

Time and Cloth, Dress 1.0

Designed by Catherine K. Blumenkamp, MPS in collaboration with Trish Ramsay, MFA

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Time and Cloth is a collaboration between artist and draper in the creation of singular elemental statements in women's apparel. The work is reflexive; one creates the textile and one creates the garment, responding to one another's process to generate original designs. Combining objectives to experiment with discarded materials and to create zero waste instills natural constraints and inspires work within the confines of each fabric's unique surface design and dimension to arrive at an aesthetically pleasing and wearable garment through couture techniques.

Collaboration, process, and locale all have bearing on the final form. The designs are not preconceived but evolve in situ. The textile and the garment are purposely not planned together to allow for the improvisational aspect, integral to this combined design process and thus dictating the finished form. Knowledge of textile and apparel history and traditional construction techniques lend a framework for making.

Dress 1.0 is composed of four panels of silk charmeuse, each measuring 14 inches in width and 42 inches in length. Silk was chosen over other fabrics for its hand and drape, as well as its receptivity to dye. The artist sourced discarded steel from local fabricators and scrap yards in southeast Texas. Rusted industrial parts (i.e. drains, plates, targets, paddles, etc.), along with tea tannins, were used to print and stain un-dyed 19mm silk charmeuse. The technique evolved through experimentation with various acidic and neutralizing processes. This method of textile printing is limited to warmer months, when outdoor temperatures are above 70 degrees Fahrenheit, expediting the formation of rust on steel. The surface design of each panel is a cohesive design within itself, created prior to and independently of the garment design.

The industrial shapes printed on each panel of silk emerge as anatomical shapes in their placement on the body. Hereby the textile transforms from material to garment through the translation of printed lines and shapes to style lines and markers. None of the panels are cut. The silhouette is derived from arranging and joining the printed shapes and raw edges where they are most complimentary to one another and to the body. The seams are machine sewn, incorporating French seams wherever best applied. The neckline, armhole, sleeve, and hemline are each finished by hand with a handkerchief hem. These edges are intentionally

unpressed to draw attention to the gently rolled edge and its reference to the soft roll of the sleeve into the side and the easy roll of the hemline around the leg. The neckline and armhole are faced with nylon organza ribbon (5/8 inch) that ascends up and over the shoulder into a subtle strap.

The outcome of this collaboration is an unspoken conversation between surface design and wearable form. While *Dress 1.0* may be imitated, it cannot be repeated. However, this design process may be repeated, revealing new forms through iteration and collaboration.



