

Immersive Audio Tour Script

ARTIST: Welcome to the Mode Brut Exhibition at the Museum of Craft and Design in San Francisco. We're thrilled you joined us.

NARRATOR: Today, you're viewing a fashion-related exhibition made up of four collections. All of the garments and outfits on display were made by artists with developmental disabilities from Creativity Explored in collaboration with non-disabled designers. The following audio will take you through the artists' works and some ideas behind the designs.

Here's a little bit about Creativity Explored.

NARRATOR: Creativity Explored is a studio-based collective in San Francisco that partners with people with developmental disabilities to celebrate and nurture the creative potential in all of us. The studio and art gallery started in 1983, and its programs have served hundreds of artists with disabilities. Creativity Explored is a model in the field of art and disability worldwide.

And here's a little bit about Mode Brut, the exhibition at the Museum of Craft and Design showing through January 23, 2022.

NARRATOR: Over 50 Creativity Explored artists are featured here. Their collaborating partners from the community include teaching artist and designer Victor Molina, community art collective Bonanza, queer advocate and model Ayana "Yanni" Brumfield, and San Francisco-based haute couture fashion brand Tokyo Gamine. The Mode Brut Exhibition aims to challenge what fashion is and who is fashionable. The works merge fashion design and Outsider Art.

The Exhibition fills a medium-sized gallery space with a high ceiling. The main gallery is a cube, and a second space extends beyond, only a third as wide and along the right side, creating an L-shape. Long rows of track lights illuminate exhibits from above. The fashion pieces are displayed either hanging or draped over mannequins or dress forms.

When you first enter the gallery, there is a freestanding wall with hand-painted aprons and ceramic masks. To your right is the description of the exhibition. Continuing past the freestanding wall, along the left wall are three small collections separated by temporary walls. You'll come first to the collection with CE artists and Yanni Brumfield, then the Tokyo Gamine Line, and in the far corner, the Bonanza line. In the center of the main gallery are displays of tote bags, accessories, and jewelry arranged on low pedestals. Along the right wall is the collection of 14 works from the Creativity Explored Studio Line with Victor Molina. These four collections will be described in detail on this tour.

As you continue along the right wall, just beyond the 14-piece CE Studio Line, you enter the smaller, narrower extension. You first come into the atelier, which is French for "workshop." This

space contains several showstopper clothing designs displayed in more of a workshop setting. The atelier also showcases the art of many more Creativity Explored artists and features a salon style hanging of drawings and paintings. The feel is less gallery-like and more a peek into how work is made at Creativity Explored. Continuing beyond the atelier is a smaller media room where videos will play. These include more work from the collaborating artists, animations, and a documentary film.

As you take in the pieces, consider fashion as more than just the clothing. What do these clothes say about accessibility? About gender? About the identity of the artist or the person who wears them? In creating these pieces, Mode Brut artists had all of these questions in mind.

VICTOR: “Even if it looks like there’s not, there’s always a ton of effort in our artists’ work. Nothing the artists do is careless. It is in many ways like a circus, and a lot of effort goes into all of it.”

NARRATOR: That was Victor Molina, Teaching Artist and Lead Fashion Designer for the house label, which is the “CE” Studio Line. You’ll hear more about Molina and the other collaborators at the end of this tour.

It took a lot more effort to collaborate during a global pandemic. Before the pandemic, collaborations happened in person. This time, artists mainly made and designed their pieces using Zoom and the phone, and submitted them by mail. Some of the collaboration happened in conversations on long walks. The process was challenging, but uniquely successful. Let’s explore the amazing and inspiring clothing designs that came out of this unusual collaboration.

The pieces

ARTIST: Let’s check the designs out now!

NARRATOR: Yanni’s collection

A blend of shapes and fabrics. This outfit starts with a mid-thigh length jacket with a heavy weave in a tan and cream polyester-cotton blend and three large brown buttons down the front, lined in silk. Cascading down the front of the jacket is an array of hand-cut wool and fleece patches of varying sizes and all different shapes in burnt orange, maroon, and royal blue, seven on each side. The shirt is cotton with a sewn-on canvas patch on the front painted in colors matching the jacket patches. The pants, made of wool and cotton, have a tighter weave of the same tan and cream tones. They are high-waisted and have deep pockets in front. A set of wool and fleece patches matching the ones from the jacket adorns the pants from the tops of the pockets down to the knees. The patches are a range of asymmetrical shapes and forms and are stitched on in tight clusters down the pants.

A tribute to Breonna Taylor in three pieces. A simple black leather jacket has wide lapels, shiny black plastic buttons, and small straps along the top of the shoulders to hold a shoulder bag in place. The front is unadorned, while the back has three stitched, black horizontal stripes

up top and a pleated hem at the bottom. Most of the back is filled by a painted rendition of an iconic Breonna Taylor portrait. She has medium-length hair with her bangs swept up and over to the side. She wears diamond studs in her ears and another, smaller piercing on her nose. Her expression is quiet, soft, and somber, and her eyes are wide and bright.

The shirt for this ensemble is a collage of fabrics, cream-colored cotton at the top stitched onto black quilted jacket lining for the bottom half. Sewn onto the front of the shirt is a red painted square patch with a set of glimmering copper-colored fabric Xes that are centered on the square but whose lines go well beyond the top and bottom of the square.

The black miniskirt is a denim and cotton mix with one button accenting each of the two shallow front pockets. A phrase is painted onto the skirt with fuschia paint and white highlights using thick, bubbly cursive. At the waist, "Justice For," and along the bottom, "Breonna Taylor."

Tokyo Gamine

A dazzling overcoat that immerses the senses. This rectangular kimono-like overcoat has wide, three-quarter long sleeves and is made of a stiff, dark blue cotton. Worn open at the front, it includes an apron-like pair of enormous pockets on either side. The coat is decorated with mostly blue- and blue-green dyed discs of Belgian linen. Each disc is hand-painted with acrylic fabric paint in a flurry of short, parallel brush strokes of varying hue and orientation. The painted discs suggest the planets in their range of size and finely-detailed streakiness of colors. Most range in size from tennis balls to cantaloupes, and they overlap. One giant circle behind many others can be seen only in pieces, though it stands out brilliantly for its speckles of orange and red, suggesting the Sun or maybe Jupiter.

Recycled materials flow into fabric. This fire engine red, loose, asymmetrical sleeveless tunic is built from a flowy fabric made of recycled bottles. The tunic is decorated with a collection of polyester chiffon applique triangles along the front in various patterns: hand-drawn flowers and various smooth, rounded shapes. Down both sides are acrylic textile painted triangles, with more of the applique triangles toward the bottom of the right side. The garment has an extremely low-cut back, scooping down to the waist before the red fabric is brought together loosely by wide strips of multi-colored batik fabrics stitched to it.

Bonanza

A collab with Joseph Omolayole: Clothes that blur the boundaries of top and bottom.

Four or five fabrics in collage make up this light-weight set of "day pajamas." The mustard colored silk top is a mock turtleneck vest, complete with hidden front zipper. Winglike rounded flaps overhang from the shoulders. Running up and down the torso are pale fabric strips of different lengths with reflective dots. One glittery strip drapes softly past the hemline and continues down the right leg. Stray fabric threads casually interconnect the reflector strips like spider webbing. The pants start with pale pastels of pink, blue, and gray leaf shapes mixed with glimmering white leaves. At mid-thigh, the pastel leaves give way to a patterned array of roughly

printed black squares against a white background, each composed of a few stripes and a row of dots, as if etched from a woodblock.

A collab with Kathy Wen: a color block outfit for cool or warm weather. The spacious short-sleeved top is framed by a sporty, elastic neck and hemline in forest green and white. The shirt is built out of thick stripes of sweatshirt fabric. The stripes are highly contrasting color schemes stitched together in three imperfectly aligned bands: lemon yellow and gray, then hot pink and black, finishing at the bottom with light gray and dark green. The shorts are an odd patchwork of cotton, jersey, and denim squares and rectangles that extend to just above the knee, a little uneven and somewhat fraying around the bottom.

CE Studio Line

Pieces of fabric create a landscape. This short, white cotton apron is composed of blocks and strips of fabric decorated with marker and sewn together with the seams out in the open and visible. The waist ties come together in the back with thick thread. The bib portion shows a giant yellow sun rising out of a magenta ocean into a sky that is blue toward the horizon and green up above. The pocket and skirt are magenta and green marker lines in thick strokes back and forth, up and down. In places, the rough marker lines overlap to become a soft brown hue.

A mix of soft and silky. This lightweight sleeveless dress is a shiny copper brown blend of fine threads interwoven with a gridwork of coarse ones in the “ripstop” style of parachutes and tents. The arm and neck holes are simply hemmed. The dress is adorned with colored circles, squares, and animal shaped patches stitched on, applique style. Nested circles and squares of stitching decorate two dozen patches, which range from walnut to peach-sized. The shoulder straps each have a burgundy square with white stitched nesting circles where they cross the shoulder. The stitching contrasts on some and matches on others: Many are stitched with black or white or a darker shade of the color of a patch itself. Two animal patches, centered one above the other, are at chest height and have stitched outlines. A mane and stripes on each suggests a zebra, one lime green and the other sky blue.

Home life on a silky, cream-colored hoodie. The top third of this hoodie is unadorned. At chest height are unevenly cut bands of yellow, burgundy, and mauve. Below the bands, a pastel colored fabric collage encircles the lower two thirds of the hoodie, showing several scenes at home. The shapes are made with simple line drawings stitched on top with slender yarns. The part of the house in view on the back of the hoodie is one room with decorations on the walls stitched in circles and stripes. There are four figures inside. The largest, a woman with a halo sits up on her elbows in a bed that has an elaborate frame. She wears a tasseled head scarf and a long-sleeved garment with stripes. The lips of her broad mouth have a slight downturn. Facing her from the foot of the bed stands a tall woman with silver hair, in a fancy dress and the suggestion of a smile. In the foreground, a girl with wavy yellow hair plays with a doll, or maybe an infant with a halo, as a woman with dark hair and either a mitt or a glove appears to be cooking or maybe performing a laboratory procedure. Peeking out from the bottom of the home scene is a bit of the shiny, bright pink lining of the hoodie.

A playful blouse and pants set. A knee-length tunic-like top with vents running from waist to hemline down the center and the sides, made of light cotton with alternating white and tan stripes. The stripes run horizontally except down the short sleeves and at an angle at the shoulders. Covering much of the front at a 45-degree angle is a pastel painted and embroidered drawing of a pink-skinned face with wavy yellow hair, a sharp nose, full red lips, and tilted neck. The right front vent flap has been pinned up to reveal a casually tied bright red and white sash and the top of one pant leg with side pocket below. The pants are wide and straight-legged, salmon pink with a trim of pale lavender down each side. A partially embroidered line drawing of a person rises three fourths of the way up the right pant leg, holding a flower in their hands in front of them. Bright stitching fills the green leaves of the stem and the orange center and blue petals of its daisy-like bloom. Atop the person's head, on a decorative hair comb, there appears another leafy stem with two rose-like blooms, one red and one white. Thick brown dashes make the eyebrows of the face, and a slender oval outline marks the nose. The eyes are filled white with black dots in the center, and the lips are red and full. The person wears a flouncy dress with V-neck, lace, and ruffles. The pale lavender of their top merges with the trim of the inseam.

A soft, flowy black-and-white sleeveless jumpsuit. A faint aura of orange surrounds smeary streaks and spots on the left side of the hand-dyed silk sleeveless outfit. On the right side of the fabric, the spots are barely visible against varying shades of black dye that has bled out of them. The dye gradually lightens down the leg to reveal the soft shapes below the knee. The left and right sections of the fabric are joined by a seam that runs down the center of the jumpsuit. There is a crisply-painted seven-sided emblem over most of the chest, two sides slightly longer and meeting at a blunt point at the bottom. The image on the emblem resembles a dandelion seed head atop a two-leafed stem. A casually tied, wide silk sash around the waist is dyed with the same spots as the jumpsuit, and the ends of the loose bow hang low.

A forest of names. A creamy beige wool blazer with a sheen is mostly covered in names all hand-written in the same style in black marker. In front, the names run up the left lapel and down the right and down the left sleeve as well as jacket waist beneath the breast pocket. On the back, they run up the left sleeve and torso and run slanting down on the right. The upper arms and shoulders are unmarked, so that the name "Elizabeth Montgomery" stands alone, less crowded than the others beneath the collar on the back. But everywhere, the names are clearly printed and distinct. The letters are mostly in single strokes of the pen and have a gauzy quality from imperfect contact with the weave of the fabric. Except every second, third, or fourth letter, and sometimes several in a row, are bold, the enclosures of letters such as the small "b" and capital "D" have been filled in, as well as select openings, such as between the legs of the capital "R" in the name "Roberts."

The final two pieces in this collection are showstoppers, on display in the atelier.

A jacket as community quilt. The design is a thigh-length, robe-like blazer crafted of criss-crossing yarns, threads, lace, and gauzy, shiny ribbons much like a handmade rag rug. Colors of the rainbow jostle and rub up against one another, shades of red and orange dominating, but occasionally alongside deep blues and purples, pale green, various pinks, and white. Like colors appear here and there together like patches on a quilt. In some places, the

weave is tight, orderly, and trim. Other areas blend thick yarns with slender, lacey threads. And others still have bulky, loosely-woven threads and wide ribbons. These variations give the jacket depth and texture. Near the top of the lapel hangs a fluffy yarn pom pom. A deep pocket on the front has loose loops of yarn dripping off the open top.

A trench coat becomes a garden. A khaki trench coat with a flat, narrow collar becomes a home to birds and flowers through acrylic paints, felt, and thread. Growing up the center front of the jacket is a green, leafy stalk that reaches up to and around the collar. The sleeve cuffs have smaller versions of this leafy plant with lush red and white blossoms on them. At the base of each plant, and on either side of the collar, stands one fluffy, round bird with red, white, and black plumage and a crown of feathers on its head. The birds' long, slender beaks point down. Red and yellow blossoms made of felt and thread sit where the coat's buttons would be.

The back of the coat is filled with a self-portrait of the artist in acrylic paint. In this self-portrait, the artist has brown skin and long, black hair. He wears a red shirt adorned with tall plant leaves. The leaves are decorated with thread and felt blossoms matching the front of the coat. The shirt collar is decorated with the same red, white, and black lines as the birds' feathers on the front of the jacket.

The designers

NARRATOR: We hope you've been engaged and excited by the creations here. If you'd care to keep listening, we'd love to tell you more!

ARTIST: And now, let's meet the designers!

Victor Molina and the Creativity Explored Studio Line

NARRATOR: Victor Molina is a teaching artist at Creativity Explored, who comes to fashion with a critical eye for the mainstream. He challenged partner artists to exercise their own aesthetics and interpretations as they crafted designs from donated fabric and clothes.

Molina says, "Our artists' fashion choices are definitely impacted by their respective disabilities. Most CE artists are very conservative in what they choose to wear, so for me to make bizarre clothes with the idea that I'm representing the studio is false. The studio really isn't fashionably so 'out there.' Also, because of one's disability, sometimes, there is less choice of clothing based on availability or necessity. I've had to think about all these things for this project."

Molina was born in Havana, Cuba, before the Cuban revolution, then moved with his family to Pasadena, California. He later moved to Los Angeles and worked as a fashion designer and illustrator. Running a small theatre in the Silverlake neighborhood of east-central LA reshaped the way he works. Collaboration there was much the same as he went on to practice at Creativity Explored. Molina now lives in Montreal, where he founded a clothing design company that makes one-of-a-kind items and collections for boutiques.

Yuka Uehara and the Tokyo Gamine Fashion Line

NARRATOR: San Francisco-based artist and fashion designer Yuka Uehara is known for hand-painting her designs, which makes each piece personal and specific. For the Tokyo Gamine line, she worked with artistic pieces by partner artists Yah Kakabutra, Hung Kei Shiu, Anne Slater, Marcus McClure, Emma Reyes, Cheryle Rutledge, Taneya Lovelace, Yukari Sakura, Zachary Adams, and the late José Campos, under the organization of Creativity Explored.

The pieces explore the natural elements, incorporating abstract painting, intricate fabric forms, and patterns contributed by the partner artists. Uehara says, “The artists’ creations are personal and inspiring to the senses. I put together the fashion collection almost instantaneously in my mind. This featured collection explores the idea of oneness from chaos and harmony found in the natural world, and each piece highlights a natural element expressed through a combination of geometric shapes.”

Bonanza Vinyl: The Sewn by Spiders Line

NARRATOR: Bonanza is Conrad Guevara, Lindsay Tully, and Lana Williams. Their collaborations challenge the idea of identity as fixed or generic, using signaling, posturing, flexibility, and resilience. CE x Bonanza partnered with artists Kathy Wen, Kevin Chu, and Joseph Omolayole. Taking inspiration from working at home and wanting to dress a little extra, they’ve called their collected works of day pajamas “Sewn by Spiders.” Inspired by Kathy Wen’s bold colors and cascading patterning, Bonanza said, “We wanted to make a pajama-like outfit that looked like something Billie Eilish would wear while working in the community garden. These are outfits created in Shelter-in-Place, and we wanted to reflect how Shelter-In-Place has changed our sense of personal style.”

Bonanza's independent work has been exhibited at Gallery 16, the McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, the di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art, and the Buffalo Institute for Contemporary Art. Their work has been written about by VICE, SFAQ, San Francisco Chronicle, KQED, and East Bay Express. They were selected for the San Francisco Recology Center artist-in-residence program in 2018, and recently finished their fourth film. The film is a gig comedy that satirizes the so-called sharing economy and the excessive demands it makes on its workers.

Yanni Brumfield

NARRATOR: Ayana “Yanni” Brumfield is a Black, queer, non-binary, multimedia artist from Oakland, CA. They are the founder of the annual limitless queer fashion show, which prioritizes increasing representation of people who look like them in the fashion industry. For Mode Brut, they collaborated with Creativity Explored artists Joseph “JD” Green, Vincent Jackson, and Gerald Wiggins.

This collection includes original paintings and artwork on streetwear. Yanni pairs traditionally masculine garments like jeans, leather jackets, and collared shirts with the bold graphic artwork of the Creativity Explored artists. Yanni describes their line as an “offering and direct reflection of

Black under-represented folks” and that overall, “there is a fierce, radical limitless tone, one of Self, Freedom of expression, gender non-conforming, and body positivity. It shows the audience you can be any version of you and express that in any way you like. It’s a statement of self acceptance and love.”

Wrap-up

ARTIST: We hope you enjoyed the Mode Brut Exhibition. Please come visit the Museum of Craft and Design again soon! Be sure to check out more work by the Creativity Explored artists at our studio in the Mission District or online at www.CreativityExplored.org.

NARRATOR: This audio tour was written by Cheryl Green and Oliver Baker.