



## Denim and Silk Ensemble

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There are a variety of creative ways a designer can bring sustainability into their design process. My creative scholarship contributes to the ongoing conversation regarding sustainable fashion. I believe the purposeful consideration of sustainable design criteria and processes moves sustainable design to the next level. This ensemble combines three sustainable design practices: zero-waste techniques, natural dyeing, and upcycling of post-consumer textiles.

Designing one garment from another through upcycling or reconstruction, adds a level of complexity not encountered with a normal cut of fabric, that is the shape and size of the pieces. My design challenge with this garment was the use of draping techniques to create one garment from another, while retaining many of the identifying features of the original garment. As one of a series of ensembles designed from recycled Levi's jeans (Orzada, 2001a, 2001b; Cobb, Orzada, Kallal, Roelse, Gorea, & Hall, 2014), the jacket in this ensemble reflects both a draping and a construction challenge.

The kimono-sleeved, asymmetric jacket was designed by upcycling worn Levi's jeans. Use of "post-consumer" textiles from my own family provides conservation of resources at the micro and macro levels. The process of converting jeans into another garment by draping was an extensive one. First, the jeans were deconstructed. Waistbands and pockets were detached from the jeans, leg panels were cut away below the pant crotch, and stitching was removed from the inseams. The jeans were then "draped" on the dress form. Pant leg portions were transformed into kimono sleeves and upper and lower back sections. Waistbands were used for the neckband and the decorative wrapping belt which also serves as a closure for the jacket. Hems and seams are stitched in gold cotton thread echoing the original topstitching of the denim. Worn edges areas of the jeans were incorporated into the design. One pocket was used to piece the right side, while on the left front the outline of a removed pocket is stitched with contrasting gold yarn. Cut edges were finished with a shibori printed cotton as either a bias binding or facing. Sashiko embroidery in navy and gold rayon yarn adds emphasis to the jacket and is also used to secure the belt to the jacket body.

The naturally dyed indigo wrap skirt is a zero-waste garment designed using two fabric rectangles. An indigo vat was prepared by the designer. Shibori resist dyeing techniques were researched and a simple border design was selected. The silk satin organza outer skirt features nui shibori along the lower edge. The skirt lining is a remnant cotton sateen and has a nui shibori border on the inside center edge. Three snaps provide the skirt closure and are positioned so the skirt wraps at an angle across the front to complement the angle of the jacket hem.

This ensemble is a study in sustainable apparel design. By combining several sustainable design methods, I challenged myself while focusing on the aesthetics of the design lines and worn denim. In addition, I continued to build my expertise in dyeing and upcycling/reconstructing garments.

#### References

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