



Expressions of **The Sun Society**

Researching design and trend possibilities of technological swimwear fabrics, staff and students of Northumbria University (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK) have explored new methods of print, construction, and embellishment to create product for 'The Sun Society Consumer' scenarios. These pieces illustrate their response in diverse areas where they challenge how consumers dress through swim sports, family activities on the beach and glamour around the pool.

Collaborators include:

*Eurojersey
Carvico
Jersey Lomelina
ESF
Bemis
Plymouth*

Expressions of Sun Society



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

Northumbria University is based in Newcastle upon Tyne in the UK. Our Fashion Marketing course has had a close relationship with Concepts Paris for many years now through internships and special projects such as 'upcycling' in 2011 and now 'Expressions of the Sun Society' in 2012.

At Northumbria University our Fashion Research ethic is to explore materials;

In the body,

On the body and

Around the body.

Involved in this project are a team of fourth year Fashion Design, Fashion Marketing students and Lecturers. We have felt that as a team of experts, fledgling experts and apprentices we can bring different aesthetics across age, values and perceptions to the design process. Sharing ideas, material manipulations and conceptual frameworks.

Throughout this project we explored the design and trend possibilities of technological swimwear fabrics by using fresh approaches to print, construction, and embellishment. We have examined the wearing and use of swimwear in different arenas; on the beach, with family, around the pool, in the pool, active sport and play activities. We have endeavored to meet the needs of each arena technically, where the human form needs to be both Held, Supported, Enhanced, Articulated, and Flattered over a wide array of body types. From a fashion point of view we aimed to meet individual needs in colour, print, embellishment and silhouette based on our research into future trends.

We have Identified 5 key drivers in the future in the beachwear market:-

Body image and identity

Health and well being

Ageing population

Sustainability

Polarisation of the market

Beachwear and sun products are an expanding area of the clothing industry. It is a complex market that delivers clothing encompassing different aspects of human psychology and social integration on many levels. New awareness of body health is a response to growing concerns on diabetes, weight, safety in the sun, enjoying the health benefits of vitamin D and the benefits of light and emotional positivity of sun 'worship'. Design needs to be sensitive to covering the body for all shapes and sizes in a positive framework that aids self image

How we approached project

We chose 4 key conceptual themes to research and explore:

Plunge

Solorise

Eden

Polaroid

Overarching

When artists come to paint with a particular medium such as Oils, watercolours, collage etc it takes time to hone and craft the possibilities that can be obtained. When a designer explores new fabrications it Too takes time to explore potential possibilities in drape, stretch, moulding, cutting, bonding, welding and manipulating the media to suit both their design ethos and client needs. We chose a variety of weights and finishes from Eurojersey Lomellina, Carvico and ESF along with Bemis no sew technology and Plymouth elastics to explore the possibilities of these fabrications within this framework.

Plunge

Inspired by endurance 'wild swimming' in lakes and rivers this trend encompasses the new fit 'middle-youth' who like to live through the great outdoors, they enjoy global travel and take adventure where they can.

Kate Rew founder of the Outdoor Swimming Society stated that 5 years ago it felt as if outdoor swimming was extinct, however there has been a huge revival, summarised in her quote;

'The wild animal part of you still needs to roam into the unknown'

This consumer is physically fit, they investment dress in artisan and utilitarian products with both design and echo integrity. They are caught between the power of technology and their love of the ancient, craft, vintage and folklore.

They can be;
Midlife independents
Self Contained Couples
Senior Sole Decision makers and
Empty Nesters



Plunge

Mintel

Consumers who are 45+ are interested in staying younger, dressing fashionably but appropriately and are quality driven.

They are environmentally attuned, ethically in touch and are the key protagonists in the population when it comes to recycling and supporting ethical causes. In the creation of these trends we selected Colours to complement the outdoor landscape, natural sepia, duck egg, charcoal, bitter chocolate and white; neutral tones and light weathered textures.

The shapes are sculptured to enhance and support the figure for ultimate comfort, support, elegance and sophistication. They are not for competition, but performance built for a demanding swimmer.

These products will give confidence and trust to the owner, with built in shape enhancing features that include sensitive fabrication with enhancements such as thermo regulation, comfort and moisturising properties.



Solarise

This trend encompasses all ages from the very young to the old, and therefore provides a challenge in styling and performance related shape silhouette and cut. Sporting ease, performance and a youthful outlook are the key drivers here.

Sportswear is intrinsically linked to lifestyle and activities, Who you are
What you are into,
dictate the way you dress.
Being part of a select group gives us an identity and validation.

These customers want simplicity and trust in their products through brand integrity and sporting endorsement, they believe in buying the best, but also wish for value for money.

They would be an ideal accompaniment to yachting, surfing or other sea sports.

Textures are matt and sleek using traditional sporting and preppy elements to less traditional effects such as flocking and embroidery. Graphic colour blocking was achieved with sharply delineated welded construction. Graphic flat zip insertion and monotone prints contributed to this youthful look



Eden

This trend is aimed at the international traveler, hot sun seeker; they want branded styles that have an instant eye catching appeal

The clientele for this trend are an example of the polarised market from

Young independence seekers,

Gap year-pack packers,

Families at play

To

Early Retirer's

Financially Secure Leisure Class and

Global Voyager

The look is best interpreted at the polar ends from luxury to volume market levels, depending on the interpretation and techniques used in the quality of production.

This customer requires swimming performance with body enhancing glamour that echoes cruise relaxation. Epitomised by equatorial sultry blooms and long haul travel. The trend encompasses all aspects of the body beautiful and hot sun environments, languid and evoking the scents of hot house flowers. This look works in warm climates around the globe. Activities include beach, cruise or dessert poolside. Colours are saturated and gleaming with bronzed and sheen finishes. Prints inspired by 17th century overblown floral arrangements and David La Chapelle photography.



Polaroid

This trend is epitomised by glamour, hedonism, living in the present and for the sense of excitement based on the idea of poolside or spa holidays.

This consumer struggles financially in today's political climate but can manage the holiday that takes them away from the disillusionment of economic and ecological problems.

Single or in a young family it is aimed towards the urban who wishes to live well and look good.

The colour story reflects past glories of Polaroid and new media i-phoneography and Instagram. Intensely over exposed colour palettes of Canary, Tangerine, Olive and Mushroom. Light reflecting colours and layering affects.



Returning to our research themes for this project

Body image and identity
Health and well being
Ageing population
Sustainability and
Polarisation of the market

Body image and identity - Health and Well being –

Expressions of the Sun Society is the start of a journey to investigate female relationships with water and swimwear across ages and lifestyles. Swimwear is the only arena where an individual exposes more of their physical body in a public space. This in itself has consequences on image construction and how each and everyone constructs their identity. Whether that be through health and fitness in body shaping or through swimwear clothing. We are entering an era when we face a change in demographics around the world and increasingly in the west. Furthermore our aging population **have lived and experienced a pluralism of fashion style and individualism**. This sector of the population should present a wonderful design opportunity in swimwear and other arenas currently under exploited.

As Emma Clifford from Mintel indicates “As the UK is getting older, the over-55s are becoming an increasingly powerful demographic. ... Many over-55s are hungry for more stylish fashion options for their age group. It is no longer commercially acceptable to ignore this growing customer base ...”

This sector of the population are younger in disposition than previous generations, are expected to live longer, are fitter and healthier and have greater disposable incomes than their equivalent from previous decades.

Sustainability

The recent advances made by these swimwear textile manufactures: Eurojersey, Lomellina and Carvico in using less resources in their life cycle production, need to be promoted to designers, manufacturers and consumers with integrity. Their Life Cycle Control project was a response to the market demand for more Social Awareness and Responsibility. The use of recycled raw materials, the reduction of waste and clever use of energy consumption amongst other creative strategies has enabled them to both better their production techniques and develop exciting new fabrications that give high performance and comfort to the end user. We hope that Eurojersey, Lomellina, Carvico, ESF, Bemis and Plymouth will enjoy the treatments that our new generation of designers and research team have created. As an example how technology and creativity might drive future markets.

Polarisation of the market

There is an increasing gap in income levels between the poor and rich. This is echoed in product markets where high end luxury and low end mass produced goods have increased in demand. A Polarisation in the market where the middle has been 'squeezed'. Companies should not to ignore this arena which we predict will re emerge when the needs for sustainable development will change the face of long term purchase habits.

Our approach to this collaboration with Concepts Trend Agency and the five manufacturers into swimwear is from these research interests. How does research aid swimwear design in different arenas by having impact on real and perceptive health benefits from design that has close correlation to each and every persons true form. More in depth analysis into sporting activities, relationships with swimwear as a fashion artefact will take Further inquiry.

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Studies have shown that purchasing sportswear that feels good and aids identity construction can help individuals maintain their personal fitness regimes

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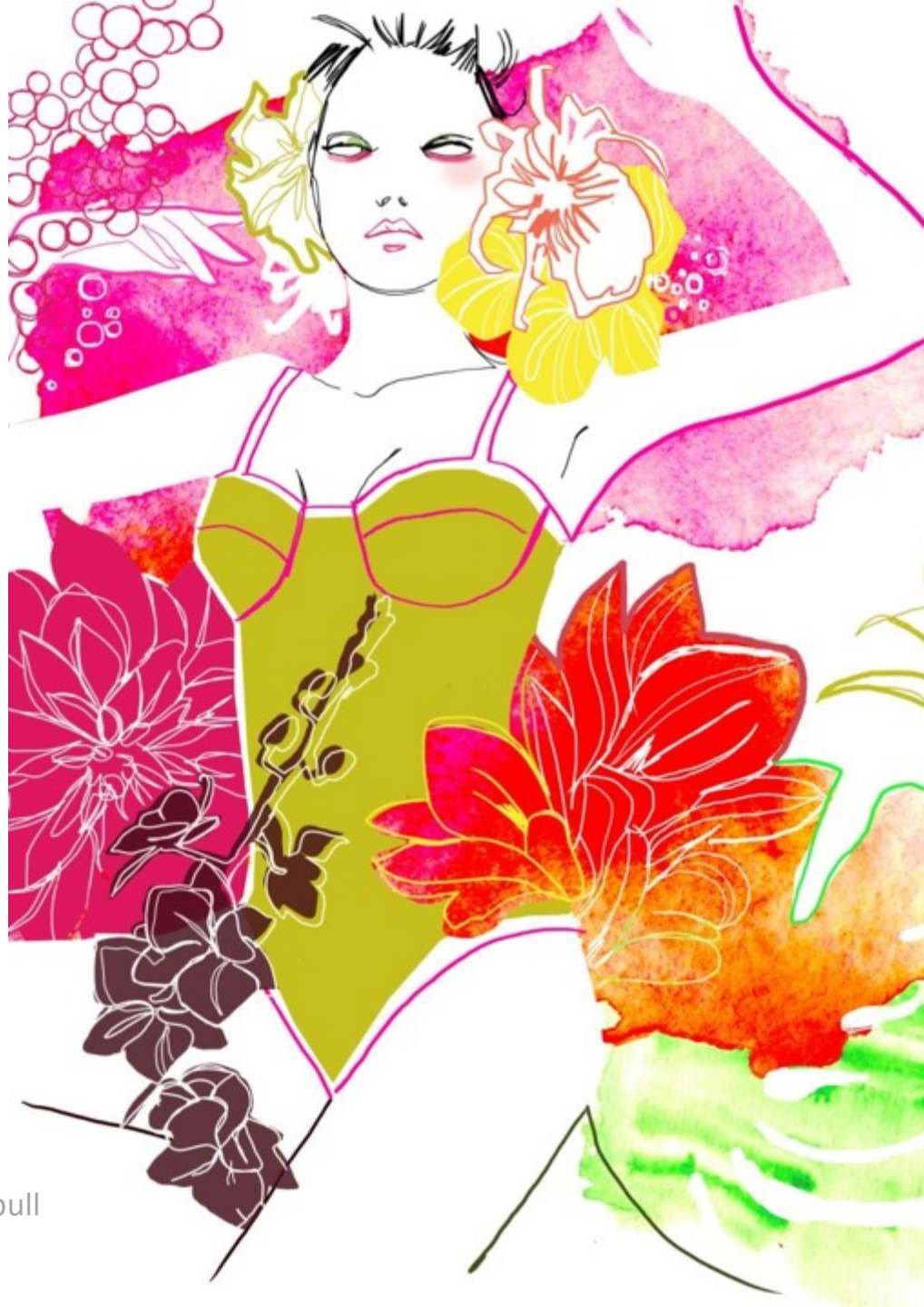








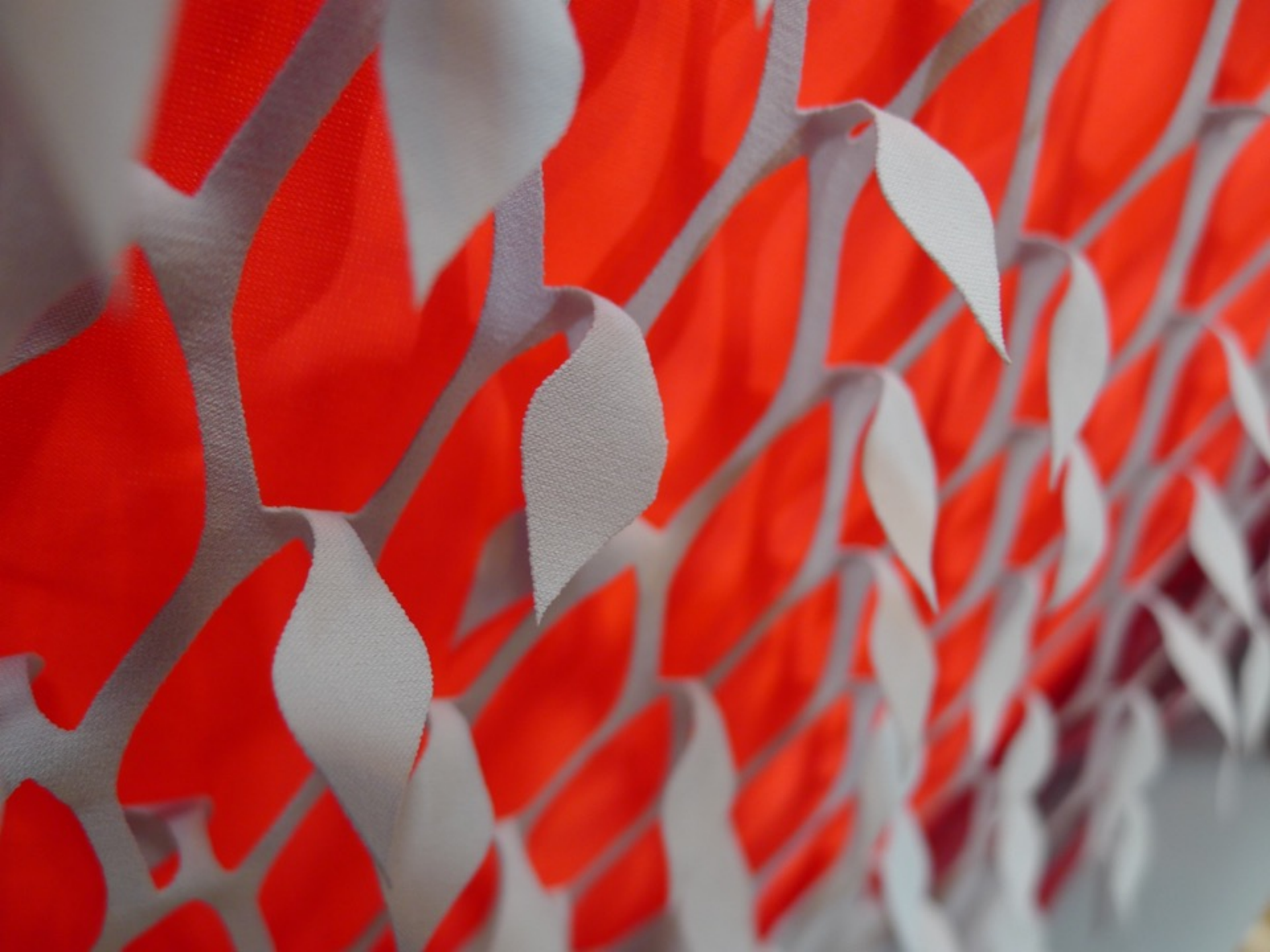
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Thank you

*Janine Hunt and
Sarah Morehead*



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