HOW DO I DRESS FOR PLAY WHILE TAKING MY CREATIVE WORK SERIOUSLY?

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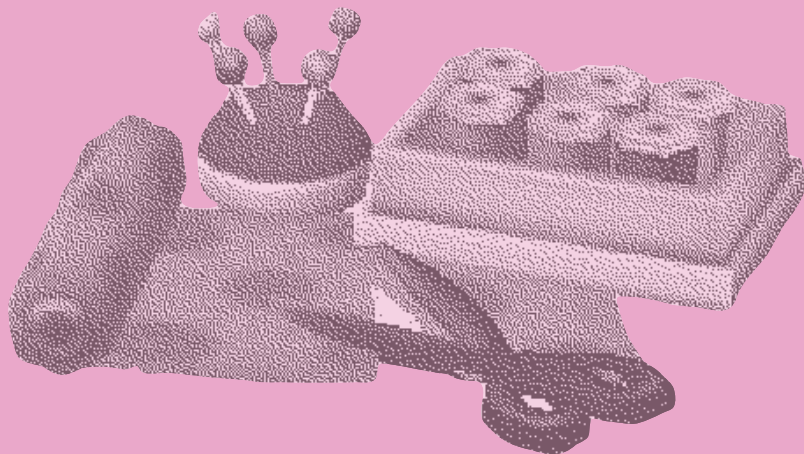
THE PROBLEM

Professional creative work often comes with a uniform of seriousness, stifling play.

Clothing is an interface for the mind; if I'm wearing sneakers, I want to run, if I'm wearing sweats I want to relax.

I sewed a series of pinafore dresses as an exploration of method designing, using dress to influence the creator's mindset.

THE EXPERIMENT

The garment featured ruffles and whimsy while optimizing for movement, layering, and wearability. The goal was not to create a costume but to trigger better thinking through dress. The garments allowed me to explore how playful I could be with my process and the ruffles became my armor.

It was almost like designing a new creative persona made of lace and bows.

Play becomes a part of the process.

How we dress can shape our ideas.

With each dress I tried to pick different color schemes based on tropes in make believe games.

Whether I was a fairy, a lion tamer, a shop owner, or queen of the park, the worlds I made up then still inspire me.

THE INSIGHT

Wearing these dresses helped me take creative risk I might've dismissed as childish or frivolous. When we dress for play, we take out our adult fears and unlock new perspectives. If play unlocks

We perform the roles we dress for. Who can say they don't feel confident in a sharp pressed shirt? When we wear these costumes, we take on their outlook too.

new perspectives, then the problen isn't maturity but of the loss of permission to fail.

THE OPPORTUNITY

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A further iteration of this project I hope to work on is developing spaces that blend co-working with this idea of using dress up as a tool for problem solving. This combines many passions of mine: fashion, making, psychology, and space design. I want to study more how dress shifts behavior.

Just as actors use costume to channel their characters, designers can use clothes as a way to challenge their uniform and dress for play.

Directed Research
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