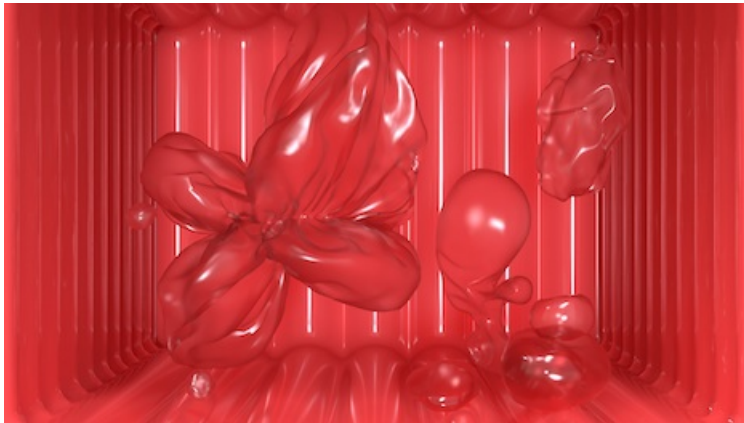


MARKETING

4 lessons in color for luxury and China

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Radiant Red is a color which is sure to resonate with the mainland. Image courtesy of WGSN

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Colors are a key mechanism in luxury fashion's trend engine.

Take yourself back to circa 2017, when the dusty rose shade of Millennial Pink covered tracksuits, tailoring and everything in-between. Designers could not get enough of the romance, with the likes of Helmut Lang, Moschino, **Gucci** and Fendi bringing out collections dotted with that same blushed hue.

Pantone might have birthed the Millennial Pink hype by naming Rose Quartz its **Color of the Year** for 2016, but the prediction could have been made much earlier. The proof is in trend forecasting agency WGSN and color system **Coloro**'s latest Key Colors Forecast, which details the trending shades for 2024.

This takes the form of a collaborative digital experience, "A Window to the Future of Color," where you become immersed in the upcoming tones-to-watch. It is not only an insight into which colors we are going to see more of, but an expression of the moods of consumers and their resultant shopping habits.

As we bid farewell to 2021's Gen Z Green and 2017's Millennial Pink, below are four lessons in color, luxury and China from WGSN and Coloro.

Colors are a mood

"When selected and applied with care, color offers us agency over human mood, behavior, and interaction," explained Coloro's head of content, Joanne Thomas. "It ties into what we have seen recently with the boom in dopamine dressing' and hedonistic brights. Consumers want to feel optimistic and hopeful, and exude their personality again after periods of uncertainty and restriction."

Ultimately, bright hues are doing so well right now because they actually release dopamine when viewed or worn, Ms. Thomas said. This is in contrast to 2020, when beige and gray tones performed best as they offered comfort, reassurance and safety during a difficult time.

Uncertainty, virtual reality and relaxation

Ms. Thomas said that this season's colors portray how humanity has attempted to realign since then.

"Uncertainty will remain a dominant force due to ongoing economic, political and environmental crises, but consumers will be seeking ways to balance their uneasiness with optimism," she said.

Alongside this, the metaverse will continue to influence color choices, with the spectrum of shades available broadening.

"This will accelerate the popularity of clean, bright and chromatic colors," Ms. Thomas said, adding that there will also be a contrast of foundational mid-tones and neutrals, due to people pursuing rest and balance.

Perhaps Millennial Pink is about to have its comeback too, as the color expert hints at "soft-tinted pastels and playful, warm brights" which reflect The Caring Economy.

A pink, red and green 2024 for China

The key colors of Radiant Red, Elemental Blue, Nutshell, Cyber Lime and Fondant Pink are all expected to be popular in the mainland for 2024.

As WGSN's head of color, Jenny Clark, highlighted, "Red has a strong cultural connection [to China] and this lighter, sweeter shade is a fresher take on this traditional hue."

Ms. Clark added that Fondant Pink is predicted to appeal to young Chinese consumers also.

Cyber Lime, on the other hand, will be popular for its connection to wholesome and nourishing food, such as fresh vegetables and rice.

"We have already seen this color coming through in fashion and street style, and we expect it to grow and be used for technology and digital environments," Ms. Clark said.

For Chinese shoppers, in particular, the brightest colors of the Key Colors of 2024 are expected to perform best due to their optimistic nature.

"Radiant Red and Cyber Lime give a positive feeling and good energy which will feel attractive post-pandemic," Ms. Clark said.

China's Gen Z and vibrant virtual realities

"All markets love brights, but we are noticing consumers in China especially the youth embracing color with confidence," Ms. Clark said, discussing how digital-friendly tones are going to become increasingly significant in fashion and beyond. "This connects directly to **Chinese Gen Z's** enthusiasm for technology and the Metaverse."

Being the first-ever netizens, or digital natives, Gen Z's shopping habits are, of course, going to be dominated by virtual realities. Color is no exception.

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