

School of Fashion & Textiles

2016

February

PRS GRC

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PhD (Fashion & Textiles)  
Master of Design (Fashion & Textiles)  
Master of Technology (Fashion & Textiles)

School of Fashion & Textiles

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# **Abstract + Posters**



**ADELE VARCOE**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**The affect of fashion on everyday life**

From the beginning of this research the question of how fashion is created as an intangible, immaterial phenomenon has been an ongoing investigation. This research develops a set of methods drawn from Participatory Art and Ethnomethodology to investigate the social workings of fashion through practice. The methods are used to construct situations that study how fashion, dress and clothes affect the social relations, feelings and emotions between people. The constructed situations challenge existing social theories around fashion to bring about new understandings and ways of feeling, experiencing and practicing fashion.



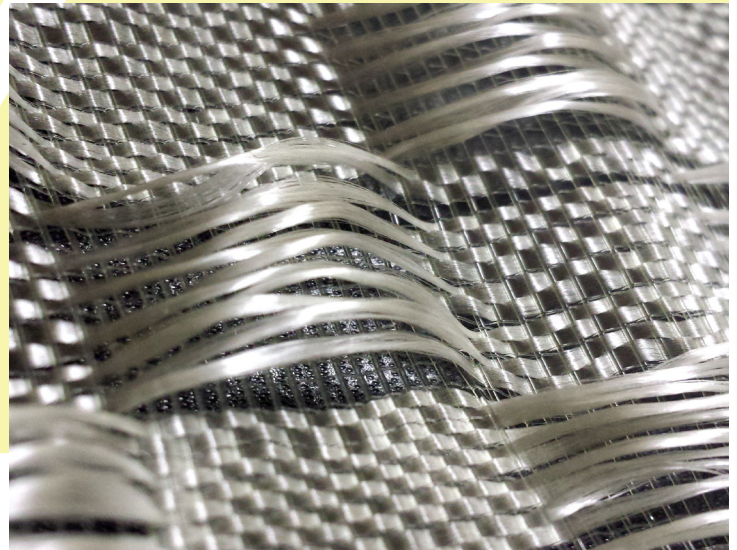
Feeling Fashion  
Adele Varcoe  
PhD Candidate  
School of Fashion & Textiles

**AMY CARR-BOTTOMLEY**  
**Master of Design (Fashion & Textiles)**

**Three Dimensional Woven Structure**

This practice based Masters investigates the opportunities of weaving three dimensional textiles. Through the process of sampling, the research explores the physical viability of shape forming through woven structures. Woven structures and selective material placement are combined with hand generated finishing processes to develop integrated three dimensional surface and forms.

The work positions textile design within an interdisciplinary design context, with projects exploring a breadth of applications at diverse scales: from jewellery for the body, to house and carry electronics whilst still maintaining aesthetic and haptic sensibilities, to three dimensional woven textiles to create meeting spaces in a large open plan working environment. These projects demonstrate the potential and opportunities for three dimensional woven textiles to integrate surface and form.



**ANNA ANISIMOVA**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**The gown of the modern Madonna: A study of how social perceptions of pregnancy affect the historical development and contemporary expression of maternity garment design in Australia**

Is there a relationship between the social perception of pregnancy and maternity garment design? This research seeks to reveal, understand, and explain the role of social drivers in maternity apparel design. Maternity wear is an insufficiently researched area of fashion history and its social aspect is not well researched.

Looking back at the second part of the 20th century we can see that maternity wear was strongly influenced by social norms and moral concerns, where the dress of expecting mothers illustrated the virtues of modesty and purity. However, at the end of the 20th century, significant social and cultural shifts in gender perception started to change the look of the western maternity dress. The range of expressions become noticeably broader and the garments worn by expecting women started to reveal the body's natural shape and became more sexually attractive and appealing in contrast with the earlier expressions. This research will seek to reveal the reasons for the major changes in

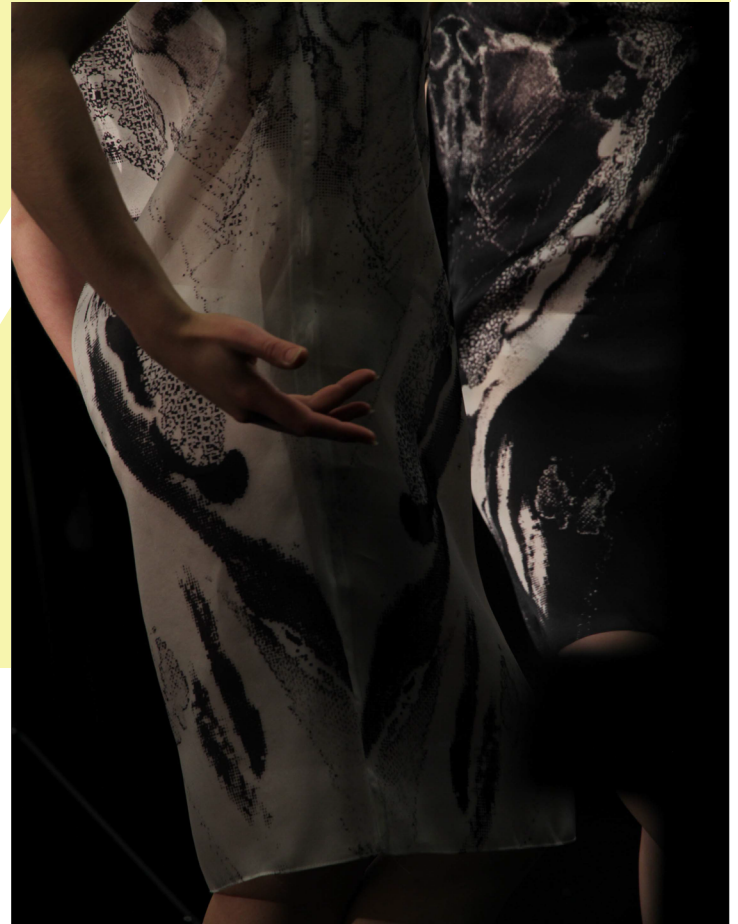
clothes for expecting mothers and define the strongly related social factors for these changes, as well as to categorize and identify the main characteristics of the modern maternity dress.



**ARMANDO CHANT**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**Imaginative Voyaging: Disrupting fashion practice through the act of drawing**

The aim of the practice-based research is to explore the 'practice' and 'process' of fashion and how these facilitate ancillary outcomes. The importance of both the action and process of drawing have become central to the research, whereby technique, form and gesture are used in a disruptive manner. This exploration has facilitated an understanding of what fashion is and has the potential to be, through inter-disciplinary engagement. The practice is exploring and considering the potential sites within the fashion process, where we engage with the drawn fashion image and garment as a surface, place and space for creative, emotional and critical engagement, and its potential to facilitate unique and novel approaches. These potential sites for engagement with line, form, structure and light are understood as being ever-evolving, transitional and transformative, enabling multiple encounters for both the fashion designer and the viewer, depending on how the drawing is being created, contextualised and interpreted.





**CASSANDRA WHEAT**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

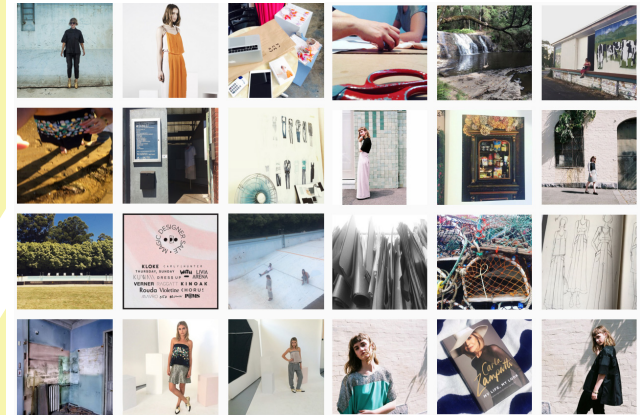
**Communicational Practice: Developing opportunities for alternative models of micro fashion practice through the interrogation of the relationships between design and marketing, the digital and physical**

The ubiquitous nature of e-commerce and social media are a contributing factor in accelerating seasonal production cycles, leading to an oversaturated fashion market. This speed has been as argued unsustainable, in both academia and fashion practice. Moreover, the specific challenges presented by over production for micro fashion labels is under researched; and the practitioners voice nascent.

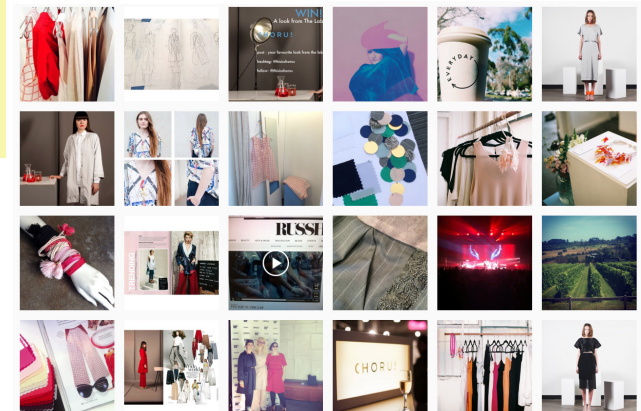
As practitioners, this led Chorus, a locally made high-end womenswear label of which I am a founder, to question: it is possible to create a successful micro fashion business within this context of over saturation. The digital environments we work in offer opportunities to converse directly with audiences, but provide unique challenges.

Commonly studied in isolation design process and marketing are inseparable for the micro practitioner, acutely in our editorialised world. By introducing focused lenses and interventions in a live business

my practice led research will investigate, analyse and proposes new models for commercially viable micro practice.



*Communicational Practice:* Developing opportunities for alternative models of micro fashion practice through interrogation of the relationships between design and marketing, the digital and physical.



## **GRANT EMERSON** **Master of Technology (Fashion & Textiles)**

### **An Unsustainable Capability**

Research conducted evaluated the effectiveness of educational strategies employed at RMIT University, School of Fashion & Textiles, Bachelor of Fashion programs in relation to students developing graduate capability in applying sustainable practices. The research also determined whether the workplace environment is either enhancing or impeding this practice. "The development of sustainability concepts within tertiary education programs remains an ongoing challenge for educational institutions due to the 'messy' nature of sustainability as a discipline and the paucity of knowledge about sustainability within the community" (Emerson & Cowlishaw 2012). Results from the research have indicated that graduates have maintained their knowledge of sustainable practice in two key areas: corporate social responsibility and productivity however, the organisation they are employed with are not providing the environment for them to practice their skills. 69% of graduates who responded to a survey stated that sustainability is not included as a responsibility in their job description and 66% of respondents stated that sustainability is not discussed at team meetings. Responses to

interviews conducted with senior management at two of the largest fashion companies in Melbourne, Australia confirmed that sustainability as a key performance indicator has not evolved to operational level employees within their organisation.

As the research has confirmed graduate capability in sustainability but with limited organisational support to practice, what can an organisation do to utilise the skills and knowledge of its employees at the operational level? It is now proposed to conduct an experiment within two major organisational structures. The experiment will provide further professional development in lean manufacturing and corporate social responsibility within a fashion product development team. Job descriptions with sustainability responsibilities and key performance indicators will be developed and implemented. From the minutes of team meetings, outputs related to a team sustainability response will be measured over a twelve month period. The results related to sustainability practice will be compared to another fashion product development team within the same organisation that has not received the professional development and continues to not have sustainability as responsibility within their job description.

This new research will determine what benefits in sustainable practice will be derived if an organisation establishes the appropriate workplace environment for its operational employees.

**JANE MORLEY**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**The Disrupted/Disruptive Body: Exploring the distorted, displaced, and disembodied fashion artefact**

This practice based PhD project examines different roles the body plays in the design process to explore new opportunities for producing fashion. By interrogating fashion knowledge associated with the body, such as flat patternmaking, the project explores how this knowledge influences creative practice. My own practice serves as driver, method and outcome of this research which explores approaches, processes, artefacts and contexts of fashion practice in relation to concepts such as disruption, distortion, displacement, dislocation and disembodiment. This project examines interdisciplinary perspectives on the experiential and material body; fashion practitioners who destabilise dominant approaches for clothing the body, such as those of Simon Thorogood, Issey Miyake and Martin Margiela; and those who produce fashion artefacts that move beyond traditional garments, such as Dai Rees and Rhian Solomon. Through theoretical and creative practice research this project explores critical perspectives on the body to identify potential value for the broader field of fashion practice.





## JOSEPHINE ABOAGYEWAA-NTIRI PHD (Fashion & Textiles)

### The diffusion of Adinkra symbols in the modern Ghanaian clothing and textiles industry

Adinkra symbols have aesthetic features and most importantly educative meanings. They are mainly used in production of cloths for special occasions that have minimal usage. For these symbols to be embraced and appreciated by the new generation of modern Ghanaian society, the meanings attributed to these symbols will be communicated by incorporating into everyday use products such as clothing. This study is to improve the spread of Adinkra symbols in the Ghanaian clothing and textiles industry. The research used an empirical study involving mixed methods to identify barriers and facilitating factors that would promote the diffusion of Adinkra symbols for modern use. The research takes a holistic approach to identify the views from the supply network that support the current market situation. This research embraced and utilised cultural symbols to the application of modern textiles and clothing technologies such as 3D weaving, 3D knitting and digital printing that can meet the present day clothing needs.

#### The diffusion of Adinkra symbols in the modern Ghanaian clothing and textiles industry



**Keywords:** Adinkra symbols, symbolic cloth, supply chain, innovation through technology, clothing

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Josephine Aboagyewaa – Ntiri  
(PhD Candidate) Fashion and Textiles

Supervisors: Dr Arun Vijayan and Mr Mac Fergusson



DEMOCRACY



EDUCATION



FRIENDSHIP



SPORTS



RELIGION



## KATE SALA Master of Design (Fashion & Textiles)

### Influence of fashion educators on emerging designers fashion practice

This proposal seeks to explore how fashion educators influence emerging designers' relationships with ideas of transformative fashion practice. It will do so through an initial comparative case study of two studio-based projects that engage with theories of transformative learning and ideas of transformative fashion practice.

The research, by thesis mode, will investigate relevant transformative learning theory and question what a transformative fashion practice is, how this manifests within fashion design, and how this relates to sustainable fashion practice. An interpretation of the term 'thrive-able' will also be proposed and explored as a means of both understanding the essence of transformative fashion practice and building upon concepts of sustainable fashion practice. Furthermore, the research will explore the notion of the pracademic (practitioner/academic) and, more specifically, the way in which fashion pracademics disseminate research within these selected studio-based projects.

The research proposes to employ a range of mixed method research practices. Research data will be collected through a variation of semi-structured interviews, combining open and focused questions

relating to the interviewee's personal experience and opinion. An analysis of collected cross-national research data about each selected university's project will create the basis for a cross-sectional study. Equivalence will be ensured throughout the research process to establish sound interpretation of the cross-culture data. Observations and written reflection will also be used.



*Influence of fashion educators on emerging designers' fashion practice.*  
Kate Sala /

Image source: [www.honestby.com](http://www.honestby.com)  
Designed by Bruno Pieters x Comme des machines 2015

**LEAH HEISS**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**Emotional Technologies: Designing wearables to re-engage the human in health and wellbeing**

Through the PhD I am developing a series of advanced textile wearable projects for human health and wellbeing that seek to fuse the personal and the medical. The projects are being developed through a trans-disciplinary approach and coalesce teams that traverse design, craft, electronic engineering, advanced textiles and health sciences. The PhD highlights key designerly strengths that facilitate innovative outcomes, including: seeking flow in the trans-disciplinary process; the ability to work within evolving electronic, craft and design constraints; openness to the co-realisation of problem and solution; creating new languages and tools to communicate across disciplines; and generating systems to archive the iterative process. The contribution of the PhD takes manifold forms, including: generating people-centred health technologies which engage with the emotional experience of the user; developing modes of practice that traverse design, craft, engineering and health; and generating new ways to document and archive the trans-disciplinary creative process.



**EMOTIONAL TECHNOLOGIES**

**DESIGNING WEARABLES TO RE-ENGAGE THE HUMAN IN HEALTH + WELLBEING**

**Keywords:** Wearable technologies, biosignal sensing textiles, trans-disciplinary design, empathy, wellbeing, aged care, human-centred design, user experience, flow, co-design, design thinking.

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**LEAH HEISS**  
**PHD (FASHION AND TEXTILES)**

**LIAM REVELL**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**Pictured L-R: A reflexive inquiry into the space between inspiration and creation or how words can produce fashion**

Graphic images offer the fashion designer a wealth of information when exploring, developing and structuring ideas. Yet what potential do words hold for the fashion design process and in the production of fashion? An aim of this research project is to inquire into opportunities words can offer the fashion designer as an instrument to communicate thought and as an exploratory tool. Reflecting on my own practice and design methods I have queried the similarities and differences between drawing and writing when investigating the space between inspiration and the creation of form.

Pictured L-R: A reflexive inquiry  
into the space between inspiration  
and creation

or

how words can produce fashion

by

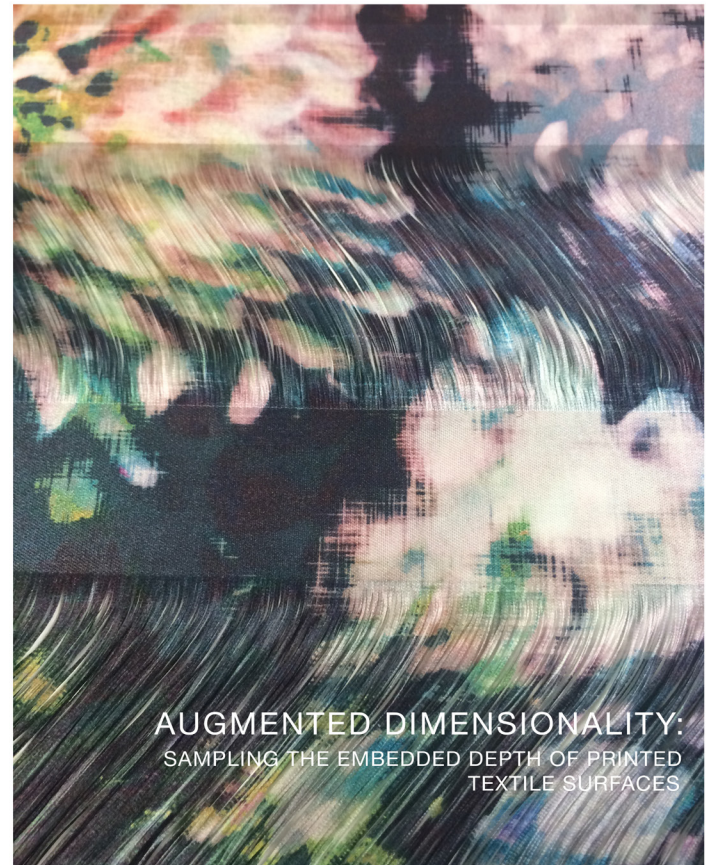
Liam Revell  
PhD (Fashion & Textiles)

2016

**LISA CARROLL**  
**Master of Design (Fashion & Textiles)**

**Augmented Dimensionality: Sampling the embedded depth of printed textile surfaces**

This practice based research investigates surface design and printing practices related to the repositioning of textile design as a result of technological shifts. By questioning and responding to the notion of surface, the research examines and creatively explores the fusion of traditional analogue skills and new digital technology associated with textile design printing. What does surface and surface design mean to a textile designer in the 21st century? How do we address the surface? How do new materials, processes, techniques and tools redefine textile printing practices? The research uses sampling and 'thinking through making' as methodologies, combining serious play with contemporary and historical precedents, to gain a deeper understanding of the surface as material experience.



**LUISE ADAMS**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

**Creative Enterprise in the 21st Century: A textile design perspective of 'the hand' as a metaphor for authenticity**

Historically textile designers are deeply connected to the act of making by hand. While contemporary textile design activities encompass many methods including a vast array of technologies, modern textile designers still understand these handmade fundamentals.

I propose there is powerful appeal in the idea of 'the hand', even if it is the idea that transcends the actual. I contend that evidence of the hand in made objects can be interpreted as having greater authenticity and that this desire for authenticity has become a preoccupation of the 21st century. I suggest that the current '21st Century Arts & Crafts' movement is driven by this desire, that Designer-Maker markets represent these values and that this has blossomed because of the digital technologies it now engages with. New 'handmade' capabilities, skills, aptitudes and attitudes have lead to a new way of thinking about what 'the hand' means and how it is read.



**Creative Enterprise in the 21st Century: A Textile Design Perspective of 'The Hand' as a metaphor for Authenticity**

**Key Words:** Textile Design, Handmade, Digital, Authenticity, Designer-Makers

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**SONYA KRAAN**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

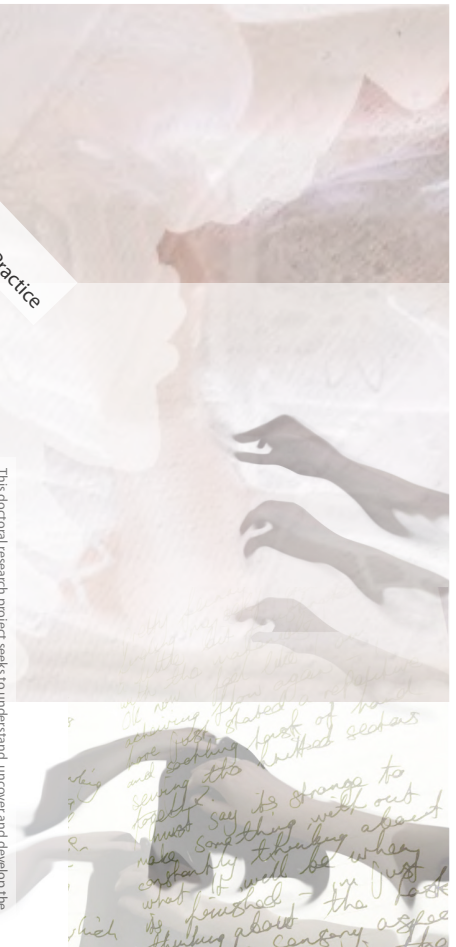
**Dis-ease State: Illness embodiment in creative practice**

This doctoral research project seeks to understand, uncover and develop the unique work methodologies of chronically ill creative practitioners. Reflecting on my own experiences as a fashion designer, living and working with chronic migraines, I propose the value of making and creativity is far deeper than cathartic and serves as both a channel for reframing illness perceptions and enhancing bodily awareness. This research is particularly interested in illness that is invisible. These patients face a distinctive set of challenges and often rely solely on verbal symptomology to communicate their illness experience. This project will connect knowledge from science, social science and creative practice to demonstrate how and if the process of making can help materialize the internal dialogues of the sick body. Through a series of qualitative, reflective and creative research projects this research aims to provide new knowledge and applications of reflective and embodied approaches to creative practice and the sick body.

Dis-ease State:  
Illness embodiment in Creative Practice

SONYA KRAAN  
PhD  
(Fashion & Textiles)

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**SURESH PARMAR**  
**PHD (Fashion & Textiles)**

### **Textile-Based Pressure Sensor**

This PhD project proposes the development and characterization of a novel low-pressure range (0-100kPa) textile-based pressure sensor that has high pressure sensing characteristics. Different transduction mechanisms, manufacturing techniques and materials shall be explored keeping in consideration simplicity, low-cost and ease of manufacturing of the final product, a pressure sensor in textile form. The development of the sensor will be approached through three directions. Firstly efforts will be made to develop a pressure sensitive filament/yarn based sensor. The second approach will be through film-shaped sensors that can be easily integrated in the textile structure, while the third approach will be directed towards modification of the fabric structure itself, allowing for fabric to function as a reliable pressure sensor. The major performance attributes that are aimed to be included in the proposed sensor are: wide working pressure range, high resolution sensing, and accuracy of results, adequate strength, flexibility and durability. In addition, other properties such as pH sensing, temperature sensing, adaptability for wireless integration, and even self-power generation capabilities shall be explored for possible integration in proposed novel pressure sensor.

# **Thank you + Acknowledgements**

The School of Fashion & Textiles would like to thank the candidates, panel members and supervisors; Professor Robyn Healy, Head of School - Fashion & Textiles and the School for their support.



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