

Contemporary Fashion Photography in Ukraine: Development Trends

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The aim of the article is to analyse artistic, visual, and stylistic trends in the development of contemporary fashion photography in Ukraine, using examples representing the work of Ukrainian clothing designers. *Results.* The article presents the historical perspective of fashion photography and highlights its characteristic features. It is revealed that in art studies, fashion photography has been examined from narrow perspectives, in particular as a means of visual representation of clothing collection models, as a means of one or another semantic content depiction, and as a component of fashion journalism. The experience of Ukrainian photographers such as Ania Brudna, Vitalii Melnykov, Danil Kaistro, Sasha Samsonova, Denis Manokha, and Dmytro Komisarenko in photographing recent collections of Ukrainian designers is analysed; the development trends of contemporary fashion photography are identified, including a strive for demonstrating "naturalness", a specific moment of life and individuality; the use of aesthetics of stylistic interior solutions and object decor to enhance the expressiveness of the collection's products; the use of three-dimensional object decorations to create the illusion of immersion in the atmosphere of another time; the departure from model's static poses in staged shooting, experiments with the plasticity of the model's figure; the combination of a photographic image with decorative elements added through graphic programs. *Scientific novelty.* For the first time in art studies, an analysis of the experience of Ukrainian photographers in presenting fashion through fashion photography is provided, and genre trends are identified. The names of A. Brudna, B. Slobodianuk, D. Kaistro, S. Samsonova, D. Manokha, and D. Komisarenko were introduced into scientific circulation. *Conclusions.* At the present stage of fashion development, fashion photography occupies a leading place among the means of presenting new design solutions. Despite the fact that the main purpose of using fashion photography is to present a design product and increase sales of fashionable clothing, this type of visual creativity captures the atmosphere of its time, and demonstrates the characteristics and moods of an era, embodying cultural and aesthetic ideals of fashion.

Keywords: fashion-photography; contemporary design; development trends; photo-image; artistic means and effects

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Introduction

The dynamics of the development of contemporary fashion, various forms of its presentation — shows, publications in magazines and online resources, its role in cinema — have greatly stimulated the development of fashion photography. The creative freedom of masters of this visual art has led to a departure from the traditional canons of the last century, which dictated the stylistic, functional, and semantic unity of artistic means, and has contributed to the manifestation of subjectivism, where the unique vision of the designer and photographer closely interact

and enter into fashion photography. The developed creative concept of photography goes beyond the ordinary, penetrating into a broad cultural context. It often embodies innovative ideas that become strong trends reflecting the spirit of the time.

Contemporary fashion photography demonstrates a combination of diverse artistic means and styles, the fusion of the incompatible, eclecticism, and compilation of different techniques, including processing using graphic editors. This variety of means is used to achieve the aesthetic appeal of the image and its heightened emotional impact, excessive emphasis, or provocative elements. However, it is primarily aimed

at achieving harmony of visual and technical expressive means and techniques of photography.

Recent research and publication analysis. The research on fashion photography development in Ukraine is presented only by individual scientific studies that focus on narrow aspects. A. Nikulina and I. Pichka (2021) discuss fashion photography as a means of conveying the visual image of women's clothing collections. In their opinion, the phenomenon of fashion photography accumulates such properties as the creation of a visual image, illusions of reality, a unique imitation of the documentary, and a captured moment (p. 138).

N. Chuprina and V. Batrak (2011) presented an analysis of the functioning of fashion photography in today's media space. The authors consider fashion photography as a material of contemporary art and mass culture. They examine fashion photographers' works as representations of the image of a person; they study the features of fashion photography in modern media, substantiating the importance of fashion photography and fashion images as structural components of mass culture.

The specific formats and varieties of fashion photography (nudity semantics) are presented in I. Skoryk's research (2023). In the context of considering the organisational and project principles of implementing modelling concepts in Ukraine, L. Dykhnych (2017) pays attention to the experiences of Ukrainian fashion photographers. The author reveals the shooting techniques used by the photographer Tetiana Tymal for the brands FROLOV, Y. Chervinska, the COAT by K. Silchenko, M. Religiosa, OSTEL, A. Voloshyna, whose concept was based on conveying positive emotions and feelings, and a fresh perspective on fashion (p. 123).

It should be noted that many researchers consider fashion photography as a component of fashion journalism. The evolution of fashion journalism in the era of Internet media is covered by M. Melnyk (2017). The author takes into account its special features, which, on the one hand, are inherited from glossy magazines, and borrowed from internet media and new forms of communication on the other. In his opinion, "... the main advantage of online fashion journalism is the ability not only to consume but also to broadcast information about various approaches to fashion and beauty. Models are not only young slender fashion models, but also ordinary people. Fashion becomes even more liberated, developing towards diversity, promoting more positive self-esteem, a sense of confidence of its participants, reflecting a more realistic picture of what a beautiful person should look like" (p. 264).

We take into account publications that reveal the general artistic, visual, and technological aspects

of photography. Such works include a collection of essays by American writer and critic Susan Sontag *On Photography*, published in 1977. The author dismantles stereotypes about photography that have developed in everyday consciousness; and emphasises the falsity of ideas about photography as a means of reliably recording experience: in the work of the photographer "the same, usually dark agreements between truth and art are concluded, as in painting or literature" (Sontag, 1977). By its nature, photography is surrealistic, with surrealism inherent in the very attempt to create a duplicate of the world — a "second-degree" reality, narrower but more striking.

While individual aspects of fashion photography have been covered in art literature and studies on fashion design, there is a lack of comprehensive research on this topic. The lack of a scientific and practical basis for the conscious functioning of fashion photography within the fashion system determines the relevance of the presented work.

The aim of the article is to analyse artistic and stylistic trends in contemporary fashion photography within the Ukrainian fashion system.

Results

In the modern era, when visual fashion content dominates over text content, the main means of communication between designer and their target audience is the visual image of fashion photography, which is formed using various techniques, methods, and effects. Fashion photography, which is available in all areas of culture, presents the latest design solutions, and forms taste and style through the broadcast of various trends. According to S. Bezklubenko (2010), the term "photography" (derived from the Greek word phos meaning light and graphe meaning to draw) has several variations of meanings: 1) the theory and methods of obtaining a visible image of objects on a photosensitive material; 2) a specific result of the process of photographing; 3) one of the forms of visual art based on the theory and methods of obtaining visible images of objects — fine-art photography (p. 212).

One of the few works on the development of photography in Ukraine is the 2014 edition of *The History of Ukrainian Photography of the 19th–21st Centuries*. The author of the publication, Oleksandr Trachun, was a design engineer and head of the experimental division for the production of new photographic equipment of the Kyiv factory Arsenal. He participated in and received awards at photo exhibitions and authored over 100 works on the history, theory, and practice of photography. Regarding the development of photography, in particular,

in Ukraine, the author writes: "Photography was invented by the Frenchman Louis J. M. Daguerre (1787–1851) in January 1839. This was reported in the same month by "Lviv newspaper", and in autumn, it gave a description of the daguerreotype process. In the summer of 1839, Lviv University professor Ya. Hloisner took the first photos, which he displayed in the window of a bookstore" (Trachun, 2014, p. 5).

O. Trachun (2014) divides the history of the development of photography in Ukraine into three periods: the first period is the pre-Soviet era, which saw its emergence and formation; the second period is the Soviet era, characterised by the dominance of socialist realism and a lag behind the global level; the third period is the years of independent Ukraine when it was time to make a mark in the world of photography.

According to O. Trachun, there are about 100 different genres and types of photography in modern fashion photography (autography, documentary, genre, industrial, interior, concert, etc.). The researcher associates the spread of fashion photography with the period of the 1880s and 1930s when advertising and magazine illustration became relevant. "The main goal of fashion photography was to create the illusion of attractiveness, to impose certain canons of taste (models, poses, clothing). Fashion photographs included elements of documentary, "new objectivity", and surrealism" (Trachun, 2014, p. 197).

It should be noted that the history of fashion photography is decisively heterogeneous; it is characterised by constant borrowing and is formed within the framework of other people's works. At the beginning of the 20th century, pictorialism dominated the first fashion images. Using colour retouching, Baron de Meyer and Edward Steichen work in the plane of two-dimensional fiction and decorativeness. Under the onslaught of the avant-garde, a trend inspired by the geometrisation of forms, a new dimension emerged in fashion photography. Optical manipulations by Maurice Tabard or Francois Kollar, or "sculptural compositions" on the subject of clothing by Man Ray, all led to the emergence of a new fashion space - geometric, sculptural, and, moreover, carnal. There is a transition from a coloured postcard to a structurally designed fashion photo, from the seen to the experienced and from the picturesque beginning to the plastic (Chuprina & Batrak, 2011, p. 5).

Fashion photography most fully represents fashion trends in a particular period. The concept of "fashion photography" can be interpreted in a broad context as a work of visual art that reflects the de-

velopment of fashion over time, as well as more narrowly — as a means of presenting clothing, footwear, accessories, and hairstyles in the format of runway shows, catalogues, lookbooks, campaigns, etc. In the last decade of the 21st century, Ukrainian photographers and designers have worked hard to make fashion shoots a form of their creative self-expression, as well as a meaningful response to the requests and needs of the fashion consumer audience.

The Village Ukraine, the city's online newspaper about cultural and social life in Kyiv, has become a unique platform for presenting the work of Ukrainian photographers (Pylypiuk, 2018). In particular, the newspaper featured works from the Instagram accounts of ten fashion photographers who became finalists of the This is the photo competition by LBK Production during Ukrainian Fashion Week. These are Oleksandra Serafymovych (known for shooting for fashion publications and collaborating with Ukrainian designers such as Flow The Label, Lake Studio, RCR Khomenko, Paris Fashion Weeks), Anna Brudna (who has worked with brands like Ksenia Schnaider, COVER Number ONE, Who is it?, DMDV, Nastasia Klimt; with Vogue, L'officiel, Design Scene, One Magazine, Vulkan, Sicky, Lovesome Magazine), Vova Klever (photographing for brands like LITKOVSKAYA, BRVKSI, TAGO brands; featured in Vogue, L'officiel, Paean Magazine), Borys Slobodianiuk (photographer for i-D and BLAST magazine), Zhenia Volkov (featured in Vogue, Purple Fashion Magazine, Calvert Journal; Ukrainian Erotic Photography), Yurii Kalichak (photographing for Harper's Bazaar and L'officiel), Yevhenii Kovalenko (street style photographer, collaborating with W Magazine), Danyl Kaistro ((photographing for Cosmopolitan, Dastish Fantastish, NADIA YURKIV, etc.), Endriu Hrei (photographer for the Ukrainian brand Chakshyn), Tetiana Osmanova (photographing for Flow The Label, Harper's Bazaar, Interview, MEOW Magazine). We will consider the main trends of Ukrainian fashion photography using several examples.

When Kyiv multi-brand concept space Apartment 13, launched its own online store at 16 Volodymyrska Street, a special campaign was shot. The owner of the online store, Diana Stavnitser, was the inspiring force and the author of the shooting concept. Photographer Ania Brudna and stylist Sonia Soltes also worked on the campaign. The shoot took place in Odesa in mid-August.

According to S. Soltes, the concept of the shoot was that "The Campaign for Apartment 13 turned out to be very romantic. It is a story about a strong woman who is in harmony with herself and the surrounding world, about freedom of self-expression

and self-acceptance. The heroine dissolves into a carefree moment, being in her house on the beach. The shots reveal the versatility of female nature. She can be tender and sensual, or she can be strong and even courageous" (*Apartment 13 zapustil*, 2020).

Figure 1 shows the models in Taller Marmo FW20/21 bohemian fringe dresses.

In the art of photography, at first glance, it may seem that it is inherently designed to stop movement rather than convey it. Regarding this image, it can be said that A. Brudna knows the subtleties of photographing moving objects — they convey the "effervescence" of life. The movement of women is supported by the rich colours of their clothing and the effect of hair and fringes fluttering in the wind. The natural background — the sky — conveys to the audience a special mood of calm, which is perceived as a contrast to the busy pace of life, which embodies the movement of women (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Photo: Ania Brudna for concept space Apartment 13. Odesa, 2020. Source: (*Apartment 13 zapustil*, 2020).

The revelation of the exclusivity of products largely depends on the surrounding objects, the atmosphere, and its interaction with the model's image. A type of shooting that combines the "fashion story" format and subject shooting was presented by designer Lilia Poustovit and photographer Vitalii Melnykov (Fig. 2). Drawing inspiration from the enchanting moments of life and continuing the theme of eternal values, the author immerses herself in travel memories, as if mentally sifting through decorative items brought from different parts of the world, and dreaming of new encounters with the world (*Like mother, like daughter*, 2021). The collection was photographed in the workshop of bouquets and decor, "Klovskiy sad," in Kyiv. Sources of inspiration — 18th-century French interior decor items — are harmoniously combined in this space with images of clothing models, emphasising the uniqueness of each

POUSTOVIT outfit. Therefore, the designer and photographer, with the main goal of promoting the collection, incorporated important factors that enhance the attractiveness of the products — the aesthetics of the surrounding space, the embodiment of dreams, and pleasant memories.



Fig. 2. Photo: Vitalii Melnykov for POUSTOVIT. Kyiv, 2021. Source: (*Like mother, like daughter*, 2021).

The search for an unconventional model representation in the photo space is demonstrated by Danil Kaistro (Danil Kaistro, n.d.) — Fig. 3. The complex dynamic lying position looks expressive on a plain blue background. At the same time, the photo fulfils its main goal — it showcases the top from the Ukrainian brand CHAKSHYN (tandem of Anton Yakshyn and Dmytro Chaiunata) and a skirt by Svetlana Bevza (BEVZA).

The photo presented in Fig. 4 is made in the genre of portrait photography. The model, showcasing a khaki trench coat, is seated in a profile view. It is evident that the lighting is set at a 45-degree angle because the light modelling is well conveyed — the face and body have a shape and volume. A neutral light blue background with a blue spot serves as a contrast for the compositional accent — a bright orange.



Fig. 3. Photo: Danil Kaistro for CHAKSHYN and BEVZA. Kyiv, 2023 Source: (Danil Kaistro, n.d.).



Fig. 4. Photo: Danil Kaistro for Zhenya Migovych. Kyiv, 2021. Source: (Zhenya Migovych by Danil Kaistro, 2020)

The author of the photographs of Maye Musk's new photo story is Ukrainian photographer Sasha Samsonova from Los Angeles; the shooting stylists were Anna Talyzina and Anna Khitrina (Annas Duo) (Shmitt, 2021). In the photo in Fig. 5, a well-known mature model is wearing a milk-coloured tunic and trousers from the spring-summer 2021 collection by Ukrainian designer Svitlana Bevza (Bevza). In the creation of this image, the effect of contrasting a model with blond hair and in light clothes to an artificial background is used. The background is rich and active in colour, with the effect of blurring watercolour strokes in a combination of red, orange, blue, and milky shades. The background lighting is much less than the model lighting.

The campaign of the COAT by Katya Silchenko spring 2023 collection (a Ukrainian prêt-à-porter brand of women's clothing, founded by Katya Silchenko in 2014) was photographed by fashion photographer Denis Manokha. The collection features silhouettes and a new interpretation of graphic patterns from the 1960s. The dynamics and geometric silhouettes in magenta, sunny yellow, and rich blue colours along with the printed mono-images of the collection create a contrasting balance between classic cut and boldness. At the same time, the minimalistic shapes of coats, square jackets, and the brand's traditional micro-shorts emphasise the aesthetics of the clean lines. "Creating this collection brought back my thirst for life and creative work, the search for new forms and combinations. I have a premonition of

our victory! Let there be spring!", — says K. Silchenko. "The print of the collection inspired me to the work of Piet Mondrian, who was the founder of abstract painting," says campaign photographer Denis Manokha (*Endorfinovyi buster*, 2023). The creative team created scenery to achieve the maximum visual effect.

In the process of shooting two or more models, uniform lighting plays an important role in ensuring that each participant is clearly perceived. Two models in motley black-and-white suits (Fig. 6) are presented in colour contrast with the red colour. In the composition, the object environment plays a crucial role — an artificial cubic shape, closed on the sides and open in front and back. The photo attracts attention primarily due to the "inverted" effect, which is quite unusual for perception.

In the challenging period of wartime for Ukraine, we observe fashion photographers turning to national and patriotic themes. Fashion photographer Dmytro Komisarenko, known for his cooperation with global brands and Ukrainian show business, became a co-organiser of the project aimed at showing what our ancestors looked like 100 years ago (Fig.7). The models were six Ukrainians who are now engaged in volunteering. Among them are military medic and veteran of the Anti-Terrorist Operation Oleksandra Zavalna and bandurist and Onuka band member Yevhen Yovenko. They show traditional Ukrainian clothing of the Rivne, Sumy, Vinnytsia, Kyiv, Poltava, and Zakarpattia regions of the late 19th to the early 20th century (Kushchenko, 2022).



Fig. 5. Photo: Sasha Samsonova for Bevza. Los Angeles, 2021. *Source:* (Shmitt, 2021).



Fig. 6. Photo: Denis Manokha for the COAT by Katya Silchenko – 2023. *Source:* (*Endorfinovyi buster*, 2023).



Fig. 7. Photo: Dmytro Komisarenko for the photo project on Ukrainian identity "Vilni". *Source:* (Kushchenko, 2022).



The author of the decorative processing of photos was the young artist Daniel Skrypnyk. "I really want to show that the emotional states that we are experiencing now, and the way we are fighting, are our trib-

ute to our ancestors, which is the strength of our nation. I wanted to convey extraordinary emotions when I think about how they created our identity. I feel that we need to transmit that powerful spirit and comple-

ment it with our own strength and the beauty of our souls. We will create art, and I am confident that we will overcome the darkness," — the artist said (*Vyshhyti vbrannia ta tradytsiini*, 2022).

In this context, artistic elements (images of Cossacks, sunflowers, and flowers) are used to create a symbolic or metaphorical connection between the image and the idea that the authors wanted to convey. The images of armed Cossacks, complementing the male photo, symbolise the spirit of struggle and freedom. The images of flowers and birds surrounding the woman emphasise her nature as a hostess and guardian of comfort and family well-being.

The graphic program Adobe Photoshop was used for decorative processing; a graphic tablet and other graphic editors can be used to create and insert artistic elements into the photo.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, it should be noted that fashion photography most fully represents fashion trends in a given period. The concept of "fashion photography" can be interpreted in a broad context as a work of visual art that reflects the development of fashion over time, as well as more narrowly — as a means of presenting clothing, footwear, accessories, and hairstyles in the format of runway shows, catalogues, lookbooks, campaigns, etc. Based on the study of the experiences of Ukrainian fashion photographers Ania Brudna, Vitalii Melnykov, Danil Kaistro, Sasha Samsonova, Denis Manokha, and Dmytro Komisarenko, the following trends can be identified in the genre of contemporary fashion photography:

- 1) striving for naturalness: shooting not in an equipped studio, but on the streets, in public places to demonstrate the movement of life and individuality;
- 2) applying the aesthetics of stylistic interior solutions and subject decor to enhance the expressiveness of the collection's products;
- 3) using three-dimensional object decorations to create the illusion of immersion in the atmosphere of another time;
- 4) moving away from static poses of the model in staged shooting, experiments with the plasticity of the model's figure.
- 5) combining a photographic image with decorative elements added to the photo using graphic editors.

Thus, the development of fashion photography takes place with the reflection of new standards in modern society, the formation of new demands, and the improvement of computer technologies. Despite the fact that the main purpose of using fashion photography is to present a design product and increase sales of fashionable clothing, this type of visual cre-

ativity is the genre of photographic art that captures the atmosphere of its time, demonstrates the characteristics and moods of an era, embodying cultural and aesthetic ideals of fashion.

The scientific novelty of the research consists in providing an analysis of the experience of Ukrainian photographers regarding the presentation of fashion clothing by means of fashion photography and identifying its genre trends. For the first time, the names of A. Brudna, B. Slobodianiuk, D. Kaistro, S. Samsonova, D. Manokha, D. Komisarenko are introduced into the scientific context.

The prospects for further research will involve the development of a typology of fashion photography and the identification of its artistic and technical aspects.

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Сучасна fashion-фотографія в Україні: тенденції розвитку

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Мета статті — проаналізувати художньо-образні та стильові тенденції розвитку сучасної fashion-фотографії в Україні на зразках, що презентують продукцію українських дизайнерів одягу. *Результати дослідження*. Представлено історичний ракурс розгляду fashion-фотографії, виділено її характерні особливості. З'ясовано, що в мистецтвознавчих дослідженнях фешн-фотографію розглядали у вузьких ракурсах, зокрема як засіб візуальної передачі моделей колекцій одягу, як засіб передавання того чи іншого семантичного змісту, як складник fashion-журналістики. Проаналізовано досвід українських фотографів — Ані Брудної, Віталія Мельникова, Даніла Каїстро, Саши Самсонової, Дениса Манохи, Дмитра Комісаренко щодо фотозйомок колекцій українських дизайнерів останніх років; виділено тенденції розвитку сучасної fashion-фотографії — прагнення до демонстрації «природності», конкретної миті життя та індивідуальності; застосування естетики стильових інтер'єрних рішень та предметного декору для посилення виразності виробів колекції; використання об'ємно-предметних декорацій для створення ілюзії занурення в атмосферу іншого часу; відхід від статичних поз моделі в постановочній зйомці, експерименти з пластикою фігури моделі; поєднання фотографічного зображення із декоративними елементами, доданими до фото за допомогою графічних програм. *Наукова новизна*. Вперше в мистецтвознавчому дослідженні представлено аналіз досвіду українських фотографів щодо презентації модного одягу засобами fashion-фотографії та виявлено її жанрові тенденції. До наукового обігу введено імена А. Брудної, Б. Слободянюка, Д. Каїстро, С. Самсонової, Д. Манохи, Д. Комісаренка. *Висновки*. На сучасному етапі розвитку моди fashion-фотографія посідає провідне місце серед засобів

презентації нових дизайнерських рішень. Незважаючи на те, що основною метою використання fashion-фотографії є презентація дизайн-продукту й збільшення продажів модного одягу, цей вид візуальної творчості фіксує атмосферу свого часу, демонструє ознаки й настрої епохи, втілюючи культурно-естетичні ідеали моди.

Ключові слова: fashion-фотографія; сучасний дизайн; тенденції розвитку; фото-образ; художні засоби та ефекти

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