

Textile + Design Laboratory

Case Study 2/ 2010: Lonely Hearts

Project title: Sampling and production for What is your damage? collection, S/S10

T+DL Partner: Lonely Hearts

Project Co-ordinator: Helene Morris, Designer, Lonely Hearts

Website: www.lonelyheartsclub.co.nz

Company Background: Lonely Hearts began as The Lonely Hearts Club in Wellington, 2003, relocating to Auckland in 2006.

Lonely Hearts and lingerie range Lonely by Lonely Hearts are sold throughout New Zealand and Australia, and are increasingly stocked worldwide.

In 2009, Lonely Hearts won the DHL Fashion Export Scholarship, which promotes international growth for promising NZ fashion labels.

Project Background: The TDL's potential to create something unique attracted Lonely Hearts, having heard about it through work experience students, and another designer, Mala Brajkovic. Lonely Hearts have worked with TDL for three seasons, mainly using the digital printing process on mohair knits, and are now also printing onto cotton.

Project Methodology: Graphics were developed by Lonely Hearts. The first prints were based on a fabric already in the range, enlarging and distorting for the print. For the second range, photographs of flowers were used. Taking advantage of being in the same city, the process was mostly managed via emails and couriers.

This design process involved some experimentation and sampling to get the desired look. Helene comments that this was no more than she would expect with any print trialing, adding "We did have a bit of bleeding and it took us a couple of trials to get the look we were wanting, but on the whole it was a really great process."

Learning outcomes: Looking forward to doing more printing with the TDL for Lonely Hearts in the future, Helene says, "I especially love the digital process on Knitwear, I think that has been our most successful application and something that we are becoming known for ... hopefully that will continue."

"I would love to try and print on sheer knits, and also experiment more with printing garments once made as I love the look that creates."

Feedback: Feedback from the press on the digitally printed garments has been very positive. Exclusivity seems to be key. "It is great there are no minimums which is really helpful for small designers. With full fabric printing, there are huge set-up costs, and also the prints are not as soft to touch. It can be difficult to get exclusivity with fabrics/prints etc in New Zealand, as there is not a huge range of fabric importers, so this process enables designers to create exclusive designs," comments Helene.

"For winter, the majority of our stockists have ordered the digitally printed garments, the pricepoint is higher than that of other printed pieces, but stores and customers do see the value as it is something they can't get elsewhere".



Floral Sweater & Heather Skirt