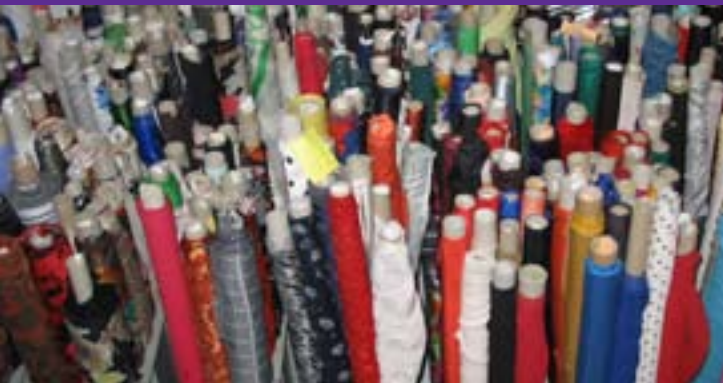


BUILDING AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED FASHION HOUSE



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Victorian Government/ISS Institute Student Fellowship

Fellowship funded by the Victorian Government



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May 2008

Also extract published on www.issinstitute.org.au

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Executive Summary

The Australian Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) sector draws on skills including trade, technical, design, manufacturing, logistics, sales, marketing and general management. Shulman and Wearne address these skills and identify the skill deficiencies the Australian TCF industry has within the areas mentioned above. Because skill requirements are changing as the sector moves towards higher value products, the following report addresses themes including the skills, knowledge and understandings required to build an internationally renowned fashion house from ready to wear to haute couture, context and concept development, theme selection and research and design and more specifically the design process at Renato Balestra's studio in Rome. Other sectors observed during the Fellowship addressed gaps Australia has in the manufacturing process including hand embellishing, draping, the collaboration process between designers and manufacturers, and fashion illustration. Shulman and Wearne discovered that each of these skills is critical to ensuring the success of a fashion-based business.

The collaboration processes between designers and manufacturers in Italy needs to be observed – there is not enough dialogue in Australia between designers and manufacturers and because of this neither of the two areas are getting the best out of one another. Italian fashion houses understand, for example - the value of fabric is the same as the value of the designer, without quality in both areas the final product will ultimately be bad quality. We have the ability to produce innovative, quality apparel, designed and made in Australia with a quick turnaround, we just need to know how to communicate and value one another's skills in the same way that it is done abroad.

Shulman and Wearne found their visit to Balestra's studio addressed many of the practical and promotional based information they sought from the Fellowship opportunity, while Milan Polytechnic and its staff provided valuable insight into a unique design based education system.

The Australian TCF industry cannot compete with the low wage industries in countries such as China in the area of mass production so we need a fresh approach. The information contained in the following report provides a valuable contribution to dialogue regarding the development of a competitive Australian TCF industry. Through seminars, the practical information learnt by Shulman and Wearne during their Fellowship will be passed on to those in the industry who may benefit from such information; namely students and educational facilities. It is also anticipated that this document may provide a useful reference for theoretical based information, which in conjunction with practical application and seminars, will contribute to the development of a new approach to business and education training for the Fashion Industry.