No Filter

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Design Statement

Contextual Review and Concept
"Fashion bloggers have become another link in the chain of information about and communication of fashion products to the public, a precious voice that is often very close to a large number of possible consumers;" For this reason, a multitude of designers and retail establishments utilize bloggers and social media influencers to advertise their products (Fortunati & Farinosi 2010). When looking at critiques of these images, people can be quick to comment how an image of a model wearing a garment does not accurately represent the garment being advertised. Such discrepancies have raised questions about "digital ethics," which is an increasingly common concern with the rise in accessibility of photo editing tools and the ease at which an image is dispersed to a large audience despite the professional level of the photographer (Yao, Perlmutter, & Liu, 2017). Though social media influencers and bloggers have wide reach through their followers, they are not always guaranteed to be professional fashion photographers trained in maintaining the integrity of the garment image during the photo editing process. This becomes an issue when the image is altered to flatter the model, without regards to how the garment silhouette, fabric, and other details are being portrayed. These issues can affect both sales of garments and accurate documentation of trends, which is a concern for fashion historical purposes. The title of this piece refers to a popular hashtag used on social media when the photographer wants it known that no manipulations have been applied to the image.

Aesthetic Properties and Visual Impact
"No Filter" is a strapless dress constructed using a striped wool tweed; a malleable fabric that also provides sufficient stability for this tailored dress. This fabric was specifically selected because it is a fabric that is typically used in suits, not strapless dresses, so it forces the viewer to take a closer look at the garment. I utilized strategically placed seams, pleats, and other embellishment techniques to distort the look of the stripes. By taking a critical look at the dress, from top to bottom, the subtle intentional distortions of the lines are evident and representational of several issues we face when relying on non-professional digital imagery to portray a garment.

Process, Technique, and Execution
To create this design, I used a combination of draping and flat patternmaking to arrive upon the silhouette. After fit had been perfected, I strategically placed the stripes on the dress to achieve a variety of visual manipulations. I applied weft to the tweed to not only provide further stabilization of the silhouette, but to make sure the lines stayed where I needed them during the construction process. From some angles, the dominate lines look as if they glide over the wearer's body in perfect alignment, but upon closer examination (especially at the bust seam), it is evident some lines are offset slightly, imitating the distortion that can occur through hasty application of photo editing tools. The waistband of the dress is beaded to disguise the original pattern of the fabric; this is a representation of how critical details of a garment can be hidden through use of various filters, which are a preferred photo editing tool due to their quick application. The exaggerated drape at the hip is achieved through use of

hidden pleating, which represents use of editing tools that alter the models' body shape, a factor that overwhelmingly is becoming more important than accurate portrayal of the garment the model is wearing. Finally, the fabric at the hemline of the dress is further distorted by the use of pull-thread technique. This technique is used at the end to further emphasize the details lost in images that utilize use of filters and quick photo editing tools.

Cohesion

The purpose of this garment is to bring awareness to the issues we face when trusting non-professional fashion photographers to accurately provide images of designs to the public. As an industry, we need to take a closer look at images being dispersed and use a critical eye when evaluating the garments depicted.

Design Contribution and Innovation

The juxtaposition of silhouette and fabrication selection in this dress encourages the viewer to take a closer look at the garment and the meaning behind it. The garment raises awareness about digital ethics with a modern silhouette and subtle distortions achieved through use of traditional embellishment techniques. The dress is not only highly wearable, but it addresses an issue that needs to be further discussed within the fashion industry.

References
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