

## Although I Must Leave I Take A Part Of You With Me

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**Mentor Statement.** The purpose of this mentorship relationship was to assist Apparel Design and Manufacturing students in exploring global events/issues to develop interculturally competent citizens. A studio-based class of third- and fourth-year apparel design students were challenged to research a chosen global theme or problem and utilize the information found while designing a garment. The student designer in this study chose to focus their garment on immigration from Latin America. This design was chosen to be sponsored based on its high quality of construction and the significant meaning brought to the piece through imagery created using surface design techniques. This student successfully communicated their desired message to the viewer.



**Figure 1.** Carved Stamps

**Statement of Purpose.** The piece *Although I Must Leave I Take A Part Of You With Me* was made to thank the designer's parents for their sacrifices made and create discussion on the topic of immigration from Latin America. The designer's family immigrated to the United States in 2002.

**Aesthetic Properties, Visual Impact, and Cohesion.** This dress celebrates the designer's ethnic background by illustrating the diversity of Latin America. The color palette of this piece represents the colors of Latin American flags and various skin tones. Images of the

garment show the trim utilized on the waist and hem of the dress. The pattern on this trim incorporates the rich and diverse influence Indigenous culture has on Latin America, as "there are 826 different indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, with an estimated population of 58 million people" (FILAC, n.d.).

Another motif utilized in the garment is the monarch butterfly. This animal has long symbolized migration and immigration, which is illustrated by Evangelista in the following statement: "The butterflies travel far and wide to escape the harsh winters of North America in order to find a new home that is safe and warm for them. Their migration is the same as those of immigrants coming to the U.S." (2022). Since the student designers of this pieces is a DACA recipient she wanted to commemorate young Americans like herself who have a similar status.

**Process, Technique, and Execution.** The designer made different colored hands to show the different races of Latin American people. The hand appliques are distressed to show that these are the hands of

hard-working people who have had to leave their homes behind in search for a better life. Figure 1 shows the 5 stamps the designer made out of rubber blocks. There are two different types of butterfly wing designs and three hand positions. The first thing the designer did to create these stamps was to hand draw the pictures on rubber blocks. Then she carved out the negative space leaving an outline. Once the outline was left, the designer used acrylic paint to stamp the design on faux leather. Since leather creases and has a texture to it, it gives the illusion of real skin. When everything was dry and cut out, the details on the hands and wings were hand drawn using a mix of permanent markers and opaque paint markers. The base of the dress was made by combining draping and flat pattern skills. The design of the top has 16 panels in total and the colors go in order of brown, orange, beige, and green starting from center front and center back. Since the skirt is heavy due to the appliques, the top is very structured and thick. Horsehair interfacing was ironed on the front panels and includes a heavier lining all around. To show gratitude, the designer wanted to incorporate each U.S. state that has made an Immigrant Sanctuary. Throughout the dress you will find the shape of the states California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington. These states are considered sanctuary states because their "...local government and police protect undocumented immigrants and refugees from deportation by federal authorities. [They are] sanctuary cities where law enforcement cannot question crime suspects about their immigration status" (American Police Officers Alliance, 2021).

**Originality and Innovation.** The techniques used to make this dress were original and innovative because the rubber stamps were hand drawn and carved out to create the appliques. The appliques are unique from one another because the designer had to add detail by hand to each individual applique piece. *Although I Must Leave I Take A Part Of You With Me* is a visually impactful, unique, and sentimental dress that represents the designer's culture. This dress is meant to start a positive conversation about immigration and how allies can support those who are immigrating and starting fresh in a new country.

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