

Lipstick on His Collar

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Purpose and context. Lipstick is much more than a make-up product that colors the lips; it is a powerful tool of seduction that has been used since ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. A bright red lip draws the eye, and, according to a study, men spend the longest time fixated on a woman's lips when she is wearing red lipstick (Daily Mail Reporter, 2010). Throughout research, there are proven links between bold lipstick and both attractiveness and power. Armed with the knowledge that make-up, specifically lipstick, has strong associations with desirability, women use this product to camouflage themselves into an ideal mate in order to find love (Bondsof beauty, 2017; Farrell, 2013). Lipstick on His Collar celebrates a sense of powerful femininity through the imagery of lipstick. The garment is designed to fall between the constraints of lingerie and ready-to-wear. I was inspired by the trends of underwear as outerwear to pull the seduction of the theme into something that could be styled outside of the home as well.

Aesthetic properties and visual impact. The textile design explores this theme of camouflage through both the social camouflage of wanting to be accepted by society and the visual blending of colors. From a distance, the textile appears to be a white fabric with pink spots on it. As you look closer, the lips reveal themselves and the subtleties in color variation show the uniqueness of each individual print. Although people try to fit in in hopes of being loved by another, our individuality is never lost. In terms of standing out with the use of lipstick, there is a sense of uniqueness in the choice of shade and in the imprint itself. The garment silhouette of the wrap style romper conceals and reveals the lipstick pattern underneath. The placement is fun and flirty and gives the garment a seductive edge. Although the first thing one notices about the romper is the purple satin, the delay of processing the pattern strengthens its visual impact. The kimono elevates the look with its dramatic flow. It takes the look from cute to powerful and potentially dangerous. The girl in the romper is sweet, while the girl in the kimono has fortunes under her name and a husband who died under mysterious circumstances.

Process, technique, and execution. In developing my textile, I wanted each print to be unique. I used my own lip print as a template for block printing and stamped each one on individually. I used lipstick to create a print on linoleum blocks and carved around the imprint to create four unique blocks. I mixed up paints to produce realistic lipstick shades and continued printing and mixing until the lips were evenly distributed across the fabric. In order to emphasize the camouflage theme and add dimension to the textile design, I added lips using white block printing in a white that is slightly cooler than the ground fabric. I also used silk painting paints to

paint some fluid lip prints as well. The patterns were created primarily using Optitex PDS. Basic blocks were digitized, and all adjustments were made digitally based on measurements, such as where I wanted the two panels to cross over one another. This method reduced the amount of paper that would have been used with non-digital flat patternmaking and allowed me to more easily record and store the patterns as they changed over time. As the romper has overlapping panels, the outer purple layers are self-lined, while the inner lipstick layers are faced. The garment has an invisible zipper closure at the back and a snap securing the halter at the back of the neck. The slight ruching at the waist was done by threading a flat leather cord through a 1/4" channel. This method was chosen as the effect was more controlled than elastic. The beaded trim was attached after the lining was sewn to the outer layer of the satin so that the placement could be more easily managed and the metal would not get caught up in the machine. Beaded fringe trim was used on the outer petals of the shorts to create movement and give the look a subtle Art Deco vibe that is continued with the trim on the sleeves of the kimono.

Cohesion. Purple satin fabric was chosen to pair with the textile design as the color matched one of the lipstick shades used and satin fits with the overall lingerie feel of the look. The black chiffon fabric chosen for the floor length kimono grounds the look and creates movement when the wearer walks or the wind catches.

Originality and innovation. The styling of the look shown is dramatic and focuses on the lingerie aspects, however, the romper could also be paired with a leather jacket and sandals to be worn on a night out. The garment also balances between modern and vintage. The detailed trims pull from the past, while the flirty silhouette and pattern are more youthful and modern. This vintage/modern dichotomy is also reflected across the two garments; the floor length kimono is rooted in the past with modernization in the silhouette while the romper is fresh with vintage-y details. This aspect builds on the aforementioned themes as lipstick and the power associated with it is applicable across time and culture and has dated back to ancient times.

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