

The Artistic Hat Applying Natural Resources and Innovative Materials

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Abstract

The hat is the most flexible human head covering. Almost entirely enveloping the hair, it can be simple, pure, elegant and mysterious. Yet it is frequently a highly decorative form of dress. The hat also takes a part in the extension of the area of art as soft-sculpture. My purpose of this thesis is to present diverse artistic hats with natural images by nontraditional materials and natural resources. The reason why I select nature as them is that it is absolutely the origin of life and art. To develop the innovative hat design, I focus on the material to extend the range of art expression. I observe nontraditional materials such as wire, paper and so on that enhance heterogenetic feeling from natural images. The attempt is made to enhance the visual effect by harmonizing the disharmonious feeling. Natural resources such as moss, orange, feather and so on could be adapted to the hat and applied for unique design, which supplies new expression. Therefore, the harmony of natural images and natural resources could avoid dullness, bestow elegance and polish the unique beauty creation of the hat.

I. Introduction

All the basic hat shapes were created very early in the history of mankind. Over the last five hundred years the development of headwear has been more a process of changing scale, proportion and decoration than of changing style. In fact, there were only two styles; brimmed and unbrimmed. And there are only two basic forms: caps and hats. The history of modern headwear is concerned with variations on these. We can go further and say that for most of the time there have been only two materials: felt and straw. However, it would be wrong to imagine that such

limitations make the subject of hats narrow or predictable. On the contrary, headwear has been used to show pride, humor, resourcefulness and imagination with variety that few other items of clothing can emulate and none can surpass. Over the centuries the hat has been pre-eminently the item of dress that could best proclaim quickly, effectively and dramatically the personality and status of the wearer.¹⁾

In this research, I would like to focus on the classification of hats concerning the characteristics of the material, the concept and the history of hats. Together with clothing whose main purpose has been changed from

functional or practical use to an unrestricted expression of formative art aimed at creativity, hats become one of the important type of formative art. Even though hats express artistic creation with various materials, shapes, and techniques, diversification of materials can be the most important subject. Therefore, I first traced the history of various materials used for hats, and then I tried to make new art works applying non-traditional materials.

Hat is about millinery that is, men and women's hats, their design, history, and traditions. I would like to explore the art of the hat. The hat is viewed as soft-sculpture, in an attempt to celebrate and delight in the craft of millinery, as well as to delineate styles, periods, and designers. I have focused my work on the study of interpretations of natural images and natural resources and their application to hat design.

II. Theoretical Background

1. The concept and history of hat

The hat is an accessory worn on the head consisting of a crown and a brim. Designed to complete a costume or be worn for warmth, it can be made of felt, straw, fur, fabric, leather, vinyl, etc. Worn since the 10th century, early hats were designed to show the importance of the wearer. Men had worn hats indoors as well as outdoors and even in church until 1660. Women rarely wore hats until late in the 16th century except for traveling. Flat straw hats were worn in church from approximately 1750 to the mid-1830s. After that bonnets took over and hats were not again considered proper for church until 1875 when they almost replaced bonnets as

headgear.²⁾

1) Before 12th century

(1) Men

Until the 12th century men didn't enjoy wearing any kind of headwear. Later they wore something normally made of wool or felt.

(2) Women

Women were expected to cover their heads and usually did this by draping a broad scarf or veil around head and shoulders so that only the face is visible (figure 1).

2) 12th century

(1) Men

The hood emerged with a cape that covered the shoulders loosely.

(2) Women

The veils and scarves remained dominant throughout this century.

3) 13th century

(1) Men

The hood, small round cap, large-brimmed traveling hat and coif became more widely used with slight variations in style.

(2) Women

Hairstyles became much more elaborate and, though no new styles of headwear emerge, the earlier styles were modified to take this account into.

4) 14th century

(1) Men

The style of the hood later grew very long and was then wrapped around the head rather like a turban.

(2) Women

The barbette was increasingly discarded and headwear consisted of the fillet and a fret, a hairnet that covered the hair, which as now coiled around the ears.

5) 15th century

(1) Men

Fashionable men spent lots of time and money

on clothes. The chaperon was developed from the hood-turban, and for at least fifty years it was the hat of power as well as fashion (figure 2).

(2) Women

The padded and cushioned headdress (figure 3), horned headdress (figure 4), and wired veils all testified to the increasing interest in the head as a fashion focal point. Headwear worn high on the head is seen throughout Europe.



<fig. 1> An Illustration, The Lambeth Bible



<fig. 2> Louis of Anjou, The Hat



<fig. 3> An Illustration, The Hat



<fig. 4> An Illustration, Hours of King Rene



<fig. 5> A Portrait by H. Baldung, The Hat



<fig. 6> An English Gentlewoman by Hans Holbein, The Hat

6) 16th century

(1) Men

The low and soft male bonnets were composed of elaborate trimmings of feathers, lace and ribbons. The flat cap is sophisticated and perfect style by mid century (figure 5).

(2) Women

The standard hood shape, known in Europe as the English hood, strongly architectural, was formed (figure 6). In its later forms, this hood becomes very rigid and the space under the gable was covered by material. On no account was any hair shown. The French hood was smaller and worn further off the brow (figure 7). It was far less rigid than the English style and followed the contours of the brow. The lettuce cap (named after the fur from which it was made, a type of ermine) becomes fashionable. Towards the end of the century women began to wear hats based on men's styles.

7) 17th century

(1) Men

Hats began to reach new heights of extravagance. The scale was voluminous and the trim costly. The large hat with a high crown and broad brim, later to be known as the 'Cavalier', was the dominant style. Hats were made of various materials, including the expensive beaver. Luxurious trims were common, particularly using feathers. The favorites were ostrich feathers, worn either singly or in bunches that draped around the brim or stood upright and drooped over the crown.

(2) Women

A variation of the plain gauze veil was informally draped over the head and face (figure

8). Hoods, known as chaperones, were common. Made of soft material tied with a bow under the chin, they were frequently worn over a coif. The large-brimmed hat, a copy of the 'cavalier' hat, was worn by fashionable women.

8) 18th century

(1) Men

The main style was the tricorne. It was deeply crowned and with the brim cocked on all three sides (figure 9). It was called by various names depending on how it was cocked. The brim was bound with lace or braid and occasionally had a jewel or feather ornament.

(2) Women

Caps began to be worn indoors (figure 10). For outdoor wear, the same caps were worn under hats. These caps, known as day caps, were normally made of linen and almost invariably edged with lace. In the last decades of the century, the dormouse, a mob cap from France, becomes all the rage. It was very large and elaborately trimmed with layers of lace and ruffling. As wigs grow bigger, many fashionable women abandon hats altogether. Hats were usually enormous, and they were made of straw, beaver or felt and were trimmed with ribbons, bows and feathers.

9) 19th century

(1) Men

The top hat began to dominate the 19th century as thoroughly as the tricorne dominated the 18th. However, it was by no means a static style, and variations in scale both of brim and crown were found throughout the century. In the 1820s, the Wellington was the most popular (figure 11).

(2) Women

The mob cap was worn continuously. Turbans were also popular. Often, women wore only a handkerchief pinned to the head and ornamented with flowers for evening occasions. The bonnet dominated the first decades of the century. The most commonly seen type of bonnet had a high, stiff crown and deep brim and was universally known as the poke bonnet.

In the 1820s, fashionable hats and bonnets suddenly became huge and were smothered in ribbons, flowers, feathers and gauze trims to give

an even greater sense of bulk.

By mid-century, the scale has reduced. By the 1860s, hats had gone out of style and modishly dressed women wear only bonnets.

Hats came back into fashion as informal headwear in the early 1870s. Straw sailor hats and wide-brimmed bergeres were popular. It is in the 1870s that an explosion in women's hat styles took place. Hats became increasingly trimmed with feathers and most fashionable hats require a veil.



<fig. 7> Lady Jane Grey by Master John, The Hat



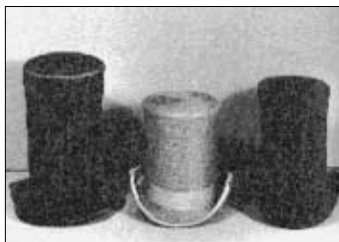
<fig. 8> The Countess of Somerset By Issac Oliver, The Hat



<fig. 9> A Young Man by Bernard Lens, The Hat



<fig. 10> Ladies' Caps by Bernard Lens, The Hat



<fig. 11> Top Hats, The Hat



<fig. 12> An Illustration by Georges Lepape, The Hat



<fig. 13> An Illustration by Jeanne Lanvin, The Hat



<fig. 14> Turban by Paulette, Hats

10) 20th century

(1) Men

The top hat, bowler, homburg, fedora and trilby crossed into the new century.

(2) Women

The art of millinery was pushed to its outermost limits in the first decade of the new century, though things began quietly enough. At the start of the century the most fashionable hat in Paris, London and New York was the small hat that perched on the head and was at its most chic in black, with a small veil.

By 1910, most hats were enormous, though Poiret's tight turban ornamented with an aigrette (figure 12), seen on the most fashionable heads in Paris, was an exception. Scale was still important at all social levels and was provided by trims. Feathers, artificial flowers, waxed satin ribbons and tulle are all used in abundance on hats as well as toques. The latter became fashionable again and was worn large and tilted back off the face.

In the 1920s the cloche becomes the most fashionable hat for both younger and older women (figure 13). For summer recreational

occasions a broader-brimmed picture hat was often worn. By the middle of the decade the general tendency was for hats to be high and modestly scaled. Berets, pillboxes and tricorns were fashionable- the latter marking a move towards the asymmetric lines that were to be the theme of the decade.

Many of the 1940s turbans were ad hoc affairs, using any materials to hand, including paper flower, cellophane and offcuts of pre-war materials (figure 14).

Hat styles of the 1950s complemented the long slim lines of the clothing styles of the time by being either very small flat pancake berets or pillboxes or very large romantic picture hats in the spirit of the turn of the century.³⁾

The prevailing tendency was towards unisex clothing and hats from the 1960s to the 1970s

Since the 1970s till the 1980s, patchwork started appearing on hats to join sequins and embroidery as part of an ethnic movement. The popular look became the felt hat, often appliqué with pop music symbols.

The young of both sexes enjoyed wearing the baseball caps after the 1980s.

2. The material characteristics of hat

1) Straw

Natural straw used in millinery comes from dried stems of grains such as barley, oats, rye, and wheat. After the grain is pulled, it is laid on the ground and bleached. The outer layer of the stem is removed and the stem is bleached a second time. Synthetic straw and the coating and treatment of natural straw to make it colorful and shiny was commonplace until the 1950s.

2) Felt

In the hat industry, felt is made from animal hairs, usually the fur of rabbits, known as coney. Fur felt hats have survived in surprisingly large numbers. Many of these hats have very wide brims. These hats are usually found in excellent condition, rarely showing the moth and rodent damage characteristic of many of the later felts. The wide-brimmed fur felt hats are often without decoration. This may have been because the trim was removed and reused on another or later hat. No adhesives are used in felt making. Some felts are hard and smooth; others are soft and napped. Velour is soft and velvety. Originally felt was made of all wool yarns, but recently it has included other fibers.

3) Horsehair

Horsehair is quite literally hair fiber obtained from the mane and tail of a horse. It may be used in combination with mohair, linen, cotton, and other fibers to achieve its characteristic openwork weave. Besides widespread use in millinery, it has been used for interfacing in suits and coats, and hems in dresses and gowns. We find examples of horsehair in every decade. In the 1950s the openwork effect was virtually replaced

by synthetic materials, notably nylon and acetate.

4) Silk

Rayon was originally known as artificial silk. It is a fiber derived from trees, cotton, and woody plants. Satin is not a textile, but rather a type of finish used on various textiles such as silk, rayon, acetate, nylon, or combinations of these years. Nylon is a generic term for artificial fiber made of a long chain of synthetic polyamides extracted from coal and petroleum

5) Velvet

Velvet is a pile fabric, which is what gives it its thick, soft texture. It is made of various fibers in different weights, woven with an extra yarn in the warp. Corduroy and velveteen are cut pile also. Most of the nineteenth and early twentieth century velvet is made of silk pile. Many early straw bonnets are trimmed with silk velvet.⁴⁾

6) Non traditional material

Inspiration for millinery exceeds expression in traditional materials. Hat is unrestricted expression of formative art aimed to creativity. The milliner may conceive of a design for a hat that consists of an asymmetrical wire frame, decide to wrap the frame with metallic thread, and then add the finishing touch, a single, silk velvet flower.

I am especially interested in designing hats that apply unique natural resources and innovative materials in order to explore a broad range of artistic expression. I have focused my works based on the way I have used materials. I have chosen natural materials such as feathers, moss, oranges, and flowers to express the essence of nature. In the case of feathers, it helped to show the extravagant display and self-

adornment very common as an indication of status and rank. By analyzing the texture and pattern of oranges structurally, configuratively, and aesthetically during the design process, the essence of the material reveals itself. I connected sliced oranges to copper wires to make a unique hat. The hat in which I attempted to use wire to penetrate a hard shell of nuts was also innovative.

I am interested in the residue materials left behind as they transform through weathering and aging. Food can still be a beautiful material even after weathering and aging.

I have also attempted aesthetic possibilities from materials such as paper and wire with diverse techniques. I used strong green wires to emphasize the free movement of the hat. The hat, which was made by weaving beading, wires and fine fibers created a feeling of elegance. I made the recycled paper hat by an embossing technique.

By combining a variety of natural resources and innovative materials I have produced headdress that may function both as hat and as sculpture while they express our complex and varied relationships with the natural world.

III. Work and Commentary

1. The use of non-traditional materials

1) Work (1)

- Composition: Headdress
- Material: Beading wire, Thread
- Color: gold, green, blue, and purple
- Design Characteristic: Geometric parallel lines of the wire and fine fibers create an unexpected texture and feeling. I wanted to

create a feeling of sophisticated elegance playing the weaving against the organic forms. Colors are modulated and blended to celebrate nature's artistry.



2) Work (2)

- Composition: Head dress
- Material: Wire
- Color: green, copper
- Design characteristic: Thin lines imply the beauty of which has unlimited possibilities. Strong green wires control the shape and emphasize the free movement.



3) Work (3)

- Composition: Head dress
- Material: Paper, Buckram
- Color: white
- Design Characteristic: I used recycled paper because of its greater ecological connection. I show concern for the characteristics of the paper its weight, texture, and tone. After preparing the fibers in a blender, I molded the pulp by hand like clay. The hat is stamped with a coin by an embossing technique.



skin of light ivory provides nuances of color and a beautiful sweet smell. This veil shape is remarkably mysterious and pure, because it expresses the allure of the hidden and unattainable.



2) Work (5)

- Composition: Headdress
- Material: Orange, Bead, and Copper wire
- Color: orange, clear, gold, purple, copper

2. Natural resources

1) Work (4)

- Composition: Headdress
- Material: Orange, Mulberry plant bark, Bead, Copper wire
- Color: orange, ivory, gold, copper
- Design Characteristic: Light Brown mulberry plant bark is an especially and intriguing material. It can be preserved and appreciated for a long time. I attached the skin of small round pieces of oranges with copper wires to mulberry plant bark. The color change from the outside orange skin of red-yellow to the inside



- Design characteristic: I am interested in the cross section view of an orange because it has unique pattern and texture. To dry the sliced orange sufficiently is very important because the moisture can make it fragile when use with wire. I connected sliced oranges to copper wires to make a simple hat shape.

3) Work (6)

- Composition: Headdress
- Material: Rice, Coffee, Raffia, Buckram, Pigment
- Color: gold, brown, and black
- Design Characteristic: Rice, a seed, which is widely eaten, and coffee, the crushed dried berries of a tropical tree, are the material used in this headdress. I molded the hat shape from buckram and then poured the rice and coffee over it. I sewed the raffia raw as fringe on the edge of the hat for a decorative effect. Even though all of the materials are natural resources, a mixture of gold and copper pigment was used to transform the materials for making the work more precious and valuable.



4) Work (7)

- Composition: Headdress

- Material: Nut, Copper wire, Bead, Pigment
- Color: ivory, brown, and copper
- Design Characteristic: The nut is a fruit or seed with a hard shell and kernel inside which is eaten. I used whole nuts and half shells by turns to avoid dullness. I attempted the wire to penetrate the hard shell. Wires and beads of a similar color enhance the visual effect.



5) Work (8)

- Composition: Headdress
- Material: Moss, buckram, Bead, Pigment



- Color: green, brown, gold, silver
- Design Characteristic: Moss is a small green plant from damp. Dried moss gives long lasting beauty and enjoyment. The gold shoe on the moss is a surrealistic touch. I like its unexpected effects. The hat, designed in the shape of a shoe, can also be a vase for flowers.

6) Work (9)

- Composition: Headdress
- Material: Mixed hackle, Bead, Cotton, Buckram, Pigment
- Color: black, brown, and gold
- Design Characteristic: The feather is one of a bird's many light skin coverings. Feathers have adorned prestigious headwear in many cultures. I like their color change, movement, and soft texture. To enhance the color of feathers, I did some screen-printing on black cotton with gold pigment. The repeated linear gold patterns and beads enhance the feathers' liveliness. To emphasize the movement of the feathers, I made a ball shape covered by the black cotton to which the feathers are attached. It looks elegant and mysterious.



IV. Conclusion

The hat is an essential means, presenting an art impulse and self-expression and creature of human being, reflecting art movement caused by social condition. Thus, the hat of present day reflects the social movement, which emphasizes the importance of nature and environmental problems. Our current concern for our relationship with the natural world can be expressed in millinery forms.

Even though various kinds of materials, shapes, and technique are used for hats, in this thesis I focused on the diverse expressions of non-traditional materials, and some unique natural resources. To develop extraordinary materials and extend the range of artistic expression, I studied natural resources such as moss, oranges, nuts and feathers that represent the natural world and give peculiarly aesthetic sensations.

Adapting non-traditional materials such as wire and paper that have a relationship to diverse techniques like embossing, weaving and dyeing, an attempt was made to harmonize disharmonious feelings. It was also proved that natural resources could be adapted to hat and applied for unique item that supplies new expression.

Using natural resources and non-traditional materials together seems to be an innovative attempt in the millinery design field. It could be used to pursue unique beauty, which is both functional and has aesthetic possibilities.

Notes

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p. 7.

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- 3) Colin McDowell (1997), Hats, Thames and Hudson, p.221.
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