Masquerade

Suek Yi Lim, Iowa State University
Design Mentor: Sunhyung Cho, Iowa State University

Keywords: Engineered digital printing, duplicity, print development, pleats

Mentor statement: The purpose of this mentorship relationship was for the student to explore and apply digital printing to create a self-expressive wearable art piece. The design research project required the student to conduct a relevant literature review about a chosen topic, developed a series of sampling, and developed engineered prints using creative fabrication. The instructor advised the student, such as providing guidance on adequate fabric selection, knowledge of internal structure, and understanding of relevant materials needed to support the design form. In the way of developing the design piece, the student was able to creatively employ various design elements (e.g., box pleats) to effectively deliver her message.

Through the concrete design research, the student recreated the imagery of duplicity with her own interpretation and invented a creative way to convey the message through the design piece. The student fully demonstrated the basic application of engineered digital printing using her own illustration techniques. Overall, this design can provide a strong visual impact as a unique interpretation of the inspiration.

Statement of Purpose:

Masquerade is a conceptual piece emphasizing eye-catching and dynamic illustrations. The purpose of this design was to explore various themes of human expression through the use of engineered digital printing techniques.

The double-sided image that Matthieu Bourel has represented was one of the major inspirations the designer adopted in this design piece. Bourel is an artist known for his portrayal of duplicity and human behavior, specifically "revealing hidden intentions and unfolding mask after mask" ("*Matthieu Bourel*," 2020, para. 2). Instead of repeating the human face as Bourel did, *Masquerade* incorporates literal imagery of theater masks to cover the faces. The dark mood of the expressions was influenced by Yohji Yamamoto and Suzume Uchida's collaboration designs, where portraits were represented mysteriously and unapologetically (Verner, 2017).

Process, Technique, and Execution

Based on the research of the inspiration, the design process began with generating various sketches that were converted as garments and would effectively demonstrate the concept. A simpler silhouette was created through draping techniques in order to provide a stronger emphasis on the details of the developed digital print. Each pattern piece of the dress was digitized by Modaris and accommodated into an Illustrator file. The whole print design was hand-drawn using Clip Studio Paint and engineered onto the digitized patterns with Photoshop. Duchess satin was selected for the body of the dress for its solid weight and smooth appearance, which exhibits the print with clarity. The top layer was printed in silk habotai to contrast the heavy satin.

Aesthetic Properties and Visual Impact

The strategic placement of the images adds a deeper meaning behind the pleats. The title, *Masquerade,* means a false show or pretense. Furthermore, the depiction of theater masks on the top surface of the inverted box pleats split into two. This action, along with the opening of the pleats, mimic stage curtains parting to signal the start of a show. The dress, when lying flat, has a seemingly innocent appearance from afar. However, the action of pulling the sides of the dress reveals the true character underneath, conveying that the individual is putting up a "show" for everyone else to witness. Instead of having a repetitive pattern, the masks and faces establish unique, colorful focal points. The dahlias connect all the masks and faces together. Despite its dignified look, the flowers symbolize the imagery of deception. Through all the intended components, the dress embodies deception.

Originality and Innovation

Masquerade merges digital printing and original illustrations to effectively capture the concept. This design practice provides the potential that digital printing technologies can be effectively implemented in fashion design, indicating the many stories that can be told through fabric. Overall, Masquerade delivers the message representing double-sided human expressions using the digitally printed surface design and the innovative application with the garment components.

<div align="center">

References

</div>

Matthieu Bourel: Collage and the Power of Images. (2020). The re:art. Retrieved May 31, 2021, from http://thereart.ro/matthieu-bourel-works/

Verner, Amy. (2017). Yohji Yamamoto Spring 2018 Menswear. *Vogue*. Retrieved from https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/spring-2018-menswear/yohji-yamamoto