



Hormazd Narielwalla

Title: Couture Lines

Medium: Mixed digital media drawings

Dimension: @ 203 x 152 cm

Date: 2010

Statement

In his art making process Narielwalla forages for forms in historical tailoring archives. The found fragments are digitised, collaged and re-presented as a celebratory artistic response to the craft of their time. 'Couture Lines' was initiated by the chance find of a tailoring journal documenting the progress of a 16-year-old Parisian girl, Berthe Seynove, as she learns to cut couture dresses at the turn of the 20th Century.

The journal has travelled across time and around Europe before being discovered by Narielwalla who transforms Berthe's tentative fine lines that become concrete in comparison to the looseness of the pages. The once-frail fire-damaged journal seems to slowly fade from us revealing an intricate geometric landscape of confident construction lines tracing the cuts and curves of an imagined structured couture garment.

Biography

After completing a Masters in Fashion Enterprise & Design at Westminster, Narielwalla worked for the prestigious Savile Row tailor, Dege & Skinner, where he developed an appreciation for bespoke tailoring; in particular, the cutters' all-important brown paper patterns of individual customers. This fascination, of the patterns, prompted him to produce *Dead Man's Patterns*. The artist book was inspired by a set of bespoke patterns belonging to a deceased customer. The concept was an attempt to recreate the patterns as objects of art, using the unique theme, which has become his trademark.

In October 2009, British designer Paul Smith presented Narielwalla's first solo exhibition *A Study on Anansi*, at his Mayfair gallery where his artworks combined the patterns with western African folk tales. He has also recently written and art directed his second publication *A Cut Above*, the tailoring memoirs of Michael Skinner, whose story he tells through the pattern cutting journals Mr. Skinner compiled when studying at the Tailor & Cutter Academy.

Narielwalla has since become the first recipient of the International Rector Scholarship from the University of Arts, London. The thesis for his PhD at the London College of Fashion will focus on the uniforms of the British Raj and their construction (archived at the National Army Museum). The research aims to interpret and articulate historical knowledge of embedded meaning in the uniform of the Raj through the medium of an art form, accessible to both tailoring and non-tailoring audiences.

<http://www.fashion.arts.ac.uk/61709.htm>

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