



The problem, the solution: Ruth McCallum's design made of waste Tim Hortons' cups, worn by Laura Chang, accessorized with a reusable travel mug.



Virginia Stonehouse wrapped model Nicholle Sherwood in flattened aluminum pop cans.



Artists Anonymous saw a skirt where others see shredded paper. Carol Koo, model.



Model Sharon Driedger in Nezy Lacdao's metal bustier and over skirt.



Ruth McCallum, one of the designers, models a re-used T-shirt worn inside out.



Got skirt? Charmine Kong models Ruth McCallum's milk and juice carton creation.



Ready for a red carpet: Kelly Lou models an evening gown made of black fabric and red plastic, designed by Artists Anonymous.



Farhana Alam flounces down the runway in a plastic bag skirt designed by Virginia Stonehouse.

Re-Dressing Waste

By Gloria Hildebrandt
Photos by Mike Davis

A dress made entirely of Tim Hortons' coffee cups was a highlight of the 6th annual Revolution Wear (RevWear) fashion show in Hamilton last February.

RevWear features reused and reconfigured materials of all kinds to comment on current issues. The show is meant to, as the organizers state, "critique consumer habits and their local environmental, social, economic and political consequences," through charged wearable art, hoping to inspire the audience to "create change and reuse everything."

The coffee cup dress clearly illustrates these ideas. Kim McCallum designed the dress, noting that it "was inspired by the incredible waste created from disposable cups. It's amazing how many Tim Hortons' cups are visible litter. But even beyond litter, there are garbage cans full of cups! These garbages will be emptied into the landfill and filled up again tomorrow! I live near King and Dundurn St. in Hamilton, and all 55 cups for the dress were gathered from the ground and garbages within two blocks of my house, where there are four Tim Hortons! It took me only 20 minutes to collect them all."

She explains that the dress was made entirely from used coffee cups, first washed and dried. "It was exciting to see that something beautiful can be made from waste," she adds. "It

took some serious problem solving skills! I used 45 whole cups strung together for the skirt and 10 cups that were cut open and flattened for the top. The only other materials used were thread and twine."

Another creation by McCallum was a stiff skirt and top made of large milk and juice cartons that were opened up and used as squares of fabric. Yet Mc-

Callum was not the only one to interpret waste as a new material.

Plastic bags were a favourite resource. One skirt was made of layers of bags assembled with the handles facing out to form a flouncy edge. A man's vest was made out of a black Gap shopping bag, showing the logo prominently on the back. A striking floor-length evening gown was made by attaching red plastic to the knee-length hem of a little black dress and adding decorative red roses made of more bunched red plastic.

Other materials were used creatively. Aluminum pop cans were flattened and connected into a strapless short shift. Bunches of shredded paper were combined into a delightful pom-pom of a skirt. There was a skirt made of brown paper towels folded into flounces. Duct tape was unrolled to create a smooth blouse and a dress, and more tape was bunched up into floral accents.

Old clothing was reused in new ways. An old half slip was worn as a strapless mini dress and

had decorative detailing down one side, made of paper cupcake liners. Large pieces of fabric and old clothing were used to drape and form new fashions for men as well as women.

Nezy Lacdao is another designer who participated in the show. For one of her creations, she used plastic yellow and blue forks and spoons to form an abstract design across the bodice of a short strapless purple dress.

"I wanted a material that is convenient, can be easily manipulated and utilized for the effect I was going for," Lacdao explains. "I like to incorporate unusual materials. I pick materials to use first, then let the materials inspire my designs. My philosophy is 'Resources should not hinder your creativity, but instead let it inspire you. Innovation is the key.'" Another of her designs was made of flat metal pieces that were hammered and curved into a bustier and an elaborate over skirt of curled strips of metal.

"I was playing with the idea of conformity versus vulnerabil-

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