

## **REVIEW**

by Assoc. Prof. Yana Dvoretzka, PhD

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for the candidature for the scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 8. Arts,  
professional field 8.2. Fine Art - for the needs of the Design Department, NBU

of Milena Ivanova Nacheva and the documents submitted for the award of the scientific degree  
"Doctor", as well as a scientific thesis on:

### **PATTERN MAKING AND VOLUME DRAPING IN FASHION DESIGN**

Scientific supervisor: prof. Emilia Panayotova, PhD

#### **I. General presentation of the applicant**

The candidate Milena Ivanova Nacheva is one of the most recognizable faces of the New Bulgarian University. She was a student in the Bachelor and Master programs in Fashion, a PhD student, and now a lecturer with seven years of practice in the field of design and pattern making. For the non-academic community Milena Nacheva is known as a fashion designer with a specific creative character, perfectly constructed and crafted garments and special attention to detail.

I dare to say that the candidate's design career began in the university studios - I remember her as one of the most impressive students, working with a lot of enthusiasm and creative charge. Apart from her undeniable talent, she possessed qualities that are vital for development in the field of fashion design - creative curiosity, perseverance, perfectionism. Her broad interests were reflected in the extra-curricular activities organised by the department, and here I would like to mention her two participations in the international Rooms for Free programme in Germany and France, in which I was a tutor and closely observed her performances.

Milena Nacheva's Master's collection continues to be one of the strongest theses shown by our students.

After graduating from university, her creative path continued with work as a pattern maker for various fashion studios, until eventually her own brand emerged, which today has an established client base and name. I can't help but mention Milena Nacheva's long-standing presence as part of the Ivan Asen 22 design platform, where she has 21 shows, including two solo appearances.

#### **II. Significance of the research problem in scientific and applied terms.**

The significance of the research "PATTERN MAKING AND VOLUME DRAPING IN FASHION DESIGN" comes from the research thesis that pattern making is not only a three-dimensional manifestation of design, but also a means of generating design. In the field of fashion, pattern making is mostly perceived as part of the technical process of creating a garment, but this thesis offers a new and quite original reading of the topic - pattern making is not only a physical embodiment of the design concept, but also an important aspect of design itself. The research examines and proves that understanding the structural components of a garment and having experience in pattern making and drape modelling directly influences creativity, inspires more and better ideas and helps to create original designs that fit perfectly on the human figure. This concept implies a change in the traditional perception of the role of pattern making, hence a change in the attitude towards the design process itself, and towards teaching in this field.

### **III. Aims and objectives of the dissertation.**

This dissertation sets the ambitious goal of proving that pattern making is part of design, and to this end it considers all applications of pattern making and draping in design and the creative process.

The main tasks include:

- Clarifying the concept and tracing the stages of the design process.
- Examining and comparing the two main types of pattern making, flat and drape, clarifying their application and involvement in different creative approaches.
- Study and comparison of the ESMOD and M. Müller & Sohn pattern making systems, analysis of their advantages and disadvantages, and proposal of a new approach for the pattern making of a corsage base based on this analysis.
- Development of a capsule fashion collection of 8 garments that traces the evolution of pattern making.

### **IV. Relevance and state of knowledge.**

When talking about fashion and fashion processes, the requirement of relevance is inevitable. Very often, however, dissertations in the field of fashion focus on historical and theoretical aspects where they can draw on existing research. In this case, the dissertation examines the work of the fashion designer here and now, and proposes a new, scholarly and practical approach that could develop and enrich the process of fashion making. This utilitarian nature of the topic makes it particularly interesting and meaningful.

From my point of view (as a working designer and teacher), the value of this thesis comes mainly from the fact that the research rests on the vast practical experience that the candidate has gained in her personal creative journey. The thesis does not simply ask questions, but proposes a practical approach to solving them with an expertise that is rarely found at this academic level.

#### **V. Correctness in citing a representative number of authors.**

The bibliography of the dissertation contains a total of 137 titles. Monographs, scientific publications and online sources concerning different aspects of the topic are cited. The selected sources show thoroughness of the research and ability to build a sound research framework.

#### **VI. Relevance of the chosen methodology and methodology of the research with the stated aim and objectives of the dissertation.**

The methodology of the research includes, on the one hand, the traditional study of various literary and online sources - books, textbooks, scientific publications, journalistic articles on fashion, which deal partially or largely with the problem under study. However, it is important to note that due to the originality of the research thesis, its direct confirmation cannot be found in the already existing scientific literature in the field.

The analysis of the creative process and the comparison of the two pattern making systems directly support the thesis's assertion that the need for good pattern is key to the success of a piece, collection or even a brand.

As the most impressive part of the dissertation's methodology I would still point to the practical-creative development of a capsule collection, which illustrates the entire theoretical basis of the research and visually presents and defends the research thesis.

#### **VII. Description of contributions**

I have already touched upon the originality of the thesis - up to this point, I have not come across a Bulgarian or foreign scientific work that so convincingly presents and defends the concept of pattern as a carrier of a design idea.

The study of different forms of pattern making and modelling gives a new insight into their applicability and role in the creative processes underlying the fashion business. The analysis of different techniques in the application of draping (moulage) is clearly structured and impressively detailed.

Of particular importance is the detailed comparison of two of the most popular pattern making systems. The pros and cons of each are outlined with great precision and again based on empirical analysis.

Undoubtedly, this dissertation is an invitation to rethink the teaching practices in Bulgaria in terms of students' skills in the field of pattern making and drape modelling. It seems to me a highly innovative approach to teach pattern making not as an adjunct design discipline but as a starting point for idea generation. Such an approach would encourage students to experiment more boldly and could serve as a methodological basis for creating hands-on classes focusing on mixed media and complex pattern making techniques.

### **VIII. Availability of own input in the collection and analysis of empirical data.**

The evaluation of the popular pattern making systems has been used to create a pattern basis for a women's corsage, which is a real practical improvement applicable in the routine of every designer and pattern maker. I would add here the adapted size chart, which also has a high degree of usefulness.

The research draws on the candidate's many years of design and pattern making experience. As she herself points out, many of the conclusions applied in the dissertation were made before its realization and are a prerequisite for the choice of the topic. In this sense, the most convincing defence of the thesis is the evolution of the pattern presented in the context of the evolution of design in a capsule fashion collection - evidence of an obviously well worked creative process with an undeniably good result.

The ideas set out in the research have been carried out for years in the BA Fashion Design courses at NBU and the results of this teaching approach can be seen in the projects of Milena Nacheva's students.

### **IX. Evaluation of the compliance of the abstract with the main points and contributions of the thesis.**

The abstract is logically structured and reflects clearly and accurately the content of the dissertation. The aims and objectives of the research as well as the theoretical and practical contributions of the dissertation are well formulated.

### **X. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation.**

The following article has been published on the topic of the dissertation in scientific refereed journals:

Nacheva, M. (2018). Comparative analysis of street style in clothing in two major fashion capitals - Paris and Berlin. *Journal of LANGUAGE AND PUBLICITY* of the Department of Philosophy and Sociology, Third Doctoral Issue", CN.8, ISSN 2367-5756, Issue 3/2018, pp. 79-93. Sofia: New Bulgarian University

## **XI. Conclusion**

The presented dissertation not only possesses the qualities of an adequate scientific study, but also states and defends the innovative thesis of removing pattern making from a technical context and placing it at the centre of the creative process.

I fully agree with the candidate that ignorance of pattern making techniques leads to a limitation of creative potential within what she calls 'flat design', while conversely, high technical skills in traditional and draping pattern making provide new horizons for designers.

The dissertation "C PATTERN MAKING AND VOLUME DRAPING IN FASHION DESIGN" is based much more on the empirical research of the PhD candidate than on reference to other scientific sources, which convincingly contributes to its authenticity and value.

With conviction, I propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to award the degree of Doctor of Education and Science to Milena Ivanova Nacheva at the level 8.2 "Fine Arts" (Fashion) - Department of Design, Doctoral Program "Design" of New Bulgarian University.

22.06.2024

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