DIPLOMARBEIT

Titel der Diplomarbeit

Fashion tells a Story - Analyzing Fashion Film as a New Genre and New Medium of Representation

verfasst von

Verena Grünberger, Bakk.phil.

angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag.phil.)

Wien, 2013

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, ao. Univ. Prof. Dr. Monika Seidl, who has not only given me the opportunity to write this thesis on a topic I am passionate about, but also contributed a great amount of input. Her patience, guidance, motivation and constructive criticism made it possible to work on this project freely and efficiently.

Secondly, I am also endlessly grateful to my best friends who have always been there for me and inspired me with their motivation and ambition. I would like to thank them for their priceless and unconditional friendship.

Finally, I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my parents and brother. Without their financial and emotional support none of this would have been possible and I am forever grateful to them for having me sent on this journey and walking with me.

Vienna, February 2013

Table of contents

1 Introduction - The phenomenon of the fashion film

At present, the genre of fashion film is beginning to develop and is constantly gaining acceptance as well as importance within the field of fashion after the medium of photography has been utilized as a means of visual communication for fashion for more than a century now. Fashion film can be characterized as an innovative hybrid form with an alliance of art and fashion within the medium of film and is seen as a new genre as well as a global hybrid form (Scorzin 1). The internet can be identified as a reason for the increasing popularity of this new genre and it opens the exclusive field of fashion to a global audience. However, academic discussion as well as scholarly research has remained limited, since the genre is currently in the process of development and influenced by numerous other genres. This also manifests itself in the fact that no unique term or label has been given to this new form and similar expressions such as fashion film, fashion campaign film, digital fashion film or fashion video are used in equal ways. However, in the course of this paper the term fashion film will be used and applied since it appears to constitute the most neutral form. It becomes clear that the definitions and boundaries of fashion film can still be described as indistinct.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to analyze the genre of fashion film focusing on distinctive features and characteristics and to establish a general definition for different types of this form that might appear. To begin with, the most obvious research questions leading the investigation are the following: What are the basic features and characteristics of fashion films? What do most of them have in common and what differentiates them? Which leads to another research question: What subtypes or -categories can be distinguished? For the analysis of a new genre it is also important to ask: When, how and why did this phenomenon start? Which other genres have an impact on fashion films? How can fashion films be placed within the wider field of fashion? Since fashion is the main subject matter of these films the area of interest also expands into the question of how fashion and clothing itself is portrayed in these films? In order to define the genre comprehensively another significant issue is of concern: What is the general content of fashion films and do they follow a common plot or storyline?

Based on this range of research questions as well as on the previous information the main hypothesis for this thesis is the following: Fashion films constitute a hybrid genre that fuses aesthetics, ways of representation and forms of expression originating from other fields such as fashion, photography, art, advertising and film.

As far as the research method is concerned, it can be stated that it is necessary to make use of a number of tools for analysis, since little to no original research has been conducted before. Thus, a combination of established tools and concepts from cultural studies in general, fashion theory as well as film analysis will be utilized. The analysis will be applied to a wide range of data, consisting of different forms of fashion films, in order to examine the genre comprehensively. Different types of fashion film will be incorporated in the process of establishing the genre definition for fashion films.

1.1   Theories and approaches for analyzing fashion film

As already mentioned above the analytical and methodological framework for this paper and the analysis of the phenomenon of the fashion film is premised in cultural studies. As for cultural studies as a discipline it can be stated that the boundaries can not be demarcated as accurately as those of other academic fields of study. Neither definite methodology nor areas of interest for investigation have been clarified completely within this field. However, cultural studies can be defined as the study of contemporary culture and traditionally, larger forms like literature or specific texts or images are studied critically (During 1). For this paper both of these areas are of interest, since it is absolutely essential to investigate unique examples of images and texts in order to define the genre of fashion film as a larger form.

The rather vague definition of cultural studies as the study of contemporary culture leaves the possible investigation open to various approaches, which means that cultural images and specifically texts can be analyzed from different perspectives focusing on semiotic, feminist, sociological, aesthetic, psychoanalytic, mythical, symbolic, historical, ethical, Marxist, biographical or rhetorical aspects. The analysis of a cultural product or text can always include one, two or even more of these various approaches (Berger 20). Since the objective here is to dissect the genre of fashion film in its entirety it is indispensable to regard and incorporate as many vantage points as possible. In consideration of this approach it is also worth mentioning that cultural products themselves appear rather complex nowadays as they cross key boundaries and separations; and society has been witnessing the erosion of the dated distinction between high and low culture, also called mass or popular culture. This phenomenon mostly developed in the wake of postmodernism and consumer society and in fact, postmodern elements can be found in almost every form of text or art and usually represent some sort of response to older modernist forms of texts. This new wave of reactive response is manifesting itself especially in film and above all in avant-garde film and video as well as a whole new range of fictional and commercial films with particular stylistic

features (Jameson 1846-1848). The particular filmic genre of the fashion film appears to be a perfect example of this phenomenon and can therefore be seen as a counter reaction to former established ways of representation within the field of fashion, such as written criticism or the static image of the fashion photograph.

This inclusion of the moving image besides the written text and still photograph in the fashion world illustrates the transition from former disciplines such as literary studies to what has become known as media studies, which now form an integral part of cultural studies. The expansion of interest into the audiovisual genre brings with it new productive opportunities for modernizing scholarly analysis (Nünning and Nünning 131). After all, audiovisual forms such as television and film are societal phenomenons embedded in culture and vice versa. Hence, film or TV studies are a rather novel discipline based on general cultural studies and many methods, perspectives and theories originating in cultural studies have been adapted and developed (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 11). The audiovisual genre of biggest interest here is of course the medium of film and a large part of analysis of this paper, predominantly section 3, is based on film studies. Just as is the case with cultural studies at large, film studies also experiences a shift towards new approaches as of late and combines technical, historical, economical, organizational-sociological, political, aesthetic and biographical elements prioritizing production, technology, and most importantly for this paper, style (ibid. 216). For the purpose of an overall analysis of a genre such as fashion film it is also necessary to distinguish between film theory and film analysis as subfields of film studies. The latter refers to the examination of the structure of a single work. The former, on the other hand, focuses on the theoretical investigation of film, aiming at a systematical formulation and description of structures as well as functions that classify film as a medium, communication medium, artwork, object of humanities, art and cultural as well as ideological history. Film theory is often based on a single text and starts with a close analysis of films or segments in order to proceed to formulate universal and absolute statements (ibid. 219).

Film theory draws on various related disciplines, each having their own methods and approaches, but most of them are overlapping. The disciplines relevant for the analysis of fashion film are for instance: media theory which is centered upon isolating groups of signs and levels of communication such as image, speech, writing, music and noises from a semiotic point of view. This leads to the second overlap, namely semiotic analysis which sees filmic text as a special communication, symbolic and representational system. A third type of imbrication is the theory of a clearly filmic approach which contains mise-en-scène (which are the possibilities of staging reality in front of a camera), lighting, acting and props. It also includes photographic representation consisting of camera position, shot type, perspective, camera movement and post production as

well as the filmic production of meaning like metaphor, metonymy and the classical procedure of montage (which is a technique of film editing placing a series of shots into a sequence in order to condense time, information and space). One other noteworthy discipline is genre theory exploring groups of one film type focusing on material, dramaturgical, thematic and stylistic similarities in order to detect influences on production and the possibilities of filmic communication (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 220-223). The last overlap embodies the most vitally important one for the object at hand as it is a whole genre that is being analyzed below and besides, genre theory also appears to unite the aspects and concerns of the formerly mentioned related disciplines in one body of theory.

Alongside cultural studies and film studies as a framework for this thesis, fashion theory acts as the third basic theory for analyzing fashion film as a new genre. Once again it needs to be emphasized that also leading fashion theorists try to develop a model that considers various different factors, in fact, already James Laver, possibly the first fashion theorist per se, attempted to take account of social, cultural, aesthetic as well as political aspects (Craik 6-9). Another fact speaking for incorporating different perspectives and approaches while analyzing a new phenomenon is that a great amount of fashion theory stems from the works of social scientists like Herbert Spencer, Thorstein Veblen, Georg Simmel of J.C. Flügel who aimed at establishing "[...] so-called grand theories of society and culture as a whole and used the example of fashion as an instance for their general principles" (ibid. 10). Additionally, a number of theories proceed from the assumption that fashion is an internal system system of signs and symbols that produce a language. For that reason scholars need to apply semiotic as well as linguistic models to elements of clothing and not only analyze clothes themselves but their relationship to the human body. A leader in this kind of fashion theory is certainly Roland Barthes who investigated clothing in the light of vocabulary and grammar (ibid. 110) and clothing and fashion were also approached in an interdisciplinary way by him (Stafford and Carter viii). Moreover, fashion has been analyzed by scholars as symbolic system, an aesthetic form, a global industry, a media phenomenon, an individual indulgence, a sign of group membership and a technique of creating and re-creating a sense of self persona (Craik 284). Hence, also the genre of fashion film is being dealt with from different vantage points based in various academic disciplines here.

As already stated above fashion theory can also be understood as interdisciplinary and yet again, it is a theory comprised of several different approaches relevant for investigating fashion film: a historical one focusing on dress & social history; the consumer culture approach with areas such as material culture, marketing, management, advertising and industrial relations; a cultural one with emphasize on cultural history, sociology of culture; the communicative relationships

approach incorporating cultural and media studies, textual analysis, art history and visual culture; a gender related method dealing with aspects of feminism, psychoanalysis and masculinity (Craik 116-117). However, fashion theory appears to be increasingly interdisciplinary, according to Taylor and in most cases makes use of a combination of two or more of these perspectives (qtd. in Craik 117). For instance, the connection to cultural studies is manifested in the fact that Christopher Breward sees this discipline as the defining framework for contemporary fashion theory. In fact, he distinguishes four main variants of cultural studies that deal with the phenomenon of fashion: textual analysis (semiotics, visual culture), audience and consumption studies (ethnography, history, sociology), ideology (hegemony, subcultures, pleasure) as well as pleasure and political identity (race, gender, sexuality) (Breward 305). He goes on to argue that these interdisciplinary perspectives can be seen as enriching knowledge about the category of fashion and as a productive way of understanding cultural phenomena and social relationship that would not be graspable utilizing other disciplines (ibid. 311). In this paper the main focus will be on the first variant, namely text analysis as seen in sections 3 and 4; however, it becomes clear that an interdisciplinary approach rooted in cultural studies is of utmost importance for the investigation of fashion films in this paper and that only the inclusion of several perspectives proves to be adequate and sufficient.

The fact that fashion and how it functions have been of growing importance within the study of culture also emphasizes that fashion can be comprehended as a cultural practice (Craik 1-2). Accordingly, clothing constitutes a crucial reference point for the perception of humanity and theorists have been striving for explanations of fashion and its function in culture as a whole (ibid. 10). Breward defines the fashion world rather similarly and calls it a culture industry which includes economic, sociological, psychological and aesthetic experiences (103). In the same manner Craik defines the fashion business not as a mere sector of apparel production but a "value-adding cultural industry" with a complex chain of subsectors and interlinking components. On top of the rather obvious first field of manufacturing and producing material and the task of designing clothes she points out two further crucial points, namely fashion marketing and promotion as well as the communication system responsible for product information and the advertising of products showing their salient features (205-6). These two subsectors of the fashion industry already suggest that fashion as a cultural practice or industry distinguishes itself from other cultural industries in terms of its production and selling of intangible added values, meaning the enhancement of a fashion item and label with desirable attributes through promotion and marketing (Craik 212). The representation of fashion and its salient features will also constitute a great part of analysis in this paper focusing on the techniques of how fashion film underlines the clothes and designs and brings them to the for in promotion and marketing as seen in section 4.

It became apparent that fashion is situated in a wider cultural context than simply the cut of a garment or the choice of a look, yet, there are still notions like triviality, ephemerality and idiosyncrasy connected to fashion. Nevertheless, all the facts on fashion theory mentioned above speak for the line of argument that fashion is an influential and powerful means within culture (Craik 284). Still, the nature of all these processes such as design, production or marketing in the fashion industry prove to be highly complex and controversial, even more so in the wake of ever growing transnational interconnections (ibid. 295) as well as the technological and information revolution of the 20th century which led to a shift in the fashion image. More than ever it is no longer a mere representation but a commodity in itself in the form of exclusive fashion shows, new kinds of fashion magazines and above all on the internet (Evans *Emblems & Commodities* 97). This brings with it major issues and challenges for the future of fashion as a cultural industry due to the effect of the transformation of the media landscape into a virtual version of fashion promotion and representation (Craik 303). The transition to this virtual reality indicating that the fashion image is no longer exclusive but available all around the world, discussed in more detail in section 2.4, leads towards the next important factor in the world of fashion film, namely the process of globalization.

The fashion world has experienced major change and has become a highly diversified and global phenomenon (Craik 212) featuring new patterns, issues and challenges that transformed the field of fashion (ibid. 302). Above all, it has been the media landscape which experienced a transition, where modern communication is mainly characterized by its incredible speed and complexity which did not spare the media as well as the fashion industry and acted against the linear development of clothing (Breward 101-102). Consequently, the phenomenon of globalization had its biggest impact on the increased mobility and global marketing strategies which made fashion available all around the world (Craik 118). In times of economic and societal globalization there is an ever-growing digital interconnectedness which leads to novel genres as well as hybrid media formats such as the globalized fashion film discussed in this paper. This contemporary global cultural productions reaching across geographical boundaries transform the existence, visual presence and media distribution of recent artworks such as the hybrid format of the fashion film (Scorzin 4). After bringing up this hybrid characteristic of fashion films it is now necessary to turn to all the factors influencing and shaping it.

1.2 Influences on the hybrid genre of fashion film

The main hypothesis of this paper already stated at the beginning of section 1 defines the

phenomenon of the fashion film as a hybrid genre. This assumption is based on previous findings in related genres and properties of other media forms representing fashion and culture which are argued to have an influence on fashion film. These cultural products appearing in hybrid mixed forms of conventional text types and genres are most typically a product of postmodernity, where the boundaries between the previously all-important distinction of high and popular culture started to disappear (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 23). What is more, the analysis of a new genre in the landscape of media always asks for consideration of other media forms because the proliferation of new media always has an impact on the entire media system (Schmidt qtd. in Nünning and Nünning 131). As a matter of fact, for understanding a text, especially film, encounters with works having similar conventions (Bordwell and Thompson 59) and drawing on a large repertoire of cultural associations from other sources for measuring meaning (Vernallis 192) is highly relevant in many cases. As far as the form of these connections is concerned there can be made a differentiation between conformance (similarity & congruence), complementarity (exhibiting neither consistency nor contradiction) and contest (foregrounding collision) for both, apparently larger connections and short moments of similarity within a whole piece (ibid. 192).

Therefore, another important term alongside hybridization is intertextuality, which is the relationship from text to text that can be of different character but there are always traces of the older text in the new one. These intertextual references can be distinguished according to their degree of similarity of the texts, the material and entities adopted (such as elements, terms, codes, structures), the degree of the intention to adopt, the function of the reference and the medium of the pre- and the follow-text (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 88). Most importantly, new media is very often influenced by older forms contentwise and therefore the interdependence between different media forms is of increasing complexity and this convergence of formerly separate areas is present in many forms of hybridization in almost all areas of contemporary culture (Nünning and Nünning 131). Within the genre of fashion film this becomes clear in the obvious reference to fashion photography as far as content is concerned. On the basis of a few examples this relation will be investigated in more detail in section 2.2.

During the last decades there has been an accelerated growth of these forms of hybridization of various genres from different media, coined as the intermedial turn by Wolff (2). The term intermediality referred to here can be defined as the relationship between art forms like music, paining, photography, film or TV and the main question for analysis of such hybrid forms should be how they react to other media and how they incorporate conventions used in previous forms (Nünning and Nünning 136). The reference to as well as the utilization of conventions from other media has now become an important characteristic of postmodernism and led to the

establishment of a number of inter-art studies (ibid. 135). In film studies the term intermediality or also called dialogue also refers to the relationship between film and other arts, with the aim of finding a dialogue of voices in a single work (Devoucoux 43). Some theorists depict this development of hybrid forms rather critical if not even negative. Horkheimer and Adorno for instance argue that "[c]ulture […] is infecting everything with sameness. Film, radio, and magazines form a system" (94). Quite similarly Fredric Jameson describes the world as lacking the possibilities of true innovation and sees the imitation of dead styles and speaking through masks as the only options left, which means that contemporary forms of art are always about themselves in an innovative manner. He concludes even more pessimistically with the notion that there is a failure of the new and an imprisonment in the past (1851). Nevertheless, the conception of hybridization and intertextuality in this paper remains neutral to positive because it allows for the possibility of combining the best aspects of each form referred to and it appears to be inevitable in the vast cultural landscape of today. The most outstanding instance of this development is supposedly the phenomenon of virtual reality (Nünning and Nünning 135), already addressed in the context of globalization of fashion promotion which is also closely connected to the phenomenon of fashion film since they mostly appear online which will be discussed in section 2.4.

Furthermore, it is also important to add that commodity productions such as clothing are primarily and most directly touched by stylistic changes deriving from artistic experiments (Jameson 1859); and when these commodity productions became an image as well, they rapidly became more referential as well as historically and conceptually themed (Bruzzi 99). This transition to referencing previous forms was of necessity, since fashion can be described as a world where lasting notions seem to be scarce and therefore rotating images with constant reinvention and regular homage as well as revival are almost unavoidable (Jones). Just as much as fashion looks forward with these stylistic changes and new virtual possibilities of representation, it also always looks backwards (Bruzzi 103). In other words, fashion has to find the right balance between the past, the now and the future which generates a tension between reinterpretation, uniqueness and innovation (Craik 222). As a consequence, the current fashion image can be seen as a means of generating an image, very often a former historical one, in the light of the present (Bruzzi 103). As for fashion films, the images presented very often convey the feeling of having been shown before or referencing another more or less prominent image already produced in the past. Ultimately it becomes clear that fashion in the 21st century appears to be a highly fragmented, simultaneous and potentially confusing cultural phenomenon (Breward 102).

Now that an undeniable connectedness and intertexuality has been established it is time to consider the factors that shape the fashion image. Firstly, with regard to actual fashion itself, these

include the history of clothes, the structure and economics of the industry, the artistic influences, the social organization of a culture as well as factors shaping and changing its continuity (Craik 7). Other fields influencing the fashion image more recently, especially starting in the postmodern era and the last century, are Hollywood films, popular music, photography, TV programs, films, new forms of sports, video, the internet and websites, art, architecture, cinema, design, other new designer collections and catwalk shows, trade shows, celebrity fashion, advertising, newspapers, business publications, fashion magazines, literature, painting, novels and theater or pantomime (Craik 84, 118, 175, 180, 213, Barthes 109, Storaro, Devoucoux 45). This vast amount of possible influences shows that there exists of course connection and continuity but it also shows that these are still ambivalent (Craik 175) and positions fashion as a complex lexicon with sophisticated interplays and links (ibid. 180). Some of the influences listed here, such as film, cinema, video and TV programs, already suggest the next logical area of hybridization and intertextuality in cultural studies which plays a crucial role in the analysis at hand, namely film.

Due to the fact that film as a piece of work is a human creation and and the fact that the creator or artist can not escape his situation in history and society it is almost impossible to not relate to other pieces of work and aspects of the world and culture in general. As a result film incorporates formal cues of life and culture in general as well as other artworks nearly all the time (Bordwell and Thompson 58-59). The influencing factors are close to identical to the ones mentioned in the previous paragraph on fashion as an influencing factor. For film, however, there exist a few more relations worth mentioning such as the stylized arts like opera, ballet or pantomime (ibid. 59) or radio and vaudeville. The last two aspects brought in by Carol Vernallis (59) are most notably considered as vital influences for music video. This special form of film or video is apparently very closely related to the genre of fashion film, further elaborated on in section 3 covering the medium of film for fashion and useful approaches for fashion film. Actually, it has already been argued that areas such as fashion, popular culture, advertising, media and art are quite recently converging into one medium namely the short film, for instance,in the form of the fashion film for famous luxury fashion brands. A lot of these labels seek cooperation and creatively inventive collaborations with representatives from film, architecture or the fine arts such as David Lynch for Dior (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*), Zaha Hadid for Chanel or Takashi Murakami for Louis Vuitton (Scorzin 1) which once again speaks for the extensively addressed interrelatedness of different genres and forms of media and the hybridity of the genre of fashion film especially.

Now that the aim of this analysis, the suitable approaches and theories for analyzing fashion film as well as the possible influences on this hybrid genre have been introduced, the logical structure to follow is the closer consideration of these factors having an impact on the object

of fashion film. The brief discussion of concepts like hybridization and intertextuality between different forms of media now asks for a more detailed reflection on the idea of the medium, with particular focus on the types used for the representation and promotion of fashion so far.

2 (Re)presentation and promotion of fashion so far

We live in an era where we are trying to preserve everything (Molho) and at least ever since the 1990s we have been living in a multimedia world, also referred to as the information age (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 11, Sardar and Van Loon 154), which does not only refer to the variety of messages available but also to actual forms of media possessing signifying systems and types of discourse at great speed (Sardar and Van Loon 154). This of course raises the question what a medium actually is and Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff describe it as a system of information, processing signs and having its own norms of production, transmission, distribution, reception and (re)processing of contents (11). In this section, the term media or medium is understood in the conventional way, namely the differentiation between different types of media, such as photography or fashion magazines for the representation and promotion of fashion. However, fashion can be seen as a medium in itself, since it is also endowed with signs representing specific kinds of connotations, terms, concepts or notions. To put it another way, fabrics and different types of clothing are the elements, or signs so to say, that build the medium of fashion (Metzeltin and Thir 121) and this understanding of media will be focused on in section 4. Interestingly enough, these forms of media not only influence the entertainment industry but also knowledge, communication, perceptions, feelings, memory, processing information as well as the socialization of the individual (Nünning and Nünning 131) which means that media can be considered as a crucial part of culture.

The monopoly of the print medium came to an end in the late 19th century and led to what is now a media landscape full of a number of different media like television, film and computer related forms which all serve to accumulate, save and transmit information. Yet, it is important to emphasize that old media are not necessarily replaced by new ones but sometimes their functions are altered (Nünning and Nünning 134). Some critics claim that this urge for preservation immobilizes things and takes life from them and they argue that by producing media such as film for instance, life in the present is not actually lived but reproduced and postponed for future consumption (Molho). With this wide range of different media types which developed because of the increasing number of audiovisual and digital media it is important to consider the main criteria for classification. Firstly, it is essential to determine the type of medium whether it is print, acoustic or audiovisual. Secondly, the main function also plays a curial role in classifying media, which could range from reporting to

reflecting, appealing or reproducing, for instance. A third measure is the relationship of the respective medium to reality, which can manifest itself as credible or not, true or false and factual or not. The fourth and last criterion concerns the thematic specifics, asking which particular milieu is of importance and determining the topic or story focused on (Nünning and Nünning 141). This last criterion regarding thematic aspects, type of story and topic already suggests the area discussed next, namely fashion which is the main thematic focus in the medium of fashion film.

As a matter of fact the fashion system of today is very much dependent on media and there has always been a close relationship between fashion, pop culture and media for visualizing designs and trends. As soon as new media forms developed, fashion always was one of the first fields to explore the opportunities for representation (Craik 246, 270). It all started with the fashion dolls of the 18th century which later turned into the fashion drawing in the 19th century, only to be replaced by fashion photography in the 20th century and again being challenged by digital images of fashion and style in the 21st century (Teunissen 9). Ever since the former simple manufacturing branch turned into a culture industry and started making use of mass-produced images and texts, first and foremost through highly expressive graphic communication and visual reproduction of fashion (Breward 115). The utilization of new types of media leading to a rise in fashion coverage made the formerly exclusive field of elite fashion accessible for a much broader audience (Bruzzi 97). In fact, this proliferation of fashion texts and images did not appear out of nowhere, but is closely related to the increasing literacy and interest in fashion images and texts, which in turn led to the shift from focus on material qualities of a garment to a large interest in symbolism, psychological potential of communication and aesthetic values that are all inherent to fashion (Breward 115). Finally, the different kinds of the connectedness between fashion and media is also of relevance and is expressed in three forms: "media representations of fashion interdependent of the industry, the use of media by fashion industry to promote fashion, fashion take-ups of media representations of role models in new fashions" (Craik 265).

Most certainly it can be argued that media was always somehow involved in the shifts of the fashion system during the last two centuries with forms such as the fashion illustration, the fashion photograph, advertising and marketing or modeling (Craik 265), all of which will be discussed in depth in the remaining part of this paper. What follows in the 21st century and gives rise to yet another shift, is the phenomenon of the fashion film which is in many ways fed by these former types. As is the case with most innovative work and change in general, highly innovative emerging forms can at first appear peculiar because they do not completely adhere to established conventions and norms; yet once the new forms of a flourishing work feed conventions within a field it can turn into a well received format and generate new expectations (Bordwell and

Thompson 59). One of the advantages of film is certainly that it can unite all other works and arts in one medium, namely the medium of film (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 89) which privileges it over more traditional and simple forms since it unites numerous of their aspects in one singular work and possibly appeals to all senses. However, cognitive research on the medium of film has shown that it is impossible to follow every medium and aspect of a multimedia object simultaneously, there only appear moments of congruence between media (Vernallis 15) for instance between the moving image of a floating dress and a sound accompanying it.

In any case, fashion film is much more than just fashion in film (Scorzin 1) like for instance this floating part of a dress just alluded to. It has definitely become a media phenomenon and one of the media formats of the moment in fashion since it offers new technical opportunities, a scenographical extension (ibid. 1) and can be seen as a new way of high gloss representation of fashion and has thus grown into a serious competition for more traditional forms of fashion media (Khan 235) like the static photo, the conventional magazine spread or the more traditional form of the fashion show (Scorzin 1). Besides, the digital fashion image as a genre can not be classified as a mere means for advertising and promotion, it actually has an impact on the notion of fashion as a moment in time. This immense power of the digital fashion representation, however, has rarely been an object of investigation and analysis (Khan 236). Interestingly enough, however, representatives of the fashion industry like photographer Nick Knight or designer Gareth Pugh strongly believe that fashion film will gradually displace and substitute classical formats in the near future (Scorzin 2). A great number of fashion houses already start confiding in this promising phenomenon and have appointed small production companies and well-known filmmakers to produce short films for them such as David Lynch for Dior (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*) or Harmony Korine for Proenza Schouler (Khan 236). Nevertheless, "fashion film itself is only at the early stages of its existence, only just beginning to walk" (ibid. 245) and this allusion of walking neatly leads to the discussion of one of the earliest forms of fashion promotion and representation which clearly influenced the genre of fashion film apparent in several examples considered in the next section, namely the fashion show as a medium for representing fashion.

2.1   The fashion show

Before moving on to this relationship and the affinities between the fashion show and the medium of film, fashion film in particular, it is of importance to briefly recite the history, development and main functions of the event of the fashion show in general in order to fully grasp the similarities and differences discussed later in this chapter. Previous to the establishment of fashion media as we

know it today, like magazines and the campaigns featured in them for example, there were already other means for representation and promotion. Starting in the 18th century when little dolls dressed in fashionable clothing were the source of information about the latest styles, however, only royal houses in France and England were privileged of having access to these dolls. Quite obviously, the original designs were reserved for a small selected group of people, namely the royal elite (Teunissen 9). As a result, the consumption of elite fashion design in form of the medium of fashion dolls was bound to specific sites and places by then, as Gilbert emphasizes "Simmel's trickle-down theory was extended from the social to the spatial" (238).

As far as the early forms of fashion shows appearing towards the end of the 19th century are concerned, it can be stated that only aristocracy and the elite of society were admitted (Teunissen 9) to witness the latest trends and developments in fashion design. Hence, the broad public had to gain its information from secondary media, in many cases magazines and newspapers that emerged in the 19th century (ibid. 9). Nevertheless, the fashion shows were still almost only written about but not much photographed or illustrated and it was only later that the general public first saw the mannequins modeling the newest fashion, when they were showing off couturier dresses at the famous races in France, for example, and when illustrations and photographs also started to spread (Evans *The Walkies* 112). In addition it can be argued, that the Eurocentric fashion system emerged during the late 1850s, when Charles Worth founded his fashion house in Paris in 1858 and employed so-called shop models for presenting his designs as a form of media promotion which resulted in the elimination of aristocratic exclusivity on fashion (Craik 69). After the time and motives of the emergence of fashion shows it is now also important to look at their structure and discuss them content-wise.

One of the predecessors of the fashion show is definitely the fashion play performed on London stages which was a new genre of musical comedy that came into being in the 1890s and lasted until 1914 (Rappaport qtd in Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 274). These fashion plays were dramatized fashion plates where leading ladies paraded up to seven new dresses in one night and these extravaganzas can be seen as the "rise of the modern fashion show" (Kaplan and Stowell 1). With Worth setting up the fashion system in Europe, he can be described as the father of Paris fashion. Similarly, Paul Poiret can be described as the impresario of fashion in the way he established his company in 1903 and enriched the whole business with new energy and innovation by promoting his designs by means of modern methods such as illustrations by famous French illustrator Paul Iribe and, especially important for the discussion here, his theatrical approach to the promotion of his designs (Craik 70). In the wake of these novel approaches, the fashion show gradually developed from early forms of mere walkabouts to proper shows endowed with simple

texts and scenarios especially written for them (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 275). French couture houses enhanced their fashion presentations with simple storylines which made them appear as short dramas with actual narratives (ibid. 282). As a result the fashion shows towards the end of the 20ᵗʰ century, for example by Lucile or Paul Poiret, can be identified as working along the lines of the principle of commercial seduction through novelty and innovation by disguising their actual commercial nature as argued by Evans (*Fashion Edge* 67, *Enchanted Spectacle* 280). Nevertheless, this points towards the fact, that the initiation of fashion shows does not only cater to trade but also to cultural aspects (Entwistle and Rocamora 743) as they do of course produce cultural images. However, during the 1940s the theatrical way of presentation emphasizing mise-en-scène during a fashion show from the early 20ᵗʰ century was replaced by focusing on speed as well as the style of a mannequin's presentation. This new manifestation led to the establishment of a so-called cabine, consisting of up to 18 models for each couture house which all had their own walking style. As of then, the models exhibited this unsmiling, glacial, immobile, ungracious and arrogant behavior which made them appear detached from the proceedings. This aloof arrogant style lasted through the 1950s to only change once again during the 60s with "rapid-fire presentations" à la British fashion designer Mary Quant, who was famous for her speed and style of showing her designs, showing up to 40 dresses in fourteen minutes. The tendency for speed is still present today because modern fashion shows do not last longer than up to half an hour (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 291-7). This new phase marks the return to the fashion show as a spectacle.

However, fashion as a spectacle is nothing new and many designers borrowed conventions of the theater stage where fashion played a leading role ever since and costumes already demonstrated lavish luxury. This theatrical tradition has remained an important reference point up until today and fashion shows are still staged like theater presentations (Devoucoux 288-289). One of the first designers within the world of fashion to stage her presentations like a spectacle was Elsa Schiaparelli at the beginning of the 20ᵗʰ century. She was a pioneer in the way she endowed her shows with themes and offered larger than life presentations with spectacular parades involving music, light, dancing stunts and jokes (White 164, Craik 182, Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 289). The spectacular fashion show returned in the 60s with Mary Quant, as already mentioned above, and during the 70s more and more shows involved acting and dancing to music, for instance, with Kenzo staging ground-breaking shows that were as much a spectacle of lighting and sound as they were of the designs and the models (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 299-300). Fashion designers became aware of the value of shock and therefore utilized the spectacle as a resource to attract the attention of the press and the buyers (Evans *Fashion Edge* 71) and these spectacular shows were indeed addressed extensively in the press (Entwistle and Rocamora 739). Fashion shows turned away from mere events just for buyers and developed into proper entertainment

15

tools, which becomes apparent in the fact that the house of Mugler gave away half of the tickets for their fashion show to the public in 1984 (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 301). This trend continues into the 1990s and the new millennium with shows by Hussein Chalayan, Martin Margiela, Alexander McQueen, John Galliano, Dior or Givenchy that pursue the tradition of the spectacle and showmanship and the fashion show still functions as a spectacle in the visualized global market we live in today by means of seducing through hyper-real images and fetishizing commodity form with new technologies of the image (Evans *Fashion Edge* 79, Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 301-306, Evans *Emblems & Commodities* 95-98). It shows that the fashion show is connected to Guy Debord's idea of the society of the spectacle without much doubt, in the way that reality and everyday life is displaced by commercial display and images on the catwalk (Evans *Fashion Edge* 73) where "[t]he rise of the model, and the fashion show, are directly linked to the rise of mass production" (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 272).

Moving on to the function of fashion shows it is obvious that the primary purpose of such events is the presentation of clothes, in particular the showcasing of the next season's clothing, for buyers and individual clients (Evans *The Walkies* 112, Entwistle and Rocamora 736). It can be argued, however, that this purpose is only ostensible since the fashion weeks appear too late in the seasons and the buying happens approximately two months before the shows in the designer's studios. As a result, fashion shows are as much a trade event as they are a cultural one (Entwistle and Rocamora 742). The cultural side of fashion shows is emphasized by the fact that they also act as signifying practices and that they constitute a system of representation giving priority to the aspect of performance as well as performativity of fashion. This focus on performance also entails that organizing and hosting a catwalk show also involves the staging of the gaze (Entwistle and Rocamora 744), the concept of looking and being looked at, developed by the likes of Lacan, Foucault or Laura Mulvey. As for fashion shows, there is the gaze of the audience, who are object and subject at the same time on the one hand, and there is the gaze of the models walking down the runway featuring a distant and detached gaze which underlines that they are only present to be seen and not to see themselves, on the other hand. To see and to be seen is actually one of the main objectives of fashion shows, since this process is crucial for reproducing the position of all the players in the field (ibid. 743-744).

Apparently, fashion shows may exhibit polysemous images endowed with complex and even contradictory meanings which perfectly mirrors and reproduces the fashion culture on the whole (Entwistle and Rocamora 743) and usually represents the overall fashion idea and is a reconstruction of the market (Weller 10) with its complicated and sophisticated links and relationships between the different parts and sectors. Interestingly enough, most fashion shows of

16

today still only bring together related groups of the fashion industry sharing a mutual interest (ibid. 2) and only grant access to those already belonging to the field of fashion, which marks the actual event as a physically enclosed space not open to the wider, more general audience. Consequently, there is a dividing boundary between the inside and the outside which replicates the barriers of the field of fashion as a whole (Entwistle and Rocamora 738). This adherence to exclusivity reproduces the universal power relations and stabilizes the market of fashion by offering a common ground to increase the value of the participants and the output (Weller 11). In the from of a ticket to a fashion show, said process even takes shape, since the ticket as a symbol signifies affiliation and reassures one's insider status, it is actual material evidence for the presence in the field, so to say (Entwistle and Rocamora 741).

Nevertheless, there are also developments that counteract this strong commitment to exclusivity in the recent past. On the one hand, a number of less traditional forms of the fashion show have been established with the emergence of a new category of fashion weeks which very often offer public entrance (Weller 12). Additionally, it has become a common practice to feature fashion shows extensively in the press (Entwistle and Rocamora 736) and the ever growing media attention contributed to the fact that fashion shows are no longer under the rule of exclusiveness, but unrestricted as far as date, time or location are concerned (Weller 13). This evolution began with the coverage in newsreel as of 1910 (Evans *The Walkies* 112), continued during the 1980s when catwalk images where available in newspapers and magazines and broadcasted on television world wide (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 304) and is still present today where details of the seasonal collections of designers are accessible immediately after the show for free on the internet (Scorzin 2). Hence, the fashion image has evolved into a more graphic one during the last half of the 20th century, driven by the emphasis on the image as fashion promotion and marketing (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 304).

Thus anybody interested in the field of fashion can obtain admission to fashion shows in a way and the ticket is no longer of material form but can be manifest in the form of the respective link or website where images are featured almost simultaneously to the actual event or the posting and publishing of fashion images on one's own website or blog or social media networks such as twitter or instagram. Just as the alternative and emerging fashion weeks besides the big four, New York, London, Milan and Paris (Entwistle and Rocamora 73) are characteristic of experiment and innovation, so are the forms of media coverage and the multiple repeated utilization of fashion show images (Van der Zwaag 34). Fashion shows today have more and more grown into copies of movie super productions and have affinities with film as far as the dimensions and the use of high amounts of financial means are concerned. In effect, they are stylized to media events and have

gained their own economic weight within the industry of fashion (Devoucoux 292). As a result, numerous fashion houses commenced the manner of utilizing the images of their fashion shows in a manifold way.

First and foremost, by live streaming their shows on the internet and by putting short films as a form of recap for unlimited future consumption on their official websites or social media platforms. One of the pioneers in this respect has been the British brand Burberry under the creative direction of designer Christopher Bailey for more than one decade now. The house of Burberry usually broadcasts their biannual fashion show as well as the moments before, when important guests arrive, live online and additionally offers perfectly edited summaries of their shows as well as exclusive insights into the craftsmanship behind their goods (Burberry *Full Show*). Besides, the house of Burberry also utilized another form related to film for promoting their actual fashion show, namely the teaser (Burberry *Teaser).* A teaser or trailer functions as a hint towards future content, usually featuring a logo, name and date at the end or the beginning. It aims to attract attention by presenting parts of this content functioning like a preview or appetizer so to say and it commonly features visual stimuli by using key images and highlights to be shown (Bühler 340-341). In the case of the Burberry teaser the short film opens with the Burberry Prorsum logo and the invitation to watch the Spring Summer 13 Womenswear show (Burberry *Teaser* 00:00-00:03) and ends with a countdown and the actual date of the fashion show and again the logo of the brand (ibid. 00:19-00:27). It presents key images related to the traditional British fashion house like the typical check pattern (ibid. 00:04), the famous trench coat (ibid. 00:05), the Union Jack (ibid. 00:08) or the Big Ben (ibid. 00:13,00:18) as well as scenes from their previous fashion shows (ibid. 00:13, 00:17). One of the most important features of a teaser or trailer is the fast cutting technique which entails the constant change of synaesthetic stimuli and shot types and movement (Bühler 341, 348). Again, the Burberry Teaser is a prime example here, the cutting is extremely fast with around forty different shots in less than fifteen seconds at the beginning (Burberry *Teaser* 00:03-00:15). Besides, the synaesthetic stimuli also change extensively alternating between images of the craftsmanship (ibid. 00:04, 00:09), the designer himself (ibid. 00:05, 00:18), the guests arriving at the show (ibid. 00:06, 00:08, 00:10, 00:14), a comet and an explosion (ibid. 00:07), images of London (ibid. 00:08, 00:11-00:12, 00:17) and backstage footage of the models getting their make-up done (ibid. 00:09). In addition to that, the shots also include a lot of movement, both movement of the objects filmed and camera movement. For instance, hands sliding across the typical Burberry tartan (ibid. 00:04), a woman in a Burberry trench coat walking towards the venue (ibid. 00:06), a camera moving (ibid. 00:06), the comet flying across the sky and shimmering particles flying through the air after the explosion (ibid 00:07), a spinning thread (ibid. 00:11) and almost every shot includes some kind of camera movement such as a pan, tilt or zoom.

These clips and videos related to and featuring fashion shows can be seen as one form of fashion film, constituting a rather simple and reduced one though, since they only reproduce material that is staged independent of the production of film. Still they can be classified as films, since the postproduction of editing the footage collected at the fashion show, by cutting and adding text, sound or other effects actually ranges them with the production of film. In this manner, fashion houses can bridge the gap between exclusivity by only inviting insiders to the actual show but still offer their content to a wider audience by making it available in the form of videos and films online. Furthermore, in the past there used to be two seasons, spring summer and fall winter, within the cycle of fashion. Today, however, fast fashion has more than just two seasons and designers offer collections in between the big two, often called pre-fall, cruise or resort collections, whereas retailers might create up to twenty collections a year which involves high complexity of planning (Craik 207). Due to this high amount of output it is obviously impossible to stage a fashion show for each collection, which can be understood as another reason for the emergence of fashion film in the first place, serving as a substitute for presenting new seasonal collections without hosting an actual event. Now that the relationship between fashion show and film has been established it is vital to look into the nature of this interconnection with more detail.

Most generally, every creative activity can be seen as giving form to chaos, for instance by taking snapshots and freezing or preserving the moment for eternity. Fashion as well as film has always been concerned with telling stories in some way and giving conclusion to one piece of work. Nevertheless, the ending and completion of one film or fashion show always means that another one will definitely follow which forms a continuous and endless development that both forms have in common (Molho). The fashion show has been related to theater from the outset and shared characteristics with film (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 271, Evans *The Walkies* 111) especially due to the fact that the medium of film and the event of the fashion show emerged almost simultaneously towards the end of the 19th century, when in France the first film screening presented to a paying audience took place in 1895 and the first fashion show was organized in the late 1890s (Evans *The Walkies* 110). The first instance where film and fashion collided in one medium was when the film *50 Years of Paris Fashion,* recounting the evolution of couturier's art in France, was presented in London in 1910. The structure of other early films on fashion was far from complex and often replicated the conventional form of the early fashion shows in the salons showing the upcoming trends and current fashions with a clear promotional intent (Breward 132).

From the beginning, as early as 1900 both film and fashion were primarily concerned with the fascination of the human movement and the image of the woman in motion (Evans *The Walkies* 110-111). In her essay on early fashion shows and silent cinema Caroline Evans

19

established a number of affinities between those two spheres. She argues that one of the first exchanges between them was the language and terms used for description. For instance, the word défilé itself originates in cinema where it first described the marching of soldiers and was later adapted by the field of fashion for the parading of models (ibid. 111). She also discusses the early stop frame films of Georges Méliès as related to the fashion show. In these short trick films Méliès carefully choreographed the action by stopping to film in order to change the actors or props before starting to film again. Hence, he produced surprising transformations within the camera's field of vision and made women mysteriously appear, multiply, transform or disappear. These four forms are also common features of the fashion show where the mannequins also appear, disappear and reappear in a transformed state with different clothing (ibid. 116). One of these early films is *Ten Ladies in One Umbrella* by Méliès of 1903 in which he makes use of the stop frame extensively and lets women appear behind the umbrella of a male actor (Méliès). What also connects this early film to the fashion show is that the women change dress throughout the short film two times, meaning that their appearance is transformed just like that of mannequins when they disappear backstage and reappear onto the catwalk again in another outfit again. Now that it has become clear that the two spheres converged, it goes without saying that a number of affinities and similarities appeared.

To begin with, the first period of cinema at the end of the 19th century, namely the cinema of attraction, first coined by theorists André Gaudreault and Tom Gunning, which is a type of film that focuses on motion rather than on narrative and aims to shock and astonish (Evans *The Walkies* 116-118) already shared several characteristics with the fashion show, especially the early forms at the beginning of the 20th century. Firstly, both forms focus on presentation rather than on narration and let the models function as attractions with robotic movements instead of characters with personalities and individuality. Besides, they frequently address the spectator directly in both forms by looking into the camera or gazing at the audience (Richard Abel qtd. in Evans *The Walkies* 118). This common feature of early film and fashion show can also be found in a similar way in the fashion film of today. The focus on presentation in place of narration is a feature of a great number of fashion films, as they rarely follow a clear storyline and are not equipped with a clear narration in general. A prime example of this focus on presentation with robotic performances and characters without personalities would be Miu Miu's fashion film of 2011 *MUTA* by Lucrecia Martel. Most of the time the movement of the actresses or models in this short film does not appear human but quite robotic, in the way they act and walk (Miu Miu Muta 00:30-01:06, 4:28-05:07) or flutter their eyelashes (ibid 1:14, 5:17). Besides, they are not presented as characters with personality since they all act and walk similarly and their faces are never revealed because their hair veils it or they are filmed from behind as seen in figure 1 below. Prada's clip for fall winter 2012 is another

instance of the features just mentioned, since the models appear to be controlled by a higher power, more precise the movement of the chess pieces, and move in robotic ways (Prada *Fall Winter 2012* 00:11-00:19). The setting and location in this film leads to the next similarity.

Figure 1: Robotic characters with no personality (Miu Miu *Muta*)

The second affinity between the cinema of attraction and the fashion show is the convention of the homogeneous space in which the action happens that does not change throughout the whole scene and which reminds of the locality of the couture salon in which the mannequins paraded (Richard Abel qtd. in Evans *The Walkies* 118). In the second example, the Prada clip, briefly discussed above, this is exactly the case when we enter the space at the beginning by opening doors or gates and remain in this room until the end. In fact, a lot of the current fashion films do not incorporate more than one location and this fixation on space also leads to the next shared feature because thirdly, the fixed viewpoint of the audience in the salon or at today's fashion shows reflects the single grounded position of the camera in the cinema of attraction, which again underlines the impersonalization of the mannequins (Richard Abel qtd. in Evans *The Walkies* 119). One considerable example of this feature, which is Lanvin's Fall Winter 2011 in which the camera does not move and constantly films the dancing models from one point of view (Lanvin). Nevertheless, this fixed position of the camera is less common in today's fashion film, perhaps partly because also film in general quickly moved away from the static camera after its first experiments or early forms and used mobile camera as well as more animated models, walking in springy ways, gesticulating, chatting and shyly glancing at the camera in a flirtatious and dynamic way (Evans *The Walkies* 126). One prime example for this behavior of the models would

be the fashion film *Hide and Seek* by Nowness for Louis Vuitton (Louis Vuitton *Hide and Seek*). Here the models appear very animated, running across meadows in a springy way (ibid 00:16, 00:22-00:23, 00:42-00:43), feet dangling in the air (ibid. 00:17), shyly glancing towards the distance and smiling into the camera in a flirtatious manner (ibid. 00:34-00:35, 01:12, 01:22-01:23). This choice of using more animated characters lets them appear more realistically and more lively and possible invites the viewer even more to identify with the models shown, in contrast to the rather distanced and robotic model appearing in photographs and on the runway frequently. In fact, the liveliness and mobility is one of the great advantages of the fashion film compared to previous static forms of representation and promotion of fashion.

The first designer who understood the possibilities and advantages of the medium of film as a device for marketing and showing his mannequins modeling to a wider audience, was Paul Poiret (Evans *The Walkies* 110). He can be classified as the father of the fashion film, since he was one of the main representatives for this new genre from the very beginning. His original strategies of promotion, marketing and publicity soon involved the fashion film as a crucial element of mixed media (ibid. 119). He was the first designer to incorporate photography as well as film into his repertoire of representation, as he was a keen amateur photographer himself and quickly understood the possibilities of the medium of film. For his first fashion film of 1911, he filmed his models walking up and down in his garden, brilliantly lit by the projector during one of the extravagant parties he used to host. He had the collected footage edited into a complete film, which is unfortunately lost today, and showed it to his clients as a more elaborate form than an actual fashion show in order to present his new collection (ibid. 120). During the years of 1910 through to 1930 (ibid. 111) he continued to tour with promotional films which showed his mannequins parading in his latest designs. In addition to Paul Poiret, the French houses of Lucile and Patou where also among those most open to the medium of film for representation of fashion besides the conventional fashion show which they also influenced largely (ibid. 125). Consequently, the use of the medium of film as a means of distributing images of fashion rapidly grew. To illustrate this development, the production of a series of short films on forthcoming fashion in 1911 by the film production company Pathé or the films showing department store parades, which brought the fashion image to a wider audience and dissolved the exclusivity, are worth mentioning (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 280, 285). At the same time as the possibilities of fashion film were explored and developed, a second medium, namely the newsreel came into being and was another quite short filmic means of promoting fashion shown extensively in cinema programs back then. The actual content of these newsreels varied from models parading in the latest designs like in a fashion show to narrative scene with women playing roles such as society women chatting and having tea (Evans *The Walkies* 123-125). Given these facts, it appears that the modern-day

fashion film already originated in a number of related film forms such as the pioneer films on fashion by Poiret and his fellow designers, the short films produced by film companies and the newsreels part of cinema programs.

The mutual exchange between the fashion show and film was not only a phenomenon of their early existence but continued right to the middle of the 20th century when Elsa Schiaparelli commissioned a film company to convert her courtyard into a fairytale showroom for her fashion show and had her models sway to samba (Evans *Enchanted Spectacle* 291) and is still present today in many ways, with the exchange happening in both ways. Generally speaking it becomes clear that the fashion industry is more and more becoming like film production or the music industry (Weller 24) in the way that fashion houses are increasingly under the power of transnational conglomerates (LVHM Louis Vuitton Moet Hennessy, PPR Pinault-Printemps-Redoute, Diesel-Group Molvena) just like film production companies (Devoucoux 292). In particular in haute couture and fashion houses under avant-garde designers a whole new digital body and fashion world has been established, for instance in a three dimensional fashion show by Thierry Mugler in which a model was digitalized resulting in a hybrid creature that was half human and half robot reminding of characters from films like Star Trek (Devoucoux 77). Hence, the presentation of clothing and body in both film and fashion show is rather one-sided in the way in which the body is celebrated, ritualized and idealized. The similarities do not only concern the characters or models but also the content, demonstrated by the structure of present-day fashion shows with scenes that appear like based on screenplays and scripts with dramatic or documentary focus as well as a clear plot lines. Yet another affinity are the technical means utilized in both forms, for instance computer-controlled laser systems or music themes. In fact, today's fashion shows would be unimaginable without a soundtrack that matches the overall atmosphere and look of the show. One penultimate analogy is the presence of famous people, at fashion shows the front rows are filled with insiders of the field and other important celebrities and the catwalks are full of successful models while films feature the latest stars and allure even more famous people to their premieres. The last similarity is the décor which is a central element of presentation in both and offers symbolic meaning by coding the fashion system with a symbolic net of connotations (ibid. 288-290). All these elements inserted into a fashion show, like the scenes appearing to be based in scripts, the music or the décor may trigger an endless array of connotations and to reduce these possibilities fashion shows are frequently given titles serving as verbal basis framing and situating the images shown, just as films, and today also fashion films are given titles.

Some actual contemporary examples are fashion shows of designers like John Galliano, Alexander McQueen, Jean Paul Gaultier, Hussein Chalayan or Martin Margiela. Most of these

designers find inspiration in performative art and in films such as Gaultier who staged one of his fashion shows in a metro which coined it with a claim for ordinariness and at the same time uniqueness (Devoucoux 288-290). Additionally, the work of Galliano or McQueen can be classified alongside that of a film costumier since many of their collections and therefore also their shows appear to have a clear filmic influence (Breward 139). The presentations of Chalayan are also marked by a convergence of the fashion show with new technologies of film and incorporate digital image as well as video projections, as a matter of fact, it has become a convention to utilize computer animated images matching the action of models (Evans *Fashion Edge* 78). The models, are in fact another connection between the fashion show and film (Devoucoux 272).

More important for this paper are prime examples of where the exchange works vice versa. One instance would be the fashion film by director Anita Fontaine for Louis Vuitton presenting their Stephen Sprouse print of the current season (Louis Vuitton *Stephen Sprouse*). This film consists of the simple content of a model walking across the screen from different directions and angles like in a fashion show wearing different designs featuring the Stephen Sprouse print in front of a background created through unique techniques of photo copies alluding to image noise of television and VHS material and painting as seen in figure 2 below. A second example is DSquared2's fashion film presenting their Fall Winter 2012 collection in which one scene is structured like an actual fashion show. The male and female characters come together in what appears to be a classroom and seem to be waiting for their class to start, sitting on their chairs rather bored (*Substitutes* 00:00-00:22) until two men in suits appear who turn out to be the actual designer duo Dean and Dan Caten accompanied by two other men dressed as concierges carrying two suitcases. They place the suitcases on the teachers desks and open them to reveal that they are filled with glittery and colorful accessories (00:23-00:35). At this point the impromptu fashion show is initiated by the designers, with the word walk written on the chalkboard and they start teaching the "pupils" how to walk up and down the class room like on a catwalk embellishing them with their accessories (00:36-01:18). Another aspect that is of importance in this film is the utilization of the stop frame or stop motion technique already discussed above in this section at the beginning of the film (00:04-00:09). Just as in the early films of Georges Méliès this trick is used to let more and more male and female characters appear in the classroom which shows another affinity to these early form of films and the fashion show in general, where the models also appear. Interestingly enough the film was shot by fashion photographers Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott, which leads to the discussion of the next medium influencing the genre of fashion film, namely photography.

Figure 2: Models walking like on runway (Louis Vuitton *Stephen Sprouse*)

2.2 Photography – the traditional and prestigious form of communication

First of all, it is important to briefly mention a medium closely related to photography that had a decisive influence on its development and later on also affected the medium film, namely painting. Photography adopted a number of stylistic conventions used in the art of painting for a long time, such as structural design rules like the golden ratio, the segmentation into nine sections, image size or hierarchical structures (Devoucoux 43). Additionally, also frame size is being used analogically in the composition of both media, applying various shapes and sizes such as narrow rectangles or vertical panels (Bordwell and Thompson 183). The fashion illustration as an early means of representation and promotion of fashion has been mentioned a few times, and it is in fact one genre of painting in general, including some structural similarities with subsequent forms. In fact, it was the representational depiction of fashion before the inventions of photography in the form of portraiture, line drawings (Craik 191), sketches, illustrations, engravings or fashion plates which were the only source of information about clothing for a long period of time. Particularly, fashion plates that not only portray clothes, but whole groups of people in fashionable situations, were reproduced and distributed, first in black and white and then hand colored, by early fashion magazines as well as a form of display in shop windows as of the 1770s. For the first time the entire fashionable lifestyle was circulating in a tangible way (Craik 246-247). The elements used in such fashion paintings were commonly shaped by general current art and painting movements such as pictorialism, the aesthetic avant-garde like surrealism, abstract expressionism or

25

geometric art (Zahm 266). Traces of all these affinities between the painting and the fashion illustration can also be found in the fashion film of today, like Devoucoux put it: the fact that the history of painting is at the same time the history of fashion painting and therefore fashion itself makes it also valid for film (43). Said history of fashion photography will now be outlined more accurately.

The medium of photography is born towards the end of the 19th century (Boodro 258) and the special form of fashion photography contributed widely to the transformation of fashion reproduction and representation of fashion in general, since it had an impact on the development of the print medium of modern fashion magazines in the last half of the 19th century (Craik 68). Nevertheless, fashion photography only developed slowly and it was not used extensively on the fashion market from the outset (Aspers 2) and fashion illustrations remain an important medium until the 1930s (Craik 191, Breward 123). In comparison to its immediate predecessor, the fashion illustration or plate, it offered the possibility of portraying fashion more realistically for the first time, and as a result, fashion photography established itself as a specialist profession (Craik 191) which also entailed a golden era for fashion journalism in general and gave rise to related actors in this field such as fashion editors (ibid. 250), art directors or stylists. At the beginning of the 20th century its relevance grew enormously, because of the possibility to multiply images and reproduce them more easily for circulation, and it emerged as the medium of choice for many magazines which started using the latest techniques of coloring and printing. The increased utilization of the photograph in the fashion industry also implicated the focus on the imaginative potential of lifestyle and art as a promotional tool and the emphasize shifted from materiality to the symbolism of modern visual language promoting whole lifestyles, new values and ways of living (Breward 122, Craik 248).

This shift away from the materiality of clothing and fashion designs towards all other kinds of influences and a variety of referents led to the development of fashion photography as a rather complex, even confusing, fragmented and disparate genre (Zahm 264). For instance, the first photographers who worked for Vogue turned out to be extremely influential in the way they utilized techniques originating from surrealism rendering quite abstract images and fetishizing fashionable life. As a result, their images represented a more complex relationship between clothing, identity, image and desire (Breward 123) after the shift away from pure material focus happened. Another influence pretty dominating in the 1940s was avant-garde which developed the shift even further and established the fashion photograph as more powerful than fashion itself headed by Richard Avedon (Sharkey). The 50s and 60s of the 20th century saw an inclination towards sexual objectification of the body with a great range of work produced by a new generation of

photographers and models (Breward 126). This movement was initiated by Helmut Newton whose images shocked and therefore offered a significant turning point. The photographs he shot were no longer glamorous pictures of beautiful models but underlined social realism, which he achieved by means such as incorporating explicit sexuality, an erotic mood, unconventional poses and new settings. Three important London based photographers who followed this lead were David Bailey, Terence Donovan and Brian Duffy who also added sexuality, nudity and suggestiveness to their work (Craik 191). The change of setting was coined as outdoor naturalism dominated by names as Avedon again, Frank Horvat and William Klein who choose real urban settings as their location and left the confinements of the studio behind (Zahm 266). During the 80s yet another photographer was rather influential, namely Bruce Weber (Sharkey) who contributed to the cult of the supermodels together with Steven Meisel (Breward 126) and as a matter of fact, it is exactly this period of time in which our understanding of fashion photograph is rooted. Currently, the values of fashion photography have an aura of aesthetic and beauty on the one hand and provocative concepts such as sex and drugs on the other (Aspers 2-6) which entails that there can be found brilliant technicians of the glamour image like Steven Meisel or Nick Knight, great artists like Richard Prince or Cindy Sherman (Zahm 264-265) and innovators such as Juergen Teller who provocatively pictured topics such as drugs or anorexia during the 90s (Breward 126). The genre of fashion film also includes these notions just mentioned, one instance is the short film *Love Me* featuring model Karlie Kloss shot by Ruth Hogben (SHOWstudio *Love Me*). This short film refers to concepts such as sexuality, eroticism or fetish and clearly adds suggestiveness to the whole atmosphere. The colors used in the film are predominantly black, white and red which already refer to this erotic and sexually loaded mood. The eroticism, especially the fetish part also comes to the fore by means of the usage of a whip (ibid. 00:15-00:29, 02:12, 02:27-02:56) and the garments and underwear the model is wearing, which is mostly silk, fur or leather and latex (ibid. 00:34, 01:06, 01:27-01:52).

Now that the general history has been depicted it is time to move on to the actual function of the fashion photograph. All these tendencies and trends throughout the 20th century have shown that photographers ventured onto new terrains many times which resulted in a never-ending process of hybridization of the genre of fashion photography. This molded it into a hybrid form assimilating, integrating, absorbing and fusing with many other territories of reference and their characteristic signs. Consequently, it is close to impossible to define any specific artistic or sociological referent, as the genre is permanently reinventing its foundations and origins by drawing on all sorts of other influences. In general, the fashion photograph articulates three basic signifiers, namely clothing, model and set or location. However, it can be classified as a special case of visual cultural production since it has become clear that it is a meta-image transcending its

object, which is of course clothing and fashion design (Zahm 263-266) and it is improbable that fashion photography will return to this less abstract focus on clothing (Craik 193). Just as any other representational system works according to the principle of representation through a specific channel, also the photograph functions as such a system to communicate photographic meaning about the content pictured (Hall 5). The content produced by shooting a fashion photograph very often consists of surreal scenarios that exist independent of the actual piece of clothing which only serves as a means of representing, constructing and addressing contemporary life and culture in a broader way (Breward 131, Devoucoux 50). What is more, the process of representation of the fashion photograph can assume multiple and convergent forms since it is shaped by flexibility, adaptability and mobility and exploits all other forms of representation from fields such as film or contemporary art which characterizes it as a hybrid icon of the present consisting of all other kinds of images (Zahm 263). Fashion images are not an isolated form but always exist within a context and are only effective in combination with other interactive elements of culture (Devoucoux 50). One of these contexts that crucially influences the end product is the background and situation of the photographer him- or herself. The profession of the photographer constitutes one of the main similarities between fashion photography and film and will now be dealt with more in-depth.

It is fundamental to reflect upon the situation of the actors of the subject for discussion in order to understand the creation and composition of fashion photographs and their content (Ruggerone 357). As already mentioned, the background of the photographer has an impact on the final product due to aesthetic, cultural, social, economical and technical aspects (Aspers 41) and the style of one photographer is characterized by various elements such as angle, perspective, light, composition, background, choice of model, pose, styling and make-up (ibid. 63). As for this outstanding and complex circumstances a lot of fashion houses and magazines choose to work with only a small field of professionals they are already familiar with and interestingly enough, there is only about a dozen of such renowned talents in every era who establish themselves as such trustworthy choices (Tungate 91). Besides, the last decade has shown, that they are not only working in different fields of photography but also cross boundaries and are active in the field of film as well, as Nünning and Nünning put it many authors write or work for different kinds of media (131). This assertion is also true for fashion photographers who also invade the field of film quite frequently, underlined by the fact that the first filmmakers ever actually were simple photographers attempting to master the use of new tools (Mitry 2) and quite a number of leading fashion photographers throughout the 20th century moved into film, for instance, William Klein or Bruce Weber (Sharkey).

Some of the most recent examples which point towards this transgression of boundaries

between photography and film are the Dsquared2 film shot by Mert and Marcus or the Prada film by Steven Klein already discussed above for reasons of similarity to the fashion show. A number of today's fashion films are indeed produced by professionals who originally worked in the field of photography exclusively and talents who now also master the medium of film are highly coveted (Exner 1). The prime example of this development is Nick Knight with his project SHOWstudio, an interactive platform on the internet that launched in the year of 2000 which is even called the home of fashion film. A formerly well-known and established fashion photographer he was one of the first ones to transition into the sphere of moving images (Exner 1) and his approach to the genre of fashion film is more informed by his previous work involving still images and photography than by narrative film which is illustrated by the fact that a high number of fashion films featured on his website reference the heritage of the non-moving fashion photograph and pay homage to stillness, while actively engaging in the shift from the static to the moving image which creates a dialectical relationship between old media and new technologies (Khan 236-243). Knight is not the only one to venture a step into filmmaking and a plenty of his colleagues followed suit, like Karl Lagerfeld, who constitutes an exceptional example anyway, being fashion designer turned into fashion photographer turned into fashion filmmaker with his short films like *Remember Now* for Chanel's Cruise 2011 collection or *The Tale of a Fairy* for 2012 (Chanel *Remember Now, Tale of a Fairy*), another Prada fashion film shot by Steven Meisel for Spring Summer 2012 (Prada *Spring Summer 2012*) or Ellen von Unwerth who produced a short film called *I Found my Love in Portofino* for the Dior Cruise Collection 2012 (Dior *Portofino).* This transition from the static photograph to the moing image will now be looked into with more detail.

Any medium and technique takes on an important role in today's life and culture, be it the medium of photography or the medium of film in the form of television, video or digital film on the computer and internet (Devoucoux 49). Nevertheless, the medium of film for fashion with its digital image is starting to replace the older medium of fashion photography which historically characterized the fashion image as still. What is more, the shift is close to inevitable when fashion is considered as a visual phenomenon and the permanent presence of the moving digital image suits this notion of fashion perfectly (Khan 235-238, 248). In fact, the fashion image as a means of carrying and producing meaning can no longer be reduced to its contours and lines but has to include the meaning of the moving body wearing the clothes (Devoucoux 50). The motionless photograph is more factual and objective due to its static nature, while the digital images of fashion film are highly aesthetic and effective due to their movement endowing them with a higher narrative level which can possibly convey the designers vision more comprehensively doing the actual fashion design justice (Scorzin 1). It becomes obvious that the advantages of the visual language of a film for the representation of clothes have exceeded the possibilities of the fashion photograph

which led to the establishment of closer relationships between fashion houses and filmmaking (Breward 131-134).

For instance, some of these advantages are that the static images merely pretend to represent immediate reality, when they actually always depict a reality of the past (Nünning and Nünning 138), whereas the fashion film can offer a much more dynamic image and continuous flow that is no longer locked in the past and conveys a more immediate reality, since the filmic image conventionally aims to produce the illusion of space much more accurately (Bordwell and Thompson 129, Khan 248). Besides, the moving image implies the passing of time and by creating a flow of more tangible images continuity is achieved (Khan 239-243). While the static photograph is only one unique image, the fashion film consists of more than one and also represents more than just a series of images put together (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 97), like for example the relating images of a whole static advertising campaign. Here the images are motionless, and not only do the figures remain inactive and immobile, they also do not emerge or leave the photograph, which means that the static shot only represents one specific moment in time within the fashion circle connecting it with notions of stillness and immobility (Khan 234, 238). Khan argues that the static image is endowed with iconic or indexical meaning and that the moving image conveys symbolic meaning (235, 238). What is more, a number of static images within the field of fashion tend to show the whole body of a model, with the exception of a few photographers who started moving away from total shots to capturing fragmented pieces such as Guy Bourdin who focused on visual language on the whole rather than on photographs of dresses (Tungate 102). With the dynamic medium of film, it is possible to show a combination of both, long shots with a total view of a body and a presentation of the designs as a whole as well as close-ups showing only details, fragmented parts of a body or dress and accessories or jewelry discussed later in section 3.3.1 on different shot types. Another reason for producing films alongside the production of fashion photographs, besides the possibility of showing more aspects and details, is the fact that these productions have turned into collaborative projects up to now and require as much time and organization as an actual film production (Tungate 94), which only proves to be the perfect setting for really producing an accompanying film.

Almost all of these examples referred to in the last section on the photographer as a fashion film producer have one aspect in common: the advertising campaigns as well as the accompanying films shot are both results of the same production and consequently share the same visual material. The imagery of these two different forms of representation, consisting of moving and static images, are almost identical in the cases mentioned, meaning that the same location, scenery, models, props and dresses are used for both productions. It appears, that the occasion of

a fashion shoot is seized to produce a matching video which is later released as a fashion film, resulting in multiple utilization of the images produced. Their meaning is extended with the help of the moving image, making use of the advantages of film just mentioned, such as escaping the past and locked single moments by creating a continuous flow and permanent presence or the possibility of showing more details. This process is nothing new, since the movement of images from one medium to the next is not only valid for photography and film, but also occurs with other media as well (Devoucoux 53). Like Nick Knight's SHOWstudio approach, their way of working seems to be influenced by the practice of the fashion photographer rather than that of an actual filmmaker (Khan 248). One perfect example is the short movie La Bella Estate by Dolce & Gabbana for their spring summer 2012 man's campaign produced in collaboration with photographer Mariano Vivanco, who shot the campaign itself, and film and sound editor Leandro Manuel Emede. The short film features scenes that are also part of the static images, for example the sequence where a couple dances (Dolce & Gabbana *Bella Estate* 00:27-00:35), the moment in front of a church with a group of people appearing to be a family before or after a christening (ibid. 01:18-01:21) and the celebration with cake and playing the guitar around a table (ibid. 01:26-01:34). Ellen von Unwerth's film also includes the same images as the print campaign, as do the films and images shot by Steven Meisel for Prada, or the Lanvin film for Fall Winter 2011 also shot by Steven Meisel. These short films and videos can be categorized as yet another simple and reduced form of the fashion film. The fact that these types of fashion films are produced alongside the advertising campaigns of fashion houses raises the question, whether the fashion film is more informed by the conventions of advertising in general or if it should be considered as a piece of art, which will now be addressed in the next section.

Figure 3: Dolce & Gabbana advertising campaign

Figure 4: Dolce & Gabbana fashion film (Dolce & Gabbana *Bella Estate*)

2.3 Art and advertising in the fashion film - convergence and undefined boundaries

Due to the lack of original research on the rather recent medium of fashion film the only way to establish connections between the fashion film and art and advertising is to look into each field with its relations to the others individually. The first two spheres discussed are fashion and art. As a matter of fact, the relationship and exchange between fashion and the field of art has been existing for a very long time, if not from the beginning, and the question whether fashion should be considered as art has been of never-ending interest. Many fashion designers are actually educated in art history and refer to already existing artistic trends and movements, such as architecture, design in general, music or craft with their collections by designing a piece of clothing resembling an iconic painting or popular building. This raises the question if fashion can be considered as an original creation of art with its own aesthetics or only as a derivative replication. It shows that the relationship of how fashion and art relate to each other has always been controversial and ambiguous with little to no final commentary of the nature of this link (Craik 171-172). What complicates this discussion about the similar nature of these two fields even more is the fact that there are no universal forms or absolute principles that an artist must adhere to in any type of art and that a piece of art is always embedded into culture and social conventions which defines unique principles and meanings for each artwork in each environment and background (Bordwell and Thompson 65). Furthermore, there are also overlaps as far as the protagonists are concerned (Craik 189) as the fact that many designer are actually trained in other fields of art or the transition from designer to photographer and filmmaker in the case of Karl Lagerfeld and other photographers who start producing films have shown. In conclusion it can be argued that even though there are a great number of references and overlaps, fashion can be classified as an independent art form and must be acknowledged as a primary artistic form since it has developed its own theories, language, grammar and patterns (Craik 189). For the object discussed here, it is also important to consider the exchange between film and art, which will be outlined next.

The audiovisual medium of film has been of interest for the field of art ever since it emerged as a new means of representation because it offers an excellent base for an artist to create a total piece of art (Bühler 10). It follows, that if a film is actually produced and seen as an art work the same techniques and theories as in art history are to be applied for describing and analyzing it (Devoucoux 150). The consideration of a film as a work of art implies that the reference to the field of art is not achieved by simply representing an already existing piece of art in a filmic context, like including a painting or filming a theater play or ballet performance, but by referring to and utilizing as well as transforming whole areas of art with their different codes and forms in producing a film.

One type of exchange is the usage of narrative techniques from literature such as the flashback or overlapping strands of narration (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 89-91). Almost every film offers a whole range of citations and intertextual links (Devoucoux 72) and another reference to art, is related to the composition of film images very often drawing techniques and strategies from painting like the composition of colors, shapes, surfaces, lines, volumes and shade for guiding attention and putting focus on specific elements in the frame (Bordwell and Thompson 142, Mitry 7-8, Devoucoux 144). In many cases the filmic image does not refer to one popular painting but to a whole movement by applying its typical structure, arrangement and codes, which enhances the film with specific meanings inherent in the respective area of painting (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 89). However, the medium of film exceeds the possibilities of art and painting in some respects. Firstly, even though the elements within a frame such as the people, objects, clothing and décor are meticulously arranged like in a painting, it is not their sum and compilation that gives meaning to a filmic image or scene, but the whole situation and dynamic environment of the other frames and scenes of the film in which they appear (Devoucoux 61). This is related to the possibility of the filmic image to shift and change because of the inclusion of movement which paintings also lack (Bordwell and Thompson 144). Besides, the film image may be composed and edited like a painting but it enhances it with the element of sound which paintings lack (Devoucoux 61). As this paragraph has shown, the types of influences can be of various forms and some of the possible areas of art having an impact on film will now be outlined.

In most cases these exchanges happen in form of references to popular styles, trends and aesthetic eras, such as the following fields related to the fine arts: cubism, romanticism, futurism, constructivism, surrealism or postmodernism (Craik 173, Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 215). For both fashion and film, the term and art form of avant-garde has been one of the greatest influences for a long period of time, which refers to a form of resistance to mass tastes and trends (Sharkey) and aims for independent, individual and experimental ways of expression. This tendency has especially enriched the medium of film with multiple projections and connections to other art forms and media resulting in so-called experimental films that include aspects of all types of other media, elements of dreams as key images and music as a structural source. A great number of these components of the avant-garde have now found their way into more commercial spheres which has led to a tension between the world of art and popular culture (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 214-216). In the field of fashion this has led to this ambivalent and unstable definition even more, with the trivial, commodified and simplistic attributions on the one side and the avant-garde art aspects on the other side. However, by constantly producing output that transcends the commercial limitations of the mass market and providing sublime images, fashion has also somehow managed to overcome this tension between the avant-garde and the mass market (Sharkey). This allusion to

the mass market and popular culture in contrast to the art influence is linked with the field of interest being discussed next, namely advertising and its relationship to film and fashion.

Throughout history the advertising world has developed from a simple focus on giving specific attention and information to an institutionalized system of persuasion and commercial information between the 1880s and the 1930s. The ultimate turn from the simple proclamation to the psychological advertisement happened after the first world war which led to skepticism and again changed advertising into a more developed and sophisticated from (Williams 321-331). However, the main function of advertising always remains to sell a product or service which ultimately led to ways of disguising the actual promotion with the help of public relation strategies, where the methods are often similar but the information infiltrates editorial content leading to no need for booking and paying for advertising space. Due to these strategies and facts and its perfectly organized and professional nature Raymond Williams argues that the advertising world can be characterized as a magic system (333-335). According to Craik the field of fashion can also be described as magical, especially the designing part of fashion under a famous designer (220) which also leaks into the atmosphere of most advertising in fashion. In the case of the fashion film, the aspect of magic also appear quite frequently, with one of the first examples being Georges Méliès film *Ten Ladies in One Umbrella* in which the women magically appear and seem to be changing their clothes magically, which in reality was achieved by the so-called technique of stop frame already discussed above in section 2.1.2 (Méliès). The concept of magic is also dominating in the fashion film *Lady Blue Shanghai* produced by David Lynch for the Lady Dior bag and it is indeed this bag that is surrounded by magic. During the first part of the film there seems to be a lighting strike in the hotel room the female protagonist enters and the bag appear out of nowhere and out of glaring light and wafts of mist sitting on a golden socket in the middle of the hotel room and vertically emits a beam of light (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai* 02:06-02:30). At first the woman is scared of the bag, but after she plays through some of her previous experiences in Shanghai in her head including a love story she opens the bag and finds a blue rose that also appears in a beam of light. The magical bag turns form this mystical object at the beginning into a reminder of what she seems to have lived through in Shanghai before and at the end she smells the rose and caresses the bag hugging it with both her arms and holding it close to her body and heart (ibid. 13:34-14:48). The bag turns into a magical object that leads the woman into her past or possibly a previous or forgotten life and helps her trigger all the beautiful memories she had with a man she obviously loved a lot. In this way, the fashion film loads the meaning of the Lady Dior Bag with new magical meaning alluding to the possibility that such a woman's bag, namely an iconic Dior bag, may accompany her for more than a lifetime and collect and contain all the memories and magical moments a person can possibly experience. In other words, the bag is presented and somehow

advertised in a way that makes it even more special, extraordinary and desirable or indeed magical. Another example where a bag turns into a magical object is the fashion film *Mourir Auprès de Toi* produced by Spike Jonze for Olympia Le Tan in which the objects on the book cover come to life. Olympia Le Tan is famous for her box clutches that look like actual books and are decorated with images and objects taken from real books. The fashion film plays in a book store and the objects on the books, which actually are her famous clutches, come to life magically as if they are awaken by a higher power (Olympia Le Tan 00:50) as seen in figure 6 below, where the skeleton frees itself from the threads that stitched it to the book cover. What follows is the love story between the skeleton on one book cover or clutch and a woman on another one, which again endows the bags designed by Olympia Le Tan with some kind of magic and points towards the fact that a simple clutch bag may indeed tell a story just as beautiful and complex as an actual book.

Figure 5: Book cover coming to life (Olympia Le Tan)

The nature of fashion has always been determined by a close relationship to different media, popular culture and commercial aspects with a special focus on newness in its representation and promotion (Craik 171, 264). As a result, fashion images have never appeared out of nowhere but have depended on accurate consideration and planning of the utilization of media channels and their sources of power ever since (Devoucoux 52). This complex system for promoting and representing fashion is one of the most complicated forms within the advertising field, since the production of meaning is usually not controlled by an external agency but is accomplished in a more sophisticated process involving many different actors (McCracken 90) and various factors for developing a strong brand (Craik 220). Many luxury fashion houses do not

involve conventional advertising agencies as much as in other areas of the commercial field, but decide on communication strategies, imagery and overall designs of their representational and promotional tools internally (Tungate 91) by leaving the artistic and creative part of advertising to the fashion designers themselves who already put symbolic meaning in the actual designs (McCracken 92), which is very much the case with Karl Lagerfeld, for example, who frequently designs and creates both, the clothes themselves and the accompanying fashion campaigns. In order to achieve the best possible outcome they not only need to introduce new products with symbolic or technical meaning but also need to apply innovative forms of representation in media and popular culture. This sophisticated approach to perfect advertising involves all the stages of fashion starting with the actual designing, creating a whole collection, preferably with a clear theme each season, achieving exposure by doing marketing and advertising via catwalk shows, celebrity endorsement and publicity through fashion spreads (Craik 220-223, 82). In all these cases it is important to convey the message and meaning desired which is influenced by the choice of the model, the medium or the photographer (Welter 276). After the choice of the adequate actors the focus shifts to the actual content of these advertising strategies and it is important to add emotional and symbolic meaning to the material goods in order to transform the product into a mood or feeling that is being conveyed. The fact that more and more fashion houses are owned by big international conglomerates, such as LVHM or PPR already mentioned in section 2.1.2, makes this process even more complicated since there is enormous competition between all these major corporations. As a result the emphasis can no longer be on the product or the logo but on additional distinctive and independent value (Craik 223-228). This can be achieved by making use of innovative or even shocking themes for representational means which generate publicity and draw a lot of attention to a fashion house (Welter 248). One of these strategies can be to bring forth the actual genius behind the clothes, namely the fashion designer him- or herself, which again includes the magical aspect in the commercial advertising referred to above.

The growing importance of the designer is not a phenomenon exclusive to the field of fashion, but also appears in other art forms such as architecture, for instance (Craik 77-78). The fashion designer as the star in addition to the content can bee seen as an analogy to the star system established in Hollywood starting around 1915 (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 206) and over the century many fashion houses realized that the form and permanence of the public presence of a designer also contributes highly to the success of a brand. This led to a shift from marketing and advertising strategies for the designs themselves to an emphasis on drawing attention to the actual person transferring the atmosphere and meaning of the fashion on the character of the designer, which celebrates important values of the fashion field in general, namely individuality, personalization and sophisticated staging of the ordinary person and appearances. In other words,

the star system as it has been called, is based on the continuous representation of the existence and elite status of the person, (Craik 81-82, 221) in this case the fashion designer. In order to achieve this perpetual flow the fashion houses must create spectacular opportunities for the designer to appear, like the fashion show where the designer usually steps on stage after the presentation, a fashion spread in a magazine with an interview on design as well as personal aspects, and most importantly for the discussion here the appearance of the designer behind the clothes in a fashion film.

In fact, there are quite a number of films including this phenomenon of promoting the designer as a star persona in fashion film. One typical example of such a cameo appearance of the star persona is Lanvin's short film for their fall winter campaign 2011 already mentioned above. Towards the end, the celebrated designer of Lanvin, Alber Elbaz, appears himself alongside the dancing female and male models attempting to outdo them with his performance of dance moves by even pushing them into the background (Lanvin 00:51-00:55), illustrated by figure 6. A second instance already discussed due to its affinities to the fashion show in section 2.1.2 is Dsquared2's fashion film *The Substitutes,* and as the title already suggests the designer duo functions as the substitute for the real teacher, already highlighting their position. Instead of actually teaching them they train the pupils in walking on the runway (Dsquared2 *Substitutes* 00:23-01:18). Another fashion brand utilizing this advertising tool of the star persona is the more commercial retail clothing company H&M. They have been launching highly anticipated and celebrated collaborations with high-end fashion designers for several years now and started releasing short fashion films for promoting their designer collections on television and online. For their designer collection of winter 2011 they produced a film starring multiple copies of a model that looks a lot like the real designer Donnatella Versace, who turns out to wield a higher power over the model by controlling her movement (Versace for H&M). A second film by H&M including the creator of the collection is *Fashion Shower* starring Anna Dello Russo who designed an accessory collection for the retailer in fall 2012. In this film that is structured like a music video the designer Anna Dello Russo is the only person appearing, which puts the emphasis even more emphasis on this one single star persona (Anna Dello Russo at H&M).

Almost all of these examples have two aspects in common. Firstly, the designer is always represented as some kind of authority and their status of expertise is emphasized in all these films which lets them and the actual designs appear even more sophisticated and desirable. Lanvin's Alber Elbaz has the better skills of dancing, Dan and Dean Caten teach the models how to walk, Anna Dello Russo calls herself the guardian of fashion and teaches ten lessons on fashion and Donnatella Versace has the power over the models by playing with them like puppets and

marionettes controlling their every move. Secondly, the presentation of the designer is artificially delayed in order to create suspense and even more underline their importance and individuality. Alber Elbaz only appears in the last few seconds of the film (Lanvin 00:51-00:55); the first shot including the Dsquared2 duo is of their feet (Dsquared2 *Substitutes* 00:23) and they are initially filmed from behind (ibid. 00:25); just like Donnatella Versace is shown from behind several times (Versace for H&M 00:01, 00:15, 00:17, 01:00) her face is hidden behind a light bulb (ibid. 00:21, 00:26, 00:36) or is left in shadow (ibid. 00:40) and she only turns around in a revolving chair revealing her face during the last few seconds (ibid. 01:04-01:06); and Anna Dello Russo's face is also hidden behind a gold record (Anna Dello Russo at H&M 00:04) and only her hand is presented (ibid. 00:08) before she is shown as a whole. The last two examples by H&M are clearly influenced by advertising a lot, also because these short films are part of commercial breaks on television, which leads to the next two related spheres that are being compared, namely advertising and film.

Figure 6: Fashion designer as star persona (Lanvin)

The majority of films are not produced for their own sake or for the sake of art, but with an economical agenda, which means that production and distribution are usually driven by achieving economical success (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 17, 206), for instance the short fashion films produced for the H&M designer collaborations that are primarily shown on television. In fact, one of the closest relationships between the two phenomenons of advertising and film is of course the filmic commercial produced for audiovisual media, since these seem to offer the best opportunities for introducing a product and conveying the added value, accompanying message and mood or

aura of the good (Bühler 67-68). This form, however, is not considered as a serious product of art and culture but is categorized as rather trivial and commercial (ibid. 10-11). Nevertheless, it is exactly this form that has infiltrated public as well as private everyday life and has established itself as an essential part of mass media culture (ibid. 59). The audiovisual advertisement has existed for a long time now, and the aim for maximum profit and the perfect advertising strategy has led to a number of different types. Bühler differentiates five different subcategories of the television commercial: Firstly, there is one type focusing on the object, where the product is presented in an isolated way by a commentator referring to the qualities from the off. Secondly, there is a more developed type where the product is presented in a more appealing way with a designed setting and background, reference to the advantages of the product, actors appear and take on roles in simple scenes. In a third type all the means of the audiovisual medium are employed such as animation techniques, cinematic and electronic tricks, music and sound are mixed in an elaborate way and interact with the images on the same level as in feature films. These ads consist of short stories and have a narrative structure with situations from everyday life. The fourth type is utilizing the latest motion picture technology as far as images and sounds are concerned. The levels do not interact analogously but have a strong sense of individuality and endow the short film with a special kind of flow. The content ranges from stories related to the actual product to imaginative conceptions of pictorial broadsheets not related to reality with loosely connected shots and focuses on lifestyle by conveying a specific atmosphere and quality of living. Usually the product is not demonstrated extensively and frequently appears towards the end since the technique of cutting images and enhancing them with music already points towards the elaborate world of the product. The last type Bühler differentiates is the highly developed form of advertising with complex strategies and intertextuality (83-88). For fashion and especially the fashion film, the last three types seem to be of interest, since the mere presentation of the product or actual commentary on the advantages, is never part of fashion films. As far as their structure is concerned they are more akin to actual films and employ all methods of the audiovisual medium, the newest technology also used in the cinematic sphere and complex strategies as well as intertextuality just as the last three types. After the fields of art and advertisement have been investigated individually as far as their connection to fashion and film are concerned, it is now time to move on to the relationship between those two, and attempt to clarify whether the new phenomenon of fashion film is more influenced by art or by advertising.

The genre of the fashion film is influenced by numerous other genres as already mentioned on several occasions. This exchange between different genres and areas of culture and media has led to an intertextual way of working in all types of audiovisual media in general resulting in new complex stylistic and aesthetic forms and messages (Bühler 339). What naturally ties in with this

development is the discussion of the relationship between art and advertising in the new audiovisual forms which tends to lead to opposing and contrary opinions and positions. What drives the biggest wedge between those two is the fact that advertising is naturally a part of the capitalistic, industrial and economic system whereas in art the true motivator is not of monetary nature but the focus is still on the essence and value of the piece of art for its own sake. Nevertheless, there has always been a close connection and exchange between these two systems, in terms of aesthetic aspects as well as regarding the actors, starting decades if not centuries ago when famous painters such as Manet or Toulouse-Lautrec also worked in advertising. More recently, there has been a rediscovered interest in combining elements of advertising and art as of the 1980s when art was being functionalized in order to load the images of advertisements with new meanings, by referring to artistic techniques of creation. This experimentations with structures originating in art has led to the invention of artistic and aesthetic innovations outside of art itself by means of new forms and media usually located in advertising. It shows that the boundaries are disappearing increasingly since both systems work with and produce similar means also emphasized by the fact that institutions such as museums or film festivals formerly featuring art exclusively are now also exhibiting such new forms without clear definitions and boundaries (ibid 62-65). As far as the fashion field is concerned two of these forms crossing boundaries between economical aspects of advertising and art are the fashion show and fashion photography, discussed above in section 2.1 and 2.2, which also represent the wider field of fashion which has always taken up an intermediary position between the two systems (Entwistle and Rocamora 739, Aspers 4). Additionally, also the field of film in general has experienced a mutual exchange with the fields of art and advertising.

This is manifest in the fact that some of the most influential filmmakers, for instance from Hollywood, with affinities to art have also turned to producing advertising and other hybrid forms (Bühler 76, 309). What is more, one of the most powerful influences, be it of artistic or economic nature, has always been the aesthetics of the audiovisual medium itself via the massive utilization of quotations and references. This relatedness can range from content, to structure, sound in terms of rhythm or melody, themes, concrete objects or mise-en-scène which are all elements of this tendency towards self thematization (ibid. 105-107). Professionals started alternating between different audiovisual media in order to experiment and exploit the freedom of rather new genres which led to the same groups of actors, such as directors or technical experts, working on different forms of media and in various genres (ibid 309-310). In the case of the fashion film this phenomenon of professionals producing in more than one field has already been addressed when discussing the fashion photographers who turn to filmmaking in section 2.2.2. The genre of fashion film actually offers a great intertextual form for experimentation between the spheres of advertising

and fine arts, photography or film art, since it is positioned in-between the task of generating attention and enhancing fashion designs with unique qualities. The outcome mostly consists of an effective assembly of promotional tools, commercial practices of staging, artistic codes, intentions and functions rendering a new form of a complete artwork in audiovisual media (Scorzin 2-5). The product to be advertised, meaning the actual fashion design, usually represents the starting point of the film which the whole story or atmosphere revolves around (Exner 1) including spectacular visualizations appropriate for these innovative contemporary forms distributed in a globalized media culture. Ultimately it can be stated that the form of distribution and the context the fashion film is based in always influences whether it represents an audiovisual campaign and an entertaining commercial or if it can be seen as a valuable contemporary media artwork and an expensive collectible item (Scorzin 2-5). For instance, Nick Knight's project SHOWstudio is different from more commercial approaches to the genre of fashion film such as David Lynch's *Lady Blue Shanghai* for Dior (Khan 236) and is not focusing on the commercial aspect but the artistic passion (Scorzin 1). This context and distribution of the fashion film lately happens through various websites and platforms on the internet, which will be the focus of the next section.

2.4 The internet and social media as a platform

One of the factors that led to the birth of fashion films and their distribution on the internet is globalization. Fashion was de-territorialized through the course of the century and fashion films can also be consumed all over the globe today, primarily due to the distribution of the internet. This also implicates that the barriers between those who have access to media and information and those who previously did not have access are now broken down which implicates the internationalization of media related fields such as publishing, advertising, marketing or audiovisual production (Mattelart, Delcourt and Mattelart 421-423). The connection between the world of fashion and the world of images in terms of globalization is a rather recent phenomenon (Devoucoux 281) starting in the late 20th century when the global market for visualized media expanded and gave rise to new technologies for the representation of images (Evans *Fashion Edge* 74). Today this platform for presenting and staging new images and strategies is the global network with its digital world of images full of technological innovations and developments that offer new dimensions for the representation of content of a creative industry like fashion. In this way, fashion and its artistic as well as creative practices infiltrate the digitalized and globalized terrain of the internet (Scorzin 2-5). For the designers and fashion houses this means that the staging of fashion shows for the elite is no longer enough and that the production of strong graphic images that represent their brand and vision is highly necessary as they are transmitted globally on these online platforms (Evans

42

Fashion Edge 74). This important focus on the fashion image as a form of representation would not have emerged without the phenomenon of digitalization.

The rise of the digitization of information such as the fashion images is in fact closely linked to the fast expansion of the internet, since every content that can be digitized can also be published online (During 137). Historically speaking, the digital format has been existing ever since the last decade of the 20th century and it not only extended the distribution of material but also enhanced the possibilities of film technique and processing, by expanding the capacity of apparatuses such as cameras and general data storage, less expensive circumstances for production, easier and more efficient handling, no development or laboratory work, allowing any number of desired copies and positively influencing the form and aesthetics of montage by making any arrangement of shots and elements possible in the testing phase (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 133-134, 150). In addition to these technical enhancements, there are also some possibilities regarding content, for example, the digitization of film offers completely new perspectives of time and space components with the help of aspects such as sound, music, voices, colors, contrasts, décor, costumes or movement. In other words, the possibilities of digital editing techniques for film can render a reshaped image and experience of the world. However, the digital image should not be overrated because the affinities to the traditional image and visuality in general still remains (Devoucoux 304-305). What ties in with digitization is the establishment of tools and platforms these new media and art forms are represented on, such as the internet, the iPad and various apps (Devoucoux 306, Scorzin 2) and coerce the creative industry, especially fashion brands, to extend their already existing websites and homepages with even more innovative technological forms (Scorzin 2). In fact, a number of websites now open with short animated images as well as whole fashion films or at least include those in other categories on their website. One example would be the homepage of the house of Chanel which currently opens with a short fashion film called *Chanel and the Diamond* featuring the story of how Gabrielle Chanel revolutionized the world jewelry in the 1930s when she designed and showcased a collection exclusively dedicated to the diamond (Chanel *Diamond*). Another website that opens in a similar way is the homepage of Louis Vuitton which features a number of different images on its front page that lead to different collections, such as a Lockit jewelry collection or the Mini bag, and each page of the collection also includes a short fashion film (Louis Vuitton *Lockit, Mini*). In this way, the fashion houses and brands can represent and promote their latest products and designs in the best possible ways, showing moving images with their fashion films that feature footage of the actual objects and show them in motion and extremely close to reality, which would otherwise not be possible with only featuring a static photograph or product image. The objects come to life immediately and as a result, the viewer can picture and imagine the products themselves straightaway, which possibly increases

their interest instantly.

Consequently, there is a current wave of transformation in work organization and production processes in the field of communication and media closely related to computers and the internet (Mattelart, Delcourt and Mattelart 423) and their rapid growth has contributed to the formation of new media forms (Nünning and Nünning 132) such as the fashion film. Just as television, which was an important outlet of fashion in the 1980s, constituted a serious competition for print media or radio, former media are now threatened by the presence of digitalized information and communication technologies of the world wide web, especially since today's communication primarily happens in mass media and above all in the audiovisual field. The internet has started to absorb and transform old types of media and added new communication technologies such as downloading, uploading or linking. In a way it renders old media unnecessary or invaluable by preserving them and altering their power by absorbing, hybridizing and mutating them (Bühler 9, Welters 276, During 137). As already briefly referred to above, there are two important innovative aspects of these new media forms, namely the what and how, meaning the presentation of the content and the technology provided by them and they both have an impact on the aesthetics, visual language and even filmic structures (Bühler 10) also on fashion films. Concerning the fashion world, the internet has indeed developed into the new main medium for any kind of fashion information and content (Craik 268) and throughout the last couple of years a number of websites as distribution and discussion platforms for fashion films in specific have developed, such as the previously referred to SHOWstudio by Nick Knight (Scorzin 1) which seems to be dominating in the sphere of fashion films or the website A Shaded View on Fashion Film launched by Diane Pernet which offers a broad view on the phenomenon by relating to the whole process involving aspects such as advertising, film art and many more (Exner 1).

What is more, the fashion image is no longer just a medium but a form with different relationships and increasing relevance itself that changed radically as new advanced and mobile image carriers such as the computer or the mobile phone developed (Devoucoux 302). The presence, mobility and availability of the image is ever growing and reached a peek like never before (Bühler 11, Wallis 164) through the emergence of the internet which also had a liberating effect on the field of fashion (Teunissen 9) and made the former elite coverage of information accessible to a larger circle of recipients (Nünning and Nünning 133, Scorzin 2). Still, the access is always limited to the mere image and does not relate directly to the actual object of fashion itself. However, this massive presence of the fashion image grants great familiarity to the broad public, if not even some kind of ownership through the power of the image (Evans *Emblems & Commodities* 97) as it now also turns into a commodity itself and constitutes a bundle of signs just as the real

fashion designs (Evans *Fashion Edge* 74). As already referred to in section 2.1.1 on the development of fashion shows, the ticket to enter the sphere of fashion now is quite immaterial and presents itself in the form of a link or fashion image posted online. This ticket can be the posting of runway pictures on websites such as style.com or nowfashion.com as well as the extensive reviews posted on online networks and magazines or the homage to a collection or designer by posting images of the respective designs on personal blogs on fashion, which had a radical effect on publishing on the internet anyway since all these options offer an easy and free alternative (During 141). The same is true for the moving image of the fashion film posted on websites online, which offers an even more dynamic entrance into the world of a fashion brand, and today there has emerged a race of who and where the image or film is posted first after it has been released, which can be seen as an analogy to the real object and being the first to purchase and wear a highly coveted fashion trend or garment. This way, platforms and networks aim to establish themselves as the new authorities and the internet as one of the fastest means in the media landscape today offers the appropriate channel for this ambitions. After discussing the field of digitalization and related new media such as the internet it is now time to look closer into the specific medium of film or video on the world wide web, and the specific genre of the fashion film.

In general it can be stated that the medium of film or video, in the form of video on demand, has found its perfect distribution channel with the internet. A number of brands have set their ultimate goal on the option of video on demand in order to increase their availability and capacity with the help of the internet's possibilities. YouTube can be considered as one of the most important platforms for the distribution of the innovative works (Bordwell and Thompson 15, 38) within this new genre of fashion film since virtually every fashion brand can publish content via this channel in an easy as well as inexpensive way and hence it has been growing exponentially ever since 2006 (Phelan 1). As previously mentioned, the medium of the film for fashion in motion is nothing new and developed rather unnoticed throughout the last century, due to the interest of fashion designers and image makers of fashion in the developing technologies of the moving image. Just as the pioneers of film, for fashion film Paul Poiret for instance, the experts in representing the fashion image seek to exploit the full potential of the new system of the internet and its technological possibilities which offer a transition from the still to the moving image (O'Neill 274). Especially during the last decade the internet has become the fundamental space for representing fashion in the form of the fashion film and in practice almost all of these are only available online such as David Lynch's *Lady Blue Shanghai* for Dior (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*). The fashion film differs from the ordinary cinematic film and fashion represented in it in the way that framing, time, narrative flow and structure is less controlled in fashion films which presents fashion in a new light (Khan 236-237). The much referred to precursor of this extended freedom in

production is Nick Knight with his website SHOWstudio, whose manner of working with his team on the fashion film is highly experimental and informed by the advances if digital technology and media aiming to alter the perception of the fashion image by utilizing collaborative projects and interactive technologies (Khan 236). As a result the fashion filmmakers in general recently produce highly astonishing convergences between different media and artistic influences, as designers decline to exclusively count on their spectacular fashion shows and begin exploiting the performative and dynamic possibilities of the film form and digital media, all distributed on the internet for free (Scorzin 1). After the influences of former established forms of representation and promotion of fashion, also outside the audiovisual medium, have been discussed extensively it is now time to move on to the medium of film itself.

3 A new genre is born within the field of fashion – towards a definition

With the establishment of the fashion film a new genre within the field of representation and promotion of fashion was born. Therefore, it is now crucial to elaborate on the notion of genres in general first, before moving on to the specific filmic genre of fashion films. The term genre originates from the French language and usually stands for type or kind (Bordwell and Thompson 318). The term genre in the sense that we understand it today and the way it is used here is a kind of text in the mass-mediated world, for instance there is the medium of television transmitting different genres such as commercials, news shows or soap operas. In the same manner also films can be differentiated into a number of genres and subgenres. Within this genres certain formulas or patterns occur which refer to the specific conventions found in the respective genre (Berger 17-18) and these can relate to action, temporal or spatial situation, figurative and graphical motives, visual-aesthetic style, iconography, narrative pattern or text perspective (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 65-68). Some of the crucial questions in combination with genres concern the relationship between the whole genre and an individual work, the reason for new genres emerging and the specific patterns and conventions used (Nünning and Nünning 319). With this range of important aspects and questions for analysis as well as the fact that new genres are established constantly it appears logic that it is getting more difficult to specifically define genres in a fixed way, also due to cases falling out of alignment and ambiguous instances (Bordwell and Thompson 319) as well as the fact that there is a growing number of differentiated and specialized cultures with their own values and practices of giving meaning (Bühler 61). This also holds true for genres of film which are in many cases also difficult to define and classify. As Bordwell and Thompson put it, many film genres lack a precise scientific definition and most terms for different types develop rather informally (Bordwell

and Thompson 318). Additionally, the issue is complicated by the fact that genres can be extremely specific on the one hand and far-reaching on the other hand, which also leads to defining subgenres, the classification between two genres or general difficulty of identifying a genre affiliation at all (Bordwell and Thompson 319). Consequently, the best way is not to apply genres too strictly but rather to see them as structural reference points (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 67).

Usually a genre analysis starts with considering motives, such as recurring elements or figurations of time and space, and observing iconographic features and continues with a closer look at specific mise-en-scene (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 65-68, 75). The iconography characteristics generally include recurring symbolic images that carry certain meaning, objects and settings. Genre conventions can also include specific plot elements or even distinctive film techniques (Bordwell and Thompson 320). Ultimately it can be stated that genre conventions can be considered as a valuable starting point for analysis, whether examining a genre's history, its cultural functions or its representation of social aspects (Bordwell and Thompson 328), but it is always essential to keep in mind that statements remain limited since genres never reach an ultimate definition and since they are subject to change. As we have seen, genre definitions always remain unstable and are never fixed or ultimate due to their vulnerability to change (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 66). Filmmakers are prone to play with genre conventions constantly which means that their form never remains unchanged for a long period of time (Bordwell and Thompson 321). The moment a new genre is born there appear to be no fixed rules of how it will develop and some critics claim that the first examples of a genre can be considered the most pure ones. This modification of genres often involves the interchange of conventions between different genres and emerging genres often borrow already existing characteristics of other types (Bordwell and Thompson 321) by appealing to specific images or themes of related genres (Vernallis 80). It has shown that there are endless ways of combining various genres, however, despite these limitless possibilities of interchange there are still distinctions made (Bordwell and Thompson 325-326), for example for the genre of the fashion film discussed here.

Just as it is the case with fashion films, most filmic genres and subgenres come into being when a specific film is highly successful and is widely imitated as a consequence. After a certain number of films that appear akin to one another, they are being compared (Bordwell and Thompson 321). As mentioned above an emergent genre is usually open to develop in many different directions and this is exactly the case for the genre of fashion film which is developing rapidly due to the access to the same technical means among all actors in the field of fashion (Exner 2). As far as the genre conventions of this specific case are concerned, it can be stated that fashion films can include all the elements listed above. For instance, they make use of classical

narratives by telling short amusing stories on the one hand, while other films lack any kind of story or plot by simply presenting the beautiful designs and models (ibid. 2) in symbolical atmospheric spaces like theaters or staged rooms that allow a perfect presentation of the clothing shoes or accessories in a dynamic flowing way. Others at least include some kind of sub-narrative or performative structure via presenting the plot in a dominant non-verbal way. Concerning the iconographic conventions the images of fashion films very often convey added values such as a specific sense of lifestyle, a special atmosphere or mood with symbolic meaning besides the actual fashion designs and the flawless models by using scenic performances and focusing on optical visual presentations (Scorzin 2). With regard to the genre alteration and the interchange with other filmic genres, it can be argued that the fashion film is in fact influenced by several genres such as the classical add, comedies, drama, thriller (Exner 2), the fashion show or fashion photography as already discussed. These other genres and filmic genres and influences in general will be elaborated on in the next section.

3.1   The medium of film for fashion

The medium of film in general came into being during the 19th century, when photography was invented in the 1820s which made the production of film possible in the first place, since it provided the most inexpensive and efficient way of generating thousands of images which are necessary for a lengthy display such as film. The first versions of film were of extremely reduced nature, usually comprised of a single long-distance shot, but the medium of film started utilizing more sophisticated and interesting techniques and content in order to remain in focus and presence due to its immediate success (Bordwell and Thompson 441-443) and the fact that film technology, production and distribution soon developed into commercial and economic companies (Corrigan 18). As far as the general processes in the film industry are concerned three typical phases can be distinguished: production, distribution and exhibition (Bordwell and Thompson 14-15).

According to Bordwell and Thompson the production phase can be distinguished again into four stages: scriptwriting and funding, preparation for filming, shooting and assembly. Firstly, the ideas are developed and a screenplay is written while financial support is garnered in the scriptwriting and funding phase. The main actors on this level are the producer who is responsible for financial and organizational aspects and of course the screenwriter. Secondly the physical production is planed by hiring graphic artists and designers to create a storyboard, which is a series of sketches of shots in each scene including notes on costume, lighting and camera work. On a third stage the actual shooting takes place where the images and sounds are created with help of special units such as the photography unit headed by the cinematographer or director of

photographer and the sound unit with the production recordist as its leader, both of which consult with the director on how the scenes are produced in detail. The fourth and last stage naturally consists of the combination of the filmed footage into a final form which involves cutting images and sound, inserting special effects, music and dialogues or adding titles. Interestingly, the whole idea behind a film is subject to possible alterations in each of these levels of production, also due to the high amount of specialized tasks and particular jobs in all these stages as well as the numerous experts involved who all have their own influence on the film on the whole (14-17). In addition to that, the film industry is also exposed to technological changes which also influence the final productions (Corrigan 18) and besides, there are social contexts and institutions which are just as important as the technology concerning its impact on films (Bordwell and Thompson 15). After all these stages and processes the final outcome, the film, has a specific form and style, a composition, which will now be looked at in general.

One of the close relatives of film already referred to above in section 2.2 on fashion photography is the painting in all its forms, which has always been a major source of inspiration for film production due to its medial expressiveness and in many cases the content of a film can be traced back to a famous painting or a whole genre (Devoucoux 46). In addition to painting, films can involve all other kinds and disciplines of art such as literature, pictorial or plastic arts, music, dance, theater and even architecture (Corrigan 17) since the medium of film provides such a complex form that is capable of presenting all other kinds of art and adapting specific forms. Throughout the course of the development of the medium of film it has also become possible to refer to another previous film or the medium of film in general in a self-reflexive way. Here a film explicitly refers to filmic construction and incorporates allusions to aspects of the medium itself which very often occurs in artistic, experimental or abstract films that will be discussed later (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 89, 94). Consequently a film always conveys some sort of dialogue by referring to other films and other arts (Devoucoux 305). In this respect, the film can be considered as a sophisticated and complex invention within the field of visual arts. As the first medium ever it contains a variety of aspects such as sound, visual constituents, movement, frame, content, dialogues, portrayals, personalities, structure, color, text, cut, rhythm (Martin and Wilkes, Devoucoux 18). However, the medium of film offers more than just a collection of all these categories and elements and in fact achieves to almost render all of them invisible in how the aspects vanish into one continuous structure and flow (Devoucoux 18). In other words, a film is not just an arbitrary arrangement of elements but has a structure, style and form like any other piece of art before and a film normally conveys an overall system and relationships between the single aspects (Bordwell and Thompson 55). Therefore, a film is not just about one element but rather puts this subject, such as a character, an object or a story on the whole, in relation to other aspects

49

and creates specific meanings by creating key moments, patterns and images by means of the constantly moving image of film (Corrigan 20-21). Concrete objects are turned into signs and the relationship between different elements can possibly compose expressive images and therefore give particular meanings to objects (Mitry 92). This can happen in both, fictional and non-fictional texts; however, the classification is not always obvious and some films may belong to both categories (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 62). In connection with the fashion film, both genres are relevant since a great number of them portray fictional content and stories whereas others present non-fictional material. This non-fictional footage very often occurs in the form of documentaries, showing real conditions and actual everyday happenings as the main content in an attempt to conserve genuine moments (ibid. 41-42). One instance of this form within the realm of fashion film is the habit of filming at actual fashion shows and producing short films of the collected footage as already referred to above in section 2.2 on the fashion show and one example would be the Burberry show also mentioned before (Burberry *Full Show*). These short films usually provided on the websites or other media platforms of a fashion house on the internet can not be classified as a pure form of documentary but also include certain effects of contrast, graphic patterns, rhythms of movement and even dramatization sometimes (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 47). The composition and style of a film is always related to and influenced by the decisions of actors within the production of film.

As a matter of fact, the form and style of a certain film is frequently influenced by the preferences and manners of the respective filmmaker. Many directors shape the form of a film by their stylistic and formal choices concerning motives, codes, symbolism (Scorzin 2), technological features, cultural and economical elements and these aspects very often shape the development of certain genres and filmic movements (Bordwell and Thompson 440-441). Moreover, many filmic authors work for more than one genre in the audiovisual field (Nünning and Nünning 144) and just as the fashion photographers often move from the still to the dynamic image of film, filmmakers also cross boundaries within the medium of film and work for different genres. This has also led to a number of fashion films produced and directed by a number of renowned authors famous in other areas of film, such as a few prestigious film directors like Roman Polanski for Prada's short film *A Therapy* (Prada *Therapy*), David Lynch for Dior's *Lady Blue Shanghai* (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*), *Un Rendez Vous* for Dior Homme by Guy Ritchie (Dior *Rendez Vous*) or for instance well-known music video directors like Spike Jonze who produced *Mourir Auprès de Toi* for Olympia Le Tan (Olympia Le Tan). Hence, also established actors within the medium of film in general do have an affect on the specific genre of fashion film. The fact that these short fashion films produced by renowned filmmakers all follow a more or less clear narrative structure already points towards another important element to be considered in the light of fashion films, namely narrative structure.

50

Actually, the feature of narrative structure is also highly relevant for the object at hand here, namely the fashion film. The novelty introduced by the medium of film was the manner of telling stories by means of moving images which did not exist before the invention of the audiovisual medium of film (Mitry 7). In relation to film the term narrative refers to a series of events in a cause and effect relationship that occurs in time and space (Bordwell and Thompson 75) and is not restricted by any type or length of film, but rather refers to modeling the world in general and has an entertaining function frequently (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 51).

Even though the narrative form has been the dominating choice ever since the beginning of the 20th century in the film industry (Bordwell and Thompson 444), there is another way of organizing the content of a film. Besides the conventional form of narrative presenting a story, there is the second non-narrative type which is more descriptive and once again there is the possibility of combining these two types (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 51). The case of the non-narrative film is frequently based on places, atmospheres, moods, suspense or imagination rather than on action and the content is conveyed in an ambivalent way far from conventional dramaturgical structures. Furthermore, the lack of a story is often replaced by special effects and the meaning is implied by places, mood or characters (Devoucoux 300). The genre of fashion film features both types, the narrative and the non-narrative. One prime example of the narrative fashion film would be David Lynch's Lady Blue Shanghai for Dior (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*) which is based on a narrative structure. The female protagonist, Marion Cotillard, is alarmed by the mysterious presence of a blue handbag in her hotel room, through which she then discovers her past. The use of narrative in a fashion film is very often of Hollywood-like nature and commonly implies the shift of the viewer as a consumer to the viewer as a spectator. However, the non-narrative type is as prominent as well, if not utilized to a greater extent on the whole, since the extent of narration is generally less controlled in fashion films . In contrast to the narrative fashion films, the non-narrative examples very often allude to a series of images containing movement or stillness and take the image itself to a whole new level by means of innovative structures of production. One representative of this category is Nick Knight, whose films predominantly consist of a flow of images offering a continuous presence of movement within the frame emphasized by juxtaposing still images and by techniques of speeding up and slowing down which often leads to the loss of a fixed spatial structure (Khan 236-238, 244). The approach to fashion film adopted by actors such as Knight already points towards film productions less influenced by traditional film and their conventional methods and structures but more abstract, independent and experimental examples.

Whereas the conventional film productions involves hundreds of people with specialized skills and tasks, a smaller production usually requires less experts where often only a dozen of people or less take on several roles and perform various tasks. As small as the production teams might seem the number of such productions is quite high (Bordwell and Thompson 15). These independent or experimental projects are usually positioned outside the industrial and commercial production context of film and involve some kind of artistic aspiration (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 64). In addition, the rise of the digital format enhanced their presence in an uncomplicated and inexpensive way but an obstacle might be that in almost any case the budget is much smaller than for high-end or commercial productions, however, one advantage is that the filmmakers have a more wide ranging control over these small-scale productions, but an advantage is that they do not control the whole planning and shooting phase as accurately as in feature film productions (Bordwell and Thompson 27-29) which is also the case for fashion films which are less controlled in general (Khan 236-237). The alternative film movements already began in the silent era of film in France, with opposites such as abstract films or filmmakers focusing on Dadaism. These developments did not remain French exclusively and started to form an increasing international avant-garde opposition to commercial productions. Two of these avant-garde movements are firstly, impressionism which is a broad avant-garde style in the film industry in general, headed by big French companies. Impressionist filmmakers sought after the realization of film as a pure form itself and rejected younger projects with numerous affinities to poetry, painting, music, theater or literature by focusing on a pure aesthetic of emotions and opting for an intimate psychologically dominated narrative. They achieved this depth of the human mind by incorporating flashbacks, dreams, fantasies and images of mental states by cinematic means of superimpositions as traces of thoughts and feelings, subjective camera work, irises, masks or specific rhythmic editing with accelerating speed and shorter shots building a climax often mirroring the pace of a character's experiences. Secondly, another opposition is surrealism which was previously based outside the film industry and now relates to surrealist movements of other arts. While the impressionist did work with the commercial industry as well, the surrealists had to rely on patronage and even their productions where only shown to a much smaller audience, normally at artists' gatherings. Their movement was much more radical and was directly related to surrealist painting or literature, featuring hidden currents of the unconscious, bizarre and evocative imagery, ecstasy, untamed sexual desires, violence as well as other disturbing effects, surrealist mise-en-scene and a non-narrative structure. The extreme forms of impressionism and surrealism in film came to an end around the 1930s but a number of established techniques such as psychological narratives, subjective camera work or the common manners of editing survived. What groups all of these independent, experimental or abstract productions together in a way is their distinguishing form and style from conventional and mainstream film. They often explore the nature and possibilities of

film itself and include a variety of abstract forms (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 64). Despite their uncommon form and content, the more experimental films have also entered public spheres and the genre of fashion film underlined by the fact that they now are parts of film festivals.

Commonly, film festivals or competitions are crucial events in the film industry which contribute extensively to the evaluation of films and help to launch a certain production with its target audience and generate public attention in general. Besides, the actual events as such function as excellent ground for the exchange and communication between experts and representatives of the film industry, journalists, economic actors as well as the viewers (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 86). Similar to the fashion show within the field of fashion, experts and important actors of the industry meet at these big rituals where they represent themselves (Devoucoux 292). There exists a certain number of big renowned film festivals that are on the public radar, however, throughout the course of the last few decades a number of more specialized and differentiated small independent festivals focusing on different innovative genres, techniques, content or methods of production have established themselves (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 86-87). For the topic discussed here the emergence of these specialized events is essential, and in fact, and film festivals have started to explore the tension between fashion and film (O'Neill 271) and the relationship between fashion and film is being celebrated more than ever today with festivals such as the Biennale in Venice, which was even dedicated to the topic of fashion in 1998 where several designers presented their own screenings and many other institutions such as museums, concert halls or whole other cities were involved (Devoucoux 269). As for the inclusion of museums it appears interesting that fashion has been displayed at exhibitions for a long time now, however, the curating and archiving of fashion in museums is often considered as the graveyard of clothing. As a result the film has offered an appropriate alternative for keeping fashion alive and animate as well as displaying designs on the moving body. Nevertheless it might be claimed that the obvious successor of the museum as a graveyard might be the film archive (O'Neill 274) but the digital fashion film of today usually published on the internet has the opportunity of infinite presence on the world wide web. With the emergence of the fashion film the establishment of the first specialized international fashion film festivals and awards goes hand in hand and these events have developed into important platforms for discussion, criticism and artistic competition with a wide range of media coverage (Scorzin 1). Almost every big city has initiated their own fashion film festival, such as the Fashion in Film Festival of London launched by the Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in 2005, the New York Fashion Film Festival launched in 2011 or the Festival A Shaded View On Fashion Film based in Paris and founded by Diane Pernet in 2008 with the corresponding platform already referred to above. All these festivals aim to explore the relationship between fashion and film in general and investigate the importance of the ever growing

genre of fashion film for the industry of fashion on the whole. As a result, it is now interesting to outline the relation and first contacts between fashion and film in general.

The first contacts between the two spheres of film and fashion happened towards the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century (Devoucoux 263) with the invention of film and ever since then there has been a complex and close relationship between the moving image and fashion. A similar transgressive connection between the image and fashion already existed before (Breward 131) when the visual medium of photography with its static image for fashion was celebrated. The emergence of the moving dynamic image offered yet an even more progressive set of possibilities for the representation of fashion and the link between the filmic image and fashion became almost symbiotic (Craik 252). One question that always remained which is also of great importance in connection with the genre of fashion film is whether fashion influences film or if film has more impact on fashion (Devoucoux 263). In reality both ways of exchange are possible, on the one hand there is a variety of films that had a major impact on fashion such as *Gone with the Wind*, *Rebel Without a Cause* or *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Craik 252). By contrast the influence also works vice versa illustrated by the fact that famous fashion designers have worked for film productions as of 1910 when Paul Poiret was one of the first designers to work with French film productions and went on to work for Hollywood films such as *The Enemy of Women* in 1923. This phenomenon of designers working for film continued until more recent times, for instance, when names like Versace, Gaultier or Armani contributed to film productions to a great extent in the 1980s. Still today the high-end fashion houses are closely linked to the film industry and are present at big film events such as the Oscars for example, where representation happens outside on the red carpet as well as inside on the screen showing that the immediate interaction of the two fields led to a natural and self-evident relationship today (Devoucoux 263-270). The question that arises next concerns the nature and form of these exchanges as well as the general similarities or even differences between fashion and film.

Fashion and film have always been parallel spheres observing and resembling each other and exchanging ideas. Both of them are a separate medium of expression but in some way they influence one another and exchange ideas and signs (Molho). They share principles such as symmetry but more importantly also asymmetry with elements such as divergence, difference, speciality, sensation, scandal, provocation, craziness, furore, fascination as well as strange and bizarre things in order to attract attention (Devoucoux 143). This also ties in with the fact that they both aim to seduce, strive for innovation and that they are inconstant fields. The exchange between them is very much governed by commercial aspects since they are both major industries (Razzini) but with their joined power they also have an impact on contemporary popular culture,

especially visual culture, in which emotions and atmosphere is triggered by objects and fashion in films (Martin and Wilkes). This is emphasized by another visual medium, namely images and photographs, which demonstrate the intimate relationship between fashion and film ever since, with pictures of actors in the latest fashions which shows the visual and pictorial dependence or symbiosis of fashion and film (Engelmeier 7-8).

They also refer to each other in ways of borrowing established conventions, for instance, fashion borrows visual aspects from film and shares social effects with it while film shares the aesthetic practices with fashion (Breward 132) and offers even more possibilities for fashion. In fact, there is no other medium that reflects its time and reproduces reality more than film and as far as fashion is concerned this is evident in the way that specific fashion styles, cuts, shapes or ideas of elegance and taste for luxury and extravagance in general were introduced by the medium of film. In addition, film also uses fashion to entertain or surprise (Razzini) and to spread images all around the world (Razzini, Molho). At the early stages of film production, companies such as Pathé or Gaumont immediately realized these advantages of a symbiosis of fashion and film and created short clips of fashion shows to be presented in the newsreels as of 1911 (Razzini) in order to attract more attention and especially appeal to a female audience. These fashion shorts also incorporated the latest technologies of film for color or atmospheric musical accompaniment and picturesque settings and famous models of the time (Breward 132). It shows that the filmic forms on television such as newsreel back then or commercial advertising and music videos now can be seen as a means of setting trends and spreading current fashions, brands or specific products (Craik 254, Bühler 11). In turn, the fashion world quickly realized that film is a promising medium of communication and an innovative means for representation (Razzini) with a broad impact and public appeal. Furthermore, without the medium of film the effect of fashion was lower (Engelmeier 7) and on screen the communication and appeal of the fashion design for shaping characters and suggesting social context was more powerful than in the real world (Breward 131). Just as the early exchanges between fashion and film also the more recent phenomenon of the fashion film includes these similarities. The next section goes on to explore these affinities and similarities stemming from other forms and genres of the filmic medium.

3.2   Film forms influencing the phenomenon of fashion film

After looking at a few examples of fashion films it becomes clear that one of the closest related film genres is the music video. The two filmic forms share a number of aspects such as content, structure, average length, authors and film techniques amongst other things. Consequently it appears logic to look at various conventional elements of the music video since it constitutes a film

form that has been part of popular culture for a longer period of time than the emerging fashion film. Therefore, one would imagine that the music video has been object of analysis to a far greater extent, however, the latest output has shown that there is still no unique methodological approach or ultimate definition of different types (Keazor 13). The reason for this lack of clear outlines or characterization might be the fact that music video is a hybrid genre, just as the fashion film, which is situated somewhere between fields such as music, film, television studies, cultural studies, communication studies, philosophy, theater or dance (Vernallis pix). Besides, the genre has been defined by experimental manners in terms of cinematic form or visual language from the very beginning (Bühler 11). Nevertheless, it is certain that the genre of the music video is of course part of the field of film, television or video clip underlined by the obvious references and connections, for instance concerning authorship or formal aspects (ibid. 18). Moreover, it is also clear that the music video is indeed a distinct genre that marks itself off from other genres within the sphere of audiovisual media in the way that the content is organized, how the themes are explored or how time is dealt with (Vernallis px). Consequently, the formal and functional aspects of the music videos will now be outlined in order to relate them to the phenomenon of the fashion film with its similar aspects.

By now it has become obvious, that there is no typical music video or clear and fixed definition for this genre, since it is full of various types with different tendencies and structures such as the more commercial one or the artistic and sophisticated type (Bühler 158). For an audiovisual medium it is always important to analyze the individual levels of image, music or text as a whole structure since they usually interact in complex ways (Keazor 15-17). This combination of different elements in music videos is not of hierarchical nature, but can rather be seen as an interaction where the various parts of the structure are intertwined to represent (ibid. 97). Each part can present a different flow and alter the relation to another element and even when they appear to be synchronized some aspects always recede while others move to the foreground which emphasizes their ambiguous form even more (Vernallis 7, 14). The complex forms and diversity of types also stems from the various artistic fields that have an affect on the genre, which leads to all kinds of music videos with some of them having a more artistic appeal, others referring more to advertising and some aspiring high aesthetic form or even combining all of these tendencies in one example. This radical pluralism of structure and form often brings about contradiction but in most cases this combination of single contradictory elements successfully results in whole complex unities (Bühler 160). This lack of a clear definition and fixed established types as well as the different forms, like artistic or commercial, also holds true for the genre of the fashion film which illustrates the relatedness between music videos and fashion films appropriately. Now that it has become clear that the elements of these genre do interact and influence each other in creating meaning and form

it is of interest to explore the nature and possible characteristics of these single aspects.

The form of the music video is generic and specific and it manages to convey the imaginary and the real at the same time. On the one hand, a number of videos is characterized by the general genre conventions but on the other hand, they frequently cross the boundaries of their genre (Vernallis 94) by referring to other fields. What characterizes them the most is their representation of concepts such as pipe dreams and juvenile dreams but also anxiety dreams and nightmares, violence, sex and horror and their reference to the desired or feared. In reality almost every link is possible in music videos and they often incorporate these in colorful, whimsical, abrupt or turbulent ways with a strong focus on the visual side (Bühler 161). To emphasize the visual aspects music videos extensively work with units like figure, shape, color, setting or theme and vary the color, light, size, speed, height or depth of situations and shots in order to achieve visual rhymes or graphic matches (Vernallis 43). One concept just mentioned finds its way into music videos quite frequently and has affinities with the visuals of this genre in general, namely dream. There are indeed several analogies and similarities between these two fields, first and foremost, the domination of the visual with spatial and temporal discontinuity. In both forms the viewer takes on both, the role of the passive spectator and the active participant and there is a shift between physical and psychical situation at frequent intervals. It appears that in a dream as in a music video the images are arranged randomly which entails fragmented sequences, arbitrary images mounted together and conveys no logic or rational pattern but a rather surreal atmosphere (Bühler 213-214). The notion of the dream also found its way into quite a number of fashion films and therefore plays a crucial role in this new genre. One example would be the fashion film Dancer in a Daydream for Christian Louboutin, here the title already suggests the importance of the concept of the dream. In this film the main character, which is indeed Christian Louboutin the designer himself, sits in his atelier and works on new shoe designs. Between drawing the sketches he pauses and stares into the distance (Louboutin 00:43-00:55) and ultimately falls into some kind of daydream in which he is a stage dancer wearing outstanding shoes (ibid. 01:03-01:42) that inspire him to create similar shoes in reality. The dream sections are clearly marked off in the film in the way that color and lighting is used. While in his atelier the atmosphere is rather bright and colorful (ibid. 00:20-00:48), the dreams appear in black and white and convey a rather dark atmosphere, only putting emphasis on the iconic red soles (ibid. 01:55-03:46) which clearly separates the reality from the dream in a visual way. The usage of the notion of the dream in this fashion film is used to allude to the actual designing process behind a piece of clothing, or in this case the shoes. In this way, the iconic Louboutin shoes are endowed with a clear story behind them which loads them with even more symbolic meaning and arouses the interest of the viewer even more. In other words, what differentiates the exclusive shoe designs of Christian Louboutin from every other conventional

shoe is the fact that they are designed with a clear vision behind them. Another fashion film example that includes a dream is the film for Matthew Williamson's 15th anniversary. Here the designer himself also appears at the beginning sitting in a large room of a beautiful building (Matthew Williamson 00:18) watching women in beautiful dresses dancing through the whole building (ibid. 00:33-00:37, 01:17-01:39). Throughout the whole film there is a voice calling his name here and there (ibid 00:18, 00:31, 01:58, 02:14) until there is the voice of his mother shouting his name (ibid 02:18) and he wakes up in his bed realizing that all the women dancing in those beautiful dresses were only a dream (ibid 02:19-02:23) and has his mother tell him he is going to be late for school if he does not get up. In this film the notion of the dream is used in two ways. Firstly, to point to the fact that the dream of a schoolboy to become a designer one day can actually become true, also since the film was produced for his fifteen year anniversary; and secondly, again to underline the designing process behind the Matthew Williamson dresses and the fact that the designer possibly comes up with his ideas while dreaming and has clear visions and stories behind his designs which should give the viewer or customer the impression that the dresses are actually something very precious and unique, almost dreamlike. A quite different example that also makes use of the concept of the dream but in a rather different way is the fashion film *Such Flare* for Dolce and Gabbana. This fashion film does not utilize an actual person falling asleep and having a dream or waking up from a dream, but rather uses the imagery of dreams such as fragmented sequences or arbitrary images put together. The film starts off with footage of a dark wood in front of a sunset (Dolce & Gabbana *Such Flare* 00:01-00:19*),* then green flickering light or spots appear on this footage of the woods (ibid. 00:20-00:59) before the image of a male model also appear on top of those two layers (ibid. 01:00). It shows, that in this fashion film the images seem to be arranged just as randomly and fragmented as they appear in actual dreams.

Figure 7: Fragmented arbitrary images like in a dream (Dolce & Gabbana *Such Flare*)

Another important aspect of music videos relating to fashion films is the music and sound level. In music videos the music with its inherent rhythm, mood, tempo or lyrics is often superior to the images, and although most other audiovisual media focus on the visual components, the dominating aspect of sound has found its way into other filmic genres (Bühler 198, Vernallis 46-49). The fashion film, for example, lacks dialogue very often and only features music on the sound level and very often the images are even guided by the music as is the case with the short film *Such Flare* by filmmaker and photographer Pierre Debusschere for Dolce & Gabbana Men Spring 2010 (Dolce & Gabbana *Such Flare*), the Lanvin Fall Winter 2011 fashion film (Lanvin) or the video *Fashion Shower* created for Anna Dello Russo's collaboration with H&M (Anna Dello Russo at H&M). The latter two example, appear to have a special affinity to this feature of the superiority of music, and in fact, they would go through as actual music videos themselves. In Lanvin's video the models attempt to dance like real singers or dancer would do to their songs and in the second case, a real song was produced and Anna Dello Russo performs to it in this fashion film, which underlines the importance of the music. Like in music videos the image in these fashion films seems to follow the music rather than another aspect, and the models appear more like dancing and singing automatons than animate figures who follow their intent or consciousness (Vernallis 16). However, for the fashion film it is important to register, that even though the music appears to be the leading aspect it is not the first medium produced, which is of course the clothing and designs that frequently appear even more superior, which will be discussed in greater detail in section 4. In addition, the music does not only influence the characters and content of the music

59

video but also the way that images are put together which is also subject to the rhythm, timbre and melody of the music and the way the camera moves over the figures and bodies which captures the rhythm emanating from them (ibid. 44-45). The manner of creating and structuring a short film according to the principle of connecting image and sound in a rhythmic way just described above has become known as clip aesthetics (Bühler 11). The term is associated with strong visual elements and constant shifting content in order to attract and maintain attention by means of a high level of movement which is achieved in different ways. Firstly, there is the movement and action in front of the camera: the actors and models, lights, dancers, moving objects or special effects. Secondly, there is the movement of the camera which concerns the change of perspective or the distance to the objects and thirdly, there is the post production which also yields movement in the form of the cut (ibid. 208-209).

Researchers specializing in music video analysis have of course attempted to establish a typology in order to categorize them into different classes. In the 1980s scholars started trying to establish criteria for categorizing music videos focusing on narrative structure and performance patterns (Keazor 68-69). One of those who successfully differentiated types according to structure, aesthetic form and degree was Bühler who established a systematization of 5 types, but immediately remarked that most realistic examples mix different types, except for the purely narrative type which would be disturbed by inappropriate visual insertions. The first type is the so called performance clip which consists of the performance of a band or an artist with visual effects added during postproduction. The second type is the flood of images clip which is related to the first type in which the artist performs in a playback version often enhanced by special effects, digital multi-layering, various shot types and fast cuts. This type lacks a clear theme and instead includes strong visual images and unconnected shots with a high impressionistic affect, often arranged like a kaleidoscope. The third type is the pseudo narrative clip with a high frequency of cuts and musical performance in some parts built of single shots with a single message as well as whole sequences with feature film character and narrative connections extending over several shots. The footage commonly enhances and underlines the given mood and atmosphere of the music and the visual still dominates over narrative content here since not all shots are connected. In contrast to this, yet another type is the narrative one which feature a sophisticated narrative with a clear beginning, setting, development, result and ending. This type comes close to the epic structure of feature films but requires faster and more direct ways of narration due to its shortness. The fifth and last type is the art clip which celebrates visual realization of imagery and borrows from visual arts and film art like underground, avant-garde or experimental film. Moreover, it may also incorporate sequences resembling animated film, computer graphics as well as other innovative film techniques. This last type also relates to the image flood clip due to their mutual

60

method of fast cutting (Bühler 198-207). The examples of the fashion film that feature recordings of fashion shows or simulated situations and elements referring to fashion shows established in section 2.1 (Dsquared2 *Substitutes,* Louis Vuitton *Stephen Sprouse,* Burberry *Full Show)* as well as the fashion films that consist of footage shot at the photo shoot for a campaign referred to in section 2.2.2.2 (Dolce & Gabbana *Bella Estate,* Prada *Spring Summer 2012,* Prada *Fall Winter 2012*, Lanvin *Fall Winter 2011*) can be related to the first and the second type of the music video since the performance elements taken from the field of fashion the fashion shows and the photo shoots featured in these fashion films can be seen as an equivalent to the performance in the field of music. Besides, one of the functions and advantages of the music videos is its availability independent of the actual performance and they offer the opportunity of viewing content at any given time (Keazor 56) which also relates the performance type to the fashion film since it offers the viewing of the fashion designs without an actual fashion show. For the genre of the fashion film there are also clearly some examples of the narrative type relating to the third and fourth type Bühler distinguished for music videos, for instance the animation film *Mourir Auprès De Toi* by Spike Jonze for designer Olympia Le Tan (Olympia Le Tan) which features an amusing little story where two skeletons fall in love (Exner 2) or the films *Remember Now* and *The Tale of a Fairy* by Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel (Chanel *Remember Now, Tale of a Fairy*) and the short film *Lady Blue Shanghai* by David Lynch for Dior (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*).

On the other side there is also the non-narrative type of the fashion film, comparable to the flood of images music video or the art clip, and there are a few reasons for the high percentage of this type. Firstly, fashion films like music videos do not feature fully developed stories because of the genre's multimedia nature; secondly, narrative film elements often appear inappropriate and inapplicable and thirdly, the fashion designs or the music and song is usually superior to any story or narrative. Rather than featuring a complete story the non-narrative examples often contain several segments that convey a certain mood or they feature the relation between figures and elements which becomes more clearer or vaguer, or closer or more distant which leads to a certain degree of knowledge in the end (Vernallis 13-18, Bühler 161). In this manner different elements are endowed with certain meaning and by creating tension between shot types, single scenes or whole sequences yet another level of meaning is added (Devoucoux 19).Very often there are elements of plain nature such as a sequence of colors, a particular prop, feeling, movement or setting which guide through the film and enhance a quite simple structure with richness and complexity rather than a complex narrative (Vernallis 20-25, 38). The popularity of rather non-narrative examples might stem from the fact that they are influenced by various other genres, art forms and media in general, specifically also by other filmic forms, besides the music video, which will now be focused on.

61

In this paper it is argued that the fashion film is a hybrid genre influenced from many sides and just as the fashion film, music videos are also influenced by a wide range of other works and types within media (Bühler 217) and actually refer to the whole visual culture and everyday life which offers a suitable point of view for analyzing the hybrid genre of fashion film. Some concrete examples are once again films, advertising, fine arts, popular communication and entertainment forms, art works (Keazor 18, 421), paintings, fashion and news photography (Vernallis 26). In addition to this they infiltrated the world of images and visual culture themselves and hence they may also refer to their own genre, history and previous clips (Keazor 18, 421). In this respect, the fashion film is less developed since the genre is just emerging and therefore still relates to other genres and media more commonly than quoting examples from within the phenomenon. In consequence of this close relationship and the fact that the two media of music video and fashion films also resemble one another as far as form is concerned the influences on both genres appear to be identical in many respects, which leads to the assumption that the a wide range of findings for the music video and its influencing fields are also valid for the fashion film. Therefore, the aspects discussed next will also be related to the fashion film alongside the music video.

One of the firsthand influences has of course film in all its various forms like silent film, feature film, experimental or avant-garde film which can be seen as the precursors for the format of shorter films and video clips (Keazor 56). The reason for this is that historically speaking film has preceded later film forms which only developed because of the existence of film and later forms tend to utilize commonly accepted structures, content and material of film in order to establish a connection to the audience (ibid. 167, 198). The relations include aspects such as mutual motives, themes, scenography, narrative techniques, mise-en-scène, aesthetics or technical innovations (Bühler 324, Keazor 167). Besides, music videos or the fashion film do not only interact with film but also with related audiovisual spheres such as television, commercials or movie trailers, primarily because these forms also feature temporal compression (Vernallis 6). One fashion film relating to such a short audiovisual form has already been mentioned in section 2.1.1 with the Burberry teaser for the actual fashion show (Burberry *Teaser*). Another example would be the short teaser- or trailer-like film for Juicy Couture's fashion film featuring their fall 2012 collection (Juicy Couture *Teaser).* This teaser is less than 30 seconds long and features some of the main scenes from the actual fashion film which lasts for more than two minutes and was released two weeks later than the short trailer (Juicy Couture *Back to Cali*). The same is true for the house of Dior who released a total number of four teasers (Dior *Teaser 1, 2, 3, 4*) which are ten seconds long and feature key scenes from different sequences of their actual fashion film released about two weeks later (Dior *Addict).* Some genres that function as a source of inspiration ever so often are the less

mainstream and more innovative ones such as experimental, abstract, underground or avant-garde films.

The experimental film forms already discussed in general for the medium of film in section 3.1.3 also had a crucial impact on the short film forms such as the fashion film or the music video. These recent forms readily adopt artistic ideas, visual structures, special effects, filmic and technical knowledge of forms such as the avant-garde, experimental, or abstract absolute film which is especially known for its focus on visual music. By absorbing all these film movements, the new formats also include all kinds of artistic fields like modernity, surrealism, futurism, dadaism, video art as well as dance and choreography of course and the exchange also continues into realms such as design, mass media or commodity fetishism. However, the shorter versions featuring all these aspects must not appear just as experimental as the previous film genres and also more conventional types include visual material from abstract or avant-garde films which leads to the emergence of such material into the wider public (Bühler 159-162). As much as the audiovisual forms concentrate on these artistic elements and ideas a lot of them also strive for attracting attention and entertaining the viewer simultaneously (ibid 185). This emphasizes their commercial side as well as their need for striking and entertaining content which clearly illustrates their affinity to commercial forms and advertising genres.

In fact, short filmic forms like the commercial, the music video or the fashion film are endowed with similar effects as far as content and structure are concerned. This explains why short filmic forms frequently refer to the field of advertising and the commercial industry as far as strategies, style and attractive presentation are concerned (Keazor 405) and as a result they seem to have a dual nature of exhibiting innovative material and at the same time advertising, being powerful and captivating (Wallis 161, Vernallis 191). This almost contradictory link between art and commerce in such forms leads to radical pluralism and the utilization of numerous models and patterns of all spheres of art and culture which entails the crossing of boundaries between genres as well as between what is considered as high culture and popular or mass culture. As a result, the ambiguous nature of these short filmic types classifies them as hybrid forms that are situated within many other fields and especially between art and economy as a means of sale (Bühler 219) which once again underlines the hybrid nature of the fashion film claimed at the very beginning of this paper. Advertising is important for other filmic forms since it is usually produced to promote a good or service among many others (Vernallis 204) in the fashion film this would be the fashion designs, collections and the fashion house on the whole. However, it has shown that this is not their only purpose as compared to the pure advertising, since they are also independent aesthetic objects that strive for entertaining qualities (ibid. 157). The manifold nature of such short filmic forms has

63

led to the development of technical and contentwise innovations all inherent to the concept that has become to be known as clip aesthetics (ibid. 13) which will now be looked at more closely.

These patterns and structures primarily developed in advertising and the music video have also found their way into other audiovisual media such as film and television as well as the fashion film of course. First and foremost, these aesthetics include the overall appearance of the film form which is determined by the situation in front of the camera, exclusive equipment, camera work, cutting, lighting, location, scenery, accessories, styling as well as the actors involved behind and in front of the camera (Bühler 92-94). Besides, several special effects and film tricks have also been commonly included in short filmic genres ever since, ranging from simple animation techniques such as claymation or puppets to more sophisticated effects inserted in post production as well as happening in front of the camera (ibid. 99-100). One fashion film that makes extensive use of such special effects or film tricks is the short film *Mourir Auprès de Toi* for Olympia Le Tan produced by Spike Jonze already referred to above in section 3.1.1 because of the music video producer crossing boundaries to the fashion film and in section 3.2.1. briefly covering non-narrative and narrative film forms. This special form of the fashion film features the sophisticated technique of stop-motion which brings handmade felt objects, puppets and figures to life in a book shop which are part of the embellishment on Olympia Le Tan's clutch designs that look like books in reality (Olympia Le Tan) as seen is figure 5 on page 37 above.

The composition of filmic forms is influenced by the author in many cases giving a directional voice to a music video for instance. As already referred to above a few times, the authors of audiovisual media are usually not restricted to one single genre but cross boundaries and work on several different forms and genres, meaning that many directors and filmmakers who produce music videos also produce advertising or film. One reason for this is the opportunity to test filmic techniques in different forms and shorter forms often function as possibilities for experimentation (Vernallis 91) and gives tremendous freedom and creative space to one single person (Bühler 323) unlike in feature film productions. The author's flexibility between different audiovisual forms often finds expression in the motifs, aesthetics and the overall look of a piece of work (Keazor 198). It becomes clear that different audiovisual forms are not only linked and related as far as the content on screen is concerned but also behind the scenes (ibid. 405) where directors coming from film produce advertising, music videos, fashion films or vice versa.

The majority of audiovisual media not only feature high-end and exclusive locations, backdrops, accessories, set designs and actors but also the unity of people working on these projects can be described as professional and commonly includes specialist camera people, sound

and lighting units as well as stylists. Hence not only the content but also the work and crew behind the scenes resembles an actual film production and has established itself as a typical characteristic of audiovisual media in general since it has emerged into all areas besides advertising or music video (Bühler 98). As far as the authorship of audiovisual projects is concerned it is worth mentioning that the producer of the actual film very often differs from the producer of the content being showcased, advertised or used for pure artistic expression which means that there can be overlapping and mismatch at the same time since various interests and ambitions may be followed (Keazor 15-16). Just as in the case of the music video the music is produced by an artist or band while a director is responsible for working on a video, the fashion designer produces a collection first which is later incorporated into a short film produced by a creative person within the audiovisual field such as a director or a photographer. All these elements, like location, actors, lighting, camera work or sound, just addressed already point towards the next big focus in this paper, namely mise-en-scène which somehow unifies all these particular elements into one concept that is highly important for film.

3.3   Mise-en-scène in fashion film

Now that the numerous influences on fashion film have been discussed extensively, both filmic and other references such as the fashion show for example, it is time to move on to actual film analysis in order to describe and investigate the single constituents of a film form such as the genre of fashion film. There are usually four main concepts that are relevant for analyzing film, namely image, sound, story and narrative mode (Nünning and Nünning 147). The latter two have already been covered to some extent above which is the reason why the following sections will now be focusing on image and sound. For this purpose the term mise-en-scene is of crucial importance which originates from French and usually means putting into the scene (Bordwell and Thompson 112). In film studies the notion of mise-en-scène mostly refers to the analysis of visual structures of the frame, concerning both the contents and their organization (Gibbs 5). Some critics such as Bordwell and Thompson do not include aspects such as framing, camera movement or position into their definition of mise-en-scène while others see a lack in this approach and classify these elements as an equally important part not least because filmmakers usually do not just position objects and characters on location without considering camera work (ibid. 54). The analysis here also includes categories related to camera and framing as seen in the following section on shot and editing since in short film forms these aspects play a rather crucial role because they come to the fore more easily and may appear as more striking and prominent in short filmic forms. What is more, the next section also refers to the aspect of sound in fashion films which is usually not

included in mise-en-scène because it is seen as an exclusively visual parameter by most film analysts, however, an analysis of film without considering the sound level including music, noises and speech would appear rather limited (ibid. 64-65) especially for the investigation of fashion film which is characterized by dominating music in many cases. One of the main advantages of a mise-en-scène approach is the possibility of grasping all kinds of meanings of film by considering movement of the camera, use of color, setting, organization of décor, props and characters (ibid. 98). These elements just listed as parts of mise-en-scène will now be focused on in the next part.

Generally speaking, mise-en-scène includes a variety of elements like setting, lighting, costume, accessories, the actors themselves, their behavior, performance and body language, their faces, make-up, even hair, staging, camera movement, framing, photographic decisions, décor as well as all kinds of objects or properties (Bordwell and Thompson 112-115, Gibbs 5, 12 Devoucoux 70, 227). These various elements contribute to the cinematic construction and the creation of meaning, for instance, costumes, styling and accessories can be a visual, stylistic and argumentative element emphasizing emotionality (Devoucoux 70, 78) while décor and objects can express a characters emotion which can not be put into words otherwise (Gibbs 69). An additional element that is not included in the traditional understanding of mise-en-scène but contributes to its impact tremendously is the camera work and position, since it effects the creation of space and the structure of elements within the frame. The position of the camera usually has a significant effect on the structure of the content of a filmic image and therefore influences the understanding of a shot, scene or whole sequence and above all, it colors the understanding of the action and the relationship between the figures. It shows, that the camera work and position may have a wide range of possible effects and influences on the content and structure of a film (ibid. 18-19); nevertheless, it is close to impossible to define a single meaning for each technique (ibid. 44). The main reason for this difficulty of determining one effect for each usage of an element is that they always relate to other aspects and interact with various elements of a film.

In fact, the concept of mise-en-scène does not only list and describe the individual elements of a film image but also looks into the combination, organization and interaction of the contents in order to reveal their versatile expressiveness (Gibbs 34, 26-27, 57). What ties in with this observation is the notion of coherence which is highly important when analyzing a film, and refers to the relation between one specific moment and the remaining parts of a film, the traditions and conventions in general as well as context and aspects from the world outside of the film. There are two different forms of coherence within the medium of film. Firstly, there is the overall coherence of an audiovisual production, such as a visual motif which gains importance and meaning through repetition throughout the whole film, for instance. Secondly, there may be coherence between

various elements of a single situation or shot. The fashion film *MUTA* for Miu Miu contains one example that creates coherence across the whole film that can be seen as a visual motif that becomes evident and expressive in the way that it is repeated throughout the whole film and alludes to how the fashion film will actually end. This visual motif is the way that the female characters flutter their eyelashes (Miu Miu *Muta* 1:14, 01:38-01:44, 5:17) as seen in figure 8 below and the fluttering also appears at the very beginning in the opening credits where little birds flutter and bustle about above the water (ibid. 00:05-00:10). Towards the end the motif of fluttering appears once again when the woman disappears abruptly only leaving her clothes, shoes and eyelashes behind and seems to be fluttering away as the sound suggests (ibid. 05:26-05:52). The fluttering appears yet another time when tiny insects flutter across the screen in front of a night sky at the very end just before the opening credits (ibid. 05:53-05:59). This prominent motif, both visual and also in the form of sound as we hear the eyelashes, birds or insects fluttering, certainly creates coherence across the whole fashion film and holds it together enhanced through the repetition. Consequently, it can be stated that the whole form always includes more than the sum of its parts and that different interactions of the elements of mise-en-scène accomplish specific impacts (ibid. 39-41). The next few sections will focus on these aspects, including shot, editing and sound, since the expressiveness of the images is very important for the genre of fashion film. The traditional elements of mise-en-scène will be discussed right after the cinematic aspects with special focus on the category of costumes, or in the case of the fashion film clothing.
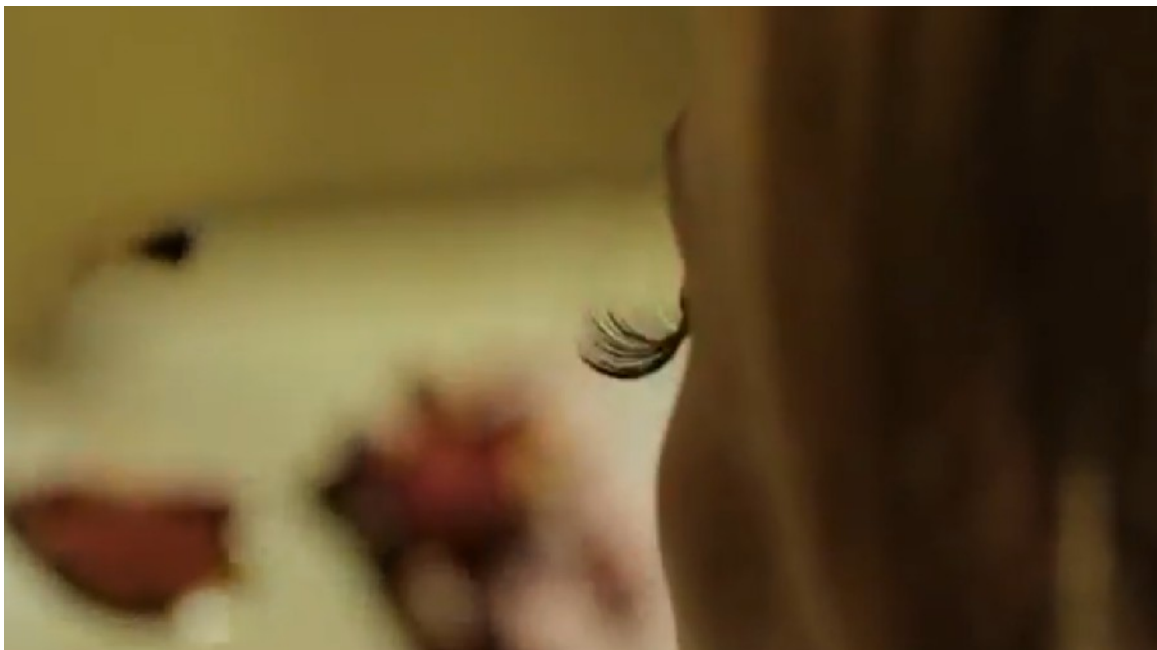

Figure 8: Visual motif of fluttering (Miu Miu *Muta*)

3.3.1   The close-up, framing and editing in fashion film

Before looking into detailed types and categories of shots and their specific use, function and effect it is important to consider the notion of the shot in general. In the past many filmmakers, commonly coming from theater, put the emphasize of their work on the actors and their behavior. However, throughout the last century and today more than ever, many directors work for short audiovisual media besides film productions which resulted in the increased focus on filmic aspects such as camera position, movement and work as well as lighting and all kinds of cinematic special effects (Bühler 311). It can be stated, that this development is especially important and valid for the genre of fashion film, as the majority of these short films do not focus on narrative action and therefore the acting and behavior of the characters, but more on the overall appearance of the film and the creation of a certain mood. In contrast to the photographic shot the filmic shot consists of a moving image and each shot has been assigned a more of less fixed term and description like close up or long shots and these types will be discussed in more detailed just below. The meaning of an image, however, can not be determined as easily and asks for more flexible descriptions since a moving image is a complex signifying unit (Mitry 17). As tempting as it may be to ascribe fixed meanings to these fixed shot types they do indeed not create an ultimate and general meaning but endow each single case with unique and rich effects (Bordwell and Thompson 192) which generally stem from the context and surrounding structures and the shots would not convey the same meaning in isolation (Mitry 115). Still, the various types of shots are commonly used according to certain patterns and do of course generate some preliminary meaning and effects.

In filmic history a handful of different shot types have been determined. Generally speaking a shot is the smallest element of a film (Mitry 176) a series of frames in a short sequence of any kind of filmic form (ibid. 59). As already mentioned above each shot type conveys more or less complex meaning but only creates specific meaning, atmospheres and feelings in combination with previous or following signifying units (ibid 66). Following the scale of distance the farthermost shot type is the extreme long shot which usually features whole landscapes and barely visible figures. What follows is the long shot or full shot in which the backdrop still takes up most space but the figures are much more outstanding already since they are revealed in their entirety and in the medium long shot this relationship between actors and background is close to equal, usually showing a figure from the knee up. The medium long shot is the first one in which the figure is the most prominent aspect being shot from the waist up and creating some kind of intimacy by exposing the expressions and gestures of a character. The next type is the medium close-up showing most but not all of a person usually from the chest up and then the close-up which only features just a head, hands, feet or any kind of small object and reveals facial expressions and

gestures in great detail or underlines the significance of an object. One last form is the extreme close-up which only includes one detail of a face such as the eyes or the lips and thereby isolates and magnifies a detail or object (Bordwell and Thompson 191, Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 102, Corrigan 26, Devoucoux 28).

Figure 9: Opening long shot in narrative fashion film (Dior Lady Blue Shanghai)

For a long time these terms and types have only been applied to traditional film, such as feature films. With the emergence of short filmic forms such as advertisements or the music video already discussed above, the terminology and concepts for film in general were also adapted to analyze the fashion film. Nevertheless, one has to bear in mind that shorter audiovisual forms tend to makes use of these types and their preliminary function and effects in a quite different way from conventional film. The extreme long shot, for example, has traditionally been included at the beginning of sequences of a film in order to establish the given setting and context. In shorter visual forms such as the music video, or also the fashion film they tend to appear at any given time and create visual contrast or reveal space (Vernallis 33). Interestingly enough, the majority of fashion films that include at least some kind of narrative actually open with a long shot or an extreme long shot in order to establish the location and the setting as seen in the examples of Dior's *Lady Blue Shanghai* which starts with a panoramic view of the skyline of Shanghai introducing the city the film is set in (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai* 00:02-00:17) as illustrated by figure 9 above, Chanel's film *The Tale of a Fairy* beginning with a shot of the house the story is happening in (Chanel *Tale of a Fairy* 00:50-00:53) or Dsquared2's *The Substitutes* which features a long shot of the class room the action is based in (Dsquared2 *The Substitutes* 00:00-00:01). For

69

the short format of the fashion film the concept of the shot is highly important since the choice of shot has always had an effect on clothing in general in the production of film ever since (Devoucoux 28). The shot types at greater distance to the objects and figures, and therefore the fashion designs in fashion film, can be classified as less important, while the shot types ranging from the medium long shot to the extreme close-up are crucial as they convey the material more precisely and present characters from up close. In the case of the fashion film, it is very often necessary to bring one element of the design to the fore and in fact this is the task of the filmmaker and the camera crew (ibid. 133) who may use wider more distant shots to present a whole person or group of people and the clothing and designs they are wearing or a closer shot focusing on one detail of a piece of clothing, shoe or accessory (ibid 160).

As a matter of fact, the close up can be determined as one of the most important shot types of the fashion film. This is underlined by the fact that many other audiovisual forms, be it advertisements or also film, now also use the close-up extensively and the reason for this is that it is an efficient means of communication and it endows and image with clear comprehensibility. It provides the possibility of concentration and visualization of details and it is included for reasons of visual attraction and a general variation of shot types (Bühler 311). The close-up's quality and signification distinguishes it from all other shots, which are more allusive and suggestive, while the close-up draws attention to all possible details and therefore endows figures, objects and settings with symbolic meaning by focusing on the structure and form of one single object or character and leaving all other parts and surroundings aside (Mitry 67). In some way this specific type can be classified as a voyeuristic shot since the camera works as a voyeuristic instrument in these cases and it shows aspects and details which would be rarely visible in other shots or in reality (Devoucoux 87). In this way the specific moment of an audiovisual production utilizing a close-up presents something rather intimate about the object or figure which showcases its specialty and underscores its distinctiveness (Vernallis 33) by isolating it and locking it for a moment (ibid 48). In the case of the fashion films the close-up's very often display and celebrate the actual fashion designs which are frequently the most important part of their whole content.

There are innumerable examples of these close-ups or even extreme close-ups used in the fashion film, for instance, in Dior Homme's short film *Un Rendez Vous* there are many close-up's of the male character's attire, such as his shirt, tie and cufflinks (Dior *Rendez Vous* 01:02-01:11, 01:27, 03:48-03:49) which appears to put emphasize on his perfectly tailored garments and his outstanding taste and therefore underlines the exclusivity of the designs of the fashion house in general. In Miu Miu's fashion film *The Powder Room* the dresses of the women are being presented by means of the close-up showing their detailed prints or embellishment and beading in

70

great detail (Miu Miu *Powder Room* 00:54-00:55, 00:59-01:00, 01:27-01:28, 01:35-01:38) as seen in figure 10 below. This short fashion film also shows one specific case of the close-up used in a variety of other cases, namely the close-up of accessories such as shoes, bags or jewelry which is one of the most frequent shot types of fashion films in general. In this particular fashion film it is primarily shoes that are being showcased up close (ibid. 00:48, 01:18-01:19, 01:24-01:26).

Figure 10: Close-up of details on a dress (Miu Miu *Powder Room*)

Yet another example is Dsquared2's film Ultimate Scream for their spring summer 2013 collection starring model Cara Delevingne which features countless close-up's and extreme close-up's of the clothing and especially the accessories (Dsquared2 *Scream* 00:28, 00:41-00:42, 00:56-00:58, 01:11, 01:16, 01:44-01:47) as illustrated by figure 11. The reason for this might be that shoes and accessories in general are very often some of the most expressive and therefore most coveted pieces of a fashion collection, as consumers may not buy a whole outfit or specific dress, but rather opt for a more variable bag or heels. A strong focus on the presentation of shoes can also be found in the short film *Dancer in a Daydream* by Christian Louboutin, who is in fact a shoe designer first and foremost and therefore obviously puts the focus on his shoe designs and their iconic red soles (Christian Louboutin 00:50, 01:26-01:31, 02:46-02:48, 03:08, 03:15-03:16, 03:58-04:02). The already referred to short film for Anna Dello Russo's collection for H&M is yet another prime example of the close-up focusing on accessories since the collection in fact only consisted of jewelry, shoes and bags and as a result shows close-ups of the various pieces throughout the whole film and almost covers every single piece of the collection by the end of the film (Anna Dello Russo at H&M 00:08, 00:19, 00:21, 00:31, 00:55, 01:25, 01:45, 02:07, 02:22). The extensive use of

the close-up in fashion film can also be said to relate to the difference between the moving and the still image already discussed above in section 2.2.2.2. Static shots very often prefer the presentation of a whole piece of clothing or a person wearing a specific fashion design, but these full shots may not show each and every part of the outfit in great detail. In contrast to this, the moving image in the medium of film offers the showcasing of both, the whole attire as well as particular parts of it and in fact fashion films usually also include full shots and medium shots alongside the important close-up in order to present the fashion designs in all its facets.
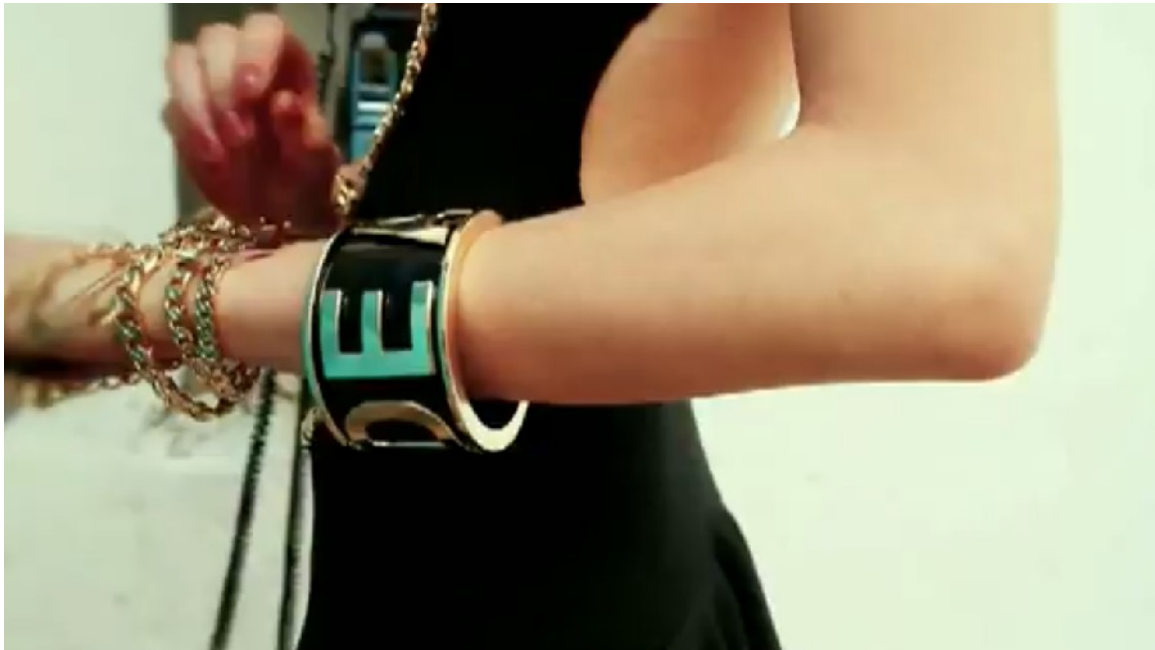
Figure 11: Close-up of bracelets (Dsquared2 *Scream*)

This choice of showing whole objects or only specific parts also relates to the notion of frame which is closely connected to the shot. The concept of framing refers to the separation of the space outside of the shot and the objects and content included within the frame, and can be compared to the frame of a painting in the broadest sense (Mitry 91, 94). These boundaries or borders are not arbitrary or neutral but commonly affect the image by defining a certain point of view on image. Generally speaking, framing can have an influence on the film image in four possible ways. Firstly, concerning the size and shape; secondly, in the way the frame defines the space included on screen and the space left out; thirdly, the way distance, angle, height and point of view are concerned and lastly, in the way the frame can move in relation to the mise-en-scène (Bordwell and Thompson 182-183).

In general, it is important to note that the camera's point of view or perspective is created by means of a certain camera position and angle, in other words by a specific height and side the

action and objects are filmed from (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 107) The repeated usage of a certain type of frame or framing technique can be linked to a certain figure or situation of a film, creating some kind of motif that holds the film together. Besides this unifying function, the concept of framing also has a more visual dimension (Bordwell and Thompson 194) by offering the possibility of giving a certain visual language to the filmic image (Vernallis 33) Interestingly, the concept of framing does not only include static variations such as point of view or angle, but also movement since the camera and therefore also the frame is mobile today. All the types of shots and frame already mentioned above can also be part of a still image, such as a photograph, a painting or any other kind of static picture. In contrast to this, the special feature of film is the camera's possibility to move and to change the angle, level, height or distance while shooting which transforms the frame into a mobile unit (Bordwell 193-194). This flexibility of the moving camera can enhance the elements of mise-en-scène such as the actors, décor, clothing and other details and as a result the overall style (Devoucoux 133). Furthermore, the movement of the frame can let single objects appear much sharper, more vivid and three-dimensional (Bordwell and Thompson 194-196). This raises the question, of what nature this diverse number of different movements actually is.

One type of the moving frame is the pan which is short for panorama and consists of the camera rotating from left to right or vice versa in order to create the impression of horizontally moving across the space while the vertical axis remains unchanged. A second possibility of creating a moving frame with the help of the camera's mobility related to the first type is the tilt which creates movement along the vertical axis by moving the camera up or down, for instance in order to reveal a setting or situation from top to bottom or vice versa. The third type involves even more movement by actually changing the position of the camera and hence the point of view on the whole by means of moving the camera forward, backwards, circular, diagonal of from side to side on tracks, which is usually referred to as a tracking or dolly shot and keeps a film moving. Yet another type is the crane shot which offer the possibility of filming from a high level above the ground usually outdoors by means of a mechanical arm that lifts or lowers the camera up and down, from side to side or forwards and backwards (Bordwell and Thompson 194, Corrigan 26, Devoucoux 27, Mitry 72, Vernallis 34). These types of the moving frame just listed can be classified as the most common ones, however, there are still a few other possibilities and the different categories can be combined in endless variations, in fact different mobile frames can even be used within one single shot of a film (Bordwell and Thompson 194-196, Vernallis 36). In a high number of cases the movement of the frame is linked to the movement of a figure or object in a shot which means that the camera tilts or pans at the same time some element changes its position in a situation, referred to a reframing. Besides, the frame moves along the lines of a song or rhythm (Bordwell and Thompson 196) as if the image is floating over the surfaces of bodies and objects

being carried by the music (Vernallis 34, 116).

The fashion film also makes extensive use of the moving frame and implements pans, tilts and tracking shots as well as the hand held or subjective camera. A frequent usage of the moving frame are pans and tilts of the camera that appear to be moving up and down the bodies of the figures and across their clothing. The reason for the choice of these types of mobile frames is to bring the main theme of the fashion film, namely the fashion designs and accessories in many cases, to the foreground. One instance among many others would be the fashion film for Matthew Williamson celebrating his fifteen year anniversary in which the camera frequently moves over the bodies of the dancing figures showing all the details of the dresses (Matthew Williamson 00:44-00:45, , 01:36-01:39, 01:40-01:43) which also happens on a few occasions in the short Gucci film for their spring summer 2012 collection (Gucci 00:21-00:27, 00:37-00:43, 02:17-02:25) or in the Miu Miu fashion film called *The Powder Room (*Miu Miu *Powder Room* 00:57-01:00, 01:24-01:28) and in the Prada film already referred to above (Prada *Spring Summer 2012* 00:14-00:19*).*The majority of these examples shows that the moving frame is usually a pan or a tilt in these cases and moreover, it is also linked to the close-up already discussed due to its importance for the fashion film above in section 3.3.1.1 since the camera usually moves across the bodies in close-up mode in order to showcase all details. In addition to this, the fashion film also makes use of the tracking frame type regularly as seen in the Matthew Williamson film again in the scenes where the camera seems to follow the movement of the dancers and their dresses (Matthew Williamson 01:15-01:19). Besides, the tracking shots very often follow the actors as they walk a straight line commonly focusing on their feet and shoes as seen in Dior's Lady Blue Shanghai (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai* 00:54-01:30) or in Prada's film (Prada *Spring Summer 2012* 00:08-00:12) as well as in Dior's Addict film (Dior *Addict* 00:21-00:29) which somehow imitates the atmosphere of an actual fashion show and the gaze of the spectators there. In general it can be stated, that the movement of the camera and the mobile frame is of course motivated by the movement of the figures in the fashion film, but first and foremost many dolly shots, pans or tilts appear to be driven by the movement of the fashion designs and the flowing movements of the actual clothing first and foremost. In a way this technique of filming up and down or from side to side of a dress mimics the examining look and detailed inspection of consumers of fashion in real life. However, the mere showcasing of single shots would not make much sense for a cinematic production such as the fashion film and that is where the concept of editing comes in.

In the most general sense, editing is the process of combining various shots one after another in a meaningful way in order to create a whole film in the postproduction phase. Editing has been an important part of film analysis ever since and many critics actually claim that editing

influences a film to a great extent due to the powerful nature of this technique (Bordwell and Thompson 218). One concept that is commonly referred to in the field of editing is montage which basically labels the editing process of joining shots and sound elements in a meaningful way. Moreover, montage does not really build meaning in its own right but is always motivated by the overall context and narrative of a filmic form and the main function of montage is to create meaning by combining two shots which would not be conveyed by either of the two shots alone (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 146-147). Quite obviously, the editing technique does of course have an impact on aspects such as the overall construction of a film, the style, the characters, the rhythm, the narration and the costumes since the movement of the forms, bodies, clothing, colors, action and even emotions added to a film via means of editing would not be conveyed with single shots and images otherwise (Devoucoux 135). The consideration of filmic techniques such as shot types, cutting and editing is inevitable in the analysis of a genre like fashion film. In order to discuss these aspects, however, it is vital to outline the specific types and dimensions of editing first.

As for the actual appearance of editing the notion of cut is important and one has to keep in mind that there is the rather abrupt change of one image to another which is usually referred to as cut on the one hand and more subtle forms on the other hand (Bordwell and Thompson 219). To be exact, there are four different types of such gradual transitions: firstly, the fade out which usually darkens the image to black and is employed to represent some kind of closure or end of a situation, scene, sequence or the whole film. A closely related type is the fade in which lets a shot appear by slowly fading from a black screen. Thirdly, there is the dissolve or overlap which superimposes the end of one shot and the beginning of the following one and hence connects action or elements separated in time or space. The last type is the wipe in which the recent shot is replaced by the following one by means of a boundary between the two shots moving across the screen which may signal the change of a location (Mitry 144, Bordwell and Thompson 218-219) and it commonly happens in a horizontal or vertical manner like rolling one image over another. Eventually, one has to keep in mind that all these techniques do not represent one single fixed meaning or function and that they can be applied in numerous ways and combinations (Mitry 144).

This classification of shots is closely related to the system Bordwell and Thompson established which includes different types of cuts concerning choice and control. One type that is relevant for fashion films links together shots according to graphic elements which may be part of lighting, setting, costumes, behavior, photographic dimensions, framing or camera movement. The match can either create continuity by joining similar forms and colors or it can build a contrast or abrupt change by means of clashing colors or conflicting forms. Another type is the decision of relating shots and the length of shots according to rhythm based on movement in mise-en-scène,

the camera movement, rhythm, beat and sound or the overall context. The patterns of different shots synchronized with beats can create a dynamic structure, a rather long duration of a shot, for example, may create suspense and accentuate a certain detail while fast cutting can increase excitement (220-231). A fashion film that features a special form of editing and shot choice controlled by rhythmic matches is the film *Love Me* by SHOWstudio shot by Ruth Hogben. Here the shot types frequently change synchronous to the beat of the music or sound (SHOWstudio 00:18-00:20), for instance, the change from one scenery to the next or form one character to the other is frequently accompanied and marked by a specific beat (ibid. 00:29-00:31, 01:25-01:28). At the beginning of the film the rhythm and the beat of the music or sound is rather slow and the editing and change of shot types is also rather slow. However, the music speeds up towards the end and becomes more agitated and along the same lines also the editing changes with the shot types alternating more frequently (ibid. 02:40-02:57). The longer durations of the shot types matched to the slower rhythm at the beginning manages to create suspense while the extremely fast cutting technique at the very end increases the excitement enormously. The editing of short audiovisual genres such as the related forms of the music video, advertising or the fashion film, can be described as a necklace with various beads of different size and color rather than a chain with equal elements and links which underlines the vast possibilities of shots and editing (ibid. 28). Nevertheless, one of the most common techniques of all filmic genres in general is still the so-called continuity editing being discussed now.

The majority of films throughout the history and up to now adheres to a small set of possible editing elements and a dominating editing style, the so-called continuity editing technique, which is characterized by endowing a film with a general flow of space, time and action over the course of a number of shots joined together (Bordwell and Thompson 231, Vernallis 28). The continuity style basically works along the lines of visual dimensions which build a structure for the overall flow of a film by means of the development of images rather than verbal associations and elements (Mitry 159). Generally speaking, the main focus in continuity editing is to adhere to continuous graphic qualities across a number of shots by balancing figures, keeping the frame symmetrical, constant lighting techniques, rhythmic cutting and camera distance. Additionally, the continuity technique also includes some shot and editing types already discussed above such as the match on action, crosscutting (Bordwell and Thompson 231-244), tracking shots, crane shots, close-ups, matches on rhythm, invisible lighting and editing techniques (Vernallis 36, 112). Even though the continuity style can be classified as the predominant technique in film in general, there are of course other approaches specifically important for more recent and shorter audiovisual forms such as the fashion film.

In reality there are of course short audiovisual forms following the continuity style, but it is less common in rather recent filmic productions such as music videos, advertising or the fashion film and it is no longer the preferred form or first option in general (Vernallis 28). Especially rather abstract or experimental projects tend to focus on such conventions and traditional editing techniques less than actual feature films and purely narrative productions (Bordwell and Thompson 218) and instead aim to explore other more diverse editing techniques. As for the matching types of editing the more experimental and associational film forms tend to put emphasize on the graphic and rhythmic types with matches of light, texture, shape and rhythm rather than the spatial or temporal ones (ibid. 251). In this way these forms do not incorporate matches on action or narrative to such a great extent but rather strive to create a rhythm with cutting and editing styles by means of joining shots with similar movement, speed or duration as well as other structural elements (Vernallis 29-31). Furthermore, productions ignoring the continuity style also incorporate a higher number of rather abrupt and surprising elements, such as the jump cut which can create rather disorienting moments and attention-grabbing situations (Bordwell and Thompson 254, Vernallis 31) or unusual insertions such as a cut to some kind of metaphorical or symbolic scene or object that does not belong to the space and time of the film (Bordwell and Thompson 254) as well as sudden changes of cuts, color, scale or content (Vernallis 31). One prime example of this technique of quickly alternating elements by means of abrupt changes, fast cuts and different colors would be the SHOWstudio production for the spring summer collection 2013 of the brand Void of Course which shifts between different shot types at a high rate and projects different colored light on the body of a woman almost like a flicker effect (Void of Course).

Two further editing styles which are a prominent feature of experimental or abstract films are the fast or slow motion technique as well as the superimposition. The fast motion effect accelerates the pace of the shot in postproduction in proportion to the real speed of the footage and may have various effects such as grabbing attention or whisking through a set. On the opposite side slow motion puts extreme focus on objects, figures or moments giving extreme power to them, especially with the extreme form of high-speed recording where a short moment can later on be stretched endlessly, and this technique very often conveys a certain mood of dreams and fantasy in general (Bordwell and Thompson 167-168). One fashion film that can be characterized as a more abstract one since it does not follow a clear narrative to a full extent and leaves a few interpretations open is Miu Miu's *MUTA* film which in fact utilizes the feature of fast- and slow motion which is much more prominent in films not following the continuity editing style. The scene when the characters first appear makes use of fast- and slow motion at the same time, in the way that they crawl out of a tiny door in a manner of alternating between accelerated pace and extremely slow movements (Miu Miu Muta 00:35-00:58) as seen in figure 1 on page 22 above.

Here the use of these two techniques in a way contributes to the rather ambiguous nature of the film on the whole and the fact that the women appear more like robots than actual human beings. Another case of slow motion occurs several times in Matthew Williamson's short film where the technique is used for focusing on the flowing fabrics of the dresses which endows them with great importance and power in contrast to the other elements in the film (Matthew Williamson 00:33-00:37, 01:01-01:04, 01:23-01:24, 01:38-01:39) and this usage of slow motion can be classified as a common feature of the fashion film in general.

Figure 12: Slow motion focusing on flowing fabrics (Matthew Williamson)

The second technique, superimposition, is the act of overlapping two images in one shot showing parts and aspects of both at the same time and the result often alludes to dreams, memory, vision, mental images or even ghosts (Mitry 143-144, Bordwell and Thompson 174). A rather experimental fashion film that makes extensive use of this technique is the short film *Such Flare* for Dolce & Gabbana men spring 2010 which consists of a superimposition of the camera moving across woods and trees, different light effects and a male model posing in the fashion designs (Dolce & Gabbana *Such Flare*) and somehow creates a rather spooky mood, with the male model almost appearing like a ghost or just a mental image or memory recollected while looking at the woods as seen in figure 7 on page 60 above. Another fashion film employing superimposition for the sake of conveying memories or mental images or dreams is Christian Louboutin's short film *Dancer in a Daydream* in which the designer himself sits at a table and appears to be thinking about all kinds of possible memories as an inspiration for his designs presented by superimposed images and thereby glides into the state of a daydream which is also

ended by a superimposition of an image of his dream and his situation in reality in his atelier (Christian Louboutin 00:56-01:07, 03:45).

Figure 13: Superimposition (Christian Louboutin)

It becomes clear that these less conventional productions operate editing and shot types much more freely often motivated by the main content such as the sound and rhythm in music videos (ibid 36) or the fashion designs in fashion film as already pointed out above when discussing the frequent use of close-up, pans, tilts and tracking shots in the editing styles of fashion films. The reason for these fast alternating styles of shots and the frequency of cuts may be the fact that the shorter version have much less time at hand than full-length films and therefore want to fill the duration of the films with as much content, effects and messages as possible (Bühler 95). One main aspect that many of these alternative editing styles share is the superiority of the sound, rhythm, tempo or beat that often appears to be guiding and motivating the editing and cuts (Vernallis 27). In the wake of all these recent audiovisual genres the aspect of sound has gained more and more importance and therefore asks for a more detailed examination in general.

3.3.2   The forms and functions of sound in fashion film

The discussion of the influence of music videos on the genre of the fashion film in section 3.2.1 already pointed out that the aspect of sound is an important feature of the fashion film. Nowadays, film aesthetics include the level of sound and especially music as much as any other given filmic element in an audiovisual production and the creation of images since it has the ability of characterizing figures, objects and spaces (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 137, Devoucoux 151).

Traditional film employs sound only as an additional dimension focusing on moving images usually superior to the soundtrack (Bordwell and Thompson 264), for the genre of fashion film, however, it can be argued that the element of sound is of crucial importance and the analysis asks for an awareness of the wide ranging possibilities of the sound (ibid. 291). In the case of the fashion film the sound usually plays an important role and therefore most productions include sophisticated and complex sound designs that increase the emphasis on visual allusions (Scorzin 3). For analysing such sound designs it is first of all important to understand all the different forms, aspects and functions of sound in general.

Some common features of sound in film are change, return, variation, analogy or association and music very often forms the movement of the body and therefore the movement of the clothing in film or vice versa (Devoucoux 157-158) particularly valid for the genre of the fashion film. The term sound has remained rather ambiguous until now, but for film three different types of sound can be distinguished: language or speech, sounds or noises and music (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 139, Bühler 96). The first category of sound, namely language or speech can be present in the form of dialogue as an element of film, making it a diegetic element, or narration as an extradiegetic element, while inner monologues or the verbalization of thoughts lie somewhere in between. Noises or sounds are the second variation and refer to the background noise or acoustical surroundings of a film that are a vital element for creating the allusion of reality. The last form of sound important for the investigation of film is music which is another extradiegetic sound frequently and is usually linked to emotions and memories instantaneously and like the second type music often lingers in the background (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 139-142). However, in the special case of the fashion film music has been of great importance ever since the establishment of the genre and indeed very often presents the most frequent or even only type of sound included as shown for instance by the Lanvin film where the models and the designer himself dance to the music and no other sound type, language or noise is included (Lanvin) which is also the case in the Gucci or Prada film for their spring summer 2012 collections (Gucci, Prada *Spring Summer 2012*) or the more abstract and underground film *Such Flare* for Dolce and Gabbana (Dolce and Gabbana *Such Flare*). An almost equally important aspect of sound are the noises which are also included in a number of fashion films like the film promoting the Versace and H&M collection (Versace for H&M) or the the animation film *Mourir Auprès De Toi* by Spike Jonze for designer Olympia Le Tan (Olympia Le Tan). In contrast to this, the first type of sound expression, language, is not made use of to a great extent in the majority of fashion films, only in those that are more structured like actual feature films and have a more or less straightforward narrative such as Chanel's films for their cruise collection 2011 and 2012 (Chanel *Remember Now, Tale of a Fairy*) or Dior's film *Lady Blue Shanghai* (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai*) which include dialogues and speech in

general throughout the whole course of the film.

Now that the three forms of sound have been outlined the question arises whether what function sound actually carries in the medium of film. Firstly, it offers the ability to narrate by means of speech and dialogue; secondly, it synthesizes the medium of film on the whole and contributes to the production of a filmic whole by creating continuity between shots or scenes with the help of so-called sound bridges, for instance. In addition, it also offers the possibility of showing by means of indicating particular motives, objects, figures or other details and lastly, it has the function of interpreting by underlining and extending a certain mood and message of the images by means of sound (Borstnar, Pabst and Wulff 138). This last function already refers to yet another possible differentiation concerning sound which explains different forms of how sound may relate to other filmic parts such as image, for example. Bordwell and Thompson distinguish different dimensions in this respect and for the fashion film the rhythm and spatial categories are important. The first category is one of the most effective types and involves aspects such as beat, tempo, pace and pattern which are all rather prominent in the music, meaning the third type of sound, that accompanies a film. Besides, this dimension is one of the most complex ones since also the movement within a shot and the editing have their own rhythm. Clearly a variation between all these types is possible, but in the majority of cases they are synchronized, especially music and the movement of the image, for example in situations featuring dance or other ways of movement. Another category includes the spatial conditions in which a sound occurs, including the distinction between diegetic sounds which are part of the story such as words spoken or sounds made and extradiegetic sounds which originate from a source outside of the film like added music, narrative voice or sound effects. The diegetic kind can once more be divided into internal sounds coming from the inside of a characters mind and can not be heard by others and external ones originating from an actual source in the scene. Many films blur the boundaries between these types in order to create ambiguity, confusion, surprise or humor (Bordwell and Thompson 275-290). Fashion films tend to make use of the first type frequently where the rhythm of the sound and the image are synchronous such as in the Prada film shot at the gas station where the models walk in the rhythm of the music (Prada Spring Summer 00:49-00:52) or the Juicy Couture film featuring scenes of a model fighting men on a beach in which the walk of the model, the men being hit and falling down is very often in sync with the music (Juicy Couture *Back to Cali*). As for the differentiation of diegetic and extradiegetic sounds it is striking that a great deal of sounds is actually extradiegetic which is related to the fact that fashion films include external music more than language or noises as already discussed above since almost any fashion film features at least a soundtrack if no other sound level is present. This vast pool of possible types and functions of a sound entails an equally vast number of possible effects.

81

Sound and the patterns that the different sound types create can be an enormously powerful technique for filmmaking and they can generate strong effects while at the same time they frequently stay in the background and creating special atmospheres almost unnoticed (Bordwell and Thompson 264). The musical level of an audiovisual form certainly has its own language and has the power to depict and describe as well as generate meaning in a sonic or acoustic way (Vernallis 142) and as such an additional highly valuable level of creating effects like messages, moods and meanings it can be classified as a basic and essential means effecting the filmmaking process (Devoucoux 196). The actual types of effects can be of various degree and always depend on the respective film they appear in as well as on the given context and surroundings of course. A lot of the effects have already been indicated in the listing of the different types and functions of sound above, but some of them are worth mentioning in more detail here. For instance, sound can shape how an image comes across and what kind of mood it conveys (Bordwell and Thompson 265). This very much relates to the strong connection between music and emotions or feelings and in fact, the music or sound within a film has the ability to appeal to specific emotions (Bühler 96) in a rather subtle and nuanced manner of coloring the mood with particular emotions which can not be achieved by any other elements. (Vernallis 142). In general, a certain mood endowed with emotions, feelings and ideas is achieved by the pattern of musical notes (Hall 5) and their rhythm, melody, harmony and instrumentation (Bordwell and Thompson 273). However, this whole process of generating emotional states in a film remains rather abstract and can not be explained by means of language in an obvious way which leaves the possible connotations quite uncertain and open (Vernallis 142-143, Hall 5). One example of how music shapes a film is the short film *The Heimlich Maneuver* by Vs. magazine starring model Erin Wasson which has a rather spooky soundtrack that emphasizes the content of the film where a model almost suffocates because of a necklace she seems to have swallowed and it remains unclear until the end whether the second woman present will save her (Vs. Magazine). Another fashion film conveying a more positive emotion and feeling also via the combination of the joyful images and the cheerful music accompanying it is the Dior film *I Found my Love in Portofino* (Dior *Portofino)* which conveys the typical mood of vacationing in Portofino through the images actually shot at this location and the accompanying traditional songs referring to Portofino. As far as sound is concerned quite a range of effects are a achieved by their combination with other elements of the filmic form which means that music mostly achieves certain impacts due to its association with other parts (Mitry 169). For instance, music and sound is very often connected to certain characters, setting, objects or ideas and hence can alter the quality of a certain situation this object appears in (Bordwell and Thompson 273). The nature of the combination between sound and elements of an image is frequently shaped by movement which means that a sound can control the movement of a figure or object, for instance when an object or character moves at the same beat or bass line as the music does (Vernallis 160-179). This

combination of music and elements of mise-en-scène already points towards one of the most important effects music can have in the case of the fashion film, namely the symbiotic relationship between music and clothing. Again, this very much refers to the concept of movement in the way that the sound level of an audiovisual medium can underline and emphasize the movement of a figure and its attire. For instance, the rustling of a garment or the sound of a pair of heels while walking on the ground shows this intimate and complex relationship between fashion and sound constructing dramatic patterns and elaborate meaning within a film image (Devoucoux 151-157). One example of this match of music and clothing would be the fashion film produced for Matthew Williamson's fifteen year anniversary. In one scene, for instance, a female model takes off one dress after the other to a melody with a clear pattern of beats and always drops it on the floor to the same beat at the end of this melody (Matthew Williamson 00:20-00:31). In another section, a model lifts up her dress so that the fabric flows in the air just as the singers of the melody lift their voices at the same moment (ibid. 00:53-00:56) and the image of the flowing dress in the air slows down and almost freezes at the same time as the singers pause for a moment (ibid 01:01-01:04). When the flowing fabrics that remind of the ones used for the dresses and designs of Matthew Williamson come flying out of the windows at a single blow also the singers of the choir change their pitch and it seem more singers joins in for a moment (ibid. 01:49-01:54). The music that appears in combination with all the dresses in these scenes appears to be originating from the opera or a classical music genre which enhances the dresses with a certain meaning an power. Just as the singers and voices of the opera are usually ostentations, noble, up-scale and classical also the designs of Matthew Williamson can be classified along the lines of these notions. An additional example where the music underlines the clothing and accessories is the short flim produced for the Versace for H&M collection. Here the sound of the music and the sound of the lever the model operates go hand in hand with the exclusive Versace dresses that come out of the machine (Versace for H&M 00:03-00:07) and are produced on the assembly line for the much bigger audience a label like H&M has, which underlines the philosophy behind the whole collaborations between high-end designers and retailers like H&M. In other scenes there are other instances where sound and clothing, or more specifically accessories, namely the shoes, have a symbiotic relationship (ibid. 00:22-00:23, 00:37-00:39, 00:45-00:50) and the audible sound of the shoes on the floor puts great emphasis on the high heels as an important part of the whole collection. The sound can be described as rather clicking which alludes to the extremely high heels Versace produced for the collaboration and that the fashion house stands for in general, which underlines the sensual image of the brand and the strong focus on rather alluring and powerful women. This focus on clothing in fashion film will now be the main point of analysis in the next big section on the element of clothing in mise-en-scène, to be more precisely the fashion designs featured in the genre of fashion film.

4 The role of dress and clothing in fashion films

As already pointed out above in section 3.3 costumes and clothing are one element of mise-en-scène in films. In the case of the genre of the fashion film, the outfit and look the models or actors are wearing can not really be referred to as costumes since they usually represent one of the most important elements of the whole film and in many cases they even constitute the motivator behind the production of a fashion film in the first place. Therefore, this element of mise-en-scène is not referred to as costumes here but rather as clothing or more specifically fashion designs. However, as far as their function and their effects on the overall filmic form are concerned, a number of findings, theories and statements can of course be drawn from the analysis of costume in film. This section will now look at the utilization of clothing in the genre of fashion film, discussing aspects such as its functions and effects referring to color, material and accessories among others, investigating how it shapes the body and figures appearing in film and in the second part of this section the focus will be on the fashion designs as the main character and the driving force in the genre of fashion film.

Clothes in general have always been an everyday object and one of the most outstanding features in society ever since which led to the discussion and analysis of this object very soon (Barthes 21). Being such a crucial part of society, clothing should not only be seen just as garments or attire but rather as an element of social processes and a powerful means for creating cultural symbols and meaning with all its details (Craik 5). The approaches to clothing or fashion have drawn on several disciplines in recent years which led to an inter- or multidisciplinary point of view on the phenomenon of fashion (ibid. 14) including aspects such as manufacturing, technology, economics, sociology, history, aesthetics or psychology. The investigation of the fashion film mostly considers sociologist structures such as clothing, models or aesthetic principles investigating certain forms of fashion (Barthes 72). Furthermore, the discussion here should not only be limited to the exploration of fashion principles in general but also regard the explanation of details of fashion and fashion behavior which create meaning for individuals and groups (Craik 14). As far as the combination of fashion and film is concerned, it is essential to consider the fact that clothing has a major impact on the dynamics of film among other aesthetic elements and that it plays a crucial role in creating space (Devoucoux 21-22) and meaning. In other words, the relationship between fashion and film can be described as stimulating and lively including the exchange of style and spirit (Molho). The field of research on costume design and the actors behind it can be seen as a starting point for the analysis of fashion film conducted here.

4.1   Who is responsible for dressing the characters in fashion film?

Interestingly enough, the costume designer has been acknowledged as a crucial actor in the creation of a film rather late underlined by the fact that an Oscar for costume design has only been awarded since 1948 which shows that the field of clothing in film has been neglected for a long time after the emergence of the medium of film (Devoucoux 121, Engelmeier 19). This means that the profession of costume designer was not acknowledged at the outset of the medium of film, however, filmmakers soon started consulting a number of famous names associated with costume designs, such as Ben Carré, Paul Iribe, George Barbier or Erté which are still recognized as some of the most influential professionals in costume designing today (Devoucoux 263). In addition to the professional costume designers film productions have also appointed stylists or actual fashion designers for dressing the characters of their film, which links the realm of costume design even more to the genre of fashion film. In contrast to the experts in costumes design who simply dress the figures of a film, the fashion designers or couturiers are also renowned outside the film industry which already points towards the fact that their designs are usually more outstanding than the concepts implemented by actual costume designers (Bruzzi pxvi). In deciding on the clothes for characters, the costume designer tends to consider all kinds of factors previously defined for a film and includes technical aspects like light, shape of the film image or other specific demands of the camera (Molho). As opposed to this nuanced and detailed work ethics of a costume designer, actual fashion designer often invest little to no time in investigating the specificities and technical conditions of film, but are more interested in making a name and have the interests of their own fashion house in mind (Devoucoux 264-265). On the one hand, the reputation of a fashion designer can contribute to the success of a film enormously, and film has entered into relationships with big names such as Coco Chanel, Elsa Schiaparelli, Hubert de Givenchy, Pierre Balmain, Christian Dior or Paco Rabanne (Molho, Devoucoux 264-265). On the other hand, the relationship between film and fashion designers has always been complicated, among other things because they do not possess such a broad knowledge of the filmic form and as a result the designs often fail to impress on screen and appeared rather lifeless or flat (Devoucoux 265). Alongside the two professionals involved in the related fields of film and fashion, costume and fashion designer, there is a third type of professional that may possibly be responsible for dressing the figures of film, namely the stylists, who do not design the clothes themselves but rather chose from collections of fashion designers or retailers and they are commonly employed in film production today. Their task is to decide on the overall look of the clothes, accessories, hair, styling, make-up and sometimes even the setting and mood of the filmic image. This profession is closely related to the visual stylist working on static image production within the field of fashion such as advertising campaigns, editorials, look books or catalogs. They are commissioned because of their ability to pay great

attention to all details of the presentation of a product and hence increase the visual appeal and create more attention-grabbing imagery (Craik 269).

4.2   Clothing and details in fashion film make the characters

Concerning the fashion film it can stated that the clothing is in most cases designed by the fashion designer of the brand that commissions the production of the film which kind of unites the two different actors of fashion designer and costume designer in one person. Interestingly, some fashion films actually refer to the actors responsible for dressing the characters as costume designer rather than fashion designer, for instance in the case of Miu Miu's films which actually list the brand name Miu Miu as the costume designer for their films in the closing credits (Miu Miu *Powder Room* 02:18, Miu Miu *Muta* 06:10). Other fashion films that include the designs of a specific fashion house leave the act of dressing the characters to external stylists, as is the case in Proenza Schouler's short film *Snowballs* which lists the fashion stylist Vanessa Reid in the credits (Proenza Schouler 04:12) or the Dior Homme film *Un Rendez Vous* which also commissioned a stylist, namely William Gilchrist (Dior Rendez Vous 04:31). Moreover, there are also fashion films that incorporate both, a designer and a stylist, responsible for the clothes such the film *The Heimlich Maneuver* presented by Vs. magazine. Here the clothing of the characters is referred to in two ways, first by listing the designers who created the clothing chosen for the film (Vs. Magazine 02:03) and second by listing a stylist who was responsible for this selection and the actual dressing process (Vs. Magazine 02:06). Another example is the film produced by SHOWstudio for the brand Void of Course that lists the names of the two designers of the fashion house as well as the name of the stylist of the film (Void of Course 00:52). Furthermore, it is also common to not explicitly list the name of the responsible person for styling and dressing the figures and only referring to the actual name of the fashion brand in the credits at the beginning and the end, which has the effect of giving even more power to the name of the designer or brand and emphasizing their creative work. In any case, the professionals responsible for dressing the characters do not go about this task irresponsibly and usually have a certain concept in mind and aim at certain effects.

Costumes and clothing can indeed be classified as a medium in themselves (Devoucoux 53) in other words, they are cinematographic elements and resources (ibid. 25) and just as the other elements of mise-en-scène such as the setting for instance they also have specific functions and effects and these can be quite diverse ranging from complementing the overall patterns of the setting in general, guiding the attention to certain graphic aspects, playing a crucial role in the narrative or making the characters themselves appear more prominent and outstanding (Bordwell and Thompson 119-122, Vernallis 100-101). For the fashion film, as for objects of the material

world such as clothes in general, it is not only important what these objects are and how they look but also what kind of function and effect they have, what meanings they convey. In this respect one has to keep in mind, that a medium such as clothing does not have an inherent meaning but always interacts with other elements surrounding it and the general context (Hall 5). Besides, for the special case of clothing a garment in itself can not always be perceived as an object endowed with a message, since the meaning rather lies in the finished object worn by a character as a complex outfit with particular details (Barthes 28). In a medium such as the fashion film, not the number of different outfits is of relevance but rather the manner in which they are presented and the way they appear and have a certain impact in combination with the other elements (Devoucoux 26). What complicates this process of meaning creation even more, except for the unlimited way of possible relations to other elements, is the fact that clothing itself, especially women's fashion, is made up of a high number of elements ranging from dresses, to trousers and accessories or jewelry which creates an unlimited number of possible combinations and hence and endless number of effects (Barthes 69). Nevertheless, there are a few common effects and functions fashion can have in the medium of film which will be discussed now.

One of the most obvious and common differentiations of the function of fashion and clothing is the distinction made by psychoanalyst J.C. Flügel as early as 1950 who lists protection, modesty for hiding nudity and ornamentation as the three basic functions of dressing (qtd. in Barthes 6). In reality the last function, ornamentation, is the most essential one nowadays since fashion is used in order to adorn the body to get noticed by others (ibid. 6, 97). For the genre at hand here, namely the fashion film, it also appears appropriate to argue that the act of ornamentation is the most important factor since the fashion film usually does not present and promote basic types of clothing that protect the human body or can be seen as a means of veiling the nude body but rather puts a clear emphasis on the factor of adornment and ornamentation the special fashion designs offer. The innovative collections appear bi-annually or even up to four times a year by now with the release of spring summer, pre-fall, fall winter and cruise or resort collections of big fashion houses which even more highlights the last factor, the desire for up-to-date adornment, since clothing for simple protection needs not to be bought or renewed four times a year. Moreover, Barthes also argues that the fashion system has also developed an additional factor outside these three functions, namely the creating of a message and meaning since the wearing of clothing, which has turned into the showcasing of different outfits in many cases, can be seen as an act of communication and an expression of meaning (33, 97). This added function of clothing is especially important in the audiovisual field and the genre of fashion film, since the wearing of a particular outfit or design enhances the overall meaning.

This process of giving meaning via clothing or fashion designs in the fashion film can have wide ranging dimensions and introduce an almost unlimited number of motifs and themes. The exceptional feature of fashion in film is that it can create meaning by characterizing a figure or sending a message in general before a line was spoken or any other action occurs (Ryan). The reason for this is that fashion can nowadays be seen as an equivalent part among numerous other elements in a wide network of signs and this process can manifest in countless forms (Bruzzi 96). For instance, fashion can evoke themes such as sexuality or gender construction referring to motifs like seductive femininity or aggressive masculinity, mythology with notions such as aliens, outer space or gods and goddesses, morality through the presentation of good versus bad, hierarchical and sociocultural structures including social, political, economic, ideological or professional status as well as age and generation, specific cultural milieus or geographical locations and it can even introduce themes referring to technology by showing different light effects, sparkles or other visual effects (Craik 256, Devoucoux 37). A fashion film that uses almost no spoken words but still manages to classify and identify all the characters, mostly according to their clothing is Dsquared2's fashion film *The Substitute.* First of all the pupils are characterized by their look in the way that they are wearing very colorful and bright, rather youthful and trendy clothing and the fact that they all carry a big bag or have one standing right next to them on their table or seat (Dsquared2 Substitute 00:02-00:21). The designer duo that enters the classroom, on the other hand, is dressed in formal suits (ibid. 00:22-00:29), which immediately classifies them as an authority and ranks them higher than the pupils in their colorful and playful attire. In contrast to this, the two man that accompany them and enter the classroom behind them are dressed in uniforms and carry they suitcases they bring their accessories in (ibid. 00:22-00:29) which subordinates them to the designer duo with their higher professional status. The last person that enters the classroom is also characterized by her clothing straightaway, wearing glasses, red lipstick, a turtleneck and a checkered skirt, all of which are typical clothing choices for a stereotypical teacher (ibid 01:19-01:27).

Figure 14: Characterization by clothing – pupils (Dsquared *Substitute*)

Figure 15: Characterization by clothing – designer duo and uniforms (Dsquared *Substitute*)

The theme referring to technology, light and visual effects is especially important for the genre of fashion film, not at least because it very often incorporates specific relation between various colors and shapes. The audiovisual medium in general regularly employs a so-called grammar of contrasts which is a prominent form of expression by creating space by means of characters or action and especially costumes with opposing elements like black or white, bright or

dark, big or small, close or distant. In this way a film subtly mixes the nuances of colors and movement of costumes in order to convey a certain mood or atmosphere and space (Devoucoux 23), for example, along the lines of using a bright colorful costume in between a rather neutral setting or dark background or vice versa (Bordwell and Thompson 144). For the fashion film, which often lacks dialogue or clear narration and action in many parts, it is also worth mentioning that costumes have the power of guiding the attention and in a way the fashion designs can be seen as a means of orientation, organization and clarification. The focus on shape, form and colors already suggests yet another important field within the field of fashion film, namely the effects and functions of certain fabrics and colors of the fashion designs and the special forms of impact accessories like jewelry, bags or shoes might have.

It is important to keep in mind, that the details of a whole look and even the details of one single piece of clothing can be as important as the outfit in general and small elements such as color, fabric, tailoring or style can create quite specific connotations and meanings (Craik 115). Two of the aspects picked for further investigation here are fabric and color. The latter can play a crucial role in how people are dressed and the way this creates unique or conforming identities in the fashion system (Craik 34). In fact the occurrence of certain colors in garments can convey certain social, cultural, political, hierarchical or psychological dimensions and be a marker for emotion, desire or gender (ibid 37-38). For instance, the color of red can convey themes such as fertility and life by referring to blood while it may also stand for death and decay in other instances. Another typical example is the color white which stands for positive connotations such as goodness, purity, cleanliness on the one side as well as for negative ones on the other side like emptiness or uselessness. The color of black also has such opposing meanings and may present death, madness or secrecy on the one hand and more positive ones like power, elegance and luxury or eroticism if used for lace for example (ibid. 42). A fashion film that makes use of this distinction between colors and their general connotations, is *The Heimlich Maneuver* by Vs. magazine. The two protagonists here, two women, wear a black and a white dress (Vs. magazine 00:12-00:18). The woman wearing black almost chokes on a piece of jewelry she appears to have swallowed accidentally during eating. Therefore it can be argued, that the color of her dress represents the notion of death since she also suffocates and dies in the short film. The second woman, on the other hand, wears a white dress which can be seen as an allusion to the good side or even to savior or lifesaver, because she rescues the other woman in the end and saves her from dying. Besides, her dress also features a lot of ruffles and flounces (ibid. 00:48.00:55) which possibly alludes to a heroine or even an angle and his wings together with the color white and in fact, she somehow plays the role of an angle bringing the woman struggling with death back to life in the end. In other words, the two women somehow represent the good side, namely life in the form of

the white dress, and the bad side, namely death in the form of the black dress.

Figure 16: Colors - black and white dress (Vs. Magazine)

In quite the same way also certain types of fabric, like velvet, fur, denim or brocade for example, do have particular connotations, represent specific meanings and create certain metaphors (Devoucoux 301, Craik 115). Quite a number of fabrics refer to rather sensual and sexual themes as well as desirable female sexuality, including the materials of chiffon, silk and satin (Devoucoux 250). Furthermore, the fabric of fur is also a rather expressive means for film and stands for luxury and lavishness (Devoucoux 41). A fashion film that features different fabrics and conveys the respective connotations is Prada's film *A Therapy* in which the patient that shows up to her psychiatrist is wearing expensive fabrics, clothes and accessories such as a silk blouse, a pearl necklace and even a big fur coat. In her therapy session she even talks about the fact that she is rich, which explains why she is wearing all of these expensive clothes that convey the notion of exclusiveness, luxury and lavishness which is somehow transferred to the image of the fashion house in general with this fashion film. The focus on luxury and exclusiveness is even more emphasized by the fact that the psychiatrist does not seem to be able to listen to what his patient is telling him but rather focuses on the exceptional fur coat hanging on the clothing stand (Prada *Therapy).* The investigation of Bollywood which represents a whole filmic world of costumes has revealed a number of findings that can be applied to costumes, fabrics and textiles in general. For example, the good heroine of Bollywood films commonly wears designs made of cotton, silk, chiffon or other natural fabrics, whereas the opposing character of the vamp wears satin, velvet, lycra, nylon or similar synthetic materials. As for the cut, the vamp usually showcases figure-

hugging clothes with cleavage, push-up bras and naked shoulders, while the heroine is often clothed in simple jeans and sweaters. Concerning color and patterns scholars have noticed that the opponent prefers blood red, high contrasts and geometric patterns, whereas the heroine dresses in more softer colors and flower prints for example (Wenner and Wadia 32-35). The notions of color and fabrics are also vital for the look and hence the message of a subfield of fashion, namely accessories.

Figure 17: Fabrics: fur, silk, pearls, leather (Prada *Therapy*)

In the same way as certain connotations, moods and feelings are generated by the use of a specific type of clothing, also jewelry, make-up, hairstyles and accessories can trigger such associations (Devoucoux 36) and the general meaning of accessories can be of quite diverse nature. One special type of accessory is jewelry, which is also part of many fashion films since fashion designers very often create matching jewelry to their respective collections. Like any other element of fashion and accessories, jewelry also has an impact on the figures wearing it in a film and is endowed with symbolic meaning (ibid 185-188). The speciality of jewelry is that in includes various types of the most expensive and exclusive materials such as gold, silver, gemstones or pearls which enhances it with fundamental power. Generally speaking jewelry is more associated with femaleness which is based on the fact that husbands made their women wear the most sophisticated gemstones in order to show off their wealth (Barthes 60-63). Quite obviously, another special case in the category of accessories are shoes. In a traditional sense the shoe has always been connected with the concept of walking and therefore the notion of movement, for instance, either a stiff walk in high heels or a soft and easy walk in flat shoes (Devoucoux 184) which refers

to the conventional essential function of shoes, namely to walk in comfort. For a shoe in a film it is not necessarily important what it is made of or what it looks like in great detail, but what it reflects which is very often some kind of mirroring of the character wearing it (Ricci). Besides, almost any renowned shoe designer has contributed to the filmic form in some kind of way, with famous names such as Salvatore Ferragamo, Roger Vivier or Manolo Blahnik. In film production and also particularly in the genre of fashion film, the camera frequently focuses on shoes with various close-ups or tracking shots which creates surprise and suspense as to what direction might follow or what the shoe actually symbolizes within the overall content (Devoucoux 183-184). In a high number of instances this emphasis on footwear leads to one of the most common associations for shoes, namely that of eroticization, power and seduction primarily if the shot focuses on a woman's shoes (Ricci) which have an erotic character in almost any filmic representation. The situation very often involves the game with leather, the women's foot, legs, stockings and garters or trying on shoes (Devoucoux 184). The reason for this relation between shoes and motifs such as erotics and sexuality is that the foot actually constitutes one of the most erogenous zones of the human body and therefore touching, seeing and admiring it is linked to such sensual and passionate notions. What is more, the more a shoe form reveals the foot underneath or in it the higher the erotic appeal which results in the fact that sandals are one of the most preferred shoe types for sexual fantasies. The sandal also involves laces just as pieces of clothing like corsets which are also endowed with similar associations due to the mutual act of tying and untying and therefore both imply the meaning of restriction and freedom at the same time (Ricci). Ultimately it becomes clear that the meaning of shoes in film is quite dynamic and that at least any type of shoe contributes to the characterization of the person who wears them (Devoucoux 185). Fashion films make extensive use of this focus on shoes and one example that includes quite a number of shots focusing on the feet and bringing the shoes to the foreground is Miu Miu's film *The Powder Room*. Firstly, there is the simple close-ups focusing on the shoe (Miu Miu *Powder Room* 00:47-00:48) then there is the typical scene referred to above in which a woman puts on a shoe (ibid. 01:15-01:18) and a shot that moves from the shoes upwards putting extreme emphasis on the feet and legs as a sensual part of a woman (ibid. 01:24-01:28) as illustrated by figure 18 below. Besides, the shoes also include straps and laces which classifies them even more as these erotically and sexually loaded objects which have a great visual impact in a filmic form such as the fashion film.

Figure 18: Close-up of a shoe (Miu Miu *Powder Room*)

Alongside these two types, the shoes and the jewelry, there are also a number of other accessories that may have an impact in film. One category would be headwear which is often classified as an enhancement or replacement of hair and hairstyles which puts emphasis on the head and there is a wide range of forms such as caps, all kinds of hats or headscarves. Different types of headgear may possibly enhance and underline the forms of a face and they elongate or enlarge characters in general which makes them stand out more in certain settings. While hats for men are still seen as representing symbolic value in general women's headwear is very often connected to erotic connotations (Devoucoux 175-178). Yet another important accessory, primarily for women, is the handbag in any size or shape and among other things it has been classified as a protective shield and an essential element for the survival of a woman in everyday life carrying around all kinds of necessities (ibid. 188). A fashion film that extensively features this accessory is Dior's *Lady Blue Shanghai* which in fact has the iconic Dior bag as its main protagonist. At first the bag appears mystical and as a rather scary and uncertain object, but after the woman recollects all her memories she appears to have had in Shanghai and with this bag, she puts her arms around the bag and embraces is holding it close to her body (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai* 14:21-14:50), almost as if she is using it as this protective shield referred to above which should save her from any other frightening or scary situations that might come. A further type of garment commonly associated with women and situated somewhere between clothing and accessories is underwear or lingerie. In a general sense two different forms of undergarments can be distinguished, one the one side the pieces a woman decides to wear for herself and on the other side the type of lingerie that feeds the dreams and fantasies of other characters, mostly male ones. This sensual and erotic

connotation once again primarily stems from the fact that underwear also features all kinds of fasteners, closures and hooks which grant access to the body and reveal intimate desired details of a person (180-184). Many aspects just discussed concerning accessories and clothing are also valid for yet another type of body decoration, namely make-up and hair (Bordwell and Thompson 122) and in many cases these two somehow play along the lines of fashion or even compete with it even though they are not of the same material (Barthes 80). One reason for this might be the fact that the eyes play a crucial role in the overall appearance and expression of character and make-up has the ability to enhance the appeal of the eyes by means of applying eyeliner, eyeshadow or mascara that draw the attention to the eyes. Besides, expressively shaped eyebrows also let a figure appear more expressive as they frame the face (Bordwell and Thompson 124). Consequently, make-up and hair can shape a figure in a film just as much as clothing for instance by underlining the ambiguous side of a character showcasing a lot of dark and flashy make-up and a wild hairstyle or highlighting the more neutral characteristics of a figure who wears rather soft and subtle make-up and a common hairstyle (Wenner and Wadia 32-35). For the fashion film the process hinted at with all these observation is that fashion and clothing can generate and build a character which will now be looked at in more detail.

Figure 19: Handbag as protective shield (Prada *Lady Blue Shanghai*)

Fashion and clothing has interested writers, scholars and philosophers for a very long time, not at least because it can be said that it is closely connected with the human being and its personality and in fact, even has the ability to change the appearance and perception of a person. As Roland Barthes put it, fashion and clothing relate to the human body on the whole and

furthermore, fashion and the body also relate to society. In this way, clothing has the capacity to make a character and vice versa, due to the dialectic connection between these two elements (Barthes 96). In a way clothing can not be observed in a meaningful way without also considering the body and the person it dresses and this process is put to use in film strategically by identifying and forming a person by already creating a particular impression and certain meaning before a character walks, talks or engages in any other kind of action on screen (Devoucoux 29-32). For the purpose of analyzing this relation between fashion and body, it is vital to take into consideration that the combination of a certain piece of clothing and a specific character results in a universal effect and that the meaning of specifically colored or shaped clothes can vary from case to case (ibid 79). However, some general effects of clothes on the identities and personalities of characters in film can be listed such as the creation of social comments and social value or status including hierarchical aspects, class positions, economic wealth and power as well as age or gender for example (Craik 11-12). Moreover, clothing can also distinguish between different characters by means of drawing boundaries between main characters and less important figures or supporting characters using certain types of clothes, for instance, by dressing the important characters in more attention-grabbing and outstanding clothes while presenting secondary figures in more neutral clothes (Vernallis 100). What ties in with this capacity of clothing and fashion shaping a figure in a film is the fact that the appearance and hence the identity of a character can also be changed by means of varying their clothes and in this sense, dress can be an operator that is capable of creating a new structural relationship between the body and dress (Craik 36).

For the genre of fashion film a further observation appears to be appropriate which is also valid for the relationship between fashion and the body within the field of fashion in general, namely that the clothing can actually function as a substitute for the body and a character (Devoucoux 79). In many cases the characters of a film are dressed almost too beautiful and spectacular which results in the shift of the focus on the identity of the characters themselves to their fashionable attire and the art of clothing itself. In other words, the emphasis is put on the glance at the clothes on display and the creation of desire for the material goods of fashion (Bruzzi 18-20). This function of clothing in film can be related to a previous form of the promotion of fashion already discussed to a great extent above in section 2.1 on the fashion show. In both of these sphere of representation of clothes, in the staged presentation on the catwalk and in a number of fashion films, the only function of the human body is to move in a way that emphasizes and showcases the fashion designs which subordinates the characters as well as their individuality and identity to the material objects, the clothes. A prime example featuring this movement emphasizing the cut, shape and fabrics of the clothes and fashion designs is the fashion film for Matthew Williamson, which features female dancers that move, dance, walk and jump in a way that

lets the fabrics and the whole dresses appear in their best light and brings out all their details and elusive ornamentation (Matthew Williamson 00:33-00:37, 00:40-00:49, 01:14-01:39), as seen in figure 20 below. It shows, that there is of course an important relationship between clothes and the body, however, the nature of this link is not balanced or constant in the way that the fashion design very often dominates over any other element or aspect of a film (ibid. 30-31). Consequently, it can be argued that fashion can not only make a character but build a whole story or narrative on its own and represent the driving force and only focus in a fashion film which will be the subject of discussion in the next section.

Figure 20: Human movement emphasizes fashion designs (Matthew Williamson)

4.3   Fashion as the driving force: how clothes unfold into storyline

The overall understanding of costumes or clothing in film is that they only generate meaning in relation to the body of the character which is of course true for many filmic productions, especially for those with fully developed narratives and complex characters. Overall, film history has shown that the majority of scholars analyzing clothing in film in general have argued for this understanding and function of dress (Bruzzi 33-34). However, in the context of the fashion film clothing can be looked at from a quite contrary perspective and as Stella Bruzzi argues, clothes do not only create meaning and signify something in relation to a body or figure of a film, but they can build an independent discourse and therefore generate meaning by themselves (pxvii). Clearly, clothing does not have the capacity of narrating everything in film and most certainly does not make up a story on its own, since for example a fixed unchanging shot on a dress just hanging somewhere

does not really create complex meaning or a full story. Nevertheless, in film and in the context of all the surrounding elements they do of course have great power and may actually narrate a lot by creating moments of intensification and pointed emphasis, not at least because actors rarely appear fully naked and even then clothes would gain a meaning of exclusivity in such a case (Devoucoux 53-57). As a matter of fact, clothes in general, or in the case of the fashion films the specific designs of a fashion designs, can contribute a great deal of value just as any element of mise-en-scène can and hence, fashion designs can indeed be classified as highly expressive objects (Vernallis 103). From the outset of film, clothing and costumes have played a crucial role and very often constituted the firsthand resources for a film to generate a plot or create surprises and memorable moments by creating a certain mood and overall meaning within a film production. After film has been present for several decades now and has developed many other sophisticated means for advancing a story or creating meaning with all kinds of digital and technological innovations, film still draws on the power of clothes frequently in order to establish the visual structure and enrich it with meanings (O'Neill 273).

In practice, such powerful patterns and situations are very often created by means of outstanding and iconic fashion designs that are prioritized over narrative and story and which therefore often collide with all other kinds of elements of the mise-en-scène and as a result create an alternative and independent as well as overriding meaning (Bruzzi 3, 17). This phenomenon can even go as far as that fashion labels are indeed synonymous with a protagonists identity (Bruzzi and Gibson 126) or that the direct presentation of a character without the associative game of fabrics, colors, forms and movements of their garments would appear rather flat and not generate any meaning at all (Devoucoux 99). Quite obviously a number of scholars and other actors within the field of fashion, for example the costume designer of the series *Sex and the City* Patricia Field, even go to the lengths of classifying a piece of clothing or a certain look or outfit as a character of its own, partly because fashion can nowadays be seen as one of the most striking elements in the world of filmic images (ibid 33). One of the main reasons for arguments against the common belief that clothes are only meaningful if they are linked to a human body and the identity of a character is the consideration of actual fashion designers within the field of dressing characters for films (Bruzzi 34) and this observation especially holds true for the phenomenon of the fashion film, since the actual clothes are not designed for dressing a specific character with a distinguishing identity, but rather for their own sake and the sake of fashion and art in general. The genre of fashion film only comes into play after the collections have been designed and completed in order to represent and showcase them in the majority of cases. To put it another way, the creations of a fashion designers already gain signification and meaning outside the realm of film and incorporate or combine all kinds of inspiration and artistic sources in order to create innovative

looks and meaning (Devoucoux 267). What ties in with this classification of clothing and fashion designs as the main and leading elements of a film is the concept of the spectacular.

Quite a number of films on the whole and especially those within the genre of fashion film employ clothes and fashion designs as a means of display and as pure spectacle as opposed to utilizing garments as visual elements inferior to narrative and character (Bruzzi 3, 8). The notion of fashion as a spectacle is not a development of recent times or the phenomenon of fashion film in particular, but has been existing long before in fashion shows or stage performances featuring outstanding garments (Devoucoux 48). The medium of film makes use of clothes as a spectacular elements by means of following clear methods that invert the conventions of strong scripts and overpowering narrative and therefore incorporate spectacular fashion designs alongside the characters and actions in a film imposing structures and meaning superior to any kind of story or other developments. Clothes can be considered as achieving this spectacular character when they interrupt, destabilize or when they outdo and top any other element such as characters or action (Bruzzi and Gibson 115, 123). If this strategy of intruding and overall dominating designs is made use of in film, especially in fashion film, the whole content can be considered as an elongation of the former method of promoting and representing fashion, namely the runway or catwalk (Bruzzi 13). The designs as spectacular and clothes as the driving force of a film can be manifest in many ways and some traditional examples as well as such cases of fashion film will now be the subject of discussion.

Generally speaking, clothing as the main character of a film can be present in many ways for example it can take on the role of qualifying, marking, differentiating, valuing, visually demarcating, organizing, shaping, affirming, influencing, changing, orienting and building all kinds of relationships, hierarchies or other dimensions of society and the reason why fashion commonly takes on this role is its ability to communicate with visuality and materiality and hence has an attention-grabbing function close to incomparable to any other element (Devoucoux 29-30). Films use the outstanding fashion designs in order to present beautiful and fashionable characters, predominantly in the combination with women, because in the past it has always been women who were characterized and identified through their garments most (Bruzzi and Gibson 116). However, in many cases it is not the women themselves that are presented as pretty and desirable but the clothes they wear (Bruzzi 19). By this means, films very often rather present quite artificial ideas almost dreamlike concepts which are far from the common perception of clothing and identity in real life, and this use of fashion designs that represents them as dreams also situates the films outside of reality and somehow classifies the whole content of the films as a dream (Devoucoux 31-25). This is especially true for the fashion film which always makes use of the latest collections

a fashion designer created, very often long before the costumers can actually purchase them and besides, a wide range of the audience of fashion films in fact never acquires the actual fashion designs but rather remains in this state of dream. After establishing the concept of clothing as the dominating elements within films it is now time to illustrate the statements by reference to some actual examples of fashion film that include such a spectacular and superior elements of clothing.

One prime example would be Dior's film *Lady Blue Shanghai*, which features a handbag that mysteriously appears in the hotel room of a woman at the beginning (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai* 02:16-02:20) and somehow manages to control the whole content and course of action throughout the rest of the film. The first time the bag is presented already establishes it as something spectacular because it appears out of fog, haze and gleaming light and from the inside of the bag a beam of light is emitted. In her analysis of the fashion film Nathalie Khan argues that these circumstances let the bag also appear fantastic, monstrous and ghostly and the whole use and representation of the Dior handbag classifies it as a spectacle (237). Furthermore, it can be argued that the bag takes on an independent role and it is established as a character of the film itself in a way, which is highlighted by the fact that the woman caresses and hugs the bag tightly as if it were a person at the end of the film (Dior *Lady Blue Shanghai* 14:15-14:49). Yet another example of a piece of clothing dominating a film is Prada's short film *A Therapy* in which a woman appears to an appointment with her psychotherapist dressed in a fur coat which she takes of at the entrance of the room. While she starts to talk, her therapist soon digresses from what she is telling him and fixates the fur coat hanging on the clothes-stand (Prada *Therapy* 01:18). Consequently, the fur coat quickly controls the further development of the story and establishes itself as the dominating object, which is highlighted by the fact that the voice of the woman starts getting quieter while the therapist only has eyes for the coat anymore (Prada *Therapy* 01:30, 01:50). The coat fascinates the therapist so much that he seems to completely forget about his patient and gets up to walk over to it and starts stroking over its furry surface. It even goes as far as that he takes it off the stand and puts it on himself just to admire his appearance in the mirror afterwards (Prada *Therapy* 02:29). According to Devoucoux a piece of clothing can also be a medium conflict in film, either between to people or in general, and it can even be used as a murder weapon (137). One example of a fashion film that illustrates this use is the film *The Heimlich Maneuver* which first only presents two women dining at a table. However, soon one of the two women chokes on something while eating and does not manage to disgorge the piece that made her choke on her own. The other woman slowly comes over to her and finally manages to free her from the object she swallowed which turns out to be piece of jewelry, namely a necklace (01:36-01:39). Clearly, this specific accessory developed into the main element of the film controlling the course of action, since the woman would have died if it was not for the other woman who freed her, illustrated by figure 21

below. All the examples just mentioned seem to include some kind of narrative or little story in addition to the spectacular objects of fashion designs who dominate the films and unfold into storylines, but there are also other instances of fashion films that solely concentrate on the showcasing of designs without a clear plot. Two instances of these type where the clothing appears to be the only driving force are Gucci's short film and Prada's film for their spring summer collections 2012 (Gucci, Prada *Spring Summer* 2012). The domination of the clothes throughout the whole films is manifested in the way the camera moves over the fashion designs and follows the characters as they walk around the setting in order to catch the movement of the clothes as well as every single detail.
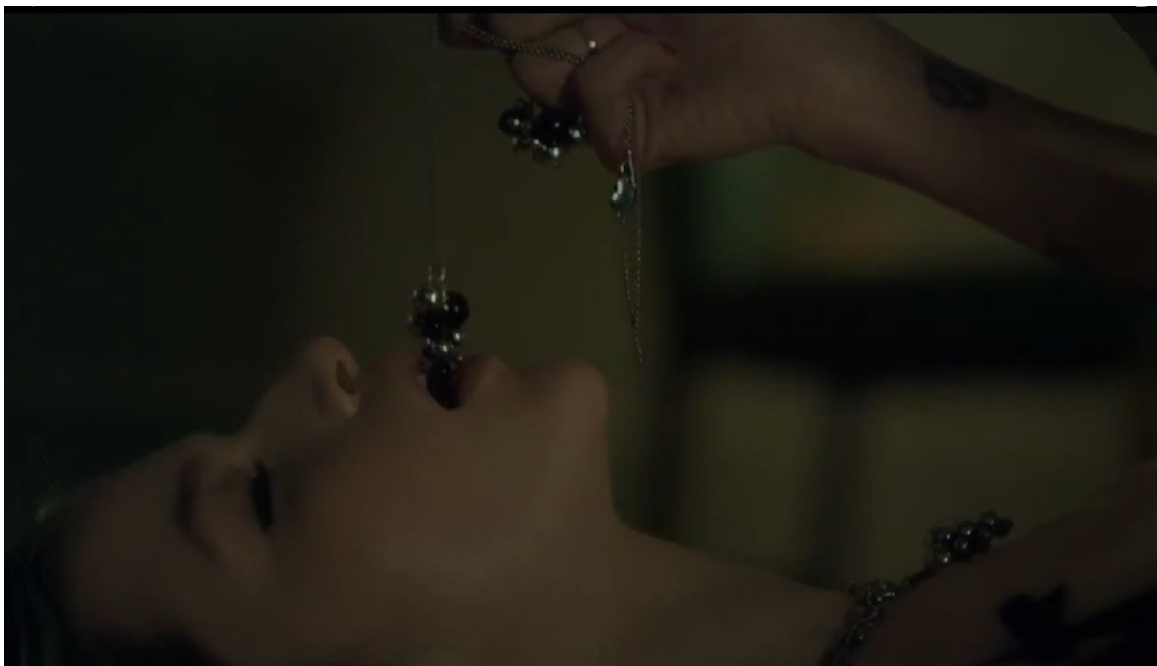
Figure 21: Necklace as the driving force (Vs. Magazine)

In conclusion on the topic of clothes or fashion designs in the fashion film it can be stated, that they actually have the capability of dominating over all other elements of the mise-en-scène of a film and that they frequently present the key element or even leading character among all the other aspects. The reason for this is that fashion films do of course aim to represent and promote the collections of the fashion houses who have these films produced. After the consideration of the most important element of the fashion film as a last analytical point of this paper is important to bring all the observations together in one last section, the definition of the phenomenon of the fashion film and the listing of all the subtypes and their features above.

5 Conclusion

Generally speaking, it has become clear throughout the course of this analysis that the genre of the fashion film is indeed a rather hybrid genre as stated in the hypothesis at the very beginning of this paper. However, just as the genre of fashion film also the notion of hybridity is rather ambiguous or undefined and incorporates a number of different theories, ideas and concepts (Kraidy vi) but for the purpose of this paper there are a few aspects inherent to the notion of hybridity and therefore, the term should be defined as the process of fusing distinct styles or forms which very often includes the movement of cultural commodities such as media (ibid. 5). In this way, hybridity plays a crucial role in changing culture and breaking or blurring boundaries between formerly separated forms (Barker 89), such as ways of representation and promotion of fashion in the case of the fashion film. Another closely related concept, which is more detailed and even more important for the analysis of the phenomenon at hand here, namely the fashion film, is the concept of hybrid genre; and the fashion film has indeed been defined as a hybrid genre in this paper. The concept of hybrid genre originates from literary studies first and foremost and generally speaking it can be defined as combining the formulated conventions of two or more other genres (Kent 69). In fact, fashion films do actually draw on a number of related fields such as fashion in general, photography, art, advertising and film and incorporate many aspects and elements that have been traditionally established in these other spheres before. Consequently, it appears obvious that it is close to impossible to note down one single universal definition for the genre of fashion films since so many different spheres have had an impact on its establishment and development. However, there are elements that appear across many examples and subtypes which establishes them as universal features and characteristics of fashion film in general and therefore these will now be listed briefly.

Two of the main influences on the genre of fashion film from within the field of fashion have been the most traditional forms of representing and promoting fashion, namely the catwalk show and fashion photography. The elements and patterns inherent to these two types that found their way into the phenomenon of the fashion film have been discussed extensively in section 2.1 and section 2.2 above. One example that is part of a great number of fashion films in general would be the fact that the actors in fashion films frequently move in the same way as they would in a conventional fashion show or during the shooting process of a campaign or fashion editorial. This aspects is manifest in the fact that the figures in fashion film often appear to be moving across the screen as if they walk down a runway in a fashion show and that they pose in the dynamic images of film in a way they usually do in the still fixed images of photography. This feature of the fashion

film based on conventions of the fashion show and fashion photography also includes the fact that the figures and characters in fashion films frequently remain rather lifeless and have no clear identity or personality and besides they do not develop fully. Some instances featuring these similar forms of movement and the establishment of characters would be Dsquared2's fashion film *The Substitutes,* Louis Vuitton's film presenting the collaboration with Stephen Sprouse, Gucci's film for their spring summer 2012 collection or the Prada films for their 2012 collections. This first common feature of the fashion film also relates to another specific characteristic of the genre, namely the silence of the figures. In analyzing the sound level of the fashion film, it has become clear that quite a number of cases focuses on the utilization of one type of sound, namely music and does not include the two other types, speech or dialogue and noises to a similar extent, with the exception of the more narrative types of fashion films. It shows that the emphasis is more on the audiovisual presentation of the contents, to be more precise the fashion design, and the creation of a certain mood or atmosphere and specific motif or themes connected to the collections and the fashion houses in general. This typical feature already points towards another common similarity between the unique forms within the genre namely the domination of the objects of fashion within the genre. A second element that is included in almost any kind of fashion film that refers to both, the influences of the field of film with is various forms and cinematographic techniques as well as the field of fashion and clothing in general, is the fact that the clothes are highlighted and showcased at least in some form. The different forms of achieving this focus on the fashion designs have been analyzed in great detail in section 3 on the influences of film on the genre of fashion film and in section 4 on the various elements that concern fashion and clothing in fashion film. One the one hand there are the filmic techniques such as the shot types focusing on the fashion designs, with extensive usage of the close up, or the camera movements, with pans, tilts, tracking shots or cranes following and revealing the clothes. Some examples would be Dior Homme's short film *Un Rendez Vous,* Miu Miu's fashion film *The Powder Room, the* short film *Dancer in a Daydream* by Christian Louboutin or the film presenting Anna Dello Russo's collection for H&M. On the other hand, there is the concept of the fashion design as a spectacular element originating from the field of fashion in general which manifests in fashion film in the way that pieces of clothing and accessories have the power of establishing themselves into the key elements, main characters or driving forces in the fashion film. Here some prime examples would be Dior's film *Lady Blue Shanghai*, Prada's short film *A Therapy* or the fashion film *The Heimlich Maneuver* produced by Vs. magazine.

For the general definition it is difficult to list any other universal or typical elements due to the fact that the fashion film is such a diverse genre influenced by numerous other fields and the fact that the genre is a rather new and recent development which is open to so many different

directions. The wide ranging analysis has shown that the investigation is much more efficient and useful if it includes a number of different example and focuses on the analysis of various subtypes of the genre of fashion film. As a result the concluding remarks will now focus on the different points of view from which fashion film can be defined which includes the establishment of various subtypes and the listing of their distinguishing features and characteristics, not at least because the aim of this paper was to analyze the genre of the fashion film on the whole regarding as many facets, aspects and approaches as possible.

One of the most useful and applicable approaches to the genre of fashion film is from the point of view concerning the element of narration, distinguishing two categories, namely narrative and non-narrative. In fact, throughout the short history of the fashion film both types have been made use of in the production and there are examples of great narratives as well as instances that almost completely lack any kind of narrative. On the one hand there are various narrative fashion films that can be compared to filmic forms such as the feature films or fictional films. As for their overall structure they usually follow a clear story and therefore feature clear pattern of cinematographic techniques, with the continuity editing style as one of the most striking characteristics of this type. Besides, the narrative focus also becomes apparent in the length of the fashion films belonging to this type and it can be argued that they longer than the non-narrative type with up to almost 30 minutes in the case of the fashion film *The Tale of a Fairy* for Chanel's Cruise 2012 collection. Other examples more or less featuring a story would be *Mourir Auprès De Toi* by Spike Jonze for designer Olympia Le Tan, Dior's film *Un Rendez Vous*, the film *Remember Now* by Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel and the short film *Lady Blue Shanghai* by David Lynch for Dior. On the other hand there are also numerous non-narrative type that frequently only feature a certain mood or atmosphere or only hint to a story but leave many aspects ambiguous or unclear and the outcome open. This type is very much influenced by more experimental films or abstract and underground film and therefore often follows alternative editing styles rather than the continuity system. As for the length the films in this category remain rather short and on the average to not last longer than a few minutes. Some examples are Burberry's short film showing their fall winter 2012 collection, Louis Vuitton's film presenting their collaboration with Stephen Sprouse, the short film by Lanvin for fall winter 2011, *Such Flare* by Dolce and Gabbana or the film presenting the Void or Course collection.

Another fruitful way of approaching the phenomenon of the fashion film is the question of authorship. As far as the authors or directors are concerned there are also two different categories. Firstly, there are those fashion films that are produced by actual filmmakers such as famous feature film or music video directors as well as film auteurs from more experimental fields. Some

examples analyzed in this paper that were actually created by real filmmakers are Prada's fashion film *A Therapy* by Roman Polanski, Dior's short film *Un Rendez Vous* by Guy Ritchie or another Dior film, namely *Lady Blue Shanghai* by David Lynch who are all produced by rather renowned film directors, or Olympia Le Tan's short film *Mourir Auprès de Toi* created by music video director Spike Jonze. Secondly, there are those fashion films that are produced by those authors who are not originally based in filmmaking but rather coming from within the field of fashion. In the majority of cases these are fashion photographers who test their skills in filmmaking and produce fashion films such as Dior's film *I Found My Love in Portofino* by Ellen von Unwerth, Dsquared2's *The Substitute* by Mert & Marcus or Lanvin's film by Steven Meisel. Fashion films produced by the actual designers behind the collections that are featured in the fashion films also belong to this category as for instance Karl Lagerfeld's films *Remember Now* and *The Tales of a Fairy* for Chanel or the fashion film *The Ultimate Scream* produced by the duo Dan and Dean Caten behind the brand Dsquared2. This second type frequently features the same imagery as the still images of the photography of the print campaigns which is a rather simple and reduced subtype of the fashion film.

A third possible point of view on the genre of fashion film concerns the commissioner, meaning the people or institutions who assign the creation of a fashion film and once again there is also a differentiation into certain subtypes. In the majority of cases the fashion houses or fashion designers themselves have the idea of creating a fashion film featuring their designs in order to promote and represent a recent collection or the brand in general. Most fashion films discussed in this paper belong to this category and some examples would be the fashion films H&M created for their collaboration with fashion icons such as Versace or Anna Dello Russo or fashion films such as the Burberry Teaser among many others. Other types of commissioners would be online platforms such as Nick Knight's SHOWstudio already referred to a couple of times or the platform NOWNESS which also features in-house fashion film productions as well as print publications in fashion like Vs. magazine, Dazed and Confused or Achtung magazine who now also start producing fashion films.

Ultimately it can be stated, that there are also a number of other approaches to the phenomenon of fashion film that can be of interest in order to establish definitions for the genre on the whole and for establishing various subtypes. For instance, another point of view for future analysis could concern the characters featured in fashion films, or a closer analysis between the influences of art and advertising on the fashion film. However, the close analysis of all these aspects would have exceeded the aim of this work, which was to prove that the fashion film is a hybrid genre influenced by various other fields and to establish some general characteristics and

features as well as several subtypes, all of which has been discussed to a great extent in the sections above. At last, it is crucial to keep on mind that the genre of the fashion film is indeed a hybrid genre which complicates the establishment of a universal definition and instead leads to various subtypes and due to these reasons future research is more than welcome and needed since fashion films apparently offers and enormously wide range of points of interest and since little to no original research has been conducted before.

6 Bibliography

6.1 Secondary Sources

Aspers, Patrik. *Markets in Fashion: A Phenomenological Approach*. 2nd ed. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.

Barthes, Roland. *The Language of Fashion*. Ed. Andrew Stafford. Trans. Andy Stafford and Michael Carter. Oxford: Berg, 2006.

Barker, Chris. *The Sage Dictionary of Cultural Studies*. London: Sage Publications, 2004.

Berger, Arthur Asa. *Cultural Criticism: A Primer of Key Concepts*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication, 1999.

Berg, Angelika and Regine Engelmeier. "Design oder Nichtsein, Kostümbildner und Couturiers in Hollywoods großen Tagen." *Ausstellung Film und Mode - Mode im Film.* Ed. Regine Engelmeier. München: Prestel, 1997. 18-25.

Boodro, Michael. "Art and Fashion." *The Fashion Reader.* Ed. Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun. Oxford: Berg, 1990. 256-260.

Bordwell, David and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. 8th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Borstnar, Nils, Eckhard Pabst and Hans Jürgen Wulff. *Einführung in die Film- und Fernsehwissenschaft*. 2nd ed. Konstanz: UVK-Verl.-Ges., 2008.

Breward, Christopher. "Cultures, Identities, Histories: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress." *Fashion Theory* 2.4 (1998): 301-313.

---. *Fashion*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003.

Bruzzi, Stella. *Undressing Cinema: Clothing and Identity in the Movies*. London: Routledge, 1997.

Bruzzi, Stella and Pamela Church Gibson. "'Fashion is the Fifth Character': Fashion, Costume and Character in Sex and the City." *Reading Sex and the City.* Ed. Kim Akass and Janet McCabe. London: Tauris, 2003. 115-129.

Bühler, Gerhard. *Postmoderne, auf dem Bildschirm, auf der Leinwand: Musikvideos, Werbespots und David Lynchs Wild at Heart*. Sankt Augustin: Gardez!, 2002.

Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*. New York: Longman, 1998.

Craik, Jennifer. *Fashion: The Key Concepts*. Oxford: Berg, 2009.

Debord, Guy. *The Society of the Spectacle.* Detroit: Black & Red, 1970.

During, Simon. *The Cultural Studies Reader.* 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 1999.

---. Introduction. *The Cultural Studies Reader.* 2nd ed. By During. London: Routledge, 1999. 1-28.

Engelmeier, Regine. *Ausstellung Film und Mode - Mode im Film.* München: Prestel, 1997.

Entwistle, Joanne and Agnés Rocamora. "The Field of Fashion Materialized: A Study of London Fashion Week." *Sociology* 40.4 (2006): 735-751.

Evans, Caroline. "Yesterday's Emblems and Tomorrow's Commodities: The Return of the Repressed in Fashion Imagery Today." *Fashion Cultures: Theories, Explorations, and Analysis*. Ed. Stella Bruzzi and Pamela Church Gibson. London: Routledge, 2000. 93-113.

---. "The Enchanted Spectacle" *Fashion Theory* 5.3 (2001): 271-310.

---. *Fashion at the Edge*. London: Yale UP, 2003.

---. "The Walkies: Early Fashion Shows and Silent Cinema". *Fashion in Film.* Ed. Adrienne Munich. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2011. 110-134.

Exner, Maria. "Fashion Film Festival: Ein stilvolles Kind des Internets". zeit.de 28 January 2012. 30 Septmeber 2012: 1-2. <http://www.zeit.de/lebensart/mode/2012-01/fashion-film-festival-barcelona>

Gibbs, John. *Mise-en-scène: Film Style and Interpretation*. London: WallflowerPress, 2002.

Gilbert, David. "World Cities of Fashion." *The Fashion Reader*. 2nd ed.. Ed. Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun. Oxford: Berg, 2011: 237-242.

Hepburn, Audrey. "Kostüme machen Schauspieler: Ein persönliches Bekenntnis." *Ausstellung Film und Mode - Mode im Film.* Ed. Regine Engelmeier. München: Prestel, 1997. 9-11.

Horkheimer, Max and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007.

Jameson, Fredric. "Postmodernism and Consumer Society." *The Norton anthology of theory and criticism.* Ed. Vincent B. Leitch. New York: Norton, 2010. 1846-1860.

Jones, Dylan. "The Man in the White Suit." *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Jones, Terry, ed. *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Milano: Electa, 1998.

Kaplan, Joel H. and Sheila Stowell. Introduction. *Theatre and Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes.* By Kaplan and Stowell. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. 1-7.

Keazor, Henry. *Video Thrills the Radio Star*. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2005.

Kent, Thomas. *Interpretation and Genre: The Role of Generic Perception in the Study of Narrative Texts.* Cranbury: Associated UP, 1986.

Khan, Nathalie. "Cutting the Fashion Body: Why the Fashion Image Is No Longer Still." *Fashion Theory* 16.2 (2012): 235-250.

Kraidy, Marwan M. *Hybridity: or the Cultural Logic of Globalization.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005.

Louis Vuitton. *Stephen Sprouse mit Leopardenmuster*. 12 October 2012. 14 October 2012. <http://www.louisvuitton.de/front/#/deu_DE/New-Now/articles/STEPHEN-SPROUSE-MIT-

LEOPARDENMUSTER>

Martin, Richard and Andrew Wilkes. "cine/moda." *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Mattelart, Armand, Xavier Delcourt and Michèle Mattelart. "International Image Markets." *The Cultural Studies Reader*. Ed. Simon During. London: Routledge, 1993.421-437.

Metzeltin, Michael and Margit Thir. "Der Mensch als semiotisches und mediales Wesen." Diskurs, Text, Sprache. Eine methodenorientierte Einführung in die Sprachwissenschaft für Romanistinnen und Romanisten. Ed. Michael Metzeltin. Wien: Praesens Verlag, 2006.

Mitry, Jean. *Semiotics and the Analysis of Film.* London: Athlone Pr., 2000.

Molho, Renata. *"*Reflections". *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16.3 (1975): 6-18.

Mulvey, Laura. "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" inspired by King Vidor's Duel in the Sun." *Feminist Film Theory: A Reader*. Ed. Sue Thornham. New York: New York UP, 1999. 31-40.

Nagrath, Sumati. "Local Roots of Global Ambitions: A Look at the Role of the India Fashion Week in the Development of the Indian Fashion Industry." *Global Fashion, Local Tradition: On the Globalisation of Fashion*. 2nd ed. Ed. Jan Brand and José Teunissen and Anne van der Zwaag. Arnhem: Terra – Lannoo , 2006. 46-53.

Nünning, Vera and Ansgar Nünning. *An Introduction to the Study of English and American Literature*. 8th ed. Trans. Jane Dewhurst. Stuttgart: Klett-Lerntraining, 2011.

O'Neill, Alistair. "Festival Review: Fashion in Film Festival." *Fashion Theory* 12.2 (2008): 271–276.

Phelan Hayley. "Why Fash Videos are Increasing in Popularity." fashionista.com. 15 November 2011. <http://fashionista.com/2011/11/fashion-videos-are-increasing-in-popularity-here-are-the-top-10-most-viewed-fashion-videos-of-all-time/>

Razzini, Vieri. "Everything to Seduce" *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Ricci, Stefania. "Cinderella: the shoe rediscovered." *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Ruggerone, Lucia. "The Simulated (Fictious) Body: The Production of Women's Images in Fashion Photography." *Poetics* 34, 2006. 354-369.

Ryan, Roberto. "Costumes from the Oscars." *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Sardar, Ziauddin and Borin Van Loon. *Introducing Cultural Studies*. Ed. Richard Appignanesi. New York: Totem, 1994.

Scorzin, Pamela C. "Global Design Art: am Beispiel des Fashion Films 'First Spring' von Yang

Fudong." *KunstDesign*. *Kunsttexte.de* 1/2011. <http://www.kunsttexte.de/index.php?id=711&idartikel=38664&ausgabe=38657&zu=691&L=0>

Sharkey, Alix. "Postcards from Bohème: The Avant-Garde in Fashion and Film." *Biennale di Firenze 1998: Fashion / Cinema.* Ed. Terry Jones. Milan: Electa, 1998.

Stafford, Andrew and Michael Carter. Preface. *The Language of Fashion*. By Roland Barthes. Trans. Andrew Stafford and Michael Carter. Oxford: Berg, 2006. vii-xiii.

Teunissen, José. "Global Fashion, Local Tradition: On the Globalisation of Fashion." *Global Fashion, Local Tradition: On the Globalisation of Fashion*. 2nd ed. Ed. Jan Brand and José Teunissen and Anne van der Zwaag. Arnhem: Terra – Lannoo, 2006. 8-23.

Tungate, Mark. *Fashion Brands: Branding Style from Armani to Zara.* London: Kogan Page, 2005.

Van der Zwaag, Anne. "Fashion Weeks." *Global Fashion, Local Tradition: On The Globalisation of Fashion*. 2nd ed. Ed. Jan Brand and José Teunissen and Anne van der Zwaag. Arnhem: Terra – Lannoo, 2006. 32-43.

Vernallis, Carol. *Experiencing Music Video: Aesthetics and Cultural Context.* Columbia: Columbia UP, 2004.

Wallis, Cara. "Performing Gender: A Content Analysis of Gender Display in Music Videos." *Sex Roles* 64. 3-4 (2011): 160-172.

Weller, Sandy. "Beyond 'Global Production Networks': Australian Fashion Week's Trans-sectoral Synergies." *Working Paper 33.* Victoria University: Centre for Strategic Economic Studies, 2007.

Wenner, Dorothee and Riyad Vinci Wadia. "Eine Enzyklopädie der Bollywood-Liebe." *Bollywood. Das indische Kino und die Schweiz*. Ed. Alexandra Schneider. Zürich: Gestaltung, 2002. 31-39.

White, Palmer. *Elsa Schiaparelli: Empress of Paris Fashion*. London: Aurum Press, 1986.

Williams, Raymond. "Advertising: The Magic System." The Cultural Studies Reader. Ed. Simon During. London: Routledge, 1993. 320-336.

Wolff, Werner. *The Musicalization of Fiction: A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality.* Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999.

Zahm, Olivier. "On the Marked Change in Fashion Photography." *The Fashion Reader.* Ed. Linda Welters and Abby Lillethun. Oxford: Berg, 2003. 263-269.

6.2   Primary Sources

Anna Dello Russo at H&M. "Anna Dello Russo at H&M - Fashion Shower." youtube.com. 04 September 2012. 28 October 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zXRmWzi2ne4>

Burberry. "Full Show: Burberry Prorsum Womenswear Autumn/Winter 2012 Show." youtube.com. 20 February 2012. 15 May 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mymYfX0jTbI&feature=plcp>

Burberry. "Teaser: Burberry Prorsum Spring/Summer 2013 Show." youtube.com. 14 September 2012. 15 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiYbsY0zPvg>

Chanel. "Remember Now by Karl Lagerfeld | Short Movie Part 1 (Chanel Cruise 2011)." youtube.com. 11 May 2010. 4 April 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZYsv-Z6AA4>

Chanel. "Remember Now by Karl Lagerfeld | Short Movie Part 2 (Chanel Cruise 2011)." youtube.com. 11 May 2010. 4 April 2012.<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=P2i8CsBkY58&feature=endscreen>

Chanel. "Chanel - Cruise 2012 The Tale of a Fairy The Short Film by Karl Lagerfeld Part 1 Exclusive."youtube.com. 10 May 2011. 3 March 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcWR8nqdqoI>

Chanel. "Chanel - Cruise 2012 The Tale of a Fairy The Short Film by Karl Lagerfeld Part 2 Exclusive."youtube.com. 10 May 2011. 3 March 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=Zz5x_4fbVuU&feature=endscreen>

Chanel. „Chanel and the diamond - Inside CHANEL." youtube.com. 28 January 2013. 28 January 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RW3T5RcxXCw>

Christian Louboutin. „Christian Louboutin / Dancer in a Daydream." youtube.com. 21 May 2010. 2 December 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ycaRcpMp_p8>

Dior. "Lady Dior – Lady Blue Shanghai." youtube.com. 08 June 2011. 13 November 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZPAO4k_Wstk>

Dior. "Christian Dior | Cruise 2012 | I Found My Love in Portofino by Ellen von Unwerth." 16 November 2011. 11 May 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6iLTz0WmPts>

Dior Homme. „Un Rendez Vous by Guy Ritchie starring Jude Law." youtube.com. 05 September 2010. 18 August 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZd9mKJcOR0>

Dior. „Dior ADDICT Fragrance [Director's cut]." youtube.com. 20 June 2012. 13 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZAKwpdgTZI>

Dior. „Dior ADDICT [Teaser 1]." youtube.com. 07 June 2012. 13 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GY_CLViHH7c>

Dior. „Dior ADDICT [Teaser 2]." youtube.com. 07 June 2012. 13 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcQ57eLxB7g>

111

Dior. „Dior ADDICT [Teaser 3]." youtube.com. 07 June 2012. 13 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJt8VTV8KtE>

Dior. „Dior ADDICT [Teaser 4]." youtube.com. 07 June 2012. 13 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8tVjaRo61M>

Dolce & Gabbana. "La Bella Estate: the Dolce&Gabbana Man Campaign S/S 2012 Short Movie." youtube.com. 11 January 2012. 15 May 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTW6YmAQiF0>

Dolce & Gabbana. "Such Flare! Sparks Fly for Dolce & Gabbana Spring 2010." nowness.com. 11 Mrach 2010. 12 September 2012. <http://www.nowness.com/day/2010/3/11/428/such-flare>

Dsquared2. "The Substitute: DSquared² Fall/Winter 2012/13" youtube.com. 19 June 2012. 20 June 2012 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIDdbqKC8Cw>

Dsquared2. „Ultimate Scream by Cara Delevingne - Dsquared2 Resort Collection Spring Summer 2013." youtube.com. 20 November 2012. 21 November 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlyxfOZ0gM4>

Gucci. „Gucci Spring Summer 2012 AD Campaign YouTube."youtube.com. 06 February 2012. 4 October 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qnD-fAt6KQ0&feature=relmfu>

Juicy Couture. "Juicy Fall 2012 Fashion Film Teaser." youtube.com. 30 July 2012. 20 October 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtK0RuOs_sw>

Juicy Couture. "Juicy Couture Fall 2012: Karlie Kloss Goes Back to Cali." youtube.com. 16 August 2012. 20 October 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZSqUTkgf_4>

Lanvin. "LANVIN Fall Winter 2011-2012 Ad Campaign." youtube.com. 31 August 2011. 10 March 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KyG0xKTDJs&feature=plcp>

Louis Vuitton. „Louis Vuitton: Hide and Seek." youtube.com. 07 September 2012. 20 December 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_HvgZTrZd4>

Louis Vuitton. „Louis Vuitton Presents Stephen Sprouse en Leopard by Anita Fontaine." youtube.com. 12 October 2012. 14 October 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TB5_I5Dt4c>

Louis Vuitton. „Louis Vuitton Presents Small Is Beautiful." youtube.com. 15 January 2013. 16 January 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ih9XsVkS51w>

Louis Vuitton. „Louis Vuitton Presents Lockit, a Fine Jewelry Collection." youtube.com. 31 January 2013. 31 January 2013. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qE6lvIbUHwA>

Matthew Williamson. „Matthew Williamson 'XV' - 15 Year Anniversary Film." youtube.com. 07 November 2012. 08 November 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNK1q5eVlvY>

Méliès, Georges. "Ten Ladies in One Umbrella (La parapluie fantastique) 1903." youtube.com. 9 May 2012. 29 June 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R3ODNioLDs0>

Miu Miu. "MUTA by Lucrecia Martel." youtube.com. 30 September 2011. 1 June 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALPGLecuorc&feature=plcp>

Miu Miu. "The Powder Room." youtube.com. 28 September 2011. 13 November 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQWgWGLql4I>

Olympia Le Tan. „Spike Jonze: Mourir Auprès de Toi." nowness.com. 17 October 2011. 23 November 2012. <http://www.nowness.com/day/2011/10/17/1640/spike-jonze-mourir-auprs-de-toi>

Prada. „Prada Spring/Summer 2012 Women's Advertising Campaign." youtube.com. 01 February 2012. 11 March 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgaGXv1XnrA>

Prada. „Prada presents: 'A Therapy'." youtube.com. 22 May 2012. 16 November 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gl-kaGumng>

Prada. "Prada Fall Winter 2012." youtube.com. 2 August 2012. 3 August 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aumsEbfWnjk&feature=plcp>

SHOWstudio. „SHOWstudio: Fashion Fetish - 'Love Me' Ruth Hogben / Karlie Kloss." youtube.com. 22 March 2012. 25 May 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgMx894Jbdo&oref=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DmgMx894Jbdo&has_verified=1>

Versace for H&M. "The Very Best of Versace for H&M - H&M Winter 2011." youtube.com. 26 October 2011. 14 September 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybGBVa49GoI>

Void of Course. "SHOWstudio: Void of Course S/S13." youtube.com. 14 September 2012. 16 November 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7SB9aiNoqs>

Vs. magazine. "Vs. Magazine presents The Heimlich Maneuver." youtube.com. 09 September 2012. 14 December 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yF-vL2PqQLA>

Table of figures

Abstract

German Version

In der vorliegenden Arbeit wird das Genre des Modefilms (fashion film) untersucht, welches sich gerade im 21. Jahrhundert immer schneller entwickelt und immer mehr Anerkennung im Bereich der Mode erlangt. Die Grundlagen dieser Analyse basieren in den Kulturwissenschaften, mit speziellem Fokus auf Repräsentation (representation), Filmwissenschaft und Modetheorie. Im ersten Teil der Arbeit wird argumentiert, dass es sich bei dem Phänomen des Modefilm um ein Hybridgenre handelt, welches Repräsentations- und Ausdrucksformen aus anderen Bereichen vereint. Diese Hypothese wird mit Vergleichen des Modefilms und verwandten Feldern wie der Modeschau, Modefotografie, Kunst, Werbung und Film belegt. Im zweiten Teil der Arbeit wird die Struktur des Modefilms untersucht und es wird argumentiert, dass Kleidung und Accessoires eingesetzt werden um Geschichten zu erzählen. Die detaillierte Analyse von aktuellen Filmbeispielen belegt diese Annahme und unterstreicht, dass der Modefilm oft Modeobjekte enthält, die als primäre Antriebskraft und Hauptstrukturmerkmal charakterisiert werden können.

English Version

The thesis at hand investigates the genre of the fashion film which is quickly developing in the 21st century and is constantly gaining acceptance within the field of fashion. The analytical and methodological framework is based in cultural studies, with special focus on representation, film studies and fashion theory. In the first part of the thesis it is argued that the phenomenon of the fashion film is a hybrid genre which fuses ways of representation and forms of expression from other fields. This hypothesis is verified by the comparison of fashion film and other related spheres, such as the fashion show, fashion photography, art, advertising and film. The second part of the thesis investigates the structure of the fashion film and it is argued that clothing and accessories unfold into storyline and are utilized in order to tell a story. The detailed analysis of current examples of the fashion film corroborates this hypothesis and underlines that fashion film frequently includes fashion designs that can be characterized as the driving force and main structural feature.

Curriculum Vitae

Angaben zur Person

Name   Verena Grünberger, Bakk. phil.

Schul- und Berufsbildung

1996 – 2000	Volksschule Kematen an der Krems
2000 – 2004	Unterstufe des BRG Traun (musisch-kreativer Zweig)
2004 – 2007	Oberstufe des BRG Traun (musisch-kreativer Zweig)
2008 – 2012	Studium der Publizistik & Kommunikationswissenschaft an der Universität Wien
2007 – 2013	Studium der Anglistik & Amerikanistik an der Universität Wien