

HISTORY OF ART

«SICKLY» TRANSFORMATIONS OF PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT INTO FASHIONABLE ACCESSORIES

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Design of modern items as any other craft or art, requires some inspiration. In different periods of time, designers were inspired by their own origins, popular music, nature and art, but some of them were influenced by more unexpected things. An interesting fact is that some modern tendencies in fashion history and in today's world have appeared from a much unexpected source – disease. For example, at the beginning of the XVIII century, 400000 European people annually died from a pox, by the middle of the century vaccination against this disease had become widespread throughout Europe except France. The successful vaccination of King Louis XVI and his two younger brothers convinced all the French nation of the need to be vaccinated. In order to celebrate this significant historical moment, Parisian hatters created a head-dress called «pouf a l'inoculation». Unfortunately, the images of this head-dress haven't survived till today's time. However, fashion historians think that it was a synthesis of symbolic signs: a snake holding a medicine, a cane symbolizing victory over disease, the sun rising for the king, and an olive branch symbolizing the miracle of recovery. It is also known, that this festive head-dress became popular among fashionable elite very fast. Such emotionally-psychological influence had become a key to success for fashion designers [1, p. 425].

Another mortal disease – tuberculosis, took the lives of the civilian population of England in the XIX century. By the way, the influence of tuberculosis on women's body was considered wonderful, because its consequences made their skin pale and body thin. As the result, this illness had a great effect on the formation of a corset and a skirt. Corsets were designed pointed, in order to create the impression of much thinner waist. Skirts became much bigger. It was called «Tuberculosis chic». What is more, because of a great amount of deaths, black color had become especially popular. When Robert Koch discovered that tuberculosis was caused by bacteria, was created a

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«health corset» that allowed women to breathe more freely and provide better blood circulation. Doctors were sure that floor-length women's skirts catch all the street microbes and bring them home, so at the beginning of 1900's, fashionable dresses became shorter. Accordingly, the proportions of the suit and the fashionable silhouette have generally changed [3, p. 96].

Years later, in 1918 about 50 million people from all over the world died from Spanish flu. According to the published statistics, for instance, in Japan 470000 people died from Spanish flu or because of reasons related to it. At that time Japanese authorities made a decision to wear masks, and considered them to be a proper way of protection against this mortal disease. In such way a «mask culture» began to form in Japan [2, p. 193].

Current pandemic of coronavirus COVID-19, has spread across the planet and changed the way of life of millions people. It influences not only on people affected by the disease, but on industry, trade and the economy as well. The fashion industry, as the component of it, didn't escape the consequences too. For example, the Swedish brand «Airinum» was engaged in face masks before it had become a mainstream. The respirator «Urban Air Mask 2.0» was developed as a mean of rescuing from air pollution in large cities. However, the filters used in this respirator also protect against bacteria and microbes. The classic line of the brand presents stylish minimalist models in three colors and four sizes.

American artist Daniel Baskin has adapted to the trend and created the company «Resting Risk Face», which prints faces of users on the masks, so they can use «Face ID» technology without removing masks. Such idea appeared in her mind when she was discussing a question of efficiency of the so-called «N95» respirator masks for protection against coronavirus. It turned out, that many phone-users faced such a problem that they couldn't unlock their gadget while wearing a mask. The artist found a decision: 2D photo of a face transforms into 3D image and next is being printed on the mask.

Earlier, designer fabric masks were bought as accessories or as a protection from polluted air (most often in Asian large cities). Protection was quite conditional, because in such masks, which produce, for example, «Off-White» and Vare, there is no built-in respirator and they do not filter the air. Nowadays, such masks are often used by celebrities, influencers and street style heroes as a fashion accessory.

Ukrainian artist and sculptor Olha Radionova has started to create masks in steampunk style. However, she doesn't position these masks as antivirus protection. It's more like a stylish accessory that has become very fashionable. Stitched masks made of neoprene and decorated with the same fabric elements that the designer uses in her sculptures.

Croatian fashion designer, the owner of brand «BiteMyStyle» Zoran Aragovich has also created a bright collection of antiviral masks. Same as

masks by Olha Radionova, they aren't a good protection against the illness, but they pretend to be an expressive accessory in a fashionable suit. Zoran Aragovich believes that the best way to combat the fear of the virus is to stay positive. The cotton masks with the prints of «Disney» cartoons, comics and pop art motifs have immediately attracted the interest of consumers.

At the Paris Fashion Week, designer Marin Serra, in addition to dresses, blazers, coats and head-dresses, had demonstrated respirator masks, the design and color of which corresponded to the style of clothing. French brand united with the manufacturer of medical goods «Airinum» (filters in their masks meet the same standards as the American N95). However, the designer's care to this world-wide problem is expressed first of all in her creativity: conservative coats with a print of a «goose foot», skirts made of costume fabric; double-breasted jackets, deconstructed dresses and shabby jeans decorated with a characteristic print in the shape of crescents dilute medical masks which completely hide one's face. The vast majority parts of clothes, as in previous collections of the brand, are made of vintage materials. As follows, M. Serra invokes to remember about «reasonable consumption» caused by ecological problems. Consequently, masks as a temporary trend will obviously lose their relevance very quickly [4]. In return, the designers' attention will stay attached to more global and significant problems in the society.

Fashion analysts believe that in fashion industry the rejection of the concept of «fast-fashion», is not the main, but a very important step towards rethinking. There won't be the renovation of an assortment few times a season. Luxury brands will stop to produce so many collections. Their goods will be bought by those, who used them before the pandemic, but according to analysts, luxuries will be more expensive and exclusive because of smaller amount of collections. Another important step is the transition to more environmentally friendly materials and production technologies. Fashion mentor Linda Loppe believes that mass-market will return to norm core for some time. In turn, the luxury segment will rely on the basic quality collection, which passes from season to season. Season collections will be produced exclusively, in extremely small numbers and will be available only to a limited number of people.

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