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## Nepalese Summer

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NEPALESE SUMMER

NEPALESE SUMMER

by

Dikshya Upadhyay

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of  
Science in

Fashion Business and Entrepreneurship  
at

Lindenwood University


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## **Introduction**

I'm a graduate student pursuing a Master of Science in Fashion Business and Entrepreneurship at Lindenwood University. I was born and raised in Nepal, and I am currently inhabiting Missouri. After completing my undergraduate degree in Fashion Design from Namuna College of Fashion Technology, I wanted to get out of my comfort zone and understand the business side of fashion, and that is what brought me to the United States. I instinctively lean towards womenswear that is not just glamorous but comfortable as well. I gain inspiration from people around me and my personal experiences. My design and aesthetic have evolved throughout the years although, I still like to incorporate vintage accents in my design details, and the 1920s fashion really charms me. Having been raised in Nepal, my heart is strongly connected to home. Although I wanted to explore the fashion scene of the international market, I have always been inspired by my own city, Kathmandu.

The project draws inspiration from the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu, also known as KTM city, which is where it all started. During my days at fashion school back home, I did not appreciate what was around me, but rather looked for inspiration elsewhere. Kathmandu had a lot to offer for a newbie like me and that is where I started to plot and plan my future, career goals, what I wanted my career to be.

The portfolio of my womenswear collection is important for three reasons. One of the primary reasons is to share my personal journey and experience as a Nepal native, within the American fashion industry. The second reason is because I want my designs to make women feel comfortable and classy at an affordable price, without great harm to the environment. The reason to give emphasis on 'comfort' is that at present, I have observed most contemporary designs are

inspired by western pop culture. Even if one chooses to pay a high price, I believe many of the clothes are trend-driven, and the pieces aren't timeless. Therefore, my brand chooses to focus on cost, staying cost-conscious and simple while benefiting the environment as well as the consumers. The next important reason is, that this collection allows me to dig into my roots, to raise awareness across cultures and countries.

### **Thesis**

My thesis project consists of a digital portfolio of my Spring/Summer 2022 womenswear collection, which will be manufactured in Kathmandu. However, the digital portfolio will be shipped worldwide and showcased in the United States first, for the potential buyers. The line for my portfolio will include illustrations, flats, colors, fabrics, the muse and inspiration from my city and country.

The digital portfolio will display ten hand-drawn illustrations painted with watercolor, that depict different styles and silhouettes. The styles and silhouettes chosen includes shift silhouette, A-line silhouette, sheath silhouette, wrap, sets, flared pants and outer wear. A selection of colors chosen for the color story will include palette of red, blue, green, yellow, white, crimson and purple, which will be popular for the S/S 22 womenswear collection, according to (Pantone, 2021). The digital portfolio will also include the fabrication chosen for the collection. The main textile used is Dhaka, an authentic Nepal made fabric along with viscose and cotton as my secondary textile and Linen-Silk as my third. I also use flower applique, pom-pom and fringes for trims and accents.

The muse for this Collection is Caroline Issa, one of my favorite industry insiders. Issa is a global citizen who has lived in London for the last decade, grew up in Seattle, Singapore, and

Texas- daughter of a Chinese mother and a Lebanese Iranian father. These references have influenced her personal style, describes her style as ‘classic with a twist’ (The Business of Fashion. 2019). Caroline likes to go out occasionally, she prefers skin care more than makeup, needs eight hours of sleep, and loves tailoring (Into the Gloss. 2018). Having followed Caroline for the past 5 years, it was evident she was a woman with great sense of style, intelligence and would be the perfect muse for my womenswear S/S 22 collection.

The womenswear collection as outlined in my digital portfolio, can be styled with sneakers and combat boots not just heels. The collection tilts towards dressy, and ranges from comfortable Bermuda shorts and oversized jackets, to crop tops inspired by blouses worn with sarees, plus an air of minimalism with a linen sarong skirt, and culottes with pleats to the otherwise vibrant lineup. Furthermore, the collection will include summer rooftop party looks, including a peplum one shoulder top with voluminous flounce sleeve. Culturally inspired pieces in the collection are Nepali fabric Dhaka appliqués vest, blouse that looks like a wrap top which is inspired by a popular Nepali outfit named CHAUBANDI CHOLO, along with a tunic top that resembles Kurta. Kurta is a popular casual garment, that is collarless, and its length varies on an individual’s choice, with slits on both sides below the waistline. Typically worn in south Asia, the fabric is light weight as the weather doesn’t get too cold (Njogu, T. 2020). Additionally, intrigued by the Tharu community of Nepal who live in the Indian border; their culture and accessories are highly inspired by India. India is a very diverse country which is rich in their culture and tradition (Rani, O.2012). The vibrant colors and beaded details can be seen in some pieces the collection. Digging into the roots of Nepal is also a way to raise awareness across cultures. I wanted my designs to make one feel comfortable and relaxed simultaneously, being their best self.



Concept Mapping

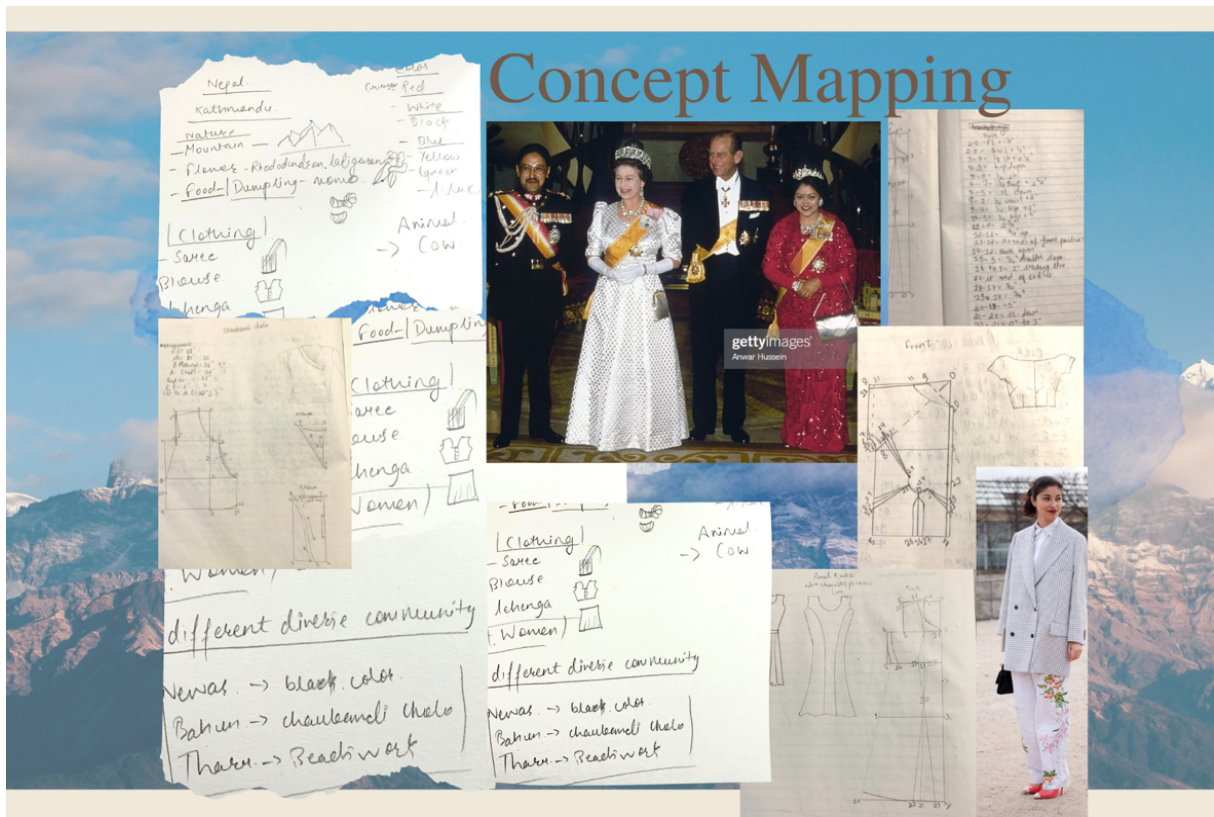


Figure 1 The Queen of Nepal wears Chaubandi cholo and Saree the national attire. My muse Caroline on the left bottom shows the oversized outfit. The collage also displays the brainstorming of the collection and design development. Image source: Twitter.com.

At the center, the picture of King and Queen of Nepal with the Queen of the United Kingdom and Duke of Edinburgh has been taken to juxtapose the style with my muse. The flared silhouette and ‘Chaubandi Cholo’ worn by the Queen of Nepal Aishwarya vs the oversized suit by my muse, Caroline. The Main motive behind concept mapping these garments were to give it a feel of being inspired from a cultural viewpoint simultaneously depicting the characteristic of my muse’s personality because it’s important for me to be able to clarify the designs and aesthetic, that I want to create. Before I design a garment, it’s essential for me to know, if I can

construct the garment myself or not. For that reason, I doodled some formulas and determining measurements.

## Nepal



*Figure 2 Inspiration Board: Nepal. The image depicts the different regions and their traditions of Nepal. Image sources: Unsplash.com.*

Nepal is a land of more than one hundred endogamous groups. With many festivals, to the forest hills, rhododendrons, and the snowy mountains and with the unique national flag (Rose, L. E. 2021). The national flag of Nepal is the only flag in the world, that has a double pennant and not the rectangle shape (Smith, W. 2020). The art and architecture of Nepal has a deep-rooted history. The clothing typically worn by both men and women differs according to the culture (Kurta, 2021). Nepalese cuisine on the other hand, consists of a wide variety of food, that have a mix of Tibetan food such as Dumplings and Indian food such as roti, paratha.

However, Newari cuisine is one of the most influential in Nepal, consisting of Yomari, Bara, chatamari, Lakhamari (Katwal, S. 2021).

## Kathmandu



*Figure 3 Inspiration Board: Kathmandu. The buzziest and colorful streets of Kathmandu. Image sources: Unsplash.com, pinterest.com.*

Against the setting of impressive Himalayas, where many travelers tour in search of the ultimate adventure, Kathmandu, is a heart for all kinds of travelers. Particularly for its rich food ethnicity, monasteries, numerous temples, and world heritage sites. One can also attend jazz festival during October (Ortved, J. 2021). There are a plethora of art museums showcasing art from 100 years old to contemporary art every year. The national library is also located in Patan, Kathmandu. Moving on to cinema and theatre, there are many theatres and an acting school (Magar A. 2018). The weather is generally warm during the days and cold during the night, however it never snows in the capital. The city is considered as one of the most happening

amongst all, for it has so much to offer from food, music, art, culture and economy (Ortved, J. 2021).

## Culture



Figure 4 Inspiration Board: Culture. The diverse culture of Nepal and their magnificent costumes. Image sources: pinterest.com.

The prevalently practiced religion in Nepal is Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. The ancient Vedic gods are most worshipped. Nepal has many rooms for different ethnicities, particularly in, Kathmandu there are people living from every caste. Denizens from all around the country migrate to the capital for various reasons, including opportunities, lifestyle, or adventure. Organically, the food culture of Nepalese consists of eating with fingers or right hand and not using cutleries. However, In Kathmandu it isn't the same, it depends on an individual family tradition. Food in Kathmandu particularly is influenced by Newar community. They prepare different varieties of meats and grand mothers are proficient in making drinks from rice and unique food such as fritters from lentils and more. The national animal of Nepal is a cow, so

beef is strictly restricted in the country, in fact the cows are worshipped in Hinduism. However, the culture of Kathmandu, which is an urban city is vastly different from other cities of Nepal (Turner, E. 2021).

## Muse



*Figure 5 Inspiration Board: Muse. Caroline Issa knows how to perfectly style suits with tailored pants or dresses. Classic style with a twist. Image sources: Vogue.com.*

Often photographed by street style photographers and bloggers, Caroline Issa is one of the notable names in the industry. A consultant, magazine publisher and fashion director of online magazine Because and Digital magazine that is Biannual named Tank, likes to call herself a businesswoman. Every woman has her own charm, Caroline's sense of style and aesthetic align quite well with my vision and the kind of women I would like to dress (Mohammed, H. 2019). For me, beauty with intellect and vigor is most fascinating in a woman.

## Color Story



Figure 6 Inspiration Board: Color story. From Red to blue, colors in Nepal plays a significant role. The inspiration for this collection originates from the national flower to the mountains. Image sources: theguardian.com.

The colors in Nepal have their individual significance. Purple बैजनी and Pink गुलाबी represents similar meaning and aspiration, such as, luxury, romance, passion, and liveliness. Red रातो represents strength, determination, rage, or anger. Particularly in Nepalese wedding red is compulsory for the bride and preferred by the guests as well, as it symbolizes good fortune and prosperity. Blue नीलो the color is considered as the coolest color that embodies harmony and tranquility. The crimson सिम्रिक color that has a shade of reddish magenta is appreciated as a sign of nobility, royalty, and high social reputation. The crimson color represents the color of the national flower rhododendron. Green हरियो and yellow पहेँलो colors represent freshness, growth, and money. Ladies tend to wear green bangles and worship lord shiva during the month of Shravan (July) for the prosperity of their spouse. White color is considered as purity and

softness. It is also important to wear white during funerals and mourning in Eastern countries. Black color represents mystery, death and evil in the Nepali culture. However, the belief of the color black, is not accepted in urban cities like Kathmandu, and it is worn by many as a just another color. (Languages, L. L. 2021).

### Fabrics Textiles/Prints/Trims



*Figure 7 Inspiration Board: Fabric Textiles/Prints/Trims. Nepalese traditional fabric Dhaka at the center, along with fabrics and trims used in the collection. Such as Viscose, Silk and flower applique. Image sources: bujonepal.com, pinterest.com.*

Nepal has a wide variety of textiles, that in produced inside the country. Nepal is popular for high end rugs, bags and blankets. Natural fibers such as cotton and jute from plants, pashmina, wool, fabrics made from yak fur and goat hair, are readily available in Nepal. The most prevalent is Dhaka, for its sturdiness quality, a wide range of colors and design patterns that are hand woven with wool and cotton. However, in recent years mass production and globalization has threatened traditional ways of textile manufacturing (Przybylek, S. 2017).

**Hand-Drawn Illustrations**

*Figure 8 Hand-drawn Illustration by myself. Digitally scanned and designed in Canva, for appealing visual presentation.*

Each Individual design is hand-drawn and painted with watercolor to give a realistic feel and finished with Pigma 0.5 pen. The illustrations are digitally scanned, however there is no retouching to the sketches and colors.



Technical Drawing



Technical Drawing



Figure 9 Technical Drawing: Crop top with elastic waist band, culottes with pleats at the front and Jacket with Dhaka fabric and fringes trims at the end.



Technical Drawing



Figure 10 Technical Drawing: Shift White dress with crimson organza flare and flower applique at the front with Dhaka fabric at the waistline. To match with the waist detail and to add extra Nepali touch, the 3/4 puff sleeve has a Dhaka fabric cuff.



## Technical Drawing



Figure 11 Technical Drawing: Flared emerald pants with a slit at the center front. The light-yellow chiffon with floral applique details at the neck and satin tie. The yellow and Dhaka patchwork long maxi vest completes the look.



## Technical Drawing

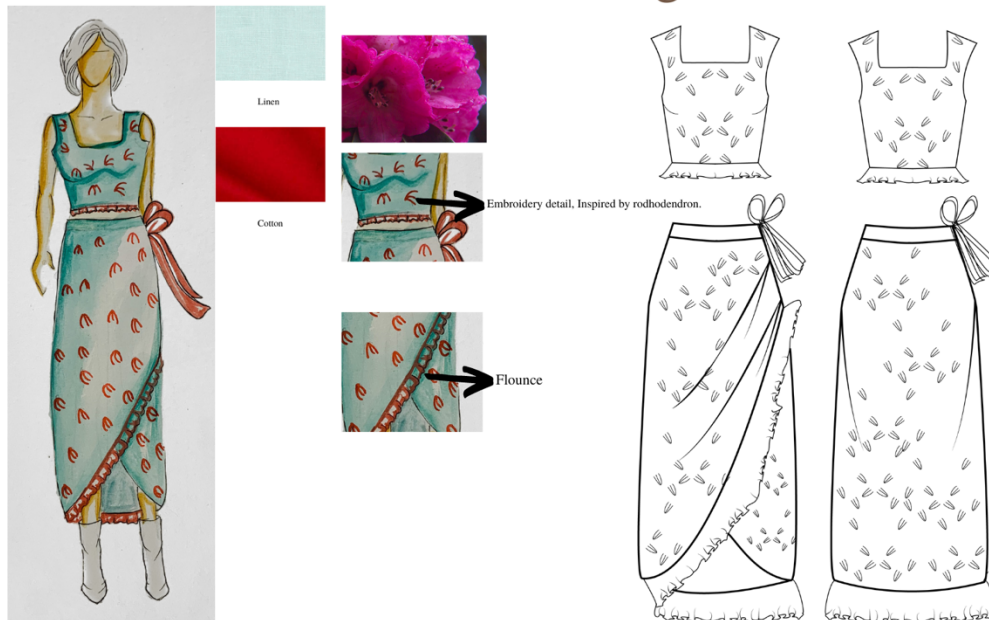


Figure 12 Technical Drawing: Muted green Linen crop top and sarong skirt with flounce detail at the hem and embroidery inspired by national flower of Nepal rhododendron.



## Technical Drawing

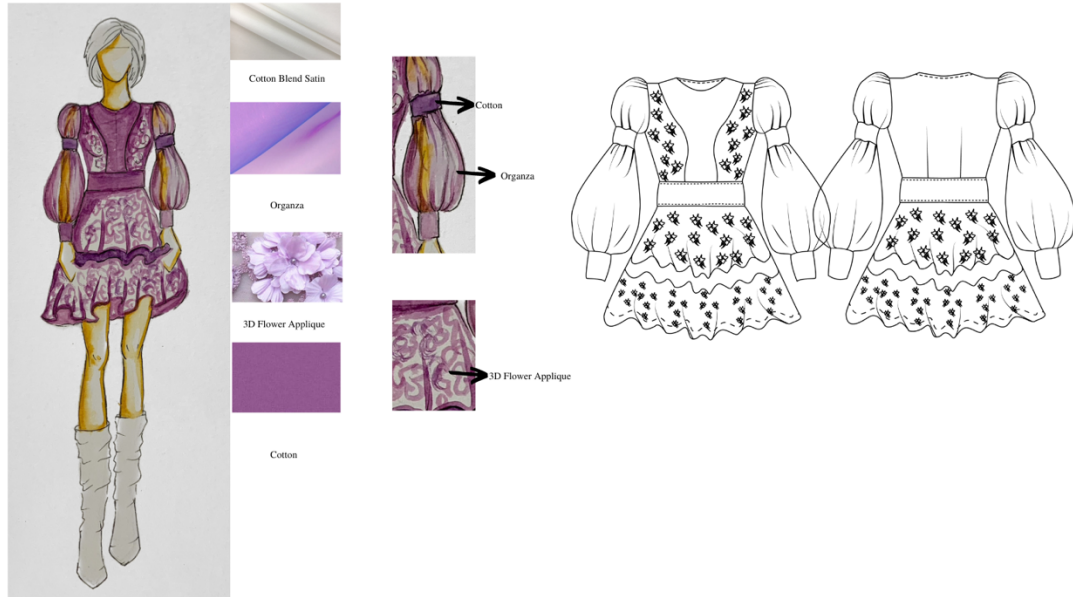


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## Technical Drawing

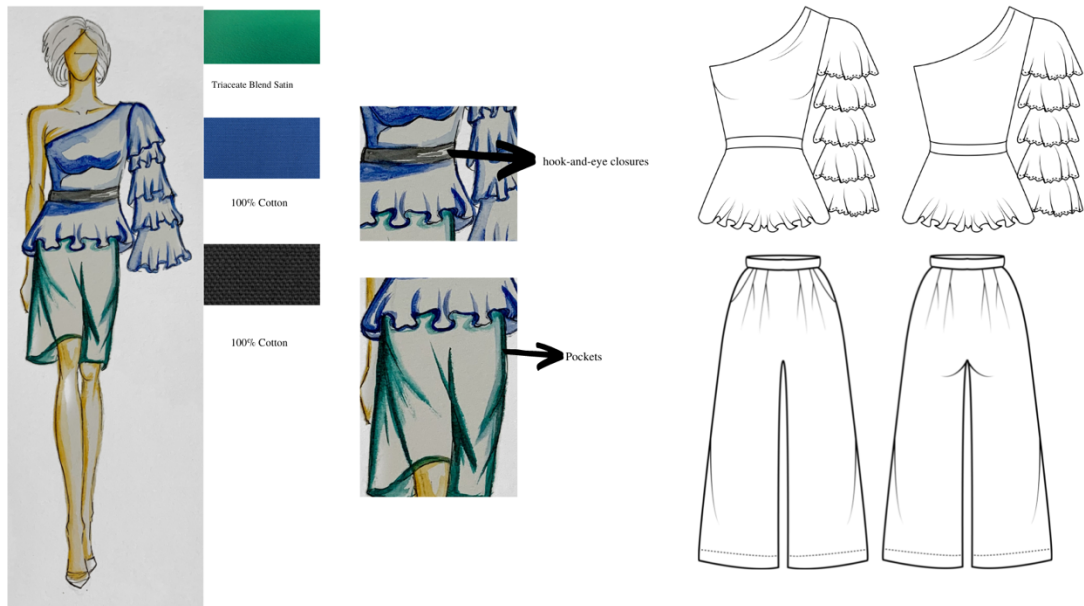


Figure 14 Technical Drawing: One shoulder style is inspired by the draping style of saree. The peplum helps to cinch the waist and emerald, green Bermuda shorts completes the look.



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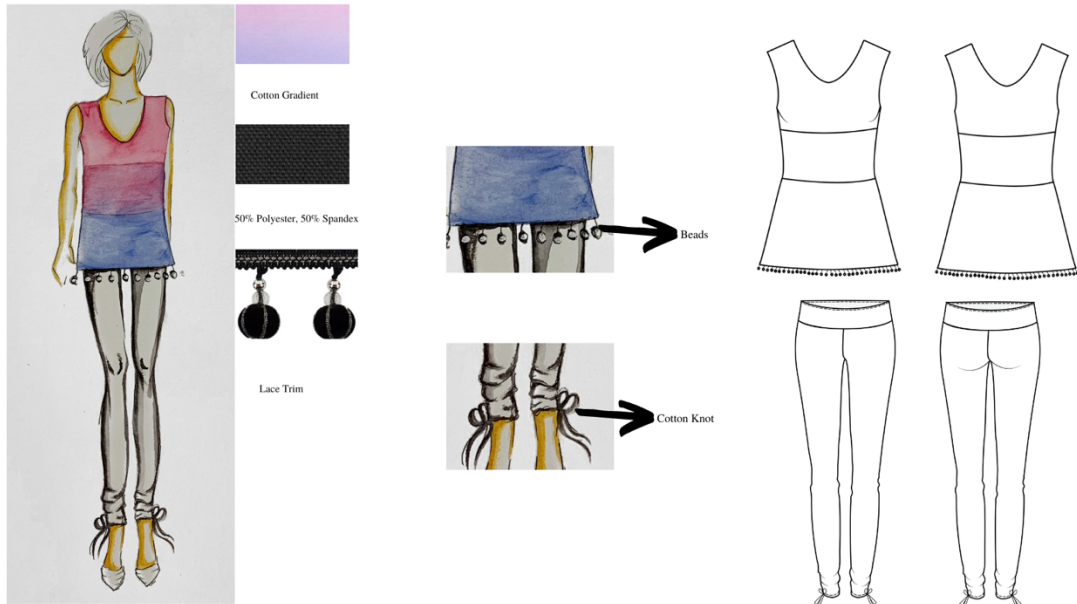


Figure 15 Technical Drawing: The gradient tunic is inspired by most worn outfit in Kathmandu 'Kurta' with drop beads lace trim at the hem, paired with basic black leggings that has a tie knot detail.



## Technical Drawing

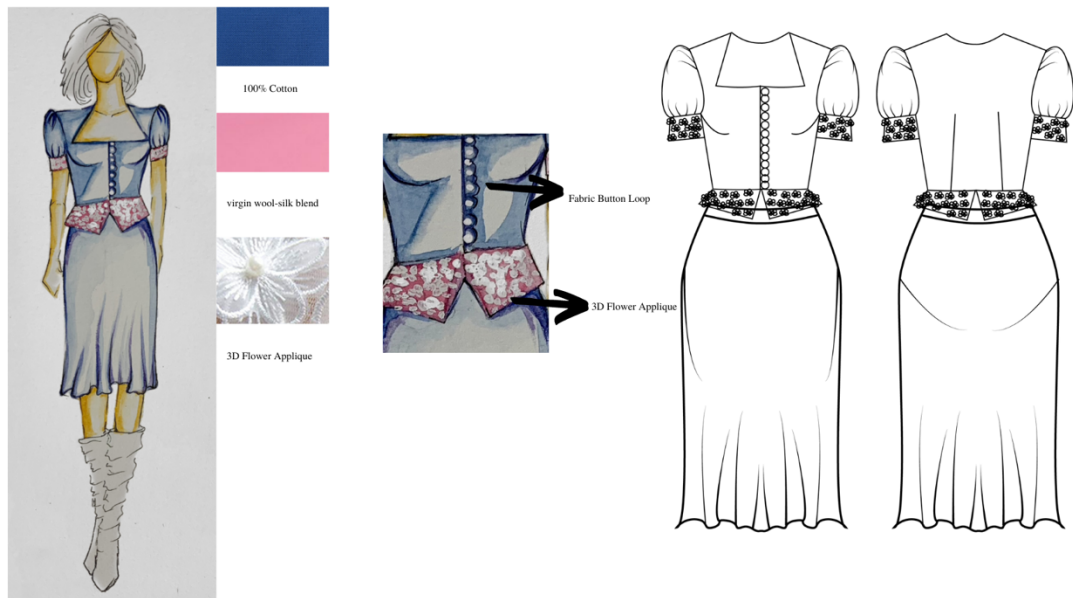


Figure 16 Technical Drawing: Targeted to the working women, the trapeze neckline, puff sleeve top with 3D flower applique at the hem of the sleeve and waist, with skirt. Can be worn separate or together.



## Technical Drawing

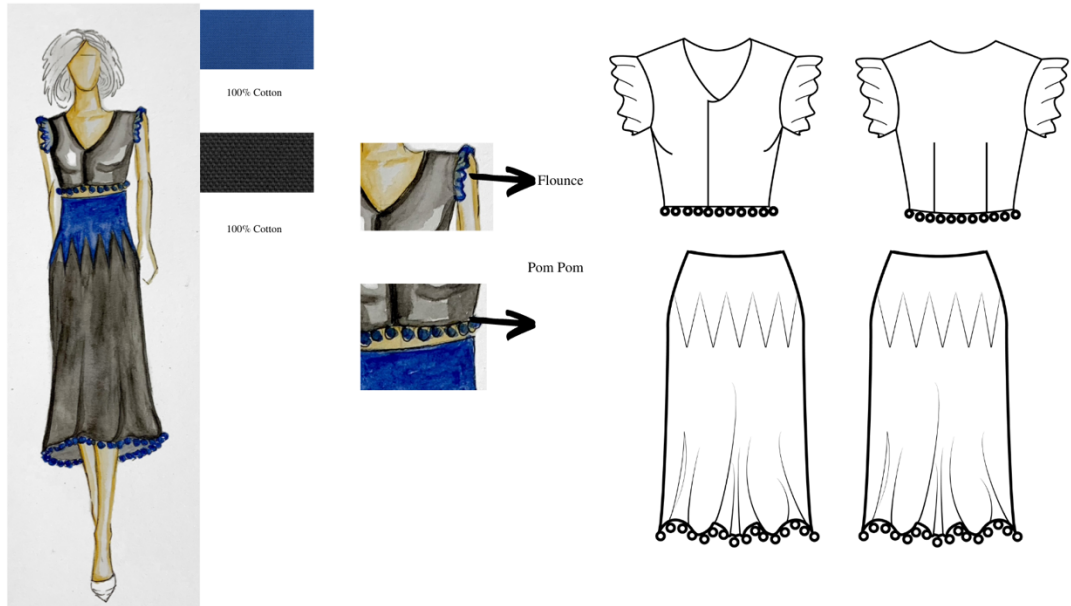


Figure 17 Technical Drawing: Crop top with hook eye fastening at the center front, flounce cap sleeve and waistline with pom-pom trims. The skirt has a blue triangle patchwork detail inspired by the mountains, with pom-pom trims at the hem.



## Technical Drawing

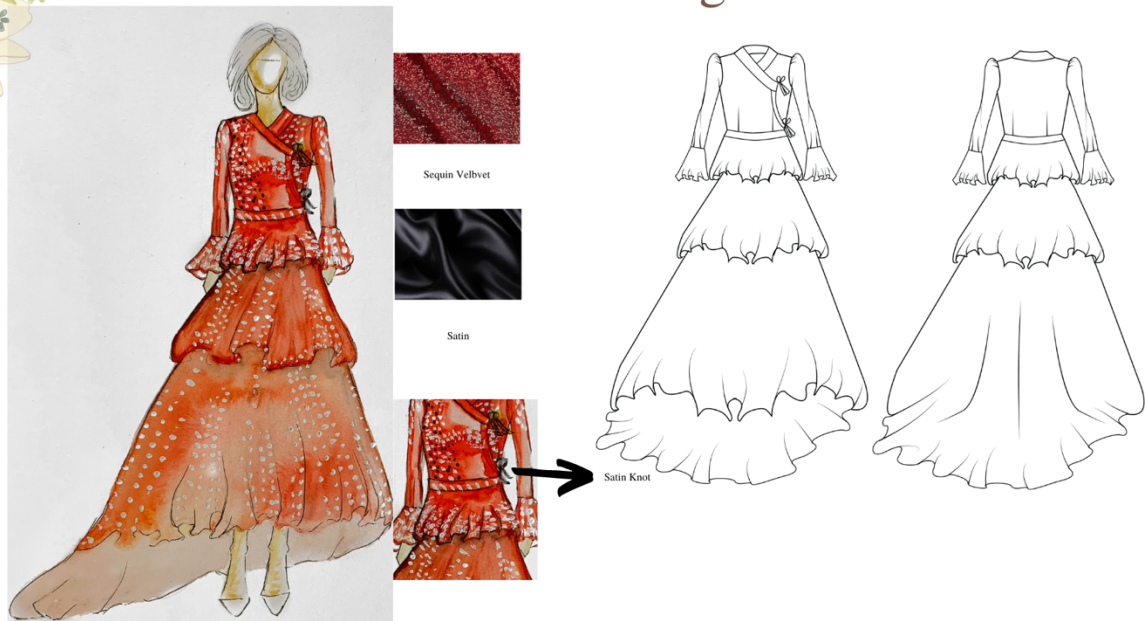


Figure 18 Technical Drawing: The front bodice is inspired by Chaubandi cholo, peplum silhouette to cinch the waistline and bottom with a high-low design.

## **Conclusion**

Although, the collection began impulsively, presenting the designs and the process in a scholarly manner has been insightful for me. Being a fashion business major, who studied fashion design in a traditional manner without much digital knowledge back home in Nepal, developing this project was a challenging task for me.

With a small vision, a fashion portfolio can assist to launch a ready-to-wear collection that feels surreal. Additionally, I was able to successfully address my vision and quest through the collection. My goal was not just to get moved by a certain muse but to reflect myself and my struggles through the designs. Such as my imagination of designing since I linked to the fashion school back in 2012 and how I landed to the United States as well as discovered my design aesthetic and preference throughout the years.

The thesis project only includes design development aspects but not finances, real-time garments, tech packs and spec sheets, because of the time and distance limitation. The collection will be manufactured in Nepal. Nonetheless, developing this project has helped me to understand the details of fashion collection development. Therefore, I'm confident this project will help me for my next step in the real fashion world.

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