
Reflection On The Documentary Film Yellow Is Forbidden

The documentary, "Yellow is Forbidden" published to be view at the Vancouver Film Festival on October 10, 2018 director Pietra Brett Kelly featured a Chinese fashion designer, Guo Pei demonstrates her journey and challenges she had overcome to host her first ever runway show in Paris. The message behind the title expresses how Chinese culture perceives yellow and gold to be royalty and power. Only the Emperor of China had the authority to wear, but civilians were not allowed to wear clothing associated with that colour. In addition, red in Chinese culture means prosperity which Guo provided into her collection. Many have questioned how Guo funded her fashion runway show providing quality haute couture and her family's support in this quest. From this documentary, it has established recognition in women's' success throughout hard effort and commitment under difficult circumstances that she has encountered as a Chinese woman recognized world-wide.

The reason why I chose this film was because of my interests in fashion design and the cultural background behind Guo's theory and study towards her first fashion runway show in Paris. Furthermore, I recognized that she designed Rihanna's dress made of gold and fox fur highlighted at the Met Gala in 2015. Guo's upbringing in Beijing, China has allowed the audience to be inspired and understand furthermore about her from how in the documentary she included her parents. Although her mother lost her vision due to sickness, she still maintained a positive attitude to support Guo in her fashion industry. After the documentary was filmed, an unexpected news of Guo's father passed away allowed her to be grateful and accomplished a successful runway show to experience alongside with her parents' faith in her. The director, Brett Kelly accompanied Guo "for two years while she [prepared] for her spring and summer 2017 collection at the La Conciergerie in Paris" (Newbold, Alice). The most important features that has caused my interest would be her consistency throughout her runway show and how in the beginning it was vibrant and sharp in colours of the haute couture, but towards the middle it would be more pastel and light colours. In the last moment, Carmen Dell'Orefeice, an 85 years old aspiring model sealed the runway show wore a "blood-red" crystal and lace haute couture accompanied by two young male model, creating a majestic moment.

The form of this documentary was placed together visually from the beginning of Guo's journey and how she experienced the pressure of the preparation from casting skilled models to uphold the dramatic, heavy haute couture, finding a location to go along with her theme and starting over since she has a traditional Chinese background it was a challenge to communicate and interact with other designers in Paris. Many qualified European models had difficulties in carrying an abundant weight on their bodies to walk on the runway show without embarrassing Guo's reputation by falling down. Nevertheless, the models were strong to pull through and one of the employers who helped with casting said that Guo should asked for "athletes" and not models. Moreover, Guo originally wanted the runway show to be exhibited at the Cathedral of Saint Gallen in Switzerland; however, since the church was a private and secrete it was not considered. The Cathedral of Saint Gallen is a Roman Catholic church that motivated her to combine the idea of religious painting as a print into her collection. Although she had to restart to persuade her collection and opinions to other designers in the fashion industry, it has allowed her to expand her social circle and be open to receive the critics to improve her work.

The message from this documentary was to perceive the accomplishment of a Chinese fashion designer as a woman and how her personal experiences had made her stronger to conquer any circumstances in the future. Guo's cultural background in a traditional Chinese family was difficult for foreigners to understand especially in the fashion industry. Furthermore, she had to work countless hours and she may not always get the recognition she deserves until now, a world-wide known for her first fashion runway show in Paris. Women nowadays are not being acknowledged of their abilities and achievements, let alone a Chinese, which brought attention to the audience to accept and discover more about haute couture inspired by Guo. As mentioned, family is important to Guo and although her father has passed, she was able to show that throughout many struggles and rough patches she was able to be in fame.

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