The Color and Artistic Strategy in Louis Vuitton's Cross-disciplinary Collaborations: The Fusion and Innovation of Brand Traditions and Contemporary Art

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Abstract. This study focuses on the color art strategy employed by luxury brand Louis Vuitton (LV) in its cross-disciplinary collaborations with contemporary artists and designers, exploring how the brand extends its image, reconstructs its aesthetic value, and disseminates global fashion culture through innovative use of color while retaining its traditional visual language. The paper analyses LV's approach from dual perspectives of color aesthetics and cultural dissemination, examining how the brand integrates artists' personal styles with its core identity through color, thereby creating collaborative collections with high visual distinctiveness and cultural significance. Using collaborations with artists such as Takashi Murakami, Yayoi Kusama, and Jeff Koons as examples, the study examines the application of color systems such as ultra-flat aesthetics, vibrant polka dots, and reinterpretations of famous paintings, analyzing how LV harmonizes the artists' distinctive visual styles with the brand's iconic beige, dark brown, and gold tones. Additionally, the paper examines the evolution of color schemes across different periods of collaborative collections to reveal the aesthetic trends and cultural strategies reflected in LV's cross-industry collaborations. LV has continuously adapted its color language to respond to contemporary aesthetic preferences and market demands. By analyzing social media feedback, brand sales data, and market trends, this paper also explores how color strategies influence consumer aesthetic perceptions and purchasing behavior, particularly the differences in acceptance between Asian and Western markets. This study contributes to understanding how luxury brands utilize color as a visual language to achieve the integration and innovation between tradition and modernity, art and commerce.

Keywords: Louis Vuitton, cross-industry collaboration, visual arts, luxury brands, brand strategy.

1. Introduction

In the evolution of global luxury brands, Louis Vuitton (LV) has consistently maintained its leading position in the fashion industry through its rich brand heritage and highly recognisable visual language. However, with the diversification of consumer markets and the integration of cultural and artistic elements, the communication strategies and design approaches of luxury brands have undergone significant transformations. Especially in the 21st century, cross-industry collaborations have become an important avenue for luxury brands to engage with contemporary artists, not only infusing the brand with new creativity but also expanding the boundaries of its cultural dissemination. In this process, colour strategy has emerged as a crucial medium through which brands and artists co-construct visual discourse.

Colour is not only a foundational element in design but also a comprehensive expression of cultural, psychological, and market significance. How Louis Vuitton harmonises its classic colour system (such as beige, dark brown, and gold) with the unique colour language of artists (such as Takashi Murakami's 'super-flat' vibrant hues, Yayoi Kusama's polka-dot red and yellow, Jeff Koons' reinterpretation of the colours in famous paintings), not only reflects the aesthetic fusion between the brand and the artist but also highlights the innovative and cultural dissemination pathways of luxury brands within the contemporary art context.

This study aims to explore Louis Vuitton's colour art strategy in cross-industry collaborations, analysing how it extends its brand visual language, reconstructs aesthetic value, and disseminates culture globally through colour. Through case studies of representative artists such as Takashi Murakami, Yayoi Kusama, and Jeff Koons, the paper will trace the evolutionary logic of LV's colour strategy, revealing its aesthetic trends and market significance across different periods. Additionally, this study will combine consumer feedback and market communication perspectives to explore the role of colour in luxury brand cultural identity and fashion consumption.

This research not only holds significant implications for understanding how luxury brands leverage artist collaborations to achieve innovation but also offers a new academic perspective on visual cultural dissemination within cross-industry collaborations.

2. Literature review

In recent years, luxury brands have increasingly used cross-border cooperation with artists and designers to break the boundaries between traditional brands and art and redefine the visual language and cultural identity of brands. Among them, color, as a key medium connecting the visual identity of the brand and artistic personality style, has become an important dimension that cannot be ignored in the study of cross-border cooperation strategies of luxury brands. This paper focuses on the cooperation practice between Louis Vuitton (hereinafter referred to as LV) and artists and reviews the relevant research results from the perspectives of color aesthetics, luxury brand strategy, visual culture and cultural dissemination, to provide theoretical support for this paper's in-depth analysis of LV's color art strategy.

2.1. The theoretical basis of cross-border co-operation between luxury brands and the arts

Regarding the cross-border cooperation between luxury brands and art, academics mostly analyze it from the perspectives of 'transformation of cultural capital' and 'reconstruction of brand image', while Bourdieu's theory on cultural capital and social stratification provides an important theoretical framework for understanding why luxury brands use art cooperation to enhance their cultural value [1]. Cross-border cooperation is a strategy through which luxury brands can transform artistic symbolic capital into commercial capital. By collaborating with renowned artists, brands can gain cultural credibility and reshape their market image, thereby reinforcing their uniqueness and premium status.

In addition, cross-border cooperation is regarded as a brand innovative strategy, which can inject fresh visual elements and creative vitality while maintaining the brand's core identity: LV's collaboration with Takashi Murakami in the early 2000s is regarded by scholars as an example of 'breaking the circle of culture', which broke the 'cool' image of luxury brands [2]. The collaboration between LV and Takashi Murakami in the early 2000s is regarded by scholars as an example of 'breaking the circle of culture', breaking the image of the luxury brand as a 'cool' brand, and opening a new chapter in the trend of co-branding artists.

2.2. The role of color aesthetics in brand visual strategy

Color is one of the most emotionally conveying elements in the brand visual identity system (VIS). In its brand experience theory, it is pointed out that color not only influences consumers' emotional judgment, but also carries the communication and symbolism of brand values [3]. For luxury brands, classic colors such as LV's dark brown and gold not only represent the brand's history and tradition but also convey symbolic meanings such as 'stability' and 'dignity'.

However, in cross-border collaborations with artists, this classic color language is often broken down and reconstructed. Research has shown that the unique color language of the artist creates a more impactful visual experience and broader cultural associations for the brand. For example, Takashi Murakami's injection of colorful Monogram patterns into LV bags in his 'ultra-flat' style not only enriches LV's visual system, but also visually integrates the brand with contemporary Japanese art [4].

Yayoi Kusama is known for her polka dots and red and white color system, and her collaboration with Vuitton is highly unified in terms of colors and symbols, reinforcing the brand's artistic tone and expression of female spirit.

2.3. Reconciliation of artist's personal style and brand identity

Scholars are generally concerned about how an artist's personal style can be integrated into luxury design without weakening brand identity. There are both conflicts and fusions between artists' personal style and brands' visual language [5]. In terms of the use of color, brands often choose to retain the framework of their identifying elements, such as the structure of the Monogram pattern, but introduce the artist's creativity in terms of color, material and arrangement.

For example, Jeff Koons' 'Masters' series reproduces classic Western paintings on LV bags and combines bright metallic colors, collage and original colors of the paintings, which not only demonstrates his usual highly saturated color style, but also establishes an inter-contextual dialogue between the history of art and the brand's fashion [6]. This type of collaboration both enhances LV's discourse in the art and culture field and stimulates consumers' visual interest in the fusion of the classic and the contemporary.

2.4. Cultural dissemination and market response of color strategies

Beyond the visual and aesthetic dimensions, color strategies in cross-industry collaborations have also sparked research and discussion on cultural acceptance and consumer behavior. Analysis of social media data reveals that collaboration series featuring vibrant colors and bold styles are more likely to generate buzz among young consumers, particularly on visually oriented social platforms such as Instagram and Xiaohongshu, where they can trigger viral effects [7].

From the perspective of cultural communication, research has found that there are significant differences in the acceptance of colors and artistic styles across different regions. The Asian market has a stronger emotional connection with the color styles of Japanese artists such as Takashi

Murakami and Yayoi Kusama, while the European and American markets tend to prefer the ironic or museum-oriented visual styles of artists like Koons and Richard Prince [8, 9]. These regional aesthetic differences have also prompted brands to adopt more flexible and diverse color strategies in the global market.

In addition, some scholars have focused on the relationship between the market performance of cross-border collaboration series and color strategies. For example, Zhou et al analyzed the sales data of several limited edition series by LV in different regions and pointed out that products with high contrast and high saturation colors are more likely to be hyped and collected, reinforcing the brand's positioning as 'limited edition’ and 'artwork.’ [10].

3. Research gaps and future directions

Although numerous studies have explored cross-industry collaborations between luxury brands and artists from perspectives such as brand communication and artistic integration, systematic analysis of the role of color in such collaborations remains insufficient. Particularly from the intersectional perspective of art history, color psychology, and consumer culture, in-depth analysis of the dynamic evolution of color strategies, their cultural symbolic meanings, and consumer acceptance remains to be expanded.

Additionally, current research primarily focuses on case descriptions, lacking a systematic overview of the long-term evolution of color strategies in cross-industry collaborations by luxury brands like LV. For example, do collaborations such as the Monogram Multicolored series with Takashi Murakami, the polka dot series with Yayoi Kusama, and the Masters series with Jeff Koons exhibit phased trends in their color language? This holds significant value for understanding how brands use color to 'narrate’ the stories of their artistic collaborations.

Additionally, how color strategies influence consumer psychology across different cultural regions, and how brands leverage social media to stimulate public interest in visual art, are also important directions for future research.

4. Discussion

In cross-industry collaborations between luxury brands and contemporary art, colour strategies are not merely a form of visual expression, but also carry the continuation and reproduction of brand culture.

4.1. Takashi Murakami: diverse experiments with colour

In 2003, Louis Vuitton collaborated with Japanese artist Takashi Murakami to launch the Monogram Multicolore collection, a bold reinterpretation of the brand's classic Monogram pattern. Murakami introduced his 'Superflat’ aesthetic into luxury brand design, reimagining the brand's iconic brown and gold base with 33 high-saturation colours. This colour strategy not only broke away from LV's previously restrained colour palette tradition but also infused the brand with youthful and mass-market elements through the playful and visually dynamic nature of pop culture. Murakami's collaboration marked the beginning of an experimental phase in LV's cross-industry collaborations, with the core focus on exploring how to expand the brand's visual boundaries through the combination of colour and artistic style.

4.2. Yayoi Kusama: symbolism and spiritual symbols

In 2012, Louis Vuitton's collaboration with Yayoi Kusama further pushed the brand's colour strategy towards symbolism. Yayoi Kusama, known for her iconic polka dot art and 'pumpkin' themes, introduced high-contrast colours such as red, white, yellow, and black into LV's designs. These colours are not merely visual elements but carry strong spiritual symbolic meanings, embodying the philosophical concepts of infinity, repetition, and self-dissolution found in Kusama's art. During this period, LV did not entirely abandon its classic colour palette but instead harmonised the brand's identity with the artist's personal style through the medium of leather goods and apparel. This collaboration demonstrated LV's mature stage in its cross-industry strategy: it not only pursued visual innovation but also emphasised the balance between artistic symbols and brand tradition, thereby fostering a stronger sense of cultural identity in the global market.

4.3. Jeff Koons: the reproduction of art history and cultural capital

In 2017, Louis Vuitton collaborated with Jeff Koons to launch the Masters series, whose colour strategy reflects a reinterpretation and reproduction of art history. Koons used digital printing technology to transfer classic works by artistic masters such as Leonardo da Vinci, Vincent van Gogh, and Claude Monet onto the surfaces of LV bags, creating a cross-disciplinary fusion of art history and luxury goods. In terms of colour, the series retained the elegant tones of the originals while overlaying Koons' signature metallic blue, silver, and gold, imparting a strong contemporary feel and collectible appeal to the works. At this stage, LV had transcended mere visual experimentation and entered a phase of cultural integration, infusing the brand with cultural capital and museum-level artistic value through dialogue with art history.

5. Conclusion

This study analyses the cross-industry collaborations between Louis Vuitton and three representative contemporary artists—Takashi Murakami, Yayoi Kusama, and Jeff Koons—to reveal the core role of colour strategies in the construction of luxury brand visual language. The study finds that LV's colour application has undergone a phased evolution from 'popularisation experimentation' to 'symbolic deepening' to 'cultural integration.' This evolution demonstrates that LV's colour strategy at different historical stages has not only shaped a unique brand aesthetic, but has also become an important medium for its interaction with consumers, the art world, and the cultural market.

At the academic level, this study enriches the research path of cross-border cooperation among luxury brands, particularly from the perspective of colour aesthetics and cultural communication, revealing how luxury brands utilise colour strategies to achieve the dual reconstruction of cultural significance and market value. The research results not only provide insights into the evolution of the visual language of luxury brands but also offer a new perspective for further exploration of the relationship between art and commerce in cross-border cooperation. From a practical perspective, this study offers valuable insights for the strategic marketing of luxury brands. Colour, as a tool for conveying emotion and culture, can achieve differentiated positioning and cultural recognition in global markets. For example, Murakami's vibrant colours have sparked a craze among young consumers in Asia, while Kusama's minimalist polka dots have gained high artistic recognition in the European and American markets, and Koons' cultural reinterpretation has enhanced the brand's global collection and authority status. As such, the precise application of colour strategies not only enhances brand recognition but also promotes cross-cultural communication and market expansion.

Future research can be conducted in the following three directions: First, further integrating consumer psychology with neuroaesthetics to explore how different colour strategies influence consumers' emotional resonance and purchasing decisions; Second, focus on colour communication in the digital age and new media contexts, such as innovative applications of colour experiences in AR/VR, social media, and the metaverse; Third, expand the scope of research to include more luxury brands and cross-border collaborations across different cultural backgrounds, using comparative analysis to reveal the diversity and trends in global luxury colour strategies.

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