

## The Fragrance of the East

Fatimah Hakeem, Dr. Sibeï Xia (Mentor), Louisiana State University, USA

*Keywords:* Creative Pattern Cutting, Pattern Magic, Circular Holes, Moroccan Mosaic Tiles

Creativity in apparel design is shown through forms and levels of novelty in the production process (Freeman, Son, & McRoberts, 2015). Patternmaking, a primary phase of this process, can play a significant role in the creative silhouette of a garment. According to Almond (2013), “Designing a pattern is a craft” (p. 89). Thus, creative pattern cutting techniques allow designers to manipulate pattern pieces as artistic work. Creative pattern cutting is defined as “technological art” (Almond, 2010, p.15) and is an innovative technique used to create garment designs with unconventional construction. These innovative techniques can be achieved through complex experimental procedures that enhance creativity; for example, sculpting, engineering, circling, folding, pleating, puffing, and cutting using a zero-waste approach (Burns & Vuruşkan, 2019). Japanese scholars have established creative pattern cutting techniques that offer new strategies for shaping garments, and have been widely adopted by pattern cutters (Townsend & Mills, 2013). The present design applies creative pattern cutting techniques published in the book series, *Pattern Magic* (Nakamichi, 2010), which were established by Tomoko Nakamichi, a professor at Tokyo’s Bunka Fashion College.



Figure 1. Moroccan Ceramic Tiles

This project explores creative patternmaking, applying Pattern Magic techniques (Nakamichi, 2010), by creating a novel design that enhances the function and aesthetic of circular holes. Surface design techniques such as gathering fabric around the holes were applied to the garment to change the material’s identity and create three-dimensional texture (Ohrn-McDaniel, 2013). According to Ohrn-McDaniel (2013), circular holes create a good fit and flirty look for the female body. The silhouette of this garment was inspired by gathered-hole illustrations found in *Pattern Magic I* (Nakamichi, 2010, p. 30 & p. 36). The functional aspect of the gathered-hole enabled the designer to create a "fitted silhouette without inserting darts or design lines" (Nakamichi, 2010, p. 30).

The fabric printing of the design was inspired by Islamic North African architecture, especially Moroccan ceramic tiles (see Figure 1) and mosaic patterns (Tina-Boomerina, 2015). The unique Moroccan mosaic tiles “Zellige” are often used for interior design to represent proudly its heritage by decorating the house walls and floors, swimming pool, Hammam spa, fountains of the gardens, and the mosque dome and lighthouse (Zain, 2020).

The *Fragrance of the East* Design is an asymmetrical cut-out maxi dress with a puffed long sleeve. The design development began with determining the location and the volume of every gathered hole in the dress through sketching. The basic pattern (sloper) of the dress and sleeve was drafted in US Size 6 with a fitted silhouette. The radial pattern generated from applying the

gathered-hole technique was created by adjusting the sloper (Nakamichi, 2010). The principle for creating the pattern of the chosen technique was to “open a hole without inserting darts or design lines” (Nakamichi, 2010, p. 30). Thus, the radical pattern was accomplished by inserting lines extended from the hole to the side seam of the pattern in a balanced way. These lines were cut and opened out, approximately 2.5” per line, which allowed enough opening space for gathering. Also, adjusting the length of the main darts (such as bust darts) was necessary in order to close them all and complete the radical pattern. Moreover, most of the pattern work focused on the side bodice and the sleeve cup. Consequently, two circular holes revealed part of the skin: a large one on the left side of the torso and small one in the upper-middle part of the sleeve’s right side. Lastly, a muslin prototype was made to check the measurements on the model. In addition, the surface design and fabric printing were tested to ensure the accuracy of the mosaic patterns and the shape of the surface (e.g. puffiness and the fullness).



Figure 2. Arrangement of the Stencils



Figure 3. The Final Look of the Printed Motifs

The dress was constructed of a 51% linen/49% viscose fabric; its soft texture and burgundy color was used to evoke Moroccan ceramic tiles. The fabric was cut based on the final radical pattern. Stencils with circular geometric motifs and mosaic patterns were used in fabric printing, to represent the inspiration (Figure 2). The stencils were separated into pieces and placed around the circular holes to create the full pattern for the prints, and ensure their final look (Figure 3). Stain and metallic acrylic paint in titanium white, licorice black, evergreen, true blue and 14K gold was applied to fill the stencil shapes. The color selection was also based on Moroccan ceramic tiles. The pattern

pieces were stitched together, and gathered holes were created by folding the edge of the holes then insert and pull a 50% metallic and 50% polyester gold cord. Four yards of cord were used to gather the circular hole in the torso and one yard for gathering the circular hole in the sleeve. Four black metallic snaps were attached as a closure to secure the opening at the back-left shoulder of the dress. To finish the neckline and right side of the armhole, single-fold bias bindings were used. Final touches on the printed areas included stitching metallic gold beads and adding metallic gold studs.

This project contributes to the academic and industrial understanding of creative pattern cutting techniques through emphasizing the “influential form” of circular holes and demonstrates how to use them to create a phenomenal silhouette (Ohrn-McDaniel, 2013, p.82).

The *Fragrance of the East* Design utilizes a unique source of inspiration presenting in the Islamic North African architecture. By highlighting this sort of architecture, this design encourages apparel scholars to discover various ways of cultural fabric printing such as Moroccan ceramic tiles and apply them to the contemporary attire.

## References

Almond, K. (2010). Insufficient allure: The luxurious art and cost of creative pattern cutting. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 3(1), 15-24.

Burns, A., & Vuruşkan, A. (2019). Using origami for creative design and pattern development in fashion education. *Journal of Textiles & Engineers/Tekstil Ve Mühendis*, 26(113), 86-96

Freeman, C., Son, J., & McRoberts, L. B. (2015). Comparison of novice and expert evaluations of apparel design illustrations using the consensual assessment technique. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 8(2), 122-130.

Nakamichi, T. (2010). *Pattern Magic*. London, UK: Laurence King Publishing Ltd.

Ohrn-McDaniel, L. (2013) Shape creating shape. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 6:2, 82-88.

Tina-Boomerina. (2015). Moroccan tile print maxi dresses & tunics for women over 40, 50, 60. *Boomerinas*. Retrieved from <http://www.boomerinas.com/2015/05/14/moroccan-tile-print-maxi-dresses-tunics-for-women-over-40-50-60/>

Townsend, K., & Mills, F. (2013). Mastering zero: How the pursuit of less waste leads to more creative pattern cutting. *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*, 6(2), 104-111.

Zain, N. (July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020). Moroccan Zellige Tile Art with a Modern Mosaic Twist! *MEC Artworks*. Retrieved from <https://mecartworks.com/moroccan-zellige-tile-art-with-a-modern-mosaic-twist/>

