



Doyenné

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transformability, structure, femininity, power

Mentor Statement

Doyenné is an outcome of fashion collection my student created for our annual fashion show. Each participating student was expected to develop a theme for a fashion collection, of which this outfit was a part. As a faculty advisor, I joined numerous design critiques from fall 2017 to spring 2018 and worked closely with each one of them.

I chose to sponsor *Doyenné* because it was one of the outfits from the best collection produced for the show in both technical and creative aspects. Her/his collection consisted of six beautiful and exquisitely made eveningwears. My student and I had a very difficult time to select only one outfit for submission but we came to decide to submit this ensemble consisting of an evening bodysuit and a skirt-cape after hours of discussion and examination of each piece. From concept development to execution, I was fortunate to witness that s/he made tremendous progress, broadening her/his spectrum of creativity and mastering hands-on techniques. S/he successfully demonstrated her/his mastery of the fundamental knowledge and skills for garment construction utilizing new technologies s/he learned from previous classes (e.g., Optitex and laser cut). Her/his attention to design details (e.g., every finishing details and interior structures like boning and foam cups) and technical proficiency never failed to impress me. The bodysuit and transformable skirt-cape were exquisitely constructed using haute couture techniques. The design of this outfit was cohesive to her/his theme of creating an image of a “female leader who has embraced her femininity and individual power.”

Design Statement

Inspired by the regalia donned by powerful queens and female leaders throughout history, “Doyenné” communicates feminine power through unique shape and soft structure. A doyenné is a woman who is the most respected person in a particular field; a female leader. The look was designed with the modern doyenné woman in mind, one who has embraced her femininity and individual power. As she clothes herself in these garments, it is my hope that they mirror and amplify the inner strength and energy of the wearer. When she walks into the room her commanding presence radiates from within and all turn to look in awe of this doyenné.

For the modern doyenné this design was created with transformability in mind: a garment that could go from cape to skirt in one swift movement. As a cape, the structured collar offers a sense of dramatic magnificence while as a skirt, the wide band exists as a durable stronghold around the waist. The length of the garment transitions smoothly from just sweeping the floor as a cape to trailing as a regal train when worn at the waist. Securely hand-sewn skirt hook and eyes create the closure and allow for easy transitions.

The silhouette of the bodysuit was designed to accentuate the wearer’s form with layered panels on the pointed neckline to communicate strength and power. These points are also found in the cape-skirt at the end of the band and along the handkerchief hem. The neutral colors chosen are unusual as they are not formal and do not normally convey authority but rather push the viewers understanding of the influence of color. By taking a nude blush color that often communicates fragility

or vulnerability but applying it in a context where the wearer commands the opposite, “Doyenné” exhibits feminine power.

Fabrics for the skirt-cape include the thick pearlescent satin chosen for its luminescent surface but also heavy drape that gives more body to the top layer of sheer nude crinkle organza. A raw silk fabric lines the other side of the band giving a peek of gold. The bodysuit is sewn out of a nude fabric and lined with a thin satin.

High-quality construction, fit for a queen, is evident in the fully lined bodysuit with Rigilene boning and foam cups inserted for support. Made to measurements, the panels in the bodysuit pattern ensured a perfect fit with additional strength from the tacked grosgrain stay fit under the bust. The cape-skirt is completely finished with baby hems on the sheer outer layer while the inner layer of satin was laser cut and needed no further finishing as the edges were sealed from fraying. The band of the cape-skirt contains buckram inside to create structure and integrity to uphold the weight of the rest of the garment.



