



Preparation for the Storm

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The design, “Preparation for the Storm” is the first in a series of outfits designed and created for a collection titled Surge Release. As a whole, the collection reveals relationships between lawless weather events and clothing that is chosen by consumers. The notion was constructed around an exploration and investigation of energy release as both a functional tool and a visual curiosity. Specifically, the collection addresses parallels that can be drawn between our wardrobes and the energy potential of a thunderstorm. The design was initially conceived through intense examination of the atmospheric phenomena known as thunderstorms.

Development included numerous observations, sketches, and research pertinent to the essential components of a thunderstorm. Once defined, the various elements were analyzed and arranged into categories that correlated to specific stages in the evolution of thunderstorms. When further evaluating the groupings, the changes in energy required to progress from one phase to another were determined to be the most significant connections. Visually, the garments convey a sense of preparedness, while simultaneously demonstrating the transference and release of energy. Overall, the primary purpose of “Preparation for the Storm” is to physicalize the point at which a thunderstorm has not yet reached its full potential, with a massive surge of energy that has yet to be released.

The design was produced by combining flat pattern-making, draping, and additive sculptural techniques. To create a base, the model’s measurements were taken, patterns were created by hand, and prototypes were made and refined to achieve a stylized garment fit. The design features three garments that are composed of ripstop nylon, taffeta, faux leather, microfiber suede, and PVC. These textiles were chosen primarily because of their visual properties and their interactions with light sources. By pre-treating the textiles with OrganoTex®; a biodegradable, chemical-free water repellant technology; and pressing the seams with a seam sealing tape, the garments’ water-resistance capabilities were significantly strengthened.

Loose draping techniques were used to elevate the desired aesthetic of elements that would be added onto the garment base. Draping pieces of green-tinted PVC onto one side of the form and creating a ripstop nylon shield for the other side aided in establishing strong elements of layering, color-blocking, and asymmetry. Additionally, they were constructed with the two strongest textiles that were used throughout the collection to further re-enforce the idea of

protection. The PVC guards and body shield could be viewed as accessories due to their complete removability that provides the option to reduce physical and visual complexity when protection from the storm is not necessary.

Atypical hardware and devices were displayed as the dominant components of the flexible and dynamic nature of the final design. The belt was created by strategically weaving different colors of paracord together into a pattern reminiscent of lightning. The ripstop body shield has the ability to be blown up and expanded with air using a reserve from a tank of compressed air (See Figure 1). Additionally, the shield can easily be moved and repositioned by loosening the adjustable paracord straps that hold the garment on the form.

When combining the elements of compressed air and adjustable paracord together, the design offers a wide variety of functional and aesthetic possibilities that can be tailored to a variety of circumstances. When the model adjusts the paracord straps, the valve opens on the air tank. The garment fills up in under thirty seconds, providing the model just enough time to fully adjust the paracord. At the end of the short performance, the garment's silhouette changes and the new design that is presented helps demonstrate the collection's focus on energy and its release during a thunderstorm.

Figure 1. Side View B



Figure 2. Front Lower



Figure 3. Woven Belt Detail

