

Dual Purpose Top and Pant

Sandra Starkey, Dr. Jean Parsons

University of Missouri, USA

Keywords: Design, sustainability, inclusive, multi-purpose

A multi-use and minimal waste garment was created using an experiential mode of design inquiry that included reflection. Gray and Burnett propose that when creative practice is placed within a research framework, new meanings emerge. Their methods informed a design process that began with research and included experimentation, reflection and brainstorming.



The garment resulted from an evolutionary process that investigated the relationship between architectural environments and the body. An image of a sustainable public green space in Normal, Illinois provided the initial inspiration. The beautifully landscaped roundabout is a circular shaped public gathering place that facilitates traffic flow and re-circulates storm water into a public fountain.

A primary goal for the project was to design a minimal waste garment using one circular pattern piece that extended the width of the fabric that was 68 inches. The final outcome involved folding opposite sides of the circle towards the center and then back again, cutting a slit in the bottom layer and adding two zippers at the fold. Raw edges were bound with fabric remnants.

Initially the garment was to be worn solely as a top. Further experimentation involved placing the garment opening at different points on the body and a viable pant option emerged. For both options the wearer steps into the garment from the top. Depending on how the garment will be



worn dictates whether the arms or legs are placed in the side openings. The garment zips inward towards the center to adjust the opening at either the waist or at the neckline and is inclusive to a variety of top and pant sizes. Accommodating a range of sizes was also an important project objective.

The dual purpose garment is made of cotton denim. It features a hand-painted industrial rivet design that was achieved by stamping and hand-painting multiple layers of textile paint to achieve a dimensional appearance. The rivet design compliments the architectural nature of the garment and appears inside the armhole/pant leg.

All of the companion garments were designed to be versatile pieces that could be worn with a variety of other garments. A polyester knit bandeau and pant are worn with the top. The

cotton crop top that is shown with the pant is constructed of repurposed fabric from a discarded dress and incorporates denim remnants and a zipper. The denim garment was completed in 2014 and is one size that fits many. The other garments fit bust 34", waist 28", and hip 37".

References

- Gray, Carole; Burnett, Gordon. (2009) Making sense: An exploration of ways of knowing generated through practice and reflection in craft. *Proceedings of the Crafticulation and Education Conference* (pp. 44-51).
- Green, Jared. (2010) *The dirt: Uniting the built & natural environments. Sustainable roundabout manages storm water and traffic*. Retrieved at <http://dirt.asla.org/2010j/08/new>.