

Practitioner's Statement

Anthony Ryan

Anthony Beshara

Androgynous refers to having traditional male and female roles obscured or reversed or having an ambiguous sexual identity. The characteristics of androgynous people impacted the fashion world in recent years and has inspired me to create my brand. The brand I have created *Anthony Ryan* has specified with menswear for the latest collection. My concepts access the male form primarily but with a desexualisation highlighted through textures and form. It commences with rough vinyl red strapped shoulder-pads, moves to olive green suede and fur and continues to a satin, dreamy mauve kimono.

Apparent in many collections that feature non-gender specific features is the idea that androgyny is associated with the masculine form, with girls "borrowing from the boys". It is exceedingly rare to see men's fashion collections featuring dresses, skirts and clothing pieces of the 'girly' norm. With the collection I have created I didn't look at just creating these articles of clothing, because its already been done. What I wanted to do was work with detail and textures in the garments and style them accordingly to create a look that is interesting and controversial. With this in mind I didn't want my collection to base its whole theme around "dressing over the gender binary" because it shouldn't just be this theme, its too mainstream. It shouldn't only be thought of interesting because of this concept, if the garments create interest and intrigue its because of the shapes and polishing of each ensemble.

I sought inspiration from the 90's designs of Thierry Mugler and the recent works of Christopher Kane combined with a collection of films, runways and street style based around the 90s decade, because it was a time of change, and a creation of subcultures within the fashion industry. To create these concepts collectively with the muted down colour scheme I looked at a lot of subcultures within today's contemporary society and refined them to garments that have a put-together, but polished atmosphere overall.

The first concept, the kimono with chains has the origins of ancient Japanese women who would wear a full kimono, seen as the most elegant for its time. Today the kimono has evolved to an item very ready-to-wear and used commonly as outerwear. I have used the elegance of its history in the satin fabric I have chosen with the shape commonly used today, tapered and shaped to my liking. For the shoulderpads outfit, it is the most masculine of the forms I have used because of its rough vinyl material used. The link to the masculine sport, commonly a tradition of young Americans was used to show a real scenario of today's youth and the expectation to play a sport as a young man. The makeup, styling and overall decorative placement of this outfit brings it to an androgynous standpoint where the materials are softened, along with the masculine form. The suede ensemble shows textures used to feminize outfits today but for the top underneath I have made it very boxy and brought contrasting concepts to create an androgynous concept. The three outfits standing next to each other reflect the principles and themes I planned in the beginning; softening the masculine form with a distinctive style, using contrasting and complementing silhouettes with certain shapes and styling.

The overall colour scheme of the brand has muted romantic tones because I wanted to show clean and amorous archetypes. The swing tag I created is very simplistic with the brand logo being easy to remember and the shape and chain fixture showing an industrial look with the soft metallic rose gold foil layered over the graphic.

For use in the article and future campaigns I took studio photographs to appropriately present the garments and show how the styling and placement of the overall arrangement displays the details and overall thought processes behind my concepts. I used makeup and other basic clothing articles to enhance aspects of the designs. The photographs were taken with a Nikon D810A DSLR camera.

We are very much from a generation that look towards fashion and hairstyles to mark out an identity. Social media has created an industry of gender speech. For the creation of my feature article in the new issue of *Hunger Magazine*, I wanted something structured with a meaning behind each component similar to these standards. I edited the photos with a rosy tint to go with the colour scheme, editing evocative captions to inhibit a response from the reader. The purpose of the article is not only to promote me as a designer, but also to create intrigue and interest in the use of fashion as self-expression.

Presenting these pages along with the garments in *Hunger Magazine's* exhibition I wanted something very clean and minimalistic to showcase the works and not interfere with the design. I used white backgrounds and frames throughout the presentation to enhance photographs and act as a canvas for which the collection is placed upon.

I am ultimately proud of my body of work and have fulfilled the requirements of my brief, while communicating my message in the designs of the brand *Anthony Ryan*. Incorporating my personal aesthetic with inspirations from other designers I believe I have created a brand that is stimulating and notable for its aesthetic appeal. I think I have created a brand that evolves men to something more sophisticated, more enticing, and creates a new type of masculinity. My hope is that the brand attracts the minds of today's youth, hindering a response to go outside of the 'norm' and exploring their own identity, allowing people to appreciate the androgynous subculture present today in the forever evolving world of fashion design.