Futurescan 3: Intersecting Identities

The Progress of Creative Pattern Cutting

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This commentary documents the journey of several research initiatives which focused upon creative pattern cutting. Instigated by a peer-reviewed, journal paper entitled, Insufficient Allure: The Luxurious Art and Cost of Creative Pattern Cutting (Almond, 2010), the endeavors attempted to elevate concepts of tacit knowledge and the making process as a form of legitimate, academic enquiry. The projects culminated in the first peer-reviewed conference dedicated to the discipline: The First International Symposium for Creative Pattern Cutting, held at University of Huddersfield in the UK, in February 2013. To trace the impact of the research initiatives, I consider how the skills of the pattern cutter, clothe the body with a myriad of shapes and silhouettes. I discuss this in relation to the different pattern cutting techniques that help to realize three-dimensional form and ways in which the research enterprises have arguably elevated the professional position of the cutter in terms of esteem and remuneration. In order to assess the impact of these initiatives, both within the fashion industry and in the emerging arena of fashion research, I identify some of the different research approaches utilized in practice-based enquiry and how results can be arrived at from hands-on experience, inspiring us to develop new ways to pattern cut.

Keywords:
Creative, pattern cutting, research, tacit knowledge, practice