

## Woven Silks

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Woven, Silk, Design, Innovative

The purpose of this design was to create a modern looking garment by using a fusion of both new and old age textile and apparel design skills. Hand weaving is a lost art form that needs to be revived by students and young textile professionals, thus being part of the inspiration for this garment. Inspiration was also drawn from a colorful piece of artwork at the North Carolina Museum of Art. Frank Philip Stella's *Raqqa II* is a fusion of bright, vibrant colors that seamlessly intertwine, following the curves and edges of the canvas. I believe that the shapes formed by the bands of color, mirror the shape of the model's body because of the form fitting dress.

I began by hand sketching the piece, coming up with the color palette, silhouette and beginning to formulate the weave structure. After the conceptualization of the gown, the creation process had to be thought out step by step. The weave pattern was created first using the Kaledo Weave software to find the optimum color pattern.



To create this piece I hand cut and pressed three inch wide strips of dupioni silk and polyester shantung to produce the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " fabric strips that make up the garment. These strips of fabric were then sewn together, end-to-end to create long, finished warp and weft "yarns." These strips of fabric were then hand woven directly onto a dress form where they were pinned and then stitched in place. The warp strips were sewn onto the front and back of the dress first, and then the weft pieces were woven through them.

The total number of hours it took to create Woven Silks exceeded 130 hours from the start of hand cutting strips to the finishing touches on the sewing. This piece embodies multiple forms of art from hand weaving, to draping, to sewing and computer-aided design, merging both technical skills with the older forms of creation.