

Change. Work. Persevere

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Change. It is perhaps human nature to want to capture a moment; to keep a relationship the same; to enshrine our designs in the moment. Yet everything changes. Even if we store our designs carefully in a garment bag protected in the closet, they will change over time, Gravity will affect them; materials will change subtly; stitching will relax. In this design I embrace change; I celebrate it. The outfit is meant to be worn; I will wear it. It will soften and acquire wear patterns based on my movements and activities. Over time, the indigo of the denim will fade from wear and washing; the light cotton of the pants will acquire a patina. As a result, the outfit will take on its own personality and take on a different look. Is this look, seen six months into the life of the garment any less valuable or less important than the look frozen in the photograph of the garment taken at the beginning of its life?



Work. The design of this outfit is inspired by historic Japanese farmers' clothing. The jacket is made from raw Japanese denim. The construction is simple with top-stitched, flat felled seams for added strength, and straight hems that resemble those of jeans, another iconic work garment. The garment now, as initially constructed, is quite rigid because the denim is unwashed. But the intention is that over time, as the jacket is worn, it will change in texture and in silhouette, showing the signs of the work done in it. The pants are crafted from natural undyed organic cotton poplin and are cropped for comfort while working in the heat. They feature a gusseted side tie closure for easy donning and doffing and for adjustability. As the pants are worn, they will accumulate wear and dirt that may not wash out completely, due to their light color. Washing will be in cold water, using natural detergents. The unique wear marks from working and this sustainable care will tell a specific story.



Persevere. The surface of the jacket has been laser engraved, a process whereby the laser actually burns away the surface of the fabric. The laser engraving on the front lapel is a Japanese saying: “石の上にも三年” which translates to “three years on a rock”. The saying is about perseverance; it encourages one to work through arduous challenges without giving up. On the back of the jacket, the koi fish swimming upwards symbolize going into a struggle against an obstacle. This symbolism represents the hardship I embraced as a freshman in college; encountering and taking on the challenging liberal arts based intellectual work, as well as the physical and emotional work of learning my craft as an apparel designer that is part of a designer’s training at my institution. What will happen to the pattern burned into the surface of the fabric over time? What will happen to me over time, changed by long nights in the library and the studio? We will see.

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