Lightening Striking

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Keywords: biomimicry, aesthetics, function

Drawing inspiration from naturally occurring biological phenomena illustrates an aspect of the Theory of Biomimicry (Eadie & Ghosh, 2011). Many examples such as polar bear fur as inspiration for polar fleece had a functional goal while incorporating images from nature into a textile design had an aesthetic goal. Our design was created to address both aesthetics and function. The aesthetic goal for this design was to create an assertive style by showcasing the juxtaposition of lightening striking on a stark night against a backdrop of dark billowing clouds. The functional goal was to create a warm, cozy coat that could be worn for protection from moderately cold weather.

Our design process began with the collar and bottom sections. Here we created a layered textile design that portrayed lightening in many different angles. This gave the appearance of lightening striking from puffy dark clouds in an overlapping pattern to surround the wearer in nature's wonders. Layering gave these collar and bottom prominence and visual depth. Layering also made both areas good insulators from cold air. While the collar forms an attractive frame for the face, the bottom section dominates the visual appeal with the energy of lightening striking from many directions. The cozy dark fur texture adds depth and a sense of being cozy.

A visually vertical silhouette was achieved by outlining the shoulders, down the sleeves, and down center front. This assertive vertical silhouette effect was highlighted along edges with the same leather piping used to evoke lightening on the collar and bottom. Acrylic faux fur was used for the exterior fabric and polyester satin was used to fully line the coat. Fasteners were hidden snaps at the neckline and down the front.

We recommend fashion designers explore the Theory of Biomimicry as a springboard for designing with nature as inspiration for achieving both aesthetic and functional goals. As we put more depth into our designs, more discoveries appear.

Eadie, L. & Ghosh, T.K. (2011). Biomimicry in textiles: past, present and potential. An overview. *Journal of the Royal Society Interface.* 8:761-775.