

## Belle Curves

Colleen Moretz, Immaculata University, USA

Architecture, quilting, embroidery

Inspiration for this design was derived from Balenciaga's statement: "A couturier must be: An architect for design, A sculptor for shape, A painter for colours, ..." Fashion design follows a similar process as an architect: planning, designing, and constructing of form by the creative manipulation of material; as an sculptor: producing works of art in three dimensions; and as a painter: applying color to create an aesthetically pleasing composition. Comparable to architecture, the curve of the peplum and the bell of the sleeves required the development of an under structure to support the three-dimensional sculptured shapes. An aesthetic element was defined by producing a polychromatic motif of stylized peacock feathers.

Cristóbal Balenciaga was known for manipulating the relationship between his designs and the women's body. The silhouette of this jacket follows the shape of the upper torso and defines the waist. The peplum bells out from the waist emphasizing the curve of the hips. The skirt/pant slender outline delineates the feminine lower figure.

Process: (1) The jacket patterns were generated in a CAD program. Curved darts and curved seams form the bell silhouette of the peplum and sleeves. The silk pattern pieces were underlined in a layer of cotton, thin batting, and shaped horsehair braid to sculpt, build, and support the bell shaped peplum, funnel collar, and the sleeve bells. (2) The skirt/pant (skant) patterns were flat patterned and draped to assure proper fit. The front skirt panel was draped flat against the form then released to form a cascade down the side of the pant and revealing the magenta lining. (3) An embellishment, stylized peacock feathers, were added to the jacket using a method of fuse quilting, then machine quilting the many layers together using the technique of free motion embroidery. (4) Contrast lining was utilized to enhance design details of the jacket and of the skirt drape.



Techniques: Patterns were developed using a CAD program, flat pattern, and draping techniques. Couture hand and machine construction techniques were employed to the understructure of the peplum and the sleeves to best support and sculpt these areas. Stylized peacock feathers were hand drawn and painted then generated in Illustrator, templates were created, and samples were executed as practice for a first attempt at free motion embroidery. The results were then applied downed the front of the jacket and encircling the peplum.

Materials: Shell; lining: 100% Silk Completed: May, 2013  
Measurements: Bust: 35" Waist: 26" Hips: 36"

