

**Assessment of the Bachelor's Thesis**

Author of thesis: Barbara Gorbunova

Title of thesis: Objectification of Women in Fashion and Advertising Photography

Assessment of the primary advisor

Assessment of the opponent

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace): Tereza Stejskalová, KF FAMU

Evaluation of the content and final form of the thesis (A/excellent – B/very good – C/good – D/good with objections – E/satisfactory – F/unsatisfactory – not recommended for defence)

Suitability of the selected objective and work approach A

Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic B

Ability to critically evaluate and use professional literature B

Logicity of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters A

Language and stylistic level of the thesis A

Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence) A

Sufficient extent of image attachments, justifiability and suitability of attachments, graphic layout A

Originality of the thesis, contribution to the development of the field of study A

Overall evaluation of the thesis B

Verbal evaluation of the thesis including questions that the diplomate must address in his/her thesis defence:

Barbara's thesis analyses objectification of women's bodies in fashion and advertising photography. Based on the theories of Laura Mulvey, Barbara shows well how fashion photography is structured through "male gaze" subconsciously instructing women how to understand themselves primarily as (hetero)sexual objects. She also uses the psychoanalytical concept of the fetish and the term commodity fetishism, in this case, however, the analysis is a bit superficial and Barbara could have done more justice to all the intricacies of these concepts. It is also a pity that even though these two terms are introduced as key for the thesis, they are not used when Barbara analyzes particular examples and we encounter them only at the beginning of the thesis. Barbara is at her best when analyzing concrete fashion photographs, namely the work of Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin and their followers to illustrate the various visual strategies used: dissection, sexualization and violence. She goes on to analyze the social repercussions of these strategies in fashion and advertisement photography. She notes how through their immense social influence they perpetuate toxic gender norms and constitute what is today designated as "rape culture" which affects women negatively on all levels of their social existence. Barbara then goes on to analyze younger generation of fashion photographers who seek to undermine patriarchal imagery prevalent in fashion and advertisement photographs. She introduces the concept of female gaze to emphasize how these photographs subvert gender norms, put to center stage the powerful relationships between women and introduce taboo phenomena that are difficult to translate into sexual object (like menstruation). The final part is very interesting and perhaps could be more detailed.

Questions:

Can you elaborate more on the concept of fetish and give a concrete example? In psychoanalysis, fetish is an ambivalent substitute that is treated as real but, at the same time, is avowed as mere substitute. We know it is not “it” but we still act as if it is. Does this play any role in the way women are portrayed in fashion photography or in fashion photography’s social impact?

When I read your comments on violence and sexualization in fashion photography it seemed to me as quite evident how fashion industry is influenced by pornography. Do you agree? What does it say about fashion photography?

Is ethical fashion imagery sufficient in itself? Can it be not hypocritical if the garments advertised are produced in an exploitative manner?