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## Installation Artist in the Fashion Industry: Yayoi Kusama

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### Abstract

The history of fashion has shown that art and fashion are influenced by each other. Cooperation between the two disciplines is quite extensive. In this work, first, the installation artist Yayoi Kusama's installations and the clothes that she prepared for these installations are examined. Then, the 2012 collection prepared with the cooperation of Yayoi Kusama-Louis Vuitton was examined and visual content analysis forms were created. As a result of the findings, a capsule collection was prepared in honour of Yayoi Kusama and photographed by establishing the figure-ground relationship as in the fashion photographs of the Yayoi Kusama-Louis Vuitton collection.

Keywords: Yayoi Kusama, Louis Vuitton, fashion design, art, capsule collection.

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## 1. Introduction

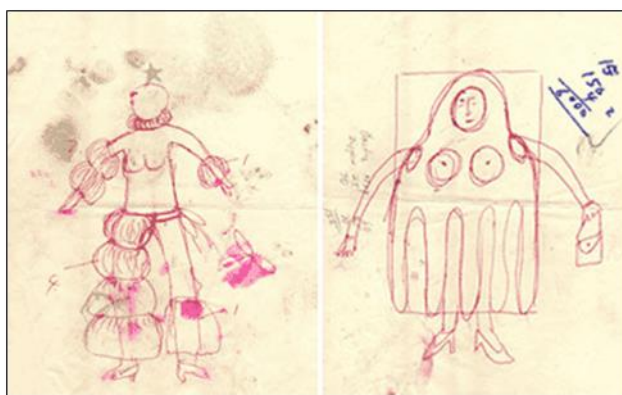
Installations are generally three-dimensional artworks designed to transform the perception of a whole room or particular space, based on the merger of Space and Time and on a relationship between the artist and the visitor (Esslinger, 2017; Lloyd, Young & Hereaka, 2009 ).

Although the term of ‘installation’ was first used in the 1970s, installation has a long history and its roots can be identified in earlier artists such as Marcel Duchamp and his use of the readymade and Kurt Schwitters’ Merz art objects (Saylor, 2017; Van Saaze, 2013).

In the 20th century, industrialisation with scientific knowledge has offered new expansions to the artist of modern age with different techniques and materials. Especially in the post-modern era that emerged in the 1960s, interdisciplinary works and pluralism led to the emergence of different and remarkable art products in this process (Karayel Gokkaya, 2003; Tarlakazan, 2016).

Since the beginning of fashion history, it has always been intertwined with art. Charles Frederic Worth, known as the father of haute couture, influenced art nouveau. Elsa Schiaparelli, worked with Salvador Dali, reflected the effects of surrealism in fashion (Fogg, 2014 ). In 1965, Yves Saint Laurent designed the Modrian Dress to honour the Neo-Plastit paintings that Modrian made in the 1930s (Fogg, 2014 ).

The installation artist Yayoi Kusama also interests with fashion. Kusama (2017) has taken part in performances and has created some unusual costumes. She opened a boutique in 1969. She used polka dots in bright contrasting colours in her artwork and costumes (Lloyd, 2009 ). Polka dots have become her language of art (Kusama, 2017).



**Figure 1. Yayoi Kusama dress drawings (Kusama, 2017) [AQ: Please provide in-text citation for Figures 1–3 and 9–12.]**

In 2012, Yayoi Kusama collaborated with Louis Vuitton’s creative director, Marc Jacobs, who is also a fashion designer; Marc Jacobs had previously been in such cooperation in 2003 with Takashi Murakami.

## 2. Method

In this study, Yayoi Kusama’s life and art is investigated via a document review. Then visual content analysis is applied for Yayoi Kusama’s installation and Louis Vuitton – Yayoi Kusama’s collection for seeing Kusama’s effect on the brand. The colours and patterns were examined. As a result of the findings, a capsule collection was prepared to honour Yayoi Kusama.

### 3. Findings

#### 3.1. Yayoi Kusama's Life

Yayoi Kusama was born in March 1929 in Matsumoto City, Japan. Owing to family reasons, she began to see hallucinations. Around the age of 10, Kusama began to use polka dots in her paintings (Interactive, 2017).

She studied at the Arts and Crafts School at Kyoto between 1948 and 1951. In 1952, Kusama present two exhibitions at the First Community Centre, Matsumoto, which was her first solo exhibition (Kusama, Y., 2017). She moved to the USA in 1957, and exhibited large paintings, sculptures and environmental sculptures using mirrors and electric lights. In the later 1960s, Kusama staged many happenings such as body painting festivals, fashion shows and anti-war demonstrations. She returned to Japan in 1973. Besides her artworks, Kusama published a number of novels and anthologies. In 1993, she participated in the 45th Venice Biennale. She began to create open-air sculptures in 1994. From 1998 to 1999, a major retrospective of Kusama's works, which opened at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, travelled to the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Walker Art Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (Kusama, Y., 2017).

Kusama uses repetitive patterns and shapes at her artwork. Especially, polka dots became her hallmark.



Figure 2. Yayoi Kusama at Madame Tussauds Hong Kong (Art, 2017)

She has often used vivid colours in her installations to create contradictions. Also, in her installations, Kusama uses mirrors generally to provide the infinity effect. Infinity Mirror Room (1965) is one of the most famous of them.



Figure 3. Infinity Mirror Room (1965, 2017)

### 3.2. Yayoi Kusama-Louis Vuitton Collaboration

Kusama’s lifelong obsession with dots fascinated Marc Jacobs. Before the release of the collection, Mark Jacobs stated in an interview and he compared Kusama’s polka dots to Louis Vuitton’s monogram pattern, because both the patterns are repetitive (Palmitessa, 2012; Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4. Louis Vuitton’s monogram (Palmitessa, 2012)

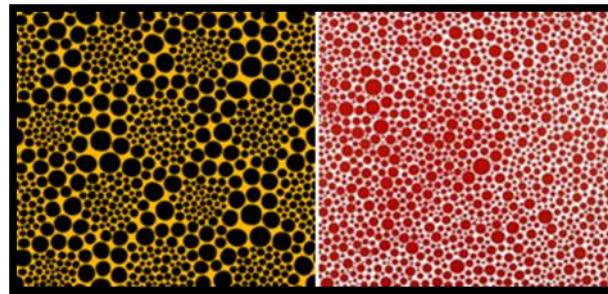


Figure 5. Yayoi Kusama’s patterns (Isabelc, 2017)

Kusama uses her ‘polka dots’ for Yayoi Kusama and Marc Jacob’s collaboration (‘Vuitton Loves Kusama’, 2017; Figures 6–8).



Figure 6. Louis Vuitton showcase (Louis Vuitton, 2012)



Figure 7. Yayoi Kusama-Louis Vuitton collection (Louis Vuitton, 2015)



Figure8. Yayoi Kusama-Giorgio Armani (Arts & Labour, 2015)

According to findings of content analysis on the collection, large and small dots were used frequently or infrequently and contrasting colours were used. Camouflage was provided in the collection photographs by establishing figure-ground relationship.

### 3.3. Representative Work to Honour Yayoi Kusama

A representative work was prepared based on the Vildan Deveci's installation, which was exhibited at 'Young Art: 3. Contemporary Art Project Competition' that organised by Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The collection was photographed by establishing a figure-ground relationship as in the fashion photographs of the Yayoi Kusama-Louis Vuitton collection.

Stripes was used instead of dots at the collection to obtain everlasting effect and camouflage.

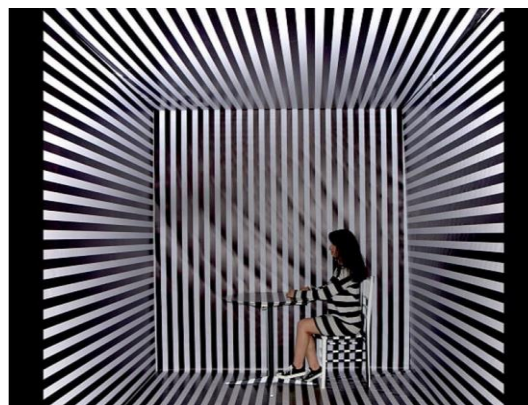


Figure 9. Representative work to honour Yayoi Kusama



Figure 10. Representative work to honour Yayoi Kusama



Figure 11. Representative work to honour Yayoi Kusama



Figure 12. Representative work to honour Yayoi Kusama

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