which are remote and inconspicuous parts of the store.

This classification is important for visual merchandising because it is related to two systems of its organization, which, in principle, are mutually exclusive. The mannequins should show the most relevant things from the new collections – that is the concept of the first. According to the concept of another, it is better to dress mannequins in clothes that are slow in a sale. In both cases, the mannequin can be a very effective sales tool.

Fashion mannequins in the shop window and at the entrance of the store are

considered the most effective advertising media. In the 1920s they were abstract mannequins, in the 1950s they were naturalistic with lush busts and hips, and in the 1960s they were stylized gamine models. Futuristic mannequins with transformed proportions are now in vogue: large or small heads, disproportionately tall, with long and thin legs, with an ultra-narrow waist. Vintage mannequins of elegant and restrained 1940s with wooden leather-covered arms are updated occasionally. Recently, popular abstract mannequins with a black glossy finish, then – with a glossy white or matte finish. The modern trend is abstract mannequins of milky shades and bright colors, metallic glittering mannequins.

The variety of existing mannequins is divided conditionally into groups:

- anthropomorphic mannequins, a realistic depiction of a full-length human figure in real proportions; they are also called whole and are divided into naturalistic, stylized, abstract, headless and animated;
- demonstration forms-mannequins – fragment models of the human body;
- tailor's mannequins (size, standard) which are rarely used in shop windows, but always in the process of fitting clothes;
- non-standard mannequins (conceptual) which are made to order, taking into account the special dimensions and level of stylization.

Anthropomorphic mannequins are divided into naturalistic (classic) mannequins, which can change the position of arms, legs, head, acquiring 'natural poses'. They are made of expensive plastic of natural colors that mimics the color of human skin. Each face is painted by hand with make-up imitation and according to fashion trends. Quite often such mannequins have manicures and pedicures, wigs made of natural hair, which is dyed in fashionable shades. The technology of making classic mannequins has reached such a level that it is difficult to distinguish individual samples from a person in a static position. One of the most characteristic features of these objects is 'naturalness', which is expressed in poses, gestures, body shape and proportions, in the color scheme of appearance, which makes them the most accurate copies of living beings.

The most interesting mannequins are solid: stylized and naturalistic, static, sitting, standing, lying, in motion. There are mannequins imitating pop stars, public figures, actors, representatives of subcultures, which immediately sets the figurative solution of the representation and forms the narrative of 'success'. They are completely cast from plastic, including the face and hair, which causes the grotesque stylization of appearance or pronounced individualization. Stylized mannequins are based on classic mannequins and are the reflection of the minimalism influence. One of the trends in their manufacture is the use of transparent plastic or saturated contrasting colors, such as blue. It is clear that the use of such mannequins in shop windows is determined by their conceptual content and raises a number of reservations about the clothing that is represented on such mannequins.

The most popular are abstract mannequins with heads of different geometric shapes. Unlike natural and stylized, they can only conditionally resemble the human body, but, as demonstration equipment, provide quality presentation of goods. Abstract mannequins are distinguished, among others, by the mannequin image

conceptualization and, accordingly, the artistic and aesthetic significance in the shop windows exposition. Such mannequins are exhibits themselves as art objects. Sometimes they attract much more attention than the clothes they promote. Abstract mannequins of the same type that were custom-made for a particular brand stores network, appear for this brand image.

Headless mannequins retain all other proportions and features of the human body in their natural form, but are faceless, aimed not to distract buyers from the product. Such mannequins are preferred when exhibiting classic clothes. In this way, the quality of the costume, its artistic and aesthetic value is emphasized. Tailor's mannequins like in French company Sigel & Stockmann, are sometimes used for this purpose.

There are also contour mannequins like decorative figures, metal structures that mimic the outlines of the human body, and non-standard mannequins as exclusive design objects. Their appearance is always extremely emotional: peculiar facial features, grotesque makeup, original poses, which a living being, as a rule, can not imitate. They are characterized by unexpected color and texture solutions, such as specific stains, abrasions, stylization under wood or various metal surfaces. Among the modern materials from which mannequins are made, fiberglass is especially popular (polymer resin reinforced with fiberglass, with the addition of mineral powder).

Tractus 3D, represented by the Dutchman Hans Boodt, is considered to be one of the leaders in the modern mannequin production of various types using 3D printing. His mannequins are extremely proportionate, dynamic and original. The Hans Boodt company produces high-quality mannequins for Hermès and Emilio Pucci, developing non-standard and new poses for this type of exposition. In modern conditions, Boodt is focused on making personalized mannequins. Interestingly, the clothes exhibited on such mannequins attract much less attention than the mannequins themselves. This proves the importance of mannequin design as a relevant modern design practice once again. Accordingly, this emphasizes the role of mannequins in the shop windows design and the implementation of visual merchandising strategies in modern consumer culture.

## **5. Conclusion**

The issues of theoretical understanding of the general laws of showcasing have not achieved a significant consideration in science. The above is due to the versatility of the representation itself. Meanwhile, if we consider the fashion shop window as a system in the field of culture and art, its exposition can be perceived as one of the most important subsystems, which gives shop window the status of a socio-cultural institution. The exposition in the shop window is the most dynamic component of visual merchandising, determined by the transformation of social situations, ideological approaches, artistic criteria, stylistics, conceptual tasks of communicative activity, which expresses a person's attitude to reality reflected in the material basis.



The shop window can be considered as an element of advertising. However, installations in shop windows have a dominant effect, forming an independent information drive that works better than any advertising. However, it is necessary to distinguish between the advertising function of the shop window and the art of its design. Creative storefronts never stop in their development as a synthesis of art, fashion and marketing, ensuring brand identification. As a result, leading brands' shop windows increasingly resemble art installations or fantasy scenes from movies. On the other hand, a significant number of well-known brands strive for simplicity, which lies in conceptuality and minimalism. Modern theory and practice of art history recognizes the artistic organization of shop windows as a specific area of design, the most important role in which is to create optimal conditions for the perception of goods in the system 'thing – exhibition – consumer'. The artistic-image form of the content and meanings representation in the specified system becomes a direct communicative mediator, experiencing a unique process of narration through interpretations and presented content metaphorization. Mannequins and their design play a special role in this.

Mannequin trends and their appearance are formed every three years during international exhibitions of exposition equipment, in particular, EuroShop in Düsseldorf. The choice of a mannequin depends on the store image, the concept of advertising and the target audience of potential consumers. Modern mannequins are not just a way to show off clothes, but a full-fledged marketing tool that determines the number of visitors, the time they spend in the store, commitment to a product. The mannequin industry employs a large number of different professionals: artists, sculptors, designers, chemists, technologists, engineers. Every company that manufactures mannequins is focused on their specific type and range. In the modern fashion industry, mannequins have their own standards of beauty. The process of making mannequins is greatly influenced by modern technologies, such as 3-D printing.

The outlined characteristics of different mannequin types allow their classification according to such criteria as function, artistic, aesthetic and symbolic significance. This classification is confirmed by the fact that the mannequin for modeling (manufacturing and fitting) must be as faceless as possible, meet the existing standards of dimensional characteristics, be comfortable in everyday use. In showcasing such mannequins are used only rarely. Their artistic and aesthetic significance is minimized, reduced to the elementary satisfaction of utilitarian needs as an imitator of the human figure.

Mannequins require the creation of unique for costume design representations, often exclusive images, which are distinguished by bright artistic, aesthetic and semantic content. Mannequins are created as art objects, not as functional (utilitarian) things or equipment. Designers use their own fantasies about the image of the wearer. However, such mannequins complicate the identification process. Conceptual custom mannequins can express the style of a designer, brand or store. Their main function is to inform consumers about the non-standard thinking and non-standard products on the storefront. Experts predict the development of the mannequin market, which indicates that they will lose their usual human proportions and will

undergo conceptual stylization, becoming the decor of store interiors, exclusively as art objects. Such predictions are primarily related to the existing shop window design approaches and trends demonstrated by individual brands.

### **Authors contributions**

Authors' contributions are equal.

### **Availability of data and materials**

Data will be available on request.

### **Funding**

The authors did not receive support from any organization for the submitted work. No funding was received to assist with the preparation of this manuscript. No funding was received for conducting this study. No funds, grants, or other support was received.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare they have no financial and competing interests.

#### Addresses:

Peiwei Liu

Huaiyin Institute of Technology  
223021, 89 Beijing N Rd, QingheQu,  
Huaian, Jiangsu, China

Department of Fabric and Clothing Design  
Faculty of Environmental Design  
Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts  
61002, 8 Mystetstv Str., Kharkiv, Ukraine

Oksana Lahoda (corresponding author)

Department of Fabric and Clothing Design  
Faculty of Environmental Design  
Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts  
61002, 8 Mystetstv Str., Kharkiv, Ukraine

E-mail: oksana.lahoda@sci-academy.cc

## References

- Alfiorova, Z. I. (2016) “Strategies for the evolution of narrative forms in audiovisual art under the influence of procedural worldview”. *Art Studies* 3, 40–46.
- Balla, O. (2001) “Man and his things: to the history of everyday sensibility of the XX century or the triumph of design”. *Knowledge is Power* 4, 72–82.
- Berger, K. M. (2005) *Guiding signs: design of graphical navigation systems*. Moscow: RIP-Kholding.
- Bruner, J. (2005) “Life is like a narrative.” *Post-Nonclassical Psychology* 1, 2, 9–29.
- Bystrova, T. Yu. (2017) *Thing, form, style: an introduction to the philosophy of design*. Moscow and Yekaterinburg: Kabinetnyyuchenyy.
- Dubrovskiy, D. (2001) *Postmodern fashion*. (Series “Thinkers”). St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg Philosophical Society.
- Genisaretskiy, O. I. (1984) “The way of life is the image of the environment”. *Arts and Crafts* 9, 38–40.
- Kataeva, E., T. Bystrova, and M. Malysheva (2018) “Strategic directions for the development of modern design in the light of design summit (Monreal) 2017 ideas”. *Academic Bulletin UralNIIproject RAASN* 1, 36, 73–79.
- Koneva, A. V. (2007) “Century XXI: global peace and culture of difference”. In *Philosophy. Education. Culture*, 1–7. Samara: Publishing House Samara University.
- Koneva, A. V. (2009) “‘Podium consciousness’ in the era of culture of difference”. *Proceedings of St. Petersburg University of Culture and Arts* 189, 4, 53–58.
- Koneva, A. V. (2013a) *Fashion as a phenomenon of social imagination*. St. Petersburg: Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia.
- Koneva, A. V. (2013b) Fashion curation: from myth to performance. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2013(2), 126–130.
- Lagutina, T. V. (2015) “The symbolism of the language of the costume”. *Historical, Philosophical, Political and Legal Sciences, Cultural Studies and Art History. Questions of Theory and Practice* 8, 1, 115–117.
- Lahoda, O. (2008) “Communicative and identification aspect of modern costume design”. In *Science and social problems of society: education, culture, spirituality*. Vol 1, 352–354. Kharkiv: Kharkiv National Pedagogical University.
- Lahoda, O. (2018a) Representative practices of the Costume Modern. In *Scientific Development and Achievements* (V. 3, pp. 29–43) London: Sciecee Publishing.
- Lahoda, O. (2018b) *Costume design: practices of representations*. Cherkasy: Publisher Tretyakov O.M.
- Lahoda, O. (2020) *Representative costume design practices in the context of the evolution of art and design culture*. Kyiv: Kyiv National University of Technology and Design.
- Lipskaya, V. M. (2012) *Costume in the system of culture (philosophical and cultural analysis)*. Saint Petersburg: Saint Petersburg State University.
- Litvinov, V. V. (2005) *The practice of modern exposure*. Moscow: RUDESIGN.
- Liu, P. (2021a) “Digital-mannequins as a modern trend”. In *Scientific Notes of the International Humanities University*, 258–262. Odesa: Helvetica Publishing House.
- Liu, P. (2021b) “Mannequin design: specifics and trends”. In *Collection of materials of ISPC*, 41–43. Sumy: FOP Tsyoma S.P.
- Liu, P. and O. Lahoda (2021) “Design of author’s mannequins as art objects”. In *Current issues of modern design. Collection of materials of ISPC*. Vol. 1, 43–46. Kyiv: Kyiv National University of Technology and Design.

- Lorents, Ya., L. Skolnik, and K. Berger (2008) *Exhibition design*. Moscow: AST.
- Maistrovskaya, M. T. (2002) *Compositional and artistic trends in the formation of a museum exhibition: in the context of art, architecture, design*. Moscow: Moscow State Stroganov Academy of Design and Applied Arts.
- Minervin, G. B., ed. (2004) *Design: illustrated dictionary*. Moscow: Architecture-S.
- Samonenko, O. S. (2011) *Associative-figurative method of costume design*. St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg State University of Service and Economics.
- Still, V. (2013) *Fetish: fashion, sex and power*. Moscow: Novoyeliteraturnoye obozreniye.
- Sydorenko, V. F. (1992) "Three aesthetics". *Greatis* 2, 66–77.
- Sydorenko, V. F. (2011) "Aesthetic concepts in 20th century design". Available online at <<http://prometa.ru/colleague/11/1/1>>. Accessed on 25.05.2022.
- Syrova, N. V. and V. S. Davyd (2016) "The role of the first world exhibitions in the development of architecture and design". *Young Scientist* 12, 952–956.
- Todorović, T., T. Toporišič, and A. P. Čuden (2014) "Clothes and costumes as form of non-verbal communication". *Tekstilec* 57, 4, 321–333. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14502/Tekstilec2014.57.321-333>
- Visual merchandising 4 by VM & SD Magazine (2005) ST Media Group.
- Zherdev, E. V. (2010) *Metaphor in design*. Moscow: Architecture-S.