Creative Music Practice

Professional Project

Conor Leavy

Analysing the Role of Music in Establishing Brand Identity through Luxury Fashion Films.

April 26th, 2024

Timm Jeschawitz

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Abstract

Whether through intertextuality, or apophenic tendencies, the human brain has been reported in many existing studies to possess the ability to create links between certain musical ideologies, and other completely non-related mediums. This thesis aims to discover the ways in which audiences perceive music in the context of luxury fashion films, and how by understanding these perceptions during the creation of a fashion advertising campaign, fashion brands can enlist sound design and original compositions to better deliver their brand identity to the intended audience. Through the identification of musical characteristics and their perceived meaning when analysed in conjunction with additional forms of media, a formula for the composition of fashion campaign soundtracks can be devised. Examples of existing studies noting pre-existing perceptions of musical tropes will be examined in order to apply their relevance to this study. Throughout this thesis, hypotheses on the most prolific of these characteristics will be stated, with the relevant data extrapolated from surveys and references put into practice through the creation of an original visual fashion campaign film and two contrasting yet structurally similar musical accompaniments. A survey analysing this film and subsequent scores will be constructed, with the data collected used to prove the proposed research question, as well as speculate on the possible implications that this data possesses for the relevant field and future studies.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Music has always been regarded as one of the greatest storytelling mediums the world has to offer. It transcends all language barriers to evoke human emotion and convey a message to its listener. A key element in the creation of marketing campaigns, music allows brands to create an encapsulating brand identity. However, as many brands focus on partaking in current social media "trends" as advertising tactics, the value of music in the context of this new way of marketing has almost gotten lost.

The aim of this major project is to document the creation of a fashion campaign film and showcase the importance of music in establishing a recognizable brand identity. By conceptualizing and producing visuals and a custom score, this project will demonstrate the link between the two disciplines and highlight how music can act as a storytelling aid, even in the world of fashion marketing.

Many studies have shown that our understanding of the storytelling capabilities of music comes from intertextuality, rather than the narrative meanings of the individual artefacts (Negus). This sentiment has rung true within studies of the role of music in marketing, as many consumers are more likely to develop a connection with brands that use familiar styles of music throughout their marketing strategies (Bruner). The aim of this project is to demonstrate how, by analyzing musical techniques used in general marketing, fashion brands can build strong customer relationships through the newest media format dominating the industry: Fashion Films. By establishing a connection between the two media forms, this project will endeavor to exemplify the intrinsic value of music in other fields, specifically the fashion industry.

<center>Literature Review</center>

<u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of the Literature Review chapter is to examine, compare and contrast a list of sources that have been compiled to aid in the research portion of this major project. Each of the sources mentioned below act as a unique reference for different areas of the project. In order to examine these sources thoroughly, this section will be broken down into six different sub-sections. Each section of the Literature Review will examine the credibility, relevance, and application of each source within the realms of the major project being developed. In order for the proposed research question to be fully answered, a theory on the characteristics and focal points of music in fashion campaigns will be devised. This theory will then be put into practice, using the knowledge of visual elements of fashion campaigns acquired through the study of similar works, and drawing on the findings of past studies in this field.

<u>Academic Study</u>

Before undertaking any research into the production of a fashion campaign, first a review of academic studies which examine the relevance, key aspects, and general effectiveness of music within marketing was conducted. Many authors have speculated on what makes music in advertising a success. Although studies have been carried out in terms of general advertising, according to the information obtained for the purpose of this thesis, there is no specific study on the compositional breakdown of music used in fashion advertising campaigns. In order for a hypothesis to be developed, and a format to be followed, two research journals were examined which detail the importance of music within general advertising; "Music, Mood and Marketing" (Bruner), and "Music in Advertising: An Analytic Paradigm" (Huron). Although many advancements in the mediums used in advertising have been made (both sources were written before the creation of social media, arguably the largest advertising medium in modern times) the research and findings outlined in both sources are still relevant today.

From the research obtained in both studies, certain assumptions can be made as to the universal themes that decipher the effectiveness of music in advertising, dependent on the desired outcome. It is said that tempo, pitch, and musical texture all have differing effects on how the audience views an advertisement (Bruner). Slower and more legato rhythms have been reported to exude a happier more dream like atmosphere in comparison to faster more

staccato rhythms (Bruner). Similarly with pitch, higher pitches in major modes are considered to be happier, and coupled with consonant harmonies which are reportedly more calming, they would technically make a more favorable pairing than dissonant harmonies written in minor modes (Bruner). In his 1989 journal published by the Oxford University Press, author David Huron devices that in order to decipher the effectiveness of music in advertising we must break it down into six basic steps: 1). Entertainment, 2). Structure, 3). Memorability, 4). Lyrical Language, 5). Targeting, and 6). Authority Establishment (Huron). In order to make this research more applicable to the particular study being developed in this project, steps 4; Lyrical Language (the lyrical content of a song) and 6; Authority Establishment (the use of celebrity or notable Public Figures) will be omitted (Huron). When broken down in this format, it is easy to formulate a hypothesis on creating an ideal score for fashion campaigns: music must be engaging and evoke some sort of emotion from the audience, however, it does not need to be directly affiliated with the particular product being marketed (Huron). The main purpose of music in this context, is entertainment, and how it grasps the attention of the audience. However, in order to compose music that is entertaining or resonates with the listener, we must first visit step Five of Huron's outline and decipher who the target audience is. It has been documented that certain genres of music affect different generations of people in disparate ways, with the conclusion that non-typical environmental factors such as unfamiliar music genres can affect a person's ability to resonate with a brand (Bruner). Therefore, in order to create captivating music for a fashion campaign, it must be concluded who the target audience is. Once the target demographic has been considered, the structure of the song can be formulated. Structure in this context considers everything from the rhythm, pitch, instrumentation, and dynamics of the piece. Certain instruments are known to provoke specific reactions in the listener, such as strings which evoke feelings of glee as opposed to woodwinds which evoke more mournful feelings (Bruner). By utilizing the knowledge obtained from these studies and using it in conjunction with the brand's own identity, customer base and style, a formula for the ideal composition to be used in fashion marketing campaigns can be deduced and implemented across all sectors of the fashion industry.

Music

Using the information gathered in the aforementioned academic journals, a structure for the composition to be used in this major project can be developed. In order to create an exciting, and dynamic piece of music, that enhances the visual element being developed, certain

musical techniques identified in the research references mentioned in this section will be utilized. As the purpose of this film is to advertise "luxury fashion", the musical element must exude feelings of grandeur, mystery, and power. Using a string arrangement, along with an orchestral brass section, underlying synth melodies and a strong emphasis on the dynamics, the composition will blend modern and classical music, a theme that is eponymous with most luxury fashion brands. The dynamic arrangement of this piece will draw on elements from Hans Zimmer's "Time", (Zimmer et al.) as well as Ashton Gleckman's "New Suite from 'Interstellar'" (Gleckman et al.). Both pieces comprise of sweeping string arrangements and place a particular emphasis on the dynamics of the piece in order to create an ebb-and-flow style cinematic quality. As mentioned in Huron's study of Music in Advertising, one of the key steps identified in creating such compositional works is memorability, as the author states:

> It is one of the peculiarities of human audition and cognition that music tends to linger in the listener's mind.

(Huron, 562).

One of the key features of compositional writing that aids in memorability is the use of motifs and repetition. As is evident in "Time" (Zimmer et al.) where the writer uses additive processes to build on a simple motif. This allows the music to be recognized after fewer listens, thus imprinting itself into the mind of the listener.

Another musical element that will be explored in this major project is the effectiveness of Orchestral instrumentation within the composition. Orchestral music has often been synonymous with luxury and can be used to add texture and dramatic flair. In the track "Escapism – Live at the Royal Albert Hall" by English pop singer RAYE (Keen et al.), Keen reimagines her 2022 hit single, this time with accompaniment from the Heritage Orchestra, with the famous Royal Albert Hall organ played by Anna Lapwood. The seamless blend of grungy electropop with grand orchestral qualities will be studied and utilized in the musical arrangement of this project.

Supporting Huron's earlier statement on the importance of memorability in music for advertising, Keen uses the simple repetition of the note sequence E-F#-C to create an underlying motif that repeats at different volumes throughout the entire track. This function allows the listener to easily recognize the song, even from just three notes, a concept which this project will examine in relation to its effectiveness in fashion marketing campaigns. It is also interesting to note that both "Time" (Zimmer et al.) and "Escapism – Live at the Royal

Albert Hall" (Keen et al.) are written in the key of E minor. In Bruner's study on "Music Mood and Marketing", he concludes that music written in the minor key is perceived to be more mysterious than that in the major key (Bruner). This idea lends itself perfectly to this study, as the project aims to deliver a mysterious quality to the intended audience.

Cinematography

After examining the elements of music in marketing, a visual component illustrating the effects of the musical studies, is to be produced. Examples of similar works were compiled and analyzed, in order to distinguish certain nuances and cinematic techniques which will aid in the development of fashion-campaign style visuals. The cinematography of the fashion film must elicit feelings of affluence, luxury, and seduction. Vogue Italia's June 2017 film *A Future Present* (Green) is the clearest example of the overall cinematic style that this project will emulate. This film utilizes sweeping slow motion cinematic techniques to blend an array of camera angles, detailed close ups and striking long shots, in order to heighten the sense of drama presented to the viewer. The use of dim lighting, coupled with the black and grey colouring of the piece, creates a sense of mystery, while maintaining a luxury aesthetic. The idea of using enigmatic visual aesthetics in fashion campaigns is quite a common occurrence, as is reiterated in the *Alexander McQueen Spring Summer 2014* fashion film (Klein) directed by illustrious Fashion Photographer and Creative Director Steven Klein. Throughout this film, the visual style creates a voyeuristic impression, as the director uses a hand-held camera to create a sense of intimacy between the subject and the audience. Some cinematic parallels between this piece and Peter Lindbergh's observational style film *Walking* for Vogue Italia's October 2016 issue (Lindbergh) can be established. Both pieces utilize the natural setting to create shadows and elements of low exposure. This technique coupled with the high contrast, low saturation colour grading creates more dynamic visuals, a technique that will be emulated in this major project.

As is common in a lot of fashion films and campaign videos, the visual and audio elements, do not always align, as most of the musical work is repurposed. The aim of this major project however is to examine the effectiveness of purposely commissioned music in fashion advertising, and whether or not it enhances or detracts from the themes displayed throughout the visuals. Once such campaign which employs curated music to match the themes of the campaign is the *Dior 2022 Cruise* campaign (Baron). With an ethereal soundtrack written by Ionna Gika, the celestial visuals, inspired by Greek mythology, and setting at the Acropolis of

Athens are without a doubt enhanced by the audio accompaniment. The correlation between the visuals and the music in this piece are of great importance in this study, as it showcases their ability to work in harmony with one another. Elements of the cinematography of this piece will be derived from this idea, and used in conjunction with diverse camera, lighting, and editing techniques in order to create a successful visual component.

Lighting

The technical aspects of the visuals being developed will all be derived from the sources outlined in the Cinematography section of this research. As previously stated, the use of negative lighting will be a key aspect in obtaining the desired look for the fashion film, similar to the lighting design of Alexander McQueen's fashion film (Klein). Negative lighting is the process of creating depth in an image by making sure the foreground of the image the darkest, the middle ground being at key and having the background bright (Oseman). Using this technique, a more interesting depth of field can be created in the visuals. As well as using negative lighting techniques, this project also aims to use portrait lighting, similar to that used in the *Mugler Spring Summer 2024* show (TORSO*). The Mugler show employs multiple different lighting techniques throughout its seven-minute duration. The use of flashing strobe lights helps to grab the attention of the viewer and helps to create the illusion of a faster pace, something that is important in order to hold the audience's attention. A key aspect of composing music for advertising, as discussed already in this thesis, is the importance of engaging with the audience through entertainment. As for the visuals, this same sentiment also rings true. Huron's study of the subject states that to entertain is to "engage the attention or to draw interest" to the subject (Huron 560)*. The finished film will then be converted in to black and white, so as to create a more striking visual affect. Many fashion campaign films use black and white footage, as a way to create a more mysterious and high class feel. Examples such as *Walking* (Lindbergh) and the *Dior - Secret Garden* campaign, shot in the opulent Palace of Versailles (Van Lamsweerde, Matadin) both utilize a monochromatic colour scheme to add a sense of drama to the finished visuals (the latter intercepts certain shots with full colour shots, however this practice will not be emulated). The lighting techniques displayed in the references mentioned in this section all display interesting, eye-catching, and attention-grabbing qualities which will reflect the themes and purpose of this project.

<u>Location</u>

In order to create the desired visuals, the location must be thoughtfully considered. The inspiration for the locations which will be used in this project are drawn from the series of references, some previously mentioned in the Cinematography and Lighting sections of this chapter. In order to create a diverse and compelling cinematic experience, multiple settings will be used for filming. In Steven Klein's opulent *Dior, Secret Garden IV* film (Klein) the model is seen walking through the grand setting of the Palace of Versailles. The use of such a grandiose location provides a desirable backdrop to create tantalizing visuals, synonymous with luxury and wealth. Dior has used this location multiple times, with the first installment of the Dior Secret Garden film series (Van Lamsweerde, Matadin) also being shot at the Palace. Creating an intertextual link between a brand and a setting can help the audience easily recognize whether or not the brand is a luxury, or expensive brand. Peter Lindbergh also explores this in his film *Walking,* choosing to capture models walking through Times Square in New York City, a city synonymous with wealth and power. The use of such instantly recognizable locations can also add to the familiarity aspect that has been found to be relaxing to a customer and aids in establishing stronger customer relationships (Bruner). Throughout the planning and preparation stages of this project; which will be discussed in detail in the subsequent methodology chapter; the logistic implications of location will be discussed.

<u>Atmosphere & Storyline</u>

Fashion campaigns are a unique storytelling medium as they usually do not have a discernible storyline. In her 2016 research paper examining the marketing of luxury brand narratives through the case study of Christian Dior's Secret Garden Campaign, author Emily Raymond explores the theory that fashion campaigns portray a vague storyline, consisting of "disconnected experiences" which allows the audience to contrive their own interpretations of the visuals (Raymond). For this major project, the visuals will not tell a story in the typical format but will instead focus on displaying a certain atmosphere in order to entice the audience. The atmosphere of the piece, as discussed throughout the literature review chapter, will reflect that of opulence, grandeur, and seduction, themes that are synonymous with luxury brands and advertising campaigns. In the film *Mother* directed by Nick Knight for 1017 ALYX 9SM A/W 15, we see the importance of B-roll footage in adding to the idea of a "storyline", as black and white clips of a fairground are inserted between dramatic black and

white shots of models (Knight). The use of B-roll footage will again be something that the visuals of this project will make use of, in order to relay the brand identity to the audience. The insertion of B-roll footage also acts as an effective interval between modelling shots, in order to create variety in the film, which in turn will be more captivating for the audience. The overall atmosphere of the film, as has been discussed throughout the many sections in this chapter, will be made up of a culmination of ideas extracted from the references analyzed above.

Methodology

In this chapter, an account of the individual steps to be taken to complete the major project will be presented in detail. This chapter will be divided into three sub-sections, in order to differentiate between the individual components required to produce this project to the desired standard. These sub-sections are:

1. Surveys & Analysis
2. Visual Component
3. Musical Component

This chapter will draw on the knowledge obtained during the research portion of the project (outlined in the preceding Literature Review Chapter) in order to successfully achieve the purpose of this project: to create and score a fashion campaign and analyze, using qualitative and quantitative data, whether or not the music aids in extrapolating the brand identity to the audience.

Surveys & Analysis

In order to determine people's perception of music in fashion advertising campaigns, a pre-production study will be devised. This study will ask a range of questions examining people's preferences for instrumentation, tempo, genre, and timbre of music in existing fashion campaigns, and whether or not the music featured is suited to the visual element.
Once all visual and musical elements have been completed, the finished body of work will then be presented to a small group, in the form of a post-production survey. In order for an assessment on the quality and overall success of the project to be completed, questions will be asked relating to the overall feeling and themes of the campaign, as well as audience's personal experience, and whether or not they feel the music that has been composed compliments or detracts from the visual element. In order to properly gauge the success of the finished artefact, the finished video will be presented twice, with the second video containing a different score using contrasting characteristics (i.e. different mode, different instrumentation). A mix of qualitative and quantitative data will be collected, examining

whether or not the finished project successfully completed its aim of representing the importance of music in storytelling and establishing a brand identity in fashion campaigns. In order to structure the surveys correctly, the Harvard University Program on Survey Research's guide, "How to Frame and explain the Survey Data in your Honors Thesis" (Harrison) will be consulted. The answers received in this survey will be used to judge the quality of the overall study and can go on to be used as an example of the role music plays in fashion marketing.

Visual Component

The first component of the project to be completed is the Visual campaign video. In order to create the visuals, the production stage can be broken down even further, into pre-production, production, and postproduction stages, all of which carry equal amounts of importance to the overall body of work. Elements such as theme & atmosphere, lighting, location, cast, production team, and any other production related decisions will be made in the pre-production segment of the project. Artefacts such as a mood-board, treatment, shot list and storyboard will also all be devised in the pre-production stage. Each of these components will then be used as a guide during the production stage. During production, the actual filming of the project visuals will take place. Filming will take place over a number of days (to be decided on during the pre-production deliberations) and will also utilize multiple different filming locations. During this phase of the projects development, technicalities such as shooting format, frame rate and ISO will be decided. It is imperative to the overall project that all decisions made during the pre-production phase are stuck to and executed, as this will help ensure that scheduling conflicts or budget constraints do not affect filming. It will also help allow the postproduction phase to run smoother. During the postproduction stage, elements such as cutting and assembling of scenes, colour-grading and any visual effects will be completed. This section of the project is very important, as the way the visuals are edited will then affect the length and pace of the music. The final edit of the visuals is just as important as the final edit of the music, as both elements rely on each other in order to achieve the goals of this project set out in the research question.

Musical Component

Once all aspects of the visual component have been completed, the musical component of the project can commence. As with the visuals, there will be a pre-production stage, production

(or in this case composing/recording) stage and finally a post-production stage. The pre-production will focus on deciding factors such as time signature, tempo, instrumentation, and key signature, using the findings from Bruner's studies on music in marketing mentioned above. As the purpose of the musical element is to create an atmosphere of grandeur, and to stir emotion in the consumer, certain production techniques will be used in order to help achieve the desired effect. As instrumentation is subject to change, it is hard to state at this current stage whether live instruments will be recorded for this project or whether the musical component will rely solely on instrument samples. If live instruments are to be recorded (such as strings or organ), the performer will be placed in a large room with microphones positioned at optimal angles and distances in order to capture the natural acoustic qualities of each instrument, to add to the atmospheric quality of the overall piece. As cinematic music usually comprises of a large number of instruments, layering will feature heavily throughout the production and postproduction stage of this project, as well as the use of plug-ins in order to manipulate the sounds and make them as large as possible. Once all recording and postproduction editing of the musical component has been completed, the audio will then be added to the visuals. The use of any audio effects (such as the sound of footsteps of models etc.) will be decided upon once the musical component and visual component have been analyzed together, and a decision can be made as to what sound effects are necessary. As many fashion campaigns rely solely on music, the use of sound effects will only be deemed necessary if it helps to enhance the atmosphere and create a more immersive experience for the audience.

Conclusion

Elements of the proposed research design and methodology outlined above may be subject to change due to possible logistical complications, however it will be followed as strictly as possible in order to create a successful artefact, and for the same processes to be followed in future studies of a similar nature. From the research obtained from the Literature Review chapter, this research design is a logical and pragmatic way for each individual component of the project to be executed in a professional manner.

Analysis

In this chapter, an account of the data collected, it's results and subsequent influence on the creation of the major project artefact, will be delivered. As discussed in the previous chapter, a survey was conducted prior to the production of the audio and visual campaign. The results of this survey were compiled and compared with existing studies on music in marketing, as referenced throughout this thesis, to aid in the creation of the musical elements of this project. A detailed report of the technical specifications, such as equipment used, song structure and editing techniques will also be provided.

Pre-production Survey

The first element of research conducted was a survey, collecting qualitative and quantitative data from a group of 28 individuals. Participants were chosen at random, in order to receive a diversified set of results. Throughout the survey, participants were asked to watch short clips of existing fashion campaigns. Each of the sample fashion campaigns had been specifically chosen in order to include a wide range of musical styles and techniques. After each video, the respondents were asked whether or not they felt the music suited the video they had been shown. The answers to this question were received in the form of quantitative data, with a percentage given of the participants choosing yes, a percent choosing no, and a percent that were left unsure. The next question asked participants to describe how the music made them feel, and what emotions they felt the entire campaign elicited. This form of questioning allowed for qualitative data to be obtained in the study. By combining both qualitative and quantitative research, a wider scope of comprehensiveness can be achieved (Verhoef, Casebeer). This allows for more efficacious results to be determined from the pre-production study, which will in turn allow for a more effectual understanding of the hypothesis being examined.

The survey consisted of five fashion campaign clips: Film A, a segment from the *Mugler Spring Summer 2024* show (TORSO); Film B, a segment from the *Dior, Secret Garden IV* film (Klein); Film C, a section from *Valentino, Rendez-Vous* (Piccioli); Film D, the *Dior Fall 2023* campaign (Chiuri); and Film E, the only non-luxury example, the *ZARA Woman Spring*

Summer 2021 campaign (Baron). After each individual film participants were asked the following three questions:

1. Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?
2. What element of the music stood out to you the most in this piece?
3. How would you describe the music in Film A?

Analysis of Pre-Production Survey Results

Upon examining the data received from this survey, a clear relationship between the musical characteristics and the audiences perceptions can be established. Participants tended to favor string instruments throughout, with over 95% of respondents selecting "yes" to question 1 for Film's D (Appendix A.15) and E (Appendix A.19), both of which are scored using string arrangements. This compares to 71.4% selecting yes for Film A (Appendix A.6), 75% for Film B (Appendix A.9), and 77.8% for Film C (Appendix A.12). It is also interesting to note that the scores of Films D and E are both written in minor modes. However, it cannot be deduced that minor keys are more favorable among audiences, as Films B and C are also written in minor modes.

Throughout all of the five films, the most noticeable aspect of the scores proved to be instrumentation, however once again string arrangements proved to be the most notable with 71.4% of respondents selecting instrumentation as being the standout element of the scores in Films D and E (Appendices A.16 and A.20 respectively). When a beat was introduced alongside string instruments, such as in Film B, it created a more diverse split in the audiences' perceptions, with 42.9% selecting instrumentation and 35.7% selecting tempo (Appendix A.10). In Film C, which uses indie track "Crystalised" by The XX as its soundtrack, 35.7% of respondents recognized the melody as the standout element, followed by 32.1% selecting instrumentation, 17.9% selecting tempo and 10.7% selecting lyrical content (Appendix A.13).

The final question in each section collected qualitative data measuring the interpretation of the scores in each film. Qualitative research is described as helping to interpret and develop concepts surrounding the experience and views of the persons involved in a study (Verhoef, Casebeer). As mentioned in previous sections, the aim of the project is to create a score which highlights the role of music in luxury fashion campaigns. The result of this question allows

for an inference to be made on the feelings luxury brands should deliver to their audiences. When listening to string arrangements as in Films D & E, respondents described the music as powerful, captivating, grandiose and dramatic (Appendices A.17 and A.21, respectively). These are all positive impressions, synonymous with luxury marketing. Tracks that included lyrics, seen in Film A and Film C, were described as being mellow (Appendices A.8 and A.14, respectively), while one person described the score to Film B, a psychedelic pop soundscape, as making them feel uneasy (Appendix A.11)
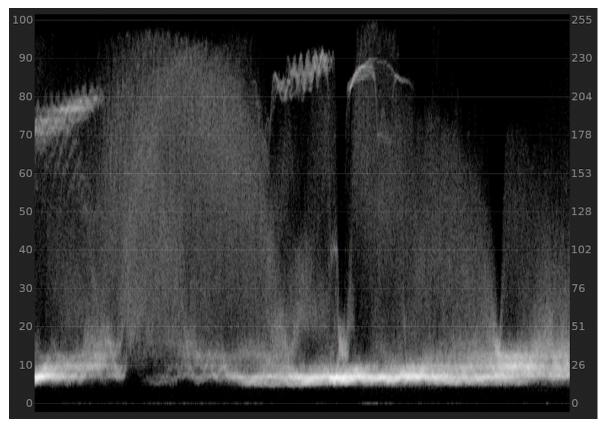
Using inductive reasoning, a conclusion can be made that in order to create a score that appeals to the majority, while maintaining intertextual links to luxury, the score should be written primarily using string instruments, in a minor key. The results of this survey somewhat echo that of previous studies, such as in "Music Mood and Marketing" where the author concludes that music written in a minor key is perceived as more mysterious, and that string arrangements were generally perceived as glad pieces (Bruner).
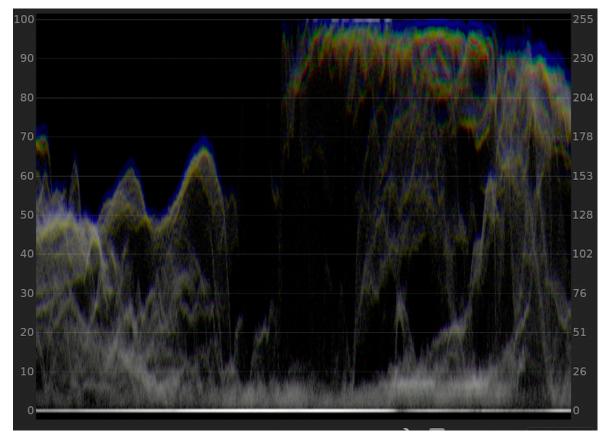

Creation of Visuals

Having analysed previous works and identifying key components in luxury fashion films, as noted in the Literature Review chapter of this thesis, the visual element of the project was created. Visuals were shot using a Canon EOS 250D camera, with a mix of 18-55mm and 50mm lenses. The film was shot in HD format, at 30 fps[1]. In order to create the desired overall aesthetic, and in keeping with references such as *A Future Present* (Green) and *Dior Secret Garden* (Van Lamsweerde, Matadin), the overall speed of each individual clip was reduced by 60%, reducing the number of frames per second to 15fps. The saturation of each clip was reduced to 0%, to create a monochromatic, black-and-white affect. Negative lighting techniques were implemented, utilizing the natural light available at the location, as well as using two Neewer RL-18" ring lights and one CATPI YS2184 handheld LED light. Figure 1 and Figure 2 below show the lumetri scope Waveform Luma[2] from sections of the visuals. This waveform gives an example of the exposure of the shots, with the background being more exposed than the foreground, following the negative lighting techniques outlined in previous references.

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[1] Fps, or frames per second is defined by *Adobe.com* as "the measurement of how quickly a number of frames appears within a second", (Kurniawan, Hara).
[2] This is a waveform in Adobe Premiere Pro which allows you to effectively analyse the exposure of each scene.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Creation of Scores

Two contrasting scores, noted as Score A and Score B throughout this thesis, were created using theories derived from the results of the pre-production survey. By comparing data from "Music, Mood and Marketing" with the findings from the pre-production survey, a set of guidelines could be deduced in order to create Score A, a score that would best deliver the desired audience reaction required by a luxury fashion brand. Score A was written in the key of E minor, as minor modes were found in previous studies, and in the data collected for this study, to communicate mystery, power, and grandeur to audiences. The same study found faster tempo music to be perceived as being happier, stating: "an inverted-U preference function seems to be more likely, with 70 to 110 BPM (beats per minute) being the range of favoured tempo" (Bruner, 95). From this information, a tempo of 110 BPM was decided upon for this score. As string instruments were found in the pre-production survey to elicit the most positive audience reactions, a series of melodic and harmonic motifs were written for an array of string instruments, including Double Bass, Cello, legato and pizzicato Violins. The entire arrangement spans over four Octaves, as compositions with a large sonic range have been found to be perceived as more brilliant (Bruner). To create layers in the instrumentation of this piece, other instruments such as Trumpets and French Horn were used. Studies have shown that Brass instruments are perceived as triumphant and elicit mostly positive reactions in audiences (Bruner). Piano melodies are also favorable amongst audiences, and thus were used in the creation of this score.

The overall structure of Score A can be divided into nine, eight-bar sections, each one building on ideas laid out in its predecessor. From the pre-production survey, melody was not found to be overly noticeable by respondents, however in similar studies repetition of motifs were found to be effective in helping audiences resonate with brands. For the purpose of this score, a number of motifs were repeated throughout the piece, the most noticeable being the pizzicato strings, shown in Figure 3 below, playing a two-bar series of notes derived from the E minor 2nd inversion chord played in an almost arpeggio like manor in the first bar and a repeated march-like pattern in the second. This motif first appears in section four and repeats for the duration of the piece. The main theme is then built upon with a mix of consonant and dissonant harmonies, additional instruments, and an increase in dynamics, all characteristics which were reviewed positively in previous studies (Bruner).

Score B consisted of some obvious similarities to Score A: both were written in Common time[3]; both pieces were 110 BPM; and both pieces utilize repetition throughout their duration. However, in order to be judged comparatively in the final survey, certain elements of Score B were the inverse of Score A. The most prominent contradiction between both pieces was the key signature, with Score B being written in G major, the relative major of E minor. The instrumentation was made up of aspects that were perceived negatively when analysing existing fashion campaigns, with a heavy reliance on synths, a strong drum beat and a lack of dynamic alteration throughout. These simple changes allow for a more definitive comparison of successful musical strategies in fashion campaigns to be drawn from the post-production survey.

Post-Production Survey

To gauge the success of the audio and visual components, and to record comparisons between this project and existing studies, a second survey was carried out. In order to ensure the success of this study and to receive clear, discernible data, a clearly defined construct was presented: to measure the affect of certain musical strategies in fashion films, and how the audience perceives them. This survey followed a similar format to the pre-production survey, asking participants a series of questions in order to collect qualitative and quantitative data. A total of 30 participants, 17 women and 13 men, were surveyed. The survey was this time broken down into three different sections: Section 1, examining the success of Score A; Section 2, examining the success of Score B; and Section 3, examining the perception of each score in successfully achieving the objectives of the hypothesis. Sections 1 and 2 analyse the success of each score individually, whereas Section 3 of the survey analyses the two scores comparatively. From Section 1, 76.7% of respondents felt that Score A suited the visual element (Appendix B.4) as opposed to in Section 2, where a mere 41.4% felt Score B was suited (Appendix B.6). When asked to choose multiple adjectives to describe Score A, a
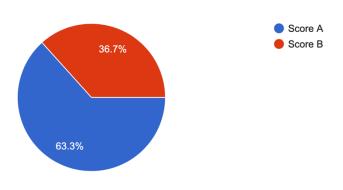
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[3] Common time refers to a time signature consisting of four quarter note beats in a bar (Britannica)

staggering 21 respondents selected dramatic, 19 selected captivating and 15 selected powerful (Appendix B.5). When asked the same question in relation to Score B, 13 selected captivating, while 8 selected dramatic and powerful each (Appendix B.7). Score A received no negative selections, whereas Score B received three selections each for boring and bland (Appendix B.7).

The final section of the survey gathered a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Firstly, participants were asked to select which of the two scores best suited the visuals presented. As shown in Figure 4, 63.3% of respondents selected Score A, while 36.7% selected Score B.

In your opinion, which score best suits the visual element?
30 responses

Figure 4

When asked to give a reason for their decision, one answer in favour of Score A stated "It suits the style of the video, the model, the vibe, and location more. It gives more of a storyline that's easily understood and followed" (Appendix B.9). Participants' reasoning for choosing Score B varied, however the majority stemmed from a preference for the type of music, independent from the research, with one respondent saying "I just like the beat to it more", (Appendix B.9). The final question of the survey asked participants to decide which score was best suited to "luxury" branding. This yielded the same results, with 63.3% voting in favour of Score A (Figure 5), with many citing genre and instrumentation as the prime reason for their decision.

Of the two scores, which do you feel best suits a Luxury brand aesthetic?

30 responses

Figure 5

Conclusion

Through the analysis of similar existing works, which aided in both the development of an original artefact and the study of its affect in successfully demonstrating the objectives posed by this thesis, an account of the musical strategies used to deliver brand identity through fashion films can be derived. Throughout the development of this study, many points as to the unique role music plays in fashion advertising were uncovered, the implications of which will be discussed in the forthcoming chapter. Overall, we can definitively state that characteristics such as instrumentation, tempo, mode, and texture are all key components in delivering brand identity to consumers through the medium of fashion advertising films.

Discussion

<u>Introduction</u>

The objective of this study is to analyse the role of music in luxury fashion campaigns and identify prolific musical strategies which successfully convey a brand's identity to its target consumer. Throughout the preceding Analysis chapter, an account of the data obtained through the execution of relevant surveys was relayed. This Discussion chapter aims to recount the significance of this data, and its capacity for aiding in the creation of music for fashion films in future studies and professional practice. Details on the technical processes in the creation of a fashion film and two subsequent scores were also enumerated in the previous chapter. In this chapter, limitations to these processes, and recommendations for future studies will be outlined.

<u>Significance of Findings</u>

This study was able to uncover many interesting and noteworthy points in regard to the general perception of music in fashion advertising, and the importance of its role in relaying brand identity to its audience. The aim of the visual and musical element was to successfully design, produce and score a fashion campaign style artefact that would elicit feelings of power, mystery, grandeur, and drama amongst a modern audience. From the analysis of survey results, this project has been successful in achieving its main objective, as the results of the post-production survey reveal the four most commonly selected adjectives used to describe Score A were Dramatic, Captivating, Powerful, and Grandiose (Appendix B.5). The results of the two surveys disclose many interesting patterns in how people perceive music in luxury fashion advertising, such as the discovery of string instrumentation as the most desirable instrumental arrangement in this context. Qualitative research obtained from the post-production survey shows that stronger intertextual links are formed between luxury advertising and classical music, as many of the survey participants noted the genre and style of music in Score A as matching the "classic" location and styling. These findings are significant in allowing for formulas to be drawn regarding to the ideal structure and arrangement of music for fashion brands, and how these formulas can be used in accordance with brand ethos and aesthetic to establish distinctly recognizable brand identity through fashion films and advertising campaigns.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of this body of work when compared with existing works of a similar nature further prove the hypothesis on which this project was formed. As briefly mentioned in the Analysis chapter, the structure of the musical elements was largely based on information obtained from Gordon C Bruner's study "Music, Mood, and Marketing". Components such as mode, tempo, and harmony were all influenced by this particular study. When the overall success of the works is analysed, a comparison between this study and the studies mentioned throughout the thesis are subsequently carried out. It can clearly be deduced that elements such as those aforementioned have a profound effect on how an audience perceives the brand in the visual, and therefore are a vital component in the research design of such works. Although the existing works cited in this thesis are formatted around general studies of music in marketing, not specific to the fashion industry, it is clear that the same sentiment is shared when applied to luxury fashion marketing. As many statements acquired through the qualitative research portion of this study state that the music in Score A felt more "timeless" and "classic" (Appendix B.10), this confirms the theories hypothesized in previous studies that musical styles play an important role in categorizing a brand and can be used to target specific demographics (Huron).

Implications

The results obtained from this study allow for many implications both in future studies and in practice within the field of luxury fashion advertising. As evident throughout the in-depth analysis of this study, musical characteristics can be clearly identified in influencing a consumers perception and engagement with a fashion brand. By harnessing this information, brands can use music as a way to succinctly reach their target consumer market. By choosing to implement musical characteristics that align with the brands overall message, and exploiting intertextual understandings of works of this nature, the creation of bespoke music for fashion films can be streamlined to yield the best results. For luxury brands, creating a sense of grandeur, power and mystery are common themes featured in the production of fashion films, and by referring to the data collated in this thesis it is evident that properties such as instrumentation, modal composition, harmony, and tempo are proven to aid in the deliverance of such impressions.

<u>Limitations and Recommendations</u>

Although this study aimed to procure a large range of data, a number of limitations can be identified. The sample size for each survey was approximately 30 individuals (the pre-production survey received only 28 responses). With a larger sample, additional breakdowns could have occurred, such as by socioeconomic background, in order to further diversify the study and give opportunity for patterns to be developed across this added layer of data. A larger sample could have also allowed for a more even dispersion of age categories. From the surveys carried out in this study, no data was received from persons aged between 55 and 64, and only one person over the age of 65 completed the survey. A larger number of responses from wider age categories may have yielded different results, as we know from previous studies that different generations have preferences for different genres of music, and that people tend to react less favorably towards nontypical environmental factors – i.e. music from a genre less common for their generation (Bruner).

A large number of financial limitations may have also limited the overall success of this project, specifically relating to the visual aspect. Budgetary restrictions played a prominent role in the overall production of the visuals, particularly in terms of equipment, location, and clothing. The availability of additional finances would have removed these imitations, helping further propel the visual component into the realms of luxury fashion campaign films. Financial limitations also affected the location of the project. With less budgetary constraints a more "luxury" environment could have been secured.

For future studies of this nature being carried out, the limitations identified in this study can serve as a guide in order for more definitive and detailed data to be extrapolated. In a larger study of this nature a series of additional scores could be developed, contingent on resources available, in order to further examine the theories being posed. Knowledge acquired through the production of this project would conclusively affect the production of a similar project. In terms of the visual component alone, errors such as the low frame rate[4] and use of HD as opposed to 4K formatting when shooting the visuals could be rectified if another study of this calibre was produced.

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[4] This film was shot at 30fps, with the speed reduced by 60% bringing the frame rate down to 15fps. Many sources such as *Adobe.com* state 24fps as the industry standard. The low frame rate of this production led to the creation of "glitch" like motions appearing at points of the film.

Conclusion

When discussing the successes and shortfalls of this study, the overall achievements are resoundingly positive, save for some minor limitations outlined above. Overall, the project achieves its objective of delivering information pertaining to the role of music in luxury fashion films. The study also provides definitive answers on the different ways in which audiences perceive music in general marketing terms, and applies it to the specific field of luxury fashion marketing. Through the creation and analysis of visuals and bespoke scores, recommendations can be made as to the technical successes and faults experienced, and how building upon these processes could lead to a more refined artefact should a project of a similar nature be developed.

Conclusion

From the examination of data produced through the undertaking of this study, it can be determinatively stated that music plays an important role in the establishment of brand identity in luxury fashion films. This research paper notes, through the successful creation of a fashion film and score, that the importance of music in this medium is not only evident, but is a key component when curating a specific brand identity in luxury fashion marketing campaigns.

Through the detailed collation of qualitative and quantitative data, examining the effects of existing fashion campaign scores on audiences and comparing the information with academic literature examining the pre-existing perceptions of certain musical elements, this study was able to implement a successful formula for the composition of musical arrangements for luxury fashion films. Hypothesizing that a more classical piece; consisting of an orchestral arrangement made up of strings, brass, and piano, and blended with subtle synths and large dynamic ranges, is more suited to luxury fashion films as opposed to more contemporary music, structured around a prominent beat and made up of a series of electronic instrumental loops; the research design of this study set out to achieve a specific point, and used the major project artefact to attain conclusive results. From these results, obtained by the post-production survey, it is clear that this hypothesis can be proven correct when tested amongst a small sample of the general public. The general perception being that Score A, the classical piece, is definitively better suited to the visuals curated, and both elements combined created the best representation of a luxury fashion film.

Although certain limitations were encountered, such as financial limitations, technical limitations pertaining to equipment spec, and specific technical knowledge of certain aspects of filmmaking, the overall project was successful in achieving the objectives set out at the beginning of this research. Having acquired practical knowledge over the careful review of the successes and failures experienced throughout its undertaking, this project can be used as a guide for future researchers to develop upon and further advance the ways in which music can be used to aid with the conveyance of brand identity through fashion films.

Overall, this project serves as evidentiary support in highlighting the significance of the role of music in other related industries such as fashion advertising. With an intrinsic link that has existed for generations, music holds an important position in the intertextuality of fashion visual mediums that do not contain discernible storylines. It is clear, that through the

application of carefully selected and well researched musical strategies, the fashion advertising industry can utilize music in order to convey and enhance individual brand identity within fashion films.

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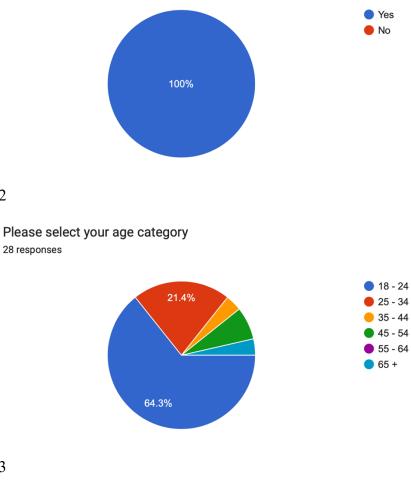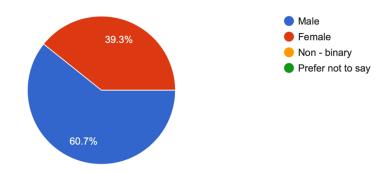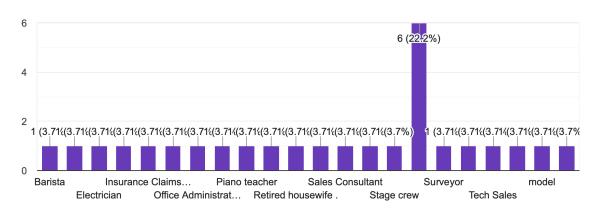
Appendix

Appendix A – Pre-Production Survey

A.1

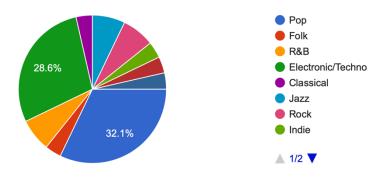**I consent to having my answers used as part of this thesis research**
28 responses

- Yes
- No

100%

A.2

Please select your age category
28 responses

- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 +

21.4%

64.3%

A.3

Please select your gender identity
28 responses

- Male
- Female
- Non - binary
- Prefer not to say

39.3%

60.7%

A.4

Please state your occupation

27 responses

A.5.

What is your favourite genre of music?

28 responses

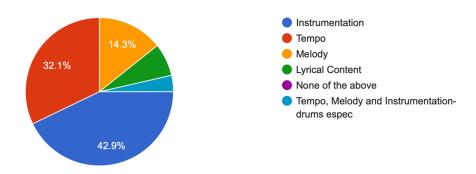- Pop
- Folk
- R&B
- Electronic/Techno
- Classical
- Jazz
- Rock
- Indie

△ 1/2 ▼

A.6

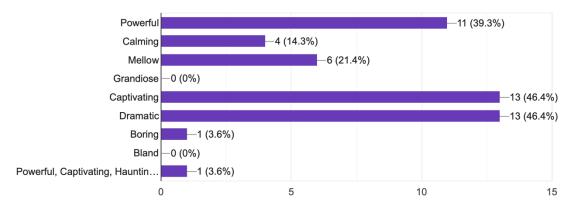Please click the link titled "Film A" Film A Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?

28 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

A.7

What element of the music stood out to you the most in this piece?
28 responses

- Instrumentation
- Tempo
- Melody
- Lyrical Content
- None of the above
- Tempo, Melody and Instrumentation-drums espec

42.9%
32.1%
14.3%

A.8
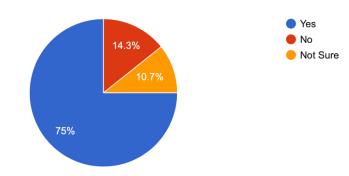
How would you describe the music in Film A? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)
28 responses

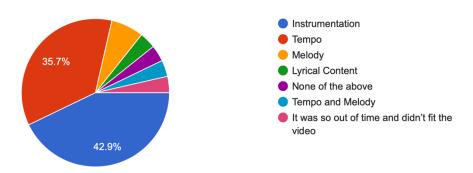| Category	Value
Powerful	11 (39.3%)
Calming	4 (14.3%)
Mellow	6 (21.4%)
Grandiose	0 (0%)
Captivating	13 (46.4%)
Dramatic	13 (46.4%)
Boring	1 (3.6%)
Bland	0 (0%)
Powerful, Captivating, Hauntin…	1 (3.6%)

A.9

Please click the link titled "Film B" Film B Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?
28 responses

- Yes
- No
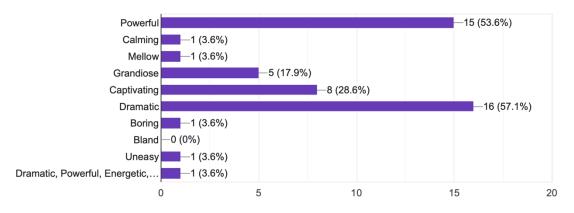- Not Sure

75%
14.3%
10.7%

A.10

What element of the music stood out to you the most in this piece?

28 responses

- Instrumentation
- Tempo
- Melody
- Lyrical Content
- None of the above
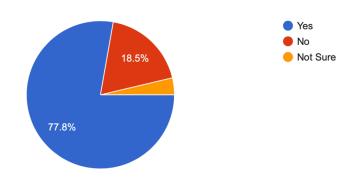- Tempo and Melody
- It was so out of time and didn't fit the video

35.7%

42.9%

A.11

How would you describe the music in Film B? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)

28 responses

Powerful	15 (53.6%)
Calming	1 (3.6%)
Mellow	1 (3.6%)
Grandiose	5 (17.9%)
Captivating	8 (28.6%)
Dramatic	16 (57.1%)
Boring	1 (3.6%)
Bland	0 (0%)
Uneasy	1 (3.6%)
Dramatic, Powerful, Energetic,…	1 (3.6%)

A.12

Please click the link titled "Film C" Film C Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?

27 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

18.5%

77.8%

A.13

What element of the music stood out to you the most in this piece?
28 responses

- Instrumentation
- Tempo
- Melody
- Lyrical Content
- None of the above
- Melody and Tempo

A.14

How would you describe the music in Film C? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)
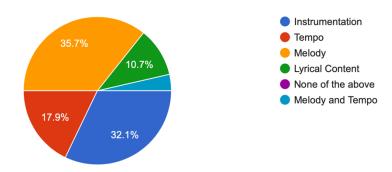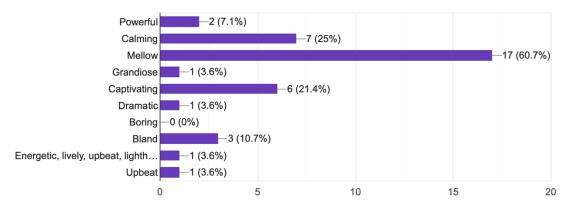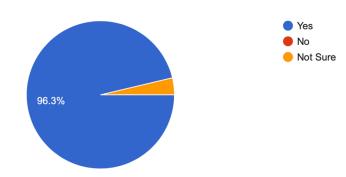28 responses

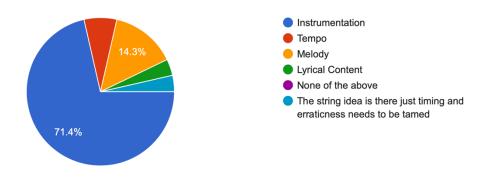|	
Powerful	2 (7.1%)
Calming	7 (25%)
Mellow	17 (60.7%)
Grandiose	1 (3.6%)
Captivating	6 (21.4%)
Dramatic	1 (3.6%)
Boring	0 (0%)
Bland	3 (10.7%)
Energetic, lively, upbeat, lighth…	1 (3.6%)
Upbeat	1 (3.6%)

A.15

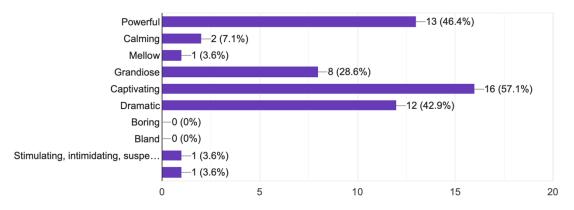Please click the link titled "Film D" Film D Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?
27 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

A.16

What element of the music stood out to you the most in this piece?

28 responses

- Instrumentation
- Tempo
- Melody
- Lyrical Content
- None of the above
- The string idea is there just timing and erraticness needs to be tamed

14.3%

71.4%

A.17

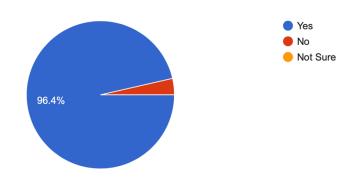How would you describe the music in Film D? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)

28 responses

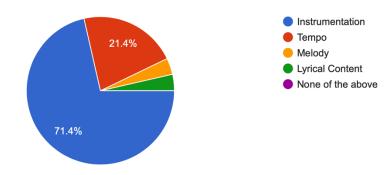| Category	Count
Powerful	13 (46.4%)
Calming	2 (7.1%)
Mellow	1 (3.6%)
Grandiose	8 (28.6%)
Captivating	16 (57.1%)
Dramatic	12 (42.9%)
Boring	0 (0%)
Bland	0 (0%)
Stimulating, intimidating, suspe…	1 (3.6%)
	1 (3.6%)

A.19

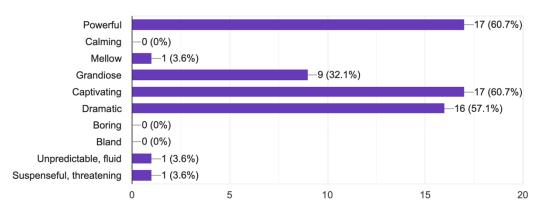Please click the link titled "Film E" Film E Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?

28 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

96.4%

A.20

What element of the music stood out to you the most in this piece?
28 responses

- Instrumentation
- Tempo
- Melody
- Lyrical Content
- None of the above

21.4%

71.4%

A.21

How would you describe the music in Film E? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)
28 responses

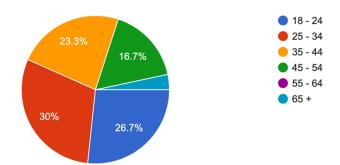| Description	Count
Powerful	17 (60.7%)
Calming	0 (0%)
Mellow	1 (3.6%)
Grandiose	9 (32.1%)
Captivating	17 (60.7%)
Dramatic	16 (57.1%)
Boring	0 (0%)
Bland	0 (0%)
Unpredictable, fluid	1 (3.6%)
Suspenseful, threatening	1 (3.6%)

B.1

I consent to my answers being used to inform this thesis research
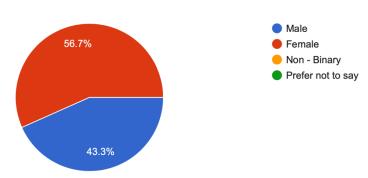30 responses

B.2

Please select your age category
30 responses

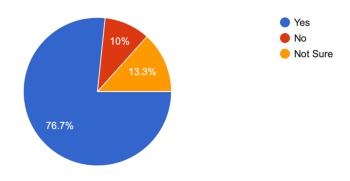B.3

Please select your Gender Identity
30 responses

In this section you are asked to watch two videos titled "Score A" & "Score B". Each visual is the same, however they will contain two contrasting musical elements. Each score has been composed specifically for the purpose of this research. Please answer all of the subsequent questions

B.4

Please click the link titled "Score A" Score A Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?
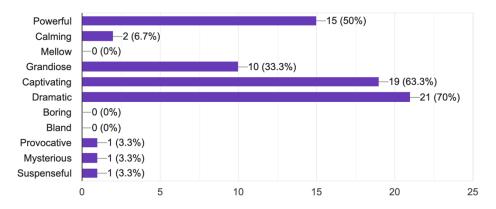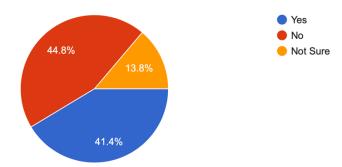
30 responses

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

10%
13.3%
76.7%

B.5

How would you describe the music in Score A? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)

30 responses

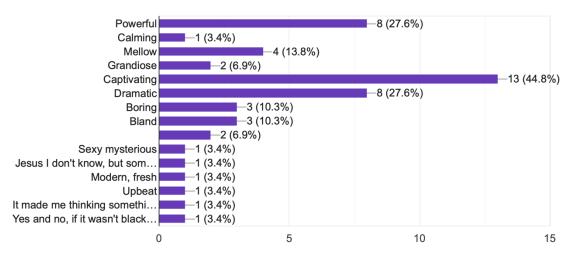| Category	Value
Powerful	15 (50%)
Calming	2 (6.7%)
Mellow	0 (0%)
Grandiose	10 (33.3%)
Captivating	19 (63.3%)
Dramatic	21 (70%)
Boring	0 (0%)
Bland	0 (0%)
Provocative	1 (3.3%)
Mysterious	1 (3.3%)
Suspenseful	1 (3.3%)

B.6

Please click the link titled "Score B" Score B Do you think the music used in this video suits the visual element?

29 responses

- Yes
- No
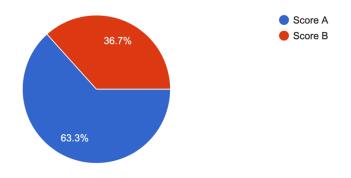- Not Sure

44.8%
13.8%
41.4%

B.7

How would you describe the music in Score B? Please chose from the list below (you may chose multiple)

29 responses

Label	Value
Powerful	8 (27.6%)
Calming	1 (3.4%)
Mellow	4 (13.8%)
Grandiose	2 (6.9%)
Captivating	13 (44.8%)
Dramatic	8 (27.6%)
Boring	3 (10.3%)
Bland	3 (10.3%)
	2 (6.9%)
Sexy mysterious	1 (3.4%)
Jesus I don't know, but som…	1 (3.4%)
Modern, fresh	1 (3.4%)
Upbeat	1 (3.4%)
It made me thinking somethi…	1 (3.4%)
Yes and no, if it wasn't black…	1 (3.4%)

B.8

In your opinion, which score best suits the visual element?

30 responses

- Score A
- Score B

36.7%

63.3%

B.9

Please give your reasoning for your answer to the previous question (Optional)

19 responses

Answers in favour of Score A:

1. The instrumentation compliments the visuals
2. It suits the style of the video, the model, the vibe and location more. It gives more of a storyline that's easily understood and followed.
3. Music changed with the scene - B stayed the same
4. Whimsical and beautiful
5. Score A more in keeping with luxury high end image , invokes feeling of sophistication and high class lifestyle
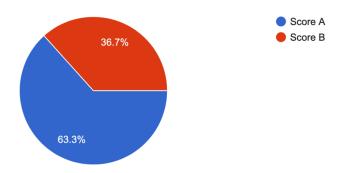6. Score A gets your attention quicker

7. The visual fits better with score A
8. A has a more dramatic vibe and feels more noir like the scene
9. I think a suits better, I feel b would work though if it wasn't black and white
10. body actions facial expressions suits the music better
11. The setting looks quite classic particularly with the piano scene and the styling. I think the more classical style music works better than the more modern slightly techno style.

Answers in favour of Score B:

1. I just like the beat to it more
2. I thought the start of the video suited A. As the video went on it didn't pair as well. A was more classy ball style. I think overall B suited it better.
3. Score B suits the models body movements
4. The music is livelier .
5. The tempo of the music matched more with the scene and tied in more closely to what was going on, but still didn't quite hit the mark
6. Beat/rhythm of this music matches the models pace /movement better. The clothing is modern and elegant and this music in score b suits the visual element better than sore a which feels as though it's from another era and might suit a different type of clothing.
7. It's more suited to the modern aesthetic
8. It fits the models actions more suitably

B.10

Of the two scores, which do you feel best suits a Luxury brand aesthetic?
30 responses

B.11

Please give your reasoning for your answer to the previous question (Optional)
18 responses

Answers in favour of Score A:

1. It seems more fitting
2. Score A seems more regal and expensive and score B seems more boppy and casual
3. Strings and orchestral music give luxurious vibe

4. Again depends on what you define luxury as. Old school luxury could be suited to A more. Ralph Lauren vibes. Detailed, character, layers. I think A suits a longer video B - could be considered the new era of luxury. Cool, sexy, mysterious. B suits a quick video
5. Score B invokes feeling of modern, everyday hip hop suitable for the likes of a trainer or young mens clothing advert thus making score A more suitable
6. Score A is a bit slow
7. Which listen and watch quicker
8. It set a grand tone
9. Has a more classic feel
10. I wasn't particularly mad on the score for a, the instrumentation suits well though
11. Works better at capturing and engaging the audience as the music is more powerful and better suited .
12. I think score A has a more timeless sound which a lot of luxury brands try to achieve with their clothing.

Answers in favour of Score B:
1. Both could be suited towards a luxury brand aesthetic but B feels more modern and cool
2. Score A would suit adverts for cars, watches, suits and more "serious" luxury, but score B would suit adverts for luxury clothing in general
3. The first music piece was more sophisticated, but didn't match the scene so for the purpose of what would sell better out of the two I would say Score B.
4. More contemporary, less cinematic
5. If the audience is younger 35 and below
6. Possibly both scores would suit a luxury brand aesthetic.. just, score b suits this aesthetic more than score A ..score a would suit an older time like Edwardian time period maybe.