

## Warwick & Warbler: Empowering Women and Challenging Beauty Standards in the Fashion Industry

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This collection celebrates diversity and acceptance of all women within the worldview of beauty. Warwick & Warbler is a high-end clothing label aimed at the professional working woman. The target demographic includes clothing styles that range between sizes twelve to twenty; a market segment that has been largely ignored within the fashion industry. Designs center on the trouser suit and includes high-quality separates with unexpected details and exquisite fit.

The inspiration for this collection came from the life and works of William Morris. Morris was a pioneer of the Arts and Crafts movement of the late nineteenth century (Mackail, 1901). His



famous quote, “Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful,” (Mackail, 1901) formed the basis of the entire collection. Design inspiration began a journey that aimed to create the perfect blend of practical yet beautiful clothing for the modern women of today. The colors used in this collection were chosen to be work appropriate and to suit a range of ethnicities. Also, the pieces were designed to be clean and modern with particular attention to fabric quality and garment construction.

William Morris was a strong advocate of handcrafts and a formidable textile designer. The printed fabrics in this collection were inspired by Morris, specifically from a series of hand-drawn botanical sketches from the gardens of the Red House in England – Morris’ primary residence. These original drawings were scanned, cleaned and arranged to create a distinct blue and white print, which was then digitally printed onto fabric. Embroidery designs were prepared by simplifying the motifs from the textile print and applying freehand on a machine. Additionally, the superb fit of the garments was achieved with the creative use and placement of seams, darts and/or tucks. The predominant material used in this collection was wool baratheia, which was

sourced from a long-standing mill in England. It was used because of its soft hand and the ability to mold and press with ease. A cotton twill for the printed textile was incorporated because of its strength and balanced weight when compared to the wool



Warwick & Warbler is breaking new ground in plus-size fashion. Many of the garments designed for the plus-size market have been regarded as less than fashionable (Peters, 2014). Even though the average woman in North America wears a size fourteen – which is plus size according to our sizing standards - the idealized female form is a slender size zero (Bellafante, 2010). This leaves “plus-size women underrepresented on runways, in magazines and in women’s clothing departments” (Peters, 2014). Consequently, this has left a huge gap in the market for plus-size, tailored separates where the emphasis is on accentuating the natural curves of the body rather than hiding them. Warwick & Warbler is committed to tackling the challenges of pattern drafting for the plus-size female body and using woven, premium fabrics in creative ways to achieve a great fit.

Warwick & Warbler is bringing fresh and new looks to plus-size women. We want to encourage and empower women to feel beautiful at any size. Diversity is woven through the label – not just in the clothing but also through the choice of models. The Warwick & Warbler woman does not have one distinct look but is rather a symbol of confidence and strength.

#### References

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