Wearable Art-Chameleon Dress

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to express the image of chameleons - that change their colors by light, temperature and its mood - into the sexy styles of corresponding coquettish temperamental people in Wearable Art. The method used in this study was experimenting various production mediums, including creating the textured stretch fabric, in the process of expressing the conceptual characteristics of the chameleon in Wearable Art. The concept of the work was a concoction of 'tempting', 'splendid', 'brilliant', 'fascinating', etc. that highlighted the real disposition of the chameleon. The futuristic preference of the researcher was also implicated. "Comfortable" and "enjoyable" concepts via motions were improved with the its completeness. The point of the design and production is to express symbolically the chameleon in real life, analyzing its sleek body lines, conditional colors changing, outer skins and the cubic textures. The coquettish temperamental image, the conceptual image of the chameleon, was also expressed by implication into the whole work. The entire line of this work is body-conscious silhouette. It was symbolically selected to image the outline of the chameleon that has the slim and sleek body. The exposed back is intended to express symbolically the projected back bones of the chameleon. The hood of gentle triangle line expresses the smooth-lined head part. The irregular hemlines represent the elongated chameleon's tale. The chameleon with its colors of vivid tones is characterized the colors changing by its conditions. This point was importantly treated in the working process by trying the effects that the colors are seen slightly different according to the light and angles. The material was given the effect that its surface colors are seen different in lights and angles because of the wrinkles protruded lumpy-bumpy. The various stones of red and blue tones are very similar to the skin tones of the real chameleon, and their gradation makes the effect that the colors are visibly changed with each move. The textures of the chameleon were produced via the wrinkle effect of smoke-shape, which is the result of using the elastic threads on the basic mediums stitched with 50/50 chiffon and polyester along with velvet dot patterns. The stretching fabric by the impact of the elastic threads is as much suitable for making the body-conscious line. The stones are composed of acrylic cabochon and gemstone. They are symbolically expressed the lumpy and bumpy back skin of the chameleon and produced the effect of the colors visibly different. The primary technique used in this dress is the draping utilizing the biased grains. The front body piece is connected to the hood and joined to the back piece without any seam. For the irregular hemline flares, leaving the several rectangular pieces with bias grains, they were connected by interlocking. What defines the clothes is the person in action. Therefore, what decides the completeness of clothes might be its comfortable and enjoyable feeling by living and acting people. The chameleon dress could also reach its goal of comforting and pleasing Wearable Art in the process of studying the techniques and effects that visibly differentiate the colors. It is considered as a main point of the Wearable Art, which is a comfortable enjoyable clothing tempered with the artistic beauty.

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Key words: Wearable Art, Chameleon, Color-changing, Wrinkle, Texture; 웨어러블 아트, 카멜레온, 색 변화, 주름, 텍스처

I. Introduction

Aesthetics always supremely reflects the significant impact of the culture of the time. The aesthetics of the contemporary fashion has been concerned with the spiritual state of expecting the new millennium as well as technical advances; the most important concepts are comfort, freedom, purity and simplicity (Moss, 1991). Technical textiles have increasingly been incorporated into second skin dresses and other innovative fashion looks for the new era, and the stretch quality of the fabric has been most effective in achieving the modern concept of aesthetic.

Wearable Art, from hand-made works to commercially-made highly decorative textiles and apparel, has been recognized as an important genre in contemporary fashion and art, although it takes longer and is more complex to create than other ordinary fashions. Many Wearable Art designers, realizing the importance of the materials they choose to work with, have turned to creating textiles themselves, involving many technical experiments, but still artistic works (Braddock & Omahony, 1998).

Wearable Art is difficult to define as many other forms of art (Friedland & Pina, 1999). It is designed from conceptual idea (Lamb & Kallal, 1992) of each designer. Different designers bring different inspirations, concepts, materials and design processes to the art that each approaches design uniquely.

The easiest approach of Wearable Art is the “wearable” and still “artistic”. One thing, as a designer, that my work has been pursued and added a technical advances; a comfortable enjoyable clothing with freedom tempered with the artistic beauty especially by creating the stretch quality of the fabric, in other words, the Wearable Art to the unique contemporary fashion.

The project “Chameleon Dress” was one of the exhibition works that invited by The Korean Society of Clothing & Textiles in Lotte Hotel, October 20, 2006 for celebrating 30 years anniversary. It has been tried to show how the image concepts of a chameleon approached on the silhouette, color and texture of a Wearable Art.

1. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project was to create the Wearable Art, a dress, that symbolizes a chameleon. The chameleon is a small long-tongued lizard whose color changes according to its background or environment such as light, temperature and its mood (Reptiles and Amphibians, 1991). It is also used to describe a person who changes easily to adjust to his or her surroundings.

The project was specifically focused on exploring the technical experiment that created the stretch quality of the fabric with three dimensional texture and flexibility, which was the expression of characteristics in a chameleon that has a sleek body shape, changeable colors and cubic textures on the back cuticle. Simultaneously, it is expressed to show the visual perception of a capricious, bewitching and enchanting woman.

The dress can be comfortably and joyfully worn by any fashionable woman at occasions such as a dance party or evening gown, where a garment must be special and noticeable to everyone around.

2. Design Methods

The main method of design process was to create visual dress shapes from conceptual imagery, a chameleon. The four-steps of design process were taken. They were used throughout this paper to describe the steps of exploration.

1. Identification: identifying both the design idea and Wearable Art that I wanted to creatively explore
2. Conceptualization: sketching, draping, and visualizing the placement and application of image concepts
3. Techniques & Prototype: reproduction of textile for stretching, draping, joining of bias pieces
4. Solution: trimming and tucking for the design point, interlocking for finishing of fabric pieces, dress assembly

II. Source of Inspiration

Art, nature, literature, and the designer's search for inspiration are never limited (Skrebneski, 1995) and individual. The inspiration for my work always comes from the nature and surroundings. Among them, nature becomes the source of the most of my work. Especially, the harmony between the mystical colors and unique textures from the nature such as the mountain, ocean, stone, flowers, animals, fish, etc. are often reproduced in my work via fabric. The impression from the power and the harmony of the vast nature is at once expressed in clothing as a part of art.

The documentary film “A Kingdom of the Animals” inspired me to start this project, a chameleon. It illustrates that the chameleon has the full variety of colors on the cuticle and their colors change according to their environment. “A chameleon” emulates beautiful curved lines by moving and has the projecting points through the centerline on it's top. The silhouette, color, texture and even the details of the dress have been done under the influence of these characteristics and details of a chameleon, which shows a sleek body line, variety of color change, three dimensional texture on the skin, and pointed long tail (Fig. 1).

III. Image Concepts

A human eye responds to edges, the boundaries between light and dark that create lines that suggest shapes that become an image (Skrebneski, 1995). Qualities of this concept are expressed in the dress expressing the combined notions of ‘sensuality’, ‘tempting’, ‘splendid’, ‘brilliant’ and ‘fascinating’. Those concepts are based on the impression or the image of a chameleon that has a fine-look with slimy lines, various colors and brilliant patterns. At the same time, the visual perception from the term of ‘a chameleon’ as a bewitching woman who changes easily to adjust to her surroundings is also reminded for the concepts.

The concepts of ‘comfortable’ and ‘enjoyable’ are also focused, which have been pursued when the Wearable Arts have been created to the work. The background of clothing is people. People move, therefore the highest level of completion of the clothing can be achieved when the clothing is comfortable and enjoyable for an acting person alive.

The ‘futuristic’ image with ‘mundane’ concept is
also suggestively involved with the work. The futuristic image, in general, might be a simple expression of the future, or the natural environment of the future world. Based on this unlimited imagination and anticipation about the coming world, the massages of ‘futuristic’ and ‘mundane’ have been tried to express, involving the advanced powerful vigor and potential energy with a simple line but flexible (Braddock & Omahony, 1998).

It intends to deliver a message of the future and vital, progressive nature, full of movement along with the imagination and anticipation of the future holding the subliminal energy.

IV. Development of a Design

The design point of this project was to reflect a chameleon both in use of photo realistic imagery and in the concept of the imagery from a capricious enchanting woman. It is specifically focused on exploring the expression of a chameleon characteristics in line, color and texture.

1. Line

Line is not simply outline, but an exclamation from the drafts out of a man’s pen and it can also be a complex configuration (Skrebeski, 1995).

This dress might be a simple expression of the image of a chameleon. The body-skimming dress resembles the chameleon image that has a slimy skin-tight outline revealing the backbone on the back (Fig. 2–3).

The body-skimming dress (Bressler, 1997) or a body-conscious line suggestively symbolizes the mundane concept with futuristic image (Cho, 2003), which includes the vital energy of a great variety of the future. The futuristic image has been sometimes expressed through the flowing feeling from the body-conscious style using a stretchy fabric, or sometimes using fabrics with a volume such as felt, lame, etc. that is expressed with three-dimensional composition or texture.

In this project, the body-conscious style has been created for symbolizing the most ideal silhouette for the futuristic and mundane image (Icon of fashion the 20th century, 1999), which intends to symbolically express the harmony between man and nature becoming one. The body-conscious style also expresses the temptation image from concept of the sensual, the splendid and brilliant due to the revealed body line itself.

Sensual and tempting images are also showed in the exposed back of the dress. It intensely emphasizes the feature of a chameleon’s revealing the backbone on the back and simultaneously signifies the look of a bewitching and enchanting woman with a sexy and fascinating image (Fig. 3).

The roundabout triangular-shaped hood signifies the streamlined shape of the chameleon head.

The pointed pieces of irregular hemline signifies the long sharp tail of a chameleon.

![Fig. 2. Front view.](image1)

![Fig. 3. Back view.](image2)
2. Color

A chameleon has various color matches each by each; red & blue, pink & green, red and green, blue, green and purple, etc. Most of those color matches are clear and bright with vivid tones (Fig. 1). No matter which colors are matching, the most important thing is that the color of a chameleon is changed with its movement or circumstances.

The dress color has been designed by the point that it looks changed by the light or an angle or etc. The chameleon with red and blue on the skin has been taken for the color inspiration of this project.

The black chiffon decorated with very tiny velvet dots of fuchsia and the green chiffon decorated with light-blue dots have been chosen as a main fabric and for york pieces. They were made fabric wrinkled by elastic threads. Finally, the fabric color itself has the iridescent effect and looks differently by the light or by an angle (Fig. 4–5).

The color point of the dress is on the waist area, which has the color contrast of opposite color stones with vivid tone, red and blue. It directly signifies the chameleon's skin color and pattern and suggestively symbolizes the advanced vigor of potential energy with the mundane, futuristic and still joyful massage.

The arrangement of red tone is from red, through fuchsia, orange to yellow. The stone arrangement of blue tone is from navy, through green, royal blue to light-blue. The color gradation effect of stones is gradually made from center front toward center back, along the body line (Fig. 6). The gradation arrangement with similar color stones suggests that the colors are changed by movement, showing a captivating effect. The color change effect is also perfect match for expressing the design concepts of splendid, brilliant and fascinating.

3. Media Employed & Textures

Designers choose material according to its varied qualities of touch, handle, drape and aesthetics, and are very sensitive to the fabric's behaviour or potential to achieve a desired silhouette (Fashioning fabrics, 2006). Especially, designers in the Wearable Art are often personally mould, crinkle, drape and sculpt a material around the body to create form or shape.

The key to the new advances in technology is fineness of the fiber which makes it flexible (Braddock & Omahony, 1998). The flexible image with inflatable and disposable structure has been completely accom-
plished by stretching (Jencks, 1971). Stretch flexibility, either adhering to the body or moving fluidly around the body, has always contributed to body consciousness with freedom of movement.

The primary material used for the dress was a transparent lightweight 50% chiffon/50% polyester with a tiny velvet dot pattern. The fabric was reproduced with a machine sewing the back-side of the fabric making the very fine smocking shapes with elastic thread, which became wrinkled and stretched (Fig. 7). The wrinkly texture on the fabric surface with small smocking shapes has been made for signification the chameleon skin texture, hard and lumpy (Fig. 8).

Finally, the textured fabric was freely became the stretch quality of the fabric and flexible for following the body line. Creating the stretching fabric was importantly considered for this work as a Wearable Art but still contemporary fashion with body-conscious look.

The textured fabric of wrinkles with the stretch thread involves the concepts of comfortable and enjoyable, which symbolizes the image of power, still moving toward future that is the focus of the dress.

Acrylic cabochon and gemstone, 8mm to 11mm, with a red and blue tone are used for a special effect, which were trimmed with gradation effect from deep to light color tone (Fig. 9). The stone trimming with three dimensional texture signifies the distinctive image of the skin texture of a chameleon that has the cubic textures on the back cuticle and its colors are changed by circumstance.

The iridescent effect from the textured fabric and the colorful stone trimming are the design point of this project, which emphasizes the look, bewitching and enchanting with each movement. It also symbolizes the image of a woman with the combination of those concepts, mundane, splendid and brilliant.

Elastic thread in black was used for making wrinkle texture of smoking shape on the surface of fabric. Fine silk thread with black was used for interlocking.

4. Techniques and Prototype

The prior test of a designer's desire to know a fabric better is touch (Skrebneski, 1995). Especially for creating a Wearable Art, drape a path of fabric across the body seems to be given priority over touch by touch, how it flows, crumples, and catches light.

For this project, draping technique with biased grain was predominantly used to make the body-conscious shape with hood of the dress. The front body piece and hood are linked together (Fig. 10 – 11). The irregular long pieces of fabric like square moves from the
front toward back, making oblique lines without side seams. The interlocking technique was used for joining a piece with another and for finishing the dress outline(Fig. 12). Finally, the dress is done as one piece from hood to hemline with the arms and back exposed(Fig. 13). Around the bust and belly area, the adjusted closing buttons exist.

The dress hemline is flared, making asymmetrical balance, which is created by joining several different pieces together with each different angles of biased grain. It is also finished by interlocking, forming the flaring volume and rhythm(Fig. 14).

Two tucking lines around front midriff are emphasized for the three dimensional texture on the dress surface, which signifies the cubic textures on the back cuticle of a chameleon(Fig. 15).

The V shaped yoke with different color in the back is made for symbolizing the long sharp tail of a chameleon(Fig. 3).

The arm decorations reminding long gloves were separately made fitting the arm by stretching fabric, which have flare cuffs of chiffon itself(Fig. 16–17).

The background of clothing is people who moves. Therefore, the highest level of completion for the clothing can be achieved when the clothing is com-
fortable and enjoyable for the living moving body (Cho, 2006). Chameleon Dress has been done these concepts through making the flexible fabric and creating the iridescent color effect with wrinkles and stones on the surface (Fig. 18 - 19). The concepts of comfortable and enjoyable have been pursued whenever a Wearable Art has been created.

V. Summary

The goal of this study is to express the image of chameleons - that change their colors by light, temperature and its mood - into the sexy styles of corresponding coquettish temperamental people in Wearable Art. The method used in this study was experimenting various production mediums, including creating the textured stretch fabric, in the process of expressing the non-fictional and conceptual characteristics of the chameleon in Wearable Art.

The concept of the work was a concoction of 'sensuality', 'tempting', 'splendid', 'brilliant', 'fascinating', 'bewitching', etc. that highlighted the real disposition of the chameleon and the conceptual impression of attractive weathercocks. The future-oriented preferences of the researcher were also implicated and improvement of its completeness was ventured on by making the work, though Wearable Art, comfortable and enjoyable via motions.

The design and production point to symbolically express the chameleon in real life, analyzing its sleek body lines, conditional colors changing, outer skins and the cubic textures sticking out of them, etc. and integrating these factors into the overall shapes, colors, textures, etc. of this work. At the same time, the coquettish temperamental image, the conceptual image of the chameleon, was also expressed by implication into the whole work.

The processes of the study are summarized as following.

1. Line
   The entire line adopted in this work is of body-skimming or body-conscious silhouette. It was selected symbolically to image the outline of the chameleon that has the slim and sleek body. Additionally, the body-conscious line is to implicate the sophisticated and
future-oriented images.

The exposed back is intended to express symbolically the projected back bones of the chameleon, which shows enough of the attractive and sensual image of the chameleon along with the body-conscious line explicitly exposing the line of the body. The exposure of the belly button also supports to express the charming chameleon.

Besides, the hood of gentle triangle lines symbolically expresses the smooth-lined head part, with the irregular protruded hemlines representing the elongated chameleon's tale.

2. Colors

The chameleon is characterized by its colors of vivid clear tones, among other things the colors changing by its conditions. This point was treated the most important in the process of production by trying the effects that the colors are seen slightly different according to the light and angles, leaving the underlying surface colors of the dress as they are.

The main medium was the one with small velvet bubble pattern of fuchsia color on top of the black chiffon, selecting the light-blue bubble one on top of the green chiffon as the yoke piece. The chiffon was given the effect that its surface colors are seen different in different lights and angles because of the wrinkles protruded lumpy-bumpy, resulted from sewing with elastic threads from behind the basic mediums.

The various stone ornamentals of red and blue tones in the waist line are very similar to the skin tones of the real chameleon. Each color was given the gradation effect, growing lighter front to back. The protruded cubic sense of the stones and their gradation make the effect that the colors are visibly changing with each move, an effect that well represent the luxurious and fascinating concept of the image the work has.

3. Media Employed & Textures

All in all, hard and lumpy texture were produced via the wrinkle effect of smoke-shape, which is the result of using the elastic threads on the basic mediums stitched with 50/50 chiffon and polyester along with velvet dot patterns. This produces the similar textures of the cubical skin of the chameleon where hard and small cubes are sticking up. The fabric with this type of texture is as much suitable for making the body-conscious line which flows naturally along the body lines, because it stretches by the impact of the elastic threads, as appropriate in expressing the enjoyable image of the work.

The stone trimmings in the waist are composed of rich components like acrylic cabochon and gemstone, decorated the way that each color tone could produce the gradation effect. The cubic stone decoration is to express symbolically the lumpy and bumpy back skin of the chameleon, the point of this study in light that it produces the effect that each texture of the fabric surfaces makes the colors visibly different.

4. Techniques & Prototype

The primary technique used in this dress making is the draping utilizing the biased grains. The front body piece is connected to the hood, going with the
irregular elongated rectangular pieces continuously attached together from the center to the back center without any seam.

Putting together the pieces using the interlocking, we assembled the entire pieces into the one-piece dress with the exposed part of the belly button adjusted with a button up and down.

For the irregular hemline flares, leaving the several rectangular pieces of clothing separated into biased grains, they were connected by interlocking. The chin accessories at the mid reef part are to stress the cubical protruding of the center of the chameleon's back cuticle.

Additionally, the ornaments of long glove-shape wristlets were made to contact the arm exploiting the stretchiness of the fabric, while the nature of chiffon was straightly revealed at the part of the cuffs.

What defines the clothes is the person in action. Therefore, what decides the completeness of clothes might be its comfortable and enjoyable feeling by living and acting people. The chameleon dress could also reach its goal of comforting and pleasing Wearable Art in the process of studying the techniques and effects that visibly differentiate the colors. It is considered as a main point of the Wearable Art, which is a comfortable enjoyable clothing tempered with the artistic beauty.

References

울 드레스 등이 노출되도록 하여 표현하였는데 이것은 동시에 간과하고 요약한 카멜레온 이미지를 나타내는 것이다. 카멜레온의 유선형 분리부분 표현은 완만한 삼각형 모양의 후드패턴을 통해, 카멜레온의 긴가락 모양 표면은 불규칙적인 플레이어의 움직임으로 처리하여 상징적으로 표현하였다. 카멜레온 색들은 선명한 비바디 톤이면서 동시에 및 또는 기분에 따라 색이 변화하는 것이 특징인데, 작품 제작 과정에서도 둘과 각도에 따라 드레스 색이 조금씩 다르게 보이는 효과를 가장 중요하게 연구하였다. 진정색 취한 위에 퍼시(fuchsia) 색 작은 벨벳 물방울 무늬가 밝은 소재를 주 소재로 하여 표면에 입체적인 텍스처를 줄으므로 빛의 각도에 따라 두 가지 색이 섞여서 전체적으로 색이 다르게 보이는 작업 결과를 가져왔다. 허리에서의 브라질과 파란색 계열의 다양한 스파이는 실제 카멜레온의 스킨 이미지와 더불어 돌출된 입체감과 그래디언트 효과로 인해 웅직임에 따라 색이 다르게 보이는 결과를 가지고 있다. 50% 취한 50% 플라스테리에 벨벳 디자이어가 들어가 있는 원단을 사용하여 옷감 표면에 탄생을 이용한 스모킹 주름효과를 주는 기술을 접목시켜 flexible한 스트레치성 옷감으로 재단형식과 동시에 소재 표면에 오를 토돌한 텍스처가 생겨나게 하였다. 이것은 카멜레온의 표면과 흩어지면서 동시에 몸에 밀착되는 결과를 가져와 색이 다르게 보이는 결과에도 적절한 역할을 한다. 스폰지색은 아크릴리세르송(acrylic cabochons)과 석가종(gemstones)을 섞어서 사용했는데 카멜레온 동 표피 젊음을 살려한과 동시에 색이 다르게 보이는 효과를 나타낸다는 점에서 본 작품의 포인트이다. 드레스 제작은 주로 비아이스 격을 이용한 드레이프 기법을 이용하였는데, 후다가 앞 옷판과 연결되어 있고 불규칙적인 색상형태가 앞에서 뒤로 몸에 잡기 없이 연결되어 있다. 옷은 상아 웅적이는 사람이 입어서 가장 편하고 즐기면 옷의 완성도가 가장 높다고 할 수 있다. 카멜레온 드레스 역시 웅적이며 신체와 함께 색이 다르게 보이는 기법과 효과를 연구하는 과정에서 편하고 즐거운 Wearable Art를 완성할 수 있었다. 바로 이점이 입는 예술 즉, 입고 즐길 수 있는 옷에 예술미를 가미한 Wearable Art의 진미가 아닐가 생각한다.