Transmedia and fashion: realism and virtuality in Chanel and Gaultier

Transmedia y moda: realismo y virtualidad en Chanel y Gaultier

Manuel Viñas Limonchi. Universidad San Jorge (mvinas@usj.es)

Abstract:

The evolution of the fashion industry in the area of creativity depends mainly on the stylistic contribution made by the fashion designer responsible for the conception and manufacture of the final product, as well as of its dramatized show and/or media exhibition. This same product finds suitable mechanisms for its artistic and influential expansion in the technological area of communication. This article addresses a review of resources, mainly of an iconographic nature, that will indeed favour the placement of this creative aspect within the domain of the transmedia narrative. This is an analysis validated at the advertising level through the art direction of two fashion designers, Lagerfeld and Gaultier, who suggest in their proposals a migration of content to different media as a complement to the natural performance that unfolds on the fashion catwalk.

Keywords:

Transmedia; fashion; design; advertising; creativity.

Resumen:

La evolución de la industria de la moda en su parcela creativa depende, principalmente, del aporte estilístico que realiza el diseñador a cargo de la ideación y manufactura del producto, así como de su exhibición teatralizada y/o mediática. Ese mismo producto encuentra en el apartado tecnológico de la comunicación la justificación idónea para su expansión artística y persuasiva. En este artículo se abordará una revisión de recursos, especialmente de naturaleza iconográfica, que favorecen el emplazamiento de esta vertiente creativa dentro de los dominios de la narrativa transmedia. Un análisis constatado en clave publicitaria mediante la dirección de arte de dos autores, Lagerfeld y Gaultier, que plantean en sus intervenciones una migración de contenidos a distintos medios como complemento a la performance natural que se desenvuelve en la pasarela.

Palabras Clave:

Transmedia; moda; diseño; publicidad; creatividad.

1. Introduction. Fashion: art, design and communication

"The man, who in the world of fashion only sees fashion, is a fool". This lapidary phrase, stated by the illustrious novelist, Honoré de Balzac, justifies the most objective reality that today, in the first decades of the 21st century, acknowledges the design of fashion. A discipline whose permanent evolution is revealed both in the workshop of the fashion designer and within the exhibition framework of the product, which mediatises, in many cases, the perception of this aspect that the consumer himself experiences.

Although for G. Lipovetsky (2009: 9) "fashion is celebrated in the museum and relegated to the storehouse of real intellectual concerns", its conversion into an industry, specifically textile, implies being assisted by multiple areas of human knowledge that contribute to its development for creative purposes, as well as in the search and documentation of socio-cultural trends using efficient artistic and marketing techniques. A commercialization that V. Steel, the director of the Fashion Institute of Technology, "rejects". "It seems that we are talking about the bastard daughter of capitalism and female vanity. However, what this debate is really about is our struggle to take the place we deserve in the world of arts", (Torrecillas, 2015).

Over time, art has surely been the main stylistic protector of creativity that covers the structure of this discipline, acting as a source of inspiration used by the author and, in many cases, as a "formal excuse" to exhibit the most iconoclastic side of his or her style. One only has to mention names like Chanel or Louboutin for the Scottish tweed of Mademoiselle Chanel or the red carmine of the genius of the *stiletto* to appear as images in the consumer's mind.

However, this natural harmony between art and fashion steps away from the testimony expressed by some notable dignitaries of the discipline, such as A. Arzuaga (2001), for whom "fashion design is not a proper art. Fashion is often highlighted by seasonality. The ephemeral nature and serialized character of fashion make it far from the concept of art. But art, especially modern art, clearly influences fashion".

However, as R. König asserts, "fashion is a completely social phenomenon. Obviously, we are not interested only in clothing, but also forms, languages and gestures" (Pérez et al., 1992: 61). This argument incorporates a new interlocutor in the discourse, which is communication, taking into account that "fashion is considered an instrument of practical communication that externalizes internal values of individuals" (Jiménez, 2008: 62).

This communication is created through the use of instruments and multimedia languages, which are responsible for generating and expanding the new identities of the communicative product, especially on the level of persuasion. For good reason, "advertising and fashion (the latter being understood as a verbal, visual and real whole) are two more or less formal semiotic systems, which at the present time complement each other perfectly and converge in the specific graphic advertising of products in the clothing and accessories sector" (Alvarado, 2008: 124).

At this point, one could cite a discipline capable of separating art and communication- intervening, paradoxically, as a transversal creative process in both areas: design. For W. Wong (1991: 9) "design is a process of visual creation with a purpose. Unlike painting and sculpture, which are the realization of the artist's personal visions and dreams, design discovers practical demands, and must translate a predetermined message". Thus, at the beginning of a project, conceptual design becomes the illustrative and totally gestural basis of patronage. In the later stages, its schematization, as a result of the input of "new information, as well as the results of the analysis of performance, the life cycle, cost, reliability and ease of management" of the product (Pipes, 2008: 115-116), stipulate technological advances that place fashion design within a larger matrix, that of industrial design.

Focusing on the creative field of fashion, the visual language used in the three major areas of design (graphic/editorial, industrial and urban), will be the one that modulates, from this point on, the discourse herewith. A language that embraces idioms fully integrated into ICT systems, being implemented in the creation and/or diffusion of the product with the help of tools from the electronic vanguard to become an ideal resource of t*ransmedia* content.

1.1. Method and scope. Transmedia and fashion: sharing the catwalk.

The visual language characteristic of design described by D. Dondis (2004: 206) as a "means of expression and communication, and therefore a system parallel to visual communication," is assisted in the design phase by physical mechanisms that intermediate between the creative activity of the author and the reflective activity of the user. Thus, to the more classic volumetric and spatial representation method, that of perspective, is added a systematic graphic, stereoscopy, and a technological division, that of virtual reality, generating a discursive framework around visual perception and its intervention in disciplines where creativity drives the ideation, development and possible dissemination of the product.

A discourse, in this case developed within digital environments, where the term *transmedia* is stated as a basic premise and not necessarily as a platform of communicative intermediation arranged between channels and media formats. A context, in summary, in which the maxim of M. McLuhan takes on an extraordinary role that reduces our definition of art to what he considers to be specialized devices to enhance human perception.

Undoubtedly, the informative extent that the creative side of fashion is experiencing today, which is treated as a thematic indication of this essay, converges in the media domain where different formats and audio-visual genres, rooted in disciplines of communication and art such as advertising and cinema, evolve. This situation means that the exhibition purpose of the product is not strictly limited to a ceremony performed on the physical fashion catwalk of an event, but is thereby broadened in this way to the channels and digital supports as the true foundation of a collection, of a work, which is increasingly dramatized in its exhibition.

This evident expansion of the work to other areas is raised by M. Alvarado (2008: 118), when he says that "the musical or cinematographic galas are a fashion show raised to quintessence, to such a point that it is difficult to know if the "red carpet" is the entrance to another place or a place in itself on which the models show off, bared of their condition as actresses, exhibiting an extraordinary repertoire of design objects over their entire body". A spatial metaphor that Alvarado himself (2008: 132) transfers to the most iconic persuasive side, stating that "fashion ads are verbally quiet, but visually noisy".

According to Lipovetsky (2009: 237), "with multimedia, a certain 'rationalization' of fashion has been put into practice: not because fashion from now on must be directed and exhaustively controlled, which makes no sense at all, but because each production acts as advertising with respect to others". Authentic *transmedia* philosophy.

In the early decades of the 20th century, major magazines of the time such as *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* (edited by *Condé Nast Publications*), were the main *cross-media* links between the fashion industry and its consumers. The designs captured at that time in photographic format by E. Steichen, Man Ray or E. Blumenfels, found a niche in galleries, being that the "museumization" of photography, its true exhibition, was carried out in the pages of the publications mentioned. However, as T. Bezzola (2008: 197) states, "a piece of cloth will never be able to evoke the spirit of the moment in which it was created. The images of the best fashion photographers of the 20th century, especially the collections of *Vogue,* are worthy of the Louvre". An allegation that contradicts Charles F. Worth ("father" of *haute couture*) who claimed that "a dress does not have the same value as a canvas!"

A century later, the codification of information through the use of devices and creative methods of a *transmedia* nature reveals the contribution of artistic disciplines, along with digital resources, in the development of heterogeneous channels arranged for the discursive expansion of the work.

Today, the *performance* that surrounds the staging of fashion shows in the great International Fashion Rendezvous assumes narrative and technical aspects that make it a new and interesting *transmedia* archetype. A communicative paradigm intended for the objective and persuasive diffusion of a product, in this case textile, which is placed in a figurative context of objects and sounds with the spectator fully integrated into the composition, simultaneously disseminated and "packaged" on both internet websites and television channels and commented upon in other more timeless digital media, such as fashion blogs. A sequence of factors, the result of which operates in terms of communication and fashion, with a few summands (physical/virtual fashion catwalk + spectator/user + format/ media) that act coherently in the re-creation of the intervention presented. True *transmedia* narrative.

Almost simultaneously with the birth of *transmedia storytelling*, one of the great fashion designers of the moment, T. Mugler, welcomed into his creative territory the previously evolved potential of communication assisted by digital technology, presenting his *Thierry Mugler's Fashion Show* in the edition of SIGGRAPH, held in 1998. A project promoted in

collaboration with Kinetix and REM Infographic, which re-created a virtual fashion show through 3D simulations using the iconography of science fiction and cinema that Mugler shows in his work.

In this proposal by the French fashion designer, the movement of the model and the detection of motion applied to the fabric as a result of innovative techniques of modelling, animation, and three-dimensional rendering, introduced an interesting procedure that was creative and involved, in addition, *online* dissemination within the classic channels of production and dissemination of events of this nature. However, despite this undeniable advance in the field of fashion and communication, some critics have admitted, such as S. Singier (1998), that "although the animation effect of the fabric is very close to reality, the charm that involves its re-creation using a real model (which we normally admire in a presentation of this type) has not yet been integrated into the programming".

In 1999, encouraged by Mugler's interesting proposal, the founders of Charmed Technology Inc., A. Ligthman and K. Barillova, presented their *Brave New Unwired World* project in New York and Hong Kong. A year later, this same company introduced a fascinating futuristic exhibition in London called *The Brave New Unwired World Fashion Technology Show.* On this peculiar fashion catwalk, you could see "clothes equipped with digital networks, developed thanks to the alliance signed at the time between Levi's fashion company and Philips Electronics Company" (BBC, 2000). The concept of a *wearable computer* was born.

These and other similar initiatives favoured the advance of a renewed creative and communicative model that linked fashion and technology, launching technical and aesthetic slogans in the cultural-cyber cosmos that had never been seen before which burst forth in the new millennium. The user, who began to be fully and permanently interconnected, was incorporated into this new scenario, managing a methodology and instrumentation rooted in the electronic world. Digital mechanisms were incorporated into clothing, relying especially on existential technological theories developed in the late 1970s by S. Mann (University of Toronto). A whole range of electronic devices were installed on the previously universalized concept of "second skin", that is to say on the epidermis itself, and/or consumer clothing, requiring the use of scientific procedures based on nanotechnology.

Since 2006, the EGO project, under the name *Samsung Ego Innovation Project* since 2013, deployed at *Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Madrid*, has become a solid move toward "technology applied to fashion in any of its aspects" (Samsung Ego Innovation Project, 2017). "A hologram, a cube and his muse, model Aaliyah Rosales, are the three pillars of the collection that opens the Samsung Ego 2017", by the Abrahamsson company. An atypical project for which the digital artist Claudia Maté and the studio Paraddax Lab designed a series of avatars of the model that are projected in the fashion show as holograms. Likewise, the guests of the event actively participate in this show, placing on their *smartphones* "a glass pyramid framed in a rectangle", provided by the organizers, that allows for "the reproduction of the hologram into two halves, allowing the audience to view the passing models in their triangles" (Lopez, 2016).

1.2. Objectives

Having revised the context and noted some of the parameters that confirm the coexistence of the argumentation, the methodology, and the instruments on the creative level of the disciplines established in this study (communication and fashion), it is now possible to present the outlined objectives.

1. Conduct an immersion in the creative field of fashion, limited to particular explanatory and persuasive proposals of the firms Chanel and Gaultier through communicative paradigms that propose the existence of interventions in this field, the progress of which indicates the assistance of *transmedia* factors.

2. Justify how these interventions, the origins of which and natural purposes do not attend to a specifically *transmedia* assumption, cross the expository perimeter of the physical fashion catwalk to enter into a heterogeneous media space that optimizes the value of the product, transforming it into the "main character" of a script that is spread through communicative channels.

3. To demonstrate the excellent informative contribution revealed through the use of iconographic goods in their new formats and digital supports within the creative phases that comprise the ideation and consequent evolution of the product associated with the field of fashion and related areas.

4. To explain, using a persuasive tone, how the intermediation of *transmedia* factors in the development and dissemination of works devised in the creative area of fashion enriches the previously mentioned excellence of the integrated product, and therefore, of its trademark.

5. Linked to the previous objective, to demonstrate how the introduction of *transmedia* methodologies, in addition to strengthening the functional/aesthetic quality of the product and the positioning of the brand, reinforces and expands the stylistic line of the author. In this sense, it is important to consider the adjectivization as a work of art that should, at times, be applied to the product and its script.

1.3. Methodology

The methodology used in the present research focuses on the study of different cases in the creative area of fashion, establishing evidence that corroborates a narrative expansion of this discipline toward communicative domains. Thus, starting from the stylistic universe of two *haute couture* (high fashion) brands, Chanel and Gaultier, we will examine various exclusive projects of both fashion labels, the relevance of which maintains the natural boundaries that confine the product to a physical stage (whether it be a fashion catwalk or an isolated, physical display of the product), to enter into the highest-profile media conditions to which its diffusion can be submitted.

A methodology of a graphic nature and persuasive scope, involved in the communicative patterns that foresee a *transmedia* system, increasingly required by the disciplines that promote the artistic and promotional competences of goods

linked to the textile sector (for example, *prêt-a-porter* (ready to wear) and adjoining areas, such as cosmetics. These disciplines include especially the design and management of art, but others as well, including those of a technological nature such as virtual reality, which have arisen to expand the sensorial capacity of the human being.

In this way, by limiting the framework of action foreseen in this study, it is important to point out the following:

That the sequence of analysis would welcome a review of *transmedia* correlations, taken from projects such as fashion catwalks, *performances* or from the dissemination itself by means of products specific to the field of fashion and its derivatives.

That the instrumentation of this analysis would be covered by the visual narrative, with image in multiple formats being the perceptible resource that arbitrates the interaction established between an information-hungry user and the channel that exposes the product.

2. Case studies. The transmedia repertoire in the domains of Chanel and Gaultier

Projects such as *Thierry Mugler's Fashion Show, The Brave New Unwired World Fashion Technology Show* or EGO, previously analysed, corroborate the extent to which "narrative production could be considered a branch of design –narrative design– characterized by planning the story beyond a single media or language" (Scolari, 2013: 278).

In this type of proposal, the convergence of two worlds, that of industrial –with regard to fashion– and the technological world, manifested in information technology, is put in place and regulated through processes of digital graphic reproduction, such as computer-aided design (CAD), thereby resolving the technical aspect. Regarding the storyline, the script itself, which is not always closed unilaterally by the author, would provide structure, with the necessity, as indicated –metaphorically– by C. Scolari (2013: 278), of directing "one eye on the creation of worlds and the other on the recovery of content generated by users". In this way, the user participates openly and actively in the design of the content where the product dissemination is located.

The case studies presented in this analytical phase, with their corresponding creative proposals and repercussions at the communicative level, focus on similar design processes. They are born in ancestral territory, as is the field of fashion, evolving in an extraordinary way thanks to the valuable contributions made by its main interlocutors: K. Lagerfeld and J. P. Gaultier. Two prestigious fashion designers who continually renew the particular production of their respective brands, appealing to the conceptual tradition of the discipline to justify with new tools an unmistakable personal style.

Trained in the workshop of Balmain, and seeing his work mature in both Fendi and Chanel, Lagerfeld gained access as a photographer to the creative aspect of fashion. On the other hand, Gaultier, who was trained in the studio of the geometrician and vanguardist P. Cardin, not only subscribes to the vision and futuristic style of the italian-french fashion designer,

but he also possesses the undeniable ability to generate and diversify product lines, applying his own personal stamp: a *transmedia* approach that is authentically entrepreneurial, impregnated with *branding* strategies.

Both of these fashion designers are also familiar with the unquestionable role that image plays in design and art direction. These disciplines possess a natural relationship in the development of a communicative project and handle typographic, photographic, and illustration-related components, favouring the establishment of persuasive advertisement standards in all areas of advertising. Advertising is understood by Lagerfeld as "one of the most important contemporary forms of expression", and he has carried out projects of this nature in Fendi and Chanel that have allowed him to define himself as "a publicist without an agency". To paraphrase the fashion designer himself, "he doesn't need one, as he is his best client" (Collado, 2011).

At present, both computer-aided design and manufacturing do not exclusively possess either technical schematization (CAD) or product-manufacturing (CAM) functions; the 3D image not only recreates graphically the physical reality of the product to be designed. The interior architecture does not simply project the fashion catwalk that the fashion models walk across, and the story that gives shape to the stylistic line of the collection does not only survive in that space designed for its exhibition. Today, these and other creative guidelines and technologies have evolved, rooted firmly in the world of the *transmedia* narrative –in its stages– as initiators of an argument that expands itself in time and form, and now in the media.

Next, with all of the foregoing in mind, the work that thrives in two creative universes of fashion is analyzed, appealing to the art direction of authors such as Lagerfeld –and to a lesser extent Baz Luhrmann– in the case of Chanel; as well as to the design activity developed by Gaultier in the company that bears his name. It is important to note that the analytical part of these case studies is introduced and reaches a greater extent in terms of content in the review of creative projects linked to Chanel, as her longevity and transcendence has been endorsed not only due to the peculiarity of her products, but also due to her versatile and prolonged media expansion. On the other hand, the incorporation of Gaultier into this study is a result of the interesting research dimension that has contributed to the stylistic line of his collections for *haute couture* (high fashion), complemented by the excellent advertising and *online* marketing campaigns that are developed for his popular perfumes.

In any case, these are artistic directions anchored in fashion and communication contexts, ranging from the creative origin of the product to its virtualisation and digital diffusion, which are evolving in that process as a *transmedia* project.

2.1. Chanel: the expansion of an icon through the media

In 1857, Charles F. Worth opened his *atelier* (studio) at number 7 Rue de la Paix (Paris). The business enthusiasm of the English fashion designer would be seconded, among other brands in the making, by Doucet in 1880, Lanvin in 1909, and

by an entrepreneur called Gabrielle Chanel, who in 1910 would locate her hat shop (*Chanel Modes*) at number 21 Rue Cambon. *Haute couture* was born.

"Under Worth's initiative, fashion entered the modern era: it became a creative enterprise, but also an advertising spectacle" (Lipovetsky, 2009: 79). A two-pronged approach, based on business and communication premises, was unquestionably managed by Chanel, shielding herself "for a long period of time in her role as "empress"' before representing the role of "queen mother" of dressmaking" (Sicard, 2007: 88). Therefore, an exhibition routine began that promulgated the possibility of transferring the firm's original styles to the fashion catwalk, presenting them equally to the *mass media* of the time.

Two rules allowed the iconic *little black jacket*, which was the *black tweed jacket* designed by Mademoiselle Gabrielle in 1926, to have an equally impressive look in its "daring" austerity of lines in the salons of *haute couture* of Cambon as well as on the cover of *Vogue*. In the inter-war period, where the everyday reality of the population was plunged into a serious political, social and economic crisis, the media, in its area of influence, presented an informative theme, that of fashion, which had a significant cultural impact.

It would not be until a quarter of a century later that one of the great female icons of the moment "confessed" to *Life* magazine her passion for the jasmine-based fragrance from the town of *Grasse* created by the perfumer of Russian origin, E. Beaux, and the entry into a new millennium, so that the same *celebrity* who covered her body with *Chanel No. 5,* Marilyn Monroe, appeared in the digital footage of ads of the French brand.

Inside Chanel, a *microsite* that describes the historical evolution of the brand applying a narrative structure of unquestionable literary weight was incorporated into the advertising campaigns directed by Luhrmann in 2004 and 2014 for *Chanel Nº5*. Undoubtedly, an ideal space for the communicative expansion of its products and the entity itself, reinforced by "a well-orchestrated content strategy, brilliant creative direction, and maximum coherence to brand identity, which is, in addition, omni-channel" (Comunicare, 2014).

Performed posthumously by the genuine "blonde ambition", Chanel's Christmas 2013 campaign, titled *Marilyn and No. 5,* responds to a documentary film *spot.* In terms of brand identity and its protagonist, this ad is presented as an interesting advertising product placement, showing scenes and people who were part of the controversial personal and artistic life of Marilyn. An exquisite plot, which contains an audio-visual narrative that combines the black and white snapshots taken of the diva by E. Feingersh with headlines in *sans-serif* ('grotesque') typeface and subtitles in *serif* ('Roman') typeface, documentary video with the sound in original version of the characters, as well as a simple, yet evocative, soundtrack.

This piece of advertising is transformed into an original historical strategy that relates the "romance" between the actress and the emblematic fragrance thanks to an accomplished script as a *transmedia timeline* in which various emblems of the communicative heritage are superbly assembled: the written press, alluding to *Life, Modern Screen* and *Marie Claire*;

as well as a tape recorder and television and film sequences, among other informative goods. The art direction of the *spot*, reduced to a meticulous fusion of scenes, presents an independent narrative cosmos –yet clarifies the story– in each one of the takes, forming in its entirety a piece deployed on a single argument of *transmedia* analogy, the "production of which goes from the digital media to a traditional one, such as television. It goes without saying that success is assured, as it has been seen and shared by millions of people around the world through social networks" (Comunicare, 2014).

2.2. Chanel Airlines on the transmedia "terminal"

Knowing the necessary complicity between communication and fashion, especially in advertising strategies, Lagerfeld has undertaken other professional routes parallel to the ones that characterize fashion design. Photographer, publisher and illustrator, among other profiles, he has always claimed that "he is interested in almost every aspect of culture, because he feels that all of these aspects influence him in some way". For this multi-faceted creator, "there is no rule about what inspires and how it can affect him", as the most important thing "is to observe everything, then forget about it and re-do it your own way" (Diaz, 2015).

In 2014, he directed *Reincarnation*, a film for Chanel that premiered in Salzburg and was published on Chanel.com. This experience in film media by Lagerfeld developed into an audio-visual complement to the *Collection Métiers d'Art Paris-Salzburg 2014-15*, thus corroborating the convergence of supports and media that come together in the process of creation and dissemination of the resources of this prolific discipline of industrial design.

With this action, having a clear cinematographic influence that expands both to a physical space and to Internet, or in the one described next, *Chanel Airlines*, in which the main areas of design concur in one of the most theatrical scenes of the firm, the *kaiser* of fashion unveils the most interesting values of the discipline of art direction, which make substantial technical contributions to the progress of *transmedia* projects.

The sixth day of October, 2015, Paris-Cambon airport. "Under the glass roof of the Grand Palace, *the Chanel Spring-Summer 2016 Prêt-à-Porter Collection* parades along the check-in desks. Passengers and stewardesses of *Chanel Airlines* exhibit around 99 *looks*" (Prodhon, 2015). On that day, Lagerfeld replaces the majestic edifice, built to house the 1900 Universal Exposition, for a refined facility that houses an elegant airport setting, difficult to reproduce with such exquisiteness in what would be its natural location.

The symbolism reflected in this exclusive "fashion terminal" is made - as already mentioned - with a fusion of several aspects of design that yield the iconography of their creative capital to create the registry of a ideally documented booklet. Lagerfeld's inquisitive mind constructs herewith his own *transmedia* "galaxy" of fashion, inviting the spectator to a *performance* that exposes - within an artistic context - the daily life of an airport, with the visual codes typical of civil aviation standardized in the three major design divisions:

a. Graphic design (editorial)

    Chanel turns the event into an exhibition of its corporate potential, stamping its monogram and *couture* typography on boarding passes, invitations, luggage carts, signs, etc. Apart from these physical supports, "technology also makes possible new economic and distribution-related models with a clear impact on design issues" (Zapaterra, 2008: 189). Thus, with *hashtags* on the event, such as *#ChanelAirlines* or *#ChanelSpringSummer2016*, social networks (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) synchronously disseminated all the details of the event, and at the same time, the channels that adapted the timelessness of the event were generated.

b. Industrial design

    A rich work of patronage and the study of materials that incorporates into the collection fabrics stamped with - among other graphic art - sparkling alphanumeric codes that emulate the data recorded on the information screens. Likewise, the footwear styles worn by these fictitious travellers were decorated with LED lights, simulating the lighting system installed on the runway.

c. Urban design

    The fictitious boarding gate, with the legendary "Nº5" of the perfume printed on its lintel, was the starting point of the theatrical route that Lagerfeld established to submerge the spectator in an airport scene. Inside, the gallery that welcomed the guests to the event was directed toward a scene where check-in counters, waiting areas, information screens, etc. were located. All of the details mimicked the corporate resources of the Parisian firm.

This intermediation of various references of graphic (editorial), industrial and urban design within a single approach that puts most of the weight on the reach of the *transmedia* narrative, proposes an acceptance that is based on the transversal nature and contribution made by the creative areas involved (the three major areas of design) in building the audio-visual discourse. This is what L. Manovich (2011: 57) calls "the information culture. A concept that can be understood as parallel to another, which is called visual culture, and that addresses the way in which information is presented in different scenarios and regarding cultural items". Some of the informational models enunciated at that time by Manovich are present in *Chanel Airlines*. For example, "airport displays and on-screen TV menus".

A testimony that includes the principles of the *transmedia* language, as Manovich himself stated (2011: 57), "places the new media in relation to many other areas of culture, past and present, with other artistic and media traditions, with their languages and visual strategies for the purpose of organizing information and structuring the experience of the spectator", and especially, with "contemporary *visual culture*, with internal organization, iconography and iconology, and with the experience of the spectator in various visual stages of our culture, such as advertising and fashion".

In the mind of the creator, in this case Lagerfeld, the development of the work is based on specific factors of spatial perception. "In the spatial representation of the history of discourse there is an explicit space (*on;* that which is seen), the

one perceived by the reader or by the spectator, and one that is implicit (*off,* which is not seen but imagined), outside the margins of the screen or stage. Part of the implicit space can be made explicit" (Moreno, 2003: 59). Therefore, the explicit variant of Lagerfeld's work in Chanel Airlines is evident in the scenario he designs inside the Grand Palace of Paris, while the implicit one is installed in the communicative channels connected simultaneously to the activity generated by the repertoire itself.

"This play between explicit and implicit space facilitates the artificial reconstruction of infinite spaces through the direct collaboration of spectators and their imagination." In fact, as continued by I. Moreno (2003: 59), "audio-visual media do not specify the entire space, but only show the part they need in order to fulfil the narrative role they play in the story".

Adhering to the words of S. Dixon, Lagerfeld performs a work of "research as it should be done, to inspire people; editing and refining cultural references in order to create something new and unifying" (Seddon, 2010: 20). Thus, the fashion designer again justifies the position adopted by the art direction on the creative level of fashion design, contributing to the persuasive value denoted by an entity whose distinctive icon links two inverted "Cs" in its monogram. A corporate nuance, which as a metaphor within the *transmedia* era acquires, on one hand, a purely technical interpretation based on the re-creation of the stereoscopic pair needed to reproduce, as an anaglyph, a 3D scene, and on the other hand a communicative "wink" towards the confluence of media and formats of a firm that bet on elegance and originality on the fashion catwalk, re-valuing the brand with unsurpassed advertising campaigns.

2.3. Chanel: virtualization of the advertising repertoire

"The act of vision is a dynamic and creative process capable of transmitting a stable three-dimension perception of moving images that constitute our visual world" (Ching, 2007: 4). A process perfectly implemented in the visual re-creations deployed in spherical projection, characteristic of immersive or 360º, videos.

This "effect" of virtual reality, materialized physically on the screen of a digital device (computer, smartphone or tablet), allows the user to move freely within a surrounding space, following a script that the user adjusts in a synchronous way. A format with a construction process that is inherited - in part - from classic procedures such as that of perspective, (and is understood as such by the disciplines that perform technical engineering), and areas of communication, agree that it is an effective strategy for the dissemination of the product.

Knowing the importance of marketing and *online* digital advertising supported by portable media, Chanel has included such interactive strategies in the commercial promotion of its products. However, beyond the communicative priorities of the support, the French company has always made sure to establish a sublime art direction, equipped with a cinematographic audio-visual language that facilitates the exhibition of a precise interaction between the user and the contents that is carried out within a virtual space.

In *Le rouge crayon de couleur* (The red coloured pencil), a spot for the spring 2017 collection of *Chanel Beauty* (Chanel, 2017), the creative approach, both at the script level as well as the level of specific technical characteristics required for its design and dissemination, meets the aforementioned criteria that determine the development of immersive videos.

Entering the virtual space re-created in this advertisement, and making a quick review of the visual narrative through the argument and the artistic parameters that nourish it, we can see that all of the activity unfolds in the epicentre of a simple scenario composed of a carousel of frames. A veiled atmosphere in the form of grisaille, which turns partially in colour when the protagonist of the advertisement, model R. Van Rompaey, sketches different pictograms with a lipstick of the brand. A product that "outlines" the storyline of this digital experience, creating along with other similar products –in a clear circular symmetry– a mechanism that acts as the gear assembly of a particular "merry-go-round", at the top of which the white monogram of Chanel is engraved.

The experience within this environment of visual and audio effects that include persuasive nuances puts the user at an observation point with privileged involvement from which the user controls the perspective of the scene, and with it, the imaging angle mechanically associated with the argument. However, as an active subject in an audio-visual plot designed to instantaneously capture the user's attention, this not only interacts in a closed environment with certain actors. "Thanks to the accessibility of websites dedicated to sharing video content, such as YouTube, Vimeo or Flickr, the opportunity for dissemination and promotion of videos is enormous" (Moore, 2013: 108); and the user undoubtedly knows and uses these communication channels.

In this way, anyone interested in the commercial, communicative and/or artistic dimension of *Le rouge crayon de couleur* (The red coloured pencil), could access its content by coordinating the following phases, formats and means:

a. Experimental

The script adapted to an immersive environment in 360º video format and transmitted through the Chanel channel on YouTube.

b. Commercial

The website from which the product is distributed, where the artistic work of K. Sadli (fashion photographer) and J. Kaye (editor and fashion stylist) becomes essential.

c. Expositive

The fashion catwalk, as a reality and logical epilogue of any activity in this discipline, personified here at the *Spring-Summer 2017 Haute Couture Show.*

2.4. Gaultier: vanguard and transmedia

The continuous evolution of the artistic and communicative movement in disciplines such as the one that has been detailed so far, that of fashion, has favoured the decentralization of creative methods and dissemination channels of a project created in new multimedia formats. Currently, both the product and if applicable the script that assists it, are not isolated in a physical support, subject to the nearly *Orwellian* contemplation that the viewer makes. Today, the large amount of *transmedia* resources, born in purely narrative "jurisdictions", supports the migration of these and the resulting location of the storyline in multiple communication media.

In the previous sections, we have analysed some creative evidence –mainly in iconographic form– that have been progressing from the expository to the strictly communicative aspect, facilitating the diversification of the *transmedia* paradigm toward territories where the effective theatricality of the script is still the preferred option as opposed to its transformation into audio-visual material. The extensive framework of study and insertion of content, as in the case of Chanel, is summarised in this closing of the analytical section, which is dedicated to the eclecticism practiced by J. P. Gaultier in the development and dissemination of his most current work.

In general terms, an initial approach to the contribution of Gaultier to the creative environment of fashion would pose a clear stylistic affiliation to the avant-garde genres that thrived with the German Bauhaus or with Futurism, among other artistic movements.

A professional trend that blossomed with his expressive "sewing box" to endow its often discussed line of design with content, and to pose original formats and channels for the dissemination of the work.

In the latest advertising campaigns, the *enfant terrible* of the *haute couture* has used *transmedia* mechanisms and elements that remarkably optimize the natural qualities of the product, while at the same time increasing the persuasive interest that results from the ideas devised for its description. An attraction that the French fashion designer has incorporated from his beginnings in the discipline, in the dress and character of its personages, creating on one hand a feminine profile fitted to a corseted young woman reminiscent of a *pin-up*, and on the other hand, a masculine stereotype symbolized by an adolescent dressed in marines' clothes.

In April of 2015, on the same set chosen by Lagerfeld to locate the terminal of *Chanel Airlines*, at the Great Palace of Paris, the exhibition on Gaultier organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts was inaugurated. For the event, Moment Factory (a creative studio specializing in the design and production of multimedia environments) developed an immersive experience that was placed in *L'escalier des muses* (The staircase of the muses), right in the space that connects the two levels of the exhibition that houses the work of the fashion designer.

> "In accordance with Gaultier's creative point of view, Moment Factory's work makes the spectator, or the visitor, the true centre of attention, graphically transforming the guest into an authentic muse. Thus, by means of an interactive device, the visitor who accesses that level of the staircase can experience their silhouette projected on a huge canvas, adorned with the stylistic nuances of the designer's work. In this virtual scene, the camera flashes and the sound of music immerses the visitor in the particular frenetic environment that takes place in fashion shows" (Boucher, 2015).

At the creative level, but sociologically as well, this digital *performance* establishes a direct relationship between the unique beauty of each person and their adaptation to the trendy patterns imposed by fashion. The intermediation of this technological resource favours synchronously the connection between the user (visitor) and fashion (the intervention), awarding the individual in a simulated way a privilege that is exclusive of deities: that of being a muse.

The expository magnitude of this facility, which grants deserved respect to the creative universe of Gaultier, is not only limited to the architectural site that houses the exhibition itself. In this case, Moment Factory's webpage brings together the photographic and theoretical testimonies that document an interesting artistic piece, which aesthetic and philosophical nature occurs simultaneously as a *transmedia* experience on the walls that run through the majestic staircase and on Internet.

2.5. Inside the Gaultier Factory

Accessing any of the sections of J. P. Gaultier's website is a virtual review of the artistic attitude of authors such as O. Schlemmer, R. Lindner, or more recently, T. Bedard (*DC Comics*). The latter is the artist who has collaborated in 2017 with the fashion designer in the illustration of the limited editions of his fragrances representing two superheroes of comics: Wonder Woman and Superman.

Within Gaultier's broad creative repertoire, geometry is one of the main creative features that endorses his work on the fashion catwalk. A concept, present in the horizontal lines of his t-shirts reminiscent of the garments worn by the beautiful sailor designed by Fassbinder in *Querelle* (1982); in the Scottish tartan skirts with which he blurs genres and adorns the man in his collection *And God Created Man* (1985); or in the pointy corsets (1983) that iconified in 1990 the image of Madonna in her *Blond Ambition World Tour*. Therefore, the exquisiteness in the use and result of graphic language used in Gaultier's pattern designs shows a clear interchange of those same creative principles with the media that exhibits them.

In his unending research, Gaultier discovers multiple graphic formats applicable to the medium, "eradicated" from the attributes of the brand that permeate the outer layer of the product. A constant inherited from his artistic progenitor, P. Cardin. Hence, his obsession for *packaging* in the sense of a container mould for the idiosyncrasy of a product was born, providing information as well, whether it is a fragrance or the human body itself. The most obvious case is the standard-

ized reliefs that sculpt the silhouette of the bottle of his perfumes, *Le Male* and *Classique*, "sheltered" by the cylindrical geometry of his legendary aluminium can.

In 1962, A. Warhol made a pictorial icon of this prosaic object. His work contributed to the commercial expansion and increase of the brand value of *Campbell's* soup. A few years later, in May 1969, *Esquire* magazine featured the American artist on the cover, with the artist himself being immersed in the now-famous tin. In the seventies, Gaultier ennobled it, turning it into a "stainless" emblem of the company, adaptable to any space and communicative standard.

Progressively, this packaging has become the *transmedia* element that combines essence and virtuality in the creative space that the French fashion designer dedicates to the manufacture and diffusion of his scents. Essence, as physical reality that plays with material and form, giving a second skin to the bottle; virtuality, on its communicative side, proposes a visual narrative sponsored by the morphology of the icon itself, perfectly capable of being reproduced and applied to different media, genres and formats.

Linking with the advertising praxis that portrays this object within Gaultier's most recent work, immersive video has been one of the formats that has caused greater interest in the designer. Certainty labelled with the slogan "Live the experience 360º" (Gaultier, 2016a), in the header of the web application analysed below. The message invites the viewer himself to transform virtually into this exclusive tin induced by one of the female icons of the fashion designer, who for the occasion is equipped with virtual reality glasses, superimposed on a background onto which appears a huge clarifying headline of the methodology used: "JPG 360º".

Be the Bottle, which is the name of this creative experience, appeared simultaneously in 2016 on the web as well as on social networks and other *online* channels of the French brand. Its artistic condition harmonizes with an authentic advertising background, converging with *storytelling* criteria and interaction through the mediation of particular factors of geometry and physics, such as the third and fourth dimensions, which act as catalysts of the relationship that occurs between the user and the device (or digital application).

A set of premises, subject to theories, methods and instruments conceived around the technology that makes reproduction of virtual worlds possible (mainly virtual reality and augmented reality), which in the case of this advertising production has been implemented by Okio-Studio as an immersive production in 360º video format. A company dedicated to the development of applications for virtual reality, which has collaborated with, among others, the Leo Burnett agency in the *Special Thé* campaign of Nestle and with *Publicis* to create an interactive driving test of the Koleos Renault.

At the sensory level, the spatial framework designed by Okio-Studio is adapted to a stereographic projection, inside of which are placed different characters that wander around a circular horizontal line. The centre of that circumference corresponds to the place where the observer is located, personified physically and from the perspective of the argument in

the *Classique* perfume bottle. The vision and interaction of the spectators is adapted to the classic principles of perspective, as they are able to voluntarily direct the subjective camera that incarnate**s** (simulates) their own eyes and carry out a simple script that adapts itself to the space and identity of the objects and actors that appear in the scene. All of them extracted from Gaultier's stylistic inventory and added to a series of micro-narratives impregnated with the picaresque style that the fashion designer's ingenuity requires.

Before the end of 2016, Gaultier expanded this interesting access to the more technical terrain of *transmedia* creation with the generation of a more conceptual work. Equally intended for the promotion of *Le Male* and *Classique* through the use of immersive mechanisms, *Be the Drop* (Gaultier, 2016b) invites the user to make a virtual trip in which the visitor travels through the still that channels the development of the perfume to its final packaging in the popular male or female torso that symbolizes it. In this case, the user is transformed into a drop that goes through a glassy "roller coaster", discovering on the way the chromatic appearance of the materials and sensations that constitute the lifeblood of the fragrance.

Filmed in the same way as the previous work, in 360º video format, the action that takes place in *Be the Drop* is performed to the rhythm of the *Casta Diva* (aria of the opera *Norma*, by V. Bellini), under a glass dome similar to one of those that grace the Grand Palace of Paris. Two paradigms, one sonorous and one iconic are reinforced in Gaultier's work, and act as logical connectors within the t*ransmedia* world that serves as a means of disseminating their creations for the fashion and advertising industry.

As an epilogue to these two proposals, *Be the Bottle* and *Be the Drop*, it should be pointed out that both were born from a common script, *the Gaultier Factory* (Gaultier, 2016c), which was broadcast on the firm's Facebook page, and in a more specific way, on its website. This project is unmistakably an adaptation of the symbolic and conceptual repertoire of Gaultier's images to the register of multimedia resources integrated into the field of communication, and these resources manage the conversion into digital support and the subsequent dissemination of the work.

An analysis of the web space where the *Gaultier Factory* is located allows us to glimpse a succession of specific codes of the dialect used on social networks that introduce audio-visual informative content. In this way, two different languages are mixed: on one hand, the communicative language, in labels such as #jpgif, #jpgworkers, #bettylovesjpg, #popeyelovesjpg, #bethebottle or #bethedrop; and on the other hand, the artistic language, transcribing the previously mentioned *hashtags* –as headlines– in video sequences such as *time lapse* or animated GIF, in order to illustrate the mechanized atmosphere in which the Gaultier's cast of characters hover about and connect with each other

Gaultier Factory, and in general all channels that host the work of the fashion designer on the Internet, are currently part of an extraordinary repository of technical, artistic and testimonial evidence, which is consolidated as the main digital axis within the media scheme that Gaultier possesses to formalize his style in the design of products for the world of fashion and related areas. The other axis –reaffirmed according to the same script– will be the physical territory, personified in the

fashion catwalk, as well as at points used for the display and sale of the product. Both are suitable ways of transmitting the same content in isolation, and with enough solid reputation to reconcile it within a single creative universe, demonstrating the genuine *transmedia* narrative "sewn" into Gaultier's work.

3. Conclusions

The study of form, specifically of its visual representation within a real or fictitious space, such as the one in which the performance of a collection that comes alive on a fashion catwalk unfolds, triggers a series of consequences that transcend the strictly creative ideal of this discipline.

Probably the most important of these effects occurs in the field of communication, taking into account that the artistic interventions applicable to the fashion and related sectors demand a careful dissemination in the media that exhibit the qualities of the product, promoting along with it the positioning of the firm and the expansion of the creator's stylistic line. Thus, the digital goods that comprise the current multimedia heritage, principally based upon iconographic attributes, have resulted in the evolution and communicative dissemination of a product that becomes a true work of art under the influence of artists such as Lagerfeld and Gaultier. Both are patrons of an eclectic style in which the media, instruments and audio-visual formats merge to communicate the reality and symbolism that assist the product and the brand.

These same deductions introduce the following points, which will terminate the conclusions section and the research itself.

a) The media exposure of the product and its technological sponsor

"While some fashion designers continue to opt for catwalk parades, others allow these parades to be viewed live on Internet, thus ensuring maximum exposure to the public" (Moore, 2013: 57). Therefore, the physical catwalk migrates to a virtual setting, generating an enriched scenography thanks to the use of synthetic images that share digital support with real beings and objects.

The eruption of this discipline into virtual worlds, posed at the end of the 1990s by Mugler, increased at the time the exhibition protocols of the product in the world of fashion. The socialization of technology has also reached the front row of the fashion catwalk, supporting creativity and the culture of fashion in general through a vast repertoire of tools, methods and channels of development and dissemination of the product, in which their best ally is image.

Brand recognition through *transmedia* content.

b) Brand image is established as a "complex socio-cultural phenomenon" (Costa, 2007: 136), introducing itself into an experiential cosmos where the product, its iconic representation and its diffusion require a systemization of means, methodologies and instruments that support the repertoire that assists the product.

In this sense, *branded content* acquires special relevance as a generator of content that will be segmented by social media, the purpose of which is, according to G. Árias (2016: 52), "To fit the audience that truly interests us. The solution is to create *transmedia* content, adapting the message to each media, its format and peculiarities, as well as to the audience that we intend to impact".

These testimonies turn the user into an actor in a visual show where the product, the brand and the media summarise the lure that needs an authentic *transmedia* script. This is the reason that "fashion brands are analysing the way in which new technologies will give more visibility to their profile, generate more sales, and increase the loyalty of their customers" (Moore, 2013: 138).

However, linked to the last argument, it could be said that the making and exhibition of the product –as well as the "brand image"– could be interpreted as "a question of social psychology rather than a design issue" (Costa, 2007: 106).

c) Technology, science and art, *transmedia* activators

"Technological advances have led to a paradigm shift in society that makes the environment faced by people today very different from that of the past" (Hasegawa, 2015: 24).Today, a suitcase is used not only to store clothing; it also holds the digital devices that have allowed its owner to access one of the great *online* fashion blogs whose authors, well known bloggers and influencers such as Ch. Ferragni (*The Blonde Salad blog*) or A. Song (*Song of Style* blog), display creative tendencies on the network that fit their personal and/or professional profiles.

Likewise, this creativity has been transformed into graphics, which a few decades ago went from a conceptual sketch drawn by a fashion designer to the patronage workshop, and from there - already turned into attire - to the fashion catwalk itself. Today, it is associated with the other "secondary creativity", stated by A. Maslow in the middle of the last century. This recognized author, who belonged to the field of humanistic psychology, associated this expression with "the rational production of something new in the world, whether of a technical, scientific or artistic nature, including many creative and practical solutions to everyday problems" (Joas, 2013: 314).

Technology, science and art. A technology forged in virtual reality and augmented reality systems, which places the user –the viewer– in an enveloping space and script. The scientific praxis, which invites this same subject to interact in a sensorial manner with the fictitious environment that digital mechanisms re-create. The artistic paradigm, evident in the design of an environment endowed with the objects and inventiveness of a Renaissance creator, but also in the Baroque theatricality emanating from the staging and mediation of the argument by the individual who is involved in the play.

Three factors that concur within the creative process and in the media projection that occurs in the *transmedia* story of a proposal that is integrated into the artistic and persuasive field of fashion. As such, they are recorded in the narrative hemisphere of the case studies analysed in this article, either in the immersive re-creation of *The Red Coloured Pencil of Chanel,* or in the virtual visit to the *Gaultier Factory.*

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