

Lasalle College

Pantone: Disrupted Through Time

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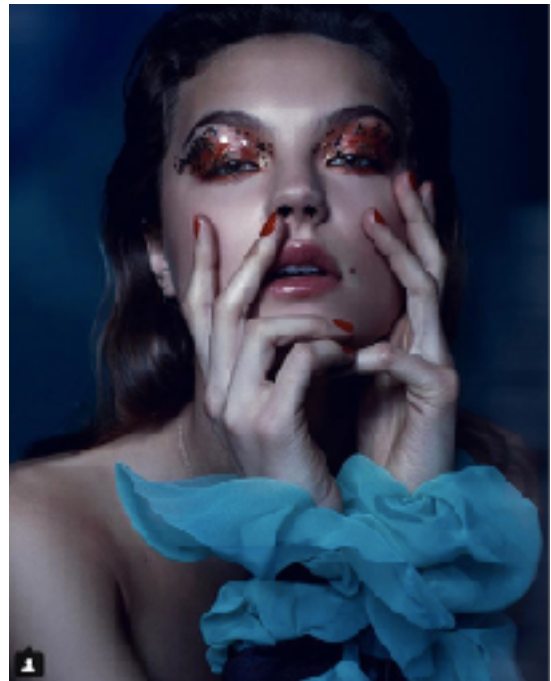
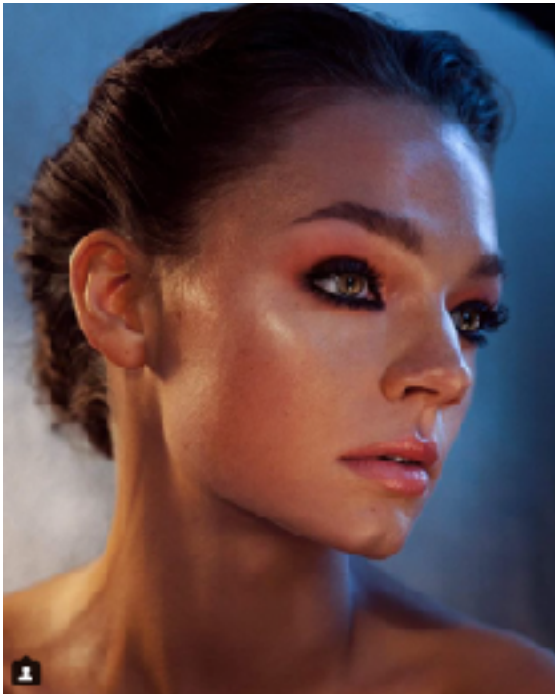
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In 2018, the society we find ourselves being apart of is one which is completely dependent and at the mercy of visual stimulants. In other words, it has recently become too ambitious to say that we believe only what we read or investigate. Instead, as the world has progressed we have become the society whom believes what we see. Trends, colours and ultimately pop culture and continuously shifting and adapting in order to keep our attention. As the theme of this research project suggests and challenges us to accept, we are now living in a complete time of disruption. The angle I have chosen to navigate this theme with is through trends and colours, my medium being photography. My goal is to properly illustrate how disrupted trends and colours have always and will always be in the face of the passing of time. PANTONE is largely responsible for this due to their annual selection of the “colour of the year”. In the face of colours, time is the ultimate boss and disrupter of all things passed or “passé” to be correct. Introducing “Ultraviolet” as the colours of the year in late December, Pantone set the literal “tone” for all that we would be seeing in everything from fashion to home decor and beyond. It comes as no surprise then that the photography aspect of my project will largely be affiliated to the colour purple and its many shade ranges. My goal is to creat “editorial” like images fit for any given fashion magazine.

Seeing as the medium I’ve chosen is photography, I found it necessary an appropriate for one of my two inspirations to be a photographer. The shots I am trying to emulate are supposed to feel very “high fashion” and showcase the rawness which the fashion industry is so well renown for. People often misconstrue just how vital a photographers eye can be in the face of creativity. I strongly believe that the same photo take by five different photographers will always look like five completely different photographs whom all tell a different story. This is true with painting as well. In other words, in the world of photography lines and shadows have the power to transform any shot into pure art. Colours and saturation play a huge role in this editing process as well. A good photographer and connoisseur of colour is able to mentally shift lights and shadows in their minds and see what is *strong* and most of all what isn’t. The photographer and local media production inspiration I have chosen is ds\_sanchez on

Instagram. Based in Montreal, Dariane Sanchez works with numerous modelling agencies across the city including Folio and Dulcedo, two of the most renown modelling agencies here in Montreal. Her approach is very style centric, and focuses primarily on the power behind a *headshot*. Most of her photography follows the classic dimensions and restrictions of portraiture.



All of these images can be found on Dariane's Instagram profile which she uses as a "portfolio" future employers can browse through. All of these four shots hold different inspirations to me for my own personal project. In the first photograph, the saturation used to bring the model *forward* is something I definitely want to try and emulate within my own project. I think the way the light reflects on the models back instead of directly on her face is part of what makes this image so strong. Being that I am nowhere near as advanced in regards to photography as Ms. Sanchez, I will need to find ways to work with light that will help me create shadows all while keeping my model well lit. Under the same uniform light, I run the risk of the "wash out effect" where every shade of purple looks similar and no distinctions exist. These shades and shadows are very important to me if I am to create images that draw in viewers and go beyond a "headshot". I've selected the second image primarily because of the model's facial expression which is apparent right away. This kind of energy and capturing facial expressions that go beyond a "smirk" or a "smile" will be very important to me. Being able to select the photographs that are both "unconventional" and yet appealing to the mass population will be a huge process of the creative component linked to this project. The third image is the most important to me simply because it is directly linked to the colour purple which we can see in the model's makeup and even in the darkness of the backdrop. At a quick glance, the backdrop can easily appear to be black. Agreeing to the backdrop being black would be a lazy conclusion. The colours and hues which exist in darkness do not all point to the colour black. In fact, most shades which the human eye recognizes as "black" are truly just deep shades of violet, blue, brown or grey. This awareness of colours and shades is the key element and point of the project I am embarking on. Pushing people to see and understand colours beyond their initial appearance is what makes "Ultraviolet" different from shades of Lavender, Rose or Mauve all of which set a different tone. Photography and the manipulation of photos through editing is so pivotal in the world of fashion because only through photography can we magnify and even minimize the power which colours hold over all of us, especially our emotions, attractions etc. The final image is useful to me due to the heavy presence of light and the

numerous shades of blue that we can find in this image. The object closest to us and the “light” is turquoise and as we move deeper into the image before us, the darker the shades of blue become all while creating a halo effect around the models face. This is another possible source of inspiration for me during the staging, photography and editing parts of this project.

The second international media production that will act as a source of inspiration for me in the upcoming stages of my project is Rihanna’s FENTY PUMA Spring 2018 Line which was debuted in September 2017 during New York Fashion Week. The collection is described as “X Games inspired” by Vogue. Featuring futuristically chic athleisure 90’s inspired clothing for both men and women, Rihanna dives into the realms of fashion which promotes “pieces” that once taken apart, can be worn casually on the street. Feeding the market of kids desperately trying to fit into an era they were never even a part of, FENTY PUMA Spring 2018 encompasses trends solidified by higher-ups in the fashion world all while pushing the envelope and truly taking it above and beyond anything we have ever seen. FENTY, over the three short years it has been in production has become far more than a “cosign” between Puma and Rihanna. Every last season the line has debuted has pushed boundaries that other clothing lines have not dared to cross in years. The pairing up of colours and the boldness of the designs has re-inspired the re-emersion of neons, pastels, metallics, plaids, chains and the importance of fonts on clothing which features scriptures. In this season in particular, the colour purple made numerous appearances and fits directly into the “Ultraviolet” craze we are now facing and will soon be becoming increasingly aware of as the upcoming months go by. The way colours affect the fashion industry is undeniable. In the face of fashion, nobody wants to be left behind which is why colours play such a strong role in the outfits we see younger generations put together. If colours come into style, they are picked up by the majority of clothing brands and mass produced until they consequently, through the passing of time become classified as passé. In the face of time, fashion always loses. Here are a couple of the outfits that were showcased at this fashion show for FENTY Puma Spring 2018.





The research that can be done on colour has absolutely no limits. Colours follow us around everywhere we go, we simply can not escape them. Colours are responsible for moods and associations we create in our minds. Colour *is* in it's own form, a language, a language we all learn to speak differently. Arguably one of the most personal forms of expression, colour is flexible in the sense that it reaches past what words can describe.

As a part of the research component of my project, I wanted to understand how colours affect our minds and psychologically shift the way we perceive our environments. A lot of studies have been conducted in order to test these theories and the for the most part, it can be confirmed that colours do indeed act as visual prompts that go on to control our moods. According to the article "Make Colour Work for You" by Carole Kanchier for the Vancouver Sun Newspaper, many different colours can be responsible for different emotions. In the article, red and its "neighbouring hues" are described as "active and exciting" while colours such as green, blue and violet which are more on the "cool sided tones" are more passive and relaxing. The colour red can even go so far as to actively "stimulate the central nervous system and increase bodily tension." If we think about red in our own environment we can make immediately links the points this study defends. An example of this would be: Stop signs. The chosen colour for stop signs is red as they are meant to encourage us, even scare us into stopping our vehicle at any given street corner. They are supposed to engage our nervous system and increase bodily functions, making us alert while behind the wheel. Once we begin to study colour, everything that was once "random" becomes increasingly strategic. The article also explains why certain people gravitate towards certain colours. For example, those who prefer red over blue tend to be described as "extroverts" while those who cling to blue are "introverted". Colours are the mirror of the soul. For this project in particular, knowing and understanding how certain colours make people feel helps me gather intel on the effects the colour purple has on people, something which is important for me to know. Being aware of the power colours hold over us also helps us understand what is deemed appropriate within our own societies. The more we know about the colours we surround ourselves with or even put on

our backs when it comes to clothing, the more we understand the impressions we leave on others who then go on to form opinions about us. Colours are in their own way, a branch of Science.

The second source I leaned on for this project was the PANTONE company itself. According to “Pantone Owns Colour-Code Market” an article written for Knight Ridder Tribune News by Hugh Morley, Pantone was founded in 1942 by Lawrence Herbert. In the beginning PANTONE started off as a printing company. It’s headquarters can be found in Carlstadt New Jersey just outside of New York City. The company is a family-owned and operated company, divided between Lawrence Herbert, the founder and his two children Lisa and Richard Herbert, all of whom work within the company and continue to propel it into the future as it grows into the “monopole” of the colour and textile industry. Pantone is indeed, the “big brother” of colour. Profitable thanks to the entire corporate industry of fashion and design being completely dependent on them and their “colour guide books” which retail for 400-900 dollars Canadian as well as their recent integration into the “Adobe” colour coding system. They are the leading language of colour. It is now true that in order to work with colours in the textile industry which overlaps into all design branches as well as the fashion and advertisement industries, you must be able to identify colours as more than just “red” or “blue”. Pantone offers hundred of variations of those very broad colours and in order to be precise as the business world require you to be, Pantone references must be made. The company is especially important and pertinent to me simply because I am looking to identify as many “Pantone Purples” as I possibly can within my own photography project. Being aware of the company’s background and its massive impact on the world today will help me gain insight on the overall scope of my project and its implications. I seek to approach my own project with the same attitude Pantone does. Just because it looks purple, does not mean it is “just purple”. I want to broaden my abilities to distinguish colour and enrich my creative eye in the face of not only photography but the millions of colours that hide in the billions of pixels which make up just one photograph.



The colour purple has long been associated with royalty over the course of history. Going back hundreds of years, the colour was among the rarest hues artisans were able to create and therefore, its price was unimaginable and extremely unattainable to commoners, thus its association with royalty seeing as they were the only ones who were able to afford having the colour produced. According to an article written by Remy Melina "Why is the Colour Purple associated to Royalty?" for LiveScience, the dye which was used to make the colour purple was only found in one corner of the world being the "modern day Lebanon". Its tint came from "mollusks" which could only be found in a very distinct part of the Mediterranean Sea. Many of these "mollusks" were needed to create enough dye for clothing, making the production process of the colour purple tedious and ultimately very expensive. During the Elizabethan Era, Queen Elizabeth I forbade anyone outside her closest family members from wearing the colour purple. This led to the association commoners and people today still make to royalty whenever the colour purple is in question. The mass production of purple only came along later as William Henry Perkins, an English chemist accidentally created a chemical compound which could be used to dye fabric purple as he was trying to create an anti-malaria drug. Although the results were far from his original goal, he is still to this day responsible for stripping the colour purple from its rarity and making it accessible to people of all classes and societal groupings. Understanding the rich history of the colour purple ties in directly to the psychology aspect behind the way we see colours which I previously mentioned. People from previous generations may have never even imagined that commoners such as us would be able to use the colour purple in our day to day lives. It goes to show just how much of a divide colours can create among people. For example in the United States of America, the country is and always has been partially divided by the colours red and blue, politically speaking. Calling on Democrats and Republicans. Colours become statements and can even go so far as becoming *labels* which we hide behind in groups we feel most comfortable in. Is it not crazy that because of this, colours could theoretically speaking be the main propaganda behind wars?

Coming back to Pantone, I find it important for me to include the “colour description” they have released on their website which describes the “Ultraviolet” colour of the year extensively. This description is important because it ties together so many different aspects of the world around us ranging from music to the cosmos where purple is clearly visible and present. Pantone's description is important because it is the accumulation of all things purple, or ultraviolet as Pantone would defend.

“A dramatically provocative and thoughtful purple shade, PANTONE 18-3838 Ultra Violet communicates originality, ingenuity, and visionary thinking that points us toward the future. Complex and contemplative, Ultra Violet suggests the mysteries of the cosmos, the intrigue of what lies ahead, and the discoveries beyond where we are now. The vast and limitless night sky is symbolic of what is possible and continues to inspire the desire to pursue a world beyond our own. Enigmatic purples have also long been symbolic of counterculture, unconventionality, and artistic brilliance. Musical icons Prince, David Bowie, and Jimi Hendrix brought shades of Ultra Violet to the forefront of western pop culture as personal expressions of individuality. Nuanced and full of emotion, the depth of PANTONE 18-3838 Ultra Violet symbolizes experimentation and non-conformity, spurring individuals to imagine their unique mark on the world, and push boundaries through creative outlets. Historically, there has been a mystical or spiritual quality attached to Ultra Violet. The color is often associated with mindfulness practices, which offer a higher ground to those seeking refuge from today's over-stimulated world. The use of purple-toned lighting in meditation spaces and other gathering places energizes the communities that gather there and inspire connection.”

The rich language Pantone uses to describe one single shade is impressive to say the least. We find ourselves feeling almost small next to the vastness that a colour can occupy. Ultraviolet is the face of the universe and represents the careers of music icons such as Prince, David Bowie and Jimi Hendrix. The complexity and the millions of interconnections colours create and Pantone illustrates is beautiful and eye-opening. In my own personal project, I hope to bring shades of purple to light that people, my audience can relate to certain elements of their past, present and even future. We live and dream in colour.

Finally, the last study I want to include in my portfolio of research would be the study conducted by Eva L  bbe in the book: “Colours in the Mind - Colour Systems in Reality: A Formula for Colour Saturation”. In this short study, thirty-two adults are asked to “define the concept of colour”. Participants were encouraged not to speak of individual colours nor textiles but rather to really focus on the essence of what colour truly is at its base. Out of the thirty-two participants, only one of them mentioned the notion of perception. Colour is indeed the perception of lights and shadows in our natural environment and how we perceive these

shades with our own eyes and minds. This is why some people argue over what is blue and what is purple, colour is indeed subjective. This is such an important study because it proves that colour is really just a fragment of our imaginations. We truly have no idea why we perceive things the way we do and when it comes to colours, we will forever be at the mercy of how they want *us* to perceive *them*.

In conclusion, my project will be pieced together by all of the previously listed sources of inspirations and research that I have conducted in regard to colours, Pantone, the fashion industry, the effects of colours on the mind etc. The study of colours is one that has absolutely no limits and is incredibly hard to grasp due to its vastness. Through my photography project and the research I now have under my belt, I want to create a project that celebrates the colour of the year in all of its grandeur. My goal is to broaden the conversation people have about colours and the language they use to describe different saturations and hues that will be present within my project. Working with photography allows me to not only take the images I will be displaying but also allows me to manipulate the images electronically in order to get the final product I am envisioning. Something along the lines of the inspiration images I have included above, I want to create images that are strong and can forever be linked to the year of 2018. Living in a time of disruption, as we so evidently are, the project I create now may be passé as the next year rolls in, however it will always be representative of this day and time, *right now*.

Word Count: 3,383 words.

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