

## Texture Transformation

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Sustainable design can be defined in various ways. Recently in the apparel field, the process of up-cycling has been in the spotlight as a sustainable design solution. Up-cycling is “repurposing lower-value items such as neck scarf to construct a higher-value end use item, such as a wrap skirt or halter top.” (Janigo & Wu, 2015, p. 77) It gives new life, new value and new purpose to old, unwanted or useless products or materials in creative ways.

I visited a local Goodwill thrift store to search for material for this up-cycling project. The process of finding the material was like a treasure hunt. Finally, what caught my eye was four polyester curtains which were not being noticed by anyone else in the store.

The color and the texture of these original curtains were beautiful. Their brownish shades with red and light blue accents reminded me of nature—earth, air, sky and sun. The soft and natural drapery of the curtains was similar to sand dunes on the desert or dancing waves. I imagined these aesthetic properties expressed in a new dress made of these curtains.



The first step of transforming was a disassembling process. The curtains were ripped and transformed into yarns of different thicknesses from 5mm to 25mm. The next step was reconstructing. A cocktail dress was created with these yarns by using hand knitting techniques. Different sizes of bamboo needles—6mm, 8mm, 10mm, 12mm and 25mm—were used to

give different structures. From the neck to the waist, the structure gradually becomes looser and more relaxed. From the waist to the hem, it again becomes tighter and denser. Tassel details were added at the hemline of the dress and they move whenever the wearer moves—like leaves fluttering to the ground on a windy day. Golden buckles, which were originally used as the rings for hanging the curtains, were left to become ornaments of the tassels.

Through disassembling and reconstructing, the old curtains were transformed into a unique yet wearable hand-knitted cocktail dress with new value, new life and new purpose. This project illustrates how the art of craftsmanship can improve the product. Environmental and aesthetic value were thus given.



Figure 1. Front View



Figure 2. Back View



Figure 3. Side View



Figure 4. Detail View

### Reference

Janlgo, K. A. & Wu, J. (2015). Collaborative Redesign of Used Clothes as a Sustainable Fashion Solution and Potential Business Opportunity. *Fashion Theory*, 7(1), 75-98.