

About needles and threads



Contrasts – with embroidery, fashion creations become unique pieces.

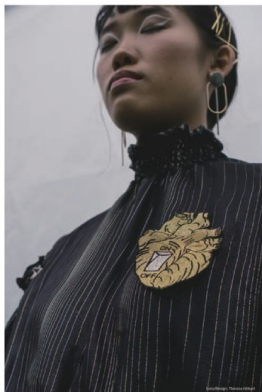
“Embroidery meets fashion” or “what happens when a traditional textile finishing technique meets young ideas”

Seventeen fashion design students – one single-head embroidery machine. The result: unique and exceptional one of a kind pieces. The cooperative project between MADEIRA and AMD Munich shows that embroidery is present and fashionable. One look into the shop windows of the fashion capitals shows that embroidery is hot. Long ago, the image changed from a relic of Grandmother’s time to a cool design element. The cooperative project “Frida Kahlo – Fashion & Pain” between the thread factory and the Academy of Fashion and Design Munich shows what arises when traditional trade meets curiosity and the urge to create.

Framework

What started as a lecture series between the family-owned company from Freiburg and the Munich fashion and design academy turned into a creative embroidery design project over the last summer semester. Under the semester’s theme “fashion and pain”, the newly designed garments were inspired by the life of the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Another prominent personality, chosen by the students, should create a contrast to the painter.

To lead the students onto entirely new ground, MADEIRA trained them through several lectures about embroidery threads and supplies, provided materials and supervised the planning of the digitalising of the embroidery design. Whoever may think the young designers held the needle



Like yin and yang – with Frida Kahlo and Stephen Hawking, art and science meet in Theresa Höbart’s collection

themselves would be wrong: the designs were embroidered with an industrial embroidering machine, which was lent to the AMD by the company ZSK Embroidery Machines for over a year. The technique used is called “punching” and describes the digitalising of the embroidery design for the software of the machine. For reasons of time and budget, the samples were implemented by a specialist company, so the students had to communicate their ideas for their desired realisation of the design. Not so easy – and planning industrial embroidering includes even more aspects: the right thread with the right strength depending on the texture of the fabric has to be chosen, the right backing to stabilise need to be selected and the machine should be adjusted correctly. “I underestimated the topic,” confessed Ulrike Nägele, Dean of Studies for fashion and design at AMD. “Embroidery makes use of careful and technologically advanced groundwork. But I have experienced the students as being very open and precise in handling the subject and I am very proud and happy that they have adopted it as their template.”

To encourage participation, the project was formulated as a competition by the representatives from MADEIRA and

the teachers of the project group, Ulrike Nägele, Shirin Seyed and Monika Hutter. The three competitors with the most outstanding designs would have the unique opportunity to present their exhibitions at major textile and fashion fairs like MUNICH FABRIC START. “A conclusive concept and its practical implementation, like embroidery technique, choice of materials and material mix, was the priority for choosing the winners,” explains MADEIRA’s embroidery expert Jürgen Korge. Some students also used their embroidery design as a decorative accessory for matching bags; others combined machine embroidery with prints or implemented elements from hand embroidery. The entire planning process happened with a view to industrial and financial practicability. “In reality, every additional finishing on textiles has to be audited by costs. It was important for us to communicate this for the students’ upcoming careers,” said Korge.

From the idea to the finished design

Aside from the technical challenges, the students were also challenged by the creative development of the design. The challenge was to develop a coherent overall concept that highlighted the character of the main figure as well as the features of the prominent counterpart. “To discover common features, I needed to research a lot,” tells young designer Helena El Malek, who was additionally inspired by Lady Gaga. “Both artists reflect their feelings in art. Frida Kahlo handled her feelings in paintings; Lady Gaga expres-



Nothing’s impossible – Pia Leberfinger experiments with daring colours and material mix.



United in embroidery – Helena El Malek counts on artists with strong feelings



Frida x Steve – Lukas Burkia’s iPhone dress combines functionality and extravagance

ses herself through fashion and stage performances. Both used art to deal with psychical pain.” About her dress, the up-and-coming designer reveals: “The shape was inspired by the mostly straight-cut traditional Mexican tops. White imitation leather looks modern and reminds one of canvas. I modified Frida’s paintings for the embroidery design and customised them for Gaga’s provocative performances with blood and raw meat.” The realisation of the contest winner Lukas Burkia was completely in contrast: here, the physical conditions of the figures were paramount. “My embroidery design unites Frida Kahlo and Steve Jobs. Both are connected through their serious medical histories and there are iconic images from both in existence, which I absolutely wanted to integrate into my drafts. This resulted in the idea of fusing the facial characteristics.” Burkia’s embroidery design shows Frida Kahlo’s typical hair ornaments with the popular “thinker’s pose” from the Apple founder with his hand on his chin underneath. “I used different materials to differentiate the personalities of both muses,” explains Burkia, whose “iPhone dress” will be displayed at PREMIÈRE VISION in Paris. He tried to combine the elegance and functionality of the iPhone with Frida Kahlo’s extravagance, which is shown in the embroidery’s diversity of colours. “I would really like to continue working with embroidery as a finishing for garments in the future,” the young designer concludes. “I see the cooperation with MADEIRA as a great chance and I’m very lucky that my student group and I had the chance to have this experience.”

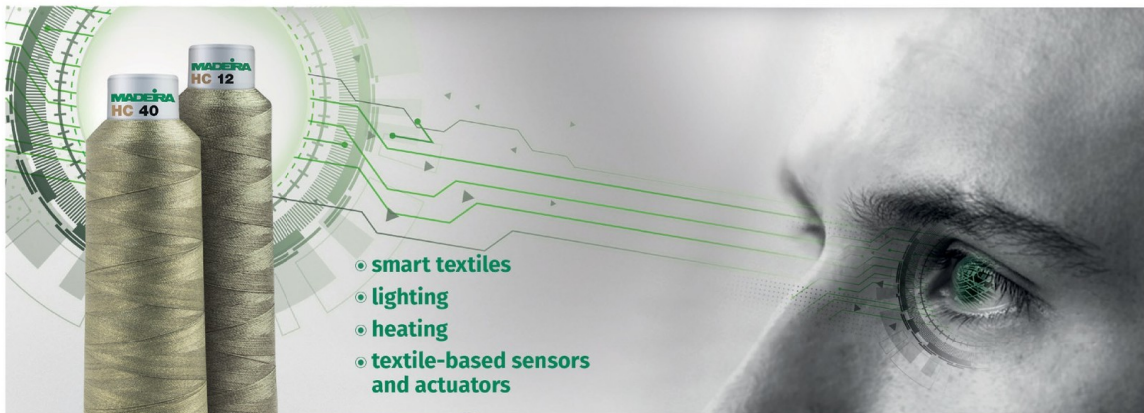
About MADEIRA

The family-owned company MADEIRA Garnfabrik Rudolf Schmidt KG, founded in 1919 in Freiburg, is today being run by its third generation. With numerous subsidiaries and partners all around the globe and international sales logistics, MADEIRA is one of the leading manufacturers of high-quality embroidery threads.

About AMD Academy Fashion & Design:

Designers, fashion managers, fashion journalists, marketing experts and design managers are trained at the renowned Academy of Fashion & Design. 1,700 students are taught at its locations in Hamburg, Düsseldorf, Munich, Berlin and, from 2019, also in Wiesbaden. In the Fashion Design (B.A.) study programme, they learn the creative, manual and technical expertise to design progressive collections.

**Switch on the magic
with MADEIRA High Conductive threads!**



- smart textiles
- lighting
- heating
- textile-based sensors and actuators

**MADEIRA HC 12 (100 Ω/m) & HC 40 (300 Ω/m):
Fully silver plated high conductive embroidery & sewing threads - Free circuit geometry - Adaptable electrical resistance - Outstanding connectivity**

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Switch on the magic – with MADEIRA High Conductive threads!

It may look just like an ordinary thread, but its powers go beyond. The field of technical applications for threads is constantly growing, requiring intelligent products at the interface between textiles and electrical engineering. MADEIRA offers a high conductive thread, optimised for use on industrial embroidery machines but also suitable for other forms of application.

MADEIRA HC – function & application

All you need for smart textiles are reliable components. HC is light, flexible and highly conductive. Currently, we offer threads with a resistance of 100 and 300 Ohm/m, which can be reduced or increased according to your needs.

Almost every industry has applications where the use of technical threads can be beneficial. In particular, HC threads are used for textile circuitry, sensors or actuators in health care, sports, automotive, workwear and fashion. Moreover, embroidered circuitry is one of the few technologies you can apply once the garment is manufactured, and you're completely free in the circuit geometry.

Neoteric Iris – the experimental interactive dress & HC

Fashion today is much more than just good looks. Smart textiles interact with the environment and connect with it. The fashion designer Amy Winters from Rainbow Winters in London has created an interactive dress in collaboration with MADEIRA. An integrated colour sensor allows the LEDs connected with HC threads to match their colours with of the objects that are held in front of the sensor. In the making-of gallery below you can see how this unique and special designer piece came to life.

