



Unbalanced Contrast

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Keywords: Ready-to-wear, Highland-Dress, Tartan, Pleats

Mentor Statement

This submitted women's ready-to-wear is one of the strongest designs from the flat pattern course taught in the Fall semester, 2017. The mentorship was established and supported with guidance during the semester. The purpose of the mentor's role was threefold: 1) to encourage the student to think outside the box; 2) to get the student familiar with the design process; and 3) to create a garment using flat pattern techniques. This garment won the Best Flat Pattern Award at the Annual Fashion Show in the Spring semester, 2018.

The student utilized the design process and focused on creativity in designing women's ready-to-wear targeting various women in the professional workforce provided by comfort, confidence, individuality, uniqueness, affordability, and easy care. The mentor facilitated the student to apply techniques and knowledge of design elements to meet expectations of quality work coordinated with inspiration, interpretation, and craftsmanship for the mass market of women's ready-to-wear. The mentor chose to sponsor this particular student's work for the ready-to-wear category because it was adequately designed to demonstrate the quality of creativity, craftsmanship, and aesthetics that are presentable and marketable clothing for the potential target market.

Design Statement

This garment was inspired by a Highland dress seen during my own trip to the Citadel last summer. The Citadel is a historical military fortress in Halifax, Canada. A gentleman wearing a Highland dress, characterized by Tartan, was playing bagpipes at the site. Tartan is a pattern of visible lines consisting of crisscrossed horizontal and vertical bands in multiple colors: Crisscrossed lines create the appearance of new colors blended from the original ones ("Tartan," n.d.). His music and highland dress were stuck in my head to initiate my design.

The purpose of this project was to create a unique ready-to-wear style for professional working women. I desired to make a two-piece jacket and skirt reinventing the tartan kilt as a new key design element for women's ready-to-wear that could be appealing to various professional working women regardless of age and race. Dark-colored classic styles of typical professional working women's business wear are harmonized with a bright-colored checkered pattern coordinated with a tartan kilt to make this outfit sophisticated.

Principles of design such as harmony, balance, proportion, emphasis, similarity, and contrast have been incorporated in an unconventional way. The intent was to challenge traditional, ordinary, and classic styles of the women's outfit to a more progressive, unique, and modern women's wear design while still being appropriate for professional work clothes. This design illustrates the idea of an unbalanced contrast in perfect harmony while additionally creating an aesthetically pleasing look adopting the design principles.

This outfit features strong contrasts by mixing colors among solid-black, black/gray checkered pattern, and shades of pink/purple tartan. In addition, asymmetrically dominated lines and curves cause unbalance to enhance the overall aesthetics of the garment. Various sizes of knife pleats were created using the tartan fabric and partially attached to the collar, sleeve, and bodies of the jacket, skirt, and pocket flap. The tartan fabric was also used to make covered buttons. Armhole princess seams for the jacket and an A-line silhouette for the skirt were utilized to provide a loose rather than form-fitting shape, which creates a comfortable feel and dressy look simultaneously. The flat pattern is the form of fundamental; however, by engineering crossed color panels in the jacket and matching them with the curved, rounded lines in the gray skirt panel. All the pleat sizes are following a 1/4" grading from 1 and 1/4" in the skirt panel to the smallest 1/2" in the pocket and collar trims.

The interpretation of the inspired tartan in a Highland dress illustrates the transition from a traditional look to a modern style using knife pleats and contrasts of materials (fabrics and color schemes) to appeal to the mass market of women's wear. This transition is shown in a set of garments cohesively to explain how my inspiration and interpretation turn into marketable ready-to-wear for professional working women.

The jacket and skirt are made from 100% cotton that makes this garment even more unique in terms of easy care as most formal attire is made out of wool or silk, where dry-clean is then necessary. Therefore, ready-to-wear, *unbalanced contrast* made out of cotton contributes to the mass market by offering professional working women positive aspects of clothing attributes such as comfort, washability, durability, affordability, and high fashion.

References

Tartan. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved April 15, 2018, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartan>

