

Przetakiewicz emphasized that she had always been interested in fashion, and after some time (in 2010) her hobby evolved into the LaMania brand. The allegations of unethical actions first appeared on 8 June 2020 in Facebook post by Bartek Fetysz, a journalist, who published information sent to him by his follower, who was also a LaMania customer. In an attached photo, she presented a cap of the brand, on which the label reads “made in Bangladesh”. Next to the cap was LaMania’s information card stating that the collection in question and all the goods available in their shop were 100 per cent made in Poland. In his post, the journalist also added a response directly from the brand, explaining the inconsistency in the information. The company then admitted that accessories (including caps) were exempt from the rule of sewing in Polish facilities and were not produced locally.¹⁸



o ©

Dear Madam,
 We are very sorry for the situation and for misleading you. We confirm that all our products are sewn in Poland and in Polish facilities. Accessories are an exception to this. Due to the fact that we care about the best quality, we sometimes source accessories from foreign manufacturers, for example winter hats and leather belts are made for us by Wioska company. As far as the cap from the SS20 season is concerned, it was produced in Bangladesh, not because of the low production cost, but because of the quality. We are always testing Polish manufacturers and believe me, they have not lived up to our expectations in terms of quality.

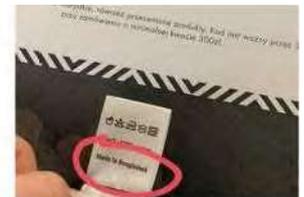


ILLUSTRATION 8

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¹⁸<https://www.google.com/amp/s/businessinsider.com.pl/firmy/strategie/afery-wokol-firmy-lamaniaodpowiedz-joanny-przetakiewicz-wywiad/0pyz3m6.amp> , accessed on 05.11.2020

However, it does not end there, as another post by Bartek Fetish on social media revealed that La Mania Home (the brand's home department) was selling a set of glasses for PLN 320, manufactured by the Julia glassworks, as its own designs, while identical glasses were available the factory's website for half the price. Further allegations came on 9 June from Michal Kędziora, a men's fashion blogger and consultant known as Mr. Vintage, who had discovered that Chinese websites Aliexpress and Alibaba were offering candlesticks identical to those sold by La Mania Home for a several times lower price. In response to the allegations, the company on 11 June altered the contents of its website. The phrase "we created products for La Mania Home" was changed to "we looked for products for Concept Store La Mania Home". However, no explanation or apology was offered to the public for this misinformation.¹⁹

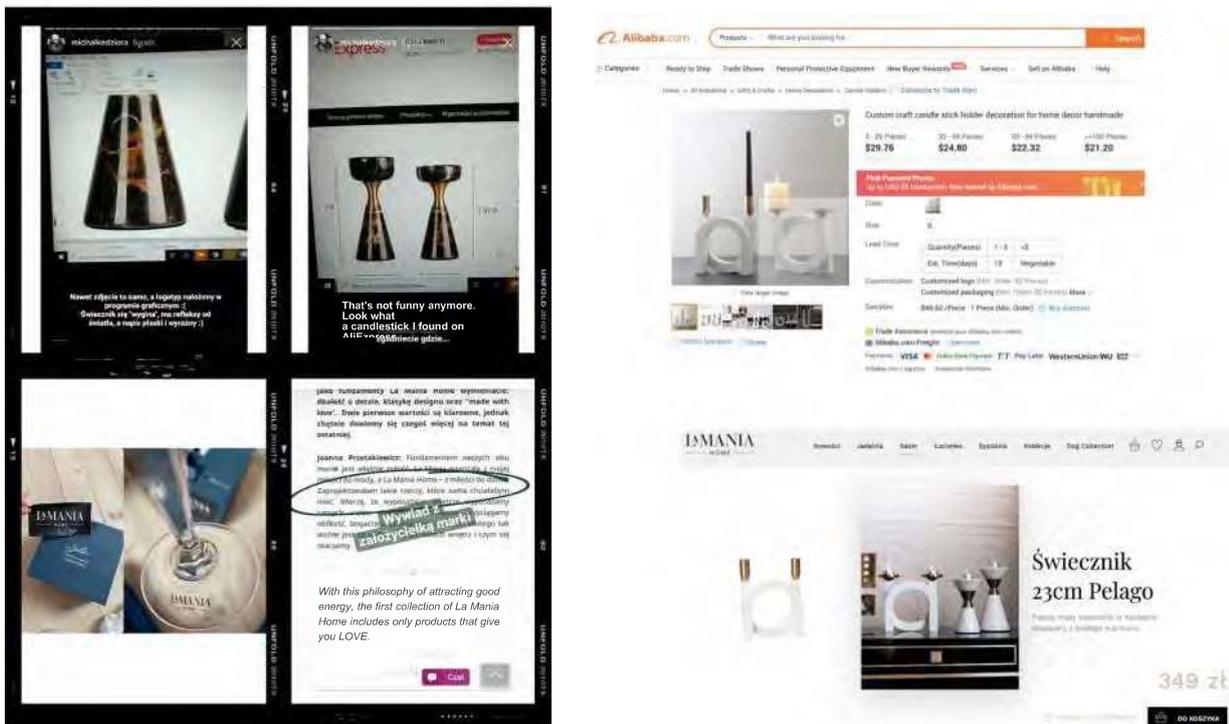


ILLUSTRATION 9

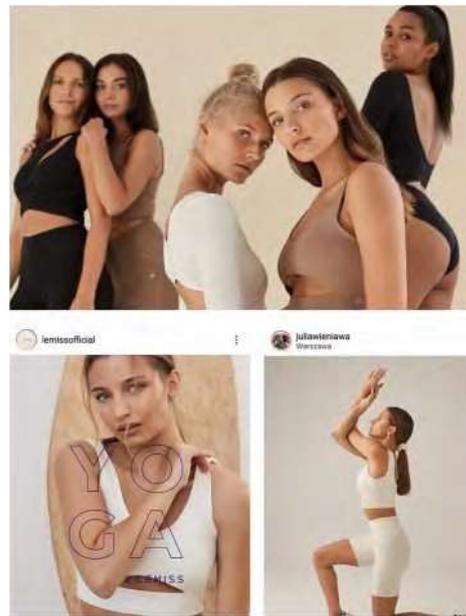
¹⁹<https://michalzaczynski.com/2020/06/10/ioanna-od-luksusu-jessica-od-biznesu-czego-nauczylly-nameth-scandals-in-golskiej-moda/> accessed 05.11.2020

In the era of widespread social media and the growing popularity of influencers, we are seeing that most Internet celebrities who set up their own clothing brands have no professional or educational background in fashion. Relying on their recognisability and wide groups of followers, they decide to branch out into fashion design, usually for financial reasons only in the (unfortunately correct) belief that a well-known name is enough to sell collections to fans. The Polish fashion market has a large number of brands founded by influencers:

Maffashion - Eppram



Julia Wieniawa - Lemiss



What Anna Wears - Nusa



Kasia Tusk - MLE Collection



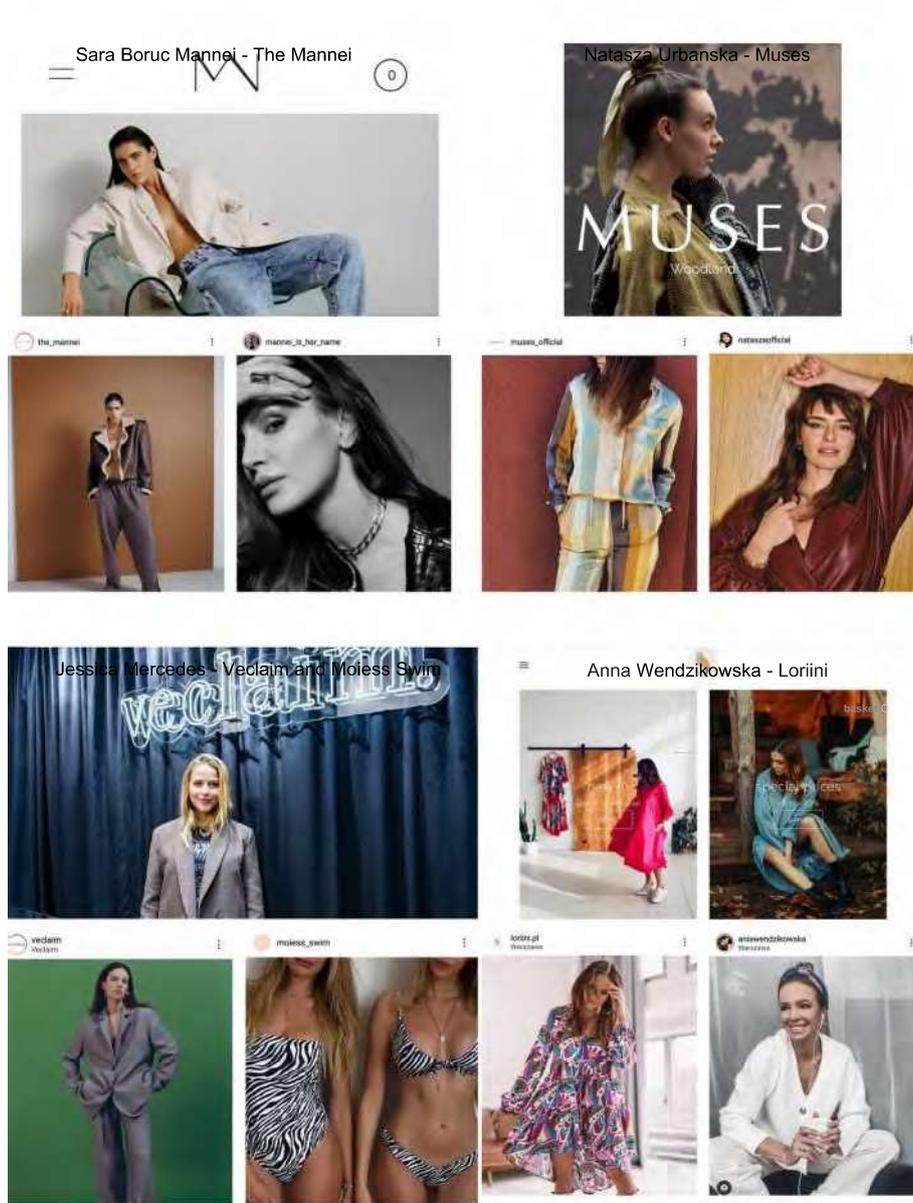


ILLUSTRATION 11

A controversial issue arises in that context – to what extent can a person who is only an influencer and does not have any background or experience in fashion design credibly lead a fashion brand and create valuable designs (even when helped by specialists). While in the beginning, the media personality may generate a lot of pull with wide audiences (as in the case of Jessica Mercedes and her Veclaim brand), the design deficiencies soon become apparent at the creative stage, resulting in damage to brand image credibility. Unfortunately, “label” or “plagiarism” affairs reflect negatively not only on individual brands on the entire fashion industry, making for disgruntled customers

and reinforcing the belief that one should be distrustful and suspicious of designers. However, in this context, 'pseudo-designers' may be used as an opportunity for qualified, educated designers to demonstrate their experience and expertise in contrast to the influencer amateurs. In my opinion, the ideal tool for this are social media, as they give the opportunity to present the audience with a valuable, credible clothing design.



ILLUSTRATION 12

Also, by providing access to a vast number of extremely useful tools, social media allow for efficient communication with the recipient group, exchanging opinions, views and ideas, and therefore exploring the customer base, its needs and preferences. In turn, this gives the designer a wealth of knowledge about the recipient to use later on in the design process in creating a better tailored product.

3. THE OPEN WORK

The model of creation assuming a specific viewer participation in shaping the final form of the work has its roots in several theories of art and design. It is based on creating and sustaining a relationship between the creator and the viewer, allowing a kind of cooperation to occur. The system of designer-collection-consumer that I am concerned with in creating my work features many references to the “Open Work” concept by Umberto Eco.

Eco describes a work of art as “an object, on the one hand, composed in such a way by the author that each viewer can (through the reactions of his own sensitivity and intelligence to the configurations of the stimuli emanating from this object) reproduce for himself its original shape, created in the creator’s imagination.”²⁰

Eco stresses that an artist intends to create a closed work of art, wanting it to be read and understood as he intended it to be read and understood during the creative process. However, such an unambiguous expression is not entirely possible because the viewer looks at the work from his own, individual perspective, conditioned by his sensitivity, culture, taste, experience, prejudices and system of associations – which clearly shows that there are as many viewers as there are interpretations.

²⁰ U. Eco, *Dzieło otwarte. Forma i nieokreśloność w poetykach współczesnych*, Wydawnictwo Warszawa 2008, p. 10-25.

However, the author claims that *“the value of the work is the greater, the richer are the possibilities of its interpretation, the more varied the reactions it evokes, the more it shows its aspects to the viewer without losing its own identity. [...] In this sense, each work of art, completed and closed as if it were a perfectly constructed organism, is at the same time an open work, subject to a hundred different interpretations, which do not in any way affect its unique essence. Each perception of the work is therefore both an interpretation and a performance, because in the course of each interpretation the work comes to life anew in its original perspective.”*²¹ Thus, each free reaction to a work of art is an act of cooperation with the author through the addition of a subjective factor, a complementation of the original form of art, its quasi-creation.

A feature inherent in the opening of a work is its “suggestive” function by which clear-cut meanings are avoided and thus deliberately laid open to free interpretation. As a result, each contemplation of the work leads to its re-creation, enriched with the viewer’s intellectual and emotional contribution. The symbol often becomes the vehicle for “suggestion,” conveying what is ambiguous and inexhaustible to evoke ever new reactions. Besides the obvious association of Symbolist visual arts, references to the above idea can also be found in contemporary works of design, for example in clothes collections. An example is the Versace “Tribute Collection” for the 2018 spring/summer season. Donatella Versace, her brother Gianni’s successor, faithfully continued his work for years (heading the Versace fashion house), nurturing the aesthetics developed by him and creating according to his artistic vein. In this unique collection brought out in tribute to Gianni and premiering on the 20th anniversary of his brutal murder one can find many symbols on different levels. Donatella explores the fashion house archives, her brother’s early work from the peak period of his career, wanting to bring out the exquisite qualities of the Versace fashion house. That is why the collection has so many direct references to specific designs from the 1990s. This is visible not only in the patterns printed on the fabrics themselves, but also in how they were adapted to the form of the clothing articles.

21 U. Eco, *Dzieło otwarte. Forma i nieokreśloność w poetykach współczesnych*, Wydawnictwo Warszawa, Warsaw 2008, p. 70.

Donatella symbolically impersonates her brother, designing through the vehicle of his style, as if she were Gianni himself. Personal and biographical factors aside, symbolism is also present in the collection on another level – in the clothes themselves, and more specifically, in the patterns on the fabrics. During the design process, Donatella took the prints from Versace's 1990s collection, from the heyday of her brother's "reign". Gianni had a unique ability to reinterpret and adapt classic iconography to modern forms and compositions. "*Tresor de la Mer*" spring / summer 1992 harks back to Gianni and Donatella's childhood years – the southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. In the prints there appears the theme of shells, pearls and corals, marine natural resources from Gianni's hometown in Calabria. The collection demonstrates his fascination with Greek mythology and is an attempt to reinterpret Renaissance art through fashion. The shell theme symbolizes the female sphere, its symbolism revolves around such meanings as fertility and virginity. It is also a Christian symbol – for pilgrims travelling to Santiago de Compostela. In mythology, the symbol is associated with the figures of tritons, creatures that blow into large shells. Pearl symbolizes faith, sublimity, purity, wealth, immortality. In mythology it is associated with Aphrodite birthed from the sea foam, with splashed drops of water becoming pearls. However, with regard to the butterfly theme from the Spring/Summer 1995 collection, Gianni described a butterfly as "a symbol of the true Versace spirit". This theme is also considered a symbol of the soul, happiness, inspiration, lightness, beauty, external transformation and consciousness. It stands for enlightenment, a deeper insight into the nature of the world and awakening in love for the world. Donatella's collection is a thoroughly ambiguous work, using the symbol as a suggestive tool – showing references to a broadly understood, multifaceted inspiration, which, however, can be interpreted by the viewer in many different ways.

ILLUSTRATION 13



The concept of “opening” an ambiguous work is usually based around a theoretical, intellectual cooperation with the viewer, who analyses the completed and organised form (even where it allows infinite possibilities of interpretation). However, there is also a category of open works that are materially completed or freely transforming, whose form can be reorganized by the viewer on his/her own, thus taking cooperation with the author one step further by participating in creation. Because such works can permanently take on unpredictable structures, as they have the characteristic of internal mobility, they are referred to as ‘works in motion’.²²

Examples include kinetic art projects such as Bruno Munari’s or Alexander Calder’s mobiles, or the Faculty of Architecture building at the University of Caracas, described as a “university reconstructed every day”, whose halls are made of moving panels. This allows lecturers and students to constantly influence the building’s interior structure and composition. An endless number of examples of ‘works in motion’ can also be found in industrial design – in everyday objects, such as folding armchairs, segmented furniture, movable lamps enabling the user to influence the form and appearance of the things that he/she uses as he/she sees fit.



ILLUSTRATION 14

22 U. Eco, *Dzieło otwarte. Forma i nieokreśloność w poetykach współczesnych*, Wydawnictwo Warszawa, 2008, p. 10-48.

I believe that every coherent collection of clothing has this feature of mobility. The fact that it consists of stylistically related elements (particular batches of clothing) enables the viewer to combine them into preferable sets (silhouettes) as they see fit depending on their taste, preferences and needs. Even though this is a finished work, it still remains widely "open", ready to be modified according preferences, to have its composition changed. It is created, performed "anew", each time new combinations are made.

In this context one can observe a tendency described by Eco as "*the realization of a work does not mean its final definition. Each realization completes the work without exhausting its possibilities, each realization gives the work shape, completing the series of previous realizations, each reading expresses the work in a complete and satisfactory way, but at the same time incomplete and unfulfilled, because it does not give us a simultaneous image of all the possible interpretations*".²³

Eco details three aspects of the "opening" of a work:

1. Open works – so-called "works in motion", characteristic in that they invite the viewer to co-create the work with the author
2. Works which are a subgenre of "works in motion," characteristic in that they are physically complete, yet remain 'open' as having the capability to constantly create internal relations which the viewer is to discover, while also selecting from the sum of impressions accompanying the act of perception.
3. Each work is assumed (whether the author intends this or not) to be open to infinite possibilities of interpretation. Each of them re-invents the work according to the individual perspective of the viewer.

In writing my thesis, I am most inspired by the last kind of opening, which is connected with the infinity of a finite work, and above all the progress of its creation.

²³ U . Eco, *Dzieło otwarte. Forma i nieokreśloność w poetykach współczesnych*, Wydawnictwo Warszawa, 2008, p. 20-48.

The basic assumption of the collection I am designing is its wide-open nature. The 'opening' itself does not take place on one plane and is not easy to fit into Eco's classifications. However, certain issues are unquestionable: the collection is meant to be a finished piece (where all the clothing types are designed and sewn, combined into ready-made silhouettes – as the creator I "suggest" one of the possible finish solutions), yet infinite in the sense that the wearer can modify its elements in any way he/she wishes by creating sets tailored to the needs, tastes and vision for a practically unlimited number of combinations. The composition of the piece remains mobile (or even dynamic) and open, capable of free-mixing.

The collection also has the characteristic features of a "work in motion". However, this aspect is temporary and operates only when the main central design assumptions are drawn up, as I communicate with the audience through social media, inviting them to co-create the concept of the collection. This stage is an invitation to a controlled intervention, to enter my world – however, I make it available within a specific spectrum of possibilities. At this stage, the recipient does not yet interpret, but paves the way for the work's construction, by sharing with me his/her preferences and needs. It is I, as the creator, who analyses and interprets these signals and uses them as a basis for the final project. The multitude of individual interventions of the viewers, in spite of their unpredictable and unconstrained character, does not introduce chaos, because it is the creator of the work who controls its structure, and these interventions provide a framework for its organization.

What follows is the kind of collaboration that Eco wrote about. To sum up, the opening of my collection takes place on two main levels:

- in the first stage - the design stage – I, as creator, communicate with the audience through social media, inviting them to co-create the design concept of the collection, based on their preferences and needs (which they tell me about). The form of the work definitely has the signs of a 'work in motion.'

This stage is definitely the most important for me, because it has been absent from the standard relations between clothing designers and potential clients, in which the design of fashion played a much more dictatorial role (imposing trends), rather than being open to cooperation.

- At the second stage, once I have finished the work, the viewer will be free to interpret the ready-made collection – in the intellectual, visual and practical sphere – by juxtaposing, modifying, mixing types of clothes, creating compositions corresponding to his/her needs and tastes. The viewer will interact with the artistic object, not with the creative subject (as was the case in the previous stage), and have the right to perceive the meanings independently of my authorial intention.

I believe that this new type of relationship between creator and viewer is the result of the needs of a changing world, a new phase of culture; the way in which art, fashion and its design process must adapt to the current times. The characteristics of the open work and of the “work in motion” build a new type of relationship between designer-artist and client-public, a new relationship between contemplation and enjoyment. Symptomatic of our times (especially during the crisis of 2020 and early 2021) is a growing distrust of prescribed norms, including the dictatorship of fashion trends and patterns. That is why it is becoming so important to listen to clients and allow them to influence the product that is designed for them. The issue of consciously “opening” the work has never been so necessary.

4. PARTICIPATORY ART AS A MODEL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CREATOR AND THE VIEWER

Certain aspects of my research relate to another concept within art theory and design, based on the relationship between the creator and the viewer and existing on the platform of collaboration creating the work. That concept is called participatory art. Although I do not fully identify with all the assumptions and views of this trend, I appreciate some of its mechanisms. However, I cannot say that it is my goal or intention to classify my artwork strictly as participatory art, as its scope is definitely more complex, although to some extent it is cast in a similar mould.

In defining participatory art, Clair Bishop describes it as “*socially engaged art, a kind of strategy through which people become the material of an artistic work. The artist arranges a situation and encourages its participants to behave in a certain way in a certain place. The artist is a collaborator and producer of socio-artistic situations and the audience becomes a co-creator or participant. Ephemeral actions are based on the meeting of people, aiming to evoke emotions, to move, to create a temporary community, to stimulate energy. The origins of participatory art derive from the events organized by Italian futurists – evening receptions (serate) – meetings with the audience and futurist provocations, which foreshadowed later activity in performance art and happenings.*”²⁴

Most significantly, the meaning of participation always depends on the context of a society’s social practices and political situation. On the other hand, the need for it is an expression of the desire to bring about broader change and deepen democracy. Thus, every artistic practice of art enforces its own perception within its individual

24 C. Bishop *Sztuczne piękła. Sztuka partycypacyjna i polityka widowni*, transl. J. Staniszewski, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warsaw 2015, p.15

historical and political context of the times in which it was created.

As Bishop notes, *“the roots of participation go back to the beginnings of the great avant-garde. But this avant-garde does not mean only constructivism, Dadaism, and surrealism. One must remember that the avant-garde is also fascism and Bolshevism-participation, as an artistic strategy can be used by any political system.”*²⁵

In Poland, participatory projects have their own tradition. They are rooted in the critical art of the 1990s, and since the 1950s they have been ideologically influenced by Oskar Hansen’s Open Form theory postulating that: *“according to the theory of open form, the artist, through an artistic artefact, does not create a closed work of art, but builds the possibility of context and interpretation. A work of art with an open form is always ready to find itself in new circumstances, in a new time, in a new relationship with a changing reality. The viewer, who is at the same time a spectator and an actor taking an active part, is expected to provide an individual interpretation and obliged to build a context. Thanks to this, a work of art is always alive, does not lose its relevance and, by the same token, does not waste resources. The artist postulates classlessness, egalitarianism, lack of hierarchy, democracy, non-dogmatism, decentralization, asymmetry.”*²⁶

In a nutshell, the main features of participatory artworks include:

- repairing social relations and adopting the activation of the spectator as a goal (art is to be a part of human life)
- inclusivity
- criticism of the individual, individualism and rejection of authorship in favour of creativity of others (co-creation with the audience)

25 <https://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/6460-lekkie-rozczarowanie.html>. accessed on 15.05.2020.

26 O. Hansen, *Ku formie otwartej*, Wydawnictwo Zachęta Narodowa Galeria Sztuki, Warsaw 2005, p.28.

- affirmation of the collective
- strong political context
- hostility to capitalism and private property
- ethical revolution
- emphasis on the process at the expense of the product (art without product, people are the material)
- performance or happening format

Many of these features, due to their extreme dimension, may raise doubts and problems. One of the main ideas of participatory art is the criticism of the individual and individualism, which are treated with suspicion. This is combined with capitalism and neo-liberalism, privatization and free market, which are identified with the worst evils. The model of social cooperation of collectives is an anti-commercial counter-model negating “lucrative” individual artists. Participatory projects rely on two basic postulates – opposition and improvement. The plan for social improvement is identified with an artistic gesture of resistance. The assumptions of participatory art may contribute to its politicization which does not necessarily play out in the artists’ actions. For example, in Great Britain, the Labour Party (1997-2010) used rhetoric almost identical to that of socially engaged art. The question “what can art do for society?” was used by the party in their political propaganda. As an answer, it pointed to new jobs, crime reduction and the promotion of social aspirations, leaving aside the values that are most important in art, namely artistic experimentation and exploratory functions – which only lead to the reduction of artistic practice to a financial issue and usefulness for the state. The basic issue raised by the Labour Party was social exclusion – they pointed to the excluded minority of people outside the system of education and the job market as a threat to society and therefore a burden to the State. The Party pushed for socially inclusive activities – mobilizing troublesome individuals to adapt to the norm of full employment and independence from social welfare.

Through social participation the State gained obedient citizens who respected the law. In this context, inclusion become more of a programme of grooming citizens for subordination than a method of restoring social ties and helping individuals excluded because of race, gender, class, etc. and oppressed. Public participation can be particularly useful in solving the problem of inclusion, but it carries with it the pejorative assumption that its participants are in a situation of vulnerability, only reinforcing this situation. The example from Great Britain is one of the extreme situations of politicization of participatory art, but it undoubtedly indicates the possibility of problems in this field. That is why it is so important that art remains autonomous, so that political and economic forces cannot make it their tool, so that it does not become part of a false social consensus. This is based on a certain paradox of art which is *“art inasmuch as it is something other than art: a sphere at once separate from politics and always political in its nature, because it contains the promise of a better world.”*²⁷

Participatory art also raises a number of tensions, e.g. between the notion of quality and equality. The paradox is that the more concentrated the authorship of a given work, the more people are involved in its creation, the worse its status as an element of culture. Another example is the relationship between individual and collective authorship. Even if at a certain point in history some works are created in a group process, over time they are attributed to particular individuals.

The reception of participatory art also depends on the types of audiences – how it is perceived by the “active” participants who co-create the message, and how it is perceived by the “passive” audience, watching a happening live or through a documenting medium.

27 C.Bishop *Sztuczne piękła. Sztuka partycypacyjna i polityka widowni*, transl. J. Staniszewski, Fundacja Nowej Kultury Bęc Zmiana, Warsaw 2015, p.79.

I believe that the question of authorship of a work, even one that is part of participatory art, is indisputable. The artist, as the organizer of the situation, encouraging the participants to get involved in co-creation, is responsible for the form and tone of the message. It is his/her own decision and idea, even if he/her uses the audience to make it a reality.

In my doctoral concept, the process of collaboration with the viewer and his/her mobilisation is also very important, but definitely not more so than the work itself which is, on the one hand, the effect of this collaboration, the visualisation of the research (i.e. the relationship with the group), but on the other hand – the result of my work, my individual design solutions. The collaboration itself definitely does not mean rejection of authorship (as it happens very often in the works of participatory art), but only “gives the floor” to the target group, allowing it to express itself and direct the work’s path of development (first stage of collection creation). Still, it is ultimately my design and product based on the results of research (second stage).

By proposing this model of collaboration and the resulting method of preparing the collection jointly with the customer, I do not stigmatize or condemn the traditional design process. I only present an alternative solution which I consider better suited to the realities of today – the era of the Internet and social media. I assume that these two models of design can be mutually complementary and co-exist in the world of contemporary design.

5. SOCIALLY ENGAGED (INCLUSIVE) DESIGN

Design based on listening to the needs and preferences of the customers has a very wide spectrum, just like the problems that users experience. Within the ideological scope of design, there are many concepts and currents rooted in the objective of creating products that respond to the desires, needs and tastes of customers. Of these, inclusive design is the most committed to the mission.

The phenomenon of exclusion, to which social design (also known as socially engaged design) is linked, occurs at many levels, including in the fashion industry.

The most socially-oriented ideas in the field of design can definitely be found in a book by American designer Victor Papanek, published in 1972, entitled “Design for the Real World”, which has served as a model for all design studies based on models of universal, sustainable, responsible, ecological or open design, all of them appealing to the designer’s morality, creative awareness, moral and social responsibility. These were the values that Papanek advised to follow. He explained that designing is a mission, much more than a profession. He called for abandoning the creation of objects which are only aesthetically and visually seductive, but in fact unnecessary for people – he recommended focusing on the needs of diverse social groups, and creating things which improve their quality of life.

Papanek was inspired by the Finnish word *kymmenykset*, which translates to “tithe”. He transfers this concept to the field of product ideas, urging every designer who is aware of the real world and the real problems of its users to dedicate ten percent of his or her work to the part of society with real needs ignored by the world of corporations, advertising and marketing. What is important here is the awareness that it is impossible to turn all design into social design, but it is important to recognize and notice the excluded groups, which is the foundation of inclusive design.

As intended, Papanek’s postulates found wide application in various design programmes focused on the social problems of marginalized groups, such as the elderly, the homeless, the poor, the disabled, or immigrants. Although Papanek outlined his ideas only in the context of industrial design, many mechanisms are universal and can be used in all design categories.

Undoubtedly, design and architecture offer the greatest scope for the implementation of socially engaged projects that can change the lives of their users. They can change the user's life radically for the better, introducing unprecedented innovations. Designers have a chance to create modern prostheses, aesthetic equipment, rehabilitation furniture, complicated mechanical systems. Now, despite great ideas of inclusive design, it is still not very popular in Poland. This is well described by Piotr Sarzyński in an article for "Polityka", which he wrote as an account of the exhibition of young designers "Make Me" during Łódź Design Festival 2018 (the "Make Me" competition is regarded as one of the few safe havens where one can find a presentation of Polish social design; in the 2018 competition, the first prize went to Małgorzata Załuska, a design graduate from Warsaw's Academy of Fine Arts, for her work called "Simpla" – an individualised external breast prosthesis for women after mastectomy). The "Make Me" exhibition neighbored in the same hall with the festival's other flagship exhibition "Must Have" displaying the most outstanding new Polish projects that went into production. Among dozens of projects presented, there is not a single one dedicated to socially excluded groups or those requiring special treatment. Out of the multitude of ideas, only things that are pretty, functional and friendly, but addressed to a wide audience, have squeezed through the narrow funnel leading to acceptance for production. This has been confirmed by a large study entitled "Designed in Poland", recently commissioned by the Łódź Festival. It shows that as many as 75 percent of professional designers do not plan to work on social projects in the future. If we add to that the manufacturers' distrust, it appears that, out of the considerable stream of ideas and concepts, only few projects trickle through to the mainstream market."²⁸

Social engagement in industrial design takes place on two rather disparate planes. On the one hand, the aim is to create low-cost products, intended for the poorest.

²⁸ Polityka 25.2018 (3165), dated 19.06.2018; Ludzie i style; p. 72 Original title of the article: „Wzory wrażliwości”.

This is exemplified by the work of Bartosz Mucha and his “Poor Design” project, which promotes the use of accessible and cheap materials (objects designed by Mucha are also very easy to assemble, e.g. a “poor man’s” lamp (Poor Lamp, 2004) is built from cardboard and tracing paper in A4 format. At the opposite end of social design is design based on the use of cutting-edge technology, information technology, robotics. It is complicated to build and expensive.²⁹

Designers in the design process must take into account not only functionality and satisfying the most important needs, but also stigmatization avoidance. It is very important that prostheses resemble real limbs as much as possible, products for the poorest people approximate products for the financially stable, and temporary mobile accommodation for immigrants or the homeless resembled high-standard camping sites. The point is that people who are categorized as an “excluded group” should not feel socially eliminated as differing from the “norm,” that they may be perceived by some as inferior or helpless, because this would only aggravate their condition – as Clair Bishop pointed out.

In terms of fashion, the aspect of social elimination tends to operate in slightly different, more aesthetic areas. All health dysfunctions were until recently completely ignored by both clothing and accessory (including jewellery) designers. An example of a great solution combining the functions of rehabilitation and aesthetics in the field of fashion accessories is the design of physiotherapy jewellery Miko+ (Ewa Dulcet and Martyna Świerczyńska). *“The project is a reflection on the condition of the non-normative body in the 21st century. The shame caused by a dysfunctional body manifests itself in the reluctance to use solutions available on the market, indicating the presence of illnesses. MIKO+ is an unprecedented solution that innovatively combines the*

²⁹<https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/ludzieistyle/17527341.design-spolecznie-zaagazowany.read> (accessed on 31.05.2020) and <https://www.2plus3d.pl/artykuly/dizajn-dla-real-world> (accessed on 31.05.2020).

physiotherapeutic function with jewellery, making the user's disability invisible. MIKO+ does not give away its medical function and is at the same time decorative.”³⁰

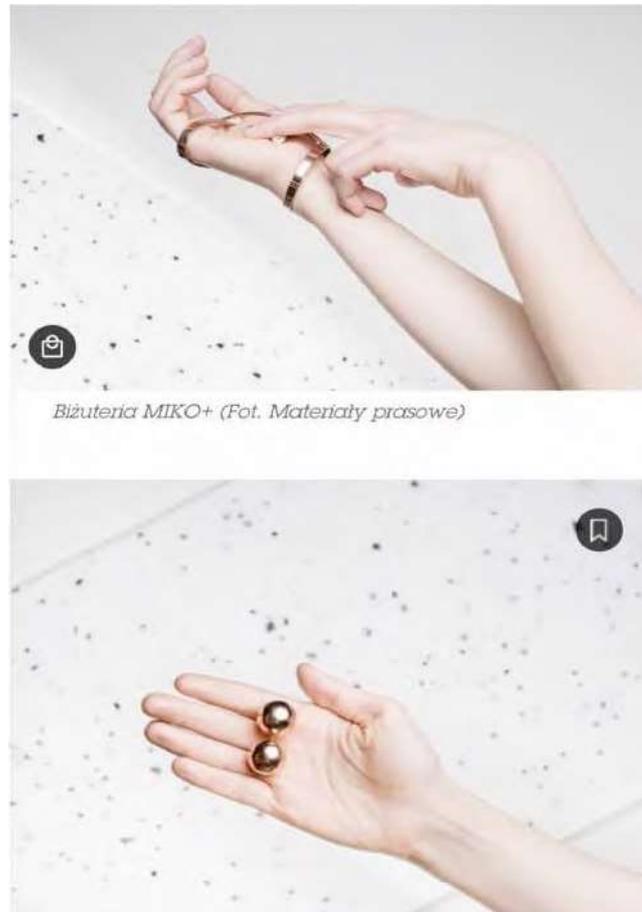


ILLUSTRATION 15

Socially responsible design is also addressed by the widespread trend of ecological fashion and recycling, which has been extremely popular in recent years. Designers are more and more willing to utilize recycled materials – production waste or vintage clothes from second-hand stores, which they use to create new designs (or completely new clothes by reworking the old ones to create the so-called “re-vintage”). In Poland, the artists who follow this ideology include Dom Mody Limanka and Van Hoyden._____

30 <https://www.vogue.pl/a/miko-bizuteria-ktora-leczy> (accessed 31.05.2020) and <https://www.makeme.lodzdesign.com/pl/finalisci-2008-2/2017/miko-bizuteria-physiotherapy/> . (accessed 31.05.2020)

I believe that ecology awareness and the ability to use existing resources is extremely important, especially in the profession of a clothing designer who generates huge amounts of waste every season while designing new collections. I try to keep that in mind on a daily basis and in the design process, while also sharing solutions as much as possible, which I did during my workshop “Creative recycling, or how to create something new from fashion production waste” at Łódź Young Fashion 2019.



ILLUSTRATION 16

Ryan Mario Yasin, a Royal College of Art graduate, addressed in his work the issue of ecology and design for the poorest in society. His collection of children’s clothing has the unusual characteristic of allowing the garments to ‘grow’ with the child. He got the idea for the design when he purchased clothes for his nephew, but they were too

small when he handed them over. He therefore introduced the fabric pleating method, popular in the nineties, which allows considerable elasticity. The solution itself is definitely not innovative as a method. However, by applying this technique to children's wear, it allows for great financial savings, as parents no longer have to buy new clothes as often as before. The Yasin collection is made up of waterproof and windproof clothes, in sizes suitable for children aged 6 to 36 months. The designer points out that babies can change their size up to six times during this period.³¹



ILLUSTRATION 17

31 <https://www.google.com/amp/s/kultura.onet.pl/wiadomosci/absolwent-royal-college-of-art-designed-wear-what-you-wear-with-your-child/p9rv0v2.amp>, accessed on 31.05.2020

Social exclusion in the fashion industry usually relates to the visual sphere and is visible in any context where generally accepted standards of beauty have been breached. Until recently any representations of women deviating from the slim, young, vigorous, flawless model full of sex appeal were seen as undesirable, unattractive, and preventing from a full enjoyment of the right to be “fashionable” and accepted in society. The canon of beauty was therefore most often unattainable for an average woman, which was exacerbated by the mainstream media, mainly magazines publishing unnaturally retouched images of impeccable-looking, slim (bordering on skinny) young girls without any blemishes. Fashion designers also promoted this, as they hired their campaigns and shows models only with a certain appearance, telling them, for example, that size 40 qualifies as plus size. In an interview with Focus magazine, Karl Lagerfeld said: “*No one wants to see curvy women. These fat mummies sitting with their bags of crisps in front of the television and saying thin models are ugly. Fashion is about dreams and illusion.*”³²).

A breakthrough came with the rise of social media, opening the door to publishing content for everyone – including “ordinary” people. Thanks to this, everyone interested in fashion could share their view and interpretation of trends with the world.

After 2010, a huge number of extremely popular fashion and style blogs appeared. This phenomenon showed realism and authenticity in contrast to the selected materials offered by the traditional mass media (TV and magazines). With time, blogs were gradually replaced by social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, making access to ordinary people’s content even easier. This set the stage for influencers (from ‘influence’ and more distantly from the Latin ‘influentia’/‘influere’ meaning ‘flow/to flow in’) or, in other words, influential figures in the world of social media who can use their wide reach to influence people with whom they have a lasting relationship.

32 <https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/oct/12/lagerfeld-size-zero-thin-models>, accessed on 31.05.2020

The term is often used to describe online creators with significant publicity who have a wide audience.³³

Influencers are like representatives of specific environments, with whom they can identify and feel a bond. As influencers are non-retouched flesh-and-blood people, they are much closer to reality than celebrities created by mass media. Very often they do not conform to standard beauty canons, thus generating even greater interest. They show that regardless of age, size or beauty one can look good, be stylish, fashionable and attractive.

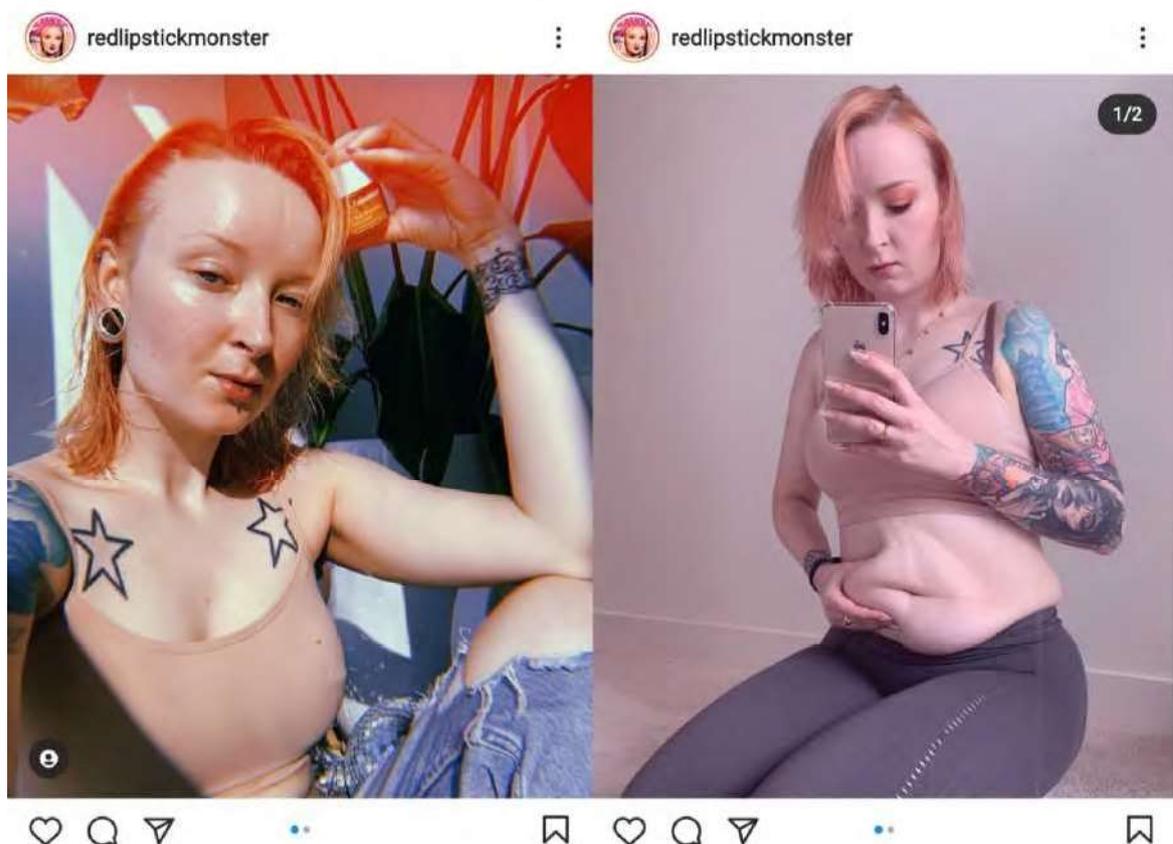


ILLUSTRATION 18

33 <https://pl.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Influencer>. accessed 31.05.2020.



ILLUSTRATION 19

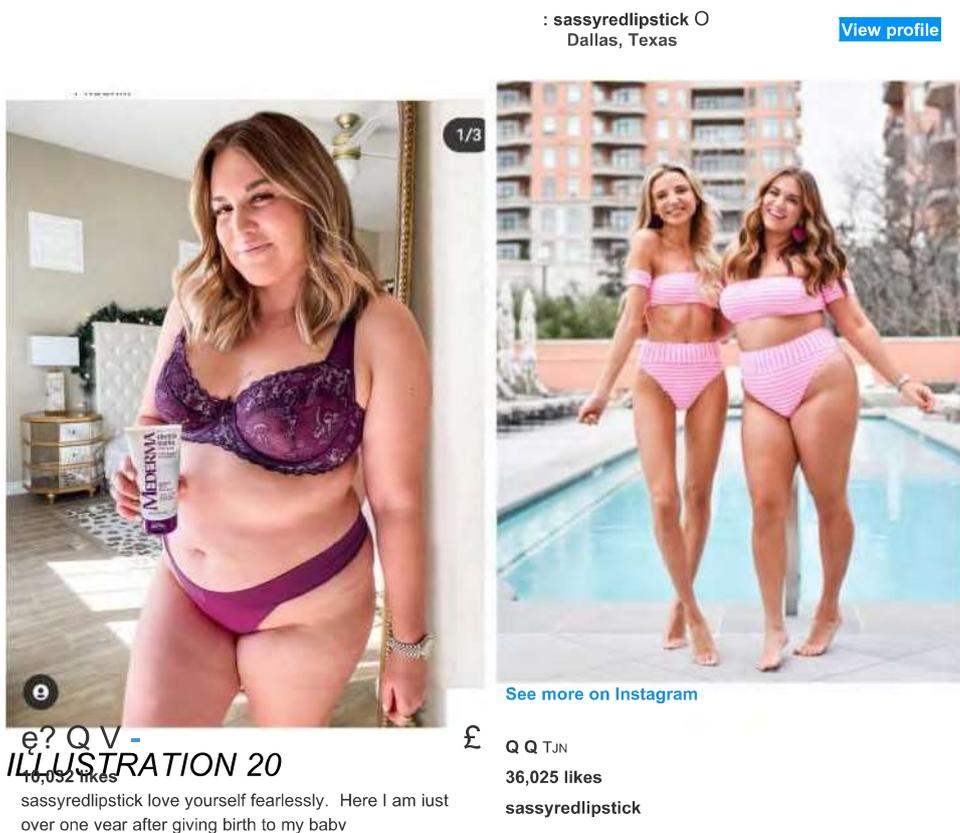


ILLUSTRATION 20

These days, people want transparency and realism, not unattainable standards. All this contributes to a change in the approach and perception of the beauty canon, to a broader perception of what can be attractive. Although the influencers promoting the body positivity movement are only creators of online content, not creators in the literal sense of designers, they undoubtedly do have an impact on the spread of social inclusive design. They do so by showing that non-standard people also deserve attention and a full range of products, such as well-designed trendy clothes available not only in “Fluffy Lady, Fluffy Gentleman” shops. *“On social media it is much easier to establish direct relations with recipients than in the traditional mass media. This is because influencers can and very often do enter into authentic interactions with their fans. This form of communication allows you to build relationships with your followers and gain their trust,”* explains Paweł Kowalczyk, Vice-President of the influencer marketing agency GetHero.³⁴

The fact that consumer attention has shifted towards social media has resulted in lower interest in traditional mass media, lower ratings for television programmes and lower sales of magazines. In the last few years many popular fashion magazines “Harper's Bazaar”, “Cosmopolitan”, “Joy” and “Esquire” have left the market. The company Marquard Media Polska was forced to change its business model to focus on creating online content.

Whether they want it or not, fashion designers have also had to adapt to some extent. Regardless of whether they did this for purely business reasons or as a conscious endorsement of the social design ideology, the important thing is that there have been changes for the better, with the offering more realistic and better adapted to the needs and expectations of real consumers.

34 <https://marketing.org.pl/mwp/795-skad-sie-bierze-sila-influencerow>. accessed on 31.05.2020.

The Body Positivity movement, which has its roots in the 1960s, initially focused on fighting discrimination against plus-sized people. Over time, it extended to all aspects of body image... *“It is noteworthy that body positivity implies affirmation of every figure - petite, squat, boyish, curvy and so on,”* says Blanka Boguszezwska, a plus-size model, in an interview for Vogue Polska. *“While in most countries this concept is understood, in Poland it is most often associated with acceptance of people who are overweight. It is also confused with praising obesity, which leads to criticism of the movement. Body Positivity is first and foremost about health. Obesity is harmful, but so is anorexia.”*³⁵

The hashtags #bodypositivity or #loveyourbody, so popular on social media in the last few years, often appear in numerous campaigns of clothing brands.

In 2017, Nike created a Plus Size sportswear collection, preceded by a social media image photo that caused a storm among Internet users whose opinions were divided.³⁶

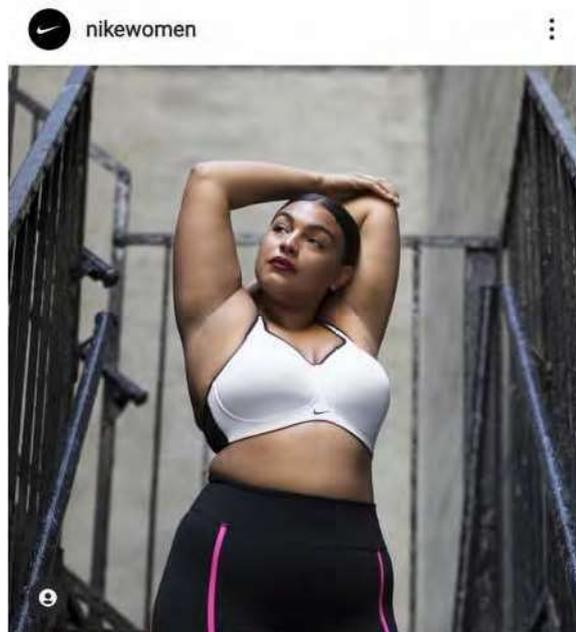


ILLUSTRATION 21

35 <https://www.vogue.pl/a/dziewczyny-na-tropie-dobrego-ciala>, accessed 31.05.2020.

36 <https://fashionpost.pl/sportowa-kolekcja-nike-rozmiarach-plus-size-juz-kupienia>, accessed on 31.05.2020.

More and more fashion designers are working with larger models in their shows which live stream on Instagram so that catwalk presentation, previously available only to invited, selected people from the industry, has become open to everyone.

During New York Fashion Week, in the 2020 spring/summer season, a total of 68 plus-size models took part in 19 shows. This is definitely a new record, impressive even compared to the previous season (autumn/winter 2019/2020), where 37 plus-size models participated in 12 shows. The brands that involved the largest number of women who were diverse in this respect were Chromat, Tommy x Zendaya and Christian Siriano. Some of the most recognizable plus-size models are: Ashley Graham, Candice Huffine, Precious Lee, Chloe Vero, Melonee Rembert, Solange van Doorn, Stephanie Rosa, Yvonne Simone, Ingrid Medeiros, Jennifer Atilemile, Seynabou Cisse or Hayley Foster, to name just a few.³⁷

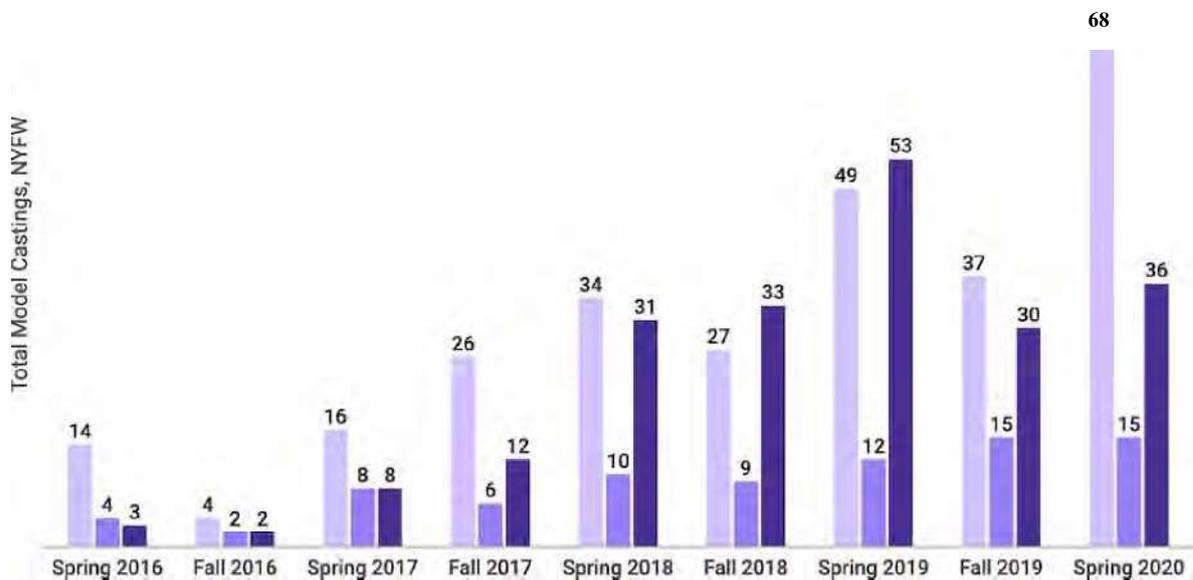


ILLUSTRATION 22

Plus - Age \$ Transgender

Fashion shows are also becoming more and more open to transgender models.

37 <https://www.thefashionspot.com/runway-news/846053-diversity-report-new-york-fashion-week-spring-2020/>, accessed on 31.05.2020.

For the spring/summer 2019 season, models who identify as non-binary genderqueer or transgender featured in all major Fashion Weeks (except for Milan). In total, they appeared on 52 shows – compared to 47 in spring 2018 – a number that is growing with every passing season, to the point that in S/S 2020, New York alone hosted a whopping 19 shows featuring transgender models. For example, in the spring/summer 2020 season, the most booked non-binary model, Noah Carlos, appeared for major fashion houses such as Helmut Lang, Marc Jacobs, Michael Kors Collection, Coach 1941, Jeremy Scott, 3.1 Phillip Lim, Prabal Gurung and Self-Portrait.³⁸

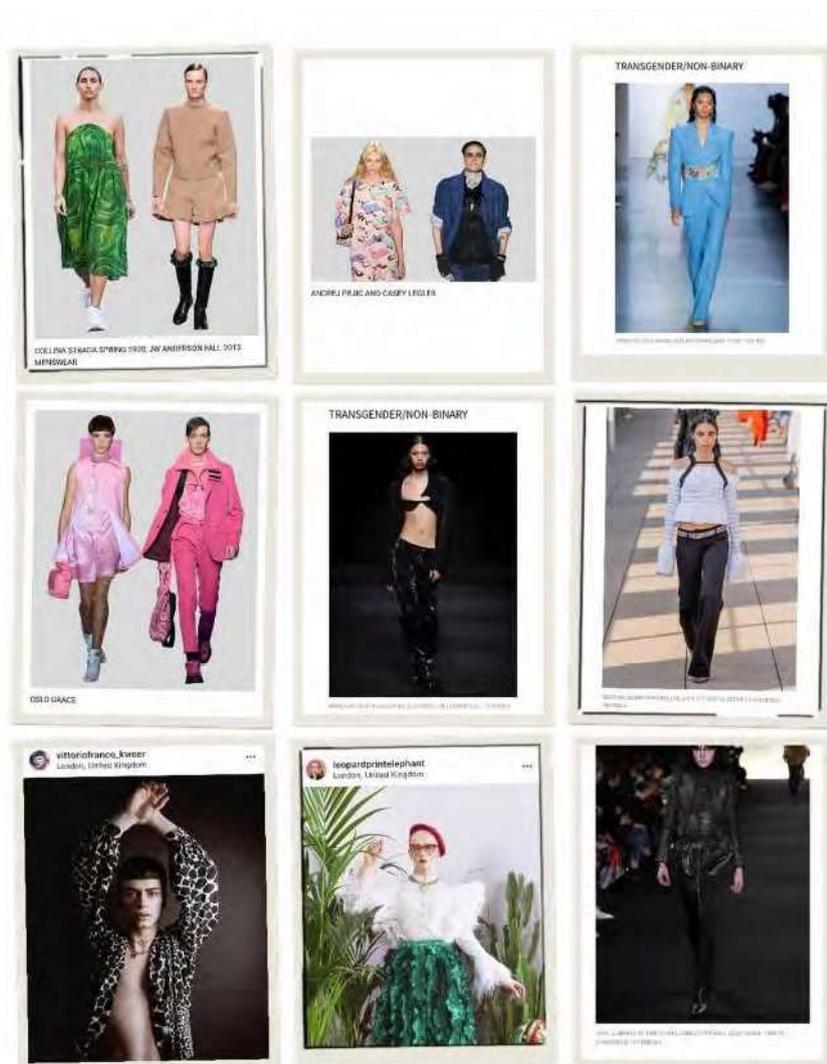


ILLUSTRATION 23

38 <https://www.thefashionspot.com/runway-news/846053-diversity-report-new-york-fashion-week-spring-2020/>, accessed on 31.05.2020.

Models aged 50 and over are still scarce on the catwalk. The breakthrough in terms of mature women's involvement in the fashion scene came relatively recently. In the autumn/winter 2014 season, the then 70-year-old actress Catherine Deneuve was chosen as the muse for the Louis Vuitton handbag campaign (the photos underwent considerable retouching, but they were among the first in the fashion industry). In 2015, 80-year-old novelist Joan Didion appeared in Céline's campaign, followed a few months later by 71-year-old Joni Mitchell posing for Saint Laurent. In addition to Bianca Balti and Irena Sharipova, Dolce & Gabbana invited three energetic older ladies who truly embodied the Italian dolce vita. In 2017, Barnadetta Barzini, Jan de Vileneuve, Marie Sophie Wilson and Cecilia Chancellor appeared on Simone Rocha's catwalk. Extremely remarkable is also the Acne Studios campaign featuring the legendary (then 78-year-old) model Veruschka. Exactly 20 years after Gianni Versace's death (1997), the brand's "Tribute" show featured the great designer's former muses such as Claudia Schiffer, Naomi Campbell, Cindy Crawford, Carla Bruni and Helena Christensen, all still stunningly beautiful. During New York Fashion Week, for the 2020 spring/summer season, 15 mature-aged models appeared on 10 shows. This is the same number as in the autumn/winter 2019 season, but in that season, models 50+ participated in 13 shows.³⁹

A special model agency called Oldushka opened in Moscow to bring together older models (the minimum age to apply is 45 years old). "*Beauty is a value that becomes more valuable with age*", says founder Igor Gavar.⁴⁰

39 <https://www.thefashionspot.com/runway-news/846053-diversity-report-new-york-fashion-week-spring-2020/>, accessed on 31.05.2020

40 <https://www.elle.pl/artykul/agencia-oldushka-dla-modelek-po-45-roku-zycia-podbija-swiat-15> and <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.ofeminin.pl/swiat-kobiet/to-dla-nas-wazne/oldushka-rosyjska-agencia-employs-models-and-models-aged-45-85/36xp77b.amp>, accessed on 31.05.2020

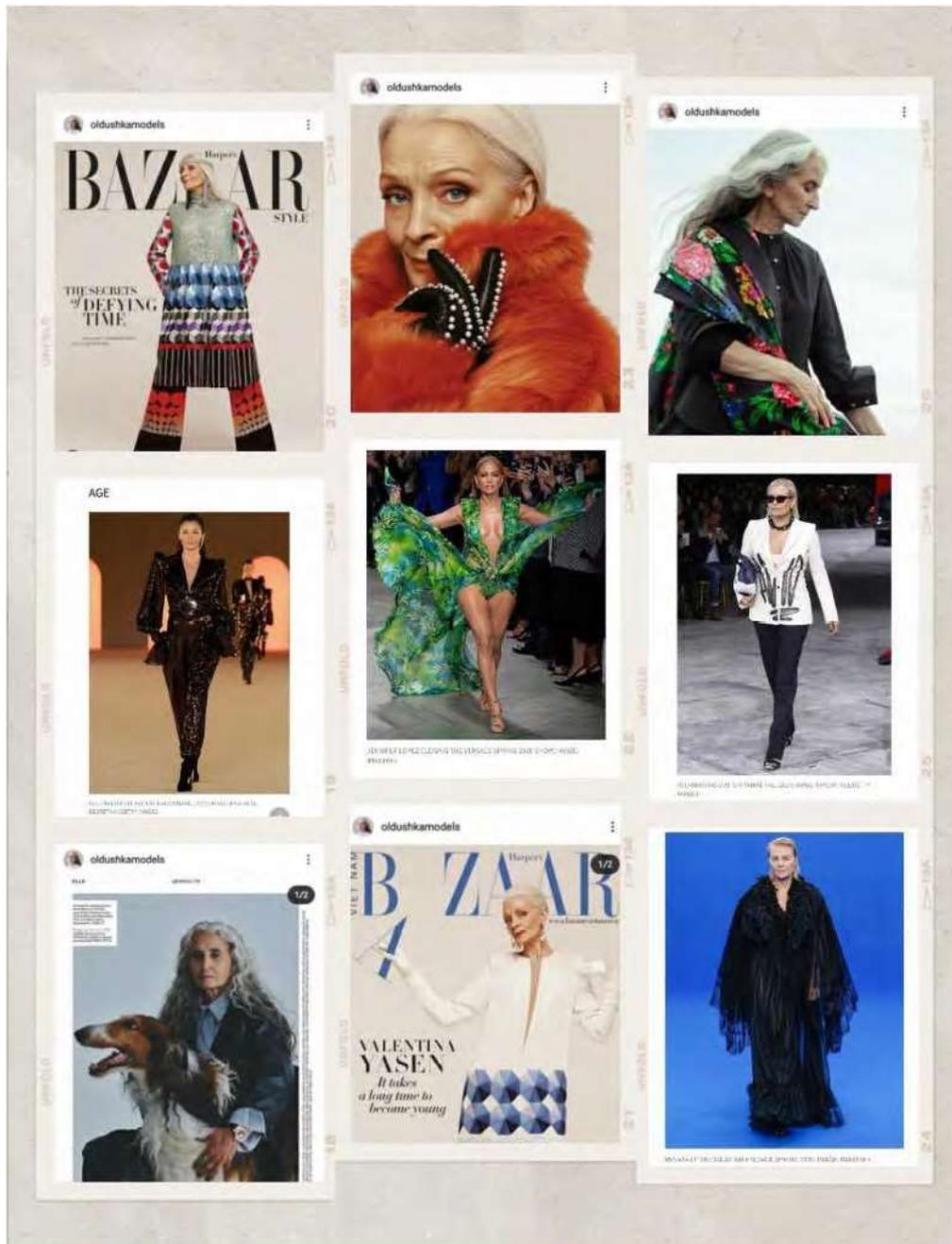


ILLUSTRATION 24

In Poland, the duo BOHOBOCO and Nenukko engaged for their 2015 campaign actress and model Helena Norowicz, aged over 80, who since then has regularly appeared in photo shoots.⁴¹

41 It is worth mentioning here that on 5 December 2020 the duo BOHOBOCO posted on Instagram their decision to quit the business, citing COVID-19 as the official reason.

Fashion is becoming more and more open to diversity, there are even special Fashion Weeks to celebrate what until recently was excluded. A case in point is the Diversity Fashion Week in Holland. Model auditions there are open to everyone no matter what their age, size, skin colour or height is. Each edition of the event features models with Down syndrome. Each season is preceded and promoted through photo sessions on social media, outlining the primary ideological points of the Diversity Fashion Week.

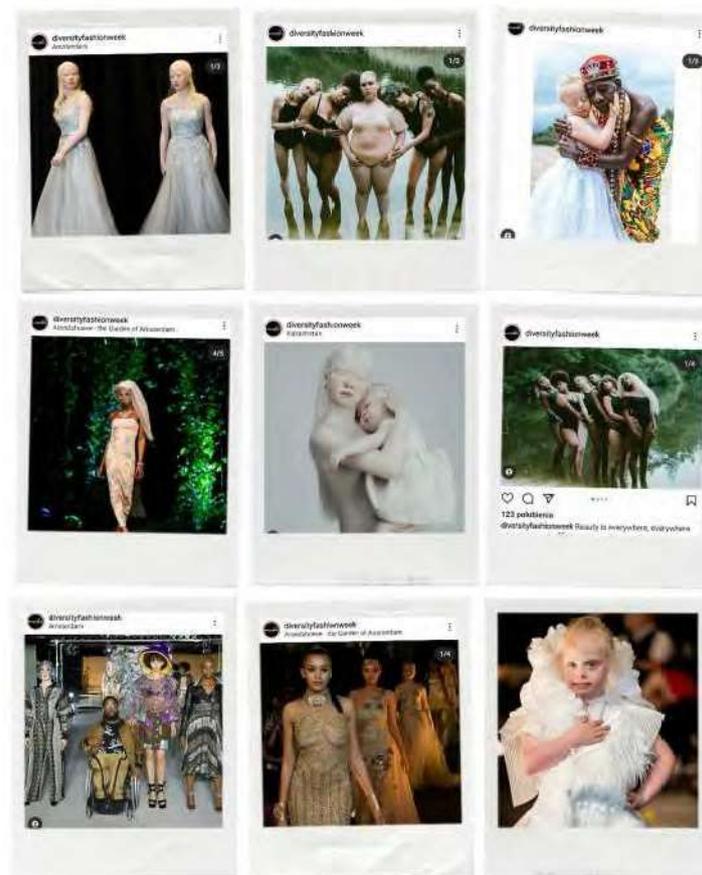


ILLUSTRATION 25

The fashion industry's openness to diversity is more and more evident. However, some questions are being raised as designers increasingly foreground the idea of inclusivity, namely: *"The issue is whether using the label 'plus size' and creating separate collections is a stigma. Shouldn't fashion brands just modify the sizes? In the same way, it should be a standard – rather than a marketing ploy riding the wave of a fad – to hire a racially diverse set of people representing various shapes and sizes for fashion"*

campaigns? It's better to broaden the canon than to create one unattainable ideal of beauty," explains Paulina Klepacz in an interview for Vogue.pl.⁴²

I definitely agree with Klepacz and Claire Bishop as regards the problem. I think that emphasizing orientation towards excluded individuals only aggravates their feelings of alienation from what is acceptable. We in the fashion industry should accept the fact that diversity among consumer groups (on all levels) has always existed and that it is completely normal. Our task, as designers, should be to focus on meeting the expectations and needs of the people we create for, without adding unnecessary labels or slogans emphasizing how special it is to accept and "admit" people of different sizes, ages, skin colours or sexuality into fashion.

Victoria's Secret is a brand which experienced image problems due to its promoting radical and restrictive, resulting in a huge financial crisis for the company. For years, critics have accused it of promoting an unrealistic and outdated image of beauty. Despite the fact that in 2018 their show was attended by Winnie Harlow suffering from vitiligo, marketing director Ed Razek took a clear stance against hiring transgender and size 34+ models, arguing much like Lagerfeld that people don't want to see shows (including lingerie shows) with plus-sized models. With respect to transgender people appearing on the catwalk, he said: "*No, I don't think we should do it. The show is a fantasy,*" he said.⁴³

42 <https://www.vogue.pl/a/dziewczyny-na-tropie-dobrego-ciala>, accessed on 31.05.2020.

43 <https://www.eska.pl/hotp1ota/news/pokaz-victorias-secret-2019-odwo1any-to-koniec-seksownych-aniow-aa-xNUM-swgj-7dQp.html>, accessed on 31.05.2020.

However, after a short time, Victoria's Secret reversed its point of view (probably under the influence of the spiralling crisis) and hired a transsexual, Valentina Sampaio, to join their regular bevy of "angels," one of the most recognizable models first to have appeared on the cover of French Vogue. But even with what might seem to be inclusive treatment, the brand's standing with the fans did not improve.

A critical turning point came after the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show 2018. That's when the media massively started to point out that it's high time for the brand creators started to notice women sized larger than XS and stopped promoting only one particular body type in shows. Negative reviews have taken their toll on Victoria's Secret TV ratings. While in the years 2010-2014 the show was watched by up to 10 million people, recently the number viewers does not exceed 3.5 million. L Brands, the brand owner, decided to call off Victoria's Secret 2019 show due to poor turnout: *"due to the declining popularity of Victoria's Secret shows, we have withdrawn our capital investments in this business, while focusing on activities that will make our merchandise resonate well with customers."*⁴⁴ Not long after the show was put on hold, the brand was forced to close 50 outlets worldwide, and Leslie Wexner stepped down as L Brands CEO. A majority stake in Victoria's Secret was acquired for half a billion dollars by Sycamore Partners. These are just a few examples of the (most well-known) fashion brand crises caused by ignoring consumer needs and failing to change the business model and image in the face of changing attitudes towards beauty.

Opposed to Victoria's Secret is another lingerie brand with a completely contrasting message – Savage x Fenty, owned by Rihanna. Since it first opened for business (to coincide with Victoria's Secret crisis), the brand has had transparent social media policy without undue emphasis on the idea of inclusiveness (e.g. using the hashtag #plussize or any other that might accentuate exclusion), while also being the most diversity-friendly and credible.

44 <https://www.eska.pl/hotplota/news/pokaz-victorias-secret-2019-odwolany-to-koniec-seksownych-aniolkow-aa-xNUM-swgi-7dQp.html>, accessed on 31.05.2020

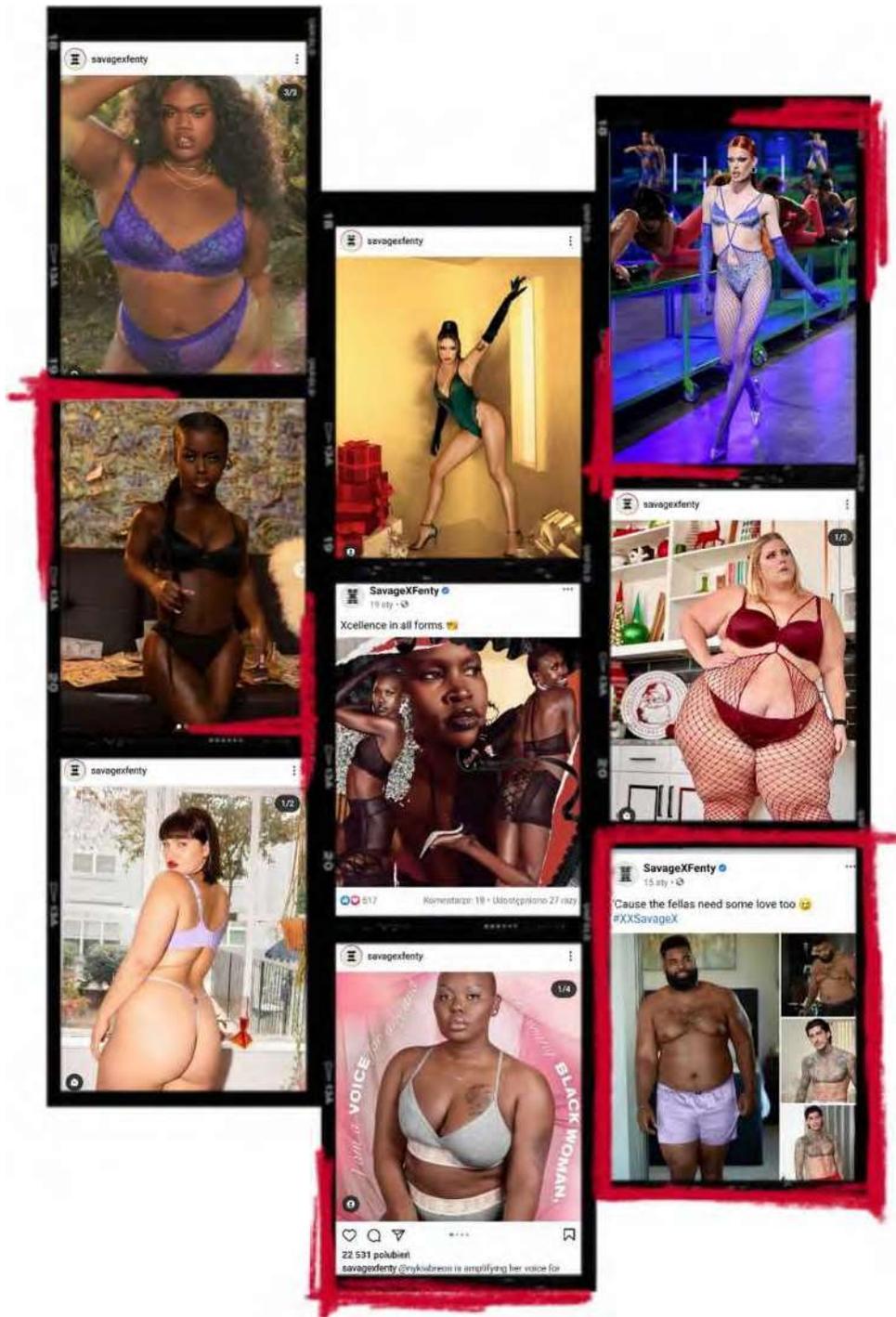


ILLUSTRATION 26

The first Savage x Fenty show took place in 2019 during New York Fashion Week. It was a multifaceted 40-minute show featuring a live concert set against an elaborate scenery. The lingerie was presented not only by supermodels such as Gigi and Bella

Hadid, Joan Smalls and Cara Delevingne, but also girls with unusual shapes, disabled persons, transsexual actress Laverne Cox and even the drag queen Aquaria known from "RuPaul's Drag Race". The whole event turned out to be an incredible success and met with a huge, positive response from the media and Internet users. Headlines blared out "Rihanna deals a final blow to Victoria's Secret", "The end of Victoria's Secret", or "Savage x FentyShow was everything that the Victoria's Secret show wanted it to be".⁴⁵

The success of Rihanna's brand is that it gives her audience what they want. With its revolutionizing extension to the definition of the female body and generally understood beauty. Thanks to this, the brand has an impact not only on the world of modelling, but the entire fashion industry as well as pop culture. Rihanna exemplifies a truly inclusive fashion brand that approaches diversity in a natural way, without creating an aura of saving excluded groups with her designs. Activity Savage x Fenty's work helps disseminate change in the world of design and in opinions.

It is natural for me to embrace the attitude that this day and age clothes should be accessible to anyone who wants to wear them, regardless of gender, age or size. Since the beginning of my creative activity I have been open to projects for larger-size clients, who can easily order most of my designs to suit their dimensions. In a similar way, I also refer to gender issues – by definition (and form), my collections are tailored to the female figure, but on many occasions my designs have been used within an extended scope, e.g. in a session for Biel Magazine featuring transsexuals or in a show during Berlin Fashion Week with a non-binary model.

45 <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.refinery29.com/amp/en-us/2019/09/8381415/rihanna-savage-fenty-amazon-prime>, accessed on 31.05.2020

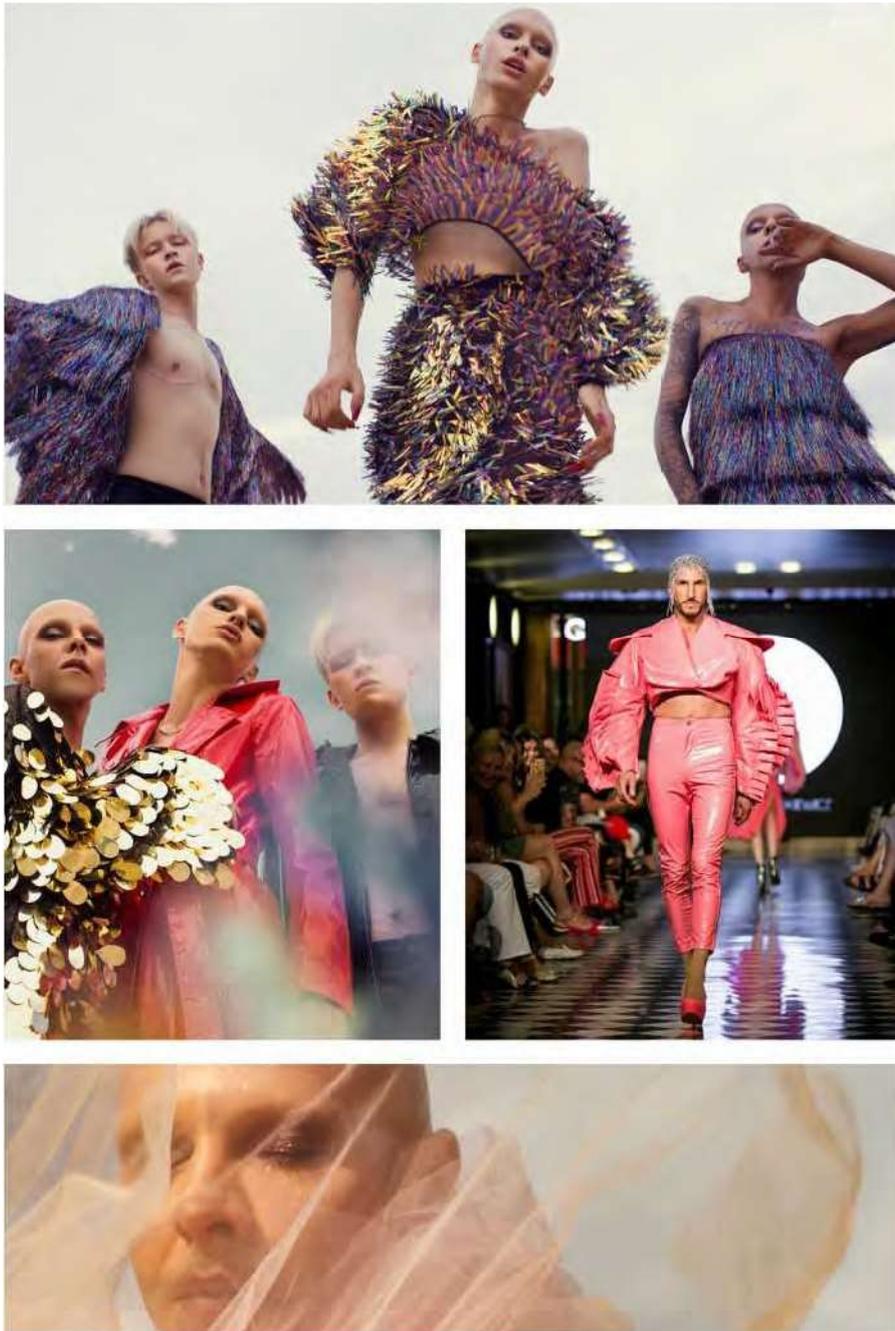


ILLUSTRATION 27

The growing popularity of inclusive design, marking a shift towards customer needs and socially responsible design, is driven by the increasing flow of information and simpler communication systems. There is no doubt that social media have played an extremely important role in this, making it possible to establish contacts and exchange knowledge, views and experiences between people from all over the world in an instant. They make it possible for customers to come together while also bridging the gap between consumers and creators, i.e. designers, brand owners, companies and

enterprises. They allow customers to influence offering through comments and opinions on products, and thus shape the future of the fashion market and other industries.

6. DESIGN THINKING

Peter Drucker, an Austrian academic lecturer, researcher in the organisation and management processes, claimed that the only constant thing is change. Nowadays, it seems that change has never before occurred so dynamically and in every area of life. On the one hand it can be disturbing, as it leads to confusion and an urgent need to always keep up and chase, but on the other it can also be positive, an chance to do something innovative, try to provide new opportunities.

One of the driving forces behind this constantly progressing change is no doubt the development of technology, bringing with it tremendous social transformation, including in the roles of customer/consumer. The reason for this is unlimited and easy access to information. We can compare and choose from endless offerings, freely exchange opinions and shop around for the best options. We are more and more aware of our rights and expectations, we are looking for credibility and professionalism.

At the same time, technological changes influencing consumer attitudes force companies and service providers to re-think their business models. Because, as Einstein said, "*it is madness to do things the old way and expect new results,*" everyone must adapt their activities to the irreversible changes. Traditional services which used to thrive until recently, such as postal or taxi services are being replaced by new, more customer-oriented and convenient ones – drop boxes and Uber. Previous business models are being replaced by more modern, flexible ones, adapted to everyday use.

In view of the changes and the resulting need for design ideology to adjust, it would be in order to find an appropriate method of transformation, i.e. the most universal and intuitive one, the relatively simplest solution. User-centred design and the methodology of design thinking seem to be an ideal vehicle for this.

Nowadays, creating products that meet people's needs and expectations is a necessity. After all, why do we design new things? For people to use. The motives for design are varied – sometimes the key is technology, aesthetics or competitive pressure. Sometimes it is to test the limits of technological possibilities, and at other times the limits of imagination, culture, society, art or fashion.⁴⁶

Design is *"an ambiguous term comprising utilitarian objects and works of art, describing their appearance or design activity. Design can be defined as all creative activities related to designing goods and services, which aim to create added value for the customer, the company and the whole country where it was created."*⁴⁷ Therefore, design is not only a noun, but also a verb, understood as a broadly delineated process, which may consist of both the design thinking and the result. The result does not have to be a work (object) - it can also be a designed service (service design).

Since the 1960s, the idea of social design began to emerge in opposition to commercial design, with the priority goal of becoming customer-oriented. This spawned the "design thinking" movement, a methodology of changing the way in which business relations are designed and a people-based and needs-oriented approach. *"Design thinking is about new ideas, products, services or strategies that are intrinsically cross-cutting, cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary. Their aim is to combine different industries,*

46 D. Norman, *Dizajn na co dzień*, Wydawnictwo Krakter, Kraków 2008, p.240.

47 <https://pl.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Design>), accessed on 01.06.2020

fields and social areas. This takes place on the border of science, business and art. It is actually a thinking that combines technological innovations with social innovations."⁴⁸

Design thinking has been successfully used by some of the world's biggest design giants, such as Apple and Google, as the basis for their ideology. Recently, it has been attracting more and more interest among Polish companies. Design thinking is considered a new method that has existed for several years. References to this concept have their roots in the 1950s and 1960s, although at that time they were related more to architecture and engineering. The notion is used not only by designers, although design thinking has become a trademark of companies directly connected with design. This is how seekers of new solutions – artists, poets, scientists, engineers and businesspeople – act, sometimes completely unconsciously. The topic of searching for answers to consumer problems was raised in the mid-1960s by Horst Rittel, a design theorist known for coining the term “wicked problems” (i.e., highly complex/multidimensional problems). In particular, Rittel concentrated on the use of design methodologies in dealing with these problems and how they affected the work of other designers at the time. The ‘wicked problems’ that he postulated are precisely the starting point for design thinking, and to solve them, a deep understanding of people is needed. Design in a scientific context and as a way of thinking was first described by Herbert A. Simon, an American Nobel Prize winner, in his 1969 book “Sciences of the Artificial”. In it, he outlined many of the principles that underpin design thinking today. He pointed out the combination of analytical and intuitive thinking, as well as the advantages of prototyping to allow discovering valuable solutions through trial and error and learning from them. In later years, the concept of design thinking also appeared in 1973 in the book "Experiences in Visual Thinking" by Robert McKim, a professor of mechanical engineering who analysed the influence of visual thinking and design methods on

⁴⁸ <https://docplayer.pl/71424420-Czlowiek-a-design-problems-design-spolecznego.html>. accessed on 01.06.2020

our understanding of things and ability to solve problems. He pointed out the need to combine analytical and creative thinking in design in order to create a more comprehensive method of finding answers to the problems posed.

Design thinking is also based on many assumptions of Victor Papanek and his cult book “Design for the Real World. The Human Environment and Social Change” from 1972, in which he points out the role of design knowledge in solving social and environmental problems.

Originally design thinking was understood as a structured process used to transfer technology from university to business. This scheme was popularized by David M. Kelley, a designer, engineer, and lecturer at Stanford University and one of the founders of IDEO, a design company that has been instrumental in shaping the tenets of design thinking.

Thanks to IDEO, they developed their own user-friendly terminology and systematized the process, while also providing a description of the toolkit. As a result, design thinking entered the business mainstream. This is due to the clarity of the message and the universal applicability of the concept, allowing it to be implemented quickly and easily even by people with no design experience or no knowledge of design methods.

IDEO’s founders began to use design thinking in many areas of business, including strategic consulting, innovation, work systems, transformation, and marketing. Stanford University, where the founders taught, was the first centre for teaching students to use the potential of diversity to design innovative solutions in business, education, and NGO projects.

One of the more important, more comprehensive but not overly erudite publications on design thinking theory is “Change by Design: How Design Thinking Transforms Organizations and Sparks Innovation” by Tim Brown published in 2009. Brown understands design thinking as the process of delivering continuous innovation in the context of an existing design problem. The goal is to understand the phenomena and changes that are occurring in society today, no matter if the problem comes from a global, local, or business context. The most important thing is to understand it and present solutions that are easy to use. The search for these solutions is rooted in creative work, which does not have to follow a specific pattern of activity, as it is intuitive. Creativity plays a huge role in prototyping, which Brown identifies as very useful in the idea generation process.

In 2017, a group of Client-Centric people, who combine strictly business experience with human-centred design, was established in Poland. They form an organization that brings together knowledge in design thinking, service design, customer research, and user experience. Among its founders are Beata Michalska-Dominiak and Piotr Grocholiński, who in 2019 published "A Guidebook of Design thinking - or How to Use Design Thinking in Business," a good overview of design thinking in its presently understood and applied role, accessible for everyone interested in the subject, although created perhaps more with entrepreneurs than artists in mind.

The method of design thinking in available publications is most often associated with practices applied by corporations with the aim of gauging customer needs, but mainly for purely business purposes, such as maximizing sales. One of the assumptions is to work in a project team, a structure typical of commercial companies, oscillating around marketability and business viability. At first sight, it is not associated an artistic environment having its own creative practices. This is probably due to the fact that design thinking has been functioning in Poland for a relatively short period of time, and there are few reliable publications available (especially in Polish) that outline a broader point of view on this ideology.

In fact, design thinking is much more complex than just a tool created for large companies to make a profit. It is not reserved for market tycoons. I think that every artist should take advantage of some of its mechanisms and use them in their own work. The need is particularly strong in the field of fashion, where designers are strongly associated with dictatorship in imposing their vision, while the fact that they create for actual people rather than themselves is forgotten.

What is very important in design thinking (but often overlooked in publications) is the possibility of a non-linear approach to applying the tools of each step of the process. There is a certain pattern, but there is no need to apply each step of the method in order. Everything depends on the specific needs of the project – we can freely draw on the individual steps. Design thinking is flexible, it is about experimenting and finding our own solutions, tailored to the problems that need to be solved at the time. It aims to make our lives easier by better adapting products, services or processes to people's constantly changing needs. Its most important tenet is the user focus based on understanding the user's conscious and unconscious needs, which is possible as a result of inquisitiveness and questioning of established models. The steps outlined in design thinking are just a tentative suggestion made to help not only experienced designers. Indeed, they are a universal, intuitive tool for managing diverse projects.

However, in order to be able to freely choose a design thinking technique best suited to a given situation, it is necessary to know its structure better. Design thinking in its basic sense combines three areas, which produce innovation when united:

- human needs – which are the starting point for work on finding solutions that meet expectations
- technological feasibility (implementability) – a given company's capability to implement the developed solutions based on a diagnosis of needs

- business viability – the business model, with specific costs, revenues and rate of return

The design thinking process involves taking action in five basic stages that link back to the questions we should be asking ourselves:

1) discovery - who do we design for?

This stage involves a broad approach to a design problem and allows us to get to know the clients, their situation, opinions, needs and requirements. This is the time to enter into a personal interaction with the clients, to learn about their experiences, problems and motivations. Discovery is based on empathy as a source of understanding; as a skill it requires active listening (asking questions), careful observation and putting ourselves in the client's shoes. It is crucial not to assume in advance that we know the answers to the questions posed and that we know what the clients expect, as they often do not know or cannot specify this themselves. It is important to ask specific, clearly defined questions that put the customer on the right track in the conversation. It is becoming crucial to recognize the motivations which drive people's choices. To that end, there are tools such as ethnographic interview, user observation and various research surveys. The design thinking creators indicate that a project team should be set up for this purpose, composed of people of different personalities and linked to the organization, such as employees, consultants, organizers. However, this model is clearly associated with the system of work in large corporations rather than with freelance artists. Despite this, in the age of social media, it is possible to carry out research based on this stage on your own, perhaps with even better results. Before starting, it is advisable to a list of hypotheses regarding ideas about customers and relevant to the project objective. These will later be verified by the results of the research. At this stage, it is very important to determine the specific group of customers. To do that, we need to define the user profile/segment and adapt the form of research accordingly. Once customer contact sessions are over, we should refer back to the initial hypotheses and see which ones are valid and which ones are completely wrong.

At this stage it is helpful to create a moodboard (a board of project inspiration and mood) to organize the findings.

2) define the challenge (specify the needs) – why do we design?

This is the stage when all the gathered information must be analysed and synthesized. From this, preliminary assumptions for our work will emerge. This step dramatically influences the direction in which to seek for solutions. This process is a huge challenge, because most people prefer to work out a specific solution right away, rather than navigate through the uncertainty of multiple possible courses of action. Defining the problem too quickly will not show the full picture. Only after this stage can we proceed to generate product ideas and create designs and prototypes.

3) create the solution (ideas) – what are we going to create?

This is the time when the form of our project becomes clearer, as we search for ideas which will be the answer to the design challenge posed earlier. This stage should end by choosing a few best solutions for prototyping. If there is a project team, various types of creativity-stimulating techniques, e.g. brainstorming, should be used in order to select the most relevant ideas.

4) create and test prototypes – what will our projects look like and do they work?

Ideas that were born and selected as a result of the previous stage of the process, now take on an initial, tangible form, that of the first prototypes. This is where the action and experimentation really begins, there is time for trial and error. This is to decide on the further development of the projects. When designing a collection of clothing, this is often when samples are created from sample fabrics (otherwise known as “raw materials”). These are prototypes of target commodities on which we will check the garment structure prepared on the drawing board. Prototypes are created quickly and cheaply, often in reduced form and with reduced functionality – as mock-ups, storyboards or the samples. All trials made at this stage make sense. American entrepreneur, politician and philanthropist Michael Bloomberg says: *“If you follow a chosen path and it turns out to be a dead end, you have essentially succeeded, because you know not to venture down that path again.”* In addition to being tested in-house, prototypes are shown to users in order to provide a rough idea of the experience of handling the object and therefore to give feedback about any corrections to be made.

5) implementation planning - are they marketable?

This is the last but one stage of the process, aimed at preparing a specific plan of marketing ready-made solutions, envisioning a fast market launch for minimized risk of failure. The most important competencies here are entrepreneurship and organizational skills – time and money management. This is the time for the final presentation of the finished product. At this stage, many designers look for sponsors.

The above model, which assumes the successive implementation of individual stages, is only an idealized concept by the creators of design thinking. In my opinion, it only has a chance of full implementation where large corporations and companies work as a team. However, some assumptions, especially those describing the acquisition of knowledge about the customer can be useful in the design process of individual fashion designers.

The influence of design thinking is increasingly visible in the world of design, especially among young companies and designers. Most often it shows in the segment of architecture and industrial design. Fashion, while a strong branch of design, still follows traditional, established models based on the unlimited authority and domination of a designer or creative director of a clothing brand. Designers create collections according to their own vision, which they consider desirable by customers. As experts in their own field, they are respected and appreciated, and they assume that they know their customers' needs so well that they do not need to ask them for an opinion. Often this attitude works and their clothes sell very well, but this is most often the case with big fashion houses, which have developed a recognizable brand or name automatically associated with luxury and prestige. Then, the customers desire the products so much that there is no need to encourage them to buy, as they trust the brand. However, such a situation is true of such an extremely small number of designers that it seems almost a utopian vision, especially for beginners who have to develop their own image and mode of action.

Nowadays, beautiful designs are not everything, what counts is openness and communication with the viewer, that's why I think the ideology of design thinking should be so important in the fashion industry.

Currently, reliance on the traditional design model has resulted in a discrepancy between what designers proposes and how the audience perceives and uses their work. Collections are first designed, sewn and marketed, and only then do their authors observe how customers react to them and what they buy.

With the sheer number brands in recent years and the fact that anyone can start a clothing company (as is now popular among celebrities who utilize their social media reach for this purpose), it is important to develop a credible, original image, without following the competition or popular, short-term marketing activities that are used by everyone. Alternatively, conceptual work should be preceded by researching customer needs and expectations and followed by creating a more tailored product that will distinguish itself from among others.

7. FASHION AS PART OF A COMPRESSED SYSTEM

Ingrid Loschek, professor of fashion history and fashion theory at the Faculty of Technology, Design and Business at Pforzheim University, says that fashion and design should be understood in the context of systems theory, interacting with and feeding off other areas of reality. Therefore, fashion cannot be seen as an autonomous uncoupled system: *“fashion as a system does not come to fruition only through*

environmental adaptation, but is reciprocally coupled with the structures of other systems, such as the economy, politics, media, music, art or sport. This structural overlapping is of great importance for considerations on fashion, and thus on the spirit of the times."⁴⁹ Present-day reality is thus created by open communication subsystems, which include all areas of social life, shaped by the general political context, civilizational achievements, technological development, social moods, etc. Fashion is a (sub)system of its epoch/parental structure, and its material emanations are strictly rooted in a specific time and place. They are therefore a physiognomy, a reflection of their times and its sphere of ideas, and must always be analysed within a broad context.⁵⁰

This compressed system also extends to what is a dominant aspect of modern life and a sign of our times – the Internet and social media which unite through networking all areas into a common virtual space. The Internet has become a subsystem within the system and its communication super-system at the same time. The Internet connects and synchronizes not only our electronic devices (smartphones, computers, laptops, tablets) used in various areas of everyday life and in different contexts, but also the contexts themselves. *"Life nowadays takes place in an online context, which is a framework for user activities, at the same time shaping these activities and responding to their associated needs, adapting its shape to the connections between spheres that have been transferred to it. Various elements of social life are so deeply rooted in the Internet environment that it is no longer possible to say that, for example, the transfer of politics to a hypothetical offline environment would be a mere change of the content carrier.* For such an environment does not exist and neither does

49 I. Loschek, *Wann ist die Mode? Strukturen, Strategien und Innovationen*, Berlin 2007, p. 31, translated by E. Kwade in *Mody, meble i memy. O fluktuacjach memów i systemów mody w kulturze (zarys problematyki)*, *Teksty z ulicy. Zeszyt memetyczny*, 2016, no. 17.

50 E. Kwade "Mody, meble i memy. O fluktuacjach memów i systemów mody w kulturze (zarys problematyki)" in: "Teksty z ulicy. Zeszyt memetyczny (zarys problematyki)" 2016, no. 17.

offline politics.”⁵¹ The Internet connects all spheres of life to a greater extent than has ever been possible with traditional mass media, and its specificity and mode of operation irreversibly affect the shape of these spheres. Similarly, this also applies to fashion, of which the Internet and social media have become an inseparable tool and communication channel.

8. SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Until recently (about 10 years ago), it seemed that the fashion industry was not particularly dependent on technological progress. Today, however, these two fields are almost inseparable. Technology influences the way consumers live, work, spend their free time, and what purchase decisions they make. As a result, today's world is often referred to as SoCloDaMo, a term coined by Dirk Nicol in his book “Mobile Strategy: How Your Company Can Win by Embracing Mobile Technologies” based on the intersecting concepts:

1. **Social** - social media:

Nowadays, social networking sites have become the primary source of information and contact for many. It is there that consumers most often look for fashion inspiration, and according to a Boston Consulting Group study, up to ten times more often than in the

51 W. Magdziarz “Tożsamości i komunikacja w świecie mediów społecznościowych – analiza z wykorzystaniem teorii społeczeństwa spektaklu Guya Deborda i koncepcji cyfrowego nonsense memetycznego”<https://www.google.com/search?q=W+Magdziarz+%22To%C5%Bcsamo%C5%9Bci+and+communication+in+%C5%9Bworld+media%C3%B3w+spo%C5%82eczno%C5%9Bciowych%E2%80%93+analiza+z+wykorzystaniem+teorii+spo%C5%82ecze%C5%84of+the+Guy+Debord+spectacle+and+the+concept+of+digital+memetic+nonsense%22&og=W.+Magdziarz+%22To%C5%Bcsamo%C5%9Bci+i+komunikacja+w+%C5%9Bwiecie+medi%C3%B3w+spo%C5%82eczno%C5%9Bciowy%E2%80%93+analiza+z+wykorzystaniem+teorii+spoc%C5%84of+Guy+Debord's+spectacle+and+the+concept+of+digital+nonsense+memetics>, p. 246

traditional mass media.⁵² Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, social media are the only way for people to connect – both on a personal and business level. From the perspective of fashion brands, the image of a brand in social media is extremely important in that it translates into better sales. According to Big Commerce research and statistics, summarising the behaviour of Internet users, most users trust companies that actively maintain their profiles on the Internet. If they can be found on Facebook or Instagram, they are more likely to have their products seen. If consumers can interact with a shop via social media, they are more likely to feel safe and make a purchase. According to studies, companies' social media activity increases their sales by up to 32%.⁵³

2. **Cloud** - Internet space used for processing and storing data:

This is a type of service that allows the service provider (e.g. Google, Microsoft, iCloud, Dropbox, Wetransfer) to store data on the server. It enables the customer to upload their files to the cloud and have constant access to their content. The content most often consists of various types of multimedia, photographs, films, including software or databases. In short – it is a virtual portable drive, with which you can connect from any place in the world that has Internet access.

3. **Big Data** - data about consumers and their behaviour:

52 J. Kall, A. Perchla-Włosik, A. Raciniewska, K. Sempruch-Krzemińska, Marka modowa. Jak zrozumieć konsumenta mody i stworzyć markę szytą na miarę, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warsaw 2018, p. 108.

53 <https://www.bigcommerce.com/blog/5-social-stats-for-online-storeowners/>. accessed on 05.01.2021

The use of mobile devices and all the activity we engage on the Internet through them leaves traces – and thus generates a great deal of recorded data. It is this data that is referred to as Big Data. *"There is a tendency to search for, retrieve, collect and process available data. It's a method of legitimately gathering information from a variety of sources, then analysing it and using it for your own purposes. As a result, a consumer profile is created, which is then used to, for example, increase sales. The most important thing in Big Data is to process information and use its conclusions in practice, not just collect data."*⁵⁴

4. **Mobile** - mobile devices, portable (i.e. mainly smartphones and tablets):

The Gemius report “E-commerce in Poland 2020”, in which Gemius together with the Chamber of Electronic Commerce presented the latest data on the online sales market, shows that a whopping 73% of the surveyed Internet users were e-consumers, because they had made an online purchase at least once. This is as many as 11 percentage points more than in 2019. The majority of Internet purchases were made on mobile devices.⁵⁵ This was undoubtedly influenced by the coronavirus epidemic. However, already in 2016, the report “mShopper2.0: Poles on Mobile Shopping” indicated a decreasing percentage of Polish users using laptops and desktop computers for digital shopping and an increasing percentage of shoppers using smartphones and tablets. This is particularly visible in the under-25 age group and among residents of large cities (with populations over 100,000). A Gemius report from 2020 indicates that the most popular device used in the online shopping process is still a laptop (80%), followed by mobile devices – phone/smartphone (69%), and desktop computers (50%). In the youngest group of respondents, the smartphone is

54 <https://poradnikprzedsiębiorcy.pl/-czym-jest-big-data>, accessed on 05.01.2021

55 <https://www.google.com/amp/s/bezprawnik.pl/e-commerce-w-polsce-2020/amp/>, accessed on 05.01.2021

the device of choice in e-commerce – as reported by a whopping 92% of respondents aged 15-24.⁵⁶

The popularity of mobile devices in everyday life (not only for shopping, but also in everyday use, in free time) results from the convenience that comes with the ability to use them anywhere and anytime. Also, according to the reports of Poland's largest online sales platform Allegro "Polska Strojna" (covering each year from 2015 until 2020), half of Allegro users interested in the fashion category use mobile devices for shopping. Using smartphones or tablets allows us to use multiple functions at once – phone, camera and other tools (which until recently would have had to be separate devices) and, with Internet connection, we can have check information and shop without limits, while also being in touch with our contacts and social media. Smartphones give us a sense of control over our private and business lives and keep us up to date. Technology provides access to communication channels at a click, both for entertainment purposes and for reaching consumers. However, as American politician Bill Quirke points out, in a paraphrase of Winston Churchill's famous words, "*never before have so many communicated so much with so little effect*". This quotation ideally sums up the contemporary characteristics of what surrounds us in virtual reality, and in particular in social media. We are constantly being attacked by a multitude of information at every turn. We are overwhelmed by the frequency of pop-up ads (often annoying and non-customized), sponsored posts, but also information published by private persons – our friends, sharing almost every event on their online profiles.

With the decline of the culture of hand writing, we as a society are returning to an image-based culture. Visual communication and message-based social media dominated by graphic images are a reaction to an ever-shortening attention span, as a result of the never-ending whirlwind of information.

56 <https://www.gemius.pl/wszystkie-artykuly-aktualnosci/e-commerce-w-polsce-2020.html>. accessed on 05.01.2021

The natural reflex is to close oneself off from this information storm and to keep one's attention only on particularly distinctive stimuli. The Internet is already so full of various forms of advertising that most of its users have learned to ignore them. There is even a term in marketing called "banner blindness", which describes the ability to ignore all the website features that we think are worthless or simply uninteresting.⁵⁷

The stimulatory overkill coming from social media, often referred to as information stress, has also been named by American philosopher and media scholar Neil Postman as a form of cultural AIDS (Anti-Information Deficiency Syndrome). This type of phenomenon forces the user to make necessary selections, a coping mechanism that allows us to deal with an overload of information stimuli competing for attention.⁵⁸

Therefore, being a fashion brand and wanting to communicate its design identity and values, we have to do so in a skilful, non-intrusive, but nevertheless clearly signalling way. As Katarzyna Sempruch-Krzemińska points out "*marketing communication is a process of exchanging thoughts, ideas and feelings between the brand and the consumers*"⁵⁹, so it is a kind of interactive dialogue if we consider the specific nature of contact in social media. The very notion of dialogue as mentioned above has become the basis for the definition of social media, in relation to the generally understood

57 <https://www.promoagency.pl/blog/jak-dziala-inbound-marketing>, accessed on 10.01.2021

58 M. Szpunar, *Nowe-stare medium. Internet między tworzeniem nowych modeli komunikacyjnych a reprodukowaniem schematów komunikowania masowego*, Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, Warszawa 2012, p. 187.

59 J. Kall, A. Perchla-Włosik, A. Raciniewska, K. Sempruch-Krzemińska, *Marka modowa. Jak zrozumieć konsumenta i stworzyć markę szytą na miarę?*, Polskie Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, Warsaw 2018, p. 169.

use of online and mobile technologies and forms of communication.

Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein in their publication *Users of the world, unite!* define social media as “a group of web-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that enable the creation and sharing of user-generated content.”^{60 61}

The term *Web 2.0* first appeared in a 1999 article by Darcy DiNucci entitled *Fragmented Future in 1999*, and became popular in 2004, after a series of conferences organised by O'Reilly Media and MediaLive International, regarding the development of new Internet techniques and the growing role of active web users. The theories presented focus on creating and personalising websites and applications, so that the users have the greatest possible opportunity to interact with the platform and each other.

According to Tim O'Reilly, an Irish entrepreneur and one of the creators trying to define the term *Web. 2.0*, the main principle is: “*Create applications that better tame the Web so that more people use them.*” The primary channel *Web 2.0* has thus become social media. The most important thing about them is the aforementioned interaction between members of the community, therefore *Web 2.0* services are called “dynamic”, as opposed to “static” traditional websites, which do not permit interaction (*Web.1.0*). This is demonstrated in the possibility of building a network of contacts, i.e. creating a list of friends, by sending an invitation so you can communicate directly through private messages, as well as in the more efficient flow of information and free discussions, e.g. in forums or public comments on posts.⁶¹

60 https://pl.mi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_spo%C5%82eczno%C5%9Bciowe. accessed on 30.01.2021.

61 https://pLm.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0. accessed 30.01.2021

The basic feature that distinguishes *Web 2.0* platforms from *1.0* is their bi-directionality, which means that users are not only passive recipients of information, but they also actively create the message –communication works both ways: it is both received and transmitted. The message can go from the user to the medium, from the user to the brand, and the other way round – from the brand to the user. This strongly changes the position of the consumer and forces brand creators to change their thinking. The most important difference of the community in relation to Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 is therefore the collective subject of relations in the “we” model.⁶²

The role of individual co-creators of network resources, which is the basis of *Web 2.0*, was highlighted by the American magazine “Time”, which gave the Man of the Year 2006 award to a fictional person, the ‘global Internet community’, or the creators of online content, with particular reference to the social media outlets: Myspace, YouTube and Wikipedia. The choice was supported by the idea that *“You” control the Information Age*. This was a way of drawing the attention to a new form of communication, a new stage of development of the Network, which *“builds a new kind of international understanding, not like a politician with a politician, not like one great man with another great man, but like citizens with citizens, people with people”*⁶³

Thanks to social media, geographical boundaries are no longer a hurdle to communication, building relationships and publishing content by sharing multimedia files in virtual space. Social media are characterized by the democratization of communication, which demonstrates itself in the possibility of freely editing and disseminating messages and materials, which is not an option in traditional media and press, radio or television. Information published on social media is only the beginning

62 M. Szulc, *Od gatunku do wizerunku. Autokreacje blogerów modowych w mediach społecznościowych*, Poznań 2019

63 W. Gogołek, *Komunikacja sieciowa. Uwarunkowania, kategorie, paradoksy*, Warsaw 2010, p. 162.

of the communication process, the starting point. The initial message can then be freely modified and forwarded to subsequent users.⁶⁴

The social network is based on three basic conditions:

1. user profiles are fully or partially public
2. it is possible to freely create and edit the contact list of persons
3. it is possible to view the list of contacts in the system

“The whole definition of social networks, on which the new media are based, are all about people. They are the foundation of the new media and marketing order. This new order is no longer based on old-fashioned consumers whose only dream was to own things. Today, we have reached a higher level and we no longer only want to own, today we want to have and be. We have become prosumers (a portmanteau of ‘professional/producer’ and ‘consumer’). Today, we want to be involved in the creation and promotion of brands or, at the same time, craft products or services ourselves. It is no longer enough for us to just have bread and circuses, today we want to participate in the production of bread and circuses, and not just be spectators. Marketing must take these requirements into account.”⁶⁵

As Anna Nacher points out in her publication *Web 2.0: Between Wikinomics and Counterculture*, the Web 2.0 phenomenon can function in at least two contexts – on the one hand it is almost synonymous with participatory culture, in which the participants want to be – first and foremost – producers of meaning. The other is a repertoire of

64 A. Całka, B. Mróz-Gorgoń, *Rola mediów społecznościowych w procesie komunikacji marketinkowej – przykład marek modowych*, in: *Marketing i Rynek* 11/2014.

65 Marcin Żukowski, *Twoja firma w social media. Podręcznik marketingu internetowego dla małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw*, Wydawnictwo Helion, Łódź 2016, p. 16.

effective marketing tools.⁶⁶

Social media have brought about a real revolution in the fashion industry – in the area of the image of clothing brands and their PR activities. The specific nature of social media, as opposed to traditional media, is that the advertising campaign continues all the time – each post, each comment added by the brand affects its perception by observers. It is the media that defines the brand-consumer relationship. The functioning of the designer in the virtual space is associated with being under constant observation of the customer and can produce both great opportunities and threats to the success of design activity. On the one hand, the character of almost immediate, constant contact means that there is an opportunity to get to know the user and, later on, to adjust the content and product to his/her expectations, to respond to the current market situation, to present and explain projects and to take a stand regarding important current events. On the other hand, the customer demands an almost immediate response to his/her actions, and expects (and rightly so) absolute credibility and transparency. Being under constant scrutiny involves following every move and spotting mistakes immediately, often resulting in a brand image crisis (as exemplified by the “scandals” described above, e.g. Veclaim).

“Customers do not like standard solutions, they want to be surprised, they want to feel that the company is fully engaged in its activities. Without a clear, positive image, you cannot count on such desirable human impulses of customers as loyalty, fidelity, sympathy, attachment, and they should become the result of image-building activities. To be able to express such feelings, customers need a concrete object. If it is unnoticeable, disappearing in the flood of similar objects or is not properly associated -

66 A. Nacher, *Web 2.0: między wikinomią a kontrkulturą – przypadek Facebooka*, in: *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis Studia de Cultura I* (2010), Folia 88. Internet i okolice.

*they will choose another, more noticeable to them, and therefore better*⁶⁷ – says Kinga Stopczyńska, in her work *Social Media Marketing - Creating the Company's Image in Virtual Space*. She then stresses that getting to know your customer should be fundamental if you want to successfully exist in the market and create a valuable product and message. Proper communication is very important. In itself, it has only two main tasks – the first is to build brand or designer awareness, or awareness of its existence in the eyes of the recipient, and the second – to increase the emotional involvement of users who already know and observe it.

From the study “KNOW: Consumer in Social Media” conducted by IMAS International shows that Polish Internet users accept the presence of brands in social media. Almost a quarter of the respondents choose to follow brand profiles and then interact with them by commenting on posts or materials posted on their profile. 72% of respondents cited liking for a brand’s products or the brand in general as the motivation for this type of activity.⁶⁸

Building lasting bonds in the brand-consumer relationship is the basis for good communication and, at the same time, the basis for social media marketing, which is *“a method consisting in gaining the attention of Internet users and generating Internet traffic with the help of social networks. (...) Social media marketing uses customer engagement on social networking sites, towards a brand or a product. The main aim of social media marketing is not to sell but to build brand image. The materials for marketing campaigns are created not only to gain customers’ attention but also to encourage them to be active, e.g. to share them with their friends. This has the effect*

67 K. Stopczyńska, *Social media marketing – kreowanie wizerunku firmy w przestrzeni wirtualnej*, in: *Prace i materiały Wydziału Zarządzania Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego 2012*, vol. 10, no 1, pp. 515-523.

68 https://interaktywnie.com/public/upload/data/Konsument-w-mediach_-spolecznosciowe.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwieuLKuqMnuAhXmlosKHeDQArAQFjABegQIARAB&usg=AOvVaw24_rgswlR4Zp-kRR3yijxQ, accessed on 01.02.2021