

Title: Rosso Mistral

Author: Rachel J. Eike, Georgia Southern University, USA

Key words: Sustainability, pre-consumer waste, quilt-and-slash

The design approach for Rosso Mistral was inspired by the quote from sustainable apparel founder of Alabama Chanin, Natalie Chanin, “it is often much easier to consume what is convenient without thinking too much about the larger impact or consequences of our choices” (Brown, 2013, p. 7). When looking around the university apparel design studio, it was clear that many student designers weren’t thinking about the textile waste they were generating while designing and constructing garments and collections, where the textile scraps may end up (e.g. landfill), or how their generated waste may affect the environment. Rosso Mistral is the first design in a series of Waste-to-Wear (W2W) pieces developed from pre-consumer textile waste. The W2W collection experiments with a variety of textile fabrication methods, surface design, and fiber art techniques that utilize small textile scraps discarded in university apparel design workrooms. Rosso Mistral, and the entire W2W collection, is aimed to demonstrate, educate, and inspire young professionals during their design process to consider environmental impact. Rosso Mistral is designed and constructed from pre-consumer textile waste (discarded textile scraps) from university apparel design workrooms. Considerations for the design included pattern shaping, utilization of textile yardage and scrap waste, and the ability to design for second life (Thomas, 2008). Rosso Mistral employs a quilt-and-slash technique where multiple layers of textiles (discarded fabric scraps) serve as the ‘filling’ for the quilted skirt (Lundberg, 2007). Discarded fabric waste was strategically layered and positioned to remain in place upon slashing of top-skirt layer – post stitching/quilting.

Rosso Mistral’s design process began by dividing the collected textile scraps by color for palette selection and yardage identification. Research for textile and fiber art technique experimentation and aesthetic inspiration was conducted. Rosso Mistral’s design was greatly influenced by the fabric available for use – textiles of red and black hues. These colors of textiles were in excess (compared to



other textiles collected) due to the women's heart disease awareness student design gown challenge. The quilting pattern of the skirt was inspired by the Mistral – the strong northwesterly wind that blows from southern France into the Gulf of Lion (Mistral Associates, 2015). The swirling motion of the quilting stitches provide an interesting aesthetic for the wearer while providing a functional construction application that holds the small and narrow textile scraps into place. To adhere to the aim of the sustainable design minimal trimming and shaping was done to



the 'filling' scraps. The scrap 'filling' continues out of the hemline of the skirt, creating the visual continuation of the strong swirling Mistral winds as they diminish into the Gulf of Lion. As the textiles used in Rosso Mistral were limited to those collected in apparel design studios, grain-lines were not always properly followed in order to create patterns for the skirt and bodice. Upon close inspection of the skirt details, one may see the variety of textiles utilized by this design: velvet, plain weaves, lace, netting, and metallic textiles to name a few.

Rosso Mistral contributes to the advancement of the apparel design profession by experimenting with textile fabrication and fiber art techniques to suggest a design approach that may be employed for combating pre-consumer textile waste. It is important to note that some designers and brands, such as *From Somewhere*, have integrated the use of production factory textile scraps into their design and development models (Brown, 2010). Therefore, the use of garment production from

Rosso Mistral exhibits one approach that yields a positive outcome from a negative, yet necessary, textile waste-generating educational situation. Designs, such as Rosso Mistral, possess the potential to impact future apparel industry professionals to critically consider environmental impacts of design along the production process and propose alternative and sustainable approaches that may produce less waste or provide a second life for discarded textiles.

Citations:

- Brown, S. (2010). *Eco Fashion*. London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd.
- Brown, S. (2013). *Refashioned*. London, United Kindom: Laurence King Publishing Ltd.
- Lundberg, T. (2007). *Connecting Quilts, Art & Textiles*. (L. C. Teufel, Ed.). Worthington, OH: Dragon Threads, Ltd.
- Mistral Associates. (2015). Mistral. Retrieved May 27, 2015, from http://us.mistralassociates.com/mistral_wind.html
- Thomas, S. (2008). From "green blur" to ecofashion: Fashioning an eco-lexicon. *Fashion Theory - Journal of Dress Body and Culture*, 12(4), 525–540. doi:10.2752/175174108X346977