

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Aside from the wonderful greenery scenery Seattle, there is an isolated area that sprung up the Grunge community. The word grunge characterized as grime or dirt, where it at that point portrays as a genre of music, fashion style, and way of life connected to Seattle. The city of Seattle at that time just threw away the image of the hippie culture but still adhered to the hippie values of counterculture and discrepancies. A band called the Melvins was the first unofficial band that started the Grunge music scene. Shaped in 1983 in Washington State, the band were one of the generation of musicians that were impacted by the likes of KISS, Black Sabbath, Led Zeppelin, AC/DC. Locks in the motivation from the bands they loved, the Melvins were one of the first rock groups to fuse the components of metal and punk in their music. Within a year, Seattle-based bands Green and Soundgarden formed, followed by the Screaming Trees in 1985. In 1986, was brought the founding of Sub Pop Records and Seattle-based record label C/Z Records discharging album called "Deep Six". This compilation included the first distribution of the grunge bands, which are the Melvins, Green River, Soundgarden, Malfunkshun, Skin Yard, and The U-Men. The following year, Alice in Chains was formed and joined to be the portion of the Seattle bands (Grambush, 2019).



Figure 1.1 The Melvins, the First Unofficial Band that Started Grunge Music Scene

Source: <http://www.coneysloft.com/>

By the early 1990s, the popularity of Grunge had spread. This was due primarily to the released of the song *Nevermind* by Nirvana, *Ten* by Pearl Jam, *badmotorfiner* by Soundgardern, *Dirt* bye Alice in Chains, and *Core* by Stone Temple Pilots. The success of these bands boosted the ubiquity of alternative rock and made grunge one of the well-known form of hard rock music in California and other parts of the United States where they construct strong followings and signing major record deals amid that time. In spite the fact that, most grunge bands had disbanded or faded from view by the late 1990s, their influence proceeds to impact modern rock music (Laura, n.d.).



Figure 1.2 Nirvana who made Grunge Popular

Source: <https://queendelafresh.wordpress.com/>

With the origins in Seattle, the look of grunge was born from a blend of influences extending from affordability to useful weather utility, which was characterized by threadbare sweaters, worn out jeans, flannel shirts, “thrifted” granny dresses, and layering of clashing garments, implied the extreme sign of non-fashion. The style icon of this grunge look is the lead singer of Nirvana, Kurt Cobain. Nevertheless, the female grunge style icon is the wife of Kurt Cobain, Courtney Love.



Figure 1.3 Courtney Love

Source: <https://www.vintag.es/>

Different with the normal grunge look, Courtney Love grasp a style called “Kinderwhore” which was characterized by short babydoll dresses, layered cardigans, Mary Jane shoes paired with ankle socks, knee socks, or white tights, alongside messy hair and smeared red lipstick. Although she was not originally based in Seattle, her persona became synonymous with the subculture and its style, gaining the name “Grunge Queen” (Kramer, 2019). Courtney Love as the female lead of the Grunge subculture, she uses her music and her fashion style for spreading female empowerment within the male-dominated culture. The popularity of the “Kinderwhore” persona and the movement Courtney Love and her band, Hole sought after, not only changed gender aesthetics for women in grunge but opened up the opportunity for an assortment of gender identities to be acknowledged towards the society. Since then, more female-led bands, and female playing customarily male instruments are uncovered to the society (Zeiner, 2015).



Figure 1.4 Kinderwhore Style that is Worn by Many Female-Led Grunge Bands

Source: <https://smoda.elpais.com/>

In the beginning of the Grunge feminism by Courtney Love, numerous female-lead grunge bands began the revolution called Riot Grrrl, which was made by Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, and Heavens to Betsy. They spread their awareness by their songs around the internal conflict that happened to women, and composing manifestos to state their outrage. Dressed in the “Kinderwhore” look, the Riot Grrrl bands including Courtney Love also uses the style as a feminist statement on stage. The style may be feminine but their mannerism on stage was negating, whereas they stood tall and confident, tossing guitars around like weapons while screaming out their feminist lyrics. The significance of girlhood is reflected within the Riot Grrrl name, which was chosen to put on the focus on girls rather than women, since this was the time where they frequently felt most insecure. In the original manifesto written by Kathleen Hanna, the lead band of Bikini Kill states, “We are angry at a society that tells us Girl = Dumb, Girl = Bad, Girl = Weak” where it recovered that Riot Grrrl gave new reason of power to what it meant to be a girl. Riot Grrrl also pointed to pull other young women and create a community and a safe zone, which was critical in the male-dominated domain

of punk rock. These safe spaces offered women a place for self-expression, where there was no competition of jealousy (Euse, 2017).



Figure 1.5 Bikini Kill (Left), Bratmobile (Middle), Heavens to Betsy (Right)

Source: <https://i1.wp.com/coogradio.com/> (Left), <https://lastfm.freetls.fastly.net/> (Middle), <https://studiosol-a.akamaihd.net> (Right)

One of the issue that has been central to many feminist is the concept of patriarchy. Patriarchy is characterized as a social structure and arrangement of traditions where a male, superior in hierarchy, dominates, oppresses and exploits the female (Walby, 1990). The social construction of womanhood in Indonesia are shaped from the mixture of Javanese cultural traditions and Islamic standards. Indonesia has a term called *Housewifization* by Maria Mies in her work “Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale”, where it depicts the manners by which women rely upon the income of their significant other for their livelihood. Women are also not considered as wage earners in the family and are set by the state in a subordinate position to men. Therefore, a woman in Indonesia is viewed as a not complete human being before she is married. They all need to be prepared for the appropriate fulfillment to be a wife.

As a result, a career woman who prefers to remain single is considered as a deviant (Ida, 2001).

Based on United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on Human Development Index (HDI) 2016 survey said Indonesia still struggles to close its gender gap. The data since 2015 showed the HDI of Indonesia women is 0.660, lower than the index for Indonesian men that was 0.712. The explanation for this gender inequality has been attributed to social norms, disparities in educational levels, lack of access to financial services and cultural factors in general services. With only 50.9 percent of women participating in the workforce, compared to 83.9 percent of men, UNDP data showed that there is a wide gap between men and women in terms of gross national income per capita, which is 6.668 and 13.391 respectively (Sapiie, 2017).

There is still gender inequality across the board, from health to education, where there is a huge between women involved in the legislative decision-making. It is recorded that in Indonesia, 75 percent of women experienced physical and sexual abuse between the ages 15 and 64. Through marriage decisions, young girls were also stripped of their rights. Based on the article from The Globe Post, at age younger than 15, 11 percent of women were first married. This can interfere with their schooling and delays their ability to get a better job. Without proper education, its wellbeing can also be affected. The maternal mortality ratio in Indonesia is one of the highest in the world, where in 2017, 306 out of 100,000 women died in child birth. Such premature deaths are believed to be caused by inappropriate reproductive behavior, including the number of births and being either too young or too old. The lack of equal access to health services for Indonesian women is also a reason (Tarahita, 2018).

To break the gender inequality in Indonesia, the country has undergone a series of cultural, political and social reforms since the late 1990s aimed at focusing on gender

equality, and specifically women-related policy issues. UNDP Indonesia developed a gender equality strategy and action plan for 2017-2020, in which its vision and goals to make gender equality become pillar of society by providing program design and implementation, operations, and communications. Indonesia has also demonstrated commitment to ending gender-based violence. By analyzing the situation since the reform period, progress and challenges in all areas, such as education, politics, economic participation, gender-based violence, and many others, UNDP Indonesia sets an ambitious goal of building on progress towards gender equality in all aspects of work, while at the same time addressing the difficult challenges that hamper the development of women in Indonesia today (UNDP Indonesia, n.d.).

Girls around the world continue to face multiple barriers at all levels, due to the gender based discrimination and socially constructed sub-ordination where women have lower status in almost all aspects, one of them in Indonesia, in which the goal of this collection will break the mindset of this gender inequality by injecting the Riot Grrrl manifesto where it shows that girls should stand together to fight for their rights, with the silhouette of Grunge fashion and “Kinderwhore” added in the collection in order to support the awareness.

## **1.2 Scope**

In the society today, women around the world still have less opportunities for financial participation than men, less access to fundamental and higher education, greater health and safety risks, and less political representation. This has been the foremost going on issue in Indonesia where the 2016 report from Human Development Index (HDI) discharged by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) says Indonesia is



still struggling to close its gender equality gap. The UNDP Indonesia country director Christophe Bahuey said different reasons had driven to gender inequality in numerous countries, where it was connected to social norms, contrasting education levels, lack of access to general services, and to financial services and cultural components (Sapiie, 2017).

Fortunately, within a year, the gender gap in education has narrowed, however the gender inequality in health to employment aspects still an issue. The inequality can be considered as exceptionally serious, as numerous women are still caught within the stigma, where their suppositions are restricted and left unheard, and their soul remain confined by the culture that does not liberate and appreciate the position of women. Especially with a high rate that surpass to 75 percent of women in Indonesia that have faced physical and sexual violence from the age 15 to 64 years old (Tarahita, 2018), the author plan to produce a wearable art collection that inspired from the goal of Riot Grrrl movement to build lines of communication so girls can be more open and accessible to each other. The collection will have a silhouette of Grunge with the layers of oversized jackets and dresses, bustier, and bodysuit to also emphasize the feminine look from the “Kinderwhore”. There will also be hidden sentences from the Riot Grrrl manifestos to show the target market about the aim that the author trying to pursue in the collection. This collection has a simple silhouette without many material treatments to still have the Grunge mood in the designs.

## **1.3 Aims and Benefits**

### **1.3.1 Aims**

The aim of this wearable art collection is to spread the message of the Riot Grrrl movement to challenge the society by building lines of communication in order to support rather than to hate each other. Although women and girls in Indonesia have seen an improvement quality of life, gender inequalities are still common in every part of society. Women and girls do not have access to health, employment, participation, and decision-making equally to men and boys (UNDP, n.d.). Therefore, with this collection, it also aims to educate people, especially women and girls that gap between gender needs to be eliminated, by breaking the barrier and challenges that women face today. It is also to develop the understanding of feminism in Indonesia since the idea of feminism is still an unpopular concept, especially with the growing rise of religious conservatism in the country, feminism has increasingly received bad reputations. There are many religious fundamentalist groups have made the campaign against “liberalism and feminism” central to their cause (Diani, 2016). With this collection and the research the author conducted in Jakarta, it will pursue the message by giving girls a safe place to self-express in a positive way and celebrate through the hidden words that will apply in each design.

### **1.3.2 Benefits**

The benefit of this collection is to spread the ongoing fight for gender equality in Indonesia, and break the stigma of the feminism community. Many people still have a wrong view towards the goal of feminists, where they will perceive feminist as toxic group that is thirsty with women in power. However, the real aim of feminism is to

define, establish, and achieve the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the genders, not girls being more powerful than men. This collection also give a benefit towards girls to support each other by starting to go against patriarchy system and challenge the society that girls can do more than just sitting at home doing the chores, while celebrating the female empowerment that has been improved in Indonesia. Moreover, the designs will be presented with the silhouette of Grunge Fashion and “Kinderwhore” to fit into the current lifestyle, since Grunge fashion is having a comeback according to WGSN. With this collection, the author hope to be insightful towards the younger generation and grasp the message that the author is trying to pursue.

#### **1.4 Structure**

- CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION: Explains about the overall of the project’s background, problem, scope, aim, and benefits.
- CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL FOUNDATION: Consist of various related theories and facts that hold up the author’s topic of researches.
- CHAPTER 3 – PROBLEM ANALYSIS: Interpreting the methods of research carried out and the final result, which includes market research and analysis, such as SWOT analysis and competitors.
- CHAPTER 4 – STRATEGY APPROACH: Discuss about the brand’s plan from the design and marketing strategy to tackle the market.
- CHAPTER 5 – DESIGN AND REALIZATION: Deliberating on the visual inspiration, and whole process along with the development of the project, consisting the mock-up also the experiment on the fabric manipulations.

- CHAPTER 6 – FINAL COLLECTION AND DESIGN VALUE: Describing the final collection in detail, brand campaign, along with the technical drawing inputted in pricing.
- CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSION: Summarize of the concept and inspiration, with the process from the first research until producing the final collection, as well as the struggle, along with the inputs on how to combat the problems faced, and future plan on the brand.