

## Comfey Dream

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### **Design Mentor Statement:**

This garment was created in the senior design studio course for the annual fashion show. Due to the occurrence of the COVID-19, the last year's fashion show was canceled. This circumstance was very emotionally challenging for the students. I mentored this design student by providing emotional support and guiding technical skills for fostering her creativity. During the design developing process, the student began gathering her inspiration, followed by creating the initial sketches, selecting fabrics, finalizing further design elements, and finishing detail choices. I provided constructive feedback on each process. As a design mentor, I intended to create a comfortable and positive atmosphere for my students. I accomplished the goals of supporting the student successfully by communicating her concerns regularly and outside the class. I chose this student's garments because she achieved the project goal and her end product represents excellent craftsmanship with original elements of her inspiration. The most important part of mentoring is to believe in the student's ability by being courageous, open-minded, resourceful, and honest to the student and her garments.

### **Statement of Purpose:**

Since the video games Pokémon Red and Blue launch in 1996 in Japan, the Pokémon franchise has remained relevant in popular culture, going on to make a continuous line of main series video games, spin-off video games, several anime series, and countless movies to this day (Laato & Rauti, 2021). This popular culture causes real-world conflicts because of its exclusive merchandise. McDonald's recently included special edition trading cards in their Happy Meals; adults proceeded to buy them out to sell at higher prices, preventing many others, including children, from getting their hands on any and angering them (Power, 2021). Target had to stop selling trading cards in-store due to physical altercations that have occurred (Carpenter, 2021). The lengths people will go to for the trading cards exemplify how popular and relevant the franchise has been for the past twenty-five years. Its appeal is due to their portrayal of harmonious relationships between people, Pokémon, nature, and advancing future technology (Laato & Rauti, 2021). This dress aims to incorporate various design techniques that I have learned throughout my time as a fashion design student, just as the world of Pokémon attempts to integrate various aspects of the real world into their own world. I was inspired by the Pokémon, Comfey, from the region of Pokémon based on the tropical region like Hawai'i, which is represented by the pink and white floral appliques along the seams of the layered skirt of the dress. I selected this character to appeal to lovers of the franchise and a traditional feminine aesthetic alike who are looking for a fancier dress that they can wear to an event like a banquet.

**Aesthetic and Visual Impact:**

Unlike the bright tropical colors that are a part of Comfey's design, I chose soft pink and lilac purple colored fabrics to soften but create a comical physical appearance of the dress. A floral lace is used for the three-quarter length sleeves to contrast the solid-colored bodice to depict a feminine element. A shallow boat neck shows the balance of conventional and playfulness—just like the Comfey's characteristics. Along with that, a boldly ikat-like printed cotton poplin is placed to alternate with the appearance of the solid lilac color throughout the dress; the bodice is a solid color, the top layer of the skirt printed, the middle layer solid, and the bottom layer printed. To maintain a constant lively and busyness of the dress, I designed the solid middle layer of the skirt to be diagonally pleated to give it an extra dynamic asymmetrical appearance. In addition, I intended to place the horizontal skirt seams at an interesting angle with the knee-length dress for representing youthfulness. These visual impressions emulate the approach Pokémon uses when creating its world and adding to it.

**Process, Techniques, and Execution:**

The design process began by researching the background of Pokémon and developing the inspiration. Along with the steps, colors and materials were selected. The construction of the dress utilizes a mix between draping and flat patternmaking method. The first step was to drape the top of the dress to achieve an asymmetrical cut. The skirt requires a matching asymmetrical shape but achieves it through flat patternmaking. The middle section of the skirt is diagonally pleated to emphasize the direction in which the floral appliques would be wrapping around the dress. After the muslin samples, two live-model fittings were conducted and examined the asymmetrical lines and cut and also overall silhouette and volumes. The top (this includes the top layer of the skirt) and the skirt portion were constructed separately except for the center back, where the invisible zipper is placed. Once the zipper is in, the tulle was attached to the skirt opening facing to add volume. And then, a horsehair hem was used to add shape to the dress.

**Cohesion, Significance, and Originality:**

To maintain cohesion of the look, I kept similar shades of colors throughout the dress as the major color used is lilac and accenting colors are from the printed material: pink, white, and grayish black. The saturation of the colors is also kept to the same level, so everything looks like it belongs together. The same type of finishing is used for all of the openings of the dress where a facing or a horsehair hem is attached to the edges, and then it is flipped back towards the wrong side to be hand stitched down; most of the edges of the dress maintain the same clean finishing. The significance of creating *Comfey Dream* was to challenge my design boundary for creating a non-costume-like outfit. Many garments that were inspired from anime or other popular characters tend to mimic the exact appearances. This Pokémon-inspired original dress is a nod to the popular franchise while incorporating various patternmaking and design techniques that I have learned to execute as a fashion design student.

Date completed: March 30, 2021; Measurements: Female Small (Size 2-4) (32"-24"-33")

### References

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