



UNDER WHERE? Bare Roots

Before the arrival of European conquerors, indigenous women of Mesoamerica covered themselves in minimal garments that prioritized functionality and accessibility. This first look represents the undergarment portion of 19th-century layering trends, honoring pre-Colombian textile tradition through contemporary techniques as homage to the hand-makers who embed their histories into every thread.

This look features a structured yet fluid two-piece ensemble, drawing inspiration from indigenous weaving and the use of sustainable materials. These elements and methods were incorporated along with natural dying for organic pigments using coffee and black tea. The twisted bra top mimics the inside of soaring wings from the hand-beaded eagle at the center, symbolizing power, resilience, and spiritual significance in indigenous, pre-Colombian cultures. The bottoms incorporate

intricate “Mexican pleats,” referencing traditional knotting and weaving techniques commonly used in everything from ancient basket-weaving to hair styling. This look serves to resist erasure by reviving the spirit of indigenous craftsmanship, while ensuring that the resilience of these early artisans is never forgotten.

LOUNGING the inter//ex:CHANGE

Resulting of the Spanish conquest, the Columbian Exchange developed as a means to dismantle indigenous identity, eventually imposing European dress codes upon native women. Yet, through ingenuity, they fused foreign elements with traditional techniques, creating hybrid garments that subverted colonial control.

As the second layer, this post-conquest look embodies indigenuos resistance through spirit, material and construction.

Dyed with turmeric, the fabric symbolizes the spices and goods introduced through colonial trade, marking a period of forced cultural exchange. The choice of yellow—a color often associated with resilience, intellect, and illumination—subtly nods to the enduring strength of women who redefined their roles in a rapidly transforming world. The top features hand-stitched smocking, to preserve indigenous craftsmanship, while the machine-stitched, shirred bottom contrasts with industrialization’s impact on traditional textiles.

This juxtaposition highlights the tension between imposed modernity and ancestral practices. A key innovation in the design is in its convertibility—the underskirt transforms into bloomers, reflecting both the evolution of fashion and the liberation of women who sought autonomy in restrictive environments. This garment is a testament to survival, a visual metaphor for transformation, and a reminder that even in oppression, identity finds ways to persist.



STRICT STREETS ¡Viva la (r)Evolución!

The Mexican Revolution saw women, known as *soldaderas*, redefining gender norms as they took up arms alongside men. Their attire was adapted to balance necessity and defiance, rebelling against the restrictive and conservative feminine styles prior—long skirts were traded for trousers or altered to allow for greater movement.

This third layer is homage to that (r)evolution through a streetwear look. The design is influenced by Frida Kahlo’s corset painting series and her powerful “Viva la Vida” quote, as seen inscribed onto this look’s tailored corset. The bodice is hand-painted to resemble internal organs,

symbolizing both resilience and vulnerability to echo the physical and emotional scars of the external and internal revolution. Custom designed 3D-printed buttons add a contemporary touch, to bridge historical influence with modern innovation.

The pants are then adorned with custom crochet lace and a cross-stitched embroidery appliqué, incorporating adjustable elements that allow the hemline to shift, mirroring the adaptability of the revolutionary women who redefined femininity through function and autonomy.

This look is a tribute to those who fought for survival and liberation, proving that fashion, like revolution, is a force of transformation.

HAUTE COUTURE vs DIY CULTURE Zoot Scouts of America

During the 1940s, the stylish struggle continued with Mexican-American youth donning oversized, sharp-shouldered zoot suits as an act of cultural pride amid rising racial tensions of WWII. This layer reinterprets this rebellious fashion statement through an all-denim ensemble, upcycled from previous patterns and garments, incorporating both the classic zoot suit collar with its sailor collar counterpart. This deliberate juxtaposition serves as a visual to the blatant discrimination among the Scouts of America, U.S. Military and P.O.C. communities all with similar style uniforms and under the same

General Limitation Order L-85 that called to ration fabrics. Therefore, the use of repurposed materials reflects the Rasquachismo rhetoric of Chicanos who navigated American society with limited resources, crafting their own identities in the process.

Beyond its historical significance, denim also carries a complex narrative; often linked to durability and the working class, it also bears a darker association with domestic violence. A commentary on resilience and reinvention, this look challenges the narratives imposed on our bodies.

Through tailoring and intentional craftsmanship, this layer honors the pachuca spirit: defiant, resourceful, and unyielding in the face of systemic oppression.

