

**American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences  
Apparel, Textiles & Design Community (ATD)  
2026 Juried Design Showcase Submission**

**Design Title:** *My Dream, My Nightmare*

**Level:** Professional

**Category:** Apparel

**Abstract (500 words maximum)**

*Introduction to the Design Concept:* My Dream, My Nightmare is a wearable textile art piece that illustrates the social policing of individuals through relationships. The purpose of this design is to visually explore the implications of socially constructed gender roles as framed by Judith Butler, with how society enforces these roles onto bodies. As we walk forward, we believe the dream to be beauty and bliss, with the gentle caress of talons believed to be a comforting and reassuring hand reaching forward into our future. As we continue walking forward into the dream the claws sink into the reality of our nightmare, shredding us apart as they try to drag us into the abyss of conformity. The nightmare is the pieces of ourselves that we gave (or were taken from us) in order to belong in the relationships around us that we thought we wanted more than anything.

*Method/Design Development Process:* This piece was designed utilizing draping methods to draft muslin test pieces that were then altered as needed to make the final pattern. A lockstitch sewing machine was utilized assembling the cut fabric pieces that were pressed during construction and steamed afterwards. At the end of construction, the piece was placed on a dress form for partial deconstruction of the back skirt train to coincide with the drape. A fabric paint medium was then spread with the palm of the hands and fingers, while the skirt was being draped to simulate the claw marks and left to dry before being heat-set. The materials for this piece are: 100% polyester crepeback satin, 100% nylon tulle, 100% polyester lace, and 100% polyester lining. The notions for this piece consists of a 100% polyester invisible zipper and 100% polyester thread. The back utilizes 100% opacity textile color fabric paint medium.

*Conclusion:* This design is intended to visually demonstrate the multiplicitous self that is forced upon bodies through social policing and norming. The front of the garment features a modern take on the traditional wedding gown worn in the United States, with the bodice having been draped with a motif to illustrate your hand reaching forward into the desired future of togetherness. The asymmetrical lines lead you to the back where you realize this reaching out of the hand is actually dragging you into the nightmare of reality. This is where we see the blending of blues and blacks at the bottom that reach towards the top with lightened opacities of a mixed fabric paint medium. This design will continue to further the field through the expression of fashion as an artform and visual representation of social movements and awareness.

\*This example is for formatting, following the precise content does not guarantee acceptance into the showcase. Submissions will be evaluated through a double-blind process in accordance with the scoring rubric.\*

## References

- Butler, J. (2006). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
- Collier, B. J. (1991). Measurement of Fabric Drape and Its Relation to Fabric Mechanical Properties and Subjective Evaluation. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 10(1), 46-52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X9101000107>
- Hamilton, J. A., & Hamilton, J. W. (1989). Dress as a Reflection and Sustainer of Social Reality: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 7(2), 16-22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X8900700203>
- Nelson, N. J., LaBat, K. L., & Williams, G. M. (2002). Contemporary Irish Textile Artists: Exploring Experiences of Gender, Culture, and Artistic Medium. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 20(1), 15-25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0887302X0202000102>
- Ortega, N. (2016). *In-between: Latina feminist phenomenology, multiplicity, and the self*. State University of New York Press.

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image of Design Front

Replace with a 3" W x 4.5" H  
image of Design Back

Replace with a 3" W x 4.5" H  
image of Design Side

Replace with a 3" W x 4.5" H  
image of Designer's Choice