

# Exploring Fashion & Landscape Architecture



UC Davis Landscape Architecture  
Senior Thesis

By Inna Nosenko

# Exploring Fashion & Landscape Architecture

---

By: Inna Nosenko

A Senior Project Presented to the faculty of the Landscape Architecture Program at the University of California, Davis to fulfill the Undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree requirement.

Approved & Accepted by:

---

**Claire Napawan**  
Senior Project Adviser

---

**Ann Savageau**  
Committee Member

---

**Roxanne Femling**  
Committee Member

---

**Steve Wheeler**  
Committee Member

JUNE 2011

## Thesis Statement

The goal is to portray the concept of each park onto the human form. This translation of landscape as the human body is an essential aspect of the design and formation of this thesis. Architecture inspires fashion design, and it can be expressed in many ways. Different concepts are applied to design and express a mood and feeling for the piece. The portrayal of landscape design through fashion is a non-traditional method of design. Essentially, the body is the landscape. Using structures, functions, colors, textures and form drives the process of designing clothing from inspired landscapes.

## Abstract

It is important to understand the structure and process of design. This thesis is a study of fashion and landscape architecture. It goes through the process of design based on the inspiration of three landscapes that I chose to work with: Central Park of New York, the Gardens of Versailles of Paris, and Parc Guell of Barcelona Spain. This process includes the study of landscapes and the methodologies, concepts and processes that went into designing and building these wonderful masterpieces. By understanding these processes, I further developed the idea of translating these concepts into garment designs. I created mood boards based on the concepts that I declared the prominent feature to each design. These mood boards consisted of images that evoked the characteristics of the design by looking at the structure, function, colors, textures and form of each piece. From these initial images, the process started with the formation of structural design, then transitioned to form and adornment. This process led to the designs of three distinct dresses. Of these three designs, I chose to construct a physical model of one particular dress, inspired by the work of Antonio Gaudi, designer of the Parc Guell of Barcelona, Spain.

## Biographical Sketch

Inna Nosenko was born in Minsk, Belarus. She moved to Hayward, California in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. After graduating from Castro Valley High School she moved to Davis, California in 2007 to pursue academia. She studied Landscape Architecture at the University of California, Davis. She is a passionate dancer and artist who loves to travel, play tennis, bowl and meet new people.

## Acknowledgments

Ann Savageau  
Roxanne Femling  
Steve Wheeler  
Claire Napawan  
Anna Komov  
Tyler Eash  
Katelyn Tigh  
Barbara Nazarewicz  
Valeria Mikhailova

# Illustrations, Plans & Photographs

## Website Photo References

“Fashionable Fittings? Wearable Architectural Design Details | Designs & Ideas on Dornob.” *Dornob | Modern Home, Interior & Furniture Designs & DIY Ideas*. Web. 07 June 2011. <<http://dornob.com/fashionable-fittings-wearable-architectural-design-details/>>.

“Viktor And Rolf’s Surrealist Gowns...Perfect For The Red Carpet?” *Fashion Trends - Current Fashion Trends*. Web. 07 June 2011. <<http://www.refinery29.com/viktor-and-rolfs-surrealist-go>>.

*Pinterest*. Web. 18 May 2011. <<http://www.pinterest.com/>>.

## ILLUSTRATIONS, PLANS & PHOTOGRAPHS

- Cover photo: Courtesy of <http://www.refinery29.com/viktor-and-rolfs-surrealist-go>
- Figure 1: Courtesy of: <http://dornob.com/fashionable-fittings-wearable-architectural-design-details>
- Figure 2: Courtesy of *Central Park: an American Masterpiece*
- Figure 3: Courtesy of *Central Park: an American Masterpiece*
- Figure 4: Courtesy of [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- Figure 5: Original hand drawn illustration, pen and photoshop rendered
- Figure 6: Courtesy of *Versailles*
- Figure 7: Courtesy of *Versailles*
- Figure 8: Courtesy of [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- Figure 9: Original hand drawn illustration, pen and photoshop rendered
- Figure 10: Courtesy of *Antonio Gaudi*
- Figure 11: Courtesy of *Gaudi of Barcelona*
- Figure 12: Photos by Inna Nosenko during construction phase
- Figure 13: Courtesy of *Gaudi of Barcelona, Antonio Gaudi* & [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- Figure 14: Original hand drawn illustration, pen and photoshop rendered
- Figure 15: Photo by Inna Nosenko, Model, Nakisa Choupani



# Table of Contents

---

Thesis Statement  
III

Abstract  
IV

Biographical Sketch  
V

Acknowledgments  
VI

Illustrations, Plans & Photographs  
VII, VIII

Table of Contents  
IX, X

Intro  
13

Body as a Landscape  
14

The Dialogue between Fashion and Landscape Architecture  
15

Adornment  
16

Functionality  
17

Structure  
18

Landscapes as Inspiration

**New York**  
19

The History  
20,21

The Process  
21

Mood Board  
21

The Design  
22

**Versailles**  
The History  
23,24

The Process  
25

Mood Board  
25

The Design  
26

**Parc Guell**  
27

The History  
28

The Process  
29-31

Mood Board  
31

The Design  
32,33

Conclusion  
34

Terms  
35

References  
36

# Intro

Landscape is the creative catalyst that serves as the driving force of this project. The focus is on the structure and process in designing a dress from inspiration of landscape architecture. Designing with fabric reveals an intimate look at the functionality and character of space and material juxtaposed on the body.

Exploring landscape architecture and fashion is a unique way of forming a dialogue between two different landscapes. However different they may seem, they share similarities. Both are living forms of nature and are beautifully and naturally formed to serve a purpose and function in life. This thesis explores a way in which the body can be seen as a landscape, and serves to create original designs from inspiration of three distinct parks. It is critical to engage the mind in different ways and to explore the many facets of design. Designers see their process in different ways. In this case, the process is based on the education and creativity that creates the liason from landscape architect to fashion designer.

# Body as a Landscape

Both the shape and overall image of the body can be manipulated by adding adornment through the use of clothing details, manipulation of fabric, embellishments, jewelry, etc. Much like using fashion to accentuate the body, landscape architecture grasps at the fundamental notion that nature may be accentuated through the interplay of colors, light, vegetation, architecture, and shape. By using these two ideas in conjunction with one another, it is possible to create a positive feedback loop where both of these areas, which use nature as a canvas, can mutually benefit, expand their ideas, and create a broader spectrum of inspiration.

*“The form is the main element with which a creative designer has to deal, for it is his task to mould the physical body into new shapes by extending or reducing, magnifying or minimizing that body, subject to the rules of composition which we are acknowledged in the fine arts and architecture.”<sup>7</sup>*

# The Dialogue between Fashion and Landscape

There is overlap in both the landscape architecture and fashion world. This overlap can facilitate a dialogue filled with argument, critique, opinion, emotion, pleasure, inspiration, function, form, and image. Fashion is more than what meets the eye, much like landscape architecture. Unlike landscape architecture, where one can walk through space and feel the surroundings, fashion is experienced at a more intimate level. Clothing is on the body--tangible, wearable. One can feel the space that clothing creates around oneself and it can be used to mold different shapes, creating a unique image. Much like designing space in the landscape, fabric creates a functional space on the body.

# Adornment

We dress our bodies and landscapes to look pleasing. We create a frame around our environment, making a picture of how we want to be represented and how we want to see our surroundings.<sup>7</sup>

The creation of clothing is a form of artistic expression through which feelings or ideas are conveyed.<sup>7</sup> Ornamental landscapes, in this matter, are an inspiration for designers to make adorned dresses. Adornment is an important element in both landscape and fashion because it creates depth and intrigue. We adorn ourselves in many ways. Woman put on makeup or earrings while men get tattoos and spike their hair. In fashion, we also adorn our garments by adding details, beads, embellishments, extra fabric and intricate designs to evoke a certain characteristic or feeling. Adornment is also used in landscape architecture, known as adding detail. Landscape architects decide everything from what type of stone lies on the road to the types of lamps and trees that decorate the landscape. These important details are what make the landscape or garment evoke the personality that the designer wishes for it to have.

# Functionality

Fashion is an applied art. It deals with functionality and carries aesthetic utilitarian purpose.<sup>2</sup> The function of landscape architecture exhibits similar characteristics. An example of such characteristics of functionality in fashion is the concept of sunglasses. Sunglasses serve the function of protecting our eyes, however they are also designed with aesthetic integrity, or are given a style to achieve a specific look. To a person in landscape architecture, the function of a tree serves a similar purpose. A tree serves the function of a shade structure or canopy for protection. Functionality is a main component of both design fields. Clothing is a function for our everyday purposes. Each article serves a specific purpose. If something does not function the way it is supposed to we disregard the use of it. Suppose a baseball cap had no visor? The function of the cap would be defeated. The same applies to landscape architecture. If there is no purpose for a bench in the middle of a field it would not be used. This is why it is important to understand the role that functionality plays in both fields and how to design based on function.

# Structure

Clothing in different time periods mimicked the qualities of architecture. Fashion designers mimicked the structure of various buildings to build functioning and aesthetically gorgeous gowns. In the 1850's, gowns were made of a dome-shaped wire framework skirt, a practical solution for heavy petticoats woman had to wear. This structure resembled the famous Crystal Palace which was built from a web of metal grids covered with glass to produce a spacious interior.<sup>1</sup> The structure of architecture has heavily influenced the design of many garments including those that are made today. Structure is an important element of design because it creates a framework to be worked with.



Figure 1. Fashion inspired by architecture.



# Landscapes as Inspiration

Each park studied shows a unique style and process in which it took to create the designs. This thesis looks at three influential parks that have been an inspiration to many landscape architects. These three parks include Central Park of New York, the Gardens of Versailles, Paris and Parc Guell of Barcelona, Spain.

## Central Park

Central Park, an American masterpiece, is a unique work similar in function to all three parks.

*“The meaning of Central Park – its celebration of democracy, technology, nature, and popular culture – is written in its stones and reflected in its waters.”<sup>3</sup>*



Figure 2. Bird's eye view, lithograph, 1893.

## The History

Central Park, a creation of Fredrick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux, is a man-made landscape that successfully emulates the natural landscape. This park is successful in its aesthetic qualities and engineering to mimic the natural qualities of the landscape. Elegance and grace are important terms that define the aesthetic of the Park.

The construction of the park took into account the topography of the land and the needs of the commissioners. Although the designers favored the European style of a more formal and geometric plan such as Versailles, they indeed created a natural romantic plan that relied on the success of advanced technology. The curvilinear roads were designed to enforce restrictions on horseback and carriage racing. These types of rules and restrictions set the boundaries of the romantic naturalistic park that it is today.

3

*“While the park is intended as a place for freedom and relaxation, for play and not for work, it has been constructed with no idea of encouraging habits of laziness, or in any way for the benefit of idlers and drones... its paramount object is to offer facilities for a daily enjoyment of life to the industrious thousands who are working steadily and conscientiously.”(p.18)*

3

The piece inspired by this park is a celebration of the human body, much like the concept of the park is to celebrate life.

The main structure of the Central Park dress is inspired by the curvilinear element of the park and the idea that the landscape is to be enjoyed. It serves as a natural and simplistic form to the body, revealing all the shapes and contours of the natural form, leaving no room for lazy habits. It is for the pleasure of others to see and enjoy. The design of the dress is form fitting to hug the curves of the natural



Figure 3. Curved roads in Central Park.

## CENTRAL PARK

body and elegant and graceful, much like the idea behind Central Park.

### The Process

The process which lead me to make my decisions about the design of the dress derived from the methodology of Fredrick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux. This methodology is to embrace the beauty of the body as they embraced the natural elements of the landscape. The body's simplistic movement and form are represented through this design. A mood board was developed to show the inspirations of Central Park from images that evoked the characteristic of this idea. Such images show curvilinear patterns to elegant forms and natural movements in nature.

### Mood Board



Figure 4. Images that inspired the Central Park dress design.

CENTRAL PARK

The Design



Figure 5. Hand drawn Central Park design.

## Versailles

The design of the Versailles parks invites the audience to experience new perspectives.<sup>6</sup> An extensive history of Versailles defines the process that drove the formation of the mesmerizing gardens. This forms the different levels of spaces and, because of formal influence, forms the rigid geometric shapes and structure of the plan.



Figure 6. Plan of Versailles, Paris.

## VERSAILLES

### The History

Versailles was created from a simple field, the natural domain of the earth, much like the simplistic form of the human body. The word Versailles is a combination of two French words, versare – a clear plot of land, and semailles, the term associated with cultivation and harvest. The land itself was very uneven with ponds, heaths and pastures, which created extensive terracing and an intricate irrigation system. This beautiful masterpiece showcases its fine work that was refined continually through 3 centuries.<sup>6</sup> Around the natural topography of the earth formed the intricate and calculated design of the Versailles grounds.

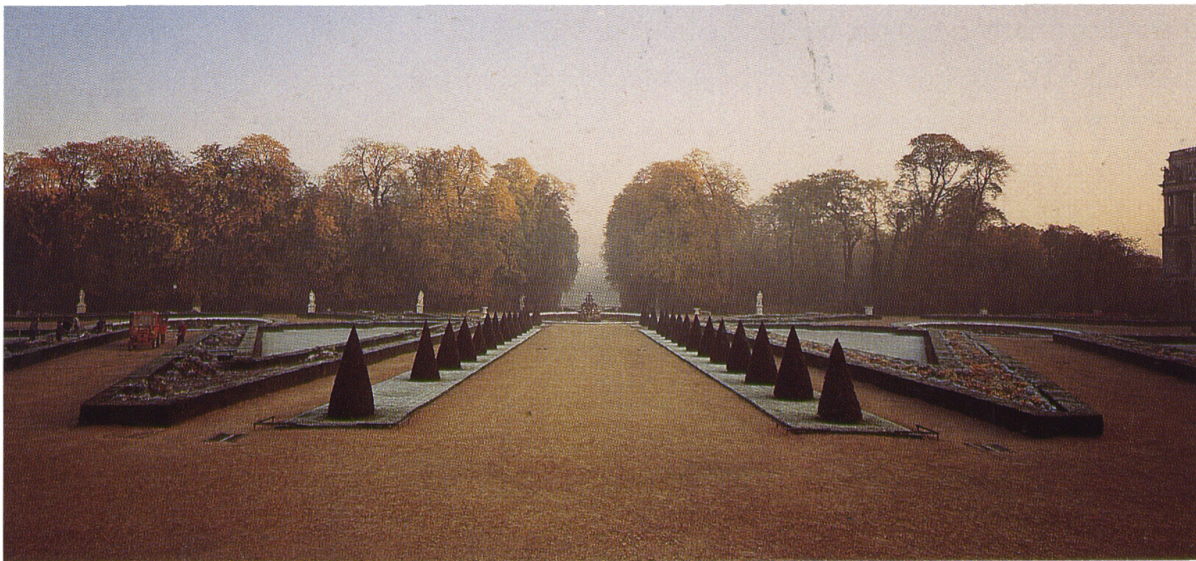


Figure 7. Transverse axis passing in front of the chateau. Axis are an important design feature and emphasis in the structure of Versailles.<sup>6</sup>

*“There was a swamp. And there were architects and gardeners. And there were lines, angles, triangles, rectangles, circles, and pyramids. And there was a park, and this park was born of the soul of le Notre.” –The Creation of Versailles<sup>6</sup>*

Axis’s were formed and spaces were calculated for functional purposes, also including hunting grounds designed with rectilinear formation. These key features form the gardens composition.

## VERSAILLES

### The Process

The inspiration behind the Versailles dress is the concept of geometry, axis's, and rigid structural topography against the smooth natural surface of the earth. This dress is designed to cut the body and flatten it's natural topography as does the topography of Versailles. Its geometry and rectilinear form is an important design feature that distinguishes the gardens. Likewise, geometry is an important adorning feature that manipulates the body to look a certain way and to look as a rigid formed structure. The axis helps define the composition of the piece. The mood board of Versailles shows the rigid structure, geometries, and rectilinear composition from different images found for inspiration of the design process. Of these images a dress was designed from the concept of geometries, rigid structure and rectilinear composition. The axis's was an important element in this design process.

### Mood Board

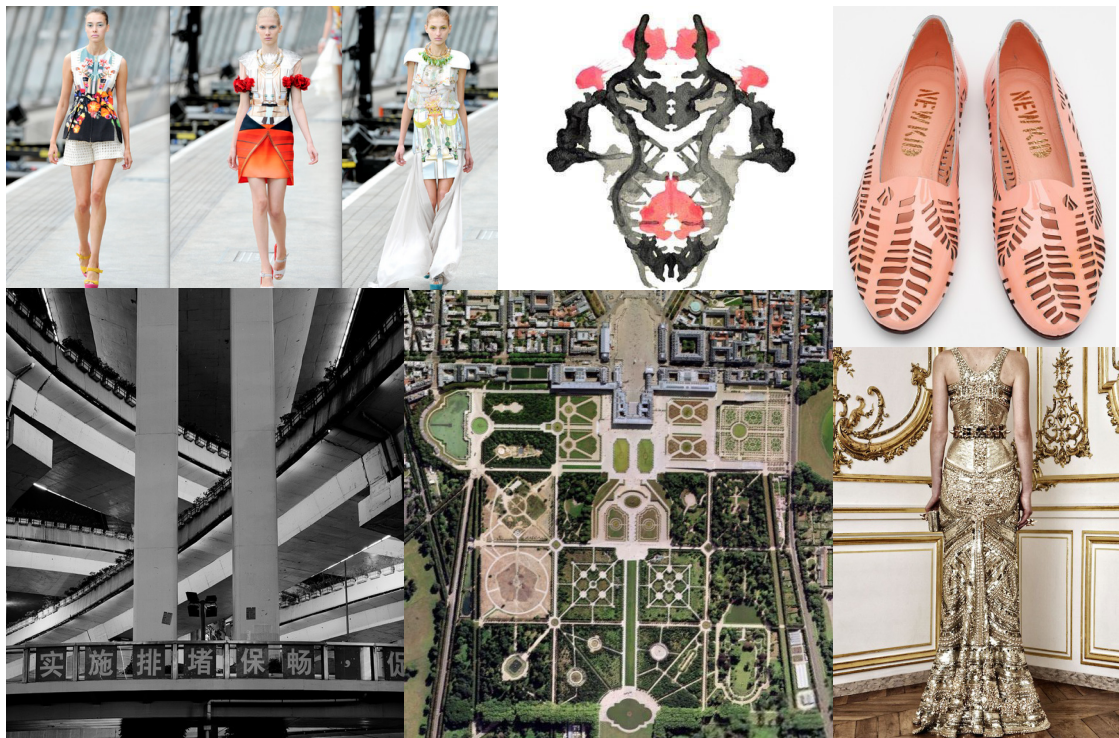


Figure 8. Images inspired for the Versailles dress design

VERSAILLES

The Design

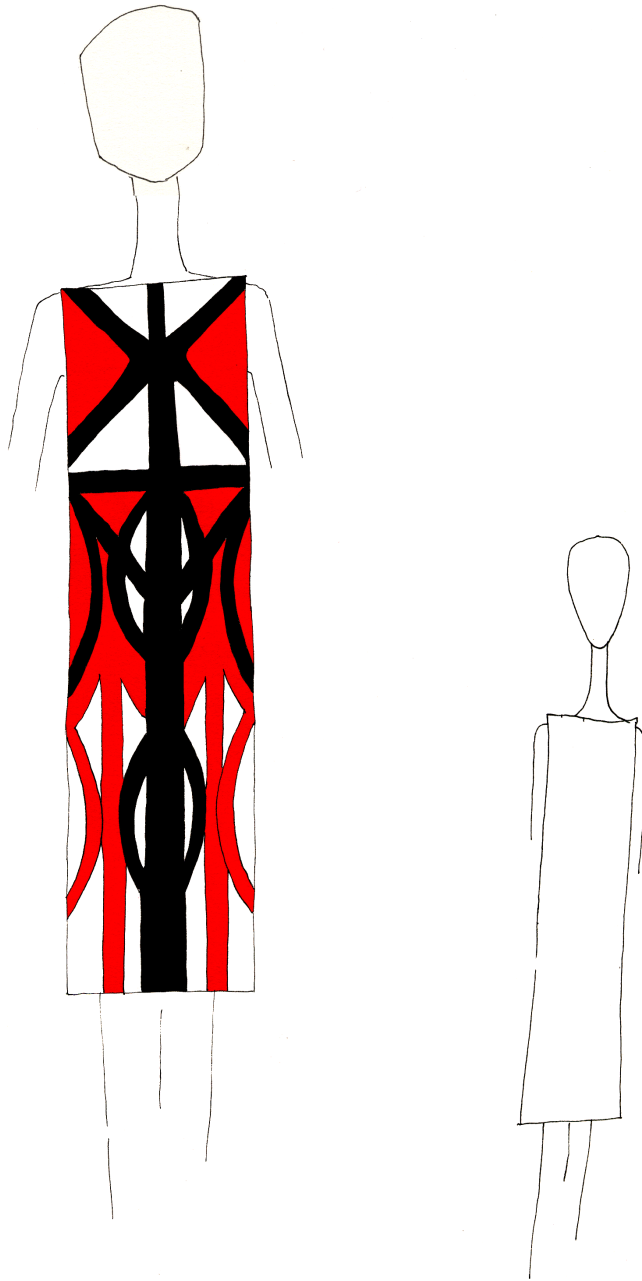


Figure 9. Hand drawn Versailles design.



## Parc Guell

Parc Guell was a synthesis of work by artist and architect Antonio Gaudi and Palau Guell. Palau Guell was the commissioner for architect Gaudi's park piece.<sup>5</sup>

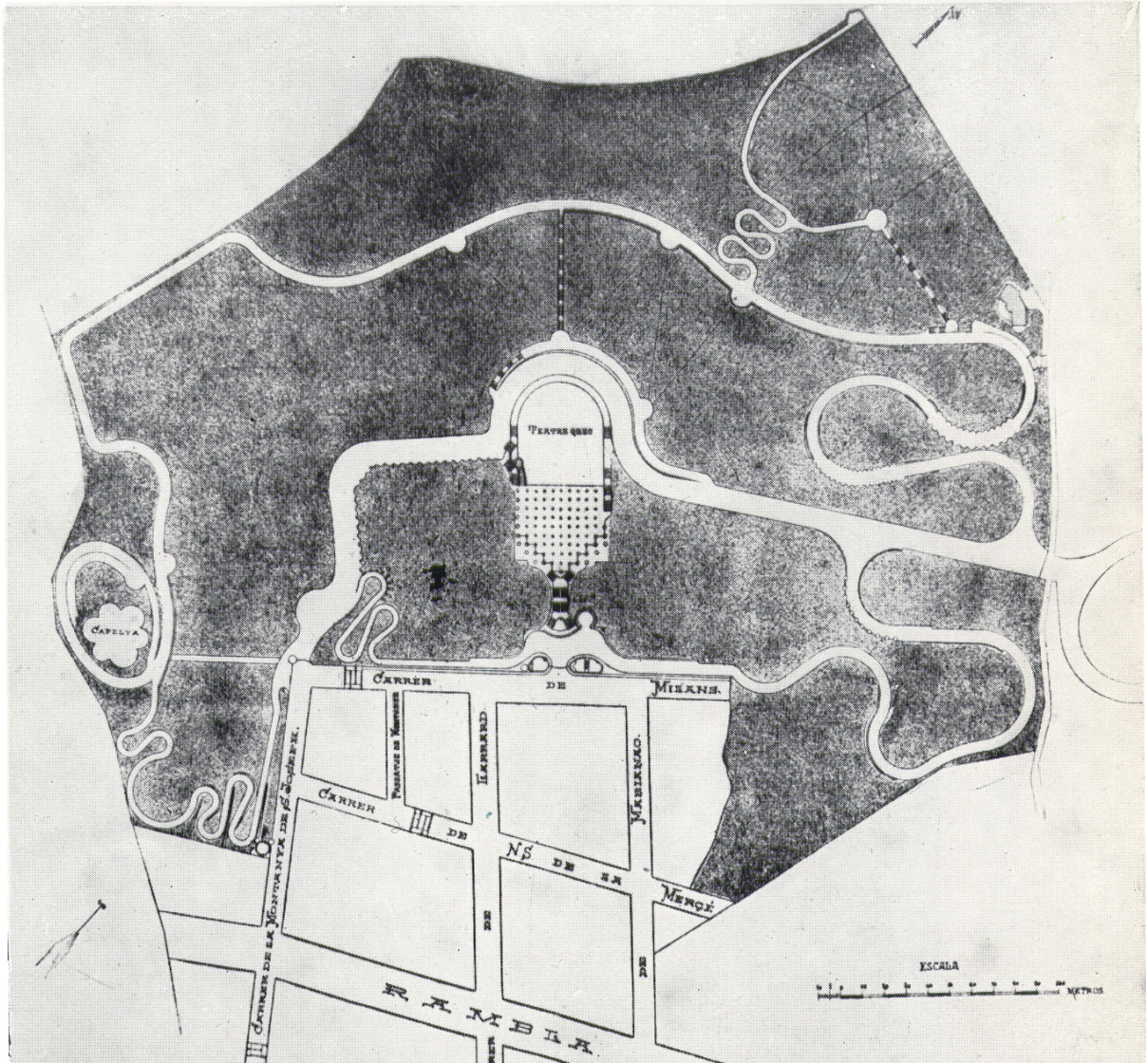


Figure 10. Plan of Parc Guell, Barcelona, Spain.

## PARC GUELL

### The History

Gaudi sought to draw a fine line between himself and the prominent members of the upper class of aristocrats and bourgeoisies by his avant-garde style. This attitude triggered the most amazing work of Gaudi and distinguished him as a defined, uniquely cultivated master of design.

His incredible works were contributed to his defiance of authority and building codes. Because of his confidence and strife to work against rules, he produced extraordinary exhibits of architecture and art. Gaudi's work thrived off of his creative ability to produce avant-garde concepts. His bold composition, asymmetry, pattern work, ornamental emphasis and emphasis on certain structures formed the concept of his bold personality designs.<sup>5</sup> He also used polychromy, the art of applying many colors as in mosaic tiling. His style was influenced by mudejar, which is a style that came about from the Muslim and Christian groups living together in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This style is well-known for its Islamic tiling and detailed brickwork.<sup>5</sup> His works became memorable for their extraordinary detail, use of tiles, stone, brick and iron.<sup>5</sup>

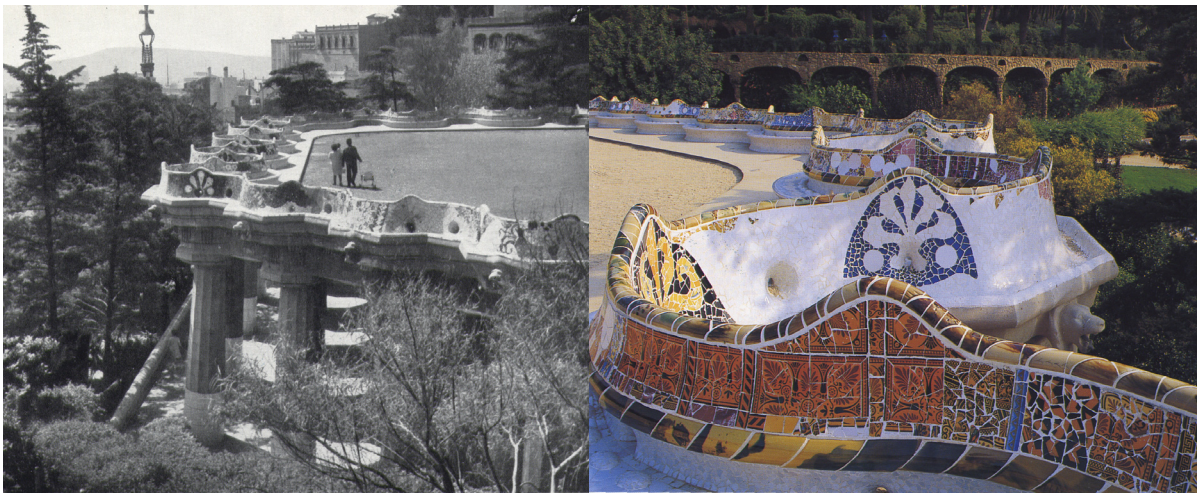


Figure 11. Top level of Parc Guell. Detail tiling (right).

## The Process

When deciding the process that I wanted to take for designing and constructing the dress for the thesis, I used creative license and inspirational images to develop my idea. This also consisted of research of the way in which Gaudi constructed his pieces in his unique style.

When building the garment from the inspiration of Antonio Gaudi's Parc Guell, my process of forming the shapes for the adornments or extra appendages changed. In the beginning, the idea was for the chicken wire forms to be cut in triangular shapes and shaped in biomorphic structures (Figure 12. Left image). Then as I was molding the wire I discovered that by twisting the wire and looping the form would create more of a smooth biomorphic structure that would keep the idea of accentuating the shoulders and hips (Figure 12. Right image). The image on the right was inspired from one of Gaudi's metal frame works that he created (see Figure 13: Mood Board).



Figure 12. Left: First concept designed. Right: Second concept developed through process of design.

## PARC GUELL

This twisting and looping process that I discovered is in line with Gaudi's process and inspiration of repetition in his work within Parc Guell. The repetition of the mosaic tiling as well as the repetitive qualities of stone detailing is a key feature in the parks beautiful décor. A mood board was also created along the process to determine the formation and structure of the design. I was inspired by the repetitive qualities of the mosaic tiling and had the idea of using flower petals to simulate this quality on the piece. I chose to form structures on the shoulders and hips as the concept of Gaudi's work was to create emphasis on selected structures. This I applied to the structure of the body. I chose green, white, and purple as the base colors of the design, as these were influenced by the colors of the Parc Guell design. The structures off the shoulders and hips were created by twisting chicken wire mesh, ducktaping the wire to not cause injury and tubing white fabric over the structures. These structures loop together to hold their place on the body. The body of the dress was sewn in the shape of a tube and slit down the sides for arm-holes and sewn again on top for the strap connections. The petals and beads were added to the dress for adornment as the concept of adorning was influential in Gaudi's work.

The design of the garment was thought of in the process of building the piece itself. The drawing of the design came after the construction of the dress. During the process of creating the flower petal design, I used the concept of asymmetry of Gaudi's designs to design the center embellishment. I was also inspired by peacock feathers so I chose to incorporate the feathers by tearing them off and gluing them in between the flower petal pattern. I then used the beads that were colored purple, green and blue to decorate the center asymmetrical shape for adorning purposes as Gaudi applied this concept to adorning his work with tiling and detail. The creation of the white chain links came about from the concept of Gaudi's to accentuate particular structures. These chicken wire, duct tape covered structures were first covered with stretchy white tubing which was later changed to satin rib-

## PARC GUELL

bon. This process still evolved and changed back to the stretchy white fabric, however it was instead wound around the structures and hot glued to create a form fitted appearance as oppose to the original loose fabric sock. These loops were attached to each other by hot gluing the pieces together and sewing them in bent circular loops, as that to mimic the quality of Gaudi's work. Thus forming the body as the landscape and creating new structure to the form.

### Mood Board



Figure 13. Images inspired for the Parc Guell dress design.

## The Design



Figure 14. Hand drawn Parc Guell design.

## PARC GUELL

### The Design



Figure 15. Photo of Parc Guell dress. Model Nakisa Choupani. Bottom right, asymmetrical embellished piece with faux flower petals, beads and strands of peacock feathers.

# Conclusion

The final product of the thesis was the creation of a dress inspired by Antonio Gaudi's Parc Guell. The design process was a unique experience and involved a different look at designing for the body as the landscape. Experiencing landscape with a set of different eyes opened up a new dialogue and understanding of how design can create a synthesis between two different fields. By treating the body as the landscape and applying landscape concepts to designing dresses, this became a satisfying and fulfilling experience.



# Terms

<b>Adornment</b>	Any decoration or alteration of the body's appearance <sup>2</sup>
<b>Concept</b>	A general notion or idea
<b>Design</b>	The combination or organization of the fundamental elements of line, space, form, texture and color <sup>1</sup>
<b>Embellishments</b>	An ornament or decoration
<b>Fashion</b>	A dynamic social process by which new styles are created, introduced to a consuming public, and popularly accepted by that public <sup>2</sup> ; an applied art, different from the fine arts is that there is a utilitarian purpose to create functionality <sup>2</sup>
<b>Form</b>	As in relation to the human body. There are three basic shapes: form of the human body itself, external shape created by the costum silhouette, and the outline or individual parts of the silhouette.
<b>Mood Board</b>	A compilation of images and materials that evoke the character and inspiration behind a design idea
<b>Structure</b>	Mode of building, construction, or organization; arrangement of parts, elements, or constituents

# References

---

<sup>1</sup> Horn, Marilyn J. *The Second Skin: an Interdisciplinary Study of Clothing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975. Print.

<sup>2</sup> Kaiser, Susan B. *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context*. New York: Macmillan, 1990. Print.

<sup>3</sup> Miller, Sara Cedar. *Central Park: an American Masterpiece*. [New York]: Harry N. Abrams in Association with the Central Park Conservancy, 2003. Print.

<sup>4</sup> Pane, Roberto. *Antonio Gaudi*. Milano: Edizioni Di Comunita, 1964. Print.

<sup>5</sup> Permanyer, L., and Sarah Mollman. Underhill. *Gaudi of Barcelona*. New York: Rizzoli, 1997. Print.

<sup>6</sup> Perouse, De Montclos, Jean-Marie., and Robert Polidori. *Versailles*. New York: Artabras, 1991. Print.

<sup>7</sup> Ridelstein, Maria Von. *1000 Years of Fashion: An Analysis of the Evolution of Style*. 1939. Print.