

Skip those stains with social media and the #FabulousDressProject

 By Leigh Andrews

19 May 2015

What do #FirstThursdays, The Jupiter Drawing Room and Skip washing powder have in common? The #FabulousDressProject, of course...

Can a pure white dress stay perfectly fabulous, stain after stain, wash after wash? That's the question Skip washing powder wanted to find out.

But they didn't go about this with your typical stain-removal experiments limited to a lab - the stains were effectively 'crowdsourced' (or should that be crowd-sauced) - and the results were free for all to see in this month's rendition of #FirstThursdays, held at Bean There on Wale Street in the Cape Town CBD on 7 May 2015, which incorporated the Skip #FabulousDressProject.



Turning what's typically seen as scientific into something decidedly social, the experiment involved all who attended, as Celeste Arendse of [Selfi](#) used her artistic talents to create beautiful stain patterns on a pristine white Selfi dress, while Aisha Baker of [Baked the Blog](#) wore these creations as a way to present the project to her fans on social media.

Jane Rowlinson, Business Unit Director at Jupiter Drawing Room tells us more about what went into creating the #FabulousDressProject...

■ 1. Who came up with the brave idea for the campaign - one of your 'messiest' yet?

Rowlinson: The idea is the brainchild of Melissa Fontini, one of our copywriters. During Design Indaba, the idea started evolving to the point that she was already identifying people she wanted to collaborate with on the project.

■ 2. Interesting start. There are so many social media elements involved - tell us about how it coincided with #FirstThursdays.

Rowlinson: The timing was fortuitous. We pulled the project off in 10 days from start to finish, and wanted a platform where as many people as possible could see The Dress. Showcasing the project at #FirstThursdays was a no brainer, as we would be reaching creatives, fashionistas... and even hipsters... on a night that we knew they would out in town, looking for

interesting installations.

■ 3. *Celeste and Aisha were definitely a pull on the night - what do they bring to the campaign?*

Rowlinson: We wanted to work with an artist who could use fabric as a canvas. Celeste Arendse from Selfi is well known for her creative approach to her ranges. We met, thrashed out what we wanted and the role that Celeste would play and it rolled out seamlessly from there. Celeste created those amazing patterns out of food and make-up for each of the designs, and each dress became a character of sorts.



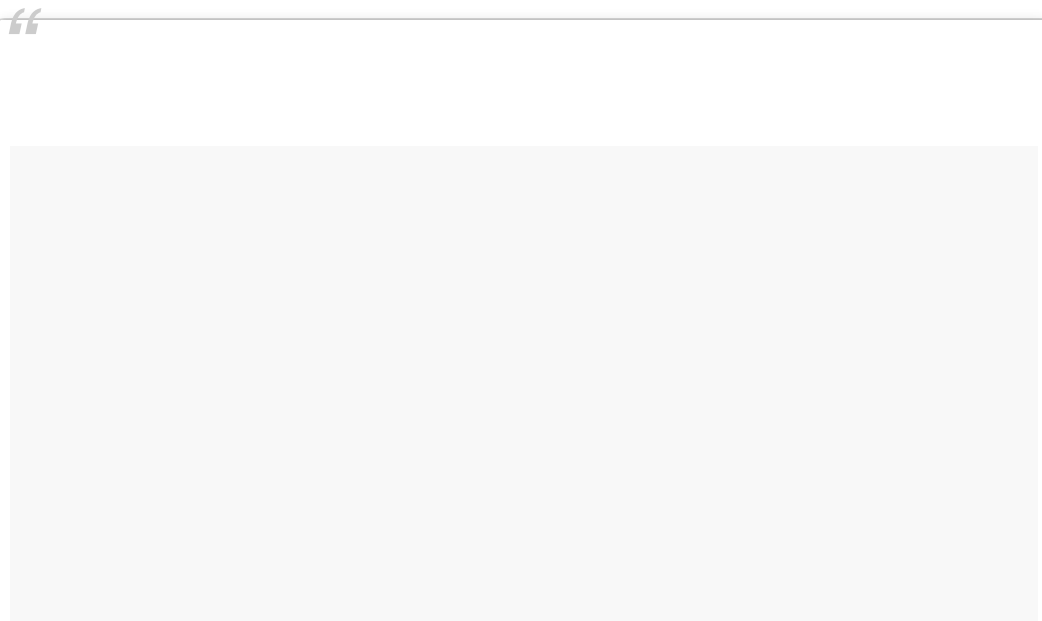
We met with Aisha Baker from Baked the Blog soon after that to tell her about the project. Aisha loves fashion, and when we met with her, she was as excited and passionate about the idea as we were. Each time the dress was stained, Aisha wore it out to meetings, dinner with friends and even to a make-up shoot with *Elle* magazine. She helped us bring the campaign to life.

After the dress was stained and then worn, it was washed white and Celeste started with a blank canvas again.

■ 4. *It's a fascinating concept. What's the intended outcome of the #FabulousDressProject?*

Rowlinson: In order to follow the staining process, we needed a hashtag that people could follow to view the metamorphosis of the dress. #FabulousDressProject is exactly what the project was - fabulous.

If someone is only reading about the project now for the first time, simply searching for this hashtag on Instagram, they'll be able to view the process and the images created by people who visited our event at #FirstThursdays and had a stab at staining the fabric too before sharing their creations on Instagram.





I may have got a little bit carried away at the #FabulousDressProject last night. #FirstThursdays
#Paint #SelfiDress #Fashion #Paint #Art #Cat #Penguin

A photo posted by Jessica Rohrer (@thefirstjess) on May 7, 2015 at 10:04pm PDT

5. It was certainly a fun way to spend an evening. Did event turn-out meet expectations?

Rowlinson: The event exceeded expectations. We had a great turn-out, and it was really interesting to see the public's reaction when they realised the dress had been stained with food and make-up... and then washed completely white and put on display on the night.

6. The question everyone wants to know: Which stains were the hardest to remove?

Rowlinson: They all washed out easily. We followed the suggested care instructions on Skip's bag, and every time we removed the dress from the washing machine, it was perfectly white again.

In terms of what was the hardest stain to apply, Celeste will tell you it was the eye-shadow, which interestingly rendered the boldest designs!

Follow the #FabulousDressProject hashtag or [Baker on Twitter](#) for more, or [Arendse's Instagram account](#). [Click here](#) for more on #FirstThursdays. You can also view the final video from the campaign, embedded below:

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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