GATEWAY TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

International Textile and Apparel Association

DESIGN EXHIBITION CATALOG

2025

November 18 - 22

St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Margaret Rucker Best Design Award, “From Sneaker to Boot: A modular footwear design to enhance fit and function for ankle-foot orthosis users” by Lida Aflatoony, Kristen Morris, Colorado State University

Design on cover page:
"*Bound Between Fingers: A Maternal Narrative in Collaborative Creative Practice"* by Ling Zhang[1] & Chanmi Hwang[2], p. 13
[1]Iowa State University. [2]North Carolina State University.

ITAA DESIGN COMMITTEES

ITAA Executive Director
Sherry Schofield

Vice President of Conferences
Jennifer Yang, Marymount University

Conference Planning Co-Chairs
RayeCarol Cavender, University of Kentucky
Laurie Apple, University of Arkansas

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DESIGN CATALOG

C**o-Chair** - Ling Zhang, Iowa State University
Co-Chair - Jessica Pattison, Mississippi State University
Committee Member(s) - Li Jiang, Syracuse University

A total of 209 designs with associated images were reviewed by a jury and were evaluated on: 1) contextual review and context; 2) aesthetic properties and visual impact; 3) process, technique, and execution; 4) cohesion; and 5) design contribution and innovation. Each undergraduate student entry was reviewed by two jurors, while professional and graduate student entries were reviewed by two academic and one industry jurors. Acceptance or rejection for the ITAA Design Exhibition was based on the jury's scores in relation to these criteria. Further, a panel of industry experts reviewed submissions and selected award eligibility of entries at the exhibition.

As the result of the review process:
-In the professional category, 75 designs were reviewed with 38 designs accepted (50.7% acceptance rate)
-In the graduate student category, 51 designs were reviewed with 24 designs accepted (47% acceptance rate)
-In the undergraduate student category, 79 designs were reviewed with 38 designs accepted (48% acceptance rate)

DESIGN EXHIBIT

Chair - Mercan Derafshi, University of Tennessee at Martin
Members - Jeremy M. Bernardoni, University of North Texas
Addison Cary, University of Tennessee at Martin
Madison McMurray, Stephens College
Jenna White, University of Tennessee at Martin

REVIEWERS 2025 DESIGN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Chair - Rachel Anderson, Texas Tech University
Co-Chair - Colleen Moretz, West Virginia University
Committee Member(s) - Cheyenne Staib, University of Missouri

REVIEWERS 2025 DESIGN EXHIBITION

Chair - Krissi Riewe Stevenson, Kent State University
Chair Elect - Kendra Lapolla, Kent State University
Chair Elect - Danielle Martin, Toronto Metropolitan University
Reviewers - Rachel Anderson, Texas Tech University
Dr. Julie Becker, Eastern Michigan University
Jeremy M. Bernardoni, University of North Texas
Aseel Binhajib, University of Jeddaha
Melanie Carrico, University of North Carolina Greensboro
May Chae, Montclair State University
Chanjuan Chen, University of North Texas
Sun Young Choi, Konkuk University
Mercan Derafihi, University of Tennessee Martin
Zoran Dobric, Fashion Institute of Technology New York
Sheri L. Dragoo, Baylor University
Adriana Gorea, University of Delaware
Kayna Hobbs-Murphy, Colorado State University
Ja-Young Hwang, Kent State University
Ashley Kim, Mongolia International University
Sumin Koo, Yonsei University
Heajoo Lee, Iowa State University

Yoon Kyung(Pollina) Lee, Pusan National University, South Korea
ShuHwa Lin, University of Hawaii at Manoa
Michael Mamp, Louisiana State University
Bert Marckwardt, Illinois State University
Laura McAndrews, Kent State University
Kerri McBee-Black, University of Missouri
Ellen McKinney, The University of Alabama
Monica P. McMurry, Stephens College
Colleen Moretz, West Virginia University
Shannon North, Belmont University
Linda Ohrn-McDaniel, Kent State University
Gina Pisut, Middle Tennessee State University
Mary Ruppert-Stroescu, Washington University in St. Louis
Mary Simpson, Western Michigan University
Leigh Southward, University of Arkansas
Cheyenne Staib, University of Missouri
Casey Stannard, Louisiana State University
Bingyue Wei, Texas Woman's University
Wijdan Tawfiq , King Abdulaziz University
Barbara Cottrell Trippeer, University of North Texas
Sibei Xia, Louisiana State University
Han Ah Yoo, Washington State University

Industry Professional Reviewers - Chelsea Bell, Rosie + Belle
Felicia Bello, ILC Cover Astrospace
Annie Cohen, Design and Development Worldwide
Audrah Davidson, Bass Pro Shops
Cindy Fidler, JC Penny
Suzi Geiger, Galore Atelier
Michelle Kidwell, Eastman Footwear Group
Maia Loesche, Weissman's Dancewear Solutions
Cathy Lowe, Workwear Outfitters
Sharon Pate
Aleana Reed, Rebel Athletic
Jenny Siede

JUDGES 2025 DESIGN AWARDS

Claire Thomas-Morgan, Product Development Manager, Stars Design Group
Michael Drummond, Fashion Designer
Derron Cherry, Costume and Fashion Designer, Derron Cherry & beoombi

DESIGN AWARDS

Sandra Hutton Award for Excellence in Fiber Arts
Crafting Community: A Kantha- Inspired Approach to Addressing Academic Loneliness Colleen Pokorny, Bolanle Dahunsi, Marianne Dickson

ITAA Award for Innovative DesignScholarship - Professional
inBetween3dPrintDress: A 3D Printed Structured Draped Dress
Danielle Martin, Niloufar Ashournia, Haya Abdelhamid, Shantine Li

ITAA Award for Creative and Innovative Employment of Technique(s) - Professional
Bound Between Fingers: A Maternal Narrative in Collaborative Creative Practice Ling Zhang, Chanmi Hwang

Margaret Rucker Best Design Award – Professional
From Sneaker to Boot: A Modular Footwear Design to Enhance Fit and Function for Ankle-Foot Orthosis Users
Lida Aflatoony, Kristen Morris

Schofield Summit Design Award (Professional)
Her Algorithmic Beauty
Chanjuan Chen

ITAA Award for Innovative DesignScholarship - Graduate
Modular Gambit: A Reconfigurable Chess-Inspired Dress Exploring Playful User Agency Lasya Aji Silpa

ITAA Award for Creative and Innovative Employment of Technique(s) - Graduate
Kiss of Time: Translating Aging, Wrinkles, and Scars into Feminist Couture
Yawen Chen

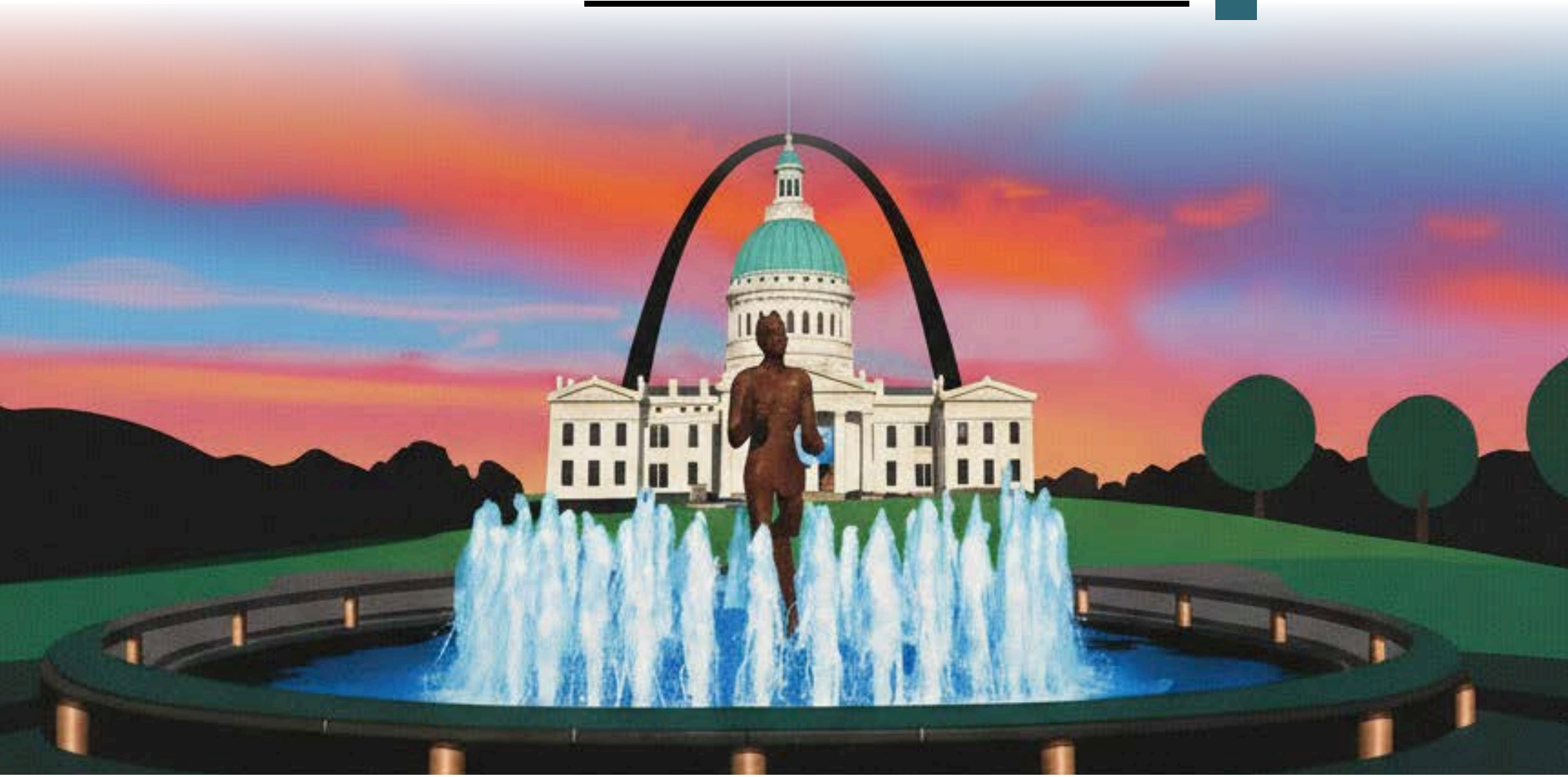
Margaret Rucker Best Design Award – Graduate
Work Assisted Exoskeleton Harness for Female Construction Workers-
Mary-Gwynedd Taylor

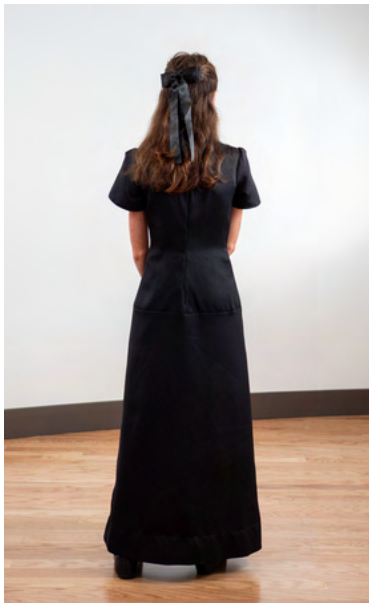
Schofield Rising Designer Award - Graduate
Iridescence: How the Chaos Theory and Innovation Upcycling Techniques Redirects the Life Path of Materials
Jacqueline Schmidt

Schofield Emerging Designer Award (Undergraduate)
SCAURA
Samantha Huynh

Schofield GuidingMentor Award (Undergraduate Mentor)
SCAURA
Rachel Eike

PROFESSIONAL DESIGNS





Size-Adjustable Performance Dress for Middle-School Female Musicians

Ellen McKinney
The University of Alabama

This problem-based design research aimed to develop and test a method for creating a performance dress that would fit a middle school musician for two years. This required a 2 ½ inch height adjustment (1 ½ inches in the torso and 1 inch in the legs) and a 1 ½ inch circumference adjustment. After reviewing grade rules, additional seam allowances were strategically added to the pattern pieces to optimally distribute the horizontal and vertical garment growth when let out. This strategy was tested and refined during construction (research through practice). The fitted drop-waist dress, featuring an A-line skirt, slightly gathered sleeves, and a sweetheart neckline, was sewn in black peau de soie (matte satin). The symmetrical design created a formal appearance, while the semi-full sleeves balanced the A-line skirt's width. The design met aesthetic expectations for student musicians and allowed the designer to meet the size-adjustability goals.

Upcycled Quilt Top Ensemble Inspired by 1930s Beach Pajamas

Casey Stannard
Louisiana State University

The purpose of the design was to create an upcycled quilt top ensemble inspired by 1930s beach pajamas and the work of Madeleine Vionnet for a contemporary audience while emphasizing sustainability. Apparel designers employ upcycling as a method of using unwanted textiles to create new designs to increase the sustainability of their work. Impending tariffs on apparel/textiles are encouraging more designers to upcycle locally available resources. Furthermore, jackets made from upcycled quilts have been trending lately. The design also incorporated the skirt/pants pattern from a Madeleine Vionnet gown pattern. Flat patterning and draping were used to create the design. The present design contributes to the body of knowledge around how to use historic patterns in contemporary garments. Future design research should further investigate how to size up historic patterns to fit contemporary bodies. This design also capitalized on the upcycled quilt trend to create a fashionable, sustainable ensemble.

Sign of the Times – Fashioning Hong Kong's Urban and Cultural Memory

Tai Wai David Yeung
Baylor University

This fashion collection, *Sign of the Times*, draws inspiration from Hong Kong's socio-cultural transformation between the 1950s and 1970s. It interprets the city's early growth through a contemporary lens, emphasizing resilience, identity, and collective memory. The design incorporates iconic elements such as street signage, dense public housing, the local undergarment brand Chicks, and the calligraphy of the "King of Kowloon" to reflect the era's spirit. Materials like cotton-linen blends and red, white, and blue accents symbolize the working-class ethos. Surface embellishments such as sequins, hand painting, and calligraphy-inspired details add depth and texture. The garment's transformation from a coat to a bag silhouette references migrant experiences. This piece serves as a tribute to Hong Kong's cultural heritage, inviting future generations to reconnect with their roots through fashion.

Embodied Dialogues

Hae Jin Gam
University of North Texas

This design explores the intersection of identity, neurodiversity, and maternal experience through personal narrative and traditional Korean aesthetics. Drawing on Parker's theory of maternal ambivalence, the project embraces caregiving's emotional complexity as a source of creative generativity. Inspired by my neurodivergent son's detailed subway map drawings, I transformed his visual language into digitally printed chiffon, creating a tactile textile that bridges mother and child. The garment reinterprets traditional Korean forms—specifically the Durumagi (overcoat) and Baji (pants)—through layered construction and contemporary patternmaking. Feminine elements such as bishop sleeves and ruffles subvert the masculine Hanbok silhouette, creating visual and symbolic tension between tradition and transformation. The result is a narrative artifact that merges cultural heritage, neurodivergent cognition, and maternal identity. This work contributes to design scholarship by proposing a relational, autobiographical model for fashion practice that values caregiving and atypical perception as generative sites for material and conceptual innovation.

C.A.R.E: Computerized Apparel for Real-Time Evaluation of Mother and Infants During Breastfeeding and Kangaroo Care

Jessica Ridgway, Morgan Geck, Te-yen Wu, Yanfeng Zhao, & Madison Jones
Florida State University

The “C.A.R.E” garment is a breastfeeding tank top garment with a built-in nursing bra structure designed by apparel design scholars and computer scientists. The “C.A.R.E.” garment utilizes physical contact during breastfeeding to monitor the infant’s physiological signals. Bio-signals are transmitted across skin-to-skin contact, such as the infant’s electrocardiogram (ECG) and acoustic cues (e.g., sucking and swallowing sounds) which are transmitted through the shared physical interface and become mixed with the caregiver’s physiological signals. By capturing and analyzing these mixed signals, “C.A.R.E.” can differentiate between contact types (e.g., skin-to-skin versus mouth-to-breast). “C.A.R.E” can estimate breastfeeding duration, isolate the infant’s ECG for vital sign monitoring, and extract acoustic features to compute the suck-swallow-breath ratio. The garment has 6 electrode sensors made from conductive fabric and wired to a wireless computer on the back of the garment with conductive thread.

La Source II

Jooyoung Shin
Indiana University

"La Source II" is a creative exploration of the social concepts surrounding womanhood and the representation of women's bodies throughout history. This project visually interprets the ambivalent and paradoxical themes inherent in women's identities, derived from the foundational questions and texts posed by Simone de Beauvoir in "The Second Sex." By addressing the historical subjugation and objectification of women, "La Source II" aims to redefine femininity and challenge traditional narratives written by men to undervalue women. The design employs contrasting elements: red and black colors symbolize life and death, while varied textures and forms represent the complexities of existence. Linear forms and irregular drapery visually narrate the dualities women embody, from creation to destruction. This work not only highlights women's inherent power but also emphasizes the continuous interplay between life and death. "La Source II" serves as a profound statement on female identity and the multifaceted nature of women's experiences.

Crafting Community: A Kantha-Inspired Approach to Addressing Academic Loneliness

Colleen Pokorny, Bolanle Dahunsi, & Marianne Dickson
Oregon State University

This design explores the potential of collaborative crafting to combat academic loneliness, particularly among female faculty. Drawing inspiration from traditional Kantha techniques, we created a gender-neutral jacket using naturally dyed fabric remnants and hand-stitched running stitches. Three female academics in an apparel design program met regularly to co-create the textile and garment, using the repetitive stitching process to foster dialogue, mutual support, and creative exchange. The project not only resulted in a visually cohesive, Kantha-inspired jacket, but also cultivated a space for connection beyond academic roles. Our collaboration sparked new pedagogical ideas, including a proposed course centered on community, crafting, and activism. It also led to a stronger sense of community among instructors and students within the program. This project illustrates how communal crafting can serve as a powerful, sustainable intervention for academic loneliness and offers a replicable model for community-building in higher education.

Sandra Hutton Award for Excellence in Fiber Arts

The Wave Dress: A Sewing-Free Whole Garment Innovation on a V-Bed Knitting Machine

Sibei Xia
Louisiana State University

This study presents a sewing-free whole garment dress developed on a fully fashioned V-bed flatbed knitting machine, traditionally used for panel production. Inspired by Hokusai's The Great Wave off Kanagawa, the design integrates intarsia and floating jacquard techniques to achieve a structurally and visually dynamic textile surface. 8/4 100% cotton yarns in a wave-inspired palette were combined with elastic yarns in the ground layer to create undulating effects. The garment was knitted as a seamless tube on a Shima Seiki SSR 112 7-gauge machine, with armhole, neckline, and side shaping realized through controlled front-back needle bed connectivity. The technical back of the jacquard was intentionally used as the design face to highlight floating structures. This work demonstrates the expanded design potential of V-bed knitting machines in producing complex, three-dimensional whole garments with enhanced customization and reduced post-production processes, contributing to sustainable and localized manufacturing practices.

Bound Between Fingers: A Maternal Narrative in Collaborative Creative Practice

Ling Zhang[1] & Chanmi Hwang[2]
[1]Iowa State University. [2]North Carolina State University.

This collaborative wearable art piece explores the emotional and physical journey of motherhood through pregnancy, postpartum, and child rearing using symbolic motifs and digital embroidery. Developed remotely by two designers, the garment integrates traced hand shapes of mothers and children, heart, and womb motifs to represent love, sacrifice, and resilience. Embroidered on sheer silk organza and chiffon, the placement of motifs reflects the protective and enduring maternal bond. Red thread details in the womb motif acknowledge the experience of miscarriage, adding emotional depth. This design demonstrates how remote collaboration can yield innovative hands-on garment creation, offering a rare case study in digital co-creation within apparel design. By merging personal narrative, advanced textile techniques, and visual storytelling, this work exemplifies how creative scholarship in fashion can embody lived experience and foster empathetic engagement with its audience.

ITAA Award for Creative and Innovative Employment of Technique(s) - Professional

The Hemp Shell: Zero-Waste Tube-to-Wear Garment through Flatbed Knitting

Sibei Xia, Chuanlan Liu, Rui Zhao, & Yanbo Zhang
Louisiana State University

This study presents a sustainable, zero-waste garment design integrating hemp yarn and flatbed knitting to address environmental and material challenges in fashion. Leveraging the regenerative properties of hemp, the design employs a biomimetic approach inspired by oyster shells, translating their layered textures and structural aesthetics into textile form. The garment was constructed on a Shima Seiki SSR 112 V-bed machine using floating jacquard and elastic-based shaping to mitigate hemp's stiffness and breakage. A tube-to-wear structure was achieved without sewing by connecting knit panels on front and back beds, forming seamless side seams and ergonomic shaping. Elastic yarns enhanced fit and texture, while blended hemp-cotton yarns supported sustainability and performance. The design illustrates how technical adaptations enable the functional use of hemp in whole garment knitting. This work contributes to circular textile practices by integrating bio-based fibers, zero-sewing construction, and reshoring-compatible, low-labor knitting technologies.

Redressing Fashion History: Romantic Day Dress

LaDyra Lyte[1, 2] & Michael E. Mamp[1]
[1]*Louisiana State University.* [2]*Florida State University.*

Redressing Fashion History: Romantic Day Dress is a creative work that reimagines a nineteenth-century Eurocentric romantic wedding gown through a Black feminist lens. Drawing Inspiration from fiber artist Bisa Butler and historical figures like Elizabeth Keckley and Ann Lowe, the design challenges dominant fashion narratives by amplifying Black cultural identity and resistance. Informed by the conservation of an 1837 wedding gown and frameworks developed by Elizabeth Bye, Jean Parsons, and David Prown, the project followed four phases: historical analysis, digital design integration, reinterpretation, and evaluation. The final garment features custom-engineered textiles created through digital technologies and surface design methods. This work blends archival research, conservation, and design innovation. Through a Black feminist perspective, Redressing Fashion History reframes historical dress as a method of critical inquiry. The dress not only stands as a creative expression but as a scholarly exploration of how fashion history can be redressed through thoughtful reinterpretation.

Motherhood Meets Workwear

Bolanle Dahunsi
Oregon State University

This creative design project addresses the need for work-appropriate postpartum clothing that enables discreet public breastfeeding without requiring garment removal. Rooted in the Functional, Expressive, and Aesthetic (FEA) consumer needs model, the design integrates cultural identity, nursing access, and professional aesthetics. The final artifact is a peplum top and pencil skirt made from green and black Nigerian Ankara fabric. It features invisible zippers embedded in neckline princess seams, allowing private nursing access while maintaining privacy. The sloper was drafted from scratch, then refined and simulated in VStitcher for precise seam placement and fit analysis. The zipper structure also provides subtle abdominal support, enhancing comfort and confidence. This work offers a novel contribution by uniting Nigerian traditional textile and digital garment simulation to meet the real needs of postpartum professionals. The design affirms the multifaceted identity of mothers as caregivers, workers, individuals through fashion that is both expressive and functional.

Functional Scales

Yu Li & Young-A Lee
Auburn University

With a specific target on bike riders, the 3D printed glove design was developed by integrating the 3D scan-to-print workflow in the performance glove development process, addressing the bike riders' anthropometric differences of hands and ergonomic needs. Auxetic triangular grid structures were used to develop 3D printed textiles that replicate the appearance of fish scales, providing better comfort, fit, and movement for bike riders. The glove consists of customized, flexible panels with auxetic textile structures designed for enhanced grip, sun protection, and easy donning and doffing. An FDM 3D printer with flexible TPU filament was used to produce all glove panels and then, they were assembled using a melting technique. Fit evaluation was performed through wear trials. This design presents a novel approach to develop wearable products for improving user fit and wearability, which are challenging to achieve through the conventional glove manufacturing process.

Gradable Zero-Waste Healthcare Scrubs: Prototype Development for Mass Production

Ashley Rougeaux-Burnes[1], Colleen Moretz[2], Sheri Dragoo[3], Ellen McKinney[4], Melanie Carrico[5], & Casey Stannard[6]

[1]Texas Tech University. [2]West Virginia University. [3]Baylor University.[4]The University of Alabama. [5]University of North Carolina-Greensboro. [6]Louisiana State University.

The urgency to reduce textile waste has led to innovative methods like zero-waste (ZW) design, scalability has been a challenge. The Carrico Zero-Waste Banded Grading (CZWBG) method addresses this by enabling size-inclusive, gradable ZW patterns using inserted bands at key seamlines. While validated in various garments, its application in mass-produced functional workwear, healthcare scrubs, was explored. This research applies CZWBG to scrubs to bridge sustainability and industrial production. Scrubs were chosen for their consistent styling, supporting long-term use of ZW patterns. The design used 100% cotton in medium blue with clean lines and consistent seam placement across all sizes. Self-fabric grading bands preserved aesthetic cohesion. The pattern was tested through small-batch production and wear trials with occupational therapy students to assess end-user comfort and functionality. Looking ahead, planned assessments of consumer acceptance will further inform the market readiness of the design, paving the way for broader implementation.

Resonant Traditions: Reconceptualizing Heritage through Cross-Cultural Collaboration

Jeremy M. Bernardoni & Hae Jin Gam
University of North Texas

This conceptual design project revisits the iconic hourglass silhouette of the early 1950s to explore the intersections of nostalgia, femininity, and aesthetic control. Grounded in social control theory and supported by historical dress analysis and empirical aesthetics, the work examines how fashion visually enforces gendered ideals. The design uses material and color to negotiate dualities of concealment and revelation, indulgence and control. A deep red silk paper taffeta bodice contrasts with a voluminous tulle overskirt, creating a dialogue of power and delicacy. Subtle tone-on-tone embroidery reinforces the theme of concealed labor. Techniques include full-scale draping, hand dyeing, and meticulous construction. Drawing on the coincidentia oppositorum framework, the final piece embodies the reconciliation of opposites, generating visual and symbolic tension. The work contributes to fashion scholarship by using historical references and aesthetic practice to critique the cost of idealized femininity, offering insights for contemporary design.

Forbidden Fruit: Mediating Coincidentia Oppositorum

Jeremy M. Bernardoni
University of North Texas

This conceptual design project revisits the iconic hourglass silhouette of the early 1950s to explore the intersections of nostalgia, femininity, and aesthetic control. Grounded in social control theory and supported by historical dress analysis and empirical aesthetics, the work examines how fashion visually enforces gendered ideals. The design uses material and color to negotiate dualities of concealment and revelation, indulgence and control. A deep red silk paper taffeta bodice contrasts with a voluminous tulle overskirt, creating a dialogue of power and delicacy. Subtle tone-on-tone embroidery reinforces the theme of concealed labor. Techniques include full-scale draping, hand dyeing, and meticulous construction. Drawing on the coincidentia oppositorum framework, the final piece embodies the reconciliation of opposites, generating visual and symbolic tension. The work contributes to fashion scholarship by using historical references and aesthetic practice to critique the cost of idealized femininity, offering insights for contemporary design.

Gloveborne

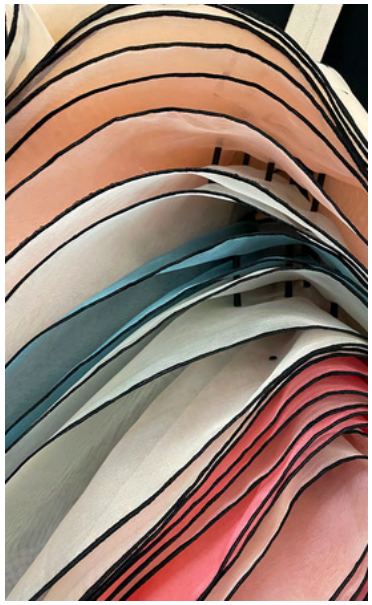
Adriana Gorea & Casey Tyler
University of Delaware

The purpose of this project was to explore how the standard 3D knitted glove shape can be manipulated to create an innovative garment silhouette by elevating the digital design process using humanized tactile creative techniques, such as modular draping, natural dyeing with madder root and couture assembly. The research through practice approach was used, where the seamless 3D shape of a knitted glove served as the draping module, aiming to fill a knowledge gap as no studies were found to use such repeating module for creative design process. This work advances both the sustainability and innovation of apparel design using advanced knitting technologies, showcasing how synthetic fibers could be used without the toxic colorants. Glovebourne also stands as a teaching resource aiming to encourage new designers to engage with advanced knitting technologies without using complex programming, but by using traditional creative process tools.

Knitgeist

Adriana Gorea & Casey Tyler
University of Delaware

In the opening scenes of *Guardians of the Galaxy*, where characters walk on a planet overwhelmed by human debris while wearing layered, modular costumes, we are reminded of a future shaped by excess and survival—paralleling the urgent need for knitwear design that transcends mere functionality to become a medium of self-expression and resistance within an increasingly digitized, plagued by hackers and ethically fragmented world. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to explore the intersection of cyber-organic aesthetics, knitwear silhouette innovation, and modular functionality using design fallout from computerized seamless knitwear. Drawing from the speculative narrative of a hyper-connected future in which privacy and personal boundaries are digitally eroded, this study aimed to envision fashion as a protective human interface—part soft armor, part stitch-by-stitch encoded self-expression.



inBetween3dPrintDress: A 3D Printed Structured Draped Dress

Danielle Martin, Niloufar Ashournia, Haya Abdelhamid, & Shantine Li
Toronto Metropolitan University

This research-creation emerges from a broader investigation into eco-responsibility within fashion design practice, examining tensions between experimental garments and acceleratingly ephemeral fashion. How can emerging technologies contribute to sustainable practices while maintaining emotional resonance often absent from eco-responsible fashion discourse? How can we interfere in the relentless acceleration of environmental disaster driven by mainstream fashion production cycles? The InBetween3dPrintDress achieves conceptual and formal cohesion through systematic exploration of tensions between opposing elements into a unified artistic statement: traditional techniques and emerging technology, handcraft draping and machine production, organic fluid forms and geometric rigidity. Without naming a specific emotion, the team was working to express emotions in the range qualified in the ‘Softness’ category, including empathy, nostalgia, tenderness/care, and vulnerability. This work contributes significantly to sustainable fashion design discourse by demonstrating how emerging technologies integrate with ancestral techniques – draping and zero-waste cutting – to create emotionally resonant, eco-responsible garments.

ITAA Award for Innovative DesignScholarship - Professional

Wired to Wellness: Swimwear for Insulin Pump Users

Hafiza Rahman & Dawn Michaelson
Auburn University

This research presents the design and development of adaptive swimwear for women using insulin pumps, addressing the challenges of continuous insulin delivery during water-based activities. Traditional swimwear lacks functionality for securely housing medical devices, often requiring users to disconnect their pumps, increasing health risks. In collaboration with an adult female insulin pump user, a functional bikini was developed incorporating a waterproof pocket to store the device while maintaining discretion and comfort safely. The design considers aesthetic preferences, medical functionality, and current fashion trends, incorporating ruffles and high-waisted cuts to conceal the pump. Fabric choices and construction techniques prioritize both utility and visual appeal. While initial waterproof testing was successful, further submersion testing and closure innovations are ongoing. This work contributes to inclusive, functional apparel design by integrating medical utility into women's swimwear without compromising style or confidence.

Crochet Chronicles: Embodying Refugee Experiences Through Artwear

Zoran Dobric
Fashion Institute of Techonology

Crochet Chronicles is a practice-based research project that explores the refugee experience and healing through artwear. Inspired by the designer's own displacement during the Yugoslav Wars, the project uses autoethnography to express personal and cultural memories. Central to the design is a screen-printed motif of the designer's grandmother's crochet doily, printed onto a gold emergency blanket—material symbolic of global refugee crises. The garment's black and gold palette, sculptural silhouette, and hand-sculpted clay elements reference Byzantine mosaics and ecclesiastical dress, evoking themes of mourning and resilience. The piece uses asymmetry and rich texture to tell a visual story of displacement, memory, and healing. By embedding personal narrative within the garment, the work foregrounds marginalized refugee voices and contributes to under-explored intersections of fashion and forced migration. Crochet Chronicles illustrates how fashion can serve as a powerful tool for storytelling, empathy, and envisioning peaceful futures amidst global displacement.

Modular Knitting

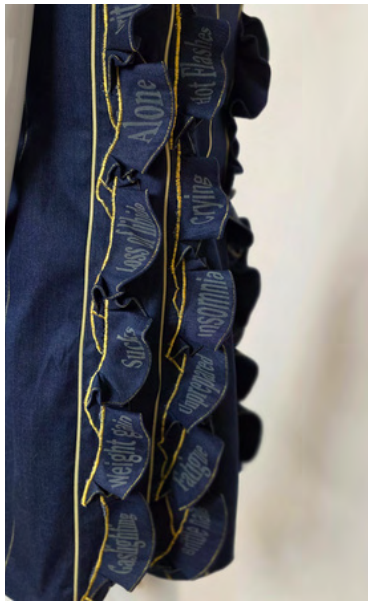
Linda Ohrn-McDaniel & Krissi Riewe Stevenson
Kent State University

Developing a graphic design for textiles and perfecting a design requires attention to detail, sampling, and iterative editing. This is especially true when considering the digital knit programming process. This process requires working in the language of knit stitches, represented by “pixels,” and applying the desired knit structures. Once a design is developed, a sample is knitted followed by edits and adjustments to perfect the repeat and color. To add additional complexity, 3D shaping of the knitted garment through partial knitting, or “goring” limits the overall graphic design to the gored sections in order to create a smooth repeat across the textile. In this project, we explore how to resolve this problem by investigating how many pieces could be created from one thoughtfully developed, graphic digital knit file. This work is underpinned by the philosophy of developing surface design simultaneously with the textile structure and shape.

Brush to Body: A Hanbok Dialogue

Hae Jin Gam
University of North Texas

This project explores how familial collaboration and personal narrative can be leveraged to contemporize traditional Korean garments through digital textile design and layered construction. Drawing on Weber and Mitchell's theory of clothing as autobiographical narrative, the work reinterprets the Chima and Durumagi using watercolor artwork created by the designer's sister. The painting, depicting a Korean gazebo and maple trees, was digitally adapted into full-color and grayscale textile prints applied to cotton and chiffon. This material juxtaposition creates visual contrast and emotional resonance, framing the dress as present and vibrant, and the coat as reflective and meditative. Through iterative patternmaking and textile testing, the project balances traditional silhouettes with modern techniques. The result is a cohesive, wearable narrative that bridges memory, kinship, and cultural heritage. This design contributes to fashion scholarship by offering a relational methodology that integrates emotional storytelling, digital fabrication, and cross-disciplinary creativity within contemporary cultural dress practice.



The Art of Repairing Me

Dawn Michaelson
Auburn University

Menopause, a natural life stage, remains underrepresented in health discourse and design narratives. Affecting over half the global population, it impacts not only reproduction but also emotional well-being, bone density, skin, and cardiovascular health. Despite symptoms like hot flashes, anxiety, and identity shifts affecting millions for years, many women feel unprepared and dismissed by healthcare providers. This garment responds to that silence, using the Japanese art of kintsugi, repairing with gold, as a metaphor for visible healing. Constructed with gold coil zippers, metallic stitching, and custom flounces etched with real menopause experiences, the design honors fragmentation and resilience. Adapted for the changing midlife body, it blends personal transformation with collective testimony. The result is both artifact and advocacy, threading hundreds of women's voices into one unified, powerful narrative. By foregrounding menopause in fashion, this piece challenges cultural taboos and fosters dialogue, recognition, and solidarity for a long-overlooked life transition.

Be You: Digitally Knitted Set for Children on Dialysis

Laura McAndrews & Linda Ohrn-McDaniel
Kent State University

Be You is a digitally knitted two-piece garment set designed for young children undergoing dialysis. Rooted in human-centered design and participatory co-design, the project engaged kindergarten-aged children in the creative process, allowing their drawings and input to shape both the aesthetic and emotional qualities of the final design. Addressing specific medical and emotional needs, the garment includes adaptive features for dialysis access sites and blook pressure cuffs, while also considering weight fluctuation, blood staining, and temperature regulation. Inspired by McAndrews and Brooks and building on digital knit design, Be You uses soft cotton yarn and digitally knitting technology to ensure comfort and dignity. Through creative workshop, children's artwork informed motifs and color choices, symbolizing care and peer support. This project demonstrates how even the youngest voices can meaningfully contribute to healthcare design, offering a replicable model for compassionate, functional, and emotionally resonant pediatric garments.

Playful Pineapple

Laura McAndrews & Kendra Lapolla
Kent State University

Playful Pineapple is a sustainable, emotionally durable children's garment designed through co-design methods and rooted in narrative and surface engagement. Utilizing modular design principles and cradle-to-cradle material strategies, the garment incorporates Pinatex (pineapple leather) and cotton twill to support both environmental sustainability and user comfort. A kindergarten classroom workshop allowed 22 children to personalize pineapple leather with drawings inspired by summer, embedding personal stories directly into the garment's surface. The modular design includes laser-cut components, metal hardware for customizable assembly, and a utility best to encourage interaction and creativity. The project fosters emotional attachment, allowing children to see themselves reflected in the garment, extending its meaningful use. Playful Pineapple offers a replicable model for emotionally resonant, gender-inclusive children's wear demonstrating how sustainable materials and participatory design can cultivate long-term product relationships. This approach encourages early engagement with conscious consumption and reimagines clothing as a medium for play, identity, and self-expression.

Her Algorithmic Beauty

Chanjuan Chen
University of North Texas

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to evolve rapidly, more industries are leveraging it to generate original content and streamline production processes. However, this technological shift raises ethical concerns, particularly in how generative AI not only replicates but also amplifies existing societal biases related to race, gender, and beauty standards. This design addresses the growing need to critically examine and expose the biases inherent in generative AI systems. By incorporating AI into the design process while intentionally utilizing its aesthetic defaults, the piece aims to expose the limitations and sociocultural implications of AI-generated beauty. The purpose of this design is to highlight these algorithmic biases and advocate for more inclusive representations of cultural beauty standards and race in AI-driven design tools. From a technical standpoint, the piece demonstrated how modular design can serve as both a structural system and a medium for creating meaningful surface designs that engage with social issues.

Schofield Summit Design Award

Development and Evaluation of an Adaptive Period Underwear for Women Wheelchair Users

Jia Wu & Lauren Lansdell
Auburn University

Menstrual hygiene management is a critical aspect of health, dignity, and human rights, yet for women wheelchair users (WWUs), it is fraught with challenges. Limited mobility, reduced dexterity, and sensory sensitivities can make traditional menstrual products uncomfortable and impractical. Aesthetically, seamless construction minimizes skin irritation, crucial for WWUs experiencing prolonged sitting. Additionally, an ergonomic fit with a lower front and higher back accommodates seated postures, preventing fabric bunching and enhancing comfort. Adaptive fastenings, such as magnetic closures, further enhance user independence by securing the absorbent pad. The fabric selection prioritizes breathable materials for comfort and hygiene, featuring a multi-layer system: an antibacterial top layer, a high-absorbency middle layer, and a leak-proof bottom layer. This design bridges the gap between adaptive apparel and menstrual hygiene management, offering a user-centered solution for WWUs. The adaptive period underwear prototype showcases a novel approach to menstrual product design, balancing functional requirements with aesthetic appeal.

Rendered in Yarn

Krissi Riewe Stevenson
Kent State University

This project explores how integrating digital and physical tools enables an iterative, responsive, and problem-solving apparel design process. Here, this approach is used to resolve the challenge of creating shaped knitted textiles with an all-over seamless repeat. Using short-row knitting (goring), the fully-fashioned garment drapes like traditionally cut and sewn woven garments but avoids waste by knitting the exact shape. A floral pattern was developed using Procreate and Adobe Illustrator, then carefully aligned across gored sections using digital knit software. The final piece, made with silk and lamé yarns, features a flattering silhouette and uninterrupted jacquard pattern. This work demonstrates how a flexible “toolbox” of digital and physical methods supports creativity, precision, and sustainability. Employing a practice-based methodology, the designer shows how knowledge is generated through making, offering a framework for future exploration of integrated workflows in fashion design and sustainable production.

Flutterform: A Choreography of Cells

Pimpawan Kumphai & Nigar Sultana
Central Michigan University

This project presents a sustainable, no-sew, size-inclusive garment inspired by kirigami cutting and cellular imagery from Axolotl biology. Developed through interdisciplinary STEAM collaboration, microscopic cell structures were tessellated into motifs resembling butterfly wings. Laser-cut into 100% polyester taffeta, these repeated motifs create a lightweight, fluttering lace-like fabric that moves fluidly with the wearer while maintaining structural integrity. The garment's design prioritizes zero waste through a one-piece rectangular pattern and incorporates customizable features like adjustable necklines and lengths, achieved by manipulating cut motifs, lace, and folds without sewing. Bright lining colors peek through cut areas, adding depth and visual texture reminiscent of iridescent wings. This work advances fashion design by demonstrating how kirigami-inspired cutting can enable adaptive forms and user-driven customization. By integrating scientific visuals into textile design, the project bridges art and science, promoting sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation in fashion education and practice.

Lacquered Wish

Sun Young Choi
Konkuk University

Lacquer is the resin extracted from lacquer trees, and its application to substrates like wood, metal, ceramics, paper, or leather forms lacquerware. Korea's 2000-year lacquer tradition offers exceptional functional properties: water resistance, corrosion resistance, insect repellency, and electromagnetic wave absorption. Lacquer-dyed textiles are particularly valued as eco-friendly materials with superior antibacterial and UV-blocking capabilities. Despite these advantages, lacquer dyeing remains underutilized in fashion design. As K-fashion emerges as a key driver of K-culture's global growth, there is urgent potential to develop fashion collections using this traditional eco-material. This study aims to modernize Korean cultural heritage through lacquer-dyed fashion by: (a) identifying design challenges via prior research, (b) developing eco-functional textiles through lacquer dyeing techniques, and (c) creating a collection that integrates aesthetic and symbolic elements of traditional Korean costumes and patterns. The research seeks to establish lacquer dyeing as a functional and culturally significant textile innovation for contemporary fashion.

Passages of Refuge

Angela Uriyo
West Virginia University

Passages of Refuge is a trauma-informed childrenswear design, designed in response to the emotional and developmental challenges faced by resettled refugee children. The design addresses the underexplored intersection between apparel design and trauma recovery, offering a wearable intervention that supports memory processing, cultural identity, and self-expression. Constructed using subtraction cutting and pieced from culturally symbolic fabrics, the garment reflects the non-linear emotional landscape of displacement while honoring diverse heritage. A chevron patchwork motif represents parallel and converging refugee journeys, and the voluminous silhouette invites multisensory interaction and embodied storytelling. Red, a culturally layered color, anchors the palette and conveys sacrifice, love, and survival. The use of deadstock and gifted materials emphasizes sustainability and emotional durability. Rooted in the Functional, Expressive, and Aesthetic (FEA) Consumer Needs Model, the garment functions as a therapeutic aid and narrative platform, demonstrating how fashion design can foster resilience, cultural continuity, and healing in displaced youth.

Witches' Blue: Fit, Form, and Filament in 3D Surface and Silhouette

Kayna Hobbs-Murphy & Kristen Morris
Colorado State University

"Witches' Blue" is a sculptural couture garment exploring the synthesis of generative AI, 3D printing digital fabrication using TPU flexible filament, and traditional construction. Born from AI explorations, this design merges naturalistic fantasy, drag aesthetics, and wearable sculpture. The design employs a non-Euclidean patternmaking approach, where shaping devices are embedded within curved lines rather than relying on flat pattern logic. The process involved drafting and patterning by hand, informed by a 3D body scan of the padded form, and experimental reverse patterning techniques to translate digital concepts into flexible 3D shapes. The padding creates drag-inspired proportions characterized by high hip volume and curved lateral protrusions at the hips. The garment was constructed using couture standards, including underlining and invisible stitching, with the absence of side seams reinforcing the continuous form around the exaggerated hips. TPU appliqués form spiraling, vine-like structures, contrasting with sheer mesh and flocked velvet.

A-Cora-ble by Design: A Junior Prom Co-Design Story

Kristen Morris & Latifah Hirchi-Vogl
Colorado State University

"A-Cora-ble" is a co-designed junior prom dress developed through a collaborative partnership with a high school student with Down syndrome, Cora, and her mother, addressing the challenge of finding formal wear with proper fit and personal expression for individuals with disabilities. Standard sizing often fails to accommodate unique body proportions, leading to fit issues for people with Down syndrome. The project utilized inclusive design methods, centering the individual's voice and vision as an active collaborator. 3D body scanning for accurate measurements and CLO3D for virtual prototyping, were crucial for customized pattern development and ensuring fit. Sustainable design strategies were integrated by repurposing fabric scraps into floral appliqués to form a vibrant expression of identity that supports ease of movement. This work demonstrates how user-centered design and technology can empower individuals in shaping their apparel, particularly for significant life events like prom, promoting inclusion over segregated events.

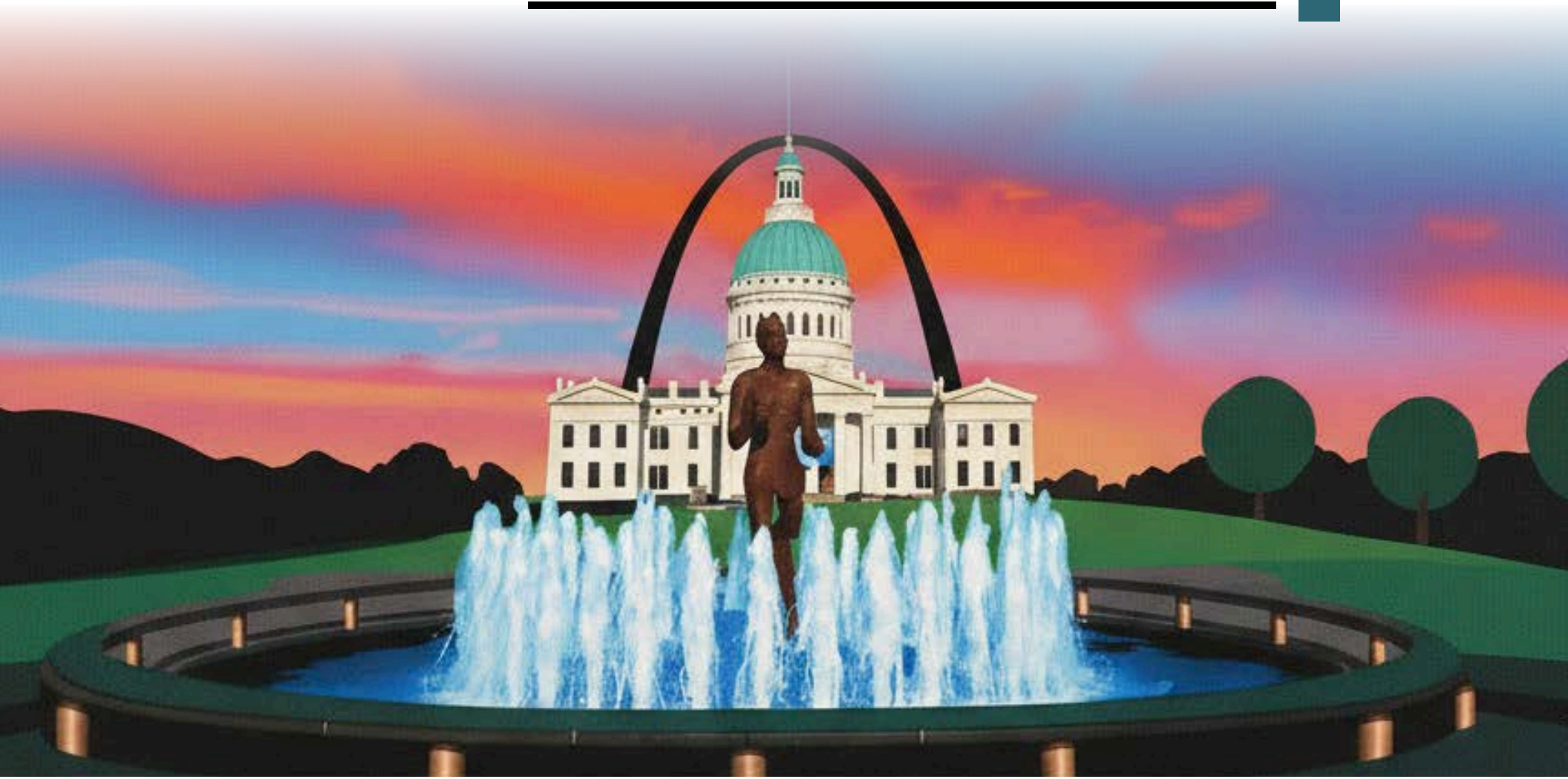
From Sneaker to Boot: A Modular Footwear Design to Enhance Fit and Function for Ankle-Foot Orthosis Users

Lida Aflatoony & Kristen Morris
Colorado State University

This research addresses the footwear challenges faced by individuals who use ankle-foot orthoses (AFOs), which are medical devices that add bulk to the foot, often making it difficult to find shoes with adequate width and depth. Through interviews with 12 adult AFO users, the team developed a modular footwear concept that transforms from a sneaker to a boot. A custom shoe last, created using 3D scans of various AFO styles, ensured appropriate fit. The design features two hidden zippers flanking the eyestay for easy donning, breathable gussets behind the zippers, and Morito® Adjustable Tapey on the tongue, which helps prevent foot drop in the boot configuration. The detachable boot upper connects via Morito® trims and a separating zipper, allowing wearers to adapt their shoe style based on weather or preference. Made from durable leather and lined with mesh spacer padding, the design balances function, comfort, and aesthetics for AFO users.

Margaret Rucker Best Design Award – Professional

GRADUATE STUDENT DESIGNS



Hands That Speak – A Tale of Silent Stories

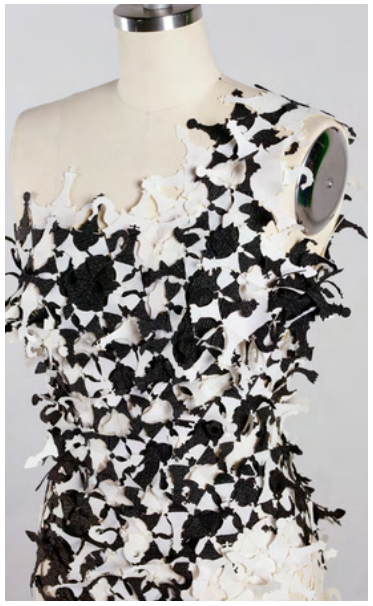
Manikya Sai Tejaswini Vallabhajosyula
Advisor / design mentor(s): Jeremy M. Bernardoni
University of North Texas

Hands That Speak is a wearable tribute to the silent narratives of Indian artisans. Drawing from the textured surfaces of working hands scarred, stained, and worn through years of labor, the garment transforms physical imprints into textile storytelling. A sculpted halter top, created through digitally mapped layer cutting of cotton twill and hand-stitched with cords, mimics the grooves of artisanal fingerprints. The skirt, crafted from hand-dyed silk organza, features pigment-stained hands in hues of turmeric, madder, and indigo. Hindi script digitally embroidered across translucent layers gives voice to native expressions, turning language into a visual, wearable form. Through digital fabrication, tactile layering, and linguistic embroidery, this design pays homage to the resilience, identity, and lived experiences of artisans. It is not merely clothing; it is a cultural document that speaks through form and fabric, paying homage to hands that shape heritage, yet often go unseen.

Architectural Bloom: Villa Palladio in Fabric Form

Manikya Sai Tejaswini Vallabhajosyula
Advisor / design mentor(s): Jeremy M. Bernardoni & Chen Chanjuan
University of North Texas

This garment, "Architectural Bloom," transforms the sensory architecture of Villa Palladio, a heritage boutique in Jaipur, into a sculptural textile experience. Drawing from the villa's vivid palette of reds, greens, and golds, the design uses sustainably sourced cotton, both hand-block printed and red-dyed, to embody the space's atmosphere. Block printing, a traditional and eco-conscious surface technique, anchors the design in regional craftsmanship and slow fashion values. Triangular forms reference Jaipur's location in India's Golden Triangle and echo Indo-Islamic architectural motifs. Laser-cut apertures inspired by jaali patterns (lattice screen) allow embedded LED lighting to recreate the glow of sunrise and sunset as seen through the villa's arches. This integration of traditional craft with digital fabrication and lighting technology creates a dynamic, wearable archive of place, time, and memory. The garment bridges cultural heritage with contemporary design practice, inviting viewers into a tactile and illuminated story of architectural influence and sustainable innovation.



Modular Gambit: A Reconfigurable Chess-Inspired Dress Exploring Playful User Agency

Lasya Aji Silpa
Advisor / design mentor(s): Hae Jin Gam
University of North Texas

"Modular Gambit" is a transformable garment inspired by the timeless game of chess—a symbol of intellect, foresight, and balance. This interactive design invites wearers to become players, customizing the garment's surface using modular chess pieces crafted from sustainable materials like bamboo jute. Each piece—queen, rook, knight, and pawn is laser-cut and can be arranged across the fitted base, allowing the garment to shift and evolve like a living chessboard. Rooted in the game's Eastern origins, the design explores duality through black-and-white contrast and echoes the harmony of opposites found in philosophies like yin and yang. Beyond aesthetics, it offers a tactile experience of strategy and agency, transforming passive wear into playful authorship. With each new arrangement, "Modular Gambit" tells a unique story, bridging cultural heritage, modular craftsmanship, and emotional engagement. It's not just worn, it's played, re-imagined, and brought to life by the wearer's choices.

ITAA Award for Innovative DesignScholarship - Graduate

Work-Assist Exoskeleton Harness for Female Construction Workers

Mary-Gwynedd Taylor
Advisor / design mentor(s): Casey Stannard & Sibei Xia
Louisiana State University

As the construction industry experiences a labor shortage and seeks to recruit more women, the need for ergonomic, gender-specific personal protective equipment (PPE) is becoming urgent. This design research proposes a functional lower-body exoskeleton harness tailored to female construction workers to reduce repetitive strain injuries (RSIs) and improve job retention. The harness integrates ergonomic patterning, targeted stretch and rigidity, and breathable materials to support comfort, movement, and sensor function. Designed using Clo-3D and Rhino on a size 12 female digital form, the harness and leg braces accommodate anatomical variability and adhere to OSHA safety standards. Visual and psychological considerations were addressed through color selection and form. The harness easily connects to a conceptual 3D-printed exoskeleton prototype, which aims to assist lower-limb movement. This collaborative, interdisciplinary project bridges apparel design and engineering, proposing a more inclusive future for exoskeleton development.

Margaret Rucker Best Design Award

The Crosscurrent Racing Suit: A Solution for Professional Stand-Up Paddleboard Racers Participating in the 80-Mile Crossing for Cystic Fibrosis

Jenna Passke
Advisor / design mentor(s): Susan Sokolowski
University of Oregon

The Crosscurrent Racing Suit is a performance garment engineered for elite female stand-up paddleboard (SUP) athletes competing in The Crossing for Cystic Fibrosis, an 80-mile open-ocean endurance race. Addressing the unique demands of this event, the suit integrates three key performance criteria: ventilation, compression, and on-body storage. Informed by surveys of experienced SUP athletes, the design responds to challenges such as prolonged exertion, extreme temperature fluctuations, and limited gear access. Aesthetic and functional features include mesh ventilation zones, compressive paneling, reflective elements, and strategically placed storage pockets. Developed through extensive research, over 70 digital sketches, and more than 30 prototypes, the suit was refined using athlete feedback and advanced construction methods. Made from durable 4-way stretch nylon/spandex blends, the garment provides anatomical precision & sustained comfort. As the first performance suit tailored to female SUP racers, this suit advances functional apparel design and addresses the gap in water-based endurance sportswear.

Reimagining the Chiton: Advancing Zero-Waste Knitwear through Historical Inspiration and Digital Innovation

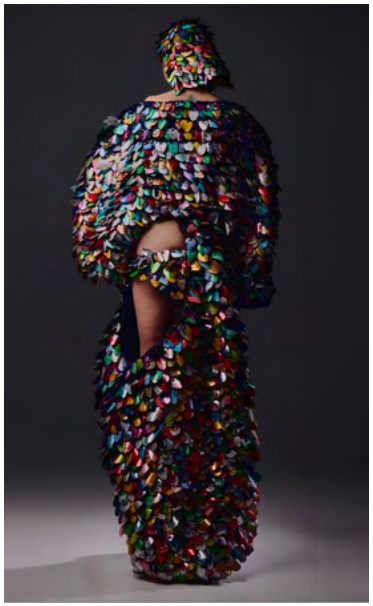
*R*ui Zhao & Yanbo Zhang
Advisor / design mentor(s): Sibei Xia & Chaunlan Liu
Louisiana State University

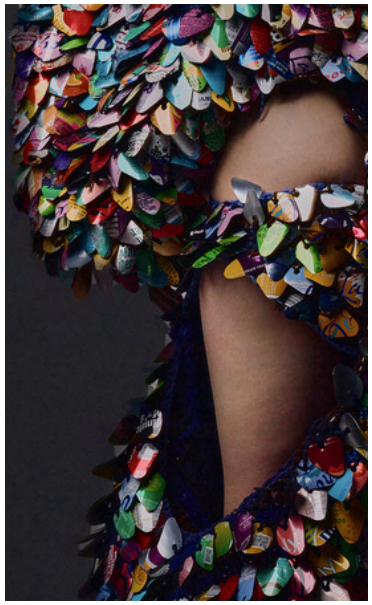
This project reimagines the ancient Greek chiton through digital knitting. It combines historical clothing ideas with modern sustainable technology. The design follows the simple, draped structure of classical garments. It uses zero-waste methods and advanced flat knitting.The main material is white yarn. Metallic threads and sequins are added for texture and a soft shine. The garment is shaped using computer programming. No cutting is needed, which reduces fabric waste.Design elements are inspired by Madame Grès's pleats and Madeleine Vionnet's bias cuts. These methods help shape the fabric and improve fit. Partial knitting and missed stitches are used to add texture, improve breathability, and increase flexibility.This project shows how traditional styles can be updated using digital tools. It supports more efficient and eco-friendly fashion design.

Victorian Punk: Reimagining Couture Traditions Through Sustainable Design Techniques

Irina Pavlova
Advisor / design mentor(s): Casey Stannard
Louisiana State University

The present design challenge was to create a cohesive look consisting of three demi-couture garments that blend traditional hand-sewing and embellishment techniques —characteristic of couture sewing traditions—with contemporary sustainable design methods. The fusion of traditional and contemporary design techniques is reflected in the aesthetic elements of the presented garments, which blend Victorian dress elements with visual codes associated with the punk subculture—known for its rejection of mass fashion and harmful, unjust production practices. The ensemble integrates multiple approaches to sustainable fashion design, including fabric upcycling, material repurposing, zero-waste design, transformable fashion and craftsmanship preservation—each coexisting within a single outfit. This multi-method approach offers a model for apparel designers aiming to create diverse collections using non-harmful design methodologies while addressing the complex sustainability challenges encountered in their creative process.





Iridescence: How the Chaos Theory and Innovative Upcycling Techniques Redirects theLife Path of Materials

Jacqueline Schmidt
Advisor / design mentor(s): Zoran Dobric
Fashion Institute of Technology

Iridescence is a garment inspired by Chaos Theory and the Butterfly Effect, illustrating how small changes can lead to vast transformations. It explores sustainability through upcycling, showing how discarded materials—like aluminum cans and thrifted yarn—can be reborn into innovative textiles. The piece draws from the fractal patterns and iridescent qualities of butterfly wings to inform both its aesthetics and construction. The dress incorporates asymmetrical balance, texture, and hand-crafted paillettes made from 200 recycled cans. Crocheted and embroidered using deconstructed sweaters, each detail represents a step toward redefining waste as opportunity. The garment highlights the potential of sustainable fashion by showcasing unique design processes. Emphasizing patience, transformation, and environmental consciousness, Iridescence aims to inspire others to explore creative, sustainable solutions in design. By embracing upcycling and experimental techniques, it reflects how innovation can reshape fashion's future and reduce environmental impact through thoughtful reuse.

Schofield Rising Designer Award-Graduate

Pulse in Yarn: A Tuft-Knit Diary of Daily Heart Rhythms

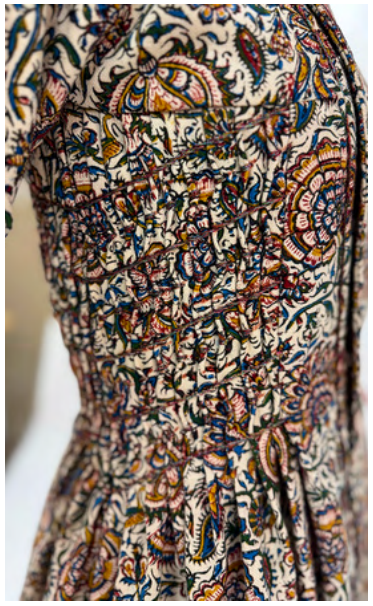
Seoyoung Choi[1, 2]
Advisor / design mentor(s): Jeyeon Jo[1]
[1]*University of Georgia.* [2]*Seoul National University.*

Pulse in Yarn is a hand-crafted garment that visualizes daily heart rhythms through tufted textures. Heart rate, with its subtle shifts between exertion and emotion, offers a continuous narrative of how the body feels rather than simply functions. Over a week, biometric data was captured and modeled using parametric design tools, producing a series of digital mappings that made the body's internal tempo visible in space. These visualizations were then translated into material form as each data point was rendered by hand through punch-needle tufting and crochet onto a knitted base. The resulting surface holds seven distinct zones, each expressing the day's emotional rhythm through changes in density and texture. By layering computational representation with tactile making, the project transforms ephemeral data into embodied memory. This hybrid process challenges the boundary between sensing and feeling and shows how craft can serve as a medium for personal reflection.

Infinity Dress

Mansoureh (Sophie) Nikookar
Advisor / design mentor(s): Elizabeth (Missy) Bye
University of Minnesota

This design explores the challenges and opportunities inherent in creating modular fashion systems that embody the principles of responsible consumption, using a transformable, upcycled denim garment as a case study. Despite the growing academic emphasis on circularity and sustainability in fashion, modular systems, especially those with transformable functions, remain largely underexplored in practical design applications. This project contributes to this emerging field by presenting a garment made of transformable modules crafted entirely from upcycled jeans, a fiber blend (cotton, polyester, elastane) that traditionally resists standard recycling methods. The innovation lies in the modular configuration and transformative versatility, which allow the garment to be worn in multiple styles, thereby enhancing both its functionality and longevity. This design addresses the sustainability challenge by creating a fashion artifact that not only reuses materials but also actively promotes slower consumption cycles through versatility and reconfigurability.



Arkhalig Reimagined: A Contemporary Zero-Waste Dress Using Traditional Iranian Block-Printed Textile

Mansoureh (Sophie) Nikookar
Advisor / design mentor(s): Elizabeth (Missy) Bye
University of Minnesota

The modern fashion industry faces significant sustainability challenges stemming from overproduction, waste, and the loss of craft-based traditions. In response, this project aims to integrate zero-waste design strategies with traditional cultural knowledge to create a garment that embodies sustainability in both environmental and cultural contexts. The design is inspired by the traditional Arkhalig, a long-fitted jacket historically worn by men and women in Iran and the Caucasus region. The piece is an asymmetrical dress crafted from a heritage textile, an Iranian block-printed cotton fabric known as Qalamkar, dyed with natural substances such as pomegranate peel and alum, and printed with wooden blocks in various colors. This garment successfully synthesizes a historical silhouette, sustainable construction, and cultural textiles into a coherent, wearable artifact. It introduces a rarely explored textile tradition, Safavid-era Iranian block printing, into the context of zero-waste design, challenging Western-dominated narratives around sustainability.

The Kiss of Time: Translating Aging, Wrinkles, and Scars into Feminist Couture

Yawen Chen
Advisor / design mentor(s): Zoran Dobric
Fashion Institute of Technology

The Kiss of Time is a conceptual couture garment that explores aging and the female body through a feminist lens, celebrating scars and bodily transformation as marks of strength and memory. Inspired by Miyako Ishiuchi's photography and the designer's mother's post-mastectomy experience, the piece reclaims wrinkles, scars, and asymmetry as aesthetic and emotional statements. Combining draping, textile manipulation, and embroidery, it challenges conventional beauty ideals by embracing imperfection and bodily change. The three-piece ensemble juxtaposes softness with structure to metaphorically express emotional endurance and physical resilience. Techniques and materials echo aged skin and healing, with elements informed by wabi-sabi philosophy. As a feminist statement, the garment resists erasure of aging in fashion, positioning the body as a living archive of survival and memory. It offers a rare contribution to fashion studies by centering aged and scarred bodies as sites of beauty, identity, and narrative power.

ITAA Award for Creative and Innovative Employment of Technique(s)

Seashell Architecture Inspired Auxetic Knitted Dress

Rashmi Balegar Mohan
Advisor / design mentor(s): Jeyeon Jo
University of Georgia

This design presents a bioinspired auxetic knitted dress derived from the structural logic of seashell architecture. Seashells exhibit hierarchical geometries and mechanical resilience through curvature, ribbing and layered composition. While not inherently auxetic, their form inspires a textile structure that mimics stress redistribution and directional reinforcement. Using arrowhead-shaped re-entrant geometries, the knit structure achieves exceptional stretch, enabling enhanced fit and dynamic visual transformation. Panels of varying unit knit sizes (4x4, 6x6, 10x10) were knitted with 100% acrylic yarn using a double-bed machine. A 1x1 rib panel was added for visual and structural contrast. Pearl beads were hand-stitched for added texture and luminosity. The resulting design demonstrates a synthesis of biomimicry, material engineering, and aesthetics-highlighting potential applications in adaptive fashion, prosthetics and impact-responsive wearables. This work contributes to the field of programmable and intelligent textiles through a fusion of structural design and soft materials innovation.

Flash Eternity

Xintong Du
Advisor / design mentor(s): Sun Young Choi
Konkuk University

Flash Eternity is an experimental fashion garment blending traditional Chinese imagery with wearable technology. Inspired by the Han Dynasty "T-Bo" silk painting from Lady Dai's tomb, it reinterprets ancient cosmological symbols through woven fiber optics. The minimalist two-panel dress features draped silhouettes, embodying the designer's lifelong dream of luminous textiles. Rejecting complex tech, it uses a hands-on approach: fiber optics are woven directly into the fabric, controlled by a simple switch. This transforms intangible cultural heritage into an interactive, glowing narrative worn on the body, merging history, light, and human form into a single visual statement.

The Jogak Jacket: A Winter Jacket that Disrupts the Current Narratives of Environmental Responsibility in Fashion through Channeling Cultural Identity

Lisa Ly
Advisor / design mentor(s): Susan Sokolowski
University of Oregon

The Jogak Jacket is the centerpiece of a Heritage Collection designed for two-time Olympic gold medalist American snowboarder Chloe Kim, celebrating her Korean heritage through fashion and sustainability. Inspired by the silhouette of the Hanbok, Korea's traditional garment, and the practice of Jogakbo—a Korean patchwork technique using domestic fabric scraps—the jacket reimagines cultural tradition and sustainable apparel construction through contemporary design. Beyond sport, Chloe Kim is a fashion icon and outspoken advocate for climate action and AAPI representation. Her identity and activism ground the jacket's purpose. Featuring a billowing thermal silhouette, sustainable and culturally meaningful surface patterning, and 3D-designed ornamental trims, the Jogak Jacket sparks new conversations on environmental responsibility in fashion. By referencing a cultural garment, the Jogak Jacket is not only visually beautiful but also transforms fashion into a medium that celebrates diversity, preserves identity, and reclaims tradition in contemporary design.

Enhanced Racing Simulation: Training for Real-World Motorsports Conditions Through Novel Suit Design

Reannan Boisvert
Advisor / design mentor(s): Yingying Wu
Kansas State University

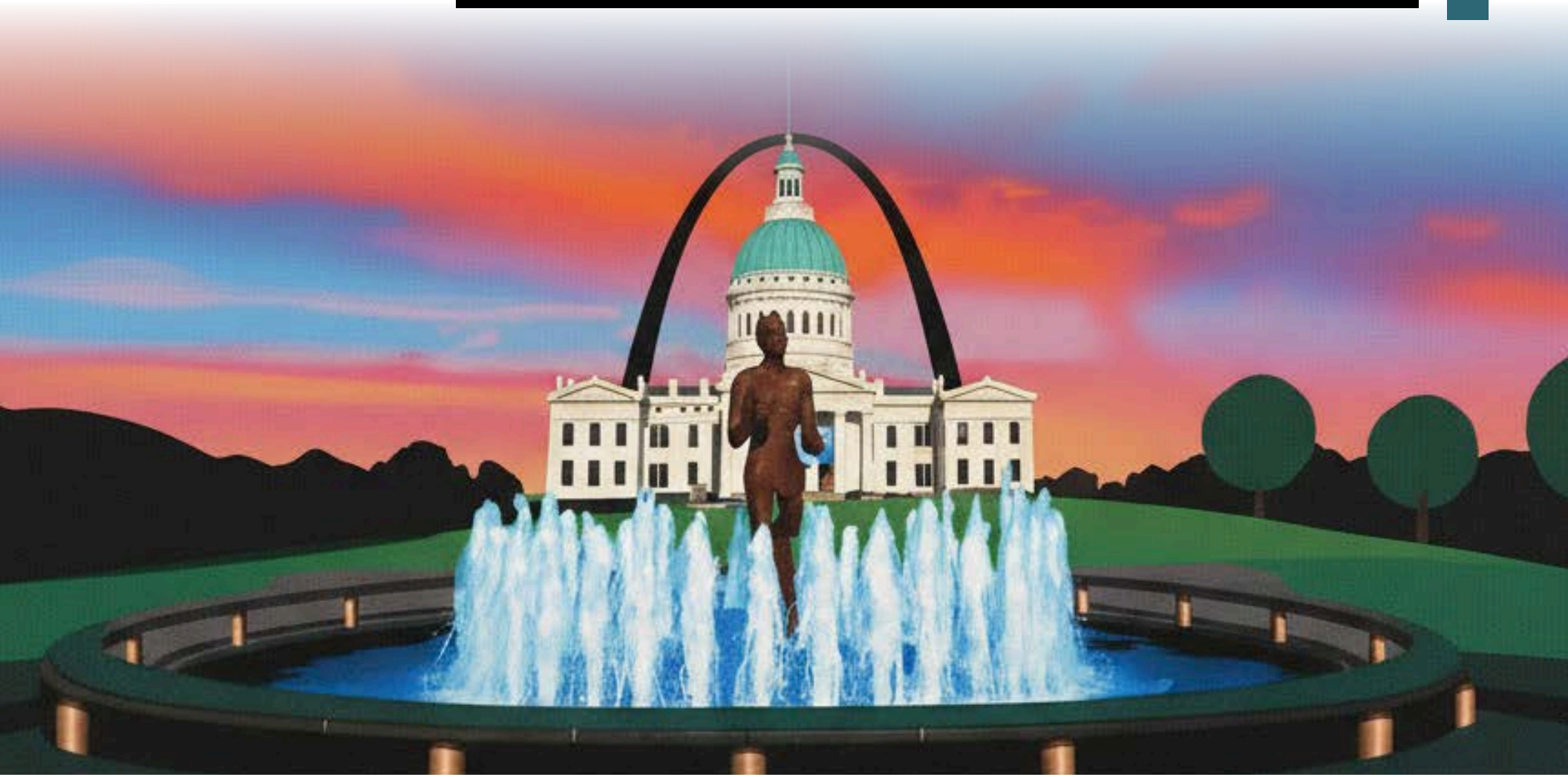
Motorsports drivers often practice using racing simulators. Protective apparel choice is crucial to motorsports competition, yet there is a knowledge gap regarding garment choices for simulation training and how they impact race day performance. Based on survey findings, this suit design promotes racing simulation training as a way to prepare for the physical and mental demands of real-world competition. Findings indicating that drivers prioritize comfort highlighted the need for an ergonomic design, so action gusset shoulders, articulated joints, and rear ease were developed to support the unique semi-reclined seated driving position. A need for replication of gravitational loading and haptic experiences was identified, leading to the development of an abdominal pocket designed to house a pneumatic bag that mimics g-force pressure and adjustable resistance bands within sleeves to simulate steering fatigue.

Wearable Art Inspired by an Ecosystem's Life Cycle: Decay

Kaleigh Slot
Advisor / design mentor(s): Pimpawan Kumphai
Central Michigan University

This design explores the final stage of an ecosystem through abstract biomimicry. Drawing inspiration from decomposing trees, fungi like Lycoperdon pyriforme mushroom, and the decaying of the tree bark, this look interprets decay as a vital, regenerative force. The ensemble features a curving drop-waist dress with an open-sided skirt, layered over a modular half-skirt that allows for three length variations. Shibori-dyed textures mimic the progression of decomposition through gradient color shifts and organic surface treatments. Modular fabric links—looped like petals—simulate growth on decaying matter, while 3D-printed root embellishments trace the garment's winding style lines. This piece was draped and sewn on a U.S. size 8 form using a combination of boiled and pleated shibori, flexible TPU prints, and customizable panels. The result is an expressive, adaptable garment that reflects nature's cycles of death and rebirth, and the potential of wearable art to communicate ecological narratives through design.

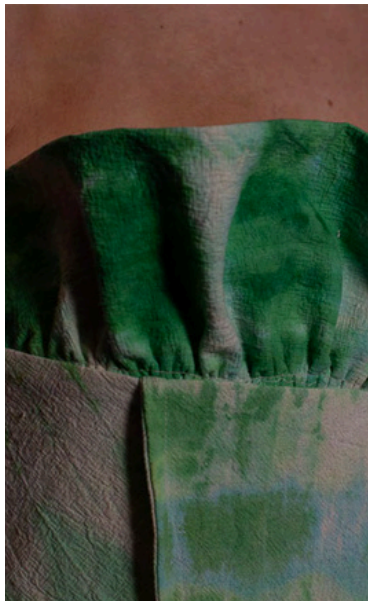
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT DESIGNS



We're Still Here

Jenna Henderson
Advisor / design mentor(s): Ashley Rougeaux-Burnes
Texas Tech University

We’re Still Here, part of the Timeless Echoes senior collection, honors Native American culture through respectful collaboration, traditional craftsmanship, and intentional design. Created with guidance from Native community members, it incorporates hand-beaded appliqué, ivory jute fringe, wooden beadwork, and a handmade buffalo bone breastplate. Each element reflects deep cultural symbolism and was executed using techniques learned or built by the designer, such as custom beading looms and hand-strung materials. The moss-green linen grounds the look, uniting organic textures and intricate embellishments in a cohesive, meaningful whole. We’re Still Here stands as a respectful, contemporary tribute to living Indigenous traditions.



Tie-Dyed: Flower Bud

Ayla Alameida, Livia Langmade, Mana Yano, Azure Wasson, & Coyan Magniez
Advisor / Design mentor(s): ShuHwa Lin
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

The flower bud is a one-of-a-kind designed by using tie-dye technique that was inspired by spring flower buds from gardens. This is a group project from the Textile fundamental class with many international students. Twelve students signed this piece dye project and want to experience fabric dye to finish garments. Students learn to conduct piece dye by tie-dye method to create different patterns with different techniques. Students came from different countries. Tie-dye is a very popular resist-dye technique that involves wrapping sections of fabric or block colorant before immersing the cloth in dye. Tie-dye techniques, such as: stitches, kite string, stitches, rubber banding, bubble technique; sinew, kite string or rubber bands were selected to adopt one to make different effects.

Bio-Engineered Body: Combining Couture Techniques with 3D Printing Technology

Martha Rigney
Advisor / design mentor(s): Casey Stannard
Louisiana State University

Using new materialism and biophilia as a foundation, the present design used both couture construction and 3D printing to fuse natural inspiration with the human form. The strapless corset exaggerates the form of the human body with its padded hips, shaped bust panel, and abdominal seams. I chose to incorporate insect-like elements into this design as a reference to biophilia and the idea that humanity is intertwined with nature. 3D-printed insect wing shapes are arranged on the corset in a size-descending order to mimic human abdominal muscles, with large 3D-printed butterfly wings at the bust. For an additional element of tech, a 3D dotted pattern is printed onto the hip and bust panels. The skirt design features a paneled yoke with layers of gathered pink and beige tulle attached to the bottom. All elements work to create a new materialist look, wherein fabrics, technology, and the body are one.

Good Ol' American Tailgate: Upcycled Athletic Apparel Through Patchwork, Repair Theory and Material Storytelling

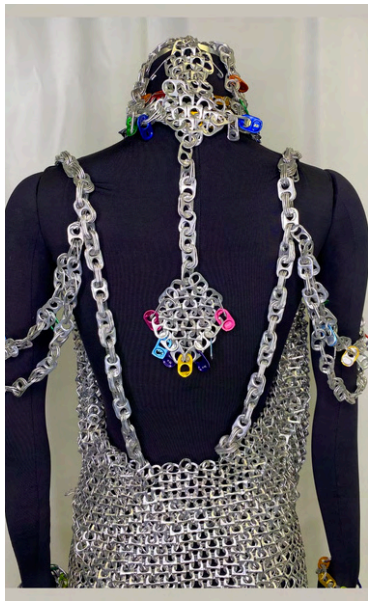
Hannah Rettke
Advisor / design mentor(s): Kerri McBee-Black
University of Missouri

This design project reimagines discarded collegiate football uniforms into a gender-inclusive garment using patchwork techniques and sustainable practices. The process is guided by user-centered design and repair theory, with patchwork functioning as both a material strategy and storytelling tool. The final product juxtaposes glossy mesh, matte leather, and cotton lining to create a textural rhythm, while the oversized silhouette with cinched waist and structured shoulders accommodates diverse body types. Rooted in ethical fashion, the piece explores themes of identity, memory, and care, challenging conventional fashion binaries and celebrating material reuse in a gameday context. This artifact represents a commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, and critical design thinking in undergraduate scholarship.

Bayou Bride: Combining Alligator Leather and Digital Textile Printing in Bridalwear

Martha Rigney
Advisor / design mentor(s): Casey Stannard
Louisiana State University

Alligator leather is attractive to luxury consumers because of its unique texture and beauty. However, due to the shape of alligator hides, differing scale patterns, and the hardness of the leather, it is less appealing for usage in apparel. One strategy to retain the visual appeal of alligator leather while improving comfort and versatility is to create photo-realistic digitally printed “alligator” textiles alongside real leather. Discovering new ways to use alligators is crucial to the alligator industry, which is experiencing a price slump. For this project, I focused on the bridal market; the utilization of sublimation dye printing allowed me to experiment with alligator print on bridal textiles such as satin and chiffon, retaining the drape and movement necessary for a gown to glide down the aisle. Creating an alligator bridal gown serves as a dramatic example of the beauty and versatility of alligator leather when combined with sub-dyed textiles.



Chain Reaction: Recycled Couture

Avery Barr
Advisor / design mentor(s): Melissa Abner
University of Central Missouri

A couture formal top and skirt were created out of only recycled can tabs to bring awareness to single use beverage containers. Over 6000 can tabs were cleaned, cut, and linked together to form metal “fabric” that is similar to chain mail for the ensemble. The top features an open back, and off the shoulder sleeves, while the skirt has an open back, gathered hem, and train. Colored tabs were included in accessories and scattered into the garments for visual impact.

The Romantic Era to Now: A Mosaic of the Feminine Vestige

Ellianne Bushong
Advisor / design mentor(s): Hae Jin Gam
University of North Texas

A Mosaic of the Feminine Vestige: From the Romantic Era to Now is a wearable art piece that explores the evolution of women's fashion in Western society by merging historical silhouettes, textures, and techniques into a single cohesive garment. Drawing from the Romantic, Edwardian, and New Look eras, the ensemble uses design as cultural commentary, referencing fashion as both artifact and tool for social expression. Key features include multi-style sleeves inspired by the 1830s, a structured peplum referencing Dior's 1950s hourglass silhouette, and godets that honor early 20th-century skirt shapes. Jacquard fabric and corset-inspired lacing integrate historical texture and closure techniques. Constructed from over 80 pattern pieces using both hand and machine sewing, the ensemble blends tradition with innovation. The piece celebrates shifting gender roles and sartorial agency, proposing fashion as a mosaic of identity, memory, and liberation—where each stitch threads together the past and present of feminine expression.

Alice: Reimagining Suffragette Dress in the Modern Fight for Women's Equality

Ruby Park
Advisor / design mentor(s): Bolanle Dahunsi, Colleen Pokorny, & Marianne Dickson
Oregon State University

The Alice look was designed to bring attention to ongoing disparities between men's and women's unpaid labor and the ongoing fight for gender equality. This look was named after Alice Paul, a prominent American Suffragette throughout the 20th century. The skirt was designed to mimic the styles of petticoats from Alice's time and allow for easy movement, as was popular with suffragettes in the 1910s-1920s. Both the skirt and the top are size-adjustable. Having the garments be size adjustable is both a sustainable choice, as it allows for the garments to fit the wearer, regardless of potential body changes, and it reduces the potential negative mental health impacts, for the wearer, associated with the perceived garment fit. This look also explores sustainability through the use of thrifted materials. The entire garment, including the lining and bias tape, is made of bedsheets from a local thrift store.

Echoes of Mountain Bloom

Hniang Sung
Advisor / design mentor(s): Minako McCarthy
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Echoes of the Mountain Bloom draws inspiration from the Chokhlei par, the national flower of the Chin people of Myanmar, known for its vivid red petals and ability to flourish in high-altitude mountain climates. The flower symbolizes resilience, endurance, and beauty that continue to preserve their culture in the face of isolation and hardship. The design incorporates the Lutuv-Chin ethnic hand-woven fabric, renowned for its bold geometric patterns and signature red color. The silhouette blends traditional elements with nontraditional cuts and design, using contrasting materials to create visual interest while honoring cultural roots. Handmade flowers on the cape echo the visual inspiration of Chokhlei par. The garment tells a story of perseverance, strength, and cultural pride, reflecting how the Chin community continues to thrive despite challenges. Through this design, I aim to demonstrate how fashion can be utilized to honor culture, convey identity, and bridge history with the present.

Lady Bamboo

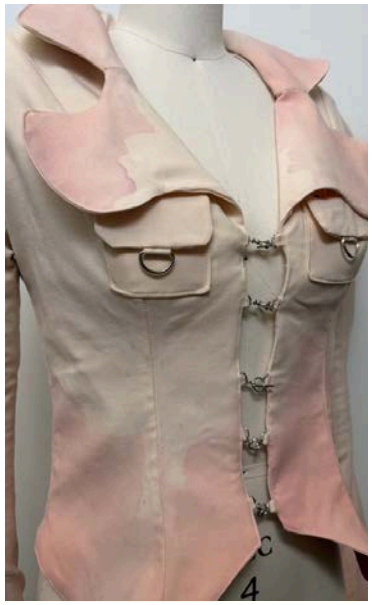
Hniang Sung
Advisor / design mentor(s): Minako McCarthy
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Lady Bamboo draws direct inspiration from the craftsmanship of bamboo baskets found in Chin State, Myanmar. This dress honors an important rural tradition that supports the cultural heritage and economic stabilization of the local communities in Myanmar. The design incorporates elements, such as a handwoven Chin textile and organza embellished with gold satin ribbons, that represent both the texture and structure of bamboo weaving. The skirt's rounded silhouette mirrors the shape of carry baskets, while diagonal ribbons evoke the crisscross patterns found in basketry. Each element was chosen to maintain a connection to the materials and techniques used by rural artisans. By bringing these familiar details into a wearable design, the garment respectfully represents the heritage of the Chin people. Lady Bamboo shows how traditional craft can be meaningfully expressed through fashion, emphasizing the value of everyday skills passed down through generations.

The tiuS

Ben Arevalo
Advisor / design mentor(s): Hae Jin Gam
University of North Texas

The tiuS is a conceptual menswear ensemble that reimagines the classic suit through the lens of anti-fashion, humor, and visual inversion. Inspired by the idea of flipping familiar garments on their head, this piece playfully challenges traditional expectations while maintaining refined tailoring. The top is constructed to resemble a pair of pants—complete with belt loops, a waistband collar, J-stitch, and faux-welt pockets—while the pants mimic a suit jacket and dress shirt, featuring lapel flaps, center-front buttons, and a detachable tie. Using a grey wool pinstripe with a subtle pink line, the design references classic suiting while introducing whimsical subversion. Through a mix of traditional tailoring techniques and CLO3D prototyping, the design transforms formalwear into a clever, wearable narrative about fashion's ability to entertain and provoke thought. The tiuS contributes to contemporary fashion discourse by merging tailoring, irony, and performance, offering a fresh take on menswear that encourages reinterpretation.



The Softest Parts of You

Olivia Blaner
Advisor / design mentor(s): Leslie Simpson
Stevenson University

This tailored jacket was inspired by the imagery of the orchid that has been modified with manmade materials. The designer is drawn to fluid shapes and juxtaposes the vulnerability of nature against the stability of industrial elements. Its uniqueness is in the use of natural dyeing techniques, cut outs, and experimentation with metal hardware. Dip-dyeing with red beets achieves an organic pattern simulating flower petals. Cutouts in the sleeves and back showcase the hand patterned lining. There is contrast in the jacket through soft yellow and pink of the outer fabric, representing warmth and femininity, against a magenta lining that evokes a sense of vulnerability. The jacket has an hourglass silhouette, reminiscent of the feminine shape, balanced with a more masculine boxy shoulder and exaggerated sleeve length. This one of a kind jacket can be worn to events where creativity in tailoring and appreciation of art are emphasized.

Interlocking Streams of Consciousness

Nash Harris
Advisor / design mentor(s): Jeremy M. Bernardoni
University of North Texas

This conceptual design investigates the psychological complexity of nightmares and their connection to trauma and PTSD. Drawing from theories of fear extinction during REM sleep, the dress represents how distressing memories become interwoven into the subconscious. Constructed entirely of knit fabrics, the garment features alternating monochrome panels radiating from a central digitally printed red eyeball motif, symbolizing the vivid, recurring nature of nightmares. The exposed red serging threads evoke inner turmoil, while the mirrored cutouts convey vulnerability. Techniques included full-scale pattern development, iterative mockup fitting, and digital printing for motif creation. Inspired by horror aesthetics, the dress juxtaposes a serene silhouette with intense visual contrasts, creating a cohesive narrative about trauma's lingering presence. This work contributes to design scholarship by translating abstract psychological concepts into tangible, wearable form and by integrating digital media with traditional garment construction to explore trauma and mental health.

Dies Irae

Antoinette Montano
Advisor / design mentor(s): Amy Dorie
San Francisco State University

Dies Irae draws from the grandeur of Victorian fashion and was crafted using historical and modern sewing techniques to challenge today's fast fashion culture. Inspired by historical corsetry and stage drapery, this look blends structured design with romantic theatricality. Every textile and trim was sourced secondhand, emphasizing reuse and sustainable design. The cream corset features gold stretch-knit accents and hand-stitched ribbon rosettes, while the adjustable taupe skirt mimics the sweeping folds of stage curtains. Techniques like cording and vertical boning reference 19th-century craftsmanship but are reimagined for modern comfort and flexibility. This piece is my quiet act of resistance, reviving the lost art of slow fashion, valuing garments made to last, and inviting the wearer to connect emotionally with what they wear.

SCAURA

Samantha Huynh
Advisor / design mentor(s): Rachel Eike
Iowa State University

SCAURA is a conceptually driven satchel created as part of a capstone project exploring sustainable material innovation through craft. The project transforms pre-consumer, production studio textile waste into a leather-like, nonwoven textile using traditional papermaking techniques and konnyaku paste. This method offers a low-tech, scalable alternative to high-tech sustainable materials. Aesthetically, SCAURA embraces imperfection and ecological consciousness, drawing on primitive craft references and emphasizing tactility, rawness, and visible construction. The satchel's asymmetrical design, exposed stitching, and scorched details reflect themes of erosion and transformation. Developed through iterative experimentation, the material incorporates reclaimed cotton with pre-processed jute and hemp fibers, and is shaped using leatherworking techniques. SCAURA exemplifies circular design by converting waste into a durable, meaningful product. It also marks the designer's transition from apparel to accessory design, expanding their technical and conceptual practice. The project highlights handcraft as both a sustainable strategy and a site of innovation in fashion.

Schofield Emerging Designer Award - Undergraduate

Liberation

Sina Golzy
Advisor / design mentor(s): Cheyenne Staib
University of Missouri

Liberation is a protest garment confronting the systemic oppression enforced by Iran's Islamic regime, particularly against women and marginalized communities. Drawing from traditional Persian art and aesthetics, the design shows the vivid beauty of Persian culture, something rarely shown in Western depictions of the country. The motif on the outer fabric, called the "tree of life," symbolizes both eternal life and peace in the afterlife, and represents the everlasting nature of culture, as well as the innocent people that died fighting for their rights. At the garment's center, a sickle rests against the neck, a representation of the tangible nature of the danger faced by people opposing the government and its ideals. By merging historical Persian aesthetics with contemporary protest, Liberation stands against the erasure of Persian identity at the hands of religious extremism while demanding global attention to the Iranian people's fight for civil rights.

Bury Me

Rachel Stauffer
Advisor / design mentor(s): Krissi Riewe Stevenson
Kent State University

The purpose of this garment is circularity and biodegradability, and it is designed to break down safely in the environment at the end of its lifecycle. My research consisted of natural dyeing, 3D block-printing, and fabric burying. This informed the color and fabric choices, and the overall design captures the concept of nature's circular patterns - a constant cycle of birth, life, death, and regeneration. This idea was applied quite literally in the form of large, circular shapes, balanced out by delicate, lighter silhouette. Every detail is biodegradable and safe for the environment, including closures, trims, and thread. In the end, everything has been thoroughly evaluated to create a truly circular fashion garment that diverts it from landfills.

The Selkie Dress

Sophia Gupman
Advisor / design mentor(s): Adriana Gorea
University of Delaware

The Selkie Dress aimed to explore a modular approach to pattern making in knitwear and high value applications of post consumer textile materials through the concept of the Celtic mythological creatures called Selkies. Selkies are mythical creatures with the ability to transform into a seal in the water and humans on land through a coat of seal fur. The old myth goes that if a man stole a selkies coat, she would become his property. The dress explores the idea of a Selkie without her coat as she rises from the ocean. It explores feelings of vulnerability, power,and femininity. The dress uses rectangular panels of machine knit fabric to create the dress in a modular design framework and uses reclaimed materials for surface design.

Rebirth: Investigating Ethical Alternatives to Silk through Wearable Design

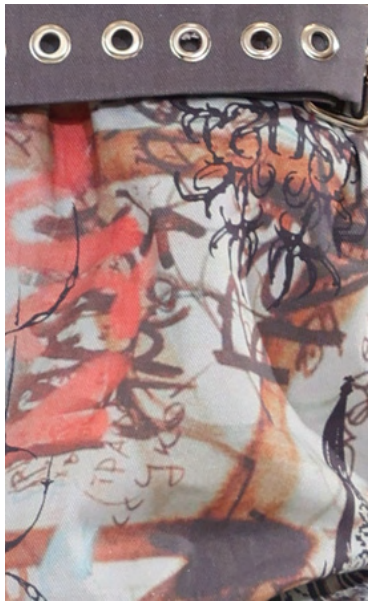
Kimngan Tran
Advisor / design mentor(s): Bingyue Wei
Texas Woman's University

Rebirth challenged traditional textile narratives by using hot glue and wire, materials rarely associated with fashion, to reinterpret the silkworm's lifecycle through sculptural form, color symbolism, and layered construction. From wing-like drapes that symbolizd molting to layered glue that mimicked cocoon spinning, each element conveyed stages of rebirth and reinvention. The final garment stood as a wearable sculpture, merging fashion and art to embody a reimagined vision of beauty shaped by empathy, innovation, and ethical intent. My design was visually and conceptually layered garment that conveyed themes of rebirth, fragility, resilience, and ethical transformation through its thoughtful use of material, color, and form.

Shed

Ella Renshaw
Advisor / design mentor(s): Colleen Moretz
West Virginia University

Shed is a transformation-based garment designed to evolve through four distinct runway looks. Inspired by structural fashion and post-apocalyptic aesthetics, the piece explores contrast, utility, and performance. Beginning with a shredded dark denim ensemble, each transformation reveals new silhouettes and materials, culminating in a sleek green leather corset and shorts. Design elements include triangular geometry, grommets, belt buckles, and a saturated green-and-black palette, all reinforcing a punk-grunge visual identity. The transformation is engineered through side-snaps and folds, allowing smooth transitions from oversized to body-conscious forms. Developed through research, illustration, draping, and finishing, the garment integrates over 100 grommets and uses industrial techniques such as Dremel distressing. Despite its complexity, the piece maintains cohesion through the repetition of textures and structural motifs. Drawing from deconstructionist fashion, Shed offers a bold, theatrical exploration of identity and transformation, expanding the potential of modular stagewear while reflecting the designer's creative and technical growth.



Streetbound

Ella Renshaw
Advisor / design mentor(s): Colleen Moretz
West Virginia University

As mentor, I supported this student in exploring zero-waste design with a focus on using the full fabric width and developing a cohesive digital textile print. The goal was to build both technical skill and creative problem-solving by aligning sustainable construction with surface design. In Streetbound, the student embraced the challenge, creating a conceptually strong streetwear garment that reflects both ecological responsibility and urban identity. Their digitally illustrated print was thoughtfully integrated into a zero-waste pattern, demonstrating precision in layout and construction. I encouraged experimentation and refinement throughout the process, from muslin prototyping to handling heavy denim and installing hardware. The final result is both original and a clear demonstration of advanced technical growth. This student successfully created a zero-waste design that is expressive, functional, and culturally relevant.

I am the Leading Man

Victoria Manion
Advisor / design mentor(s): Colleen Moretz
West Virginia University

I am the Leading Man is a transformative performance garment developed in a senior-level design studio course. Inspired by powerful female performers in male-dominated punk and rock genres, the design merges bold aesthetics with stage-ready functionality. The look features a dramatic ballgown skirt that unfastens to reveal a fringed mini-dress underneath, engineered for live movement and visual impact. Drawing influence from 1970s British punk and the subversive style of Vivienne Westwood, the design incorporates mismatched custom plaids, raw hems, and a diagonally laced corset to emphasize asymmetry and rebellion. Custom digital prints on 100% cotton ensure breathability under stage lights. Advanced techniques: including pleating, boning, snap tape, and bias construction, support the garment's structure and transformation. This look explores transformation not just as a function, but as a statement, blending narrative, motion, and material innovation in a cohesive and culturally rooted fashion solution.

Expanding the World with an Expanding Yoke

Alex Culley
Advisor / design mentor(s): Katya Roelse
University of Delaware

This design addresses the needs of ostomy bag users by reimagining the traditional waistband to improve comfort, discretion, and support. Inspired by avant-garde aesthetics and costume design, the pants feature a pleated yoke that expands as the bag fills, eliminating the rigid waistband that often causes irritation or poor fit (Brilhante et al., 2021). Materials were carefully selected to balance structure and flexibility, and pleating techniques were engineered to offer over 3" of ease at the hip while minimizing bulk at the waist. A knit binding reinforces the yoke top, maintaining shape and preventing unnecessary expansion. The layered construction mimics a bellows pocket, offering security without restricting stoma placement. This solution integrates utility and visual impact, pairing theatrical proportions and hand-finished details with functional innovation for a user-focused, expressive garment.

Intwined

Sophie Young
Advisor / design mentor(s): Dawn Michaelson
Auburn University

Intwined is a biomimicry-led garment inspired by natural forms, sustainability, and functionality. Influenced by the 2025/26 WGSN trend forecast, the designer explored how natural aesthetics and structures can inform wearable fashion. Intwined integrates organic shapes, textures, and natural dyeing techniques, moving beyond conceptual uses of biomimicry in apparel. The design process involved extensive experimentation with fabric manipulation, embellishment, and dyes made from avocado, onion, pomegranate, and indigo leaves. The resulting garment features asymmetrical draped cording, ruching, and surface designs reminiscent of vines and roots, symbolizing resilience and healing in nature. The bodice was structured with duck canvas and boning, while the skirt used modified patterning to reduce waste. Couching stitches in berry-colored thread appliqué vine-like cording, adding texture and depth. Intwined demonstrates that biomimicry can result in garments that are not only innovative and sustainable but also beautiful, wearable, and functional for everyday use.

Blending Tradition And Utility: A Modern Jacket Inspired By The Palestinian Thobe

Nijma Lara
Advisor / design mentor(s): Kyler Arnold
Georgia Southern University

Referencing the Palestinian thobe in modern garment design allows for greater utility of traditional clothing in everyday life, rather than reserving thobes only for special occasions. The purpose of this research was to explore how elements of the traditional Palestinian thobe can be incorporated into modern attire.The Palestinian thobe is a wide, often shapeless dress traditionally featuring a square chest panel and hand embroidery called tatreez. Traditional thobes were made from linen hand woven into fabrics with silk threads, and often include an embroidered motif unique to Palestine. A practical jacket was designed using embroidered panels from a thobe worn by the designer's sister. Basic bodice and sleeve slopers from a design analysis course formed the base pattern. Thobe elements, including the cuff and skirt panels, were seam-ripped, to preserve the integrity of the tatreez. Small pattern adjustments were made to accommodate the panels' dimensions.

Overgrown

Sofia Cereghini
Advisor / design mentor(s): Amy Dorie
San Francisco State University

Overgrown blossomed from my love for the quiet, grounding moments I find in nature. This piece is a reflection of that feeling: soft, imperfect, layered, and alive. Through eco-printing, hand-stitching, appliqué, and drapery, I let the process guide me rather than try to control it. Each print came out differently, and I learned to appreciate that. The unpredictability became the point. Inspired by my time abroad in Paris and Sydney, and my growing interest in sustainable design, this piece is both a study and a letting go. I hope it invites others to slow down and see the beauty in what's naturally all around us in our daily lives. This piece was made not just for the human form to shine, but to let the petals speak—to let their prints breathe and be seen.

Cascare

Grace Huang
Advisor / design mentor(s): Catherine Kueffer Blumenkamp
Cornell University

This dress was created to harmoniously integrate rigidity and fluidity, two opposites and common themes in chosen art pieces. The first art inspiration is Projection 030200 by Toshio Iezumi, in which laminated and glued sheet glass was carved, smoothed, and polished to create a mirror surface that renders its subject's reflection amorphous. The second piece, Nail and Wood by Jaehyo Lee, depicts a composition of organic shapes created from various bent nails contained within the larger shape of a square. Lastly, Tsukikage (Moonlight) by Fukumoto Fuku is composed of individually bisque-fired bowls that are glazed and stacked, and subsequently fired to create a fused form where the effects of gravity and heat allow for the bowls to naturally morph into each other. Utilizing handcraft couture techniques such as Fortuny pleating with basic draping methods, the techniques applied to this piece blend to create a one-of-a-kind, elegant and aesthetically captivating piece.

Calligraphic Flow: A Modern Qipao Bridging Western Expressionism and Chinese Tradition

Yanni Zhong
Advisor / design mentor(s): Catherine Kueffer Blumenkamp
Cornell University

This undergraduate design explores how cross-cultural aesthetics and material experimentation can reframe the traditional Chinese qipao within contemporary formalwear. Inspired by Wang Tiande's calligraphy and a Western Expressionist painting, the design merges gestural abstraction, structural tension, and cultural hybridity. Archival garments from the 1930s informed the silhouette and finishing techniques, while iterative draping and fabrication innovation shaped the final form. A reimagined collar wraps around the armhole—symbolizing cultural disruption—while side closures and tailored seams reference historical construction. Material manipulation was central to the process: boiled polyester created a bubbled texture evocative of ink bleed, overlaid with holographic fabric to enhance visual movement. Hand-finishing ensured precision and wearability, with adjustments made to balance sculptural form and comfort.

Falling Short

Kristen Crowley & Alizandra Castillo
Advisor / design mentor(s): Rachel Anderson & Mahendran Balasubramanian
Texas Tech University

Chances are you've encountered a person who has been body shamed (if you yourself have not). One study found that 86% of college students reported being body- shamed. Body shaming has been defined as "an unrepeated act in which a person expresses unsolicited, mostly negative, opinions or comments about the target's body". There are many studies that document the correlation between negative body image and eating disorders, anxiety, and depression. When negative language is used in relation to body image, there is often a significant impact on that person's mental health. The design, "Falling Short," is a symbolic representation of the effects of body-shaming. The dress represents a fallen angel, symbolizing that society (especially the fashion industry) holds unrealistic expectations for women's appearances most women will never be able to achieve, that women will "fall-short" of society's expectations.

Inno Moto

Gavin Fragale
Advisor / design mentor(s): Angela Uriyo
West Virginia University

Inno Moto is a prototype motorcycle gear ensemble developed to explore the intersection of fashion design and motorcycling culture. The design includes an armored jacket, pants, and a graphic T-shirt and is inspired by my personal experience as a motorcyclist. The project uses Lamb and Kallal's (1992) Functional, Expressive, and Aesthetic (FEA) Consumer Needs Model to explore how apparel can meet practical use needs while communicating personal identity and aesthetics. Though not intended for road use, the design simulates protective gear and draws on authentic materials and design cues from motorcycle apparel. This design addresses a gap in fashion-focused explorations of subcultural active sportswear, contributing to the discourse on expressive utilitarian design.

Adaptive Size-Inclusive Service Industry Apron

Lauren Fulk & Lee Landis
Advisor / design mentor: Pimpawan Kumphai
Central Michigan University

Pregnant women in the service industry often face uniform challenges, especially with traditional aprons that lack flexibility and comfort. This project addresses the gap by developing an adaptive, size-inclusive apron using the Functional, Expressive, and Aesthetic (FEA) framework. The design incorporates stretchy, breathable polyester-spandex fabric, elastic shirring for belly expansion, and wide dual waistbands for improved support. Interview and survey data from pregnant food service workers guided the design process. Feedback led to features such as strategically placed pockets, curved belly bands, and a multi-use structure suitable for both pregnancy and postpartum wear. The apron's all-black color complies with standard restaurant dress codes, while its innovative structure offers comfort, durability, and style. Designed to accommodate growing bodies, this garment aims to empower pregnant and postpartum workers, enhance workplace inclusivity, and inspire continued innovation in maternity and size-inclusive workwear. Future research may explore closure systems and broader adaptive apparel markets.

Queen of Asia: Chevron Pifeng as Structural Elegance

Jonathon Hong
Colorado State University

Queen of Asia: Chevron Pifeng reimagines a traditional Chinese outer garment through the lens of contemporary couture. Inspired by the pifeng—a robe historically worn by women of status—this design explores strength, femininity, and identity through sculptural surface manipulation. Voluminous chevron pleating forms the dramatic sleeves and front panel, crafted from heat-set organza using a custom steaming process engineered by the designer. Pink hues represent romance and grace, while the vibrant yellow skirt references imperial power and grounded resilience. The final silhouette balances softness with structure, heritage with invention. The piece is entirely self-drafted, incorporating layered fabrication, couture finishing, and symbolic ornamentation including hand-applied bows and diamond accents. As a standalone garment and part of a larger capstone exploration, this look offers a personal yet culturally engaged design response—one that positions traditional form as a dynamic vessel for contemporary storytelling.

Coffee Stained Music Sheets

Georgi Abdalla
Advisor / design mentor(s): Angela Uriyo
West Virginia University

The purpose of this design was to develop a concert performance garment for our client that would align with her artistic identity, performance needs, and personal preferences. The challenge involved creating a custom gown that balanced modesty with visual impact, allowed for full arm mobility while playing the violin, and incorporated inspirations from both music and nature. Using the FEA Consumer Needs Model (Lamb & Kallal, 1992), this garment responds holistically to three categories of user needs: functional (ease of movement and fabric comfort), expressive (communicating personal identity as a musician), and aesthetic (visual appeal and harmony in form, texture, and composition). The design was also informed by group research and mood board development highlighting our client's passion for abstract art, asymmetry in nature, and her signature love of coffee.

Refashioned in Bloom

*M*argaret Watkins
Advisor / design mentor(s): Fatma Baytar
Cornell University

This unique dress reimagines textile waste and the traditional garment life cycle through upcycling and the use of augmented reality (AR). Made from second-hand clothing, this dress features athletic joggers turned inside out and sewn into a sheath dress, paired with a silk blouse cut into hand-sewn flower embellishments and accented with contrast stitching. Using AR technology, viewers can scan a QR code to see the original clothing through their phone, alongside the new upcycled piece, and have a better understanding of the transformation and construction of the new piece, offering transparency in the design process. The experience bridges the physical and digital worlds of fashion, inviting reflection on sustainability, overconsumption, and the value of what we discard. This piece emphasizes the power of storytelling in promoting responsible fashion practices.

Dancing Petals

Sierra Bailes
Advisor / design mentor(s): Angela Uriyo
West Virginia University

Dancing Petals is a three-piece ensemble designed for Colette, a fictional character synthesized from three ethereal, feminine figures: Flora (Winx Club), Glinda (Wicked), and Odette (Barbie in Swan Lake). Colette is characterized as a spirited and nature-loving adolescent who enjoys gardening and hosting whimsical garden parties. Drawing inspiration from Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion (2024), which reanimates dormant fashion through sensory engagement and conservation technology, I turned to the lotus flower as a metaphor for unfolding beauty and personal growth. The project was further grounded in the FEA Consumer Needs Model, ensuring that the final garment responded holistically to the consumer's lifestyle through a balance of function, personal expression, and visual appeal (Lamb & Kallal, 1992).

Apoptosis: Sculptural Design as Emotional Metaphor

Nathalia Olvera-Barajas
Colorado State University

Apoptosis reimagines the biological process of apoptosis—programmed cell death that enables regeneration—as a metaphor for emotional healing. This sculptural garment collection explores what it means to outgrow past trauma through exaggerated, cocoon-like silhouettes that distort the body. Inspired by microscopic imagery of cellular breakdown and fungal overgrowth from zombie video games, the garments feature a wooden star frame, hand-quilted fiberfill, and whipstitched stretch fabric to create ruptured forms that evoke internal struggle. Each stitch is left visible, marking time, effort, and imperfection. The work prioritizes material exploration and personal narrative as valid forms of design research. Positioned at the intersection of fashion, psychology, and science, this collection challenges wearability norms while embracing vulnerability and regeneration. The result is a speculative series of emotional artifacts—wearable metaphors for grief, growth, and the unseen labor of healing.