

SUSTAINABLE COUTURE: CRAFTING A NEW NARRATIVE FOR POST-HUMANIST FASHION

AUTHORS

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KEYWORDS

Sustainable Fashion, Stitched Drapes, Contemporary Couture, Adaptive Designs, Indian Textile Revival

MANUSCRIPTION

HISTORICAL REFERENCES OF DRAPING

Draping as a technique has a rich historical heritage in the world of clothing. Its roots can be traced back to ancient times, where we find elegantly draped robes that can be considered early predecessors of contemporary draping.

INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION (3300-1300 BCE):



Figure 1. Statue of priest-king draped in patterned robe or shawl (left), found in Mohenjo-Daro 2500 BCE, displayed at National Museum, Karachi, Pakistan. (www.worldhistory.org, 2023)
Bronze statuette of a dancing girl displaying intricate draping and clothing styles of the era (right) found in Mohenjo-Daro 2500 BCE, displayed at National Museum, Delhi. The Dancing Girl. (<https://indianculture.gov.in>, 2023).

GREEK AND ROMAN CIVILIZATION:

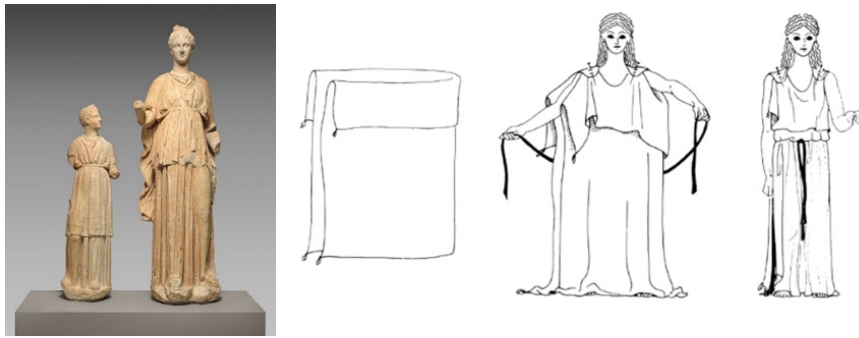


Figure. 2. Marble funerary statues of a maiden and a little girl depicting Greek costumes (left): The Metropolitan Museum of Art., Diagram of the arrangement of Peplos (right): Lee, M. (2005)

The artful draping of fabric allowed wearers to enjoy the tactile and visual allure of textiles. These garments not only respected the fabric's integrity and craftsmanship but also eschewed aggressive cutting or manipulation, highlighting a harmonious relationship with textiles.

TRADITIONAL INDIAN TEXTILES

India's rich tapestry of traditional textiles stands as a testament to centuries-old craftsmanship, intricate techniques, and cultural diversity. Some of the Traditional Indian Textiles depicted further in the exploration pictures are:

Sambalpuri Ikat from Odisha showcases a distinctive tie-and-dye method, requiring skilled artisans to meticulously dye threads before weaving, resulting in stunning patterns and vibrant colors.

Bagru prints from Rajasthan are celebrated for their use of natural dyes and intricate block patterns. Originating from the village of Bagru, this ancient technique involves hand-carved wooden blocks imprinting intricate designs on fabric, often inspired by nature and folklore.

These and many more traditional textiles are inherently sustainable. They not only reflect India's diverse cultural heritage but also showcase the artistry passed down through generations. Preserving and revitalizing these traditional techniques through contemporary fashion design is not just a necessity; it is a celebration of India's rich textile legacy in the global context.

Assimilating the understanding and beauty of historical drapes and the craftsmanship of traditional Indian textiles, this workshop blends the principles of the two, to create sustainable couture pieces for the modern wearer.

WORKSHOP PROPOSAL

FACILITATORS- Ms Sulbha Jagat and Ms Harroop Kaur Grang

OBJECTIVES -

- The workshop aims at expanding the ongoing research of creating different silhouettes which are inspired by different drapes through the History across different cultures following the given underlying principles A) Minimum cutting B) Minimum sewing C) Minimum wastage.

- Explore silhouettes on Traditional Indian Fabrics
- Explore silhouettes on Textile yardage made from fabric scrap.
- Compile the explorations to consolidate the scope of the research.

REQUIREMENT

- Number of Participants- 10 to 12 – to be working in pairs (A Fashion background for the participant would be helpful though not entirely necessary since the facilitator will be first giving a demonstration for the creation of a garment.)
- DRESS FORMS-Standard Size Dress Forms which can be used for draping explorations-Sizes may be variable ranging from UK 8 to UK 16- 6 to 7 Dressforms in total (depending on the number of participants). Alternately, in case of Non availability of any dress form- draping can be done on one volunteer for every group.
- Duration –2 hours
- MATERIAL KIT- A kit will be provided with the following material to each group.
 - A) About 2 to 2.5 (44-inch width) meters of - Traditional Indian Textile yardage OR Textile Yardage made from fabric Scrap. (provided by the facilitators)
 - B) Pins (to be arranged by the organisers)
 - C) Marking chalk (provided by the facilitators)
 - D) Scissors (to be arranged by the organisers)
 - E) Needle and thread. (to be arranged by the organisers)
- Sewing technician – the Outcomes created by the participants may be sewn with the help of a Sewing technician under the guidance of the Facilitator.

PROCESS

1. 15 Mins -Demonstration-The participants will be shown a demonstration of the creation of the garment which is depicted in this research.
2. 10 Mins- Brainstorming -The participants will be required to use one image from their culture where people have used draped garments as clothing. The reference image may be from current times or any time in the past. Some reference images will be carried by the organizers as a starting point in case the time does not permit the participants to search for images. (The annexure for the proposal shows some such images which may be used for this purpose)
3. 25 Mins- Exploration- They will then be encouraged to create a garment by draping the fabric they have been provided keeping the following in mind.
 - A) The fabric needs to be folded around the body in an easy-fitted manner. The attempt is not to contour the body, but only use the dress form for establishing the folds.

B) The participants may slit the fabric partially or completely, along the length or width to enable them to make more variations.

C) It is encouraged to create silhouettes which require the least amount of fixing, least amount of cutting and least complicated finishing. (e.g., a straight seam is preferred over a shaped one, a fold for the neckline is preferred over cutting and finishing).

4. 30 Mins- Establishing Seams, Fixing the drape, cutting and Functional aspects- The drape will be evaluated by the facilitators to establish and finalise the required seams, and areas which need to be cut to make it into a functional garment. The participants will be encouraged to fix the drape to enable the garment to come off from the dress form and be held together as a garment.

5. 5 Mins- Documenting and Marking the drape- Participants need to create a video and pictures to document the drape they have created before it is removed from the dress form. The participants will place the garment on a flat surface and mark the folds, seams and cuts as discussed.

6. 20 Mins- Sewing- The required seams may be sewn by hand sewing/Pinning or with the help of a sewing technician.

7. 15 Mins- Final Document, Display and Compilation.

RESULTS

The outcomes achieved by various participants will be documented along with the process followed. There will be a discussion about how these silhouettes can boost contemporizing of traditional textiles as well as creating functional and practical garments from textile scrap material.

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstration of a Drape created and then deconstructed to establish seams and simplifying construction.

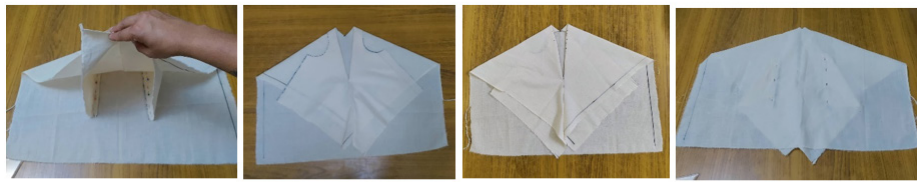
SILHOUETTE EXPLORATION IN MUSLIN



Front

Side

Back

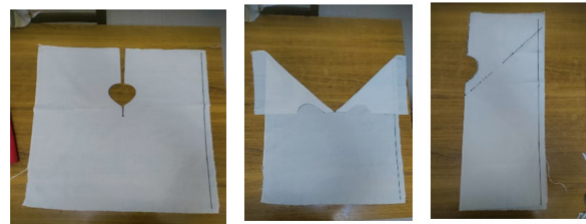


Establishing Seams.

Inside Out

Front-On Flat Surface

Back- On flat surface



Drape deconstructed

Process established

EXAMPLES

The garment making technique as above, which will be shown as a demonstration to the participants, when applied to a combination of two Block printed fabrics leads to the outcome 1 as shown

OUTCOME 1- DRAPE SHAWL GARMENT



OUTCOME-2 – DRAPED TUNIC DRESS

A different exploration based on same principles, done on a Traditional Indian Fabric-Sambalpuri Ikkat (110 inches by 44 inches)



Textile Used- Sambalpuri Ikkat Fabric draped to create a Tunic Dress.↵



Shoulder detail



A slit needed for armhole↵

OUTCOME 3- TEXTILE YARDAGE SKIRT

A textile yardage has been created by joining multiple small scrap pieces of fabric. It is lined with bigger pieces of waste fabric.



The fabric is Folded in envelope-type folds and joined to create a skirt with a paper bag waistband.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The scope of the research can be expanded in various ways.

- Further exploration of historical draping techniques from various cultures.
- Experimentation with different types of fabrics and textiles to expand the range of adaptable materials.
- Research into the environmental impact and sustainability of the minimalist approach compared to traditional Garment creation methods.

•Examination of consumer preferences and market demand for minimalist garments