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STYLE DIRECTION "UNISEX" AS A DESIGN PRACTICE IN FASHION DESIGN

Purpose. *The study is devoted to defining the basic principles of formation of the style direction "unisex" as a design practice of fashion design; the formulation of generalized image-design characteristics of this style direction for the development of costume collections as a relevant fashion product for mass consumption.*

Methodology of research is based on a comprehensive approach to identifying image-design and artistic-compositional properties of costume collection development, in particular methods of socio-cultural analysis, historical and logical development, system-structural, comparative, compositional and stylistic analysis. At separate stages methods of morphological analysis and synthesis, sociological interrogation are applied.

Results. *The origin of the "unisex" style direction, its features, the obligatory compositional elements in fashion design, the evolution of form, the main elements of products in the style of "unisex" are studied. The stylistic direction of "unisex" is characterized from the standpoint of assimilation of interactive development of men's and women's costume of the twentieth century. The systematization of figurative-design and constructive-compositional features of the main substrates of the style direction "unisex" in the modern market of fashionable clothes of general purpose is carried out. It is identified and characterized the artistic and compositional features of the collection of modern women's clothing in the stylistics of "unisex", taking into account modern materials. The general features of the collection models are systematized and the elements characteristic of the "unisex" style direction, which are the basis for designing the author's collection of women's clothing are structured. The author's collection of women's clothing, corresponding to the tendencies of the "unisex" style direction, has been designed.*

The scientific novelty of the study is to determine the image-design properties of the style direction "unisex" as a design practice in modern fashion design for mass consumption. The degree of aesthetics of the ideological content and gender aspects of the image-project of "unisex" phenomenon in the modern cultural and artistic space is determined. The main elements of the suit, which interactively interact with the design of men's and women's clothing as a fashion product, have been identified.

The practical significance of the study of the main design characteristics of the application of the style direction of "unisex" in clothing design is determined by commercial potential, which allows fashion designers in the mass market segment and clothing brands to reduce production costs and further promotion: a single design, collection for men and women from the same materials, general advertising, etc.

Keywords: *fashion product; fashion design; style direction; unisex; stylistics; fashion trend; author's collection; image-design properties of clothes.*

Introduction. Modern fashion calls the shots – clothing no longer conveys a clear message, styles and shapes are mixed, and gender indicators disappear. People are tired of conventionalities and restrictions, everyone wants true freedom. That is why designers tend to create unisex collections more often, adding masculine touches to women's wardrobe, and loading men's clothing with feminine characteristics. This development is quite

natural in modern mass fashion, because the social roles of men and women are changing as well. Convenience and versatility are the main trends in modern fashion. They are required by the pace of development of the consumer society of the 21st century. The unisex style has become popular nowadays, especially among young people, precisely because of the desire for comfort and convenience in their image. Yet, the designers still distinguish between

men's and women's clothing in the unisex style. The study subject of "unisex" stylistics, the principles of shaping and artistic and compositional features of an outfit is topical in the context of current fashion trends and in line with the development of modern design practices of the fashion system.

Analysis of previous researches.

Fashion has a special place among a number of modern gender representations (M. I. Halitbarova [1], O. I. Sharlai [2]). It is defined as a gender-labelled culture text filled with images of masculinity and femininity and plays a paramount role in modern mass culture, as defined by social scientists O. B. Hofman [3], H. H. Shubin [4] and N. Yu. Maslentseva [5]. The history of clothing makes it obvious that fashion always influences the design of clothes. The way people dress is most closely connected with the changing conditions of historical events and the needs of people, which is substantiated by art critic I. O. Andrieieva [6]. The issue of the relationship between gender and fashion seems to be one of the most critical ones in modern costume design (M. B. Romanovska [7]). There are rapid social, cultural, visual and artistic changes in trendy male and female images. However, while the masculinization of women's outfits is veiled by the message of comfort and has long won the right to exist, the vaccinations of femininity that have been penetrating men's fashion over the past seventy years are perceived by the conservative part of society as a cultural and social catastrophe, which was characterized by Yu. L. Herasimova and N. O. Sosnina in their studies of gender transformations in fashion and outfits [8], as well as M. M. Topalov [9], K. Z. Akopian [10], and M. O. Mikhieieva [11] in substantiating the social aspects of fashion.

For many centuries, the idea of inequality of the status of the sexes, expressed in male dominance in public life and culture, prevailed in society. Radical changes happened with the development of the feminist movement, the social and political movement

of the early twentieth century, under the influence of which modern society evolved and a social and cultural space was created, which was repeatedly emphasized by such scholars as V. D. Leleko [12] and D. S. Likhachov [13]. It was from the mid 20th to early 21st century when due to the intellectual efforts of theorists of post-structuralism and post-modernism that the legitimacy of the patriarchal view of the sociocultural status of the gender was questioned, and the notions of masculinity and femininity ceased to be limited to biological characteristics and went beyond the limits of traditional symbolic parameters, as defined by cultural scientist E. E. Abroze [14], art experts O. K. Baranova and M. V. Domashniaia [15].

The design of mass-produced clothing and its consumption, which actively developed after WWII, in the context of development of the unisex style, comprehensively used elements and details of military ammunition, which eventually became a separate style called "military" [16]. Analysis of the study of military style features for the development of clothing models is provided in works of M. V. Kolosnichenko, K. L. Pashkevych [17], Yu. A. Mantsevych [18], T. V. Lutsker, O. V. Kolosnichenko [19]. Military is also characterized as a trend in modern fashion. The use of elements and parts of military ammunition is its main characteristic. This style is one of the most popular directions in modern fashion [20, 21].

Statement of the problem. The conceptual diversity of design images and outfit style is a characteristic feature of modern design. This is a consequence of the adaptation of different systems of values, traditions, ethnic features, etc. and, as a result, the aesthetic needs of different social groups [4, 6, 22]. This paper aims to analyse the artistic and design features of the models of creative collection of modern women's clothing using unisex style.

Results of the research. In the 21st century, the attitude towards clothing changed its role. In the modern world, all styles are mixed or replace each other. Unisex clothing

meets the modern needs and, accordingly, is popular due to its comfort, utility and democratic nature. Many famous designers see the potential in this style, because it is simple and versatile in terms of purpose and consumption. Nowadays, the role of a woman as a political and economic agent is constantly increasing, so mass fashion faces a complex challenge: image and design freedom of unisex style once again makes it possible to clearly demonstrate the equality of the sexes, but it is necessary to leave a woman a woman through the "emancipation" of the outfit emphasizing her beauty [11].

In its first manifestations, unisex was practically a borrowing or adaptation of men's clothing by women, its decorations or accessories. However, now this trend has reversed. Currently, in the 2020s, this style has given up its position a bit and is not as popular as in the 1990s, but many of its basic elements (jeans, T-shirts, sweatshirts, sneakers, etc.) have become basic wardrobe elements of every modern person due to their practicality. G. Chanel and R. Gernreich are considered the key pioneers and originators of the unisex style, and such designers as K. Klein, J.-P. Gaultier, Y. Yamamoto, and others are considered the leading followers in world fashion of the late 20th century. At the beginning of the 21st century, this style is used by such fashion houses as IDOL, Givenchy, Michael Kors, Prada, etc., as well as such mass-market brands as H&M, United Colors of Benetton, Bershka, Zara, etc.

Since fashion has the cyclic nature, every fashion season sees a come-back of certain elements or entire fashion styles. In 2020, we may clearly witness the return of design images and artistic and compositional solutions of fashion products of the 1970s and 1990s. Yet the makings of this style have occasionally manifested throughout the previous hundred years. G. Chanel has confirmed her innovations, creating a new trend in fashion. She lifted the restrictions on women by dressing them in comfortable clothing. In the late 1950s, women started wearing men's jeans, and in the early

1960s they turned into iconic clothing and became popular around the world. Thus, jeans were considered to be a "gender-free" item of clothing. In the 1970s, skinny girl Twiggy became a manifestation of the "unisex" style. Emaciated creatures having no voluptuous breasts or hips and wearing short "a la garcon" haircuts were en vogue. Many considered unisex to be a fleeting fascination of youth, which was to pass in a few years, but everything turned out quite differently in fashion. This trend has conquered even more countries.

One may say the emergence of the hippie movement in the late 1960s was the first reason for the emergence of the unisex style. Freedom was proclaimed in everything: in clothes, in relationships. Later, punk culture came to the scene with its own peculiarities. It seemed that young people were looking for a way out of their individuality through protest against the entire society. It was very difficult to distinguish between guys and girls who identified themselves as punks: they had the same type of hairstyles, mutilated clothes, etc. [23].

The second reason is the changing social roles of men and women. While in the past only men were engaged in social, political and financial affairs, and women were in charge of family, kitchen and church, after WWI (and later after WWII) life began to dictate other requirements and new responsibilities, which were not refused by most women.

The third reason is the rapid development of postwar culture, science and technology progress in general. Life needed dynamics and a crazy rhythm. Everything that could slow the development down was removed. Lush skirts were replaced by more comfortable pants. Women have become like men.

The unisex style determines the appearance of a person, including clothing, hairstyle, make-up. However, unisex lifestyle requires more than just wearing comfortable items of clothing, fashionable short hair, using a neutral perfume. It is about the world-view. A person refuses the external signs indicative of his/her gender. Thus, a person gets the

opportunity to fully express his/her personality, which is the main feature of fashion in the late 20th century. Fig. 1 and 2 show a comparative description of the interactive development of men's and women's clothing of the 20th century, which makes it possible to follow the development of contemporary fashion and the creation of the stylistic unisex trend against its background.

Thus, the greatest recognition of the unisex style took place in the 1990s when American designer Calvin Klein presented his first unisex collection, where Kate Moss, who was the ideal of beauty of the time and embodied adolescent femininity, became the principal muse and model. After that, the designers started showing their roomy, baggy items of clothing hiding the curves of female models wearing short haircuts, and the men's catwalks were conquered by long hair, transparent T-shirts, and skinny pants (Fig. 3).

Nowadays, more designers produce unisex collections, combining men's and women's clothing with unified image and design characteristics.

Lack of details in clothing that emphasize the gender of the person who wears it is the main feature of the unisex style. Women boldly borrow the cut, models, details, colour solutions from men's wardrobe, and vice versa. Maximum simplicity is the most common embodiment of the unisex style: loose-fitting, shapeless clothes, rough elements in clothing or jewellery, unaccentuated figure, lack of elegance [8, 16]. Currently, it is about mainly oversized clothing, trouser suits, rough and massive shoes.

Many modern designer brands operating in the global fashion market do not actually implement the latest or most innovative techniques in costume design. Multipurposeness of clothes for men and women with an emphasis on comfort, bold experiments with each other's items of clothing, etc., are the main principles based on which this style direction is developed. Declaring the emergence of "gender-neutral" trends in

clothing design, which are literally just men's clothing, they rather demonstrate the ambitious idea that femininity is unacceptable and masculinity is standard rather than seek to strengthen equality. Yet, it is easy to understand why the production of gender-neutral clothing can be a problem for many companies: such pieces of clothing must meet many parameters, primarily the ergonomic needs of the one who wears them (Fig. 4) [19].

In the process of development, the unisex style was divided into several self-sufficient sub-directions, in which the following range or compositional properties of fashionable clothes are usually used in the formation of a design image:

- classic – ties, pants, T-shirts, suits,
- street – ripped jeans, shorts, jean jackets, sneakers,
- safari – neutral, sandy shades,
- globalist and protest – no restrictions, flashy, meaningful, demonstrative,
- military – uniform details, such as rough elements, massive shoes, clear and sharp cut.

Thus, many current fashion trends are combined quite well in the unisex style, as it is based on a harmonious combination of figurative qualities that are unique to men or women.

Development of clothing with military elements was one of the first manifestations of the unisex style. This trend appeared after the end of the WWI and regained its popularity after WWII. At the time, the first casual military-style outfits appeared among women's clothes. Military clothing everywhere had a strong influence on both men's and women's clothes at the time. Women's wardrobe was complemented by coats with patch pockets, pants, overcoats, accent fasteners, silhouettes changed to straight, a stand-up collar was introduced. In the 1970s, representatives of the hippie community consolidated the success of the trend, and then in the 1980s, designers started making clothes of khaki-printed fabrics in everyday pieces.



Fig. 1. Comparative characteristics of interactive development men's and women's costume of the XX century

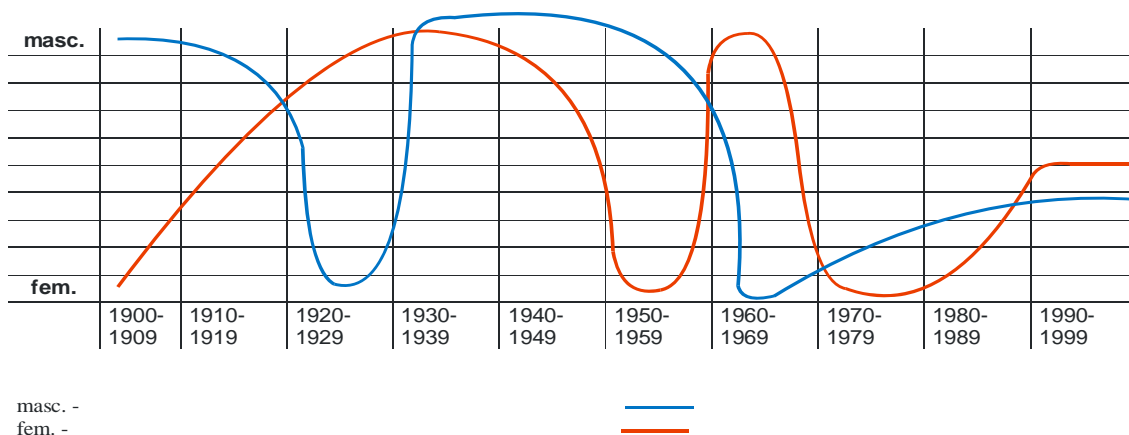


Fig. 2. Chronology of interactive development of men's and women's costume of the XX century



Fig. 3. Collections of designer brands based on the "unisex" style: a – K. Klein, 1990s, b – Haider Ackermann, Jil Sander, Max Mara, Autumn-Winter 2019/20



Fig. 4. Models of fashionable clothes (autumn-winter 2019/2020), made in the style of "unisex" by designer brands: a, b – Haider Ackermann, c, d – Jil Sander, e – Max Mara

Today's military style shows many new combinations of shades of stylization of army fabric and decorations, obtained in the 2000s. Designers create collections that differ in a wide range and versatility of models, with an original approach to design solutions. Only some details remain of the paramilitary unisex clothing of the last century, such as a stand-up collar, a straight silhouette, metal garment accessories, etc. [20, 23].

In the 2020 collections, designers make every effort to exploit the design characteristics of the unisex style, claiming that there is no more gender in fashion, and gender differences between men's and women's clothing are being erased. Therefore, we can see men in skirts and dresses on the catwalks, and women appear in tuxedos, baggy overalls and trouser suits. Women buy items and pieces in men's department stores

more often. They are looking for actual men's clothing as boyfriend jeans, men's sweaters, T-shirts or shirts, rather than variations of men's pieces in women's collections [21, 23].

Characteristics of design and artistic features of unisex fashion clothing design became the basis for the development of the author's collection of women's clothing for general purposes. In order to develop the concept of the design image of the collection, a creative collage was created, which combines product range, colour and texture features of the image, determines the nature and type of potential consumer (Fig. 5).

A poll of a potential target group of consumers was conducted to have a deeper look at the consumer. According to the poll results the average age of women for whom the collection was designed was from 20 to 25. They were involved in the fashion or public

sphere, followed the trends and loved comfortable clothes. Due to the selected artistic and compositional features of the creative source and the poll of potential consumers, a straight and trapezoidal silhouette shape of the outfit was chosen.

The models were designed based on the shapes of men's military clothing in order to create new ones. When designing the collection, aesthetic and ergonomic indicators are taken into account, the developed clothes are comfortable and functional. In the creation of new forms great importance is given to straight silhouette shapes and clear lines of products that emphasize the figure. The sketches use elements of unisex style in the form of wide belts, patch pockets, rough shoes, and reserved hairstyles. The products meet the current fashion trends

and give individuality to those who wear them. Decorative seams and buttons were used to decorate the items in the collection.

Models are made of various materials that give the look some novelty and refinement when combined in sets. For example, the set combines a white elongated cotton shirt and a decorative denim belt applique. The collection uses natural fabrics with a small percentage of synthetics for comfortable wearing and easy care of clothes. The collection combines such products from the range as pants, shirts, dresses, coats, raincoats, jackets, which make different sets and can be combined with each other or with other clothes. The colour palette was chosen for the collection as a result of a detailed analysis of fashion trends (Fig. 6).

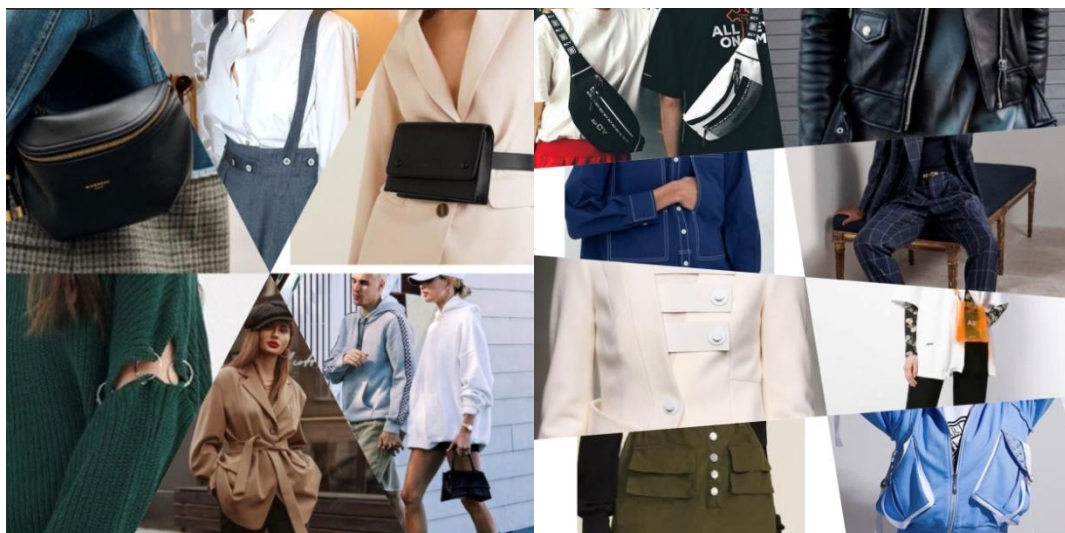


Fig. 5. Creative collage for designing a collection women's clothing in the style of "unisex"



Fig. 6. Sketches of the author's collection of women's clothing, developed in the style of "unisex"

Conclusions. The modern pace of life requires comfortable and practical outfits that would allow people maintaining the rhythm and meeting their needs. Historically, for many centuries the appearance of clothing depended on the environment, social order, and cultural conditions of people's lives.

The idea of costume reformation originated back at the beginning of the century. Since then, women's and men's outfits have confidently converged in their appearance and design characteristics. External social factors that influenced the role of men and women in society were the most important reasons for this transformation.

Thus, the unisex style direction was the result of a long-term convergence of image and design, constructive and compositional positions, accessories and attires of men's and women's outfits. It is very closely related to classical and sports styles, which were actively

developed during the twentieth century. In today's globalised world, gender-neutral clothing has enormous commercial potential: free silhouette shapes, "oversize" sizes and universal patterns and technology that came from sports and comfortable clothing, focused on men and women at the same time.

The paper analyses the design and artistic features of the original source, addresses the historical stages of the process of creation of unisex clothes, analyses the features of the style direction, outlines the design concept of the author's collection, develops a number of sketches for clothing intended for women at the age from 20 to 25, which corresponds to modern fashion trends. At the same time, the collection used topical decorative and constructive solutions of the unisex style and its separate sub-directions, in particular military style.

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СТИЛЬОВИЙ НАПРЯМ «УНІСЕКС» ЯК ПРОЄКТНА ПРАКТИКА В ДИЗАЙНІ КОСТЮМА

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Метою дослідження є визначення основних принципів становлення стильового напрямку «унісекс» як проєктної практики дизайну одягу; формулюванню узагальнених образно-проєктних характеристик даного стильового напрямку для роз-

СТИЛЕВОЕ НАПРАВЛЕНИЕ «УНИСЕКС» КАК ПРОЕКТНАЯ ПРАКТИКА В ДИЗАЙНЕ КОСТЮМА

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Целью исследования является определение основных принципов становления стилевого направления «унісекс» как проектной практики дизайна одежды; формулировке обобщенных образно-проектных характеристик данного стилевого направления для разра-

робки колекцій костюма як актуального модного продукту масового споживання.

Методологія дослідження заснована на комплексному підході до виявлення образно-проектних та художньо-композиційних властивостей розробки колекції костюма, зокрема методи соціо-культурного аналізу, історико-логічного розвитку, системно-структурний, компаративний, композиційний та стилістичний аналіз. На окремих етапах застосовано методи морфологічного аналізу та синтезу, соціологічне опитування.

Результати. Вивчено походження стильового напрямку «унісекс», його особливості, описано обов'язкові композиційні елементи в дизайні одягу. Досліджено еволюцію форми, головні елементи виробів в стилістиці «унісекс». Охарактеризовано стильовий напрям «унісекс» з позицій асиміляції інтерактивного розвитку чоловічого і жіночого костюма ХХ ст. Здійснено систематизацію образно-проектних та конструктивно-композиційних рис основних підстилів стильового напрямку «унісекс» на сучасному ринку модного одягу широкого призначення. Визначено та охарактеризовано художньо-композиційні ознаки колекції сучасного жіночого одягу в стилістиці «унісекс» з урахуванням сучасних матеріалів. Систематизовано спільні ознаки моделей колекції та структуровано характерні для стильового напрямку «унісекс» елементи, що є основою для проектування авторської колекції жіночого одягу. Запроєктовано авторську колекцію жіночого одягу, що відповідає тенденціям стильового напрямку «унісекс».

Наукова новизна дослідження полягає у визначенні образно-проектних властивостей стильового напрямку «унісекс» як проектної практики в сучасному дизайні костюма масового споживання. Визначено ступінь естетичності ідейного змісту та гендерних аспектів образно-проектного явища «унісекс» в сучасному культурно-

ботки колекцій костюма як актуального модного продукту масового споживання.

Методология исследования основана на комплексном подходе к выявлению образно-проектных и художественно-композиционных свойств разработки коллекции костюма, в частности методы социо-культурного анализа, историко-логического развития, системно-структурный, компаративный, композиционный и стилистический анализ. На отдельных этапах применены методы морфологического анализа и синтеза, социологический опрос.

Результаты. Изучено происхождение стилевого направления «унісекс», его особенности, описаны обязательные композиционные элементы в дизайне одежды. Исследованы эволюция формы, главные элементы изделий в стилистике «унісекс». Стилевое направление «унісекс» охарактеризовано с позиций ассимиляции интерактивного развития мужского и женского костюма ХХ в. Осуществлена систематизация образно-проектных и конструктивно-композиционных черт основных подстилей стилевого направления «унісекс» на современном рынке модной одежды широкого назначения. Определены и охарактеризованы художественно-композиционные признаки коллекции современной женской одежды в стилистике «унісекс» с учетом современных материалов. Систематизированы общие признаки моделей коллекции и структурированы характерные для стилевого направления «унісекс» элементы, являющиеся основой для проектирования авторской коллекции женской одежды. Спроектирована авторская коллекция женской одежды, соответствующая тенденциям стилевого направления «унісекс».

Научная новизна исследования заключается в определении образно-проектных свойств стилевого направления «унісекс» как проектной практики в современном дизайне костюма массового потребления. Определена степень эстетичности идейного содержания и гендерных аспектов образно-проектного явления «унісекс» в современном культурно-

мистецькому просторі. Виявлено основні елементи костюма, що інтерактивно взаємовпливають на дизайн чоловічого та жіночого одягу як продукту моди.

Практична значущість вивчення основних проектних характеристик застосування стильового напрямку «унісекс» в дизайні одягу визначається комерційним потенціалом, що дозволяє дизайнерам модного одягу в сегменті мас-маркет та фабричним брендам одягу скоротити витрати на виробництво і подальше просування: єдиний дизайн, виконання колекції для чоловіків і жінок з однакових матеріалів, загальна реклама тощо.

Ключові слова: продукт моди; дизайн костюма; стильовий напрям; унісекс; стилістика; модна тенденція; авторська колекція; образно-проектні властивості одягу.

художественном пространстве. Выявлены основные элементы костюма, которые интерактивно взаимовлияют на дизайн мужской и женской одежды как продукта моды.

Практическая значимость изучения основных проектных характеристик применения стилевого направления «унисекс» в дизайне одежды определяется коммерческим потенциалом, позволяющим дизайнерам модной одежды в сегменте масс-маркет и промышленным брендам одежды сократить затраты на производство и дальнейшее продвижение: единый дизайн, выполнение коллекции для мужчин и женщин из одинаковых материалов, общая реклама и т.д.

Ключевые слова: продукт моды; дизайн костюма; стилевое направление; унисекс; стилистика; модная тенденция; авторская коллекция; образно-проектные свойства одежды.

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