Porcelain

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Mentor Statement

Porcelain was completed in a digital textile printing class for undergraduates. The purpose of mentorship relationship was for the students to understand the design process for the creative scholarship incorporating digital textile printing technology. The goal of the course was to develop engineered prints for digital textile printing and develop written and oral presentation skills. As design mentor, I introduced the techniques of creating engineered patterns, a variety of design process models, and how to interface the printed textiles with apparel forms. This project was the second project the student created in the class. She visited the art gallery on the campus to source the inspirations. At the beginning, she was struggling to find a way to express the inspirations. She was unsatisfied a variety of silhouettes and textile print layouts that she created. I provided some resources and suggestions on the silhouettes and the print design. I also suggested her to use the garment construction lines to represent the shape of the chair and tea cups. I chose to submit this beautiful design because it is a superb creative work that contains aesthetical and wearable concepts. The top and the skirt were professionally constructed. The ensemble consummately exhibits the benefit of utilizing the engineered print in a junior level design class, which allowed the freedom of the student to achieve her design goal.

Design Statement

The goal of this design was to pull inspiration from mid-century architecture and designs and give it a futuristic look. We constantly look to past to try to make sense of the future, but with this design, the past created the future. Intrigued by the delicate print on a tea cup made by Thomas in the 1960s (see Figure 1) and the structure of the Executive Armless side chair designed by Eero Saarinen in 1950 (see Figure 2), *Porcelain* was constructed.

Figure 1. Tea set made by Thomas in the 1960s.

Figure 2. Armless chair designed by Eero Saarinen in 1950.

Recreating the print from the tea cups only required Adobe Photoshop, repeating a simple oval shape and the paint bucket tool until it covered the page. The designer then worked with a size 10 dress form to manipulate canvas into a new and unique structure. Using draping tape, a key hole cutout on the front

bodice was created to represent the cutout on the Executive chair. To modernize the garment, the neck was extended well above the average height to just below the chin. With such an uncommon top, it needed a skirt to match its uniqueness. The designer experimented with different silhouette, utilizing understructure and the thought of boning. Ultimately the idea of a half peplum skirt was used, tying back into when the peplum skirt was most popular- mid-century. Three panels of the peplum emerge from the princess lines on both the front and back of the skirt, having a layered affect.

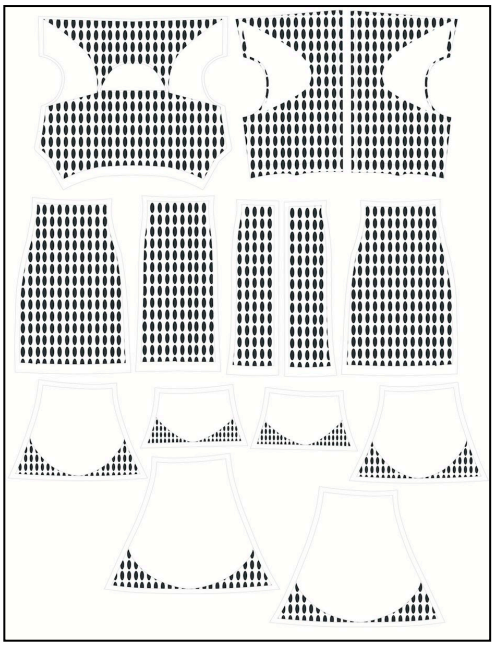

Figure 3. The engineered patterns of the dress.

With the print and drapes constructed, the next step was to digitize the design so that the print could be engineered into the correct spots. Using the digitizing table, and then converting the patterns into Modaris, the designer was then able to adjust and fix any errors from the pattern. Once fixed, they we imported into illustrator where the print was able to be placed and resized to its correct location. Resizing the print for different components gave the garment depth, along with color blocking white curved shapes to simulate the curved lines on the tea cups handles (see Figure 3).

Having the garment digitally printed confirmed that the pattern was exact and symmetrical, allowing for easy cutting. The construction took many hours and required a specific step process to ensure that it was sewn correctly. Three layers of stiff interfacing was used to keep the desired structure on the bodice, along with a complete lining to incase the interfacing. The peplum layers on the skirt were also lined and sandwiched into the seams of the main skirt. An invisible zipper was used on the back of the skirt, along with a side seam zipper on the bodice.

The garment is meant to be art, just like the pieces it originated from. Although it can be worn, it is better preserved on display for others to observe and admire. The design process demonstrated how inspirations from a diversity of arts influence the designs of textile and garment silhouette.

Image A: Full Front View

Image B: Full Back View

Image C: Side View

Image D: Interesting Detail