

Yin-Yang Circles

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Contextual Review and Concept Statement

“In Chinese Philosophy, yin and yang is a concept of dualism describing how seemingly opposite or contrary forces may actually be complementary, interconnected, and interdependent in the natural world.” (“Yin and yang”, n.d., para. 1). The ancient yin-yang symbol and colors have been used widely in art and fashion, from fashion jewelry (e.g., pedant necklaces) through mass production (e.g., everyday t-shirts) to haute couture (e.g., Ralph & Russo Fall 2014 Haute Couture, Paris Fashion Week). One of the unique ways the yin-yang symbol is sometimes used is by substituting other colors for the traditional black and white (Painter, n.d.). The purpose of the current design was to demonstrate visually the connection between a cultural symbol and artistic fashion. The objective of this design was to create a wearable avant-garde look satisfying both the aesthetics and wearability of women’s strapless dresses and accessories by using handmade and 3D-printed yin-yang circles.

Aesthetic Properties and Visual Impact

The shape and color contrast of yin-yang circles on this garment have aesthetic properties viewers will appreciate. The yin-yang circles consist of contrasting colors, with black on one side and light gray/black on the other, which generates a strong visual impact. The yin-yang circles hanging on the back of the dress from the high neck all the way down to the bottom of the dress consist of the color contrast, enhancing the beauty of artistic fashion rhythmically as well as aesthetically.

Process, Techniques, and Execution

This design began with drawing templates of circles in three different sizes (diameters of $10^{3/4}$ inch, $7^{3/4}$ inch, and $5^{1/4}$ inch) using dish plates, to be used as yin-yang circle appliqués (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Yin-yang circle template and yin-yang circle appliques.

These circles were cut out with the main fabrics of this strapless dress: faux leather and light gray/black floral single jersey jacquard fabric. A half of black faux leather and a half of light gray/black floral jersey were sewn together with zigzag stitches to complete each yin-yang circle shown in figure 1. After the yin-yang circles were made, the bodice with princess seams, which hit at 5 inches below the waist line, was draped on a dress form. In order for the concept of yin-yang to be consistent, each panel of princess seams was cut and sewn to alternate with the black and light gray/black of the two main fabrics. When attaching the yin-yang circle appliques to the front bodice, as well as the back bodice with princess seams, the colors on the circles were chosen to be the opposite of the colors on the bodice and sides to deliver the sophisticated and eye-catching features of the yin-yang circles. Top-stitched knife pleats using the floral single jersey jacquard fabric were made and attached to the prepared bodice to complete this strapless dress. Three yin-yang circles were attached to the bottom of the front and three to the bottom of the back to imitate a wide scallop hem (See Figure 2). The dress was fully lined with the floral jersey jacquard fabric. To elevate the overall concept of yin-yang into a wearable avant-garde look, 3D-printed yin-yang circles were also created and made into a necklace. This necklace consisted of different-sized yin-yang circles, which resemble Asian hanging wall art; it accents and completes a wearable avant-garde look.



Figure 2. Imitation of a wide scallop hem

Significance, Rationale, and Contribution

This wearable avant-garde strapless dress, inspired by a cultural symbol, the yin-yang circle, can help upgrade the use of yin-yang in both art and fashion. This experimental approach to creating a wearable avant-garde look using the yin-yang, including a 3D-printed necklace attached to a hanging accessory piece, can apply to design, aesthetics, and cultural appreciation for fashion designers, artists, wearers, and viewers.

References

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