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**FASHION DESIGN PROCESS:
IDENTITY, INDIVIDUALITY AND MATERIALITY**
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FASHION DESIGN PROCESS: IDENTITY, INDIVIDUALITY AND MATERIALITY

Margo Barton

Fashion, more than any other design field, is something that most people have experience of, that is, we all wear clothes, and these clothes could be experienced as fashion. I hazard a guess that everyone reading this article has worn and is probably wearing clothes right now.

The design process is a very individual thing, and fashion can be idiosyncratic. At times complex, disciplined and with a purpose in mind. Equally at times simple, meandering, trusting the gut, and experimenting with an open mind as to where wearable explorations may lead.

Fashion studies can be housed in schools of art, architecture or engineering, and of course also within a design school. It is worth noting that several designers in this section refer to art informing their practice. The fashion design process can be creative, but it doesn't have to be. The process can be functional, but it doesn't have to be; it can use a pragmatic engineering trajectory, or an emotional artistic process. The process can be situated on, and movable along the elastic continuum of pure creativity through to highly engineered products, as defined by the designer and / or wearer.

The designers sharing their processes here show distinct ways of working, and their diverse worlds of fashion and fashion making. Themes of culture, identity, philosophy, body, empathy, respect, people, experimentation, authenticity, materiality, textiles, the wearer, the craft, and more all come through. These seven designers from across the world; from Singapore, now living in the UK, from Austria, and across Aotearoa New Zealand, demonstrate the expansive processes that abound. Each designer is heading towards a different end, some designers create for personal satisfaction and fun, some for learning, and others with a focus solely on the end result – fashion.

There is no right or wrong way to design fashion, there is no right or wrong way to wear the results of the designing process either. Fashion processes are as diverse for the designer, as fashions are to the wearer.