# ARTIST STATEMENT

"Colors, like features, follow the changes of emotions." - Pablo Picasso

Design. Production. Advertising. Packaging. Color theory holds an essence of guidance, it creates visual stimulation and has the power to evoke ones mood. We used this concept and the strength of complementary colors to create a product line, which consists of a reversible jersey-knit dress in conjunction with modular silver necklaces. Using complementary colors we were able apply the aspect of interchangeability. Our product and advertisements are simple, marketable, and will always be in fashion.

Get Compliments, with Complements!

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The main purpose of our senior integrated project was to creatively advertise a product we designed. Using a series of complementary colors, we took on the process of design, production, advertising and packaging of a product, which consists of a reversible jersey-knit dress in conjunction with modular silver necklaces.

We found color theory to be an interesting concept, which allowed us to develop and advertise our product based off of its mood creating components. We developed the concept of our product using complementary colors to allow an interchangeable aspect the consumer can manipulate. The dresses are a tube style that is reversible with complementary colors on each side. Each color expresses a different mood or personality.

The dresses are sold as complements to allow the consumer two different choices of a personality they want to express that day.  The modular silver necklace with colored beads allows the consumer to add or take away chains as they please to suit the corresponding mood. The necklaces are also designed to be complementary, similar to the dresses. Instead of a reversible aspect, however, a modular necklace is sold with corresponding color beads to each dress.  Because the necklaces are modular, the consumer is able to wear the different colored chains in any combination of ways to make a necklace that appeals to their mood and outfit of that day.

Many influences helped our creative process. Our inspiration began on our trip to Italy, in the summer of 2007 to study at Lorenzo de Medici. Many artists and designers such as Andy Warhol, Apple iPod advertisements, and American Apparel then enhanced this revelation. We were also influenced by Mood Bracelets, which were sold based off of a concept very similar to our vision, and from advertising campaigns from the 1960's.

In Italy we took classes focused on fashion and jewelry design. These classes jump-started our creative motivation to work with these mediums in our IP project. We wanted to combine our skills in fashion design and jewelry construction, which established the idea to collaborate.  This allowed us to work with these skills and also to take a step further and apply another element to our project, thus the advertising campaign aspect was born.

The beaded mood bracelets were a product sold during our youth that came in a variety of colors each representing a certain mood.  The concept was to wear the colored bracelet that represented how you felt that day.  Soon the frenzy took off and customers felt the need to have as many bracelets as possible in order to show how they felt each day with a variety of possibilities throughout the day.  This idea of a consumer showing how she feels by changing her accessories gave us the confidence our reversible dress and modular necklaces were relevant, marketable products. Changing the color of a bracelet, to portray an emotion or mood, very closely relates to changing the color of a dress to express an emotion or mood.

Andy Warhol's screen-prints are very brightly colored and have layers of colors placed on top of each other. We used many of his prints as inspiration to develop our advertisements.  We had already planned on using bright colors, but the combinations that he used and the style of some of his prints were very helpful in guiding us to stronger design ideas. Although all aspects of his prints are manipulated we chose to keep the dress and jewelry very detailed and accurate. The layered effect was a technique that we chose to highlight, which brought our advertisements to another level.

Ipod advertisements are very simple and have solid, bold colors with a black silhouette of a person. The silhouettes in the advertisements are very striking poses that enthused us to work with similar poses. The iPod silhouettes show strong expressions by throwing their arms into the air and dancing around. The advertisements not only create a lot of energy through those poses but also through the vibrant and bold colors. The simple and bold graphic layout that is depicted in the ads also attracted us to them. We wanted to utilize iPod's advertisements style of simplicity so the consumer focus was on the product's message.

American Apparel is a clothing store that also uses very simple, bold colored designs. The clothing is mainly manufactured from cotton jersey fabric. A single design is produced and sold in many different colors so that the customer has a wide variety to choose from. The bold colors and simple styles were the primary influences we employed in our project.

We reviewed advertisements from the 1960's because our ads were very representative of that style. There were a myriad of various ads, which aided us in finding fonts and style ideas. Following suit from our prior research, the predominance of bright colors and unique styles of fonts served as a catalyst for our creative thought process. Several ads, such as those for Buick and a variety of soda pop companies were helpful even though they were not similar products to ours. They had bright designs and creative layouts that ignited the spark for some of the ideas we tried in our own ads. More specifically, the black outline surrounding our advertisements was gleaned by a Gordon's Gin ad with a female model whose body extended over a blue, block background.

We originally began our IP project with a gradient scale of one color and experimented with ready made clothing and different style necklaces. Our initial thrust was to integrate five different shades of pink with each shade to correspond with a different necklace and dress. The idea was for the dress and necklace to become more complex and energetic as the color became more vibrant. After reviewing our first test results we realized the gradient scale did not present enough contrast in emotions as the complementary colors did because it was not as sharp of a contrast.

The dresses originated with ready-made shirts that were purchased from the Salvation Army. Those clothes brought in another layer of meaning to the project that dealt with ready-made objects we recycled to transform into something else. Upon further review we felt this concept was pushing our project somewhere we did not want to go. It was at this juncture of our project we began to experiment with yards of fabric, and making the dresses with our own patterns. That is how we designed the simple, tube style, reversible dress.

The necklaces started as five separate necklaces that worked with the gradient scale. The first necklace, going along with the less intense color, was less complicated as it was just a simple chain. The necklaces complexity progressed with the gradient, eventually ending in many chains of different lengths. With input from outside critiques, we decided to make the necklace a modular unit that can be alternated as the customer pleases. After redesigning the necklaces into a modular style, they still did not accurately correspond with the dresses and the concept of color theory. Colored beads were then added to each necklace to further connect them to our concept.

Our product gradually transformed into a simple style dress, allowing the complementary colors to become the primary aspect of the design, along with modular necklaces that included the same colors as the dresses. The bright colors of the dresses and necklaces were the starting point for our advertisements, which are simple and colorful layouts manipulated in Photoshop. The colors help to depict the moods that correspond with each color of dress. The poses of the model re-enforce the idea of different moods or personalities. The advertisements originated with photography that was slightly manipulated in Photoshop. We photographed a model and placed her body into a specific setting. The settings were mostly nature scenes. We discovered these types of advertisements did not look very professional, realizing our strengths were not in this realistic styling approach. After a reevaluation of the design direction we experimented in Photoshop based on our early iPod ad studies. We used solid colored, graphic backgrounds with black silhouettes. We discovered a simple, bold, graphic approach seemed to be more successful in advertising our specific product. Our product is very bold and simple and therefore our ads are as well.

To avoid becoming too similar to the iPod advertisements, we decided to go in our own direction. The successful solution was conceived when we produced the silhouette of the model in a similar shade of the dress she was wearing, instead of black.

The solid colors in the background were not working as well as we imagined, which pushed us to work with abstract photographs instead. The new photographs are blurred images set on a long exposure time while the camera was in motion. In Photoshop, each image was altered to one color of green, pink, blue, orange, purple, or

yellow. The photographs added new energy to the advertisements that was not previously present with the solid colors.

Inspired by a 60's advertisement, we added a black border around the colorful photograph. The model is placed abstractly over the background and partially over the black border. Each color of the dress was to originally have its own page, making up a spread, but realistically, it would be difficult to get a spread in a magazine. We decided the more advantageous strategy would be to combine the two images together. The advertisements became stronger with the two silhouettes interacting with one another on a single page. Text, also prompted by 60's advertisements, was added as the final step in the completion of the advertisements. Similar to the previous advertising methods for the dresses, the necklaces are also advertised on silhouettes in front of an abstract background.  In order to highlight the detail in the necklace, only one is shown containing complementary colored beads.

To better show the reversibility of the dress, we decided to create a video using still frames. We photographed a model changing the dress from one color to the other. She started with one pose, took off the dress, and ended in another pose. In Photoshop, we modified the still images of the model into a silhouette mimicking the advertisements. No background was needed because she was projected onto the wall in the gallery. Without a background the focus remained on the dress. After developing the photos into bold colored silhouettes, we imported them into iMovie to make a stop motion animation. The animation consists of three loops of video with each color of green, pink, orange, blue, yellow, and purple being represented.

The ads were displayed in The Work Gallery, which is one of the University of Michigan galleries. The video was projected on a wall to the left of the six advertisements. The advertisements were hung horizontally with the three dress prints on the top and the three necklace prints on the bottom. The three-dimensional products were displayed in their packaging in front of the wall on pedestals. There was one set of the dress and necklaces available for hands on interaction while another set was displayed in the packaging.

The dresses and necklaces bright and bold colors are unmistakable via the clear containers they are packaged in. The simple, transparent plastic container suggests, "ready to wear" because it is light and transportable, and makes the clothing and jewelry easily accessible.

Our final results support and strengthen our initial investigative focus that construction and advertisement of a simple product line based off of color theory can make a dramatic impact. The gallery space was set up with the product placed within its packaging and advertisements hung like store displays. The overall effect was that the consumer will be aware of the products visual appeal and it's functionality. They constitute a great fashion pairing which the consumer can easily manipulate to correspond with their mood on any certain day. Simplicity, style and ease of use will always be in fashion. Get compliments, with Complements!

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