

# PROJECT DREYFOOS

BY MARY GIBBLE  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN LIEBERMAN

WELL READ: Shanley Mitchell models Ayla Mejia's creation.



Since 1989, West Palm Beach's Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts has nurtured the next generation of Floridian artists, dancers, actors and singers. We asked a few of the costume design students, under the leadership of instructor Penny Williams, to create garments from recyclable material. The result: upcycled fashion.

## FRONT PAGE

If Ayla Mejia's outfit looks like it belongs in magazines, that's because it's made out of them. After fashioning a corset-inspired top out of issues of *Palm Beach Illustrated*, she paused to come up with a design for the bottom. "I really wanted something out there for the skirt," says the 17-year-old senior. Mejia folded pages and created a fan effect for a separate piece with a lot of volume. Mejia says the dress could be worn to a cocktail party or fashion show—something straight out of *PBI*'s social pages.



ADMIT ONE: Molly Bockmeyer adjusts her ticket dress, worn by Ayla Mejia.



### THAT'S THE TICKET

Molly Bockmeyer, an 18-year-old senior, wanted to challenge herself by creating a cocktail dress out of admit-one tickets. "They're so difficult to handle," she says. Bockmeyer stitched the base of her skirt before gluing on more tickets and curling them with her finger to create volume. "The stitching for the tickets [was a problem] because as soon as it crinkled a little bit, the shape was blown and I had to restart," she says. Bockmeyer attached a zipper in the back by carefully running the tickets through a sewing machine.



### BRIDAL BREW

Coffee filters aren't exactly the material a bride wants to wear on her big day. But that didn't stop 18-year-old Shanley Mitchell from creating a grand bridal ball gown. "It took a long time to get down a good process for how I was going to attach the coffee filters and make them into a dress," she says. After sketching out a few ideas, Mitchell folded them in half and layered them to create a ruffle effect. All told, she estimates she used around 2,000 pieces.



WHAT A BUZZ: Lillian Rozsa poses in Shanley Mitchell's coffee-filter wedding dress.





**GLOVE LOVE:** Amanda Hull proudly models sister Taylor Hull's surgical-glove design.



### **BURN RUBBER**

For 18-year-old Taylor Hull, recyclable fashion design presents an opportunity for self-expression. "I love how I can take anything and turn it into a garment and make it my own style," she says. Surgical gloves appealed to her for practical as well as aesthetic reasons: The elastic material easily passes through a sewing machine, while the cream color reminds her of vintage lace, a detail to which she gravitates. "I'd wear it anywhere, honestly," she says of her dress. "It's just me."



### **LEAF COUTURE**

Something about the leaves on the reusable Barnes & Noble shopping bags spoke to Elianise Jean-Louis. The 19-year-old visual arts major had one goal: to make it look as if the leaves were climbing onto the body. After cutting out the foliage, she created an asymmetrical design, paying attention to the architecture of the back. Jean-Louis believes it's the perfect dress for someone confident who wants to get noticed. She wants the wearer to say, "Yes, I got a cool dress and I know I look good." ♦



**IN THE BAG:** Elianise Jean-Louis fits her leaf dress on fellow student Fazida Yathali.