

The Golden Medallion

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The inspiration for my garment came completely from African fabrics that were donated by former alum. The dress design was developed for an experimental apparel design class and was completed in May 2013. The garment itself is not a representation of traditional African dress, but is a fashion statement. The statement is made through taking traditional African fabrics to

create a garment influenced by the 50s fashion and elegance, reminiscent of a Dior gown.

I was initially drawn to a woven striped fabric, and then selected a stiff maroon, cotton fabric to complement the striped fabric. Using the two fabrics, I experimented on the mannequin before I developed my final design. This experimental stage, allowed myself the opportunity to respond to the fabrics I had chosen, which was a different way of approaching the design process for me.

Using a single rectangular piece of the maroon fabric, I worked to shape the piece to highlight the bust, waist, and hips of the figure. As I worked to contour the fabric to the body, I continuously was aware of the positioning of the printed medallions. The drape of the maroon fabric showcases the large medallion motif on the back train of the garment as well as the side. The placement of the multiple gold medallions on the side of the dress emphasize the pleating on the bodice, but also work to shift the



focus from the front of the garment to the large medallion on the back train of the dress. After I had created the drape from the maroon fabric, I sketched several options that incorporated the striped fabric to create an integrated look.

The other side of the garment is a very simple silhouette accentuated by the striped fabric that is gathered at the waist. In true 50's style, it emphasizes the hips and the waist of the figure. Tension occurs between the striped fabric of the skirt and the drape of the maroon fabric. The layering allows them to work together to create a cohesive overall look.