Olivia Mulder

Fashion Historical Report: Manjit Thapp

Fashion Sketching - 1322

September 19, 2020

Manjit Thapp is a UK based illustrator inspired by fashion and pop-culture. Thapp studied illustration at Camberwell College of Art, and went on to gain a foothold in the industry with the help of social media. With an impressive following on Instagram, Thapp has been featured in British Vogue, Vogue India, and other publications. Recently her illustrations of Fendi, Dior, Armani, and Prada have been featured in Marie Claire France. She has also been commissioned by Emporio Armani to illustrate looks from the FW 20-21 collection. Outside of fashion, Thapp has also created illustrations for Penguin Random House, Google, Adobe, and has had multiple art shows of her own. Thapp blends digital and hand-drawn techniques to create a flat yet dynamic aesthetic. Through the use of pencil, Thapp states that she achieves the textures provided by traditional drawing techniques, and digital coloring allows for a flat, uniform finish to her pieces.

Many of Thapp's illustrations set central female figures against a background – often vibrant colors, sometimes abstract and sometimes realistic. Her fashion illustrations, though, typically show the subject against a solid colored or white background, instead focusing the attention on the patterns and details of the designs. Her work overall uses vibrant colors that enliven the clothes, often a mix of earth tones and warm colors. She has stated that Frida Khalo is an inspiration to her own aesthetic, an influence that is clear in her color palette. In her fashion illustrations, she depicts both catwalk and streetwear figures. Her female figures are clearly stylized, with flat, iris-less eyes that nonetheless bring a liveliness to the drawings. This flat aesthetic is merged with an impressive realistic depiction of the garments. The material as well as the drape and body of the clothes are very realistically rendered. One of the specialities of Thapp's drawings is the consideration of textiles and patterns. Each garment that she depicts

shows an impressive attention to how the clothes look, and despite the stylized aesthetic she utilizes, the drawings convey a lifelike image of the clothes.

Though relatively new to the world of fashion illustration, Manjit Thapp's portfolio of work shows growth and change in her stylistic approach. Her recent drawings show a greater amount of brushwork, an obvious stylistic choice as the coloring is done digitally. Her illustrations also sometimes show a variety of digital brushes, varying from a grainy line to pointillism shading. She also embraces a softer pastel color palette in her newer works. Despite this variety of coloring techniques, Thapp's aesthetic is clearly her own.

Manjit Thapp's illustrations are newly embraced in the fashion world, and though it isn't yet clear the influence of her drawings on the fashion industry, it *is* clear that her style is embraced by major labels and publications. Most notable perhaps is the following she has received due to her illustrations of street style. Many of her earlier works are depictions of outfits she found on instagram of people's self-styled outfits. Her illustrations of day-to-day fashion brings a greater focus on accessible fashion, rather than the haute-couture of the runway. Though Thapp has grown to be able to illustrate for name brands and elite magazines, she still finds inspiration from the street style of everyday people.

Bibliography:

Riposte Editorial Team. *Manjit Thapp*. 2016, www.ripostemagazine.com/manjit-thapp.

Thapp, Manjit. *Manjit Thapp*, www.manjitthapp.co.uk/.

Waterhouse-Biggins, Annabel. "Manjit Thapp: Wonderland Magazine." *Wonderland*, 2 Mar.

2017, www.wonderlandmagazine.com/2016/11/15/manjit-thapp/.

Figures:

Figures 1-4 sourced from: Thapp, Manjit. *Manjit Thapp*, www.manjitthapp.co.uk/.

Figure 1: MiuMiu Pre-Fall '16

Figure 2: Street Style

Figure 3: "Solange in Outfits"

Figure 4: Fendi 2020 for Marie Claire France

Figure 5: Reese Blutstein in the style of Manjit Thapp by me

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5