

Infinity

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Contextual Review and Concept Statement: In this era of social and environmental consciousness, consumers have become more desirous of clothing that is not only timeless, functional, and unique but also sustainable (Štefko & Vladimira, 2018). It has become difficult to find one-of-a-kind clothing that allows consumers to express their individual styles. To challenge homogenous, mass-produced clothing, fashion designers and consumers have fabricated and worn garments in creative ways (Koo, Dunne & Bye, 2014). Transformable garments let consumers be directly connected to individuality and sustainability through design versatility. Such garments give new insight into sustainable clothing and introduce new ways of satisfying consumer needs and wants (Farrer, 2011). *Infinity* is transformable and versatile; it can be worn for multiple looks or occasions, mirroring the individuality and creativity of the wearer. Also, durability is the key to sustainable design that seeks to provide “physical durability through quality materials but, more importantly, through formal attributes, aims to provide stylistic durability (Casto & DeLong, 2019).” *Infinity* focused on physical, stylistic, and emotional durability.

Aesthetic Properties, Visual Impact and Cohesion: *Infinity* has a long, scarf-like silhouette that is 15” wide and 116” long. It has different color blocks in earth tones reminiscent of nature: an off-white cotton flower, brown soil, a green leaf, a cloudy sky, the red sun (Figure 1). These color palettes create a warm and nature-friendly atmosphere. The sleeves fit tightly from wrist to elbow and become fully rounded from the elbow, creating natural gathers and full volume. There are slits on the bottom of the sleeves that add comfort and aesthetic detail. *Infinity* drapes differently based on how it is worn. Its soft texture and excellent flexibility imbue coziness and reveal the movement and beauty of the body.

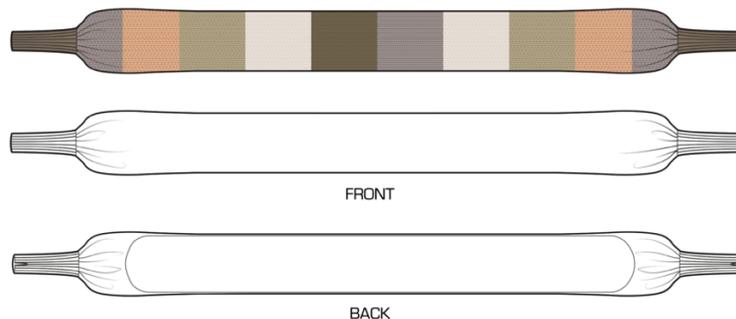


Figure 1. Flat Drawings of *Infinity*

Process, Technique, and Execution: *Infinity* was hand knitted. As the COVID-19 pandemic limited access to automated equipment and materials for garment construction, hand knitting provided a solution to this restriction. Knitting is a traditional textile technique with great historical and modern significance. In post-WWII Great Britain and the United States, hand knitting was considered part of the “make-do-and-mend” austerity campaign in which novel artifacts were knitted as tangible expressions of highly personalized creativity and innovation (Steed, 2016). Recently, positive effects of hand knitting have become increasingly important. According to Pavko-Čuden (2017), knitting is a means of communication, artistic and social expression, statement- and trend-making, and even survival; it generates imagination, creativity, and innovation. There are various advantages of hand knitting, but its distinctive features are its mobility and flexibility. Hand knitting can be performed almost everywhere; it requires only yarn and knitting needles. The knitter may design the yarn itself, combine several yarns together, or use non-traditional materials to make a fabric (Affinito, Conti & Motta, 2017).

To construct *Infinity*, a pattern was drafted to determine its proper width and length. A 4” x 4” gauge swatch was created prior to knitting the whole garment to measure the number of stitches needed. The yarn used in this design is composed of 60% acrylic and 40% wool in five different shades (Figure 2). Knitting was performed with 4.5 mm and 6 mm bamboo needles. To create textured and stretchy cuffs, a 2 x 2 rib stitch was used. Plain stitching was used for the rest of the garment, which created different surface designs on each side (Figure 3).



Figure 2. The Yarn Used in *Infinity*



Figure 3. In the Process of Knitting

Originality and Innovation: There are two reasons why this design is titled *Infinity*. First, unlike woven fabric, knitwear is flexible and extensible; it stretches and conforms to its wearer’s silhouette, regardless of body shape or movement. There is no sense of restraint, whereas form-fitting clothing, such as a tailored suit, restricts the wearer’s figure or movement. Second, this garment can be donned in myriad ways. As seen in the attached images, this design has no fixed rules or styles. It allows the wearer to be as

creative as possible, to play with various ways of dressing. *Infinity* can be worn as a scarf, head cover, shawl, or top with crisscrossed or loosely layered straps. *Infinity* offers its wearer the opportunity to use clothes to imagine and invent without limit.

Significance, Rationale, and Contribution: Sustainable design can be variously defined with different perspectives. Transformable garments are feasible ways to practice sustainability via versatility and durability. These clothes change shape and adapt to assorted functions and purposes according to wearer intent; such features make them unique and create a stronger bond between the wearer and the item compared to that generated by typical fashion. Consequently, a transformable garment, like *Infinity*, has a greater chance of being worn and kept longer, extending the product life cycle as the wearer repeatedly transforms the piece.

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