

A Study on the Expressive Effects of Queen Elizabeth I's Robes in Cinema

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The purpose of this study is to analyze the expressive effects of Queen Elizabeth I's robes in cinema and also to present two examples of Queen Elizabeth I's robes designed and made based on these expressive effects to induce multifaceted visual effect endowed with intrigue and visual complacency.

To this end, this study will first examine Queen Elizabeth I's life and robes, then on the basis of these knowledges, analyze visual definers and viewing priorities of Queen Elizabeth I's robes in five movies. Thereinafter, these robes will be classified based upon Delong(1998)'s four expressive effects: excitement, calmness, strength and delicacy. Finally, this study will demonstrate calmness and delicacy among four expressive effects through two robes made for the purpose.

The result of classification of Queen Elizabeth I's robes in the movies, Elizabeth R, The Virgin Queen, Orlando, Shakespeare in Love, and Elizabeth according to Delong's four expressive effects are as follows;

Excitement is exhibited in several simple and contrasting shapes, and discontinuous, asymmetrical, organic, diagonal, continuous X shaped lines. It is also manifested in intense primary colors or contrast between white chemise or ruffs and dark robes. Smooth surface with continuous edges made by monochrome robes or interrupted edges made by robes filled with embroideries or patterns are also examples of this expressive effect. The viewing priorities were mostly on open form, but showed closed form when warm primary colors were used. It was also shown in part-to-whole, figure-ground separation, rounded, and determinate or indeterminate surfaces. These characteristics matches those of the expressive effect, excitement, described in Delong's study. These visual definers and viewing priorities combined together, create certain moods and images in the character played by the actresses in the movies aforementioned, inducing excitement among the audiences.

Calmness is demonstrated in many shapes of different sizes with clear hierarchy or little contrast, continuous line related to the body axis, muted, neutrals, cool colors, uninterrupted edges that consist of monochrome surfaces and smooth surfaces of velvet and silk with subtle background of neutral colors. The viewing priorities were closed form, whole-to-part, figure-ground integration, rounded, and determinate. These elements parallel calmness analysed in Delong's study. The calmness helps conveyance of the actresses' emotions and improves audiences' perception of costumes, stimulating their power of psychological association.

Strength is represented in large shapes that accentuate the silhouette of the robes, and straight, implied, diagonal, horizontal lines that are common among the Queen's robes. To emphasize this effect, distinctively

contrasting colors and smooth monochromic surfaces are combined with surfaces adorned in elaborate jewels and embroideries. The viewing priorities are placed on closed form, whole-to-part, figure-ground separation, and determinate surface. Although it is hard to appear flat in a three-dimensional silhouette such as the Renaissance robe, monochrome surfaces in combination with robes filled with patterns subdue gathers and drapes, whereby costumes assumes flat appearances. The communication between actresses and audiences can be improved upon, using this particular expressive effects examined in Delong's study.

Delicacy is portrayed in light colors, lustrous fabrics, lace, chiffon and elaborate ornaments in soft edges and small rounding shapes. Curved, discontinuous, lightweight lines and clear warm colors or tints of warm colors are used to this effect. It can also be found in jacquard, lace, lubricant fabrics and jewels, chiffon, appliqué, embroidery blended together creating subtle variations on the surfaces with interrupted edges. The viewing priorities are focused on open form, part-to-whole, figure-ground integration, rounded, and indeterminate surfaces. This expressive effect helps audiences comprehend characters' emotions.

Queen Elizabeth's robes presented in this study are designed and made based on the premises of two of the expressive effects found above: calmness and delicacy. The robe that represents calmness has tight navy color bodice in corset style with epaulettes attached to it, white lace blouse with ruff and also sleeves with ruffle and puff at the wrist, and bell-shaped skirt made of navy velvet. The other, portraying delicacy, focuses on the graceful image of the Queen, and has décolleté bodice with shoulder lapels and pleats ruffle at the waist made of gold rose embroidered ivory jacquard, crystal beading, and also mameluke sleeves and skirt in light, ivory colored fabric.

After analyzing the expressive effects of robes in five Queen Elizabeth I's movies, one can conclude excitement, calmness, strength, and delicacy can be found according to the flow of the story. Since this analysis focuses mainly on one particular person during one particular period of time, there was a fundamental silhouette prevalent among the Queen's robes which then can be classified into different forms. Moreover, Queen's character in itself embodies authority and grace which, in turn, facilitates the presentation of the four expressive effects along the story line. In conclusion, thorough historical research on the character and the period, in addition to analysis of the visual definer and viewing priorities, is imperative when designing a period costume.