

# HOW DOES FASHION ENGAGE AUDIENCE WITH HIGH CULTURE? QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES

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# Why?

- Typically, fashion studies relate to clothes and accessories; however, they may be extended much wider to cover pure arts and entertainment (Aspers, Godart, 2013; Rafferty, 2011; Kawamura, 2006; Blumer, 1969).
- There is a lot in common between the art world and the world of fashion (Kawamura, 2006).
- To understand the construction of meanings drawn from programming, production and marketing of a theatre.

# Where?

- The industrial city of Perm, with a population of approximately one million
- The Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre is one of the oldest in the country
- In 2011, Theodor Currentzis was appointed as the theatre's Artistic Director.
- The invitation of directors and conductors with an unconventional approach, original language performances, wide media coverage, a new company image, online ticket sales, repertoire books and open doors day called "Opera Extreme".

# What is fashion?

- A system of meanings and tools transferring them (McCracken, 1986)
- A social mechanism, consisting of meanings and tools for transference of these meanings during interactions between consumers, producers, mediators and distributors (McCracken, 1986; Гофман, 1994; Thompson, Haytko, 1997).

# What does it mean to be fashion appeal?

- Meanings of fashion communicate the fashionable status to a thing or a practice;
- **Modernity** – meaning shaped by a process of endless changes – is the most important feature of fashion (Blumer, 1969; Gronow, 1993; Svendsen, 2007; Aspers, Godrat, 2013). **Constructing and overcoming social boundaries**, vertical as well as horizontal, is rooted in the distinguishing function of fashion (Gronow, 1993, p. 94; Гофман, 1994; Abrahamson, 1996; Zukerman, 2012; Muller, 2006). **The ludic character** of fashion is represented by the absence of utilitarian purposes in fashion novelty and trendiness for the majority of participants (Blumer, 1969; Gronow, 1993).

# Qualitative approach. 1. Goal

- To discover a set of fashion appeal's indicators and the role of marketing activity of the theatre, programming and positioning in the meaning-making process

# Qualitative approach. 2. Method and sample

- 23 in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with visitors and non-visitors of the Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre, Dec. 2014 – June 2015
- Open coding



# Qualitative approach. 3. External cues

- **Marketing communication of the theatre:** The theatre is a buzz word, and people are more informed about current performances and events in the theatre (woman, 20). The theatre is heavily promoted, advertised. The campaign is impressive (woman, 50) The theatre's brand is very promoted now. There is a new company style, modern and beautiful (woman, 20)
- **The Artistic Director's personal brand:** ...it's enough to look at Currentzis once to be interested, I think. Even disregarding his interviews or something else, just because he is so controversial (woman, 34). Currentzis – he is a genius, young, thin legs, with a new hairstyle every time. I don't know – maybe girls go to see his hairstyle and to admire the way in which he waves an imaginary conductor's baton (Man, 38).
- **Ticket shortage:** The tickets are sold rapidly, so it means a lot of people strive to get inside (woman, 22), But in general the theatre is very popular, and performances for kids and for adults, they,...in all, in the New Year season, sold all tickets to all performances. A-I-I ticket to a-I-I performances. Even to "Snow Maiden". They were sold (man, 40)

# Qualitative approach. 4. Internal cues

- **The modernity meaning:** It (the theatre) has not stayed in the yesterday (man, 40). Well, I like new performances with futuristic set designs...it's worth seeing. In general, the theatre doesn't stay in one place; it is progressing (woman, 22). I would say it (the theatre) is modern. Modern, but with respect to classical heritage. That's the way I would define it (woman, 50).
- **The cosmopolitanism meaning:** The team puts the task to create not just locally distinguished products, if you understand what I mean, but a distinguished product at its essence. I went to the theater in, I believe, Perm, but found myself in the auditorium where a performance was starting. I realise I'm not in Perm – I'm somewhere in Europe or in some other place (man, 40). As Currentzis himself is, I don't know, a cosmopolite, then the people with whom he collaborates and approaches, the expressive means which he uses are much wider than I can imagine in other theatres (woman, 34)
- **Openness:** I was with my mum, and then we of course discussed (a performance – Iu. P.). She said: When I looked at you from the outside, you was like you were possessed. Then there was an impression which caught you if you opened to it. ...this extends the boundaries of the possible (woman, 34). Some things I like [about new performances], some things I don't like. Generally, I like more than dislike. I like that our opera theatre is always in search (woman, 63).
- **The culturedness meaning:** Now there it is fashionable to be a cultured person. To read books and to watch films which are not lowbrow, and the opera theatre is from this category; this is a "must have" of a cultural person (woman, 21). Still it is not elitist...it's elitist in terms of competence: there are people who learn how to understand and people who already understand, those who have learned it and now teach someone else (woman, 45). ...well, it's very exclusive when a person performs something. And it has special value (woman, 49)

# Quantitative approach. 1. Goal

- To employ the previous research findings to develop a scale for measuring disposition to Perm opera and ballet theatre among students using the concept of fashion as a subscale.

# Quantitative approach. 2. Method and sample

- Survey based on GoogleDocs with 119 statements evaluated with 7 point scale;
- 144 students of bachelor program of Economics, Management and Business Informatics Schools of HSE Perm;
- 134 are suitable for analysis;
- Software is SPSS 20 and module AMOS for SPSS 20.

# Quantitative approach. 3. Procedures

- Likert's procedure [Малхотра, 2002; Толстова, 1998] to reduce number of the statements;
- PCA and confirmative FA to check fitness of the data structure to our propositions.

# Quantitative approach. 4. Final list of the statements

Значение	Суждение
,671**	Attendance of Opera Theatre helps to be an interesting person
,662**	Attendance of Opera Theatre holds in awe
,660**	Interest to Opera Theatre is to a person's advantage
,651**	Attendance of Opera Theatre enhances a person's thinking
,651**	A good way to create impression with a girl is to invite her in Opera Theatre.
,651**	Attendance of Opera Theatre is respectable leisure
,650**	Opera Theatre goers feel sense of participations in something interesting
,642**	Opera Theatre goers experienced unique emotions
,637**	Attendance of Opera Theatre is a high day
,636**	Opera Theatre gives an opportunity to learn something new
,504**	Opera Theatre is a buzz word
,436**	Opera Theatre is a contemporary theatre
,402**	Opera Theatre attracts youth

# Quantitative approach. 5. Two factor scale

**PCA:** KMO and Bartlett's criteria sig. 001

Explained variance is 56%

Total Cronbach's Alfa = 0,906

Cronbach's Alfa of subscale "Education, emotions, dignity" (Component 1) = 0,893

Cronbach's Alfa of subscale "Fashion" (Component 2) = 0,746

**CFA:**  $\chi^2=1,257$ ,  $p=0,085$ ;

CFI=0,979; GFI=0,928; AGFI=0,892;

RMSEA=0,042,  $p=0,647$  (CI=0,00:0,07)

	Components	
	1(47,6%)	2 (8%)
Attendance of Opera Theatre helps to be an interesting person	,657	,382
Attendance of Opera Theatre holds in awe	,684	,303
Interest to Opera Theatre is to a person's advantage	,590	,313
Attendance of Opera Theatre enhances a person's thinking	,788	,037
A good way to create impression with a girl is to invite her in Opera Theatre.	,492	,558
Attendance of Opera Theatre is respectable leisure	,622	,430
Opera Theatre goers feel sense of participations in something interesting	,761	,182
Opera Theatre goers experienced unique emotions	,775	,158
Attendance of Opera Theatre is a high day	,610	,362
Opera Theatre gives an opportunity to learn something new	,617	,335
Opera Theatre is a buzz word	,298	,720
Opera Theatre is a contemporary theatre	,062	,726
Opera Theatre attracts youth	,263	,741

# Conclusion

- The case shows that the mission-based approach to programming (Sorjonen, 2011) does not exclude fashion appeal as an facet of the theatre's image. From managerial point of view fashion appeal may be considered as an attribute of the theatre's offering;
- The scale differentiates the attitude into 1) Theatre as a source of new emotions, knowledge for personal development; 2) Theatre as a modern popular place, particular as popular among peers place;
- Fashion subscale is significant part of the attitude studied.



# What is next?

- The survey nearly 700 students of different colleges in Perm with usage of Schwartz value scale and developed two factor scale;
- Research question is “How does the fashion subscale correlate (if does) with Schwartz’s values and omnivoresness of the students?”