

Through to Gold

Through to Gold Madeline Kim
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Design Mentor Statement

The dress was completed as part of an Honors Project independent study, in which I was the supervising faculty member. The mentorship process began with the development of a creative scholarship research proposal identifying the (a) purpose, (b) significance, (c) research question(s), (d) procedures, and (e) outcomes. The proposal was reviewed and approved by the College Honors committee. The purpose of the mentorship relationship was to guide the student in successful completion of the Honors project. This purpose was met by communication with the mentee throughout the creative design scholarship process, including presentation.

This work was selected for submission due to its high quality, as well as its thorough design process. Steps included: (a) initial inspiration research on Italian Renaissance art, (b) 20 initial sketches from inspiration, (c) patternmaking through draping techniques, (d) fabric sampling and testing, (e) initial prototype sample 1, (f) fit session of prototype 1, (g) alterations of patterns, (h) prototype sample 2, (i) fit session of sample 2, and (k) final sample in fashion fabric. The final garment was shown with an accompanying research poster at the University Honors poster session, where it was ranked 4th out of 18 research projects presented by the College Honors committee. It was also accepted into the externally juried University fashion show, where it received the 1st place scholarship in the formalwear category.

Design Statement

Statement of Purpose.

The formal wear ensemble, “Through to Gold” is inspired by my study abroad experience in Florence, Italy. A drastic contrast in painting styles and ideologies is seen between the Dark Ages (500-1000AD), rooted in spiritual iconography and flat compositions, to the Renaissance or “Golden Age” (1271-1600AD) of humanism, with



Figure 1 Madonna of the Candeletta by Carlo Crivelli.

realistic painting techniques (Richman-Abdou, 2017). The purpose of this garment is to display the transition of Italian Art from the Dark Ages to the “Golden” time period.

This work builds on the apparel designs of others who used artistic inspiration to convey a concept. For example, Wilkins and Porterfield (2015) were inspired by the works of Jacob Lawrence during the Harlem Renaissance to create a garment that portrayed the reality of being an African American in today’s society. Hwang and Hahn (2017) used op art inspiration to develop a digital textile print and sensible, ready-to-wear garment. My piece integrates inspiration from the Italian Renaissance artist Carlo Crivelli with modern techniques of asymmetric patternmaking and hand beading to create a formalwear garment that conveys the changes in art and ideologies from the Dark Ages to the Renaissance.



Figure 2 Floral design

Process, Technique, and Execution.

The process of creating this garment first started with the initial inspiration and sketches. Primary research was conducted at Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, Italy. Crivelli’s (1488) Madonna of the Candeletta (Figure 1) served as the main source of silhouette and beading inspiration. The asymmetric design was achieved through draping patternmaking techniques. The pattern was tested and perfected through a process of sampling and fitting. Concurrently, fabrics were selected and beading samples were developed. The final garment is composed of a bodice design with a deep v neckline and fitted silhouette. Asymmetric elements include a tailored sleeve on the right side and added fullness with tulle on the left side of the garment. The tulle is gathered at the shoulder seam and waist, creating a flowing overlay. A stiff polyester satin was selected for the main dress and sleeve to create a powerful stance against the soft tulle. Hand beading was completed on the skirt trickling up to the bodice by threading each bead on in the pattern interpreted from Crivelli’s painting (Figures 2 and 3).

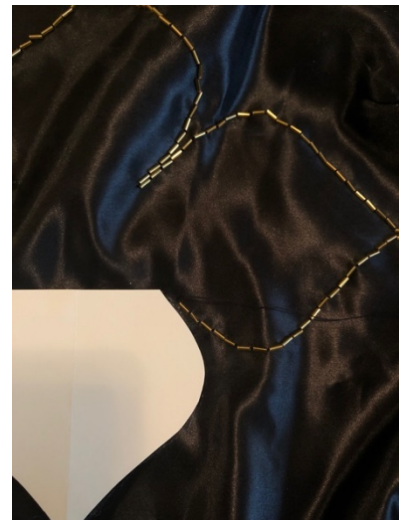


Figure 3 Beading interpretation

Aesthetic Properties, Visual Impact, and Cohesion.

Modernly practiced design elements and principles are represented throughout the garment. The contrast of shape through the asymmetric silhouette portrays a form of imbalance and uneven proportion. This design choice aims to highlight the drastic change in Italian history causing

imbalance and instability within the country. The principle of variety is shown through a contrast of silhouette and diversity of rhythmic movement between the satin and tulle fabrications. The element of value displays the representation of the Dark Ages (all black silhouette) to the Golden Ages (sparkling beads). Through this, the principle of graduation from dark to light is highly prevalent. The hand beading placed on the right side of the garment trickles up the bodice and symbolizes the change between time periods.

Originality and Innovation.

This garment is a fresh take on the historic painting with wearable art techniques of asymmetric patternmaking, fabric manipulation, and creative communication. Through to Gold takes a modernized stance on formal wear rooted in ancient Italian inspiration. The garment physically encompasses the message of contrast and change from the historical time period through the use of asymmetric design, contrast in balance and harmony, and use of rhythm and movement. The striking garment is embedded with meaning and pristine detail, creating a one of a kind gown fit for high end galas or red carpet events. The piece inspired by art, is a work of art itself, symbolizing rebirth, beauty in the natural world, and a revolutionary change in free thinking. This garment shows a modernized take on formal wear with intricate detailing.

References

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