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# MEANS OF FORMING AN AESTHETIC IMPRESSION IN CLOTHING COLLECTIONS USING TRADITIONAL CHINESE ELEMENTS

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**Abstract.** *The purpose* of the article is to investigate the aesthetic expression of contemporary fashion design through the lens of traditional Chinese clothing culture, focusing on how designers apply translation strategies to integrate cultural elements within diverse design practices.

**Methodology.** A dual-theoretical framework was employed, combining Kivy's theory of emotive aesthetics with Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience. The research adopted image analysis and case study methods, examining two contrasting collections: NE·TIGER SS 2015, representing traditional ceremonial aesthetics, and Vivienne Tam FW 2024, representing contested aesthetics in a cross-cultural context.

**Results.** The findings reveal that fashion brand NE·TIGER constructs a solemn and coherent aesthetic through structural representation, symmetrical composition, and ritual symbolism, evoking stable and harmonious emotional pathways. In contrast, fashion brand Vivienne Tam employs symbolic collage, cultural dislocation, and visual hybridity to provoke emotional tension, encouraging open-ended interpretation and reflective engagement. Differences were identified in colour strategies, material usage, silhouette construction, and symbolic integration, reflecting divergent aesthetic mechanisms and expressive logics.

**Scientific novelty.** The study develops a dual-dimensional analytical model, the Emotional Aesthetic Pathway and the Aesthetic Experience Pathway, to systematically evaluate how traditional cultural resources are translated into contemporary fashion design. This model offers a theoretical tool for examining the interplay between emotional mechanisms, visual semantics, and cultural narratives in fashion.

**Practical relevance.** The research provides structured guidance for designers seeking to incorporate traditional cultural heritage into modern fashion aesthetics, highlighting strategies for balancing cultural continuity with innovative expression. These insights may inform both design practice and fashion education, fostering deeper emotional resonance and cultural identity in contemporary fashion.

**Keywords:** fashion design, emotive aesthetics, aesthetic experience, Chinese culture, national costume, fashion, design aesthetics, clothing collection, brand, designer, fashion trends.

## INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary fashion industry, the adoption of traditional cultural elements has evolved beyond the scope of mere stylistic

borrowing or decorative revivalism. It is becoming increasingly evident that these elements are becoming vital conduits for the evocation of emotional experience and the construction of

visual language. As cultural diversity and globalisation advance, a growing number of designers have actively re-coded traditional symbols, transforming them into expressive design languages imbued with deeper cultural meanings and emotional resonance. In the visual transformation of Chinese traditional clothing culture, aesthetic expression has shifted towards a composite path of perceptual, emotive, and Aesthetic Experience Pathway, extending far beyond superficial ornamentation to trigger profound aesthetic resonance [8].

### ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

Recent studies have revealed that the re-interpretation of traditional Chinese elements in design primarily focuses on pattern structure, material expression, cultural imagery, and psychological perception. In their 2024 study, Lin et al. [7] investigated the expressive potential of distinctive embroidery techniques in Gan embroidery, such as flat stitch, long-short stitch, and random stitch, as applied to modern Chinese-style wool garments. The study emphasised these techniques' ability to enhance visual layering and cultural identification in such garments. Feng et al. [2] examined the integration of colour and composition from traditional New Year paintings into fashion, thereby highlighting their significance in brand identity and visual memory. Song et al. [11] proposed that the utilisation of traditional Chinese elements generally adheres to three strategies: symbolic reproduction, partial reconstruction, and cross-cultural integration. However, they also noted that advancements in silhouette design remain underdeveloped. In addition, Wang and Xun [13] have proposed that the fusion of the colour aesthetics and structural logic of traditional clothing into modern design enhances both artistic value and the wearer's sense of cultural identity.

At a more profound level, scholars have begun incorporating philosophical aesthetics into fashion design, imbuing creations with emotional tension and spiritual imagery. Zhao [19] utilised Daoist philosophy to analyse the role of concepts such as "nothingness", "simplicity" and "naturalness" in design, identifying a pathway characterised by minimal form, ethereal imagery and spiritual implication. Pan [17] examined how natural materials, texture, and Eastern philosophical thinking inform contemporary Chinese-style clothing from the perspective of eco-aesthetics, proposing that ecological ethics and cultural stance have become new focal points in design aesthetics. These studies reveal how traditional philosophical ideas are reinterpreted as mechanisms of perception and

emotional engagement in contemporary design contexts. Concurrently, the resurgence of local culture in the context of globalisation has precipitated more dynamic representations of traditional elements within the fashion system. Wang [14] posited that Guochao, as a visual cultural phenomenon emerging from Chinese youth culture, functions as a fashion trajectory for the expression of national identity. He elucidated that "Guo" signifies cultural revival and modern expression of tradition, while "chao" incorporates Western street style and cross-cultural imagery. Guo and Xiao [3] conducted a comparative case study of Eastern and Western fashion design in order to examine the cultural reconstruction of Chinese style in the post-pandemic era. The emphasis was placed on the re-imagining of traditional symbols, which should be considered not only in terms of their visual representation, but also in regard to their capacity to evoke emotion and the logic of experiential cultural pathways.

Despite the extensive literature on the visual representation and cultural implications of traditional Chinese clothing elements, there remains a paucity of theoretical studies grounded in specific fashion collections that explore their mechanisms of emotional evocation and aesthetic experience. In particular, there is a paucity of works that have systematically examined the design language, cultural symbols and emotional pathways within a cohesive aesthetic framework.

### PURPOSE

The present study seeks to address this research gap by applying Kivy's theory of emotive aesthetics and Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience, with the aim of examining how fashion designers construct emotionally and culturally resonant beauty through visual language, formal structure, and symbolic expression.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study is founded on Kivy's theory of emotional aesthetics and Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience, establishing two distinct analytical dimensions: the Emotional Aesthetic Pathway and the Aesthetic Experience Pathway. This systematic analysis of two fashion collections by designers with contrasting styles explores how the beauty of traditional Chinese clothing culture is constructed, translated, and experienced in contemporary fashion design.

Kivy's theory posits that works of art, particularly in the domains of visual art and music, possess inherent structures that elicit emotional responses. The perception of beauty is not solely

derived from formal comprehension; it is also shaped by structured emotional experiences formed by the viewer when engaging with the artwork [5]. In the context of fashion design, the present study distils the theory into three analytical layers: (1) Perceptual Configuration, referring to the immediate emotional responses evoked by elements such as colour, silhouette, motif, and material; (2) Affective Linkage, denoting the emotional connections established by the viewer through cultural memory and narrative context; and (3) Structured Affective Experience, which captures the sustained emotional resonance and aesthetic judgement formed throughout the viewing process. This model facilitates an analysis of how visual form structurally evokes emotional responses in fashion.

In *Art as Experience*, John Dewey [1] posits that aesthetic experience is fundamentally a continuum of lived experience rather than an isolated perceptual act. The emphasis placed on the significance of art is redirected towards the interaction between the viewer and the artwork, as opposed to the inherent qualities of the object itself. The present study proposes an Aesthetic Experience Pathway for fashion design, based on Dewey's theoretical framework and adapted to the specific requirements of the field. The model comprises three distinct phases: (1) Sensory Entry, whereby the viewer's attention is captured by formal elements, initiating an aesthetic state; (2) Contextual Engagement, in which emotional responses develop and interact dynamically with the rhythm of the work; and (3) Cognitive Integration, whereby the viewer constructs meaning and makes aesthetic judgements informed by personal cultural background and lived experience. This pathway illustrates the multi-dimensional mechanism through which visual perception transitions into cultural understanding in fashion design.

The case studies selected for this research are the NE·TIGER SS 2015 collection and the Vivienne Tam FW 2024 collection. The former draws upon traditional Chinese garment structures and ceremonial sensibilities, expressing traditional beauty through structural form and emotional resonance. The latter employs a combination of Eastern and Western visual symbols to create an aesthetic characterised by tension and controversy, engaging with cultural conflicts and affective interaction within a globalised context. The aim is to compare these two collections across the Emotional Aesthetic Pathway and the Aesthetic Experience Pathway, in order to reveal how different cultural strategies shape aesthetic design, translation, and viewer reception. This

will offer both theoretical insight and practical implications for understanding the role of traditional Chinese clothing culture in contemporary fashion design.

### **Case Study I: Traditional Aesthetics – NE·TIGER**

**Brand Background and Design Characteristics.** NE·TIGER is a fashion brand that was founded by Zhang Zhifeng. The brand is dedicated to the contemporary reinterpretation of traditional Chinese clothing culture. The brand's haute couture designs are deeply rooted in the extensive heritage of Chinese civilisation, embracing the philosophy of ethnic integration. The brand draws inspiration from the dress cultures of over fifty ethnic groups, including Han, Tibetan, Miao, Dai, Yi, and Naxi, creating a harmonious synthesis of diverse aesthetic traditions. Concurrently, it employs Western three-dimensional tailoring techniques to accentuate and convey the inherent elegance and symbolic significance of traditional Chinese attire. The couture creations of NE·TIGER are characterised by five defining attributes: iconicity, classicism, ethnicity, inclusivity, and modernity. The aforementioned elements are complemented by five core features: ritual essence, brocade as fabric, embroidery as technique, national colour as foundation, and couture as emblem. Collectively, these elements serve to symbolically consolidate the millennia-long tradition of Chinese ceremonial dress, thereby establishing a unique sartorial identity for contemporary China [18]. Each NE·TIGER garment embodies the quintessence of Chinese civilisation, signifying a cultural renaissance that amalgamates traditional roots with contemporary creativity. With regard to design language, NE·TIGER demonstrates particular aptitude in deriving inspiration from historical dynasties such as the Han, Tang, Song, and Ming. The collection under scrutiny extracts archetypal structural elements, including but not limited to cross-collar closures, stand-up collars, frog fastenings, shawls and wide sleeves. These elements are then integrated with contemporary silhouettes, resulting in a fashion system that harmonises classical spirit with a contemporary perspective [16].

The SS 2015 collection represents a continuation of the brand's signature aesthetic of ceremonial elegance. The garment's cutting techniques emphasise fluid lines and spatial construction, thereby highlighting the wearer's ritualistic posture. In terms of materiality, the garments employ haute couture craftsmanship to showcase diverse textures, including silk, velvet, denim, jacquard, embroidery, and sequins. The visual language of the exhibition is

characterised by motifs such as auspicious patterns, dragon imagery, auspicious script symbols, traditional fastenings, and colour palettes that draw upon Chinese aesthetics.

### **Kivy's Theory of Emotive Aesthetics – Emotional Aesthetic Pathway**

**Configuration of perception.** The NE·TIGER SS 2015 collection adopts visual ceremoniousness as the core driver of its perceptual system. The colour strategy employed is characterised by a high degree of structural consistency, with red, gold, and navy blue features present throughout the collection. In traditional Chinese ritual culture, these colours have been assigned specific symbolic meanings, including celebration, nobility, and solemnity [15]. As demonstrated in Figures 1a and 1b, the hues are positioned symmetrically along central axes and key garment sections. This establishes a visual order that is both decorative and symbolic. The compositional logic underpinning the work is characterised by an emphasis on symmetry, the presence of prominent focal points, and enclosed boundaries. Common features such as straight robe silhouettes and proportional shoulder-sleeve designs create a stabilised composition, reinforcing an initial sense of visual intensity in the viewer. The interplay of texture and sheen exhibits a dynamic stillness, with delicate embroidery and traditional craft techniques enriching the fabric's dimensionality. The integration of stage lighting and model movement gives rise to subtle glimmers, thereby extending the temporal dimension of visual perception and guide the audience into a contemplative aesthetic state reminiscent of religious or ceremonial experiences.

**Affective Linkage.** The formal language of this collection exhibits a close alignment with cultural semantics, yet this alignment is not characterised by rigidity or nostalgia. Instead, it establishes an affective linkage between visual symbols and emotional resonance through re-configuration, exaggeration, and symbolism. As demonstrated in Figure 1a, large-scale multi-coloured floral medallions and scrolling motifs are embroidered across the chest and shoulders, complemented by metallic threadwork and symmetrical composition. This decorative strategy not only showcases the visual appeal of traditional patterns considered auspicious in cultural contexts, but also generates a solemn yet supple aesthetic tension through the layering of colour and lustre. The colour evokes strong emotional responses, particularly in relation to ceremony and authority. The structured silhouette of the upper garment, paired with stiff embroidered fabric, constructs an inviolable visual

order, which in turn elicits feelings of reverence and inner solemnity in the viewer. This affective linkage transcends simple cultural recognition, offering instead a re-experienced form of cultural memory via visual translation—establishing a psychological pathway encompassing visual grandeur, cultural connotation, and emotional resonance.

**Structured Affective Experience.** In Kivy's theory of emotive aesthetics, aesthetic experience is not merely the result of instantaneous emotional triggers; it is also shaped by the internal formal and rhythmic structure of the artwork. The NE·TIGER SS 2015 collection has been devised to elicit a progression of emotion in the observer, from awe to contemplation, through the utilisation of a visual logic of solemnity, harmony, and stillness. As demonstrated in Figure 1c, the red-and-gold phoenix-feather gown employs high-saturation colours, symmetrically unfolding silhouettes, and densely embroidered motifs to generate a strong sense of ceremonial spectacle. The phoenix-feather motifs extend outward from the shoulders, resembling ritual garments worn in ancestral ceremonies. These motifs symbolise sacred authority and evoke the viewer's emotional response towards traditional ritual values and cultural gravitas. As illustrated in Figure 1d, the combination of a pink embroidered top with a lightweight tulle skirt results in a shift in the emotional register. This is characterised by a softening of the colour palette, the transition of materials from a rigid structure to a flowing form, and the transformation of the silhouette from a rigid structure to a flowing form. The diminished visual weight facilitates emotional release, guiding the viewer from the gravity of ritual into a more intimate and tender realm of cultural imagination, evoking resonant emotional tones. The final look, a black ensemble with blue lotus motif (Fig. 1e), concludes the emotional rhythm with minimalist restraint. The contrast between the deep black fabric and the cool-toned lotus pattern creates a tranquil tension. Ornamentation is reduced to its bare minimum, and the model's movement slows accordingly, presenting a mood of stillness and solemnity. The visual information is minimalist in nature, thereby shifting the viewer's focus from external form to internal perception, thus initiating a profound cultural gaze and spiritual reverberation. This visual structure is not merely an accumulation of decorative elements, but rather a choreographed evolution of form that orchestrates emotional guidance and integration. Through the rhythmic sequence of reverence, gentleness, and introspection, the audience is led through an aesthetic journey from



perception to affect, and ultimately to inner cultural resonance. This progression culminates in a renewed recognition of and emotional affiliation with the aesthetic spirit of Chinese tradition.

### **Dewey's Theory of Aesthetic Experience – Experiential Engagement Pathway**

**Sensory Entry.** According to Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience, the process commences when specific elements within a given

context capture the viewer's attention, thereby initiating a meaningful perceptual experience. In NE·TIGER's SS 2015 collection, cultural symbols embedded in colour, structure, and material act as key stimuli for aesthetic attention. The red ceremonial robe (Fig. 1c), with its symmetrical composition and dense motifs, instantly activates collective cultural memory associated with Chinese formal and court dress. This symbolic structure, which is rooted in traditional visual



*Fig. 1. NE·TIGER SS 2015 Collection*

Source: <https://www.dailyfashion.cn/search?keyword=NE%20TIGER>

paradigms, evokes a sense of cultural familiarity in the viewer. Furthermore, the embroidery-based, handcrafted textures in Figure 1h elicit affective responses through tactile imagination, thereby extending the aesthetic experience beyond the visual domain to encompass bodily perception and cultural recollection [4]. This sense of immersion, derived from cultural familiarity, exemplifies Dewey's notion of entry, whereby viewers locate themselves within recognisable cultural cues and begin the process of constructing aesthetic meaning.

**Contextual Engagement.** The enhancement of aesthetic experience is derived from the interactive context between the viewer and the work. Instead of remaining passive observers, viewers are drawn into a cultural space where figuration and symbolism coexist, allowing emotions and meanings to intertwine. As illustrated in Figure 1g, the voluminous silhouette and downward-extending skirt structure create a visual effect of gravity, while the model's deliberate walking pace and spotlight-centred illumination create a striking contrast with a completely darkened backdrop. This configuration produces a spatial atmosphere that is characterised by its near-ritualistic nature. Such treatment disrupts the quotidian visual rhythm, compelling the audience to observe in a more focused and meditative manner, thereby achieving a deeper level of aesthetic involvement. The gold-threaded auspicious clouds, water waves, and peony motifs on the garment are rich in symbolic meaning and starkly contrasted with the black background, evoking a sense of solemnity and reverence. At this stage, the viewer is no longer merely observing fashion but engaging in a complex cultural scenario involving traditional order, spiritual belief, and ritual symbolism. The phenomenon of emotional resonance is said to emerge from the interplay between visual guidance and internal structure, thereby completing the transition from passive perception to active emotional engagement. This dynamic interaction reflects the fundamental principle of Dewey's philosophy that aesthetic experience is formed through ongoing contextual interplay.

**Cognitive Integration.** The design works under consideration foster introspective aesthetic atmospheres through formal convergence and rhythmic coherence. NE-TIGER's collection employs minimalistic silhouettes and restrained ornamentation to guide the viewer from sensory perception to cultural understanding. The pink standing-collar ensemble (Fig. 1i), with its gentle tones and subdued structure, evokes an atmosphere of quiet reflection. Traditional elements, such as overlapping collars and embroidery,

are rendered in a simplified form to elicit profound associations with ritual, temperament and cultural identity. The black-and-gold fishtail qipao (Fig. 1g) invites multi-layered reflections on traditional identity and historical values through its symbolic patterns and dignified silhouette. The red phoenix-embroidered cape gown (Fig. 1c) constructs a solemn atmosphere of ceremonial dignity, transcending the confines of decorative function in order to elicit emotional responses that are tied to collective memory and cultural belonging. The designs under scrutiny here employ rhythmic control and symbolic language to complete the aesthetic journey from perception to cognition, and from visual comprehension to value judgement. This process serves to illustrate Dewey's mechanism of cognitive integration, thereby highlighting the cultural depth inherent in the beauty of design.

### **Case Study II: Contested Aesthetics – Vivienne Tam**

**Brand Background and Design Characteristics.** Vivienne Tam is a designer of Chinese origin who is active on the international fashion stage. Since the establishment of her eponymous label in New York during the 1990s, she has gained widespread attention for her design philosophy, which involves the fusion of traditional Chinese culture with contemporary Western trends. The artist's design language is characterised by a consistent focus on the hybridity of East and West, visually emphasising the reassembly, deconstruction, and recontextualisation of cultural symbols. Her collections are often interpreted as visual translations within cross-cultural dialogue [20]. Her oeuvre is distinguished by her adeptness at integrating Chinese motifs, embroidery, and symbolic elements into modern silhouettes and fashion structures, thereby creating a highly recognisable aesthetic of cultural hybridity. The brand eschews the pursuit of nostalgic replication of traditional styles, instead focusing on the trans-contextual reconstruction of cultural elements in its contemporary expressions. Tam employs a range of materials, including silk, organza, digital prints, embroidered sequins and high-tech textiles, in order to create and express cultural imagery. These combinations infuse Eastern iconography with a sense of contemporary urbanity and avant-garde sophistication [12]. Her collections are regularly showcased in major fashion capitals such as New York, Paris and Shanghai, appealing to two distinct but significant audiences. Firstly, she appeals to East Asian audiences concerned with cultural identity, and secondly, to international fashion consumers intrigued by Eastern aesthetics.

In the Autumn/Winter 2024 collection, Tam adopts "love" as the central theme, exploring cross-cultural intimacy and the emotional aesthetics of the East. The series combines Chinese garment features, including standing collars, asymmetrical lapels, shawls, and qipao-inspired cuts, with the fluidity, exposure, and body-conscious design of Western eveningwear, thereby creating a visually dynamic language. The colour palette is characterised by the use of Chinese red, purplish-red, inky black, and metallic shades, which are complemented by expansive dragon motifs, floral-and-bird patterns, and entwined vine designs. These are enhanced through digital printing and embroidery techniques that amplify surface texture, constructing a visual strategy characterised by symbolic hybridity, structural collage, and cultural reconciliation.

### **Kivy's Theory of Emotive Aesthetics – Emotional Aesthetic Pathway**

**Perceptual Configuration.** The visual language of colour, material, silhouette and motif collectively establishes the perceptual foundation of the emotional aesthetic pathway. These elements are theorised to elicit initial sensory responses and establish emotional anticipation [10]. As illustrated in Figure 2a, the densely sequinned materials create a fluid sheen, while the enveloping cape silhouette expresses a psychological tension between desire and defence. Fig. 2b employs gradient tones and blurred dragon motifs to construct a visual atmosphere of uncertainty. The employment of light, translucent fabrics has been demonstrated to evoke sensations of floating and fragility, thereby eliciting emotions of tenderness and dreamlike softness. As illustrated in Figure 2c, the integration of red tights within a unibody shoe structure serves to elicit a heightened emotional response through the utilisation of high-saturation colour, thereby evoking notions of desire and peril. This aesthetic choice engenders a state of visual tension that is juxtaposed against the primary attire. The collection as a whole establishes a polysemous emotional language through textile texture, chromatic temperature, and symbolic silhouette. This configuration establishes a stable yet rich perceptual entry point, laying the foundation for deeper affective engagement and cohesive aesthetic integration.

**Affective Linkage.** Vivienne Tam has been instrumental in establishing a cross-cultural emotional channel by embedding traditional Chinese symbols into Western silhouettes, thereby provoking emotional resonance within layered cultural tensions. As illustrated in Figure 2d, grey-black dragon motifs are extensively printed

over a contemporary ensemble, thereby intensifying emotional fluctuations between authority and intimacy. The visual treatment of the motif is softened, transforming it from an imperial symbol into a cultural mnemonic trigger. As illustrated in Figure 2e, the incorporation of traditional dudou (bellybands) through the use of red embroidered patches, in conjunction with qipao-inspired tailoring, serves to establish a dynamic interplay between the culturally encoded principles of bodily modesty and contemporary expressions of sensuality. This prompts introspection regarding female identity and self-awareness. The designs under scrutiny in this study generate nonlinear and open-ended emotional pathways through the displacement and reconstruction of symbols. This process enables viewers to oscillate between shyness and expression, tradition and provocation. In doing so, they engage in emotional responses and reflections across multiple cultural contexts.

### **Structured Affective Experience.**

Tam's designs construct a stable yet multifaceted emotional experience through the synergy of formal composition and cultural semantics. As illustrated in Figure 2f, the black overcoat incorporates Chinese knotting, floral branches, and antique imagery into embroidered patchwork, thereby organising a visual narrative. The broad-shouldered, long-bodied silhouette, coupled with heavy fabrics, creates an atmosphere of safety and introspection. At this stage, the viewer's experience evolves from symbolic recognition to a cognitive resonance with cultural memory and contemporary articulation embedded within the structure itself. As illustrated in Figure 2g, the dragon-patterned sheer dress juxtaposes sacred dragon imagery with ethereal fabrics, thereby intensifying the intersection of mystique and femininity. The interplay of semi-transparency, chromatic tension, and symbolic pattern leads the viewer from intuitive perception to deeper reflection on the strategy of softened symbolism. In this paradigm, emotion is no longer perceived as fragmented or instantaneous; rather, it is consciously orchestrated, choreographed, and embedded in cultural context, thereby forming an aesthetic experience that is endowed with both cognitive depth and emotional continuity.

The structured affective experience presented in this collection evinces a high degree of design intentionality and contextual awareness. The phenomenon of emotional generation is not an incidental outcome; rather, it is the result of a coordinated interplay between visual rhythm, semantic system, and cultural logic. This approach guides the viewer towards a stable and



reflective aesthetic judgement, thereby extending the expressive capacity of fashion design with regard to both emotional articulation and cultural communication.

### **Dewey's Theory of Aesthetic Experience – Aesthetic Experience Pathway**

**Sensory Entry.** In her FW2024 collection, Vivienne Tam has succeeded in establishing a direct and tension-filled sensory connection between the viewer and the garments. This is

achieved through the integration of colour, motifs and materials. As illustrated in Figure 2h, the vivid red colour of the phoenix feather mini dress is immediately striking. The phoenix wings, which are depicted as rising and flame-like, are intricately detailed, and are set against a three-dimensional feather collar, which serves to reinforce the dynamic visual impact of the piece. The incorporation of black lace edges serves to create a contrasting detail, thereby achieving



Fig. 2. Vivienne Tam FW 2024 Collection

Source: <https://nowfashion.com/acne-studios-ready-to-wear-fall-winter-2024-paris-2/>



an equilibrium between intensity and refinement. As illustrated in Figure 2c, the red dragon gauze dress showcases a blend of translucent nude-toned fabric and intricate dragon motifs, meticulously crafted to resemble fluid lines that grace the model's form, gently blending into the skin and evoking a sense of ethereal allure. The floating texture of the material serves to guide the viewer's gaze, thereby stimulating a deep engagement with bodily boundaries and Eastern symbolism. By contrasting dominant red, black, and nude hues, mixing figurative and abstract motifs, and layering materials like feathers and gauze, the collection constructs a powerful and emotionally charged perceptual entry point. This initial phase of experience is indicative of Dewey's theoretical standpoint, in which perception is not merely a passive reception of form, but rather the emotional and interpretive prelude to meaning-making.

**Contextual Engagement.** Dewey emphasises that contextual engagement involves more than physical observation; it requires immersive emotional, cultural, and perceptual participation (Dewey, 1934). As illustrated in Figure 4b, the red dragon gauze gown employs layered transparency and prominent dragon imagery to create an ambiguous cultural atmosphere. Initially, viewers are drawn to the floating fabric, but as they gaze, they gradually become aware of the embedded Eastern symbols. The dragon, a symbol of power in Chinese culture, oscillates between concealment and revelation, thereby evoking associations with tradition, identity, and feminine strength. This strategy of blurred boundaries encourages the viewer to move from intuition to cultural reflection and emotional construction. As illustrated in Figure 4a, the ensemble in question comprises a black sequin cape, which, through its combination of dramatic materiality and structural boldness, aims to provoke a different mode of engagement. The wide, cape-like silhouette is evocative of the ceremonial formality of Chinese robes, while the all-over sequins suggest a modern, night-life aesthetic. The juxtaposition of red and black accessories serves to heighten the psychological tension between reverence and provocation, thereby prompting oscillating emotional responses. Rather than conveying singular emotions, these designs utilise multilayered cultural codes and symbolic displacements to guide the viewer through dynamic interaction among perception, interpretation, and contemplation. Tam's garments construct a multidimensional field of interaction, requiring the audience to mobilise cultural memory and emotional imagination, aligning with Dewey's principle that

aesthetic experience emerges through sustained environmental engagement.

**Cognitive Integration.** The completion of aesthetic experience is characterised by an internal sense of unity across form, emotion, and culture[6]. This integration is not a linear endpoint, but rather the cognitive and emotional order formed within layers of sensory input. In Vivienne Tam's "Love" collection, the artist has created an open, pluralistic aesthetic space through the use of symbolic reconstruction and material collage. As illustrated in Figure 7b, the subject's long brown coat appears serene on the surface, yet upon closer inspection, it reveals hidden dragon motifs, thereby establishing a symbolic relationship between outer restraint and inner cultural significance. As illustrated in Figure 4a, the black sequin cape, with its dense shimmer and firm silhouette, serves to heighten bodily awareness, thereby evoking sensations of oppression and alienation. Conversely, Figure 6b portrays a translucent gauze gown embellished with prominent Eastern totems, evoking a sense of lightness and fluidity that subverts the conventional boundaries of fashion. These works do not dictate a fixed interpretive path; instead, they foster lateral relationships among motifs, materials, and structure, prompting viewers to reorganise semantic systems and construct personalised aesthetic orders. Through the utilisation of visual leaps and cultural decoding, the observer undergoes a process of self-directed synthesis. Dewey's concept of integration signifies the fulfilment of experience, an outcome contingent not solely on the structural organisation of the artwork but also on the active engagement and reflection of the audience. Each viewing becomes a co-creative moment of cultural understanding and emotional generation, with pathways shaped by individual experience, marked by openness and uniqueness.

In the analysis of the NE-TIGER SS 2015 collection and Vivienne Tam's FW 2024 collection, both demonstrate a profound appropriation and reconstruction of traditional Chinese cultural symbols. However, under the dual aesthetic dimensions of Kivy and Dewey, their design languages, aesthetic pathways, and emotional mechanisms reveal distinct divergences and underlying tensions.

**Differences in Perception-Oriented Visual Style Construction.** From the perspective of Perceptual Configuration as outlined by Kivy, NE-TIGER constructs visual order with a high degree of consistency, extending symmetrical layouts, ceremonial structures, and colour logic to emphasise stability, solemnity, and tranquillity within the form. The silhouettes are in

adherence to classical order, the colour transitions appear natural, and the motifs are symmetrically arranged, thus forming a visual field imbued with ritualistic emotional resonance. In contrast, Vivienne Tam's designs exhibit a greater degree of visual fragmentation and semantic dislocation. Her artistic oeuvre employs asymmetrical patterns, heterogeneous fabric collage, and structural hybridity to create complex visual contexts that emphasise diversity and cross-cultural visual strategies. While NE·TIGER focuses on coherence and harmony, Vivienne Tam generates visual tension through juxtaposition and fragmentation, articulating a design language of order versus anti-order.

#### **Tensional Differences in Emotional Association and Aesthetic Engagement.**

Regarding affective resonance, NE·TIGER evokes a low-tension aesthetic grounded in Eastern serenity. As viewers experience solemnity, stillness, and immersion through symmetrical structures and harmonious colour palettes, emotions are gradually elicited. The aesthetic logic of the work emphasises restrained emotional expression, guiding the viewer towards a psychological reunion with tradition. In contrast, Vivienne Tam employs a high-tension aesthetic mechanism. When confronted with the incongruities and inconsistencies in patterns, colours, and textual symbols, the viewer undergoes a process that is more akin to a disturbance, translation, and re-interpretation. Her designs deliberately incorporate visual disorder and polysemy, prompting the viewer to engage in a reconstruction of meaning. This approach disrupts the stable comfort associated with traditional beauty, forming new emotional pathways grounded in reflections on cultural hybridity.

#### **Integrative Approaches to Experiential Structure and Aesthetic Fulfilment.**

According to Dewey's aesthetic theory, NE·TIGER's collection presents a unified and enclosed experiential structure. The series is characterised by a coherent cultural timeline, constructed through consideration of form and tone, embellishment and pattern. Through this, the viewer is enabled to reaffirm notions of tradition and harmony through stable emotional progression. Conversely, Vivienne Tam employs open-ended structures, thereby challenging the viewer to actively engage in the process of cognitive integration through the interplay of text, imagery, language and material. This collaborative fulfilment is emblematic of Dewey's notion of reconstructive aesthetic experience, in which the value lies not in the presented content itself, but in the viewer's psychological transformation through interactive engagement.

#### **Essential Differences in Aesthetic Strategies and Cultural Stance.**

When considered in deeper detail, NE·TIGER and Vivienne Tam represent divergent design approaches. The former is centred on the faithful inheritance of traditional ceremonial forms and aesthetic structures, emphasising the continuity of order and the consolidation of cultural identity. The design strategy of the building is focused on the reproduction of traditional structures and the reaffirmation of visual recognition. In contrast, Vivienne Tam has been known to construct a critical and experimental aesthetic pathway by reassembling cross-cultural symbols and dislocating visual language. Her strategy emphasises reflective reinterpretation of tradition and its fusion with contemporary expression. Despite these divergences in visual form and cultural orientation, both approaches address a shared core question: how can design language revitalise traditional cultural heritage within today's globalised design context [9]? NE·TIGER has been instrumental in reviving cultural identity through the medium of order and ritual, while Vivienne Tam has been instrumental in stimulating individual perception and pluralistic interpretation via reconstruction and fluidity. Collectively, these elements embody two efficacious strategies for the extension and re-imagining of Chinese cultural elements within the domain of contemporary fashion design.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The analysis of the works by NE·TIGER and Vivienne Tam reveals that each constructs a distinct design language and cultural expression pathway under the frameworks of emotional structure and aesthetic experience. NE·TIGER is predicated on the principles of ceremonial order and aesthetic stability, placing significant emphasis on visual consistency and experiential closure. This can be interpreted as a continuation and re-articulation of traditional silhouettes and Eastern aesthetic emotions. In contrast, Vivienne Tam employs strategies of visual disturbance, symbolic hybridity, and cultural dislocation to stimulate viewers to reconstruct meaning through heterogeneous perception, presenting an experimental mode of expression that re-encodes and negotiates Chinese cultural elements within a globalised cultural context.

The design strategies and aesthetic pathways presented by these two fashion brands demonstrate the diverse mechanisms by which traditional culture is transformed in contemporary expression. Furthermore, they underscore the central role of emotion and experience in visual communication. The formal rhythms and

visual semantics employed in this manner have been shown to guide audiences along either a stabilising or confrontational emotional trajectory, thereby shaping distinctive cultural atmospheres and modes of aesthetic reception. This development signifies that contemporary fashion design has moved beyond the replication of traditional imagery, metamorphosing into a dynamic cultural expression process. This process is characterised by the profound integration and co-evolution of visual forms, aesthetic mechanisms, and cultural meanings within a contemporary context.

Despite constructing an analytical framework encompassing both emotional aesthetics and aesthetic experience, and systematically exploring design language and cultural expression through representative case studies, this study still has certain limitations in scope and methodology. Firstly, the analysis focused on specific collections, which may not entirely encapsulate the broader stylistic evolution or comprehensive design strategies employed by the respective designers. Secondly, emotional and aesthetic experiences are inherently subjective; even with theoretical models, it is difficult to comprehensively represent the viewers' authentic responses to the designs. Thirdly, the study relied primarily on visual materials, lacking empirical data on actual wearing, viewing, or interactive experiences, which constrains in-depth exploration of the mechanisms underlying experiential design. Future research may expand the range of design cases and cultural contexts, and incorporate empirical methods such as interviews and observational studies to enhance understanding of users' emotional and aesthetic evaluations. Furthermore, the integration of a more extensive array of aesthetic and reception theories could serve to enhance the analytical perspectives within the domain of fashion design studies. It is hoped that this research will provide a theoretical basis for a shift from formalistic analysis to experiential understanding, thereby contributing to the development of contemporary design approaches that centres on emotional resonance and shared cultural experience.

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## АНОТАЦІЯ

**Чень Шуаншуан, Пашкевич К. Л. Засоби формування естетичного враження в колекціях одягу із застосуванням традиційних китайських елементів.**

**Метою статті** є дослідження естетичного вираження сучасного дизайну одягу крізь призму традиційної китайської культури одягу, зосереджуючись на тому, як дизайнери застосовують стратегії перетворення для інтеграції культурних елементів у різноманітні дизайнерські практики.

**Методологія.** Використано подвійну теоретичну основу, що поєднує теорію емоційної естетики Ківі з теорією естетичного досвіду Дьюї. У дослідженні використано методи аналізу зображень та тематичного дослідження, розглянуто дві контрастні колекції: NE·TIGER весна–літо 2015, що представляє традиційну церемоніальну естетику Китаю, та Vivienne Tam осінь–зима 2024, що представляє суперечливу естетику в міжкультурному контексті.

**Результати.** Виявлено, що бренд одягу «NE·TIGER» конструює урочисту та цілісну естетику через структурне представлення, симетричну композицію та ритуальну символіку, викликаючи стабільні та гармонійні емоційні шляхи. На противагу цьому, бренд «Vivienne Tam» використовує символічний колаж, культурну дислокацію та візуальну гібридність, щоб спровокувати емоційну напругу, заохочуючи відкриту інтерпретацію та рефлексивну взаємодію. Виявлено відмінності в колірних стратегіях, використанні матеріалів, побудові силуету та символічній інтеграції творчості досліджених брендів модного одягу, що відображає різні естетичні механізми та експресивну логіку.

**Наукова новизна.** У дослідженні розроблено двовимірну аналітичну модель: емоційно-естетичний шлях та естетичний досвід, для систематичної оцінки того, як традиційні культурні елементи транслюються дизайнерами в сучасному дизайні одягу. Ця модель пропонує теоретичний інструмент для вивчення взаємодії між емоційними механізмами, візуальною семантикою та культурними наративами в моді.

**Практична значущість.** Дослідження надає структуровані рекомендації для дизайнерів, які прагнуть інтегрувати традиційну культурну спадщину в сучасну естетику моди, висвітлюючи стратегії балансування культурної спадкоємності з інноваційним технологіями. Результати дослідження можуть бути корисними як для дизайнерської практики, так і для освіти в галузі моди, сприяючи глибшому емоційному резонансу та культурній ідентичності в сучасній моді.

**Ключові слова:** дизайн одягу, емоційна естетика, естетичний досвід, китайська культура, національний костюм, мода, естетика дизайну, колекція одягу, бренд, дизайнер, модні тенденції.

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