

**Dipartimento di Scienze Economiche e Aziendali Corso di Laurea in International Business and Entrepreneurship**

# **What is the Role of Timelessness in the Artificialized Luxury Products**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the evolving field of luxury products consumption, the integration of art in the luxury product has become a defining trend, transforming the traditional notions of exclusivity and rarity. This phenomenon, known as “*artification*”, represents a strategic approach opted by luxury brands for innovating and differentiating themselves in a dynamic market. However, within this trend, the role of timelessness in the articulated luxury products remains little explored. This case study proposes filling this gap examining the intricate relationship between timelessness and luxury consumption.

Utilizing a qualitative research methodology, this study examines the perspectives of experienced individuals in the arts and crafts or in luxury and consumers, through in-depth interviews. The analysis of data reveals significant insights on the role of timelessness in the artification of luxury products. The results underlines that timelessness is not only linked to the durability over the time, but it is also intimately intertwined with concepts such as authenticity, rarity and exclusivity. These elements contribute to creating a different perceived value of luxury goods, emphasizing their longevity and significance over the eras. The research shed light on the various challenges that luxury brands face in the contemporary market and the possible alternatives and strategy that they could adopt for surviving over the time. Cohesion and coherence are key elements within the planning of market and marketing strategies in a timelessness context.

In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the role of timelessness in artificial luxury products, with significant implications for brand strategies and consumer behavior in the luxury market.

## **ASTRATTO**

Nel campo in evoluzione del consumo di prodotti di lusso, l'integrazione dell'arte nel prodotto di lusso è diventata una tendenza determinante, trasformando le nozioni tradizionali di esclusività e rarità. Questo fenomeno, noto come "artificazione", rappresenta un approccio strategico scelto dai marchi di lusso per innovare e differenziarsi in un mercato dinamico. Tuttavia, all'interno di questa tendenza, il ruolo dell'atemporalità nei prodotti di lusso artificati rimane poco esplorato. Questo studio di caso propone di colmare questa lacuna esaminando l'intricata relazione tra atemporalità e consumo di lusso. Utilizzando una metodologia di ricerca qualitativa, questo studio esamina le prospettive di individui esperti nelle arti e nell'artigianato o nel lusso e dei consumatori, attraverso interviste approfondite. L'analisi dei dati rivela intuizioni significative sul ruolo dell'atemporalità nell'artificazione dei prodotti di lusso. I risultati sottolineano che l'atemporalità non è solo legata alla durevolezza nel tempo, ma è anche intimamente intrecciata con concetti come autenticità, rarità ed esclusività. Questi elementi contribuiscono a creare un diverso valore percepito dei beni di lusso, sottolineandone la longevità e l'importanza nel corso delle epoche. La ricerca ha fatto luce sulle varie sfide che i marchi di lusso affrontano nel mercato contemporaneo e sulle possibili alternative e strategie che potrebbero adottare per sopravvivere nel tempo. Coesione e coerenza sono elementi chiave nella pianificazione delle strategie di mercato e marketing in un contesto di atemporalità. In conclusione, questo studio offre preziose intuizioni sul ruolo dell'atemporalità nei prodotti di lusso artificiali, con implicazioni significative per le strategie di marca e il comportamento dei consumatori nel mercato del lusso.

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# CHAPTER 1: Introduction

## I.1 Background of the study

In the constantly evolving luxury landscape, a phenomenon called "new luxury" has emerged, which has transitioned from mere brand consumption to a more immersive sensory and emotional experience (Jelinik, 2018). This development is characterized by the integration of art into luxury products, which redefines the concepts of rarity and exclusivity (Chailan, 2018). Established luxury houses such as Gucci, Prada and Louis Vuitton have gone beyond traditional craftsmanship and adopted collaborations with acclaimed artists as a means of innovation and differentiation.

For example, collaborations with Louis Vuitton and Jeff Koons have created bags and accessories that incorporate artistic reproductions of masterpieces, which stand out from the usual luxury standards (*see Appendix A*). This trend is not unique to Vuitton; the luxury industry is witnessing the growing intertwining of art and products.

Similarly, Versace's collaborations with artists reflect the seamless integration of art into luxury fashion. A notable example is the incorporation of classic art into the brand's collections, as evidenced by the Vittoria print presented on the fall-winter 2019 women's runway. Named after a statue in London's National Gallery, this distinctive print demonstrates Versace's commitment to incorporating classical inspiration into his creations (*see Appendix B*).

Dior also signed up the synergy between art and luxury, exemplified by their dynamic collaborations and artistic initiatives. Dior's Fall-Winter 2019-20 runway, curated by Maria Grazia Chiuri, opened in the charming gardens of the Musée Rodin in Paris, underscoring the brand's commitment to the artistic spirit (*see Appendix C*). The celebration of feminist art was outstanding, especially when the work of Bianca Pucciarelli Menna, also known as Tomaso Binga, was added to the runway. In addition, Dior's ongoing collaboration with contemporary artists is reflected in the third edition of Dior Lady Art, a unique capsule collection where eleven international artists are given creative freedom to reimagine the iconic Lady Dior bag (*see Appendix D*). This collaborative project is a testament to Dior's commitment to transforming luxury products into canvases for artistic expression. As Christophe Rioux aptly says in an interview in *LesÉchos* in 2014: "*Works of art have never seemed so similar to luxuries because of their inaccessibility,*

*and luxuries never seem to sell as much as works of art".*

This artification of luxury is a deliberate strategy, characterized as the process of transforming non-art into art, strategically employed and systematically scheduled in the marketing mix of luxury industries (Shapiro, 2004; Kapferer et al., 2014). The integration of artistic components can be seen as a collaboration, in store exhibitions reminiscent of art museums, and in the emergence of the term "artketing". Amid these changes, a critical element remains unexplored: the role of timelessness in artificial luxury products. The concept of timelessness is key to understanding the intersection of art and luxury. As luxury consumption moves from flashy brand displays to immersive experiences, timelessness becomes a crucial factor.

Time, like art, has different interpretations, from subjective and emotional aspects to objective measurements provided by clocks. Time is a limited resource, which is often equated with money as Benjamin Franklin said. So, timelessness embodies enduring qualities that transcend changing trends and generations, which is the central pursuit of luxury companies to their artificial purpose (Kapferer, 2014).

## I.2 Research gaps, research questions and objectives

### Research Gaps

Despite the growing body of literature exploring the phenomenon of "artification" in luxury, significant gaps remain. While previous research has examined the integration of art and luxury from a historical and strategic perspective (Shapiro, 2004; Kapferer, 2014), limited empirical work has been done to evaluate its tangible effects on consumer perceptions and brand equity. Specifically, most studies focus on the symbolic and aesthetic dimensions of artification without delving into its long-term impact on consumer loyalty or the sustainability of brand value.

Moreover, as highlighted in Massi and Turrini's (2020) exploration of artification's benefits, there is ample theoretical discourse but scarce quantitative or qualitative analysis regarding the psychological mechanisms through which artistic collaborations influence

consumer behavior. Questions about how these collaborations enhance the perceived exclusivity, rarity, and timelessness of luxury products remain insufficiently addressed.

The democratization of luxury, driven by globalization and digital media, has further blurred the boundaries between high-end and mass-market offerings (Silverstein & Fiske, 2003). This shift creates new challenges for brands seeking to maintain their aura of exclusivity while appealing to a broader, more diverse audience. In this context, the strategic use of artification as a tool to reinforce brand legitimacy and heritage warrants deeper investigation.

Lastly, while the concept of timelessness has been widely acknowledged as a critical component of luxury (Kapferer, 2014; Huamán-Ramirez et al., 2020), its role within the context of artified luxury products has not been thoroughly explored. The question of how timelessness interacts with artification to shape consumer preferences and drive long-term brand loyalty presents a fertile area for further study.

## Research Questions

This thesis seeks to address the identified gaps by focusing on the following key research questions:

1. How do artistic collaborations influence consumer perceptions of luxury brands?
2. To what extent do these collaborations redefine traditional concepts of rarity and exclusivity in the luxury sector?
3. What are the implications of these collaborations for brand equity and consumer loyalty in an increasingly competitive market?
4. How does the integration of art affect the perception of timelessness in luxury products?

By exploring these questions, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how artification contributes to the evolution of "new luxury" and its implications for consumer behavior and brand strategies.

## Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to explore the strategic role of art in enhancing



the value proposition of luxury brands. In a context where the luxury market is transforming with an increasing focus on cultural and symbolic experience, this investigation aims to examine how artistic collaborations impact the material and immaterial aspects of luxury products. This includes essential elements such as customer perception, brand identity and the perceived sense of exclusivity.

Specific objectives include:

1. Examining customer perception: Art plays a key role in forming emotional and cultural bonds with the customer. This aim aims to examine how consumers evaluate “artificial” luxury products compared to classic luxury goods. The emotional and symbolic values attached to these products will be examined, focusing on how art helps to consolidate the identity and position of the brand in the perception of consumers.
2. Examining the effect on brand equity: The second aim concerns the analysis of the effect of artistic collaborations on the main attributes of brand value, such as authenticity, innovation and exclusivity. The aim is to understand how the integration of art can enhance these aspects, raising the perceived prestige of the brand and its competitive value.
3. Examining the link between timelessness and artificiality: A characteristic element of luxury is its ability to overcome time. This aim aims to explore how timelessness relates to artification and how this synergy can impact consumer loyalty and the perceived value of products in the long term. The analysis will also examine the contribution of cultural and historical narratives in defining a perception of durability and eternal meaning for luxury goods.
4. Identify strategic implications: The ultimate goal is to offer practical and actionable guidance for luxury brands on how to effectively incorporate art into their marketing strategies. This includes developing guidelines to ensure that artistic collaborations are aligned with the brand’s heritage while simultaneously focusing on future development goals.

## Significance of the Study

This investigation is particularly relevant at a time when luxury brands are operating in an increasingly competitive and dynamic environment. The integration of art into luxury goods, although an increasingly common strategy, is still poorly explored in both its theoretical and practical aspects. This work aims to fill this gap by offering a detailed and organized analysis of the phenomenon of artification and its consequences on consumers and brands.

From a theoretical perspective, the study enriches academic knowledge on key topics such as temporality, consumer habits and brand value creation. In particular, it offers a more complex view of the interaction between art and luxury, analyzing not only the immediate benefits of artistic collaborations, but also their effect on the long-term positioning of brands.

From a practical perspective, the study findings will provide luxury marketers and brand managers with implementable approaches to use artistic collaborations efficiently. These strategies will aim to enhance brand equity, attract contemporary consumers and maintain the timeless essence of luxury. For example, methods will be presented to reconcile innovation with brand heritage, ensuring that artistic initiatives are seen as genuine and in line with corporate values.

In summary, this work aims to bridge the gap in academic literature through a holistic approach that integrates theoretical and practical aspects. Through a fusion of in-depth analysis and strategic recommendations, the study aims to clarify the changing dynamics of the “new luxury” and offer meaningful insights for the future of the sector.

### I.3 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is structured into six comprehensive chapters, each designed to contribute to a cohesive exploration of the relationship between artification and luxury branding, with

a focus on timelessness. The structure provides a logical progression from theoretical foundations to empirical findings and practical implications, ensuring a clear narrative flow.

## Chapter 1, Introduction

The first chapter presents the context of the study, offering a vision on the evolution of the luxury market and the strategic importance of artification. It analyzes how the inclusion of art in luxury products is not only an aesthetic aspect, but a strategy to consolidate the positioning of brands, improve the perception of exclusivity and attract contemporary consumers. It also highlights the importance of the concept of timelessness, which is a fundamental element in the creation of lasting value for luxury brands. The chapter explains the research questions and the fundamental objectives, highlighting the theoretical and practical importance of the research, and provides an overview of the structure of the thesis.

## Chapter 2, Literature review

This chapter provides a critical analysis of the available literature on the main research topics. First, the theoretical foundations of the concept of luxury are analyzed, focusing on core values such as authenticity, exclusivity and cultural importance. Then, the phenomenon of artification is examined, placing particular emphasis on its impact in enhancing brand equity and distinguishing brands in a competitive market context. The connection between timelessness and luxury is further explored, highlighting how this attribute favors the creation of items considered symbols of prestige and longevity. Finally, the chapter highlights the main gaps in the literature, highlighting the urgency of a more in-depth analysis of the effect of artistic collaborations on consumers and brand value.

## Chapter 3, Market outlook

Il terzo capitolo fornisce un'analisi approfondita del mercato del lusso a livello mondiale, avvalendosi di dati aggiornati e previsioni future. Si studiano le dimensioni del

mercato, concentrandosi sui segmenti chiave come abbigliamento, accessori in pelle, orologi e gioielleria, e prodotti cosmetici di alta gamma. Si mette in luce l'aumento atteso nei prossimi anni, incentivato da paesi emergenti come la Cina e l'India, e dalle nuove tendenze digitali e sostenibili. Il capitolo analizza anche l'importanza crescente delle collaborazioni artistiche e delle tecnologie emergenti, come gli NFT e il metaverso, che stanno cambiando il significato di esclusività e proprietà. Infine, si analizzano le conseguenze strategiche di tali tendenze per i brand di lusso, con indicazioni su come capitalizzare le opportunità derivanti dall'evoluzione del mercato.

#### Chapter 4, Research methodology

The fourth chapter illustrates the research design, clarifying the reasons why a qualitative approach was chosen to explore the phenomenon of artification in the luxury sector. The information collection process is explained, which includes semi-structured interviews with industry specialists and the analysis of case studies of successful artistic partnerships. The Gioia methodology is employed to examine the data and recognize emerging patterns that answer the research questions. The chapter also includes a discussion regarding the reliability and validity of the study, along with methodological limitations.

#### Chapter 5, Findings

This chapter presents the main findings of the analysis. It analyzes how consumers view luxury products that include artistic elements, focusing on the symbolic, emotional and cultural values associated with such products. It highlights the importance of artistic collaborations in enhancing key elements such as authenticity, innovation and exclusivity, helping to generate a perception of timelessness that increases consumer loyalty. The results also indicate that the union of art and luxury helps to distinguish brands in an increasingly competitive market, raising their perceived value in both symbolic and commercial terms.

## Chapter 6, Conclusion

This research emphasizes timelessness as a multifaceted idea in artful luxury products, including authenticity, rarity, exclusivity, and cultural significance. These qualities foster an impression of lasting value that goes beyond mere physical resilience. Authenticity, specifically, links a brand's historical heritage with its innovation, enhancing consumer trust and the sense of timelessness.

Timelessness is greatly influenced by consumer perception, as luxury goods represent identity and social standing. Artification improves this by incorporating artistic components that enhance both aesthetic and symbolic worth. Nonetheless, striking a balance between exclusivity and worldwide demand continues to be a significant challenge for luxury brands. Timelessness offers a strategic approach by emphasizing perceived quality and enduring value, rather than quantity.

Ultimately, the connection between art and luxury enhances timelessness, as both embody values of culture, heritage, and creativity. Artistic partnerships and cultural activities establish luxury brands as guardians of heritage while ensuring ongoing relevance. Even with difficulties in merging art with business, achieving timelessness continues to be an essential approach for distinguishing oneself, fostering loyalty, and ensuring enduring brand worth.

## CHAPTER 2: Literature

### II.1. Luxury and its dimensions

Having a universal definition for luxury is difficult because it can be seen through different prisms be it functional, ideological, cultural, or financial. Etymologically, luxury comes from the Latin word “*luxus*” which means excess or “*lux*” which means light. Jean-Noël Kapferer who is an expert of the luxury sector and professor at HEC Paris made three distinctions and exposes luxury as either a concept, referring to an idealized, inaccessible lifestyle, an economic sector, or a specific strategy. Furthermore, seven criteria were announced to define whether a product is luxurious or no depending on its high price, high quality, rarity, the selective distribution and the customized services provided, the beauty and pleasure it provokes (hedonism), its exclusive character (related to prestige) and the creativity (the art infused on the object) (Barnier and al., 2012).

The luxury sector has been an academic niche for many years because luxury was a niche market reserved only to the wealthiest one. However, since 1980 luxury brands have to cope with the major problem of democratization of luxury or “Masstige”, a term contracting the words “mass” and “prestige” and describing the process for luxury brands to develop lower-priced products to attract more people and thus less wealthy customers (Silverstein and Fiske, 2003). Since then, academic research on the luxury topic has thrived. Thus, many luxury brands use the artification process to solve the problem of massification by using the timelessness value of art and thus reinforce the symbolic value of exclusivity, rarity, and prestige of luxury products (Kapferer, 2014).

Furthermore, there has been a close link between art and luxury since the beginning of humanity. In fact, each early civilization created art products made of the finest materials like gold, jewels, or ivory. Moreover, until the sixteenth century there was no distinction between the artist and the artisan (Kapferer, 2014).

Moreover, Chailan (2018) classified the relationships between art and luxury in four categories: business collaboration as we talked about in the introduction, patronage like for

example Chanel which participates to the renovation of the Grand Palais in Paris, foundations like the Louis Vuitton foundation in Paris which organize art exhibitions, and artistic mentoring like the Rolex programme for example.

## II.2. The artification of luxury products

According to Shapiro (2004), artification is described as the "transformation of non-art into art" and as the "consequence of a general objectification of culture occurring in many societies." According to Shapiro, there are two essential assumptions on which the concept of artification is based. One is the belief in the superior value of works of art, which is perceived as the result of a process rather than an object, and the other is the so-called multiplication of legitimizers. The legitimators are people or institutions that determine what is considered art, and following Shapiro (2004) this is no longer in the hands of a few, but in those of the public, newspapers, collectors and many more. Artification can therefore be viewed as a consequence of the democratization of art, which gives marginalized groups access to the art world.

Luxury and art have a number of characteristics in common. Both are characterized by quality, a high price, rarity and uniqueness, as well as aesthetics and heritage (Massi & Turrini, 2014). They both aim for immortality and are expensive creations aimed at the same target group - the cultural elite (Kapferer, 2014). Furthermore, art and luxury both have a distance to function, meaning that neither follows a certain function. Accordingly, they can both escape the effects of time, as function creates temporality. An example is a technical product, for instance, the first version of the Apple iPhone no longer has any value for the consumer today (Kapferer, 2014).

However, the question arises as to what benefits luxury brands derive from the artification of their products. On the one hand, luxury benefits from art in that it has increased perceived morality, aesthetics and non-commercial connotations as well as a legitimization of high prices (Kapferer, 2014). On the other hand, artification also helps luxury brands to downplay the social classification of consumer demand and encourages "more humanistic motivations, such as elevation by objects that condense highly talented artists' work,

tradition and culture, art and creativity, and timelessness” (Kapferer, 2014). These are intended to legitimate people's desire to own these objects, as they want to have access to beauty and depth.

Massi and Turrini (2020) have identified seven essential benefits of artification for luxury brands.

Legitimization, as previously mentioned, is the first benefit. By approaching and collaborating with art, luxury fashion brands can demonstrate their affiliation with a cultural genre or overarching system (DiMaggio, 1988, as cited in Massi & Turrini, 2020) and thus be legitimized in the eyes of consumers. As a field with a recognized social role, art can lend legitimacy to fashion brands. Furthermore, the fashion world has often been rebuked by critics who have never recognized fashion products as equivalent to works of art, mainly because "fashion designers have never managed to achieve full recognition as artists" (Weissman, 1967, as cited in Massi & Turrini, 2020). Luxury, long seen as a realm of excess and opulence, is therefore increasingly "artified" (Kapferer, 2014) in order to legitimize itself and be authentic, and to differentiate itself by defining a unique and exclusive identity. Art offers fashion brands "an aesthetic and moral support" and the "legitimization of their exceptional prices" (Jelinek, 2018, as cited in Massi & Turrini, 2020).

Another benefit for luxury brands is authenticity, which is similar to the concept of authenticity. The concept assumes the existence of legitimators, as previously mentioned, these are people or institutions that evaluate whether an object is art, but also whether it is considered legitimate. For luxury brands, it is crucial to be seen as authentic, and therefore legitimate, and for this they must be "disinterested and disseminated by parties without an instrumental economic agenda" (Holt, 2002, as cited in Massi & Turrini, 2020). Accordingly, artification brings the luxury product or even the luxury brand closer to the art world, which enables brands to “position products as authentic pieces of contemporary art, each one blessed by the hand of the designer” (Kapferer, 2012).

Perceived expertise and artisanality also can benefit from artification, as one of the greatest challenges posed by the production of luxury goods is preserving the idea of craftsmanship. Mass production and the idea of craftsmanship can contradict each other in the minds of consumers because the luxury sector has thrived on an ideological storytelling



based on craftsmanship, rarity, uniqueness, one-to-one personalization, exclusivity, feelings of privilege, and boutiques" (Kapferer, 2014). In addition, counterfeit reproductions of luxury products are no longer rare and can damage a brand's image. Artification, expertise and artisanality thus convey a sense of authenticity again.

Furthermore, uniqueness and exclusivity can also be positively influenced. The price is no longer the only characteristic for the uniqueness of a product, which is why the feeling of exclusivity must be maintained, which is a challenge for brands. Luxury brands therefore present and advertise their products as an art form that can promote this uniqueness (Massi & Turrini, 2020), which enables them to appeal to the cultural elite (Kapferer, 2014).

In terms of aesthetics and emotional experience, it is important to recognize that luxury brands are much more reliant on identifying intangible benefits. Consumers identify with the products, which can help to reinforce precisely these aesthetic and emotional components, which on the one hand enriches the brand experience for the consumer, but again also enables the possibility of justifying the price (Batat, 2019).

In terms of scarcity and rarity, just like artworks, handcrafted objects are perceived as rare and sacred compared to products as a result of mass production (Massi & Turrini, 2020). As a matter of fact, in the luxury sector production discontinues whenever a product's sales increases, as it is common practice for the luxury brand Hermes, according to its CEO. An example for that is Hermes' famous Birkin Bag, which cannot simply be purchased, as it is not "sufficient to be able to afford it", as one has to be included in a customer list, and even then the wait can last for years (Massi & Turrini, 2020).

Lastly, aura is a benefit that luxury can gain from art which gives luxury a notion of sacredness. The notion of sacredness, which also can be found in artworks allows luxury companies an according positioning.

Roland Barthes in his book "*Mythologies*," applied semiotic analysis to examine the symbolic meaning of luxury brands and explain how the brand itself becomes a sign that surpasses its denotation as a product to a symbol of social status and belonging to a specific group. He describes this phenomenon as "third meaning" which goes after the primary connotation of a word and is deeply related to the interpretation and personal experience of the observer. Thus, it is a way to understand how people can construct meanings, influence perceptions, and communicate deeper messages about culture and society in art,

fashion, or luxury.

In his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979) Jean-François Lyotard articulated the Postmodernism theory. The purpose is to always analyze with skepticism the grand narratives that are to say the general truths of human existence. Lyotard argues that these narratives often marginalize alternative viewpoints and suppress diversity. Instead, postmodernism values a plurality of voices, rejecting the idea that there is a single, universal truth. When applied to the sector of art and luxury, this postmodern theory encourages an exploration of diverse artistic expressions and a rejection of a singular, authoritative definition of what constitutes "high art" or "luxury" thus acknowledging and celebrating different cultural, social, and individual perspectives and challenging traditional hierarchies and norms. Furthermore, in the context of luxury products, postmodernism might lead to a reconsideration of what is considered prestigious or valuable. It opens up space for a multiplicity of aesthetic preferences and challenges the notion that there is a universal standard of luxury. This perspective recognizes that diverse cultures and subcultures contribute to shaping the meaning and value of luxury items. Moreover, the celebration of diversity in postmodernism suggests that various narratives surrounding art and luxury can coexist without needing to conform to a singular, dominant narrative. Different viewpoints and expressions in the art and luxury worlds are acknowledged as valid and contribute to the richness of cultural discourse. Overall, applying Lyotard's postmodern perspective to the study of art and luxury allows for a nuanced understanding of how diverse perspectives shape these realms in contemporary society, fostering an environment where multiple voices and narratives can flourish.

### II.2.1 Art Infusion Theory and the Benefits of Artification

A theoretical and crucial aspect to understand the benefits of artifice in luxury is represented by the Art Infusion Theory (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008). According to this theory, consumers' perception of value is significantly enhanced when artistic elements are incorporated into consumer products, such as luxury goods. Art is a symbol of exclusivity, refinement, and prestige, and these qualities are directly reflected in the products it is connected to.

The theory is rooted in the belief that art confers distinctive symbolic value, affecting

three fundamental dimensions:

- **Beauty and Refinement:** Products that include art are seen as more aesthetically pleasing and sophisticated. Art enriches the design and establishes an emotional connection.
- **Honor and Uniqueness:** The connection with art conveys a feeling of exclusivity and differentiation. This is crucial in luxury, where recognized value is frequently associated with rarity.
- **Morality and Legitimacy:** Art is considered essentially "positive" and non-commercial, giving products an ethical aura that justifies high costs and exclusive marketing strategies.

Within the realm of luxury, the artification process enables brands to express a cultural and abstract essence that enhances the emotional bond with consumers. For instance, partnerships between artists and luxury labels not only transform products into artistic masterpieces but also elevate their perceived worth in terms of beauty and individuality. This is exemplified in initiatives like Louis Vuitton's "Artycapucines" collection, where modern art intertwines with classic craftsmanship to produce inherently valuable and timeless pieces.

Subsequent research by Hagtvedt (2011) found that consumers viewed art-enriched products as more attractive and of higher quality. This was true even when the art did not directly impact the utility of the product, underlining how important aesthetics are as a criterion for choice.

The Art Infusion Theory provides, therefore, a theoretical basis for explaining why and how the integration of art in luxury products contributes to their cultural legitimization and strengthening their position in the market as symbols of beauty and depth

The Art Infusion Theory has its critics. Some researchers, such as Joy et al. (2014), have raised concerns about the perceived authenticity when art is used in an overly commercial manner. This could cause a decrease in the value of the product if the customer feels a dissonance between the brand and the related art.

### II.3. The notion of timelessness

Timelessness, as a concept, transcends the boundaries of time and human thought, influencing reflections for centuries. It refers to something that is independent of time, that is beyond time, or that transcends time. Georg Simmel, a famous German sociologist and philosopher, shaped this notion by describing it as the quality of something that maintains its relevance and aesthetic appeal throughout the ages.

For centuries, this quest to understand what transcends the limits of time has shaped some of the most influential thoughts in the history of philosophy. Plato, famous for his vision of reality based on the existence of eternal and immutable forms such as justice, beauty, and truth, proposed a conception where these timeless forms transcend the sensible and ephemeral world. For Plato, timelessness is closely linked to the idea of eternity, offering a realm where change has no hold and reality is stable and universal. On the other hand, Heraclitus perceived the world as a place of constant change and perpetual flux, where each moment is unique and ephemeral. Despite this vision of a perpetually becoming world, Heraclitus also suggested that within this incessant flux exists a hidden kind of permanence, a timeless unity that transcends linear time.

On a spiritual and religious level, many beliefs include the idea of a higher or eternal reality that transcends time and space. For example, in Buddhism, the concept of Nirvana represents a state of existence beyond the cycle of rebirth and linear time. Similarly, in some mystical traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, there is talk of a divine reality that surpasses the temporal limits of this world.

This timeless perspective of existence can also serve as a source of inspiration and motivation, offering hope of transcending the challenges and limitations of daily life. Timelessness can inspire quests for meaning and significant achievements in all aspects of life. Indeed, the experience of timelessness can be deeply transformative, paving the way for unlimited creative potential and deeper spiritual understanding. It broadens the horizons of consciousness, thereby unleashing a renewed sense of freedom and self-awareness. According to Mainemelis (2001) “timelessness is the experience of transcending one’s self and socio-temporal reality by becoming immersed in a captivating present-moment activity or event. It emerges when attention is withdrawn from the self and invested in the depth of the here-and-now direct experience. In the state of timelessness, one loses self-

consciousness (i.e., the concept of the self, one's own desires and fears)". This makes an echo with John Dewey's aesthetics experience developed in his book *Art as Experience* (1934) which stipulates that aesthetic experience is the higher form of interaction between the organism and the natural environment because it is the exact moment when both reach a stage of fulfillment.

From an aesthetic standpoint, timelessness manifests in classic works of art, literature, and music that defy temporal limitations, remaining as significant today as they were at their initial creation. These works transcend their era and continue to resonate with future generations. Great masterpieces of literature, painting, music, and other art forms can be considered timeless if they manage to touch humans beyond temporal and cultural boundaries. In the realm of branding and marketing, experts like Jean-Noël Kapferer and Martin Lindstrom have emphasized the importance of timelessness in building enduring brands. Kapferer, for instance, views timelessness as a key attribute of successful brands, enabling them to maintain relevance and appeal across generations by embodying enduring values and narratives. It is an essential quality sought after in luxury goods, as it ensures their longevity and prestige over time.

Timelessness embodies a complex and multifaceted concept that has intrigued thinkers across disciplines, offering insights into the enduring nature of existence and reality.

#### II.4. Timelessness and luxury

In the world of luxury, the concept of time is not merely incidental but intrinsic to its very essence. Luxury, synonymous with opulence, exclusivity, and refinement, bears witness to the enduring allure of time. Through the interplay of heritage, craftsmanship, and narrative, luxury brands create an illusion of timelessness, inviting us to partake in a world where the boundaries between past, present, and future blur into insignificance. In the realm of high fashion and top-tier craftsmanship, time is not merely a fleeting moment but the very foundation upon which the most illustrious brands rest. By delving into the intricate tapestry of luxury, it becomes evident that time is indeed the pillar upon which this world of extravagance stands.

Historically, esteemed luxury houses such as Hermès, Chanel, and Louis Vuitton have transcended epochs, weaving their rich heritage into the fabric of time. Their longevity is not merely a matter of chance but a deliberate culture of authenticity and legacy. Through meticulous brand narratives and the preservation of historic houses, these venerable institutions have mastered the art of leveraging their past to forge an indelible path toward the future. Step into the hallowed halls of a luxury boutique, and you'll be transported to a world where time stands still. Every detail, from the furniture to the soft lighting, is meticulously chosen to evoke timeless elegance. Here, the customer is not just a patron but a participant in a grand narrative, where dreams are woven, and fantasies take flight.

At the heart of the allure of luxury lie its timeless products, revered as icons of style and sophistication. From the timeless handbag to the iconic little black dress, these pieces transcend trends, embodying a rare fusion of functionality and symbolism. Time is the essence of luxury, as exemplified by the meticulous craftsmanship of renowned brands. Each piece, whether it's Chanel's iconic little black dress or Hermès' timeless Birkin and Kelly bags, embodies centuries of expertise and dedication. These creations demand countless hours of labor, a testament to the pursuit of perfection. These iconic luxury houses have built their reputation by crafting enduring pieces that defy the evolution of trends. For instance, Hermès' Birkin handbag, introduced in the 1980s, remains a symbol of status and refinement today. Timeless design is also at the heart of the luxury industry. Iconic pieces such as Le Corbusier's LC4 lounge chair or Artemide's Tolomeo lamp illustrate the harmonious fusion of functionality and timeless aesthetics. As noted by the renowned designer Dieter Rams, "Good design is timeless," highlighting the importance of functionality and durability in creating luxurious and timeless products.

Huaman-Ramirez and al., (2020) proved that timelessness through the prism of brand oldness associations has multiple positive effects on customer-brand relationships such as brand credibility, trust or attachment. It highlights the importance for companies to use retro-marketing or nostalgia-themed strategies which allow a reminiscence process.

From a financial perspective, timeless luxury products not only serve as status symbols but also as lucrative investments. Like works of art, they accrue value over time, reaching

astronomical prices in prestigious auction houses such as Christie's and Sotheby's. The allure of owning a piece of history, of investing in heritage, is irresistible to collectors and connoisseurs. At the heart of luxury lies the promise of continuity, the belief that these works of art will outlast their owners and transcend generations. Patek Philippe, the venerable Swiss watchmaker, embodies this ethos with its iconic motto: "You never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely take care of it for the next generation." Thus, luxury becomes not only a possession but a legacy to cherish and pass down through the ages.

While luxury brands have historically thrived by leveraging the timelessness of their products and narratives, the landscape of modern luxury is undergoing significant change. The challenges and adaptations the industry faces today highlight an undeniable reality: even in a constantly evolving world, luxury remains rooted in time. These recent developments reveal a tension between timeless tradition and the changing demands of contemporary society.

Over the past fifty years, the luxury sector has experienced enormous and rapid changes. Today, luxury companies must contend with increasing demand for new products and adapt to disruptions caused by digital technologies that are altering distribution channels. Despite these contemporary challenges, the timeless notion of luxury remains a fundamental pillar in the industry.

In this ever-faster era, the COVID-19 pandemic has redefined the relationship with time. Indeed, individuals have learned to slow down both in their daily lives and in their consumption habits, thus adopting "a slowed-down experience of time through consumption" (Husemann and Eckhardt, 2019). This rediscovery of leisure time and digital disconnection underscores the timeless importance of authenticity and human connection within luxury. Thus, the quest for meaning and substance in present moments, even in a constantly evolving world, remains a timeless characteristic of human nature. This search for fulfillment and significance transcends the boundaries of time and space, embodying the timeless ideal of luxury as an expression of the human soul.

Consequently, luxury consumption has shifted from mere possession towards a deeper and more meaningful experience. Indeed, with the emergence of the sharing economy in

our society, people are less interested in material possession and seek emotions and timeless experiences that transcend ephemeral trends. Luxury brands, aware of this shift, focus their efforts on creating unforgettable experiences both online and in-store, a concept known as experiential marketing. Experiential marketing, by providing an intense and memorable experience, helps to strengthen the brand image in the minds of consumers. This timeless approach highlights the brands' ability to create lasting emotional connections with their audience, thus transcending the temporal limits of fashion and passing trends. This reappropriation of time and substance characterizes the concept of unconventional luxury described by Malone et al., (2023). Furthermore, these dematerialized and ephemeral forms of consumption constitute what is known as “liquid luxury consumption” (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2017), while leisure time has become the ultimate luxury (Lee and Ferber, 1977). This notion of liquid luxury underscores the timeless fluidity of luxury experiences in an ever-changing world.

#### II.4.1 Kapferer’s Brand Identity Prism and Timelessness in Luxury

To better understand how luxury brands achieve timelessness, Kapferer’s brand identity prism provides a valuable framework for analyzing the interconnected dimensions of brand identity and their role in creating lasting appeal.

The Brand Identity Prism, proposed by Jean-Noël Kapferer (1997), represents an essential theoretical tool for analyzing and building brand identity. This model is based on six interconnected dimensions, each of which plays a key role in creating a coherent, distinctive and memorable brand. In the context of luxury, the prism is particularly useful for understanding how brands can convey a sense of timelessness, rooted in enduring cultural and narrative values.

The six dimensions of the Brand Identity Prism

- **Physical:** The tangible elements of the brand, such as its design, packaging, logo and materials used, represent the visible basis of its identity. In luxury, these elements are essential to communicate exclusivity and timeless quality. For example, Hermès scarves, with their iconic patterns and timeless colors, embody a physicality that transcends fashions, anchoring itself to a classic aesthetic.
- **Personality:** A brand's personality is reflected in its tone of voice, visual language, and the way it communicates with its audience. Luxury brands like Chanel project



a sophisticated and iconic personality, embodied by figures like Coco Chanel and reinforced by advertising campaigns that express elegance and boldness.

- **Culture:** The cultural dimension reflects the core values that guide the brand and its connection to artistic and historical heritage. In the luxury sector, culture is often based on traditional craftsmanship and heritage. Gucci, for example, uses symbols of Italian culture to create a narrative that honors the past while disrupting the future, highlighting how timelessness can be rooted in an ever-changing culture.
- **Connection:** The relationship illustrates the type of interaction between the brand and its customers. In the luxury world, this bond is often based on trust, exclusivity and emotional connection. Louis Vuitton's experiential boutiques, combining product presentation with art installations, establish a relationship that goes beyond the mere commercial transaction.
- **Reflection:** Reflection shows the image of the ideal customer that the brand wants to convey. Luxury brands often create aspirational identities, targeting the "cultural elite" or those who aspire to be part of it. This is manifested, for example, in the selection of testimonials: Patek Philippe, with its famous campaign "You never actually own a Patek Philippe, you merely look after it for the next generation," represents a refined consumer, who values time and continuity between generations.
- **Self-image:** Self-image reflects how consumers perceive themselves through the brand. In the realm of luxury, goods become extensions of one's personality, allowing customers to perceive themselves as part of a larger story. The Lady Dior bag, for example, evokes an idea of elegance and sophistication, allowing customers to feel part of this exclusive identity.

In the luxury sector, Kapferer's prism offers an explanation of how brands develop a sense of timelessness by integrating the six dimensions. Culture and materiality are key to anchoring the brand in enduring values, while reflection and self-perception ensure that the consumer recognizes themselves in a story that transcends the ages.

For example, Hermès and Chanel employ symbols of craftsmanship and tradition as the foundations of their identity, while Louis Vuitton adopts artistic collaborations to give a cultural and innovative aura to its products. These factors allow brands to remain relevant

over time, even in the face of changing fashions.

The power of the Brand Identity Prism lies in its ability to connect every element of a brand's identity, ensuring consistency and distinction in the global marketplace. In fashion, this consistency is essential to designing items that not only represent the current moment but remain relevant and desirable for the future.

However, using the Brand Identity Prism presents challenges. The challenge of maintaining a balance between innovation and tradition can be daunting, especially in an industry where authenticity is of great importance. However, consistent use of this framework allows brands to create strong, unique identities, establishing themselves as timeless symbols in the world of luxury.

## II.5. Timelessness and art

The timelessness in art lies in its ability to transcend epochs, cross cultural boundaries, and touch the very essence of humanity.

It is a quality that transcends the bounds of time, allowing artistic works to remain relevant and inspiring across centuries. This notion of "timelessness" is often associated with the ability of artworks to capture emotions, experiences, and universal truths that resonate with audiences through the ages. For example, the tragedies of William Shakespeare continue to captivate contemporary audiences with their timeless narratives of passion, betrayal, and fate. Similarly, ancient Greek sculptures such as "The Venus de Milo" or "The Discobolus" continue to inspire admiration for their beauty and artistic expression, millennia after their creation.

Timelessness in art also emerges when works transcend temporal and cultural barriers, resonating with a broad audience across ages. Great masters of art often created works that communicate with generations of people, regardless of their cultural or historical context. For example, Leonardo da Vinci's paintings, such as the "Mona Lisa," continue to fascinate visitors to the Louvre in Paris, as well as audiences worldwide, centuries after their creation. Similarly, Bach's music is celebrated for its ability to move and inspire listeners around the world, transcending linguistic and cultural boundaries. These kinds

of masterpieces, timeless in their essence, transcends temporal boundaries and become touchstones for subsequent artists. It's important to understand that the resonance of iconic artworks isn't confined to emulation but it's the starter of new dialogues, interpretations, forms and expression.

Transitioning from exploring timelessness in art, it is crucial to recognize the temporal and cultural contexts within which artworks are situated. From a purely chronological standpoint, each artwork is inevitably tied to the era in which it was created and often categorized within the frameworks of predominant artistic movements. This recognition adds layers of complexity to our understanding of art's durability over time, highlighting how even within their belonging to a specific era, artworks can still transcend their initial context to touch upon the very essence of humanity.

Moreover, it's also important to underline the role of artistic resilience that is a testament to the transformative power of creativity in the face of change. If you take in consideration social shifts or cultural evolution, it's possible to observe that art assumes a role of reflection and catalyst. Artists in general adapt their expressions and feelings, challenging norms and pushing boundaries to encapsulate the spirit of change. Furthermore, the ability of art to endure during the time and evolve not only reflects the resilience of human soul and spirit, but also contributes to the cultural narrative, boosting a dynamic dialogue between tradition and innovation. This kind of resilience underlines the timeless nature of artistic endeavors, illustrating the capacity of not only standing in front the change but also of shaping and redefining the ever-evolving landscape of human experience

Hannah Arendt, in her work "Between Past and Future," puts forth a provocative idea that artworks are immortal because they are, by nature, useless. This perspective, which can be analyzed through the lens of functionality, underscores the distinction between the temporality of utilitarian objects and the timelessness of artworks. Arendt suggests that precisely because artworks do not serve practical or instrumental purposes, they are freed from the constraints of time and utility, thus acquiring a form of potential immortality. This "potential immortality" of artworks lies in their ability to transcend the limitations of time and space, continuing to evoke emotional and intellectual responses from viewers

across ages.

## II. 5. 1 Henri Bergson's "suspension of time" theory

In line with the reflection on "timelessness" in art, philosopher Henri Bergson in his theory of "duration" (*durée*) proposes that experienced time and inner experience cannot be measured by objective time, but instead represent a continuous flow that can be captured in art (Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 1907). This temporal pause is what allows a work of art to "transpire" beyond its historical context, establishing an immediate and universal connection with the viewer. Art, therefore, not only transcends time, but resides in a deeper and more impalpable sphere of human experience. In a complementary analysis, Hannah Arendt in *Between Past and Future* (1961) investigates the idea that works of art are "eternal" precisely because they lack a practical purpose. Their impossibility of being reduced to simple tools of use makes them exempt from temporal and cultural limitations. Arendt suggests that being devoid of practical utility, artistic works acquire a potential of "immortality" that allows them to remain significant over time, evoking emotions and reflections even in periods distant from their creation. In conclusion, the theory of trans-cultural aesthetics, elaborated by authors such as Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), explores how artistic masterpieces, such as those of Leonardo da Vinci or Bach, manage not only to overcome temporal barriers but also cultural ones, transforming themselves into universal symbols that communicate with different generations, regardless of their origin or the context in which they were created.

## CHAPTER 3: Market outlook

### III.1 The evolution of the luxury market: historical aspects, contemporary dynamics and artistic connections

#### Origins and Historical Evolution of Luxury

The concept of luxury has its roots in a long human history, appearing as an expression of the human tendency to seek something more than mere material need. According to Berthon et al. (2009), luxury has always meant more than a simple consumer product: it is a cultural symbol, an expression of status and authority, as well as a mode of aesthetic narration that conveys exclusivity and connection to a privileged sphere. In the 17th century, luxury was intended for a privileged few, characterized by singular items such as precious pearls and crystals. With the industrial revolution of the 19th century, however, production capacity grew, allowing a new middle class to enjoy high-quality goods, revising the concept of luxury as an accessible but still exclusive phenomenon.

The 20th century represented a new stage in the evolution of luxury, with the founding of important fashion houses such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel, which set high standards for craftsmanship and design. Kapferer and Bastien (2017) define this period as the beginning of the "regulated democratization" of luxury: a synthesis between accessibility and the preservation of exclusivity through well-considered branding strategies.

#### Modern Luxury

In the 21st century, the concept of luxury has expanded from a purely material idea to one that includes experiential, sustainable, and digital aspects. Rathi et al. (2022) highlight how modern luxury is characterized by a complex relationship between tradition and innovation. Today's consumers desire products that not only represent excellent craftsmanship, but also manifest personal values, such as respect for the environment and social responsibility.

The fundamental principle for capturing luxury in marketing is exclusivity. This peculiarity is expressed primarily through a high price, but also through a voluntary restriction

of the quantities sold and the distribution channels. In the luxury goods market, this exclusivity is also enhanced by the association with values of status, prestige and refinement of consumers. According to the analysis of Consumer Market Insights, the luxury goods sector includes very exclusive personal products.

The market, according to Statista, is divided into five key segments, each with unique dynamics and products:

- **High-End Leather Products:** this sector includes luxury leather goods such as handbags, luggage, briefcases and small leather goods, including wallets and various accessories. The creation and design of these items highlight craftsmanship, turning them into signs of prestige and uniqueness.
- **High-end Timepieces & Accessories:** also known as "hard luxury", this sector differentiates itself from fashion accessories by using valuable materials such as gold, diamonds and other precious stones and metals. It includes luxury watches and rare jewellery that often serve as investments in addition to being signs of prestige.
- **Opulent Couture:** This segment includes high-end clothing and footwear, including designer items, accessories and leather shoes. It includes both ready-to-wear and more exclusive and custom-made items, which stand out for the quality of the materials and innovation in design.
- **Opulent Glasses:** Includes ultra-premium and high-quality eyeglass frames and sunglasses. Lenses and contact lenses are not included, with a focus on brands that symbolize the pinnacle of fashion and technological innovation.
- **Prestige Makeup & Scents:** Includes skincare, fragrances and makeup cosmetics (eyes, face and lips), focusing on super- and ultra-premium lines. Segments such as personal care, hair care and oral care are not included in this definition.

## Global Luxury Market Analysis

The global luxury goods market is expected to reach a revenue of \$495.20 billion in 2025, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.93% from 2025 to 2029. This will cause the market to reach a projected value of \$577.80 billion by 2029. Global per capita spending is expected to be \$63.38 per individual in 2025, highlighting an increase in luxury among consumers in various global regions.

Geographically, China is the largest market, with an expected revenue of \$110 billion by 2025, strengthening its leadership position for the sector. However, emerging markets such as India and Latin America are revealing growth potential, forcing luxury brands to adopt increasingly localized strategies.

The luxury sector is controlled by large international groups such as LVMH Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton SE, Kering SA, Compagnie Financière Richemont SA, The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. and Chanel Limited. These giants drive innovation and expansion in their sectors, taking advantage of economies of scale and a strong position in global markets.

To ensure data accuracy, Statista relies on the financial reports of top-tier companies, taking into account only brands with annual revenues exceeding \$150 million.

This means that only the major players in the market will be considered, excluding smaller players and independent artisanal productions. Therefore, the analysis provides a meaningful view of the sector, but may not fully reflect niche dynamics or less obvious emerging segments.

Market size is calculated using a “Top-Down” method, based on stability criteria for each segment. This process combines various sources, including information from Statista, internal research, data from national statistical offices and international bodies, industry associations, company reports and specialized publications. Since reporting standards differ between companies, estimation techniques are used to align key performance indicators with the market definitions used. An example of such techniques is the joint use of the geographical distribution of High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWI), i.e. people with investable assets of more than \$1 million, and search interest monitored via Google Trends, to assess the distribution of sales at the regional level.

Market growth expectations are based on different projection methodologies, selected based on the specific peculiarities of the sector. In the luxury goods sector, which is characterized by constant growth, the technique of "exponential smoothing of trends" is frequently used, which takes into account elements such as GDP per capita and average household expenditure.

The data are treated according to current rates of change and are subject to regular updates, at least twice a year or exceptionally in the event of significant events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

In short, it is essential to analyze market data considering the methodologies employed and the restrictions due to collection and modeling techniques, in order to obtain a comprehensive and precise understanding of the dynamics of the sector.

### III. 2 Trends and Sustainability

#### Digitalization and Luxury

The use of digital technologies has radically changed the luxury market, reshaping the way consumers engage with brands and purchase their products. This shift has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has introduced social restrictions and changed purchasing habits around the world.

According to Peng et al. (2021), the year 2020 marked a crucial turning point for the luxury industry, as numerous brands improved their online visibility to ensure a direct link with consumers amid a time of seclusion. This change was not confined to e-commerce; it spanned all marketing channels and customer interactions. Luxury brands transformed their approaches by incorporating digital technologies into aspects like social media advertising, online events, and tailored communication. These modifications intended to deliver a smooth and captivating experience throughout the complete customer journey, ensuring uniformity and preserving the exclusivity and status linked to luxury, even in a wholly digital setting.

E-commerce, historically seen as a threat to the perception of exclusivity of high-end products and a high number of resources that the company could invest, is now a key



element of the commercial strategy. Brands such as Louis Vuitton and Chanel, traditionally reluctant to sell online, have launched digital platforms that combine convenience and customization. Gucci, for example, has launched an augmented reality (AR) application that allows customers to virtually try on shoes, providing an immersive experience that reflects the essence of luxury even in a digital environment. Additionally, virtual reality (VR) has been used to create virtual showrooms, allowing consumers to discover exclusive collections from the comfort of their homes, without compromising the attention to detail that characterizes the industry.

Another important advance is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to optimize the customer experience. Advanced personalized recommendation systems, complex chatbots, and predictive analytics allow brands to anticipate consumers' needs and provide highly adapted service. This strategy not only improves customer loyalty, but also reinforces the brand's image of exclusivity and originality. Digitalization has also created new opportunities for luxury to merge with the metaverse, a developing virtual context that could reframe the very concept of ownership and interaction with luxury objects.

### Sustainability and Innovative Horizons

In the current landscape, sustainability is one of the main priorities for luxury brands. Consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, increasingly give importance to the ethical and environmental commitment of companies, considering it a crucial element in their purchasing choices. Kapferer and Michaut (2020) highlight how sustainable luxury, initially seen as an oxymoron, is becoming a tangible reality thanks to specific innovations and strategies.

A key example of this evolution is the luxury second-hand market, which is showing a notable expansion. Services such as Vestiaire Collective and Vinted have changed the vision of the second-hand product, presenting it as a sustainable and responsible option without sacrificing exclusivity. These platforms not only support the circular economy, but also satisfy the desire of consumers to have access to iconic luxury goods at more affordable prices. This trend has led brands to embrace the second-hand market, through initiatives such as the “Gucci Vault” project, which offers a curated selection of

certified vintage items.

In addition to the second-hand market, many high-end brands are implementing eco-friendly materials and production methods. Burberry, for example, has eliminated the use of single-use plastic and aims to be completely carbon neutral by 2040. Similarly, Stella McCartney stands out for its innovative use of recycled and biodegradable materials, highlighting that sustainability can go hand in hand with luxury design.

Transparency has become another key aspect of sustainability in the luxury sector. By implementing blockchain, brands can ensure full traceability of materials and production processes, providing consumers with the confidence that their purchases follow ethical and ecological standards. This method not only increases consumer trust, but positions brands as responsible leaders in an ever-changing market.

### III. 3 Luxury and Art: An Intrinsic Bond

The relationship between luxury and art is inherently linked to shared values like uniqueness, authenticity, and a deep sense of timelessness. Both fields seek to provoke feelings, narrate captivating tales, and spark a profound sense of longing and uniqueness. In its core, luxury embodies expert artistry, uniqueness, and the charm of lasting beauty, whereas art signifies imaginative expression, intellectual richness, and societal reflection. Together, they create a synergy that enhances the perceived worth of both domains, transforming the combination of art and luxury into more than a strategy; it becomes an organic alliance grounded in mutual values.

This link, profoundly rooted in cultural and aesthetic heritage, traces its beginnings to the customs of royal courts and noble patrons. Historically, these prominent individuals commissioned distinctive artworks and custom luxury items as emblems of authority, prestige, and sophistication. These practices highlighted the interconnectedness of art and luxury as means to display wealth and cultural dominance. Currently, this tradition persists through strategic alliances between high-end brands and famous artists, with prominent instances including Louis Vuitton's collaborations with Yayoi Kusama and Jeff Koons. These partnerships turn products into artistic wearable items, merging

functionality with beauty. For example, Kusama's distinctive polka dots and Koons' reimagining of classic artworks bring a modern artistic touch to traditional luxury goods, transforming them into collectible items instead of simple accessories. These efforts emphasize common values like careful attention to detail, creativity, and an unwavering quest for excellence.

Additionally, the relationship between luxury and art is strengthened by prominent cultural events and a growing overlap of contemporary art with digital technology. Occasions like Art Basel, Venice Biennale, and Frieze Art Fair act as venues for luxury brands to display their creativity and cultural affiliation. These occurrences not only establish the brands as cultural benefactors but also enable them to connect with an astute audience that regards art as a fundamental part of their identity. Brands such as Prada and Gucci, for example, have funded exhibitions or partnered with both new and well-known artists to craft engaging experiences that connect fashion, art, and culture. Through these efforts, luxury brands go beyond merely linking to art; they actively participate in the art scene, encouraging innovation and cultural exchange.

In the digital age, the fusion of art and luxury has grown beyond tangible products and events to encompass digital platforms and technologies. The emergence of NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens) has provided luxury brands with fresh opportunities to connect with their audiences through the creation of exclusive digital artworks that are limited, collectible, and rich in value. For instance, Gucci's foray into the NFT realm with its digital footwear and artworks illustrates how brands are utilizing technology to boost their creative partnerships and engage with younger, tech-oriented audiences. This fusion of contemporary art and digital technology enhances the link between art and luxury while also transforming the idea of exclusivity in the digital era.

The connection between luxury and art also reaches into the area of experiential marketing. Numerous high-end brands have started to create artistic exhibits and immersive spaces that enable consumers to interact with their products more profoundly. For example, Dior has incorporated art into its store layouts and temporary installations, crafting environments where the distinction between retail and gallery fades. These encounters emphasize the skill and creativity involved in luxury items, constructing a story that appeals to the consumer's longing for cultural enhancement and uniqueness. In the same

vein, brands such as Hermès and Chanel have employed museum-style displays to showcase their history and artisanship, bolstering their enduring allure and artistic connection.

At its essence, the connection between luxury and art mirrors common values and ambitions. Both fields emphasize quality, creativity, and cultural importance, which collectively influence the perception of worth. Art brings intellectual richness and cultural significance to luxury, enhancing it beyond mere objects, while luxury offers art a physical manifestation and availability that expands its influence. This reciprocal enhancement cultivates an environment where art and luxury elevate each other's importance, maintaining their lasting relevance in a swiftly changing cultural milieu.

Besides generating value, this collaboration between art and luxury acts as a strategic mechanism for differentiating the brand. In a fiercely competitive market, where genuine experiences and narratives are crucial, the incorporation of art enables luxury brands to differentiate themselves by providing something truly distinctive. Artistic partnerships add a dimension of cultural legitimacy and creativity that resonates with contemporary consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, who value experiences and authenticity more than mere materialism. For these individuals, possessing a luxury product associated with a renowned artist or a unique collaboration serves not only as a sign of affluence but also embodies their personal identity and cultural refinement.

In summary, the connection between luxury and art is more than a historical occurrence or a marketing tactic; it represents a fundamental relationship that persists in evolving and adjusting to contemporary sensibilities. By embracing common principles of uniqueness, authenticity, and timelessness, luxury and art create a collaboration that goes beyond the limits of commerce and culture. Through notable partnerships, engaging experiences, or the investigation of innovative digital realms, this synergy persistently reshapes the understanding of art and luxury, guaranteeing their lasting significance and appeal.

### A Collaboration of Values

Berthon et al. (2009) define luxury as a set of aesthetic, functional and experiential values. However, what makes luxury truly unique is its ability to transcend mere functionality to become a means of cultural and social communication. The same exclusivity

that characterizes luxury goods manifests itself in works of art, making the fusion between these two fields fluid. Louis Vuitton, for example, has worked with Yayoi Kusama, one of the most relevant contemporary artists, to create collections that not only integrate aspects of her unique style, but also convert consumer products into true works of art.

These partnerships not only enhance the brand image, but also enhance the perception of luxury as a timeless and deeply cultural concept. Kapferer and Bastien (2017) highlight how art confers an intellectual dimension to luxury goods, elevating them beyond their material value and positioning them as symbols of culture and status.

### Luxury as a Supporter of Art

Events like Art Basel and the Venice Biennale are unique opportunities for luxury brands to showcase their creativity and highlight their commitment to culture. According to the 2023 Global Art Market Report by Art Basel and UBS, luxury brands are a major component of financing art events globally, investing millions of dollars to ensure presence and visibility in these selective settings. Brands like Dior and Prada not only support these events, but frequently work with emerging artists to develop immersive experiences that deepen the connection between the brand and the art scene.

Deloitte's Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2023 attests that such initiatives are not limited to branding operations but constitute a sustainable strategy to position brands as modern patrons. By supporting art, brands create a story that connects them to eternal and universal values, elevating their cultural importance and their appeal to a refined audience.

### Digital Art and NFTs: The Tomorrow of Luxury and Art

Technological advances have created new opportunities for the interaction between luxury and art, especially through the use of NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens). NFTs enable high-end brands to create exclusive digital artworks, often paired with tangible goods, that provide customers with completely new experiences. Gucci, for example, has presented its NFT collection that combines aspects of fashion and digital art, attracting a new generation of young and more tech-savvy consumers (Business of Fashion, 2022).

This combination of luxury and technology not only increases the perceived value of the brand, but also enables the development of virtual ownership and collecting models that could transform the concept of exclusivity. Berthon et al. (2009) propose that the future of luxury may depend on the ability to generate experiences that transcend physical limits, a concept that is fully realized through NFTs and the metaverse.

### Development Outlook and Strategic Reflections

Artistic collaborations are emerging as a key element of the expansion strategy for high-end brands. According to Bain & Company, such alliances can increase a brand's perceived value by more than 20%, making it emerge as a cultural as well as commercial leader. This phenomenon is clearly visible in emerging markets such as China, where younger consumers consider art to be a key aspect of luxury goods.

At the same time, brands are expanding their cultural influence through their own initiatives, such as the opening of corporate art galleries. Prada, for example, has established the Fondazione Prada, a venue dedicated to contemporary art that not only strengthens the brand, but also generates a lasting influence on the global cultural scene.

However, the success of such initiatives will be determined by the ability of brands to ensure that their collaborations are genuine and in line with their values. As Kapferer and Bastien (2017) highlight, transparency and a genuine commitment to culture will be essential to prevent these initiatives from being seen as opportunistic.

The relationship between luxury and art is not just a marketing tactic, but a fundamental component of the luxury world. From promoting international art events to creating extraordinary digital works, high-end brands are changing their approach to the art scene. This connection not only consolidates the cultural positioning of brands, but also generates added value for consumers, who see luxury as a cultural and intellectual experience, as well as a visual one. With the constant advancement of technology and the expansion of the global market, the collaboration between luxury and art is expected to remain one of the most active and influential foundations of the luxury industry in the coming decades.

## CHAPTER 4: Research Methodology

### IV.1. Study Design

The goal of this study is to explore the concept of immortality in extravagance items,

centering on the artification prepared. To our knowledge, there is limited research on the various aspects of immortality at the intersection of craftsmanship and extravagance. Therefore, we obtain a qualitative inquiry into the approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the role of immortality within the craftsmanship of extravagance items by considering definitions, similarities and contrasts within this framework.

Following strategies used in institutional research, we seek to explore individuals' perspectives and their interaction with the overarching concept of timelessness in the production of luxury items through in-depth interviews (Acquier, Carbone, & Moatti, 2018; Chaney et al., 2019). In-depth interviews, as suggested by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), provide a suitable framework to investigate theoretical constructs with observational information. By using a semi-structured approach, we expected to delve into the intricacies of respondents' reflections and allow them to provide both reflective and real-time rich responses (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2019). Our direct survey, comprising twenty-two questions, was carefully crafted to explore the complexity of the idea of timelessness within the artification of luxury.

The interviews will be conducted in an informative way, giving interviewees the opportunity to clarify their points of view. The interviewer's part will be primarily to reflect on discrepancies and look for additional subtle elements, particularly viewpoints of timelessness to evade inclination.

In the selection criteria, preference will be given to individuals who have extensive knowledge of the arts and crafts or luxury to create an environment in which they can speak unreservedly about the idea of timelessness.

The analysis of the data in qualitative research consists in preparing and organizing data, reducing them into themes through a process of coding and finally presenting the data in figures, tables or a discussion (Creswell, 2007). This general process was followed to identify concepts that offer insights into the role of timelessness in the artification of luxury products.

Data which consists of interview transcripts were analyzed following a constant comparative method (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). First, it consists in reading and segmenting the data into general themes. Second, these general themes are refined even more deeply to



end up with general concepts which provide insight into specific coding categories that relate the role of timelessness in the artification of luxury products. Then, these concepts were analyzed in the light of the relevant literature. Finally, information from this coding phase is developed into a discussion. In order not to be biased a cross-coding approach was implemented among us.

## IV.2. Sample

In-depth interviews were used to investigate the role of timelessness in the artification of luxury products. They were conducted with twelve respondents, of which nine were female and three were male. The respondents' ages ranged from 20 and 56 years old and they have different educational and professional backgrounds. Four management experts, four artists and four luxury consumers were interviewed. (See table I) The duration of these interviews will vary, with a normal length of approximately 45 minutes. The interviews will take place virtually in the everyday environments of the interviewees, e.g. in their working environment or at home.

The respondents were selected depending on their knowledge about art and luxury or their experience with the consumption of luxury products. The purpose was to let them talk about the notion of timelessness freely and then analyze it and cross the three concepts. Experts also helped us achieve this process. The interviewees stemmed from our connections to the case study supervisor, especially the experts, as well as from our personal circle of acquaintances. Most of the respondents were therefore already known to us. The number of interviews that have been predetermined will be evenly divided between experts, artisans and consumers of luxury in order to get a diverse perspective on the subject and possibly pave the way for future research.

The number of interviews was set by our case study director and was equally distributed between experts, artists, and consumers. The purpose was to have a first outlook and maybe open the path to further research on this topic. Interviews mainly took place virtually in the respondent's workplace or home. Their duration varied from 30 to 75 minutes, with an average duration of 42 minutes.

*Table I: In-depth interviews: respondents profiles*

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Interview Location and Duration</b>
Expert	Claude C.	M		Management teacher	Workplace, 0:58h
Expert	Nada M.	F	36	Associate Professor Marketing	Home, 1:15h
Luxury Consumer	Matthias S.	M	26	Architecture Student	Home, 0:35h
Artist	Elena V.	F	31	Footwear Designer and Artist	Home, 0:49h
Luxury Consumer	Marika T.	F	30	Luxury Worker	Home, 0:30h
Artist	Fabrice W.	M	55	Collector and National education executive	Home, 0:50h
Luxury Consumer	Anne-Sophie L.	F	56	National education executive	Home, 0:30h
Artist	Aranzazu G.	F	35	Professor of Marketing and Phd	Home 0:35h
Artist	Elsa C.	F	27	Singer and Freelance in Marketing and Communication	Studio, 0:47h
Expert	Ling J.	F	37	Phd in luxury and brand management	Home, 0:31h
Luxury Consumer	Martina P.	F	20	Student	Home, 1:00h

### IV.3. Measures: Operationalization of Concepts

An interview guide was prepared for conducting the interviews, which was followed when conducting the interviews in order to guarantee a certain degree of uniformity. The guide consists of three parts. First, personal information such as age, country of origin and information on education and occupation was requested. At the beginning, questions were also asked about general familiarity with art and whether people regularly visit museums or exhibitions, for example. The same applies to familiarity with luxury and whether you regularly buy luxury products.

This is followed by the content section, which consists of a block of questions on "Art and Luxury" and "The notion of timelessness". The "Art and Luxury" part asks about similarities and differences between the two. The questions also revolve around the respondents' view of the characteristics of artworks and luxury products, as well as the incorporation of artistic elements in luxury products and the effect this has on the perceived value of these. With this block of questions, we aim to find out how art and luxury affect each other in the eyes of the interviewees and how the combination of both affects the perception of consumers. The third part explores the notion of timelessness and begins with the prompt to define timelessness in general. The further content of the block of questions is divided into luxury and timelessness and art and timelessness.

The aim of the former is to inquire about the concept of timelessness in connection with luxury products in order to find out how consumers perceive the strategy of brands and the value of a luxury brand. The aim of this part is to explore the importance of timelessness in the definition of luxury products and its general influence on perceived value, as well as other factors such as design, marketing and consumer education regarding timelessness. This section also concluded with content on the challenges and opportunities of perceived timelessness.

In the latter, the aim is to obtain more detailed input on timelessness in relation to art by asking about the definition, the significance, but also the targeted incorporation of timelessness in works of art. Essentially, the aim of this section was to gain an understanding of how timelessness and art are connected. It is about understanding the enduring nature of art and its ability to transcend temporal boundaries. This concludes the questionnaire, along with sincere thanks to the respondents for taking part in the interview.

#### IV.4. Data Collection and Analysis

The method of collecting data is a semi structured interview (SSI). The SSI is conducted in the form of a conversation and, unlike a focus group, only one person is questioned per interview (Newcomer et al., 2015, pp. 493–497). The SSI is conducted with the help of an interview guide that contains the content blocks and questions to be addressed. This guarantees on the one hand that the same topics are covered for each interviewee in order to guarantee compatibility, and on the other hand that the answers of each interviewee can still be addressed individually, for example with follow-up questions. Essentially, the guide is an outline of all the topics that definitely need to be discussed, arranged in a certain order, which, however, does not necessarily have to be followed should the conversation take a different course (Newcomer et al., 2015, p. 493). In principle, the SSI is suitable if more than a few open questions are to be asked, and flexibility is required in order to react accordingly. Nevertheless, closed questions can also be used well, as you can start with a closed question and then add a "why" or "how" follow-up question. This is an ideal way to ask about the individual thoughts of a respondent (Newcomer et al., 2015, p. 497).

The interviewees have declared their consent regarding the collection and processing of data before the interview and have been informed that their answers will be treated anonymously. Afterwards, a few demographic questions are asked. These are traditionally asked at the end of the interview, whether qualitative or quantitative, but since information such as profession, experience, expertise and familiarity with the topic are relevant for possible inquiries, these are asked in the beginning here.

The SSIs are then analyzed using the Gioia methodology (Gioia, 2012). This essentially consists of five steps. First, the interview transcripts are taken and the so-called first order analysis is carried out, in which categories are formed by the coding of text passages. These categories use the actual language of the data. This allows around 50-100 concepts to be derived. These are then grouped thematically in the second order analysis, in which multiple first order concepts are grouped together.

New data is also collected as part of the second order analysis. It is a theory-led sampling which then specifically asks about the second order concepts. Normally, the second-order

analysis only ends when no new second-order concepts can be discovered through further interviews. This state is called theoretical saturation. As a specific selection of respondents was considered within the scope of this study, data was not collected until theoretical saturation was reached and data collection was completed with the completion of the 12 interviews.

The aggregated second-order dimensions are then created, which happens after the data collection in step 2 has been completed. This results in 3-5 original theoretical dimensions, which can then be used to build a data structure in the form of a diagram in the next step. This shows all the theoretical building blocks that result from the analysis of the data. However, as this data structure is static, an interactive model is then added, which shows all the dynamics, processes and relationships. This final step concludes the Gioia methodology.

## CHAPTER 5: Findings and Case Study Analysis

Setting out on the second-order categories examination marks a critical point in our subjective investigation, signaling a move from the foundational experiences of first-order examination to a more nuanced and interpretive layer.

As we drench ourselves in hub coding, our center shifts from the discrete components distinguished in first-order investigation to the interconnects and basic designs that weave through the information. This interpretive endeavor includes unwinding the internet of connections between distinctive categories, manufacturing a more profound comprehension of the higher-level concepts that tie them together. The point is to rise above the surface-level portrayals, diving into the conceptual lavishness implanted inside the information.

In substance, the second-order examination serves as a door to a more theoretical understanding, lifting our investigation past the quick perceptions and welcoming an all encompassing translation of the subjective scene. Through this methodological advancement, we look to unwind the idle complexities and divulge the basic accounts that shape our conceptual system.

### V.1. Anchor the product in the culture and a brand heritage

The starting second-order subject category inferred from a meticulous analysis of the interviews, pointing to develop a more abstract understanding, elevating our exploration beyond immediate perceptions and welcoming an holistic interpretation of the qualitative scene, is the category of “Artistic and cultural foundations”.

It’s made up of several subcategories: extraordinary (that’s included rarity, exclusivity and exceptionality), culture, art as precursor, history and/or heritage, art as temporal concept and respect.

The respondents' intuitions illuminate the symbiotic relationship between luxury and art, resulting in an extraordinary narrative that transcends the ordinary. Claude C. shares with us how his point of view on transcendent and extraordinary essence that both luxury and art aspire to invoke. *“This is why today luxury creates bridges with art by saying we are part of the same supra-universe in a way which is that we are outside of everyday life, outside of people's normal life.”*

In addition, their rarity and exclusivity emphasize the exceptional nature of these products. Defendants argue that these goods, distinguished by their scarcity and availability, acquire an exceptional status that adds complexity and increases their value. This sentiment is echoed as respondents stress the meticulous preservation of these exceptional qualities to support the product's intrinsic value. At the same time, the strategic use of

limited editions appears as a key factor in maintaining exclusivity, a notion reinforced by respondents preferring a cautious and moderate approach. This key utilization adjusts consistently with the broader subject of agelessness in extravagance artifacts, emphasizing how a fragile adjustment between restrictiveness and persevering offer contributes to the ageless appeal of these extraordinary manifestations. Eventually, the subcategories related to the uncommon inside aesthetic and social establishments shed light on the exchange of irregularity, eliteness, and extraordinary qualities, shaping an essential measurement in comprehending the persevering offer and ageless noteworthiness of extravagance items.

The essence of cultural continuity and the persistent attraction of artifacts beyond their temporal context is encapsulated by this. Fabrice W. further accentuates the significance of exceptional cultural knowledge, affirming that individuals with a profound understanding of culture are inclined to seize objects of extraordinary aesthetic, artistic, and historical merit, suggesting a nuanced appreciation that transcends the mainstream. The emergence of 'high culture' depicts luxury as not accessible to anyone but only for those with a deep cultural understanding, in accordance with the idea that owning such artifacts indicates connoisseurship. The association of a brand with art, as conveyed in the sentiment, underscores the enduring legacy of such collaborations, linking them to broader societal and cultural narratives. *"When a brand, which is an asset for business, associates with art, which is something that remains. So, this is owned by the Society, the Culture, and Humanity in general."*

Indeed, these insights reveal the complex layers of culture in the context of plastic arts and show how a deep connection with cultural roots and specific knowledge can contribute to the participation of these structures.

The opinions of the interviewees explain the subcategories included in the main concept of art, as a first indication of the main categories of art and art-culture, which most recognize their enduring role in the fine arts. According to Fabrice W., *"Luxury progresses simultaneously with art and draws from art, which is probably less true the other way around. I'm not sure that luxury contributes much to art."*

This observation implies a dynamic interplay, emphasizing art's influence on luxury. Furthermore, he added the acknowledgment that emphasizes how art has a tangible impact on luxury, particularly through partnerships that incorporate innovative techniques

and materials *"collaborations between major brands and artists have always existed"*.

The historical context of the luxury industry embracing artistic practices is highlighted with the statement, Fabrice W. also suggested a mutual exchange where luxury actively incorporates artistic methodologies. *"The luxury industry at that time completely embraced the practices of artists"*. Moreover, Elsa C.'s viewpoint emphasizes how art has a timeless quality and encourages an exploration of how these attributes can be applied to luxury artifacts *"artwork is way more timeless than most of the luxury products on the market"*.

In essence, these subcategories collectively illuminate the intricate dynamics between art and luxury, offering a comprehensive understanding of how art serves as a precursor, influencing both the technical and aesthetic dimensions, and contributing to the enduring allure and timelessness of luxury products.

About the subcategory of history and heritage, we were able to draw some interesting observations. For instance, Elsa C. emphasizes the profound impact of history and heritage on these artifacts, stating that: *"Their work has crossed all generations and remains relevant."*

The purpose of limited series production is to disseminate artists' works, contribute to the national heritage, and establish timeless markers in the luxury industry. The significance of preserving elements that connect with a brand's history and genesis, highlighted by the numbered bezel, is underscored by the importance of maintaining continuity. The recognition that art is a timeless product that carries the symbols and details of its creation is very similar to the eternal nature of the world in the past. The interplay between history, heritage, and timelessness becomes evident as respondents discuss the importance of certain designs and models That remain unchanged for a long time., signaling a timeless quality. The concept of being perceived as timeless is explored, emphasizing the endurance of an image that withstands the test of time while remaining relevant and in fashion. Luxury brands' incorporation of historical references, maintenance of old models, and the use of archival departments exemplify a conservation mindset, fostering timelessness. The continuity highlighted in models created by artists in the early 20th century and their presence in contemporary collections exemplifies the transition of heritage, bridging the past with the present. Importantly, small pieces of history and heritage in art and culture



provide historical information that shows the enduring nature of man-made luxury, reflecting the style of the past in the art and materials of the present.

Another very important thing to underline and that we have deduced from the words of Martina P. is that respect for past works of art, at the time of the introduction of new forms and new ideas of art, must be respected in order to avoid invoking in the observer a feeling of dissatisfaction with innovation. *"The challenge is to maintain a respect for the art of the past while introducing something new and personal."*

Finally, the notions of similarity and complementarity highlights that the historical connection between art and luxury underscores the observation made by participants that a work of art and a luxury product can intersect. This historical link suggests that luxury and art share similarities in their essence: *"Luxury was consubstantial with art a few centuries ago."* (Claude C.). Moreover, participants recognize that luxury's historical confluence with art underscores a shared appreciation for beauty, craftsmanship, and exclusivity across different epochs and cultures.

## *V.2. Highlight the unique characteristics and quality of products*

The second section we were able to draw from the interviews is related to the physical characteristics of the products, especially the quality. We found seven subconcepts in link with the quality of the products which are: uniqueness, craftsmanship and non-reproducibility, quality and durability, authenticity, expertise, technique and precision, aspect of beauty and aesthetic and creation process.

The concept of uniqueness is pivotal in understanding the intersection of art and luxury. Participants underscored this notion, recognizing the intrinsic singularity associated with both domains: *"Works of art are unique because it is a way of creating abnormality. This is also the case for many handcrafted objects."* (Claude C.). This emphasizes the exceptional nature inherent in artistic creation, which extends to luxury goods crafted with meticulous attention to detail. Moreover, the contemporary landscape of luxury reinforces this idea, with brands leveraging the connection with art to accentuate the distinctiveness of their products. This sentiment was echoed by participants, as exemplified by the observation, *"As today luxury has become an industry, brands are strengthening this link with art which is a way of telling buyers that the luxury product remains*

*different.*" (Claude C.). This highlights how the narrative of exclusivity and individuality remains central to luxury branding. Furthermore, the bespoke nature of certain luxury items amplifies their uniqueness: *"If it's luxury in the sense of haute couture, you may find only one."* (Aranzazu G.). This underscores the bespoke craftsmanship and limited availability that contribute to the perception of luxury as something inherently rare and exclusive. In addition, it is important to note that the uniqueness inherent in art differs fundamentally from that of luxury: *"What fundamentally characterizes art is uniqueness in the sense of non-reproducibility."* (Claude C.). While each artwork stands as an irreplaceable creation, luxury, although also cherishing exclusivity and individuality, may offer a form of limited yet desirable uniqueness. This can be seen in the realm of luxury goods where certain pieces are produced in limited editions or within the realm of haute couture where each piece is meticulously crafted but may be replicated in a limited manner. Thus, while art seeks absolute and non-reproducible uniqueness, luxury may provide a more nuanced form of exclusivity, enhancing its allure.

Craftsmanship and non-reproducibility are central to both art and luxury, embodying a dedication to excellence and authenticity. This fundamental quality is essential in defining the inherent value of luxury goods, where durability, evident in both physical construction and meticulous craftsmanship, defines their essence. As Elsa C. reflected, *"Material plays a crucial role in creating a timeless identity for luxury products. The emphasis is on good, durable material that maintains its quality over time."* This focus on enduring materials highlights the everlasting appeal of luxury items, accentuated by their non-reproducible nature. Participants also recognized the inseparable link between luxury and craftsmanship, affirming, *"Luxury doesn't operate without the notion of craftsmanship."* (Fabrice W.). Indeed, craftsmanship stands as the hallmark of luxury, whether in the creation of paintings or bespoke products, each uniquely crafted in distinctive ways. However, participants also acknowledged that while quality is crucial, it does not guarantee perpetual relevance: *"A luxury product could be of excellent quality, but maybe after a few decades, it will be out of the not up to date anymore and maybe for all people and not modern enough."* (Nada M.). This underscores the multifaceted nature of timelessness in luxury, where factors beyond quality alone contribute to a product's enduring appeal.

The enduring allure of authenticity is illuminated by the recognition that pioneers in any domain retain a timeless quality: *"Everyone copies and develops it in several ways. But the pioneer, it always remains timeless."* (Aranzazu G.) This sentiment encapsulates the enduring quest for singularity and originality in both art and luxury. Yet, a distinction emerges in the perception of authenticity between these two areas. While art is seen as a platform for genuine expression, *"Maybe in art, it's less about the social aspect or showing off and more about genuine expression,"* reflects Elsa C., luxury is often associated with social status and conspicuous consumption. However, the tide seems to be shifting as collaborations with artists infuse luxury brands with a newfound sense of authenticity: *"As an artist, I think I'm more receptive to these collaborations because they appear more authentic. There's an intensity that may be lacking when it's solely about luxury."* (Elsa C.). The resonance of authenticity lies in its ability to imbue products and experiences with depth and meaning. *"When there's an artist involved, there's authenticity, a genuine story that consumers, including myself, find more meaningful and are more responsive to,"* affirms Elsa C. This underscores the transformative power of authenticity, shaping not only consumer preferences but also the narratives woven by luxury brands seeking to forge deeper connections with their audience.

Expertise and technique play a pivotal role in the luxury industry, where mastery of craftsmanship and materials are celebrated as hallmarks of excellence. *"I think with techniques and the choice of materials that are also used,"* reflects Marika T., emphasizing the importance of technical prowess in creating luxurious products that stand the test of time. For instance, a distinguishing factor between fast fashion and luxury brands lies in the meticulous attention to detail, akin to the craftsmanship found in art: *"If you compare a fast fashion purchase to one from a luxury brand, you'll notice more attention to detail, similar to art."* (Martina P.). This underscores the importance of precision and expertise in luxury production, where every aspect of a product is carefully considered and executed. Also, collaborations between luxury brands and artists are viewed as a testament to the recognition of artistic expertise. *"When a brand collaborates with an artist, it means they hold them as an expert in their field and they will appropriate a part of their creativity and vice versa,"* remarks Fabrice W. Such partnerships not only lend credibility to the brand but also infuse the products with a sense of artistic authenticity. The work of a

signature artist becomes a sign of trust and the brand is established as an "expert in the field". "*Techniques and material choices are portrayed as vital components with techniques and the choice of materials that are also used*". Furthermore, participants acknowledge the significance of brand heritage and history in establishing expertise and credibility. "*Because they are better than all of the rest because of the heritage of the brand, because of the history of its positioning, maybe also because of the way the products were made,*" suggests Nada M., highlighting how craftsmanship and technique are integral to the brand's identity. Overall, perfection and precision are essential principles guiding both artistic expression and luxury craftsmanship.

In exploring the unique characteristics of art and luxury, the aspect of beauty and aesthetic emerges as a defining feature. Participants provide valuable insights into how beauty and aesthetic considerations shape perceptions and experiences within the domains of fashion and luxury. In the context of fashion and luxury, there's a prevalent emphasis on presentation and display, often associated with showcasing one's status and style: "*In fashion and luxury, it's more about showing off.*" (Elsa C.). This highlights the role of aesthetic appeal in conveying a sense of elegance and sophistication, which are highly valued attributes within the luxury market.

Moreover, participants recognize the enduring allure of timeless beauty in luxury products: "*People want to be fashionable all the time.*" (Elsa C.). This underscores the significance of aesthetics in luxury, where products are crafted to exude a sense of timeless beauty that transcends fleeting trends. A fundamental characteristic of art, according to one participant, is the pursuit of aesthetic considerations for beauty. They remark, "*What fundamentally characterizes art is a pursuit of aesthetic considerations for beauty.*" (Claude C.). This underscores the intrinsic link between art and the quest for beauty and aesthetic pleasure. Interestingly, the distinction between art and luxury is highlighted by another participant, who emphasizes the philosophical dimension of aesthetics: "*The fundamental difference between art and luxury is this aesthetic dimension, meaning that aesthetics in the philosophical sense, in the sense that art is not necessarily beautiful.*" (Fabrice W.). This suggests that while art may prioritize aesthetic considerations, luxury may encompass a broader range of aesthetic experiences beyond traditional notions of beauty.

Furthermore, participants recognize the role of presentation in enhancing the aesthetic appeal of luxury products. One participant observes, *"The fact that luxury products are sometimes exposed or exhibited in points of sale as art objects. Sometimes it looks like a piece of art."* (Nada M.). This highlights how the visual presentation of luxury goods can evoke the aesthetic experience typically associated with art.

In the exploration of the creation process within the realms of art and luxury, participants provide insights into the unique approaches and philosophies that underpin both creative areas. Participants emphasize the narrative aspect inherent in both art and luxury, noting that storytelling plays a central role in the creation process. *"Both in art and luxury, we tell a story, and the stories often share similarities. They constantly inspire each other, creating a harmonious relationship."* (Elsa C.). This highlights how storytelling serves as a unifying element, allowing for the expression of ideas and emotions in both art and luxury. Participants underscore the artist's autonomy and creative vision, which drive the artistic process. They note the importance of self-expression and storytelling, suggesting that artists often prioritize crafting their narrative before expressing themselves. This emphasis on artistic freedom highlights the ability of artists to shape their creative path, allowing for authenticity and spontaneity in the creative process. As Martina P. suggests, *"The art should flow naturally, avoiding feeling artificial or forced,"* emphasizing the importance of allowing creativity to unfold organically. Finally, participants also draw attention to the distinction between the creation processes of art and luxury, noting the human element inherent in artistic production. As Ling J. observes, *"Luxury produced by machine and arts are produced by humans,"* highlighting the craftsmanship and personal touch associated with artistic creation.

### V.3. Strengthen social status and brand value

The third category of second order themes that we were able to derive from the interview data is "Consumer Perception and Social Dynamics". It consists of 13 categories, which are social status, emotion/subjectivity, changing societal values, sustainability, brand value or general value and investment value, accessibility and visibility, reputation, customer focus, sense of belonging, as well as iconic/classic pieces, and distinction.

The first concept, "social status", describes the motivation behind the purchase of luxury products and works of art and focuses in particular on the role of social status, recognition and the urge to belong to a certain social group with an exclusive status. In essence, the interviewees describe that people buy luxury goods and art for a variety of reasons, but some of them are just "showing off wealth" or gaining social status, because luxury brands create a kind of exclusive circle that gives consumers a sense of belonging as stated here: *"I think [art and luxury] have in common the pursuit of the consumer that buys art and luxury products because both of them, I think they try to gain like a social status."* (Elena V., Artist).

The concept of "emotion/subjectivity" describes the differences between luxury products and art, focusing on the emotional connection, timelessness and intention behind the creation. Respondents pointed out that luxury products are made primarily for profit, whereas art is an expression of human feelings and therefore has a greater emotional impact on consumers. This leads to timeless perception: *"Art can make us think and we'll change minds about things and that makes it timeless."*

It is also clear that art is timeless precisely because of the evocation of emotions and that the intentions of the artists can be felt across generations, whereas luxury products alone also have artistic elements, but do not have the same emotional depth: *"Works that convey emotions and resist over time thanks to their soul are timeless."*

The category "changing societal values" looks at the relationship between luxury fashion, trends and social attitudes and emphasizes the importance of addressing shifting perspectives, including sustainability, which will be discussed in the next section. As social attitudes change, luxury brands need to adapt their strategies to these changes, incorporate elements of art and focus on timelessness to maintain their appeal.

Societal attitudes are shifting towards minimalism and owning less valuable items, according to respondents. Luxury brands should focus on creating timeless, high-quality products that reflect this trend: *"Do they opt for a minimalist approach, possessing only a handful of high-quality, enduring items, or do they succumb to accumulating a vast array of products?"*

It is also emphasized, in the spirit of timelessness, that values change. Accordingly, it may be that things that were perhaps considered timeless are no longer justifiable today, as one interviewee says here: *"The main obstacle that they can have, I guess is like. How the mentality of society is changing because what society was thinking like 50 years ago? What was luxury? For example, they were probably thinking it was like the use of crocodile skin."*

In line with the previous category, "sustainability" also describes a changing value. Sustainability is a mega-trend that is perceived as increasingly important in large parts of society. In the context of luxury products, this primarily means a long lifespan and durability of the product. Accordingly, consumers value it highly when products last longer and their consumption follows environmentally sustainable practices. According to the interviewees, the sustainability of luxury products is primarily about the fact that the idea of being able to use a product for its entire life is very appealing to consumers, as described here: *"The idea that you can use a luxury item throughout your entire life is particularly appealing."* This is primarily linked to the perceived durability and quality of the products, as one of the experts describes here: *"I like sustainability, if I buy something very expensive, I hope this can, well, be durable and it can last for a long time."*

The "brand value" category describes the value of the brand in the context of luxury products and emphasizes how important timelessness, quality and the perception of the brand are seen. As previously described, quality and craftsmanship play a major role here, as quality in particular is seen as an essential part of what constitutes luxury. As described here by the artist: *"It's this enduring quality that elevates a product to the realm of true luxury."* (Elsa C.).

A luxury consumer highlights the significance of brand value, suggesting that it can sometimes outweigh the importance of product quality in the eyes of consumers: *"The value of the brand has become more important than the quality of the product itself."* (Martina P.). However, it is also emphasized that the importance lies in the development of an iconic brand that is associated with art, which can have the consequence that desirability increases: *"Creating an iconic identity, along with the value associated with the art, can make the product more desirable and valuable."* (Martina P.)

“Accessibility” in the context of luxury products refers to the inaccessibility of luxury products, as they are not available to everyone, not only because of their price but also because of their rarity. This results in a higher perceived value. In addition, the limited quantity of many luxury products makes them even more exclusive due to their unavailability, which according to Matthias S. (Luxury consumer) leads to increased timelessness: *"I think the quantity is also something where pieces make things more luxurious. That's for sure. And also not even only in ways of financial stuff it makes rare products more luxurious and timeless as well."*

The interviews also revealed that the association of luxury products with art can lead to a higher perceived value and rarity, as described here by one of the artists: *"It adds more value to them in the sense that they are associated with art and the world of art. It often carries a highly sacralized imagery. It's like high art. It's high culture. It's something that's not accessible to everyone."* (Aranzazu G.).

Differentiating between art and luxury in terms of accessibility also reveals that art is perceived as more accessible than luxury, which results from the fact that works of art are often on public display or in museums, which is not the case for luxury products. According to Nada M. (expert): *"I think there's something universal and accessible in art that it's not in luxury. Luxury is for the elites, is for people who can afford it."* Similarly, luxury consumer Marika T. comments on visibility and accessibility: *"It's not just that, but visibility can be a point in the sense that if you've never been exposed to it, art is a world that's a bit more difficult to access, that has less visibility in the public eye."*

The "customer orientation/didactic" concept emphasizes the importance of the consumer focus and highlights important points about education, communication and tailored marketing. With regard to educating customers about the factor of timelessness and sustainability, artist Elsa C. says: *"I guess it's good to educate people about luxury, keeping things for a long time, or at least having this circular economy with the product."* She thus suggests the importance of educating customers of luxury brands about the benefits of investing in timeless and high-quality products, also with regard to the sustainability



of their purchase.

In addition, the interviewees emphasize that storytelling regarding the brand heritage and the history of the brand would be beneficial in this respect, as described here: *"So perhaps even directly in national education and yes for brands to put more emphasis on everything that is around storytelling and the know-how of the parts and the advice, the care for products that helps to enlighten, to show and raise awareness."* (Marika T., Luxury Consumer).

Martina P. (Luxury Consumer) emphasizes: *"If a consumer has the opportunity to buy a luxury bag once a year, they will probably opt for a timeless model rather than a more recent one."* This could be interesting in the sense that the consumer could or would like to consume more if the timeless factor is more present.

The concept of "sense of belonging" deals with the feeling of membership of an exclusive group or community, which has already been addressed in the concept of "social status". Here, the respondents state that the purchase and ownership of a luxury product stems from this motivation. Martina P.: *"a luxury product is more about belonging."* She also describes how this increases the value of the product for the person: *"this can increase its value and give a sense of belonging to those who own them."*

With regard to timelessness, one can also consider whether this feeling, which appears to be important for the consumer in a long-lasting product, also has a long-lasting effect in a social sense. Also with regard to passing on the luxury product to the next generation, a higher or at least longer-lasting value could arise for the consumer.

The concept "classic/iconic pieces" deals with the actual products. The interviewees emphasize that iconic luxury products are often characterized by being the first of their kind and bring a fresh, new design or style. Expert Nada M. describes it as follows: *"Also something to present something that it's the firstness so iconic."*

It is also emphasized that the enduring appeal of classic products becomes a symbol of timelessness and is also symbolic of the brand's heritage: *"Products that maintain their appeal over time become icons."* (Martina P, Luxury Consumer).

The artist Elsa C. also emphasizes that such iconic products often become a symbol for the entire brand and are therefore immediately recognizable: *"This is because the bag itself has become the icon of the brand."* This is most likely true for many of these first products launched by today's established luxury brands. They are seen as classic and timeless, representing iconic, high-quality pieces that are prized for their qualities as stated here: *"I like to buy classic pieces from classic brands."* (Matthias S., Luxury Consumer) and here: *"I think the most timeless things are classic pieces."* (Matthias S., Luxury Consumer").

Finally, the concept of "distinction" deals with a number of different topics. On the one hand, it is about the unique personality of the brands and products. They are often very distinct and contain codes that make it recognizable for the consumer which luxury brand is concerned. They reveal the character of the brand, as described here: *"So, yes it brings a certain personality to the products."* (Marika T., Luxury Consumer) or here: *"In luxury and in fashion the timeless side of a piece or a luxury house will be its codes, it is what will define the personality of the house or in any case its values, I think."* (Marika T., Luxury Consumer). These key points emphasize the importance of distinction in luxury and art, focusing on the unique personality and defining values that contribute to a brand's timeless appeal by being distinguishable from other brands with their codes, but also consistently recognizable by using timeless codes.

#### V.4. Anchor the product in time and withstand trends

In this section we have decided to gather and segment all the notions related to time that were announced during the interviews. We will thus focus on temporality and evolution. Temporality describes any element that falls within time and has a temporal value. Temporality embraces thus the notion of time, timelessness and evolution which is intrinsically linked to timelessness. As we said before, the word timelessness is widely used by both experts and customers to describe artworks and luxury products but without clearly defining it, nor analyzing the role it has on the articulated luxury products.

After having conducted our several interviews, we are now able to draw several concepts from this timelessness notions which are: art temporality, inherent longevity, generational

transmission, recognition, trend resistance, instantaneity, reinterpretation, redundancy and lasting ephemerality.

The concept of art as temporal is a subcategory that our respondents suggest to us through their insights. The observation of Fabrique W. *"in art, it doesn't work because artistic creation is necessarily temporal"* recognizes the intrinsic temporal nature of art from the moment that every artistic creation is rooted in a specific period. The perception that Fabrique W. also underlies *"there is no artistic production or expression that is timeless"*. That reflects the opinion about art reflects the opinion that art, by its very nature, is linked to a temporal context and cannot exist without a connection with the period in which it was created. The considerations on the temporality of the artist, the limitation of the timeless appearance after his death and the idea that *"an artist starts at time T and ends at time Y and it can't go beyond that"* further emphasize the challenges of giving a timeless character to art.

Another concept is the concept "inherent longevity" which describes something that lasts in time. There is the idea that longevity is a quality of an artwork and a luxury product per se as Claude C. said *"a luxury product is by nature timeless"* or Marika T. *"for me it is very important (timelessness) because precisely it gives a founding element and a real value and that is precisely what allows the sustainability of the house over the years"*. This is linked to the traditional and classical idea of art which stipulates that once an artwork is finished, it will last unless it is destroyed. This also implies the idea that these pieces need to be taken care of through restoration for example. Thus, using artification on luxury products may reinforce the idea that the owner possesses a luxury product that will survive her/him thanks to the quality of the materials used and that it needs to be taken care of. For that matter, luxury brands made a huge emphasis on the importance of taking care of the luxury pieces by educating the customers on the products and processes to use.

This is closely linked with the third concept which is the "generational transmission". As we said, a luxury product will survive her/his owner, so the idea that s/he can transmit the luxury piece to her/his children or grandchildren is also a idea that we found several times in the interviews as Nada M. said *"You can keep it for a long period and maybe give it to the next generation as well"* or *"The idea that owning something timeless is nice because*

*you can give it to your children*". This reminds the motto of the Swiss luxury watchmaker brand Patek Philippe since 1997 "*you never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely look after it for the next generation*". This shows that general transmission is a derived concept from timelessness which is clearly used in the strategy of luxury brands.

The fourth notion is the "recognition" in the sense that an artwork as well as a luxury product will cross the years also thanks to the recognition the artist has gained. As Nada M. said "*It also adds maybe in terms of temporality when it's something made by an artist*". There is thus on the one hand the physical aspect which is linked with the second point and a more social aspect on the other hand. This is why most of the luxury collaborations are made with major artists because they are famous worldwide and known by everybody, even people who are not interested in art. For instance, the famous Mona Lisa was selected for the collaboration between Jeff Koons and Louis Vuitton in 2017 whose purpose was to print an art masterpiece on bags mostly because it is the most well-known artwork in the world. Furthermore, a study by Marin in 2021 highlighted the fact that adding an artist name on a luxury product increases the perceptions of aesthetics, exclusivity and brand quality for the customer.

The fifth concept we found is the idea of "trend resistance". Here are several quotations we gathered from the interview: "*Never go out of fashion is something that well last for a long time*", "*more than just a fleeting trend*", "*they will be trendy all the time*". Some major artworks cross the ages and are still observed and imitated although they are anchored in a specific artistic movement. It is the same for luxury products. In fact, some luxury products are called "timelessness" like for example the little black dress from Chanel. It is a basic every woman must have in her wardrobe because it is the guarantee for her to be elegant at every moment and thus validated by the others. Furthermore, it is interesting enough to highlight that two of the interviewees made a correlation between the type of customers and the type of products they might like as Elsa C. said: "*I guess because those who show off maybe are most sensible to fashion and maybe they are less interested in timelessness*" and Martina: "*Regular customer might prefer a more modern product*". Thus highlighting that the artification can be interpreted in different ways depending on the customer. Finally, Ling L. said that "*Timelessness is a key difference for*

*companies to be a luxury not to be a fashion brand*”, highlighting thus that the timelessness notion is also a marketing strategy for brands to target customers.

Another concept linked to this idea of trend is the concept of “instantaneity”. As Marika T. said *“It is the same principle for luxury or for art, it is something which was created at a given moment”* and Elena V. : *“Every art piece explains how society was at that moment”*. In fact, art just like fashion is anchored in a specific area. However, luxury brands try their best to not be anchored in the instantaneity but to escape time instead. For instance, everything is done in the marketing of luxury brands to escape both time and reality and to make customers dream through immersive experiences in stores. Thus, a distinction between the physical product and all the environment around it is made.

The seventh concept was announced by only one interviewee and is the notion of “redundancy” which describes something that is repeated and was exposed by Martina as follows: *“It is a kind of redundancy that keeps the timeless essence of works of art alive”*. There is the idea that with time we acknowledge and value some representations, that we get used to them and are then reproduced. We can take the example of the artistic movements, where paradigms are made by artists on the composition, the technique and the topics and this then lasts for decades before someone brings a new paradigm. As this technique was recognized by most people for years, the artwork becomes timeless in a sense. This is the same for luxury products where both trends and timelessness products are built with time and a kind of social pressure.

Another concept closely linked to the latter is the concept of “reinterpretation” which goes with the idea of novelty and evolution. Although time is linear, it seems cyclical in the fashion industry. We talked about the notion of timeless and trend resistance, however timelessness luxury products can also be seen as less appealing if the design remains the same and can thus become outdated regarding the society standards. In fact, the first little black dress from Gabrielle Chanel was knee-length and had a not too low-cut neckline. Today, Chanel artistic director Virginie Viard redesigns it according to the standards of the current society with for example lower neckline and see-through material. The same applies for the timeless bag. It consists of a reinterpretation from former Chanel artistic

director Karl Lagerfeld from the “2.55”, the favorite Gabrielle Chanel’s first bag. This bag consisted in a black-padded-leather bag with a fine and elegant crossbody chain and clasp. The timeless was born in 1988 and keeps all the codes of the 2.55 but Lagerfeld changed the chain and added the famous Chanel CC logo as clasp, logomania dictates. Today the timeless is declined in several colors and designed every collection. These examples highlight the importance of constantly reinterpreting the product thanks to the work of the artistic director to give luxury products timelessness (Kapferer, 2013) and thus be “always in vogue”. As Aranzazu G. said: *“So that's what timelessness is about, it marks a new trend in fashion or in art”* or *“The artworks are timeless because the artists set a trend in art”*. So, it is important to highlight that for luxury products it is usually never a total breakthrough but a reinterpretation of the heritage of the brand. Although the concept of novelty sounds antinomic with the concept of timelessness, it is inherent to the latter because to be timeless a product needs to be compared with other products that may follow another trend.

Finally, the last concept in this section is a notion that also has been announced by only one interviewee and is the concept of “lasting ephemerality”. Art fundamentally consists in capturing an ephemeral moment of life and making it eternal by representing it on a painting. As Claude C. said: *“Ephemeral because it depends on the artist and it’s here to stay. Ephemerality is lasting ephemerality, it is the beauty of the moment, so it remains, and it goes together”*. Thus, the role of timelessness in the artification of luxury products would also be to anchor the customer in a specific moment that s/he lived within the luxury boutique thanks to all the experience marketing that is done and the luxury product bought is like having a souvenir of this experience that we can bring with us.

## V.5. A brand strategy to maintain legitimacy

In-depth interviews revealed that the main component of brand maintenance strategies is “A Brand Strategy to Maintain Legitimacy”. This category is described through the compilation of several subcategories, each representing a key indicator of brand management and positioning in the context of luxury. Relevant subsections address issues related to Global Brand Strategy, Uniformization, Customer Focus, Invariability and Consistency, Luxury as Investment, Appealing Products, and Fast Fashion problems. In this way, our

research has taken a comprehensive view and integrated brand strategies used to maintain the integrity and presence of the luxury sector.

As part of the second-order quantitative analysis, the main category of “Brand strategy to maintain legitimacy” in the field of timelessness linked to artifactual luxury products has shown an essential subcategory: “uniformisation”. This theory is reflected in the respondents' answers to the questionnaires. This is especially true when reflecting on the central role of labor and the public interest in the success of the luxury sector. As Elisa C. underlined *“In the luxury business, it's more about what works, what people want to see, and then making a profit from it.”*

Another interesting point of view highlighted by the respondents emerges from the observation of the connection between art and luxury brands. This association allows brands to engage their link with art, acting as a strategy to reaffirm their uniqueness in a context in which the brand image could be compromised by massification. As Claude C. has indicated this synergy between art and luxury is *“a movement that allows luxury brands to strengthen their link with art and therefore to reiterate at a time when they have image difficulties because of massification of how they are different from common products.”*

In other words, analyzing the answers of the respondents allowed us to identify "uniformisation" as a key part of the brand's strategy to maintain its status in the wild luxury landscape, providing a very important insight into the internal dynamics of the sector.

The crucial role of the global strategy and consumer is a secondary element in the timeless luxury field.

A relevant aspect that emerges from the interviews is the orientation of the luxury sector towards profit, highlighting from Elsa C's affirmation: *“Luxury products are primarily made for profit. In the luxury business, the focus is more on thinking about profits before anything else ”*. This perspective emphasizes the importance of the economic dimension in the luxury world, where the effectiveness of global strategy and the satisfaction of consumer desires are strongly linked to profit maximization.

Furthermore, the link between luxury, business and authenticity is also underlined by the same respondent and she explained that *“Luxury, to me, is primarily about business, the bottom line. In contrast, when there's an artist involved, there's authenticity, a*

*genuine story*".

This observation suggests to us that there is a contrast between the intrinsic nature of luxury business and the authenticity revealed by the artist in the creative process.

Marketing strategy and segmentation of the target are the key factors of the commercialization of luxury products: "*Afterward this is all about marketing and segmentation*" (Claude C.). This view suggests that the positioning of the overall luxury strategy and the importance for consumers as a secondary element directly affects the perception of the product and its position in the market.

Lastly, the challenge of preserving the authenticity in the marketing campaign and communication is a theme that emerges from the words of many respondents, in particular, Elsa C. observes that "*Maybe it's a hidden message, but I wouldn't say they do it aggressively by calling something timeless. So stories to convince them of this idea. I mean, you have to keep convincing*". The importance of the story telling and the persuasive strategy in the luxury context is a milestone, highlighting the necessity of constant work in the communication with consumers.

The subcategory 'Cost Strategy' is a distinct element in luxury brands' strategy to maintain legitimacy over time within the category 'A Brand Strategy to Maintain Legitimacy'.

A fundamental concept that arose from different words of respondents is the importance of the perception of value and the premium price associated with luxury products. Nada M., for instance, explains "*You have a high perceived value premium, premium price. People will be buying well and to pay high prices because your brand has this timelessness characteristic that other brands do not*". The cost strategy, in fact, focuses on the creation of high perceived value and a premium price that reflects the timelessness characteristic of the product.

Moreover, the collocation of luxury products on an entry-level, not excessively expensive compared to luxury products sold at very high prices, is a key element for the creation of an adequate cost strategy. In this way the timeless product could be positioned on the market in a more accessible way with respect to the luxury product sold at higher prices, enabling greater accessibility and attractiveness for a wider audience.

The strategy of maintaining the original product throughout the years is emphasized from an observation of Martina P.: "*I believe that if a company manages to maintain the same product for 50 years and, at the same time, manages to increase its price, it*



*certainly achieves a significant result*". This view suggests that continuing to sell the original product will allow the company to raise prices over time and increase sustainable demand for the product indefinitely.

Finally, the management of communication and advertising stand up as the integrated part of cost strategy. effectively *"If money needs to be spent to promote the brand, the company will likely focus on advertising the latest models, counting on the fact that people will buy them regardless of the advertising"* (Martina P.) it could mean that the communications targeting younger models will help reinforce the affordability and value of the luxury brand.

In the context of the subcategory of "Invariability/consistency" we observed a lot of crucial sentences about the relevance of maintaining a coherence and an invariability in the time for promoting the concept of timelessness in the luxury products.

One of the key declarations of Martina P. underlines that *"A timeless product is something that remains relevant over time."* This concept emphasizes the importance of products to avoid variations in situations and to maintain relevance and interest at all times. The idea of durability and resistance to temporal conditions is important in thinking about timelessness in the context of luxury. The persistence of maintaining a design or a logo unchanged over the time is also highlighted from a sentence of Marika T. *"By showing it (the logo) in the same way for x amount of time or by using the codes that were made when the house was created"*. This view shows how the constant presence of a view can create a neutral image and provide a signal of stability and authenticity.

Moreover, the idea that a timeless brand is limited in its capacities of changing is clearly expressed in Nada M. words *"I think it's a permanent challenge to keep your brand relevant because all the brands they do change but a timeless brand is somehow limited because it does not."* This recognized that the continued relevance of a timeless brand is closely linked to its ability to maintain a certain consistency over time, challenging the general trend of brands to evolve.

Lastly, the resistance of floating trends is emphasized from Martina P. sentence: *"Products that resist fleeting trends maintain their exclusivity and constant demand over time"*. This underlines the importance of a design and a concept behind the idea of the style that can come over the trends of the moment, allowing to maintain the relevance and the exclusivity of an importance in a long period.

Moreover, the thoughts about the perspective of consumers that see luxury as an investment for the long period.

The principal consideration that emerges is the aspiration to remain fashionable for life with a product purchased only once. As indicated by Elsa C., *“You want to be fashionable your whole life with the product you buy once.”* This emphasizes the connection between the concept of luxury and the idea of long-term investment, where luxury is synonymous with durability and demand. Furthermore, Aranzuzu G. declared that *“From the consumer's point of view, I would say that having something that is timeless means it's something you can wear all the time. I don't hesitate to spend a large sum of money on something that I will use forever”*. This suggests to us that the timelessness of a luxury product is crucial for the consumer's perception for a sustainable investment.

From the interviews, a specific mention was made about the iconic product as the Birkin bags. This underlines the link between timeliness and economic value. Elena V. affirmed *“The Birkin bags. I think people are buying them also because they like them, but also because they know that in some years ahead it will cost more”*. This shows how the prospect of an increase in value over time can motivate buyers to consider luxury as a conscious investment.

Finally, brand communication is important to educate consumers about the endless value of luxury products. According to Elena V. *“Moreover, something that the brand has to do in order to make the consumers believe that it's a good investment. To buy products from this brand.”* This shows the importance of brand communication in convincing consumers that long-term luxury is a worthwhile investment, especially when compared to fake and fast products.

Thereafter, we have observed important reflections on the ephemeral and mass nature of fast fashion and its impact on the concept of timelessness in luxury products. A declaration of Elena V. underlines the relation between fast fashion and the reduced longevity of a product: *“I think when a product is more like for a mass production, its longevity, it might be faster rather than if it's more exclusivity.”* This observation suggests that a large-scale production is often associated with a decrease in the longevity of the product, indicating an inverse connection between the ephemeral and timelessness. We also noted the presence of luxury products that conform to the ephemeral trends of fast fashion, indicating a

challenge for luxury brands to maintain a balance between exclusivity and mass accessibility. As mentioned by Elena V. *“Even luxury brands have inside their organic, I mean inside their collection they also have products for mass consumption which are more following fast fashion trends.”* The question that could arise from this phenomenon is how to differentiate the luxury product from fast fashion trends. The answer is suggested by Nada M. who said *“They make limited editions and a limited number of products or units. But still there are many copies, so that would be the first difference in terms of quantity”*. Otherwise, a conscious consumer of timeless luxury products of superior quality avoids the passing trends of fast fashion. The preference of classic pieces, in contrast with the fast fashion, emerges from an observation of Elena V.: *“I think if money wasn't the question and sustainability wasn't either”*.

The centrality of sale and property in the context of luxury creates another important subcategory: the “Ownership”.

As declared by Nada M. *“Luxury products are made for sale, otherwise they don't have a meaning if they are not sold and owned”*. This view emphasizes that ownership of luxury goods is essential to their significance and separates works of art that can be displayed in museums and that are not owned by individuals or society. Otherwise, the distinction between art and luxury products is emphasized by the same respondent: *“While art can remain something that is in museums and that everybody can see, even public museums. I mean it's owned by the whole country or by society. So, the ownership is different, and the logic of ownership is different”*. This reflects a view of luxury as a unique element that confers exclusivity and status, as opposed to the pleasures of art displayed in museums. However, we can observe a practical limitation about the ownership of artworks because of the high prices. Nada M., in fact, underlined that: *“Maybe not for ownership, because it's very expensive to own a piece of art”*. This indicates that despite ownership of luxury goods, financial considerations may limit the implementation of artistic ownership, making it less accessible. We can conclude that the distinctive perception of ownership in the luxury world helps to create a sense of belonging and participation of consumers, a key element in the overall strategy of maintaining legitimacy over time.

In the subcategory of “Appealing” instead, emerges a connection between timeless and the attractiveness of luxury products. Matthias S. said that *“I think timeless products are way more attractive to customers, to people who look at them, than modern stuff”* and it

underlines how the characteristic of timelessness contributes positively to attractiveness, creating a lasting image. The consumer's preference of choosing timeless pieces is underlined by the choice of "*a timeless model rather than a more recent one*" as Martina P. suggests. This indicates that the timeless is an important element in purchasing decisions. The strategy of appealing to current audiences by validating the past is evaluated as effective, suggesting that reinterpreting the past increases interest. The definition of timelessness as the ability to face the challenges of time underlines the importance of this aspect in the category of "appealing".

Finally, consumers' preference for timeless products over modern ones is clearly expressed, indicating that timelessness contributes to the attractiveness and charm of the product over time.

#### *V.6. Elevate the aura of the product*

Finally, the last section we drew from the interviews gathers both conceptual and philosophical perspectives about our topic. We found seven subcategories which are: abnormality, rationality, simplicity, originality, knowledge and awareness, requirement and posterity and copy.

In the conceptual and philosophical perspectives surrounding the elevation of the aura of luxury products, the notion of abnormality emerges as a central theme. Participants highlighted the resemblance between luxury fashion shows and art exhibitions, noting the challenging aspect of envisioning some runway pieces as wearable items. Instead, these pieces are perceived as resembling artworks, taking the runway as their canvas. As Elsa C. remarked, "*It seems more like art, taking the runway and all.*" Moreover, participants emphasized the concept of abnormality as a shared characteristic between art and luxury. They noted that both realms highlight representations of products or experiences that transcend everyday life. Claude C. aptly stated, "*What they have in common is what we call abnormality, which means that in both cases it is a question of highlighting representations of the product or experience which are beyond everyday life.*" Furthermore, participants discussed the contemporary convergence between luxury and art, where luxury brands seek to align themselves with the artistic realm. This alignment is driven by the desire to position luxury products as part of a supra-universe, beyond the confines of

everyday life. As one Claude C., *"This is why today luxury creates bridges with art by saying we are part of the same supra-universe."*

In the realm of rationality, participants provided insights into the considerations and challenges faced by artists in creating timeless works of art. There is a recognition of the delicate balance artists must strike when incorporating elements of the past into their works, as forcing attention can compromise authenticity and artistic quality. As Martina P. noted, *"Forcing and trying to attract attention at all costs can compromise the artistic quality and authenticity of the work."* Furthermore, participants expressed skepticism regarding whether artists actively seek to create timeless artworks. There is a belief that artists prioritize self-expression and storytelling over the pursuit of timelessness. As one participant asserted, *"I don't think that artists think that way. I don't think that they think of making it as timeless as possible at all."* (Matthias S.). However, participants also acknowledged similarities between the considerations of artists and luxury brands, suggesting that both have strategic plans behind their creations. There is an acknowledgment of the importance of subtlety and awareness in integrating timeless elements into artworks intentionally and respectfully.

Also participants emphasized the pivotal role of simplicity in elevating the aura of luxury products. They noted that simplicity, coupled with high-quality craftsmanship, contributes significantly to the timeless quality of luxury items. As Elsa C. remarked, *"The simplicity inherent in their design, often featuring leather and minimalistic elements, contributes to their timeless quality."* Moreover, participants highlighted the enduring appeal of iconic items characterized by simplicity, such as trench coats and classic white shirts. These items, with their uncomplicated nature, transcend generations and fit seamlessly into various eras. Furthermore, simplicity was lauded for its ability to ensure comfort and practicality in design, with products designed with convenience enduring through the years. Participants also noted the rising preference for discreet luxury, emphasizing understated elegance in contemporary consumer choices. As Aranzazu G. aptly put it, *"And then, I would also follow a bit the current trends because I like everything that is discreet. Nowadays, discreet luxury is used a lot."*

Discussing the elevation of the aura of the product, particularly within the domain of originality and recognition, participants delved into the significance of creating luxury items that exude uniqueness and historical recognition. They emphasized the allure of

products that have endured through time, valuing their lasting appeal over mere technical advancements: *"So there is almost more enthusiasm today for objects surpassed by time... objects that are surpassed are almost better."* (Fabrice W.). Furthermore, participants highlighted the importance of originality in luxury goods and the challenge of crafting items that garner recognition and appreciation for their distinctiveness. Established luxury brands often possess identifiable codes and symbols that contribute to their recognition, as exemplified by Hermès's equestrian symbolism. Additionally, participants discussed the risk associated with purchasing luxury items, emphasizing the desire for products that possess enough originality to make a lasting impact. There's consideration given to how easily a product can be counterfeited and its potential impact on its exclusivity. As Martina P. pointed out, *"If the product is easily counterfeited, it may lose its exclusive character."*

In the realm of knowledge and awareness, participants expressed differing perspectives on the importance of educating consumers about timelessness. While some participants acknowledged the significance of educating consumers to foster an appreciation for the enduring qualities of luxury products, others expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of such efforts. One viewpoint emphasized the necessity of educating consumers about the timelessness of luxury items, suggesting that it could contribute to the development of an economy centered around these values. As Aranzazu G. remarked, *"it's important to educate them in the sense that there's a whole economy that can develop around this."* However, there were contrasting opinions suggesting that educating consumers might not always align with the interests of luxury brands. Some participants suggested that selling the dream and maintaining an air of mystery around products could be more effective in cultivating desire among consumers. As Fabrice W. articulated, *"The more they sell the dream, the better it is and the less we know, the better it is."*

Furthermore, participants delved into the concept of posterity and copy, contemplating the enduring legacy and timeless essence inherent in both art and luxury goods. They reflected on the profound impact of historical works and techniques, recognizing their continued admiration and emulation across generations. As Marika T. observed, *"For art, there are works from Antiquity that we still admire today to which we will refer."* Finally, participants contemplated the timeless quality of certain techniques, acknowledging their ability to evoke a sense of permanence and universality. They pondered how

these techniques, passed down through the ages, contribute to the enduring allure of both artistic creations and luxury products. This notion of perpetuity through craftsmanship and innovation resonates deeply within the discourse on elevating the aura of the product. Moreover, participants underscored the role of recognition and celebrity in perpetuating the aura of timelessness. They recognized how showcasing talent and innovation not only solidifies an artist's place in history but also imbues their creations with a sense of enduring significance. As Marika T. stated, *"it's up to them to showcase their talent and then this would create a notion of timelessness because they will have this celebrity which will perhaps be able to stay."*

### V.7 Aggregate dimensions

According to Gioia et. al (2012), in the next step, the second order themes derived so far are further processed into aggregate dimensions. The aim is to further summarize the themes obtained into new dimensions in order to subsequently create the data structure. We have decided to work on two overarching themes: Art and Luxury on one side and Timelessness on the other. These themes are further dissected into three aggregate dimensions each, providing a comprehensive framework for our exploration.

For the realm of Art and Luxury, the three aggregate dimensions encompass: a) the similarity and complementarity between art and luxury, b) the craftsmanship, quality and aesthetic inherent to both domains and, c) the concepts of exclusivity, rarity, abnormality and rationality.

#### The similarity and complementarity between art and luxury

The aggregate dimension of that include among the many subcategories the categories of, reflects the deep interconnection between art and luxury. This dimension shed light on the role of art as precursor of the luxury world, underlining the fact that artistic elements and features often influence the creation of luxury goods. Moreover, It also focuses on the importance of cultural and artistic heritage in the context of luxury, recognizing how history and cultural traditions influence the production and appreciation of luxury goods. The culture is a central pillar within this dimension: the perception of con-

sumers depends also on the cultural heritage that the purchasers have. We can also observe the different cultural shapes in the luxury products. That contributes to defining the identity and significance that the luxury brand wants to share.

### Craftsmanship, Quality, and Aesthetic

The second aggregate dimension "Craftsmanship, Quality, and Aesthetic" illuminates the symbiotic relationship between art and luxury, revealing a profound interplay between timelessness and the perceived value of artified luxury products. This concept transcends mere materiality, embodying a holistic fusion of creativity, refinement, and enduring allure. Craftsmanship serves as the cornerstone, channeling dedication to perfection and mastery across artistic and luxury domains alike. Quality reinforces this dimension, imbuing products with an enduring legacy of durability and prestige. Aesthetic crowns the dimension, captivating the senses with an evocative beauty that transcends temporal boundaries. In essence, this dimension symbolizes the convergence of art and luxury, where excellence, durability, and beauty intertwine to create objects of timeless significance, uniting past, present, and future in a seamless continuum of elegance and sophistication.

### The concepts of exclusivity, rarity, abnormality and rationality.

The third aggregate dimension explores the conceptual and philosophical underpinnings that underlie the elevation of the aura of luxury products. These concepts emerge as essential pillars in the dynamic between art and luxury, demonstrating how they combine to create unique and desirable experiences. Exclusivity and rarity confer upon luxury products an aura of uniqueness and intrinsic value, thereby enhancing their appeal to consumers seeking unique experiences. Abnormality transcends conventional norms, allowing luxury products to stand out as full-fledged art objects, pushing the boundaries of creativity and innovation. Rationality ensures a balance between innovation and tradition, ensuring that luxury products remain grounded in artistic and artisanal values while meeting contemporary consumer expectations. Together, these concepts form a coherent set that defines the very essence of luxury products, offering an in-depth insight into their role in the fusion between art and luxury.



In contrast, our investigation of Timelessness unfolds through three distinct aggregate dimensions: a) the legitimacy, brand values, and emotions as pivotal factors in understanding the enduring nature of brands, b) the inherent longevity, trend resistance and generational transmission characterizing the timeless appeal of certain entities, and, c) the strategic global positioning of brands in relation to this notion.

#### Legitimacy, brand value and emotional connection

The dimension, “Legitimacy, brand value and emotional connection”, explores the connection between timelessness and the perceived value of the articulated luxury products. This concept shows the significance of social status, a motor for motivation to purchase luxury products and works of art, underlining the desire for a sense of belonging to an exclusive social group. Moreover, the perception of belonging and the value of the product are further strengthened by the property element that provides a sense of belonging and participation to the consumers. Nevertheless, the idea of property differs between works of art and luxury products, as the latter are more accessible than works of art, which contributes to the creation of a sense of exclusivity and status. Furthermore, the creation process of artworks is totally different from the luxury products because the human element is intrinsic to artistic production.

The emotional connection is crucial for the perception of timelessness. While art evokes emotions and blocks time, luxury goods, despite their artistic appeal, do not reach the same depth of emotion.

#### The inherent longevity, trend resistance and generational transmission

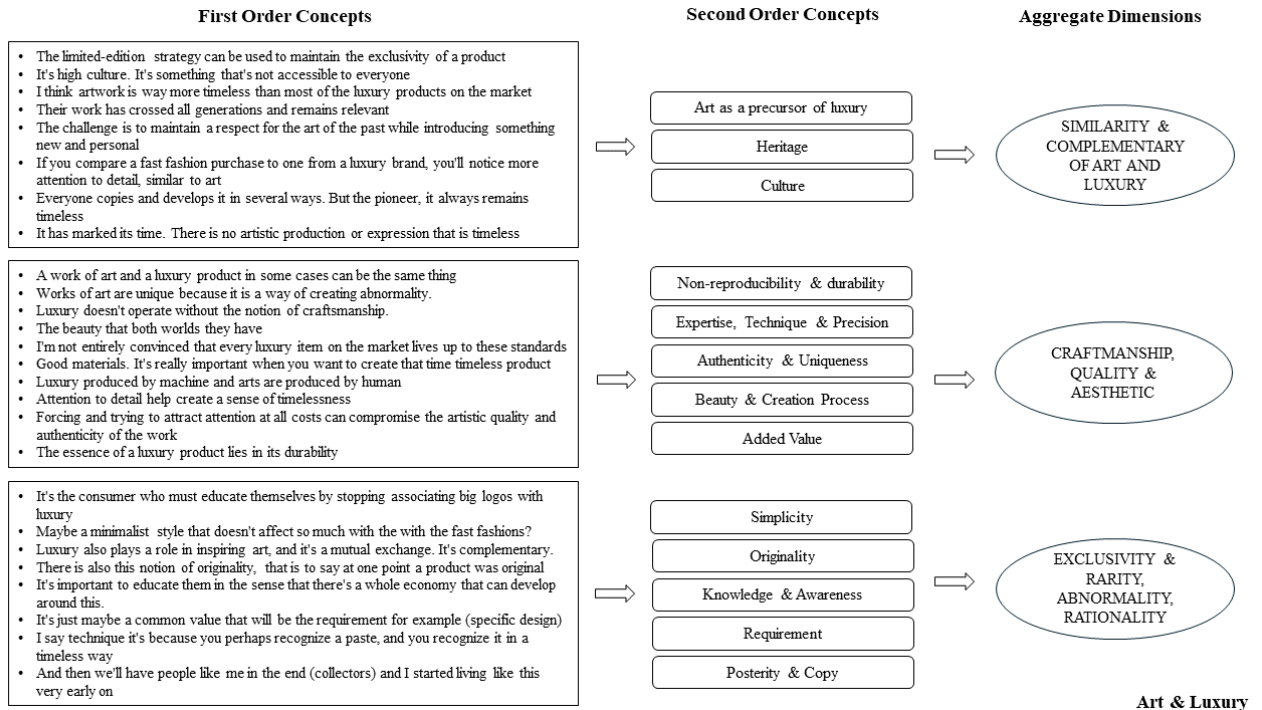
The second aggregate dimension deals with a fundamental analysis of the notion of timelessness and the concepts which underlie it. The concept of inherent longevity is announced several times and stipulates that both an artwork and a luxury product has a per se characteristic of remaining through time. In fact, although both art and luxury products belong to a specific era, they are physical products that are made to last thanks to their quality or the recognition of the artist which lasts even after his death. Furthermore, the idea of trend resistance is also widely used to describe timelessness and gather two second

order-themes which seems antinomic at first sight but can not be understood without each other and is the instantaneity which consists in living an ephemeral moment and the idea of reinterpretation which implies a renew of something that already exists, in our case a luxury product. From these two concepts also result the interesting and new idea of redundancy and lasting ephemerality which perfectly describes both the fundamental purpose of art on the one hand which is representing an ephemeral moment and make it lasts forever and also the luxury industry on the other hand with the idea that brands have to reinvent themselves each seasons. Finally, another very important aspect in the role of timelessness in the artification of luxury products which is directly linked to the other two points mentioned before is the idea of generational transmission, the idea that you can pass the luxury products you bought to your children and grandchildren.

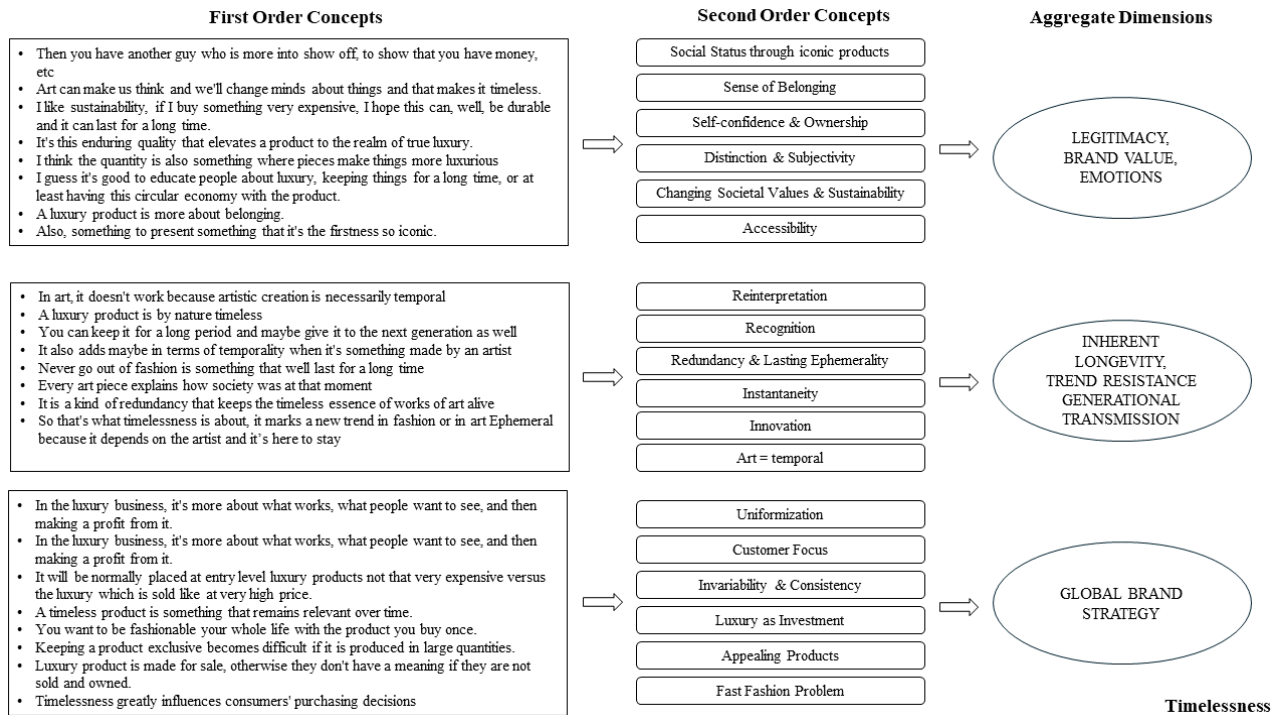
### Global strategy

Global strategy," an aggregate dimension within the fields of artificial luxury and timelessness, focuses on a few important aspects to maintain brand status and value over time. Highlighting the phenomenon of consistency is crucial, as it indicates that luxury brands must stay relevant by adapting to consumer demands and market conditions. Also, because of the relationship between artworks and luxury products, luxury brands often adopt an achievement of collaboration with art. In this way they can differentiate themselves from everyday products and face the challenge of public approval. Coherence and consistency over time are also important because it shows how much the sense of credibility is v for the name of a brand. It is also understood that luxury brands face the challenge of staying relevant and consistent over time while resisting the trends of the fast fashion industry. This strategy reflects the consumer's view that luxury products are not just a purchase, but a long-term investment where quality and durability are important. Educating consumers about the lasting value of luxury products and distinguishing genuine brands from fake and fast-changing products is a key aspect of brand communication. In short, the overall strategy to maintain brand power and value in the infinite context of artificial capital is based on several key factors, from precision to durability to luxury as an investment.

*Table II: First order concepts, second order themes and aggregate dimensions about art and luxury*



*Table III: First order concepts, second order themes and aggregate dimensions about timelessness*



**Timelessness**

## CHAPTER 6: Conclusion

### VI.1. Discussion of the Results

The analysis of the results has highlighted crucial aspects related to the role of timelessness in artificial luxury goods, underlining a series of essential elements that help to understand this concept and its strategic consequences. The research suggests that the quality of timelessness is not limited to the physical duration of a product but must be seen as a complex characteristic that combines authenticity, rarity, exclusivity and cultural value. This set of characteristics generates an impression of permanent value that transcends the mere durability of the product over time. Authenticity has proven to be a fundamental factor in the creation of timelessness, as it symbolizes the truthfulness and artistic originality of a product. This characteristic not only highlights the exclusivity of the product, but also acts as a link between the historical tradition of the brand and its attitude to innovation, therefore reinforcing the feeling of eternity in the consumer.

Another key dimension that emerged from the analysis is the importance of consumer perception in creating timelessness. It is not enough for a product to be a durable material; it must be seen as such by consumers, and this vision is highly influenced by symbolic and cultural associations. Luxury goods are not merely objects of consumption but represent symbols of social status and individual identity. The ability of a brand to evoke a sense of belonging to a cultural or social elite, combined with the need for authenticity and exclusivity, helps to strengthen the emotional bond between the consumer and the product. This emotional bond is fundamental, as it makes the product attractive not only for its real value, but also for what it symbolizes in terms of culture and meaning. In this scenario, the role of artification is highlighted: the inclusion of artistic elements in luxury goods not only increases their aesthetic value, but also enhances their symbolic meaning, thus favoring the perception of eternity.

The analysis also highlighted the strategic challenges that luxury brands face to remain relevant in a constantly changing market. One of the biggest challenges is finding a balance between exclusivity and mass production. On the one hand, brands need to maintain an image of rarity and uniqueness to maintain their luxury status; on the other hand, increasing global demand requires higher production, which could threaten these

essential principles. In this scenario, timelessness offers a strategic answer, as it symbolizes a characteristic that is not based on the quantity of goods marketed, but on their perceived quality and lasting value. However, to best capitalize on this characteristic, brands need to ensure coherence and unity in their branding strategies. The ability to clearly express brand values, inform consumers about the importance of duration and build a coherent narrative that unites past, present and future is essential to reinforce the idea of eternity and maintain brand authenticity.

Another significant aspect concerns the link between timelessness and the dynamics of social change. Although timelessness is linked to traditional and permanent values, luxury brands must adapt to fluctuations in consumer preferences and changes in social values. This apparent dichotomy constitutes a significant strategic challenge, as it implies that brands must balance the preservation of their historical tradition with the integration of innovations that meet modern needs. For example, sustainability has become a key topic in luxury debates, as contemporary consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, place great importance on items that represent ethical practices. Timelessness, in this context, can be considered an intrinsically sustainable characteristic, as products that last over time are considered less vulnerable to the logic of short-term consumption. However, to take advantage of this association, brands must incorporate sustainability into their narrative of eternity, highlighting quality, durability and craftsmanship as essential values.

In addition, the analysis highlighted the importance of consistency in marketing and communication strategies. High-end brands must be able to educate consumers about the importance of timelessness and the lasting value of their items. This implies not only a precise definition of the brand values, but also the ability to adapt to changes in consumer preferences without compromising the integrity of the brand. Communication must be consistent, genuine and aimed at establishing an emotional connection with the customer, emphasizing the cultural and symbolic value of the items.

Another aspect of the analysis is the relationship between art and luxury, which is crucial in the creation of timelessness. Art is a natural precursor to luxury, as it shares essential values such as culture, heritage and craftsmanship. Artistic collaborations not only enhance the aesthetic value of products, but also intensify the perception of exclusivity and authenticity. The creation of cultural events, exhibitions and partnerships with modern artists allows luxury brands to be recognized as protectors of culture and tradition,

helping to build a story of timelessness that resonates with customers. However, maintaining the fine balance between art and commerce is a significant challenge. Artificial luxury goods must retain a sense of rarity and originality, even when they are part of a broader commercial strategy.

Finally, the study highlighted that timelessness is not only a coveted quality, but a key strategic lever for luxury brands. This allows brands to stand out in a competitive market, consolidate customer loyalty and maintain relevance in the long term. However, the possibility of exploiting this characteristic requires a continuous commitment to the creation of excellent quality products, to the clear communication of the brand values and to the adaptation to the social and cultural changes in progress. The out of time, therefore, proves to be a fundamental aspect in the creation of the value of luxury brands, symbolizing not only an intrinsic characteristic of the articles, but also a strategic positioning approach that unites past, present and future in a cohesive and relevant story.

## VI.2. Contributions to Practical and Theoretical Knowledge

Some practical implications for luxury brands have emerged from this study. Firstly, it has become clear that timelessness is certainly a lever that needs to be activated for luxury brands. It is essential to incorporate timelessness into the overall brand strategy and to maintain it constantly, because timelessness is a decisive factor that justifies the purchase of many products. A cohesive image should be developed that emphasizes and focuses on this timelessness, because the history of the brand, which is long for the most popular and famous luxury brands, also lays the foundation for calling a brand or product timeless at all, because it must be proven over time.

Furthermore, it is important to adapt to changing social values and customer preferences. This may sound slightly contradictory to the previous point, but people's values and principles are changing, and society as a whole is evolving. Topics that had no relevance a few decades ago are now the subject of much discussion. Sustainability, for example, is one of these topics, but it is also indirectly associated with luxury products. A timeless product does not go out of fashion and is manufactured to high quality standards, which

is why it is perceived as more sustainable than a fast fashion product. Therefore, based on the research and the statements of our interviewees, the recommendation is not only to recommend timelessness but also durability, but also to develop a CSR communication that emphasizes this in order to appeal to future generations who are particularly concerned about these issues.

The recommendation is also to constantly adapt to social developments and to align brand strategies with these factors, as they appear to be essential to consumers. The challenge here is to adapt to change without jeopardizing the heritage and traditional image, which is why a balance between tradition and social trends is needed.

Moreover, with regard to the connection between art and luxury, it emerged that art is a precursor of luxury in the eyes of the interviewees. It is therefore important to continue to incorporate artistic elements into the designs, but also to maintain the general connection to art, as is already practiced by many brands, for example through exhibitions about the brand or Fashion Week shows in artistic form. Just like luxury, art stands for culture, heritage and craftsmanship, which is essential for the luxury sector to maintain or even strengthen its timeless image.

With regard to theoretical contributions, it can be stated that the interplay between timelessness and artifice luxury was identified in the course of this study. It emerged that the interviewees certainly agree that these two concepts are complementary and that this subject is therefore worthy of further investigation. Furthermore, the dissection of the dimensions of artifice of luxury and timelessness shows that the integration of art and luxury is essential in the context of the brand image and the management of the brand. As already mentioned, it is of course a challenge to manage artistically associated products and commerce, i.e. also mass, yet it is precisely this, namely the rarity of a work of art and the commercial value, as mentioned here several times in the context of the concept investment, that is of great interest.

Finally, the connection to sustainability was recognized, which is derived from the characteristics of luxury, namely longevity, craftsmanship, durability and quality. Whether sustainability ultimately represents a purchasing motive could not be clearly clarified in this study, but conscious consumption and equally conscious non-consumption of fast



luxury or fast fashion in general are also listed here and are definitely worth further investigation, especially as it is a megatrend that is becoming increasingly important.

### V.3. Limitations and further research

Although this study offers an in-depth insight into the significance of timelessness regarding artfied luxury products, it is crucial to recognize various limitations that arise throughout the research process. These constraints not only underscore the difficulties encountered but also present chances for additional investigation in this area. The main objective of this study was to explore the relationship between timelessness, art, and luxury, filling an important void in the current literature. Nonetheless, the intrinsic complexity and multidimensional nature of these concepts presented considerable difficulties, especially in terms of defining and implementing them for the study's objectives.

A key constraint faced was the overly ambitious scope of the research subject. The effort to merge three complex and abstract concepts—time, art, and luxury—unavoidably resulted in a wide research question that, though enlightening, did not possess the specificity needed for thorough analysis. Every one of these ideas possesses its unique theoretical and practical intricacies, and their convergence forms a multifaceted and complex structure that can be difficult to manage. For example, the notion of time, when associated with luxury, includes aspects like historical continuity, longevity, and the sense of worth that goes beyond fleeting trends. Likewise, artification encompasses a range of meanings, from integrating artistic features into design to wider cultural partnerships that connect a brand with high culture. Ultimately, luxury is a debated concept, with different interpretations depending on cultural, economic, and social circumstances. This wide-ranging concept complicated the creation of a unified analytical framework, resulting in some division in the understanding of the results.

Another significant limitation was the absence of globally recognized definitions for essential concepts like "luxury product" and "artist." Although luxury is frequently linked to exclusivity, rarity, and exceptional quality, its limits are still adaptable and reliant on context. For instance, what defines a luxury item may vary across cultural settings or even among individual buyers. Likewise, the term "artist" includes a wide range of creative experts, from painters and sculptors to digital creators and fashion designers. The absence

of well-defined limits sometimes resulted in confusion during the interviews and later in the data analysis. The differing interpretations of these terms among participants created inconsistencies that demanded substantial effort to resolve, possibly weakening the clarity of some insights.

Additionally, the approach used in this research, although suitable for examining consumer viewpoints and brand tactics, possessed certain limitations. Choosing a qualitative method, focused on a smaller group of interview participants, enabled a thorough examination of personal viewpoints but restricted the broader applicability of the results. The limited sample size, although adequate for uncovering patterns and themes, limits the capacity to make broader inferences about the luxury market overall. Additionally, the choice of interview participants mainly concentrated on consumers and brand strategists, omitting other essential stakeholders like production managers, artisans, and distributors. This exclusion neglects the operational and logistical aspects of artification and timelessness, which are essential for understanding how these ideas are manifested in reality.

Another aspect of limitation is the omission of the production and distribution elements of artificial luxury products. Although this research emphasized consumer perception and brand strategy, the creation process and supply chain management are also vital in establishing how timelessness is incorporated into luxury products. The skills, choice of materials, and manufacturing methods utilized by luxury brands are crucial to their ability to produce items that embody the idea of timelessness. Likewise, distribution methods, such as exclusivity in retail spaces and the selection of online platforms, greatly influence consumer views on scarcity and worth. Future studies ought to focus on unifying these aspects, offering a more comprehensive insight into how timelessness is implemented throughout the value chain.

The increasing significance of sustainability in the luxury industry offers yet another avenue for upcoming research. Timelessness and sustainability possess many common qualities, including durability, quality, and a disdain for rapid consumption patterns. Nonetheless, the connection between these two ideas is still not fully examined. Although this study addressed the possible connection between timelessness and sustainable practices, additional research is required to explore how luxury brands might utilize this synergy to increase their attractiveness to eco-aware consumers. For example, upcoming

studies might explore if the sense of timelessness in luxury goods affects consumers' readiness to invest in products seen as more sustainable. Furthermore, research could examine how luxury brands might convey the connection between timelessness and sustainability via corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives and marketing approaches, ensuring that these efforts appeal to contemporary audiences.

An additional promising direction for future research involves investigating the psychological and behavioral factors that shape consumer views on timelessness. Although this study highlighted important aspects like authenticity, rarity, and social identity, it did not explore in depth the cognitive and emotional mechanisms that influence these perceptions. As an illustration, additional qualitative and quantitative studies could explore how nostalgia, cultural connections, and individual experiences influence consumers' perceptions of timelessness. Furthermore, grasping the importance of sensory components—like the texture of materials, visual aesthetics, and scent indicators—in bolstering the sense of timelessness might provide essential knowledge for luxury brands aiming to improve the experiential features of their offerings.

The incorporation of technology within the luxury industry also signifies an important area for additional investigation. With luxury brands progressively embracing digital technologies like augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and non-fungible tokens (NFTs), it is essential to explore how these advancements relate to the idea of timelessness. For example, upcoming research might investigate if digital depictions of luxury items, including virtual showrooms or digital collectibles, can communicate the same feeling of durability and authenticity as their tangible versions. Likewise, studies could explore how technology-fueled customization and personalization influence the view of timelessness, especially among younger, tech-oriented consumers.

Finally, it is crucial to acknowledge the constraints of this study within the wider scope of luxury research. The research question's exploratory nature, though beneficial for revealing new insights, ultimately led to a level of breadth that might have sacrificed depth. A more concentrated method, like investigating the perception of timelessness within the framework of a particular brand or cultural context, might produce more specific and practical insights. For example, focusing specifically on the Cartier Foundation's contribution to fostering timelessness or exploring how a brand manages legacy and innovation following the passing of a significant designer would create a more defined

framework for analysis.

To sum up, although this research provides valuable insights into the significance of timelessness in the artification of luxury goods, it also highlights the complexity and multifaceted nature of these ideas. By tackling the recognized constraints and exploring the recommended paths for future inquiry, researchers and professionals can further enhance their understanding of timelessness and its effects on the luxury industry. Investigating production methods, behavioral dynamics, sustainability, and technological advancements will enhance the theoretical basis of this area while offering practical guidance for luxury brands aiming to thrive in a more dynamic and competitive marketplace.

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## Webography

<https://www.statista.com/outlook/cmo/luxury-goods/worldwide>

## Appendix

### **INTERVIEW SCRIPT / STANDARD QUESTIONS**

Commence the interview with expressing gratitude to the respondents for their valuable involvement.

Concisely express your overall interest in their viewpoint on the concept of timelessness



in luxury products, guarantee the confidentiality of their answers, and specify the purpose of the collected data.

Lastly, kindly ask for their consent to record the interview.

*Thank you for taking the time to participate in this questionnaire. Your valuable input is appreciated. We are keen to hear your perspective on the concept of "timelessness" in luxury products. Rest assured, your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for academic research purposes. To enhance accuracy, we kindly ask for your consent to record the interview.*

*Thank you for your collaboration and your time.*

1) Personal information (Age, gender, job, seniority, etc)

- What is your age?
- (What is your gender?)
- What is your country of origin?
- What is your current occupation? Since when?
- What is your level of education?
- What is your familiarity with art? For example, do you often go to museums, do you buy art...?
- What is your familiarity with luxury? For example, do you buy luxury products often?

2) Art and luxury: differences and similarities

- What characteristics do art and luxury have in common?
- In your opinion, what differentiates an art work from a luxury product?
- In your opinion, how do consumers (or you) typically respond to luxury products that have been infused with artistic elements?
- How can the inclusion of artistic aspects contribute to the perceived luxury of a product, in your view?
- Are you familiar with the partnerships between artists and luxury brands? What are your opinions on this matter?

3) The notion of timelessness

- How would you **generally** define timelessness?.

Luxury & Timelessness

(Although some questions may seem redundant, please disregard this and provide responses nevertheless)

- How would you define a timeless luxury product? Please, give examples and explain why. (Definition to help interviewers: *“A timeless luxury product may be defined as an item that has enduring qualities of elegance, sophistication, and*

*superior craftsmanship, which transcends fleeting trends and maintains its desirability and value over an extended period of time”.)*

- In your opinion, what would be the significance of timelessness in defining a luxury product?
- To what extent do you believe that timelessness influences the value of a luxury product?
- Are there specific design elements or motifs that you consider iconic for creating a timeless identity in luxury products?
- Do you believe there is a need to educate consumers on the value of timelessness in luxury, and if so, how can this be achieved?
- What are the key elements that make a luxury product timeless?
- In what ways do luxury brand marketing strategies incorporate timelessness to differentiate and maintain resonance over time?
- In your opinion, how much is the notion of timelessness taken into account in the design and marketing approaches of luxury brands?
- What obstacles do luxury brands have in preserving a timeless appeal?
- What are the advantages that luxury brands may get from having a timeless appeal?
- In your opinion, how much does the timelessness of a product influence consumers purchase decisions?
- Do you prefer a luxury product with a timeless design or one that adheres to current fashion trends?

#### Art & Timelessness

- How would you precisely define the concept of timelessness in art? Provide illustrative instances and explain the reasons behind them.
- Do you believe that art has a quality of timelessness? Provide a rationale for the given statement.
- How do artists, in your perspective, conceptualize and incorporate the notion of timelessness into their artistic creations?
- What particular difficulties do artists face when attempting to convey timelessness in their artistic works?

#### Appendix A: Jeff Koons x LV collaboration



Appendix B: Versace's Vittoria print fall-winter 2019 women's runway



Appendix C: Dior's Fall-Winter 2019-20 runway in the gardens of the Musée Rodin in Paris



Appendix D: Dior Lady Art, a unique capsule collection where eleven international artists are given creative freedom to reimagine the iconic Lady Dior



