

Faces of El Salvador

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Many designers take advantage of the possibilities that manipulation of basic geometric shapes offers. Some identify the importance of minimal or zero waste cutting, while others focus on use of geometry to create dramatic three-dimensional effects (Rissanen, 2007; Teng & Majors, 2003). The use of large planes of cloth also offers the opportunity to view the fabric surfaces as large canvases for digital textile design. *Faces of El Salvador* represents one design prototype developed as part of a research process structured to work only with squares and to use those squares for digital print compositions. As an additional element of the process, the size of the squares was determined by using numbers from the Fibonacci sequence. Thus, for the beginning draping experiments, squares were cut at 8, 13, 21, and 34 inches. These were manipulated on a body form, looking for balance and line repetition. While many forms of the shapes evolved, for this first finished piece, it was decided to keep the form relatively simple (Figure 1). By working with a silk organza, the folds that create the shape add additional interest in the design through manipulation of the surface pattern and development of focal points that result from creating sheer and opaque areas (Figure 2).

The printed image was composed from photographs taken while traveling in El Salvador. One is a mural that represents the struggle between the El Salvadoran government and innocent citizens in a time of conflict, the other a picture of stained glass in an El Salvadorian Chapel. The image was composed to fit within the square format and reprinted exactly in each square regardless of size. The squares are arranged to enhance the balance and shape of the design, with a large folded square on the front



Figure 1. Front

panels, a small square anchoring the upper back and medium squares draped on the lower back. Because the image is asymmetrical on the square the print repeats diagonally on the back.



Figure 2. Front detail.

Rissanen, T. (2007). Types of fashion design and patternmaking practice. Nordic Design Research Conference. Retrieved from:
<http://www.nordes.org/opj/index.php/n13/article/view/185/168>

Teng, Y., & Majors, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Yeohlee: Work, material, architecture*. Victoria, Australia: Peleus Press.