

Caution Collection

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Early in 2019 a visit to the Mona Museum in Tasmania became a pivotal influence in the development of this design work. Renowned for its unusual and controversial exhibits the work displayed in Mona pushes the boundaries of art and design. Challenged by this notion, I set out to develop a design brief that would allow me to explore two distinct disciplines of design: fashion and graphic design.

Within the fashion industry, pushing the boundaries is referred to as *Avant Garde*. Avant Garde fashion became the foundation for the development of the design brief and the experimentation and exploration that occurred throughout the Design Process.

During a seminar in 2018, visiting designer Paul Vassileff shared in detail, his aesthetic philosophy and design process. As part of this, he described the importance of projecting a holistic image across all aspects of design. He spoke of returning a packaging prototype because it was inconsistent with his vision for the overall look of his collection and his business as a whole. Struck by his attention to detail I was challenged to create a presentation that displayed a visual consistency. Expanding the design brief to include an associated Graphic Design element allowed me to present a holistic presentation whilst broadening exposure to a variety of design techniques and processes.

The design brief developed, outlining the requirements for a fashion collection to be presented as runway ready for the 2019 Summer. The collection, sponsored by the Adelaide Fashion Festival, was to showcase refined Avant Garde couture. Currently supporting local and freelance fashion designers, the Adelaide Fashion Festival required a visual presentation of the line, supported by a comprehensive graphic look book depicting the vision for the collection.

As a starting point in the design process, I investigated a range of fashion design practitioners and their work. Taking a particular interest in their thematic approaches to collections, I began to experiment with several themes. I investigated the work of Cristobal Balenciaga, known for his iconic approach to shape and form rebelling against restricting the female shape and instead promoting draping and framing the body. Exploring the qualities of diversity within his work Balenciaga pushed perceptions of minimalism in fashion. Emulating his approach, I designed several works reflective of geometric shapes and forms that framed the figure. Japanese designer Rei Kawakubo is a creator who is celebrated for her unusual design process; she does not sketch or draw, instead focusing on creating something from nothing. Her mission is to think outside the box and create work that has not been done before. Taking on this approach in my work, I created a variety of designs based on conceptual themes. I developed collections based on the Italian card game, Briscola, with lines based on geometric shapes and forms, and a collection derived from *The Grotto* exhibit depicted wearable light technology before developing a collection combining these themes and layering industrial, recycled materials. Exploration of contrasting colors and pattern, as well as disproportionate shapes and forms became a consistent theme throughout my work.

As a part of the design process, I experimented with a range of methods and media, both in the illustration of my designs and creation of the final resolved work. Refining my illustration skills with Copic markers provided a vehicle by which to communicate the developing ideas. The most challenging aspect of the project was developing the skills required to make a functional representation of my design. Having never sewn before, the brief required me to create a functional wearable garment that could be modeled and photographed for the accompanying look book. Battling against time restrictions, I sourced the fabrics, recycled materials, and created my own pattern from which to build the garment. Navigating the challenges provided by the qualities of the materials, I eventually resolved the work in time for a studio and location photoshoot. Applying photographic techniques, I staged a shoot to complement the industrial theme of the garment design.

The Graphic Design element of the brief required a look book, designed to communicate the vision of the collection as well as posters to market and promote the collection for the Adelaide Fashion Festival. Ensuring visual consistency, the graphics package was designed to be representative of the industrial theme of the collection. The work of Christine Kreiselmaier, a photographer who collaborates with graphic designers for international magazine layouts, was particularly influential. Investigating her work led to a better understanding of the best angles and lighting for my own photography and impacted on my layout choices in the design of the look book. Kreiselmaier's combining of close ups and action photography as well as her attention to colour focal points, layering and balanced compositions was instrumental throughout the process. Virgil Abloh, designer for fashion label OFF White's common use of bold text and repetition of typography to create emphasis was another aspect I chose to emulate within my work. Abloh's use of layering to create depth and draw the viewer's eye to the focal point was a technique I used in my work.

Throughout the experimentation, testing and refining process, I remained focused on providing the visual consistency required by the brief. The thematic approach to both aspects of the project allowed for the concept to flow across the two design fields and the use of key colour selections used as a focal point was applied to both the fashion design and graphic applications.

Understanding the importance of consistency within the design process allowed me present a visual aesthetic that was descriptive of the theme. The connection between the two design fields was an essential part of the brief and provided a unified resolution.

As a design student, the suite allowed me to work within two distinct design fields but also to apply my understanding of the elements and principles of design across the disciplines. Inspired by my travel experiences and by the work of designers who push the boundaries of their fields I have created a body of work that represents unified themes and visual harmony.

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