

# Echoes of Edo



My concept is a deeply personal blend of who I am and where I come from—rooted in my identity and the rich cultural heritage of Edo State, Nigeria. To fully express this concept through my final collection, I began by experimenting with print, drawing inspiration from celebrated Nigerian designers such as Duro Olowu, Yinka Shonibare, and Emmy Kasbit. These designers have masterfully incorporated traditional African aesthetics and textile narratives into modern fashion, and I found their approaches particularly relevant to the message I aimed to convey. Their use of bold colors, cultural symbolism, and historical references gave me the courage to explore print in a way that felt authentic to me.

Eventually, I developed a unique print inspired by the coral beads traditionally worn by the Edo people. These beads, known as “Ivie,” are not only decorative but also highly symbolic, often representing royalty, status, and beauty. In my designs, I incorporated exaggerated waistlines and accentuated hips, referencing the silhouette of traditional Edo garments. I also used accessories and embellishments that are commonly seen on brides and grooms during Edo marriage ceremonies. These elements, combined with my prints, helped to capture the essence of elegance, pride, and cultural significance found in Edo attire.

When I first started this project, I honestly didn't have a clear direction. I just knew one thing for sure: I wanted the spirit of the Edo culture to be intricately woven into the seams of my work. I didn't want to simply replicate what I had seen or known, I wanted to discover and reinterpret my culture in a way that spoke to both tradition and modernity. I was determined to make every design decision through the lens of cultural appreciation, rather than assumption or aesthetic alone.

One major influence for me was designer Mai Atafo, who is also from Edo State. His collection, titled “Sartorial Reverie,” deeply resonated with me. The word “sartorial” relates to tailoring and clothing, while “reverie” describes a dreamlike state of being lost in thought. His work was a beautiful homage to Edo culture, fusing classic Western tailoring with traditional Nigerian design. As someone who identifies as both British and Nigerian, this blending of cultures is something I experience daily. Living in between two worlds, I felt inspired to reflect that duality in my collection as well.

While I could rely on my personal memories and knowledge, I wanted more than that. I sought out the unfiltered truth of my heritage. I asked my parents detailed questions and listened to the stories shared during my grandmother's funeral ceremonies in Nigeria. I learned more about the history of the ‘Ivie’ coral beads and the ‘Buluku’— a weighty, skirt-like garment often made of cotton poplin or duchess satin in red or white, and how and when they are worn. These conversations and experiences allowed me to dive deeper into my culture and bring it to life through fabric, form, and design.

After production, I partnered with friends to execute a professional photoshoot. I also pulled on my other skills acquired in my own time, like makeup and accessory making, taught to me by my mum and grandmother.

Echoes of Edo

Imoto

(son of the soil)

(Queen)



Obvieseserese

True child of the land



# Echoes of Edo

free flowing fabric  
with wide sleeves

Bulks of fabric, wrapped  
and layered around the  
waist



IG:@con



@royals\_of\_b

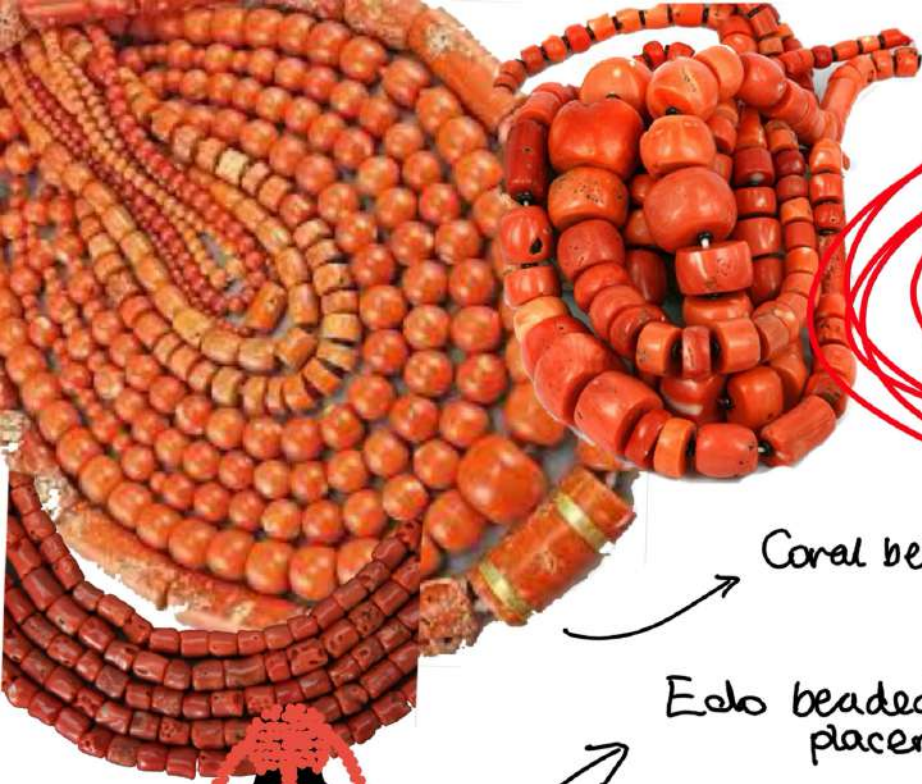
contentsbyovee



@contentstnetnoo

Famously known as  
'BULUKU', this garment is  
worn by the 'OBA', meaning King  
and his chiefs





# Echoes of Edo

Coral beads

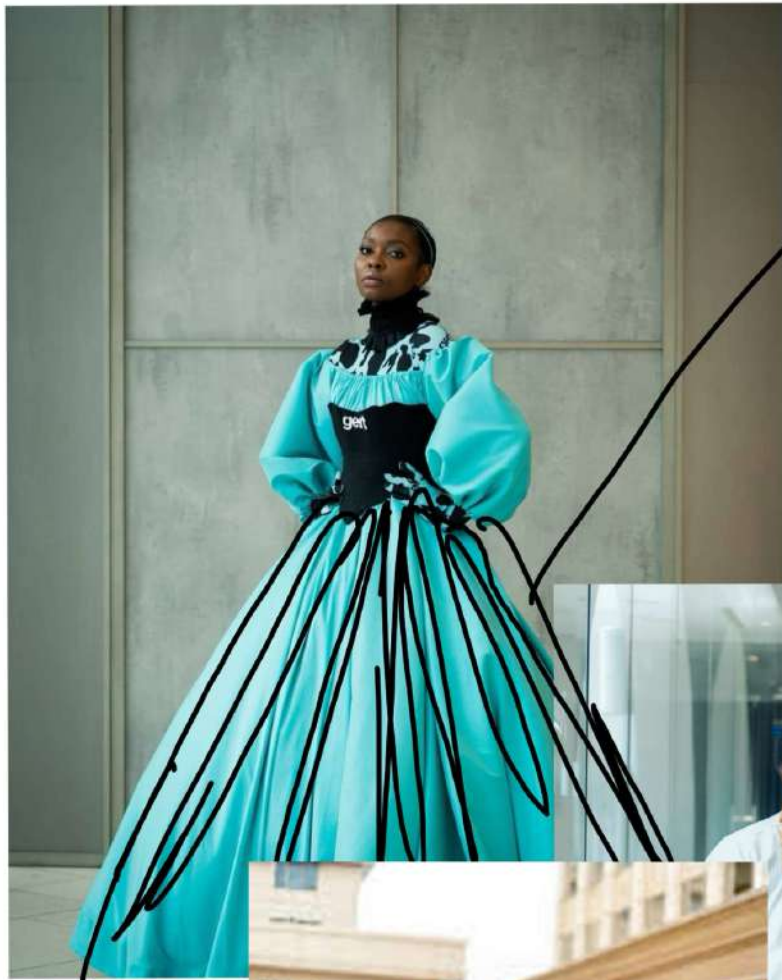
Edo accessories  
representation of the Benin culture

Edo beaded accessory placement

Mai Atafo



Bulk and layering



## Buluku

Worn for ceremonial events. Symbolises power, class and authority



Extra, weighted and volumous silhouette around the waist, made by gathering or pleating fabric.

The bigger your 'buluku' the higher your status



pleats



Echoes of Edo

Print on print / similar colours

# Echoes of Edo

Different designers have their own unique way of using and placing print.

## Concept

Designer - Thom Browne  
x Print designers

x Emmy Kasbit

x Duro Olowu

x Yinka Shoribare

Yinka works with print and volume.



Bold print on bold prints and solid colours



Print on solid colours

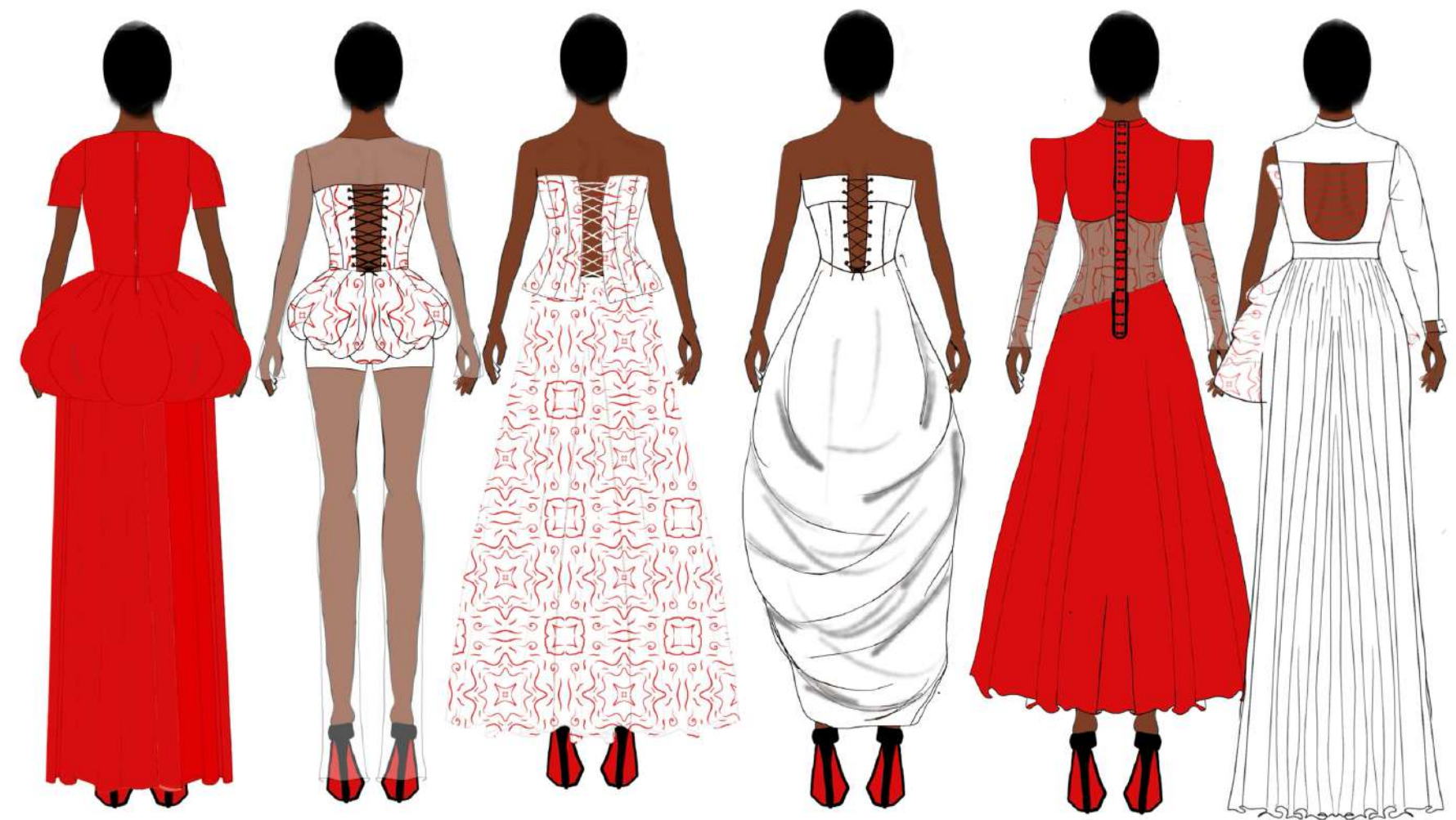


Duchess satin

Printed Cotton Poplin

Plain Cotton Poplin

Printed Mesh





Initially my base skirt was too small so I had to add an extra 2cm

1 piece

pleated waist

Don't hip panel

Princess seams

**Draping design**

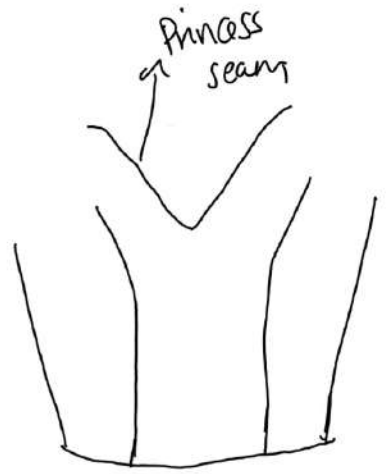
Mannequin 1/2 scale

topstitch → cotton poplin  
balloon skirt  
duckess ← satin

Tulle for bulk

printed mesh

fold and stitch  
to hip panel under-  
skirt





Added dangling beads to shoulder seam and waistline

