

Olivia Swinford

January 25, 2016

Creative Technical Studio 2

To Cut Is To Think Response

In *To Cut is to Think*, the author explains the audience how the cut of garments is vital in the construction of reality as society shifts and changes throughout time. The author discusses how fashion, along with art in general, used to be used for the imitation of reality, but how that has shifted to the creation of reality. In terms of fashion, the cut of the garment communicates the designer's own take on reality by taking a flat piece of fabric and forming it the body – framing it in a new way, unique to the designer's vision. The cut is the designer deciding what to keep and what to discard and therefore the designer is framing their own vision of reality. The author explains how this is also done in photography when the photographer decides what to cut out of the frame and what is kept in it.

Throughout the piece the author is convicted in their opinion that the cut of the garment is the most essential element of the garment because it connects and communicates the human body with the world around it. The author persuades his audience that it is the channel in which the designer creates a second skin while making a statement about the body in the context of society and society's development of the time. He does this by showing examples of how different groups and designers have used clothing to respond to the culture around them. For instance, he talks about how The Futurists conveyed disorder in their work by using asymmetrical cuts and clashing colors.

The author discusses the function of clothing as a “frontier between first and second skins,” and an “area of contact between the body and surrounding space.” I agree with the author on this point, though it seems the author is assuming fashion and clothing are the same thing. I think it is important to differentiate between the two. Fashion is made up of clothing that shapes reality, but not all clothing is fashion. Fashion responds to the society around it as the author discusses, but clothing can be kept throughout time and what was once a response to society could no longer be relevant. He discusses fashion as art, but I don’t think all clothing qualifies to be considered art. If the cut of clothing fails to adequately respond to the environment around it or meet it’s function, can it still be considered fashion?

I think the author’s claim that the cut makes the garment is accurate. The cut does define the designer’s point of view and response to the world around them, but I wish the author had expanded more on the differentiation of types of clothing. For instance, I think couture clothing has a radically different purpose and way of responding to society than ready-to-wear does and we cannot place the same qualifications on the two. The author states, “What was once considered useless and frivolous, decorous and eccentric, has become the means to a search for identity, where what matters most are originality and constant change. The difference between art and fashion is tending to disappear, as if the cut that has defined the shape of both has actually succeeded, through a sequential process of collage, in superimposing and uniting the two.” I think couture refers the “frivolous” state of fashion that he considers the past, while ready-to-wear refers to the search for identity. While I do find this statement to be true, I also think that couture responds

to society today in its cut and purpose in a very different way than ready-to-wear. Just as he stated that art used to imitate reality and now it creates reality, I think fashion in its cut can simultaneously do both. Clothing is trace of the human body and therefore imitates reality because the body's shape is intrinsic to its form, but the way the body is traced in the clothing belongs to the designer and his/her own vision.