

Organizational Ideologies and Their Embeddedness in Fashion Show Productions in Shanghai and London Fashion Week: International-Based-Chinese Independent Designers' Participatory Behaviors in Different Fashion Cities

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Abstract : The fashion week, as a critical international fashion event in shaping world fashion cities, is one of the most significant world events that serves as the core medium for designers to stage new collections. However, its role in bringing about and shaping design ideologies of major fashion cities have long been neglected from a fashion ecosystem perspective. With the expanding scale of international fashion weeks in terms of culture and commerce, the organizational structures of these fashion weeks are becoming more complex. In the emerging fashion city, typified by Shanghai, a newly-formed 'hodgepodge' transforming the current global fashion ecosystem. A city's legitimate fashion institutions, typically the organizers of international fashion weeks, have cultivated various cultural characteristics via rules and regulations pertaining to international fashion weeks. Under these circumstances, designers' participatory behaviors, specifically show design and production, are influenced by the cultural ideologies of official organizers and institutions. This research compares international based Chinese (IBC) independent designers' participatory behavior in London and Shanghai Fashion Weeks: specifically, the way designers present their clothing and show production. both of which are found to be profoundly influenced by cultural and design ideologies of fashion weeks. They are, to a large degree, manipulated by domestic institutions and organizers. Shanghai fashion week has given rise to a multiple, mass-ended entertainment carnival design and cultural ideology in Shanghai, thereby impacting the explicit cultural codes or intangible rules that IBC designers must adhere to when designing and producing fashion shows. Therefore, influenced by various cultural characteristics in the two cities, IBC designers' show design and productions, in turn, play an increasingly vital role in shaping the design characteristic of an international fashion week. Through researching the organizational systems and design preferences of organizers of London and Shanghai fashion weeks, this paper demonstrates the embeddedness of design systems in the forming of design ideologies under various cultural and institutional contexts. The core methodology utilized in this research is ethnography. As a crucial part of a Ph.D. project on innovations in fashion shows under a cross-cultural context run by Edinburgh College of Art, School of Design, the fashion week's organizational culture in various cultural contexts is investigated in London and Shanghai for approximately six months respectively. Two IBC designers, Angel Chen and Xuzhi Chen were followed during their participation of London and Shanghai Fashion Weeks from September 2016 to June 2017, during which two consecutive seasons were researched in order to verify the consistency of design ideologies' associations with organizational system and culture.

Keywords : institutional ideologies, international fashion weeks, IBC independent designers; fashion show

Conference Title : ICFTCM 2019 : International Conference on Fashion Trends, Clothing and Media

Conference Location : Copenhagen, Denmark

Conference Dates : June 11-12, 2019