THE CONSTRUCTION AND HISTORY OF AN EARLY 19TH CENTURY CHEMISE

by

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The Neoclassical Revival and years leading up to it are some of the most tumultuous in French political history. The ideologies that shaped governmental shifts extend beyond bureaucracy, influencing aesthetic shifts. By fully understanding these ideologies and shifts we gain a better understanding of the period. In order to gain a complete understanding of a moment in time, one must look at the fashion. Fashion informs us on historical gender and class dynamics, trade routes, and so much more. A garment that exemplifies these shifts, one that existed only for a brief moment—is the chemise as outerwear. Studying how this garment came out from under clothes, gives us a more complete understanding of the monarchy, the people's feelings towards it, and how the French crown fell. After understanding all of this, this knowledge is used to inform the design of a historic costume for the stage. Using a historical understanding of the time the play is set in allows for better costume design for the play *Playing with Fire: After Frankenstein.* After understanding the context of the garment, a historically accurate chemise was designed and built for stage.

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Introduction

The chemise seems like a simple piece of clothing. Its origins as an undergarment worn to protect clothing from sweat and skin oils don't suggest royalty, social outrage, or dramatic changes in fashion history. Yet, all these things play a role in the story of the chemise in the late 1800s. What began as a simple undergarment plays an important role in the history of the French Revolution, and the way its silhouette evolves becomes a valuable clue to the time in which it existed. The aesthetic cycles of fashion history give us important information on historic cultural climates.

Research Question

The questions I sought to answer through this project were: 1. What political, cultural, philosophical, and aesthetic ideals present at the turn of the 19th century influenced the chemise silhouette of the early 1800s, and 2. Could I create an accurate reproduction of this garment to help establish a theatrical production in a specific period? Understanding the ideologies present during a period allows for accurate historic theatrical costume design.

The Neoclassical revival that happened in western Europe at the end of the 18th and start of the 19th century slimmed the silhouettes of women's garments. The wide skirts of the Rococo era shrank down into columnar straight cuts. This was accompanied by a renewed affinity for ancient Greek and Roman culture. Women's dress shifted towards mimicking classic statues. This is evidenced by rising empire waistlines, draped and gathered fabrics, and sheerer fabric choices. The change in fashion silhouette was accompanied by a change in the shape of the chemise undergarment worn beneath women's dresses at this time. By understanding the era in which this undergarment existed, we can use its specific shape to inform a theatre audience about the society in which the wearer exists.

This project involved designing a historically accurate chemise for a 2024 production of Frankenstein: “Playing with Fire”, directed by Dr. Michael Najjar at the University of Oregon. The play is set in the 1790s, and the costume reflects that period.

Literature Review: Historical Background on the Cut of This Chemise

A chemise is a historic undergarment with origins dating back to the early Middle Ages. It is believed to have evolved from the Roman *tunica*, a T shaped garment composed of a tube with sleeves. The chemise began as a similarly shaped columnar shift worn close to the body to protect clothing from sweat and skin oils. Chemises across history were typically made from lightweight washable fabrics such as linen or cotton. The classic chemise was a gender-neutral garment that became womenswear when men began wearing joined, leg-covering hose in the late Middle Ages and their chemise evolved into the shirt.

The decades leading up to the chemise's appearance as a visible garment in the late 18th century were defined by changing social norms, acceleration of international trade, and industrialization. During the first part of the 18th century the chemise was an undergarment, worn with stays and an understructure to support a large skirt. Wide draped skirts were all the rage, with women wearing panniers, hoops, and hip pads to the French courts. Garments were created of costly printed and woven silks with multiple layers of trimmings and decorations. Grandiose styles tied to French aristocracy like the *robe a la francaise* were popular, alongside expensive displays of embroidery and brocade. These aesthetic attempts to project power were ultimately subverted by the young French queen.

The lavish dress of 18th century royalty illustrates Thorsten's *Theory of the Leisure Classes* (1899)Writer Thorsten Veblen's book details the idea that clothing was used to demonstrate one's wealth. The impracticality of upper-class dress during the period showed that the people wearing these clothes did not need to work (Torota & Macketti). Clothing for lower classes pictured in fashion plates and paintings was less grand in size and fabric choice. Female servants and peasants were depicted in dark colors and straight cut styles far less lush than the

hoop skirts and panniers of nobility. The fashion of French aristocracy as compared to that of the poorer classes illustrates an attempt to maintain power during the political conflicts that would lead to the French Revolution.

The chemise as an outerwear garment was first documented in 1783 by French painter Elizabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, the portrait artist for Marie Antoinette. Marie Antoinette was an Austrian princess who became Queen of France in 1774 at age 18, but who was never popular with the majority of the French people. Despite her love of luxurious clothing at the start of her reign, Marie and her social circle popularized a simpler style of dress in the late 1770s. Although other less notable members of French aristocracy were pictured years earlier by Le Brun wearing similar garments, the dress in the 1783 portrait became known as a *chemise a la reine* or *chemise of the queen.* The dress scandalized the public when the portrait was first unveiled at the Salon of 1783 (the Met). Fashion historian Caroline London explains that the reasons for this scandal were twofold– the dress was considered immodest for a queen because it was so similar to an undergarment, and it was made of imported fabric.

The *chemise a la reine's* fabric in the portrait is significant because it was made from a textile called muslin. Muslin is a lightweight woven fabric usually made from cotton and was a popular choice for the period as imports and exports to and from Asia became more frequent. At the time, muslin was a very sheer lightweight fabric made using a special weaving practice that has since been lost. Muslin today looks very different, it's heavier and cheaply made, primarily used to create garment mockups. Muslin in the late 18th century was seen as a British textile because it was imported from India– a British colony at the time. Britain and France had been

historic rivals in Europe for centuries at this point. Therefore, Marie Antoinette wearing something so associated with Britain was publicly seen as unpatriotic. Due to the uproar, a replacement portrait in another dress depicted in formal French silk had to be quickly produced. The fabric choice of the replacement garment mattered greatly (London). However the damage was done, and Marie Antoinette continued to fall out of favor with her people as history progressed from the French Revolution in1789 onwards. Even though other members of her court had been painted in similar dresses a few years prior, seeing the queen in such a garment was too far.

Even though it was controversial,-the *chemise a la reine* bears key differences from the chemise undergarments of the late 1700s to early 1800s. Undergarment chemises of the time period would often have decorative gathers surrounding the neckline, while the garment in Marie Antoinette's portrait has a formal ruffled neckline, full length gathered sleeves, a waist sash, and a gathered bodice and skirt. These differences make it more extravagant than undergarments of the period, which had no waistline or complete sleeves. To allow it to fit discreetly underneath clothing, an undergarment wouldn't have such features.

Figure 1: Typical undergarment chemise from the late 1700's

The public was outraged, because the dress Queen Marie Antoinette wore in her 1783 portrait was so reminiscent of an undergarment. Seeing the queen in such immodest dress caused immediate extreme backlash, and the portrait Marie Antoinette in a Chemise Dress was removed from the Salon. A scandal of this scale today would be similar to the White House releasing photos of the president in their underwear. Marie Antoinette in a Chemise Dress was replaced in the Salon exhibition with the portrait Marie Antoinette with Rose. In this image, she is wearing a style known as robe á la française made of a formal French Lyonnaise Silk (London). The French style and fabric were selected to reassure the public of the national alliances of the Austrian-born French queen. Six years before the revolution, this was an attempt to preserve the dignity of the throne. The Lyonnaise silk and distinctly French silhouette in Marie Antoinette

with Rose are examples of displays of wealth, power, and nationality through fashion, things that her original portrait (while unintentional) subverted.

Figure 2: Marie Antoinette en Chemise

Figure 3: Marie Antoinette with Rose

The most extreme examples of the chemise style as outerwear in this period are seen in the French *Merveilleuses,* a subculture of aristocratic French fashion (Torota, Maketi, 309). This style was adopted during the Directoire period of 1794-1799, perhaps as a reaction to the perilous social environment that existed at the time for aristocrats of the former regime. The style was purposely exaggerated and rejected formal aristocratic French fashion.

The *Merveilleuses* women modeled much of their dress after Greek and Roman statues. The discovery of many ancient Classical era statues around the time had a heavy influence on the draped and flowing fashions of the period. *Les Merveilleuses* took extreme measures to copy the

looks of these statues, with necklines sometimes cut as low as the waistband. They donned sheer fabrics and sometimes wetted their gowns so the fabric would cling to their bodies. This was done to mimic the look of flowing fabric that clings to the body the way statues were carved. This trend was primarily seen in women's fashion, as their silhouettes shrankto appear less intimidating and statue like, while menswear stayed similar to the years prior in size and coverage.

As women's fashion evolved post French revolution in 1789, it helped create a Neoclassical revival in fashion, art, and decoration. As the simple, tubular chiton gown styles of ancient Greek and Roman dress began to influence European woman's fashion, the chemise undergarment gained simple sleeves and a defined waistband to become an outerwear garment. The waist level rose to the underbust, and the gown became narrower. Eventually, the chemise garment went out of fashion and the term "chemise" referred to an undergarment once again, although narrower that it had been in the past in order to fit under the exterior gown. It began to more closely resemble the *tunica* it originated from once more.

Figure 4: Les Merveilleuses and their male counterparts Les Incroyables

As the late 1790s and early 1800s progressed, Napoleon Bonaparte came to power in the midst of the upheavals of social riots in Paris. Napolean was an army general who was able to reassert order in Paris. As he gained power, Napolean's conservative influence on France removed the extreme aspects of nudity and scandal from public dress that the *Merveilleuses* dresses displayed and after 1795 Napoleon began to impose more rigid social expectations in order to assert power. He was crowned Emperor of France in 1804; the upheaval of the Revolution was over. However, France continued to be the fashion capital of the world at the time, and changing the style of dress in the country meant an impact on western clothing as a

whole. The chemise ultimately became an undergarment once more. However, throughout the remainder of the early 19th century, shoulder puffs and bust gathers were seen on women's dresses. These details can be traced back to Marie Antoinette's original *chemise a la reine*. Before her portrait, sleeves in aristocratic dress were typically fitted at the shoulder and bodices were smooth fronted with no gathers. The *chemise á la reine* had a lasting impact on fashion, regardless of the outrage it caused. Marie Antoinette was beheaded in 1793, four years into the French Revolution, but her dress and its elements lived long after the monarch who inspired it.

Napoleon wanted to position his ascendance out of the French Revolution as a return to order. As Napoleon expanded French influence with his military conquests, new women's fashions with raised waistlines and columnar skirts began to be seen across Europe. He pulled from the look of ancient empires to assert the influence of his current one. The Neoclassical Revival adapted aesthetics from antiquity and created a resurgence of Greek and Roman architectural styles. Places like The Grand Theatre in Bordeaux showcase elements of the style. The theater's 12 Corinthian style columns form a portico which supports an entablature containing 12 statues of figures from Greek mythology.

Figure 5: The Grand Theatre in Bordeaux

This aesthetic shift influenced other areas of the arts. Paintings flattened and became more ordered and symmetrical. Women's body silhouettes were depicted as frail and columnar, modeled on Greek and Roman statues. Interestingly, men's dress also changed during the period 1790 – 1800. Embroidered silk suits were replaced with darker, plain woolen ensembles in the 1780s and 90s, but brocaded and embroidered menswear became popular again for formalwear at the French court in the early 1800s. This may be interpreted as an attempt to delineate class structure post revolution. By returning to more extravagant styles of dress, Napoleon and his court could differentiate themselves from revolutionaries and further assert their wealth and power. The newly self-crowned Emperor decided to return to some of the elements of old regime to display a sense of permanence in his new regime.

At the same time as France experienced aesthetic reforms the country also underwent major ideological shifts. Napoleon's Estates General declared themselves a National Assembly

and began to abolish feudalism, adopting the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen and drafting the first constitution in French history.

These cultural, ideological, and aesthetic shifts in France from 1790 to the early 1800s set the stage for the action in the play *PLAYING WITH FIRE: AFTER FRANKENSTEIN* by Barbara Field. The ideologies present at the historic period are referenced in the script to illustrate the change to a belief in the power of science over faith and tradition. Representing these ideologies aesthetically onstage is important in creating the world of the show. Costume history is inseparable from human history. The things people wore give us a more concrete understanding of past cultures. Clothing shows what and who is valued during a period. Napoleonic court dress shows that despite a streamlining of rococo aesthetics, aristocrats should still flaunt wealth and dress in a gaudy manner to indicate status. Marie Antoinette's *chemise á la reine* shows a young queen asserting her love of clothing in the face of social backlash and established norms. The sheer and low-cut styles of *Les Merveilleuses* show the affinity for Greek and Roman statues and aesthetics that was present at the time. All these things add to our understanding of a period, it is the costume designer's responsibility to make sure these aspects are represented in a way that's clear to an audience.

Physical Project

Introduction

PLAYING WITH FIRE: AFTER FRANKENSTEIN is a play set at the turn of the 19th century. This period is known as the Directoire era, named for the Directory committee that ruled France in the transition from monarchy through the Revolution to Napolean's empire. For the production, the costume styles were designed from a 30-year time span to showcase the action, which began in 1790 and ended around 1820. The ideologies present at the time are referenced in the script as people become more accepting of modern science and the Catholic church loses influence over French society. Characters debate their ideas of faith versus science as part of the action that leads to Victor Frankenstein creating a living creature from dead body parts.

The dialogue in the script, however, is not the most important element in setting the period. The heavy lifting for this is done by the costuming. Costume design informs an audience of the life a character has lived. It encompasses period setting, experience, age, wealth, and many other components of a character. Costuming is one of the best tools for staging period theatre. By focusing on accurate garments one can show the setting and period of the production, even if the props and scenery are minimal.

For the character of Elizabeth Frankenstein, her garments were set in 1790s, with a chemise of this period worn beneath her exterior gown. My project was to pattern, fit, and build the chemise undergarment for the production. The society of the era set the stage for the chemise silhouette featured in *AFTER FRANKENSTEIN.*

This project encompassed all the technical skills used in constructing a historical costume for *PLAYING WITH FIRE: AFTER FRANKENSTEIN*. It is accompanied by a research paper on the garment's history. The production ran for nine shows in November of 2024 at the University

of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon. It was directed by Dr. Micheal Najjar, and the costumes were designed by Associate Professor Jeanette deJong.

The costume I made for this project was a late 18th to 19th-century chemise undergarment, to be produced over 5 weeks. I estimated needing about 30 hours to complete the project. It should be noted that the costume design process is usually broken up between separate people draping and patterning, cutting, and sewing. For this project, I completed almost every aspect of the construction process myself. The time I spent on this project ended up totaling 60 hours, twice my original estimate. The role I took for this project is unusual, because as mentioned work is usually separated between people doing different tasks explained in my methods section. The best title for my role in this production would be assistant costume designer,

Methods

Before beginning physical work, a costume designer must research the era to find the appropriate silhouette and style of the garment being created. This research is covered in the Literature Review portion of this thesis. The drawing that I referenced was made by costume designer Jeanette deJong; however, it was also important for me to complete visual research so that I understood the historic form of the garment that I was to pattern.

I began the physical portion of this project by Draping. This is a patterning method in which I pinned and sculpted pieces of fabric to a dress form to create a physical representation of the design drawing. To drape, one uses skills of observation and sensitivity to the physics of how fabric falls on the figure, along with detailed discussion of the garment's intended appearance with the designer. After my initial draping work, Jeanette and I met to finalize the pinned

version on the dress form. During this conversation, we also decided what types of closures to use and where they would be placed.

I used marked pieces of fabric from the draped design to create a paper pattern. A sewing pattern is a paper plan detailing the size of each piece of the garment and how they should be cut in relation to the grain of the fabric, creating a full-sized template. For this project, the paper pattern also specified the size of each pleat and the size of the seam allowances.

After cutting the paper pattern in muslin test fabric, I used stitching skills to sew the garment together. Stitching included basting together a mock-up dress to try on the actor to get an idea of the garment on the actor and to perfect the fit. This garment was sewn with a long machine stitch length for ease of adjustment during the fitting process. After the initial fitting, I adjusted the paper pattern, before cutting the garment in the more expensive fashion fabric for the project. I sewed together the final garment and added the finishings, including piping, bias binding, buttonholes, and buttons. The final garment was made using both hand and machine sewing techniques.

Creating the chemise for the stage also involved multiple fittings on the actor who would wear the garment onstage. During fittings, the shape of the garment on the actor's body is observed while they are moving as well as standing still. Adjustments to the fit are marked using safety pins or noted in the shop notes. These fit adjustments are sewn in a process known as Altering. Lastly, practical design is an important element when making a garment for the stage. Changes might be made to historical accuracy, or traditional wearability for the ease of a production. Examples include flat buttons down the back, and snaps on the skirt rather than buttons.

Development

I constructed a historically accurate costume from scratch to fit an actor. To do this I first consulted photos of museum-archived garments, paintings, and patterning resources accurate to the period to determine the construction techniques I used for the garment. In conjunction with this research, I met with the show designer Jeanette deJong, to go over her drawing of the costume. Together we decided on the style seams, construction methods, and fit. I "drew" the bodice design on the dress form with outlines of twill tape as a guide. I then began draping the garment according to this conversation and my guidelines. I pinned fabric onto a dress form to match the designer's requests.

Figure 6: Designer's drawing of the chemise

Figure 7: Draping process, Bodice Front

Figure 8: Draping Process, Back

After finishing the drape, I consulted with the designer to make sure the prospective garment was consistent with her vision for the show. After this consultation, I marked all the individual pieces of fabric that had been draped. In my marking, I noted the placement of seams, and pleats, where the grain line of the fabric piece should be, where all the pieces connected, and where the neckline and armholes sat. These are all typical pieces of information needed in the patterning process. In my case, I also noted that the skirt needed more width at the bottom than the piece of fabric I was draping with. Once I was finished marking my draped pieces, I traced them onto paper to create a pattern.

While tracing this pattern I evened out the distance between pleats, straightened all the seams, and corrected any curves to make the pattern pieces even. After all the pieces from the drape were patterned, I corrected all the pieces to fit the actress' measurements. I then traced all these pieces onto muslin, a cheap fabric used to create mock-ups. After cutting all the pattern pieces I sewed them into a mock-up that fit on the actress.

Figure 9: Sewn Mockup

In the first fitting we marked adjustments to the costume for a better fit on the actress and to look more accurate to the design drawing. This involved: shifting pleats away from the center front of the skirt and bodice to be more flattering for her figure, moving the dropped back

shoulder seam further down the actress' back, moving the waistband up at the center back to appear level, and moving the side seam backward to appear centered on the actor's body (figure 10 & 11). After this fitting, I took the marked muslin garment and made corrections to my original pattern for the adjustments discussed. I traced these adjusted patterns onto new pieces of paper and traced the new pattern onto the garment fabric. I then cut out the fabric pieces.

Figure 10: Marked drop shoulder and back adjustments

Figure 11: Marked side seam and armhole adjustments

Figure 12: Corrected mock-up pattern

Before sewing the final garment, I discussed with Costume Designer, Jeanette, and Costume Shop Manager, Heather Bair, which seams could be sealed fully, and which seams would need to be accessible to be easily altered in the future. After this conversation, I constructed the bodice with a French-seamed harp back. I sealed those style seams, keeping the side seams and shoulder seams accessible for further alterations. After finishing the bodice and skirt, I asked for help serging the seams on the inside of the skirt. This was done to keep the fabric from fraying and to keep the seams accessible for future alterations to fit different actors if the garment were to be worn in a future production.

In the second fitting, we raised one shoulder slightly and dropped the other, to account for the difference in the actress' shoulder sizes. This shoulder adjustment helped flatten the garment back, which gaped slightly at the armhole on one side. The neckline also needed to be lowered so it didn't show under the other dresses. I did this by cutting a piece from my corrected pattern and using it as a guide to threadmark a new lower neckline. Threadmarking is a technique where you use a hand-basting stitch to mark a desired line on a garment that is easily removable after it is no longer needed.

Fig. 13: The Process Used to Lower Neckline

Finishing the garment included creating piping for the neckline and bias binding for the armholes. Piping is a piece of cording encased in bias binding (strips of fabric with a grain line at a 45-degree angle from the edges to allow the fabric to stretch evenly.). We chose to pipe the neckline to be able to slightly gather the fabric at the neckline by pulling the cording inside the piping like a drawstring. This was a good decision because the neckline ended up gaping in the final fitting and had to be tightened to better fit the actress. This is a very common situation with

a wide neckline, and piping is a good default technique in this instance. The dress was hemmed by Heather using a machine blind hem to save time. Typically, the dress would be hemmed by hand to make the hem less visible, but the show's opening was getting too close for comfort.

In the final fitting, the neckline had to be further adjusted by pulling up the piping. The neckline was also lowered so that it didn't show under the other layers of the costume. We also decided on the placement of the buttons. We chose to button up the back bodice with five buttons, spacing them two and a quarter to two and a half inches apart. The skirt was closed with two snaps. When I observed the first dress rehearsal, I chose to add a small hook and bar to the top of the dress to secure the weight of the piping at the neckline. All closures were hand sewn onto the garment.

Figure 14: Final Chemise Front

Figure 15: Final Chemise Back

Figure 16: Final Chemise on the Actress, front

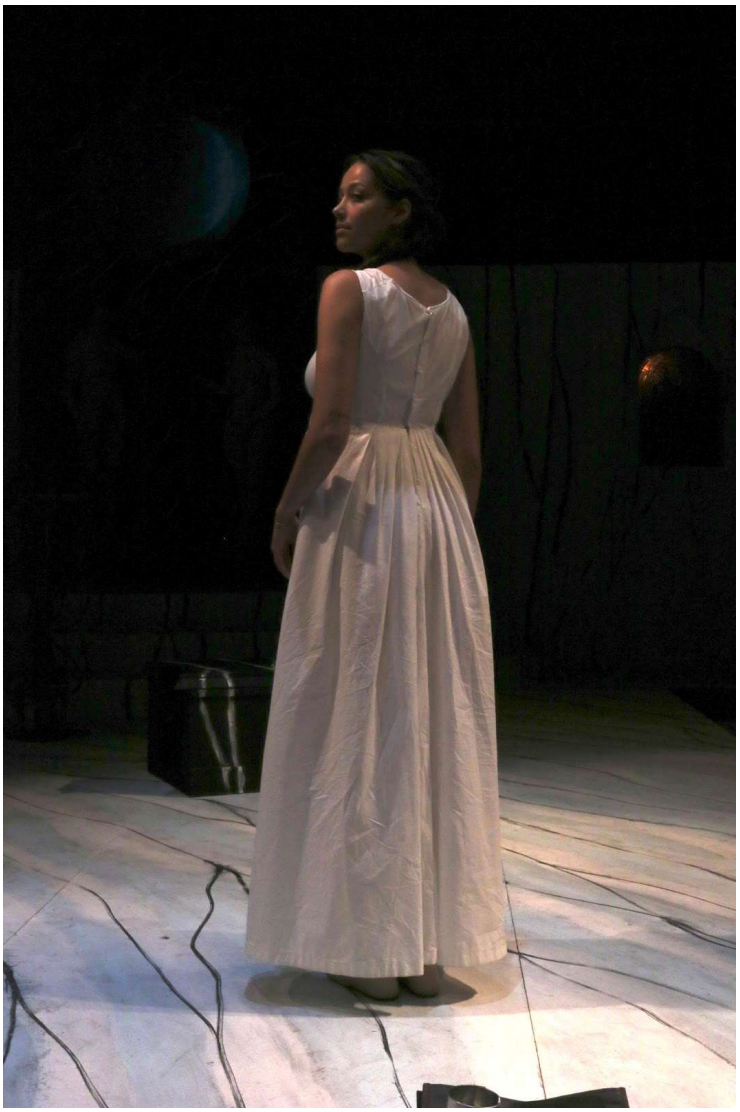

Figure 17: Final Chemise on the Actress, back

Figure 18: Final Chemise Under the Actress' Dress

Figure 19: Final Chemise Under Dress and Overdress

Implementation

Costume designer Jeanette deJong managed budget considerations that impacted fabric choice. We used a semi-sheer cotton muslin for period accuracy, breathability, and actor comfort. The costume had to fit under two other layers of clothing, so we opted to pleat the bodice and skirt rather than gather them. Gathering the bodice and skirt would be more period-accurate; however, pleats were used because they lie flatter on the body and add less bulk under the outer garments. We also opted to use flat buttons to close the back of the bodice. The character is murdered on stage. The actress lies flat on her back for about ten minutes, so the original design choice of half-round pearl buttons would have been uncomfortable.

The design's realization was mainly impacted by my ability to sew quickly. I am a slow stitcher who needed extra time to put all the pieces together for the project. This resulted in a long completion time of roughly 60 hours, most of which were used to sew.

Analysis of Process

The process of this project was straightforward. I succeeded most in the areas of draping and pattern drafting. The first mockup needed few changes to achieve the desired silhouette. The first fitting of the garment using the fashion fabric was similarly successful, and most of the alterations needed were small. I learned to trust my instincts more in terms of patterning. I have a strong foundation of skills.

However, I need more practice sewing. My stitching skills are slow and imprecise. I found myself getting anxious about the time each step was taking, which led me to skip steps that would have made the process easier in the long run. For my first mockup, I forgot to threadmark. This is a step that involves stitching the seam lines and the center front and back of all the garment pieces so you can see them from the outside. Skipping this portion made the fitting much more difficult because it was hard to see where the seam lines originally were when we started taking apart and pinning the garment.

This pattern of needing stitching practice continued into the realized garment. I had no experience creating piping with a cotton bias binding. The fabric was stretchy and difficult to control under a sewing machine. This resulted in shoddy piping that had an uneven bottom channel. After completing the physical portion of this project, I made it a goal to continue practicing my stitching skills.

Throughout the stitching process, I learned that I need to spend more time prepping my fabric pieces to create an elegant, desired result. The time spent pressing and pinning fabric is so important when creating a garment, and skipping these steps makes the final product look worse. The difference between the mockup (Fig. 4) and the final chemise (Fig. 9 & 10) illustrates this. The crispness of the pleats in the final version indicates proper pressing and careful pinning. Pinning is a process I learned to never rush again. Careful pinning makes every sewn line correct the first time. When I pinned poorly, I would have to sew parts of a line again, which is part of why the stitching portion of this project took so long. Every garment I make in the future will be pinned with care. I will also be mindful not to skip other prep steps like pressing and thread marking. These prep steps are especially important as I'd like to do more precise historic sewing in the future. I'm also interested in tailoring which requires a lot of precision, patience, and attention to detail. Completing this project and learning not to skip steps will help me with future costuming projects.

Conclusion

This project helped me gain a better understanding of how long it takes me to complete costumes start to finish with minimal help. I originally estimated around 30 hours to get from start to finish however, it ended up taking double the time—around 60 hours. This was mostly due to my struggles sewing that I covered above. While creating this garment I gained a much better understanding of historic sewing, and the time intensive process it entails. While doing my initial research for this project my advisors Jeanette deJong and Heather Bair recommended I watch "A Stitch in Time" episode where the host Fashion Historian Amber Butchart explains the history of the *chemise á la reine* while her seamstress Ninya Mikhaila recreates the garment using only historic methods. While I wasn't making as complicated of a gown, or heating my

iron using fire, I gained a lot of insight from the episode. Their garment made by a team took a similar number of hours, highlighting how long making something by hand well takes.

The physical construction process also taught me the process of delegating. It was impossible for me as a working college student to complete absolutely every step of the process myself. As I moved through the steps, I was able to pick out ones for others to do that wouldn't impede my learning or creative process. Other people cut out my fabric pieces at times, surged my seams to seal them, and hemmed the bottom of the dress. These were all things I had done before, so I felt comfortable having others take the lead. I am so grateful for all the help I received over the course of this project!

During the research portion I learned how specific this silhouette of chemise is to the time *Frankenstein* is set in. The empire waistline is widespread throughout the period in a way that has never been repeated. Studying this time in costume history made me realize how many historic dramas get aspects of the period wrong. Shows like *Bridgerton* are horrifically inaccurate in their designs in a way that does not further the story and confuses the viewer. This contrasted with Sofiia Coppola's *Marie Antoinette*, which while slightly inaccurate to the period, has a clear aesthetic vision that allows for bends in accuracy in a way the viewer can understand. While conducting my research I learned how important it is to get little period details correct, and where you can bend the rules. For example, with the chemise I made, we added flat buttons down the back as opposed to more accurate pearl ones to allow for the actress to lie comfortably on her back after she died. The same is true for closing her dress's skirt with snaps, this was done so she could dress and undress more quickly. It is the responsibility of a costume designer to the audience to know what changes can be made before historical accuracy is compromised.

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