

Mummy

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Mentor Statement. This student's creative work begins with intense research in experimental art and construction techniques, followed by intensified lab hours testing out techniques and mediums, and is translated into cutting edge adaptations and innovations in couture quality wearable art. Each piece designed inspires through the unique application of techniques, fabrics, colors and textures. As design mentor, I sought to guide the process, offering resources and streamlining construction and finishing techniques where needed. This student came to our program with extreme creativity, yet minimal skills to translate ideas to reality. I chose to submit this work because it is the culmination of tremendous [personal] growth on the part of the designer, superb creativity, and shows merit and promise for the future.

Statement of the Purpose.

"Mummy" was inspired by the rigid stiffness of mummies, metal armor, and the soft sculptures of Rosa Verloop. The Dutch artist uses nylon stockings, pins and batting to create distorted human flesh. The purpose of this design was to explore mixed creative possibilities of nylon stockings as a medium and start with Verloop's work as inspiration, then to broaden and explore the development of a metal fabric with copperhead BBs. As a child I was wowed by the beauty of my brother's copperhead BBs. I am still a lover of copper, so I chose to use copperhead BBs to give the head corset a metallic armor type look. The final product is an intricately interwoven metal, wool roving and nylon mixture of texture and marbled strains of color that excite the imagination.

Process, Technique and Execution.

The top piece started with a support layer. I created a bustier with head corset that is pieced with many intricate geometric seams that are boned to create a shell. The purpose of this shell is to support the beige nylon hose as they are stretched as tight as possible. The nylon stockings are hand tacked to the boning channels like layers of muscles attached to bone. Stockings were stuffed with wool roving of variations of reds, browns, creams, and burgundies to create rich color variations that mimic muscles. The beige nylons were accented with red paint in certain areas with a very thin layer, just conspicuous enough to make the red roving pop. All the BBs were gathered and each BB was knotted under the beige hose individually into rows of two BBs per knot. This technique draws from similar preparatory practice for shibori dyeing. This tedious practice provided strong structural support for the head corset when connected to the boned framework. The copper coating of BBs was fragile and rubbed off on the hose, adding variations of rusty colors. The rhythmic pattern of BBs and bodice edging was organic and developed around the bodice base structure.

The “Mummy” silhouette was elongated through the design on a front extension. I added the extension to the bustier because I thought the overall look would be more intense if the nylons were stretched from head to toe so that there were tense lines that ran throughout the silhouette. Two flat metal steel rods were encased in an extension made of canvas to give the bustier an appendage as though muscles were drawn out from the body and extended stiffly. The extension was covered in a red knit backing. The final element of the design was the minimal knit legging. The goal was a raw body coverage, while maintaining the focus on the sculptural work of the bustier.

Design Contribution and Innovation. The extension and experimentation of Verloop’s technique was both intriguing and complex. Through experimentation, I felt like I was creating a watercolor-like masterpiece of rich and complex colors and textures. The patterns created by the integration of metal BBs were unlike anything I have seen in fashion. “Mummy” builds on of my body of work integrating coloring, dimensional shaping, and use of innovative components to create a multi-dimensional, layered approach to design.

References.

Genista. (2015). Rosa Verloop’s Delightfully Fleshy Sculptures Made From Nylon Stockings. Beautiful Decay. Retrieved from <http://beautifuldecay.com/2015/06/10/rosa-verloops-delightfully-fleshy-sculptures-made-nylon-stockings/>

Measurements

B – 32 1/2”, W – 25”, H – 36”

