



Three-In-One Gown

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Mentor Statement: *Three-In-One Gown* was created in a senior-level studio course that focuses on creative and technical design. This course has a semester-long design project that has a specific theme, and the theme of the semester was “sustainability”. The purpose of this mentorship relationship was to guide the student to create a collection of clothing that highlights all the knowledge and skills in design and technology mastered during the entire undergraduate design education experience. The student was asked to develop her collection by developing the concept, suggesting multiple design ideas with sketches, drawing illustrations, researching the market, drafting digital garment patterns, creating 3D avatar and garment prototypes, selecting materials, fitting models and constructing garments. This is one of the outfits of her collection which was the best collection among the class. She successfully demonstrated her knowledge and skills in design, drawing, and garment construction through creative approaches by using both traditional techniques and latest 3D technology. This design also features aesthetically high quality due to elaborate craftsmanship.

Statement of Purpose: Entering Apparel Design the program, I was a novice at sewing and have progressed to attain competent and creative levels of skill and construction which have resulted in the creation of this garment, *Three-In-One Gown*. I have also been a part of fashion club on campus and have had the opportunity to design in over ten fashion shows hosted. This gown was intended to walk in my Senior Showcase for the Annual Spring Fashion Show demonstrating skill and knowledge of the limited production couture industry. For my final pattern drafting course, we were prompted to create a garment that was sustainable. One of well-known form of sustainability in fashion is to focus on reusing the same garment as opposed to purchasing new apparel for every occasion; we call this as “versatility”. Versatility includes designs for multiple looks or occasions. Versatile design can mean “serving multiple needs with multiple looks, selecting interchangeable clothing pieces for multiple combinations, or adding accessories to change the look of an ensemble, providing a different focal point to achieve the wearer’s goals (DeLong, Heinemann, & Reiley, 2014, p. 126).” Also, versatility is one of the key attributes of classic design (Casto & DeLong, 2019). My passion for niche market as a designer is to create couture evening wear that is classic, timeless and elegant. Thus, I chose to create a look that was the essence of elegance and poise while also following a sustainability theme based on versatility. This look is exactly what its

title describes. It can be worn at least three times in three different ways to events that demand a high fashion ensemble while fulfilling the purpose of sustainability.

Aesthetic Properties and Visual Impact: Nature has always been an inspiration for me. This look, intended to walk in a spring fashion show, was designed to emphasize the beauty of this season. Spring brings with it the blossoming of new, soft, and delicate flowers. Not only was I inspired by the delicacy of flowers themselves but also the many subtle shades of pastel colors in bloom. I took these ideas and designed a look that showcased the beauty, soft colors, and delicacy of flowers, and incorporated them into a couture evening gown highlighted with beads and embroidery that mimic the winding and twisting stems in nature. *Three-In-One Gown* demands all eyes when entering a room by utilizing all five design elements: shape/form, proportion/scale, balance, unity, and emphasis. The garment can be worn as a pegged silhouette cocktail dress, a column evening gown, or a cadillac gown utilizing shape and form in the highest regards. The point at which the end of the bodice and the skirt section meet, emphasize the proportions of the garment by drawing flattering attention to the waist while giving the illusion that the waist is smaller and the bust and seat are larger than they really are. Although the gown can be split into three outfits and is covered in many different pastel colors, beads and embroidered flowers, the handsewn placement of the flowers balance the look by adding visual weight to only the parts of the body that the wearer wants onlookers to focus on. Finally, the look has an overall unity to it by the emphasis of the carefully placed beaded and embroidered sections of the garment as well as the cohesive color palette of lavender, blush pink, mint green, and cream.

Process, Technique, and Execution: The preliminary stage of creating a look like this is to brainstorm ideas about color palette, fabric choices, garment style, target market, and execution. After the idea was concrete, I created sketches in Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop to visually communicate my idea (Figure 1). I then created the patterns for the garment by utilizing new Browzwear Software known as V-Stitcher in which I was able to “virtually” draft my garment and adjust the fit (Figure 2). Once the fit was perfected, I exported my digital patterns into Lectra Modaris and printed my paper patterns to begin the construction process. The construction process is where the most skill and couture aspect of this garment is evident. The fabric was partially embroidered and beaded. However, after cutting the markers for the pattern pieces, each embroidered strand as seen on the garment needed to be re-tied and glued down to keep the beads from falling off. In addition to this step, the beads and embroidery had to be removed from the seam allowance to allow for the sewing machine to stitch it together properly. After all was cut, and sewn together, I retouched everything and hand-beaded and embroidered more areas over the bust and the seat to cover sensitive areas of the body when being worn (Figure 3).



Figure 1. Illustrations Created by Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator



Figure 2. 3D Prototype Created by V-Stitcher



Figure 3. Handsewn Beads and Embroidery Details

Troubleshooting: A major part of any design process is determining costing and fabric. As a student, there were only limited fabric options that are available to use. The issue I encountered was, when the fabric I had ordered arrived, the colors were drastically different than in the product pictures. As shown in the attached images, the tulle overskirt was made out of a sheer cream color instead of its originally intended purple, and the colors of the main beaded fabric, although still quite beautiful, are significantly more muted than the original sketch.

Originality and Innovation: *Three-In-One Gown* introduces a product to the high fashion couture industry. A great way to be expressive and stand out at events such as the Met Gala, movie premiers, award ceremonies, and other red-carpet outings is by wearing a stunning gown. A common challenge is that once an extravagant gown is worn, it may not be worn by that user again without notice. *Three-In-One Gown* offers a solution to that challenge. This dress can be worn completed to a Met Gala event, the tulle skirt can be removed for the wearer to attend the after party, and the column skirt can be removed even further revealing a light pegged styled cocktail dress for a night out on the town. To capture the full drama of this *Three-In-One*, the wearer keeps the eye of the media as they unveil each featured design element throughout the course of an evening. This type of sustainable gown will be in high demand as the environmental state of the world becomes a higher and higher priority. Be the first to witness the future of the couture industry.

References

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