

Magnificent Contemporary Hepburn

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Design Mentor Statement:

The student created the three-piece look through the draping class project. The group theme was developed by a group of students in the course. My mentoring process is used to deliver knowledge or technical skills, provide emotional support, and develop trustworthy relationships with students. During the design developing process, the student began gathering her inspiration, followed by creating her initial sketches, selecting fabrics, and finalizing further design elements and finishing detail. I provided constructive feedback on each process. As a mentor, I intended to create a comfortable and positive atmosphere for my students. I accomplished the goal of supporting the student successfully by communicating her concerns. I chose this student's outfit because she has achieved her goal using her original inspiration that accompanies the draping techniques that she has learned through the draping class. The end products are unique and represent excellent craftsmanship, and have classical but original elements of her inspiration.

Design Statement:

This look was designed for the group theme, *An Ode to Audrey*, developed by a draping class project. Due to the unexpected occurrence of the Coronavirus pandemic, this look was showcased as a part of the group collection in May in the virtual 2021 fashion show. The main inspiration for the design came from a timeless fashion icon, Audrey Hepburn, and her unique feminine self-presentation that provided new women's fashion and femininity standards in the 1950s (Moseley, 2002). In particular, she offered subtle boyishness into the conventional feminine fashion by embracing her body's slenderness, wearing short hair, and choosing flats rather than heels (Moseley, 2002). The main inspiration came from Hepburn's feminine modesty and conservatism by exposing fewer areas of the body. In addition, she often covered her neck and décolleté area by wearing accessories such as the scarf seen in *Roman Holiday* (Wyler, 1953) and layered bold necklaces in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Edwards, Jurow, & Shepherd, 1961). Examining her prominent iconic styles helped developing chic and contemporary looks.

Aesthetic and Visual Impact:

This whole look is styled with the three-piece set: the boxy tweed jacket, mini-length tweed skirt with an asymmetrical hem layer, and sleeveless blouse with a gathered standing collar. The analogous color scheme of this look consists of white, pastel blue, pastel pink, and a subtle hint of gold. The medium-weight plain weave white cotton was selected and shown the crispy

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asymmetrical decorative draping layer to keep the focal point of this look, considering the level of color hue, color value, and fabric reflectance. This fabric and color choice brought this look a unique and well-organized combination of two different fabric types. In addition, using non-lustrous rather than a matte textured fabric illustrates boyishness and modernizes the style of Hepburn. It was incorporated the asymmetrical component, which Hepburn did not typically take in her style at that time. Thus, the knee-length bias-cut handkerchief layer over the mini skirt emphasized a modern aesthetical impact on the design organization of this look. The combination of the asymmetrical handkerchief-effect hem and classic symmetric tweed suit makes this look distinctive and unique, but also suitable for any occasion at the same time.

Process, Techniques, and Execution:

Creating this look began from the extensive research of the background of Hepburn and searching the source of the main fabric. The heavy-weighted tweed was ideal for its durability, affordability, and high wrinkle resistance, which could help this look widely shared in the market. Particularly, this look was made for sophisticated young women who dress as classical yet chic and stylish. As for the blouse, 100 % cotton fabric was chosen for the matte look and high absorbency since the blouse has a direct contact with the skin. In order to create a crispy and distinctive drape decoration on the skirt, it was first explored alternative choices, such as satin, georgette, and taffeta. Consequently, the same cotton fabric as the blouse was selected because of the cohesiveness of the look and the crispiness of the appearance. The jacket and skirt were made from the block patternmaking technique. The perfect bias-cut handkerchief decoration of the skirt was successful but challenging using a departing method. The placement of the panel, volume of the drape, length of the handkerchief hem were carefully developed during the draping class. After the muslin samples, two live-model fittings were conducted and examined the fit, volume, balance, and overall silhouette.

Cohesion, Significance, and Originality:

The jacket and the skirt were made of tweed fabric with a medium to a large scale of plaid, which shows a fresh take on classical and sophisticated style with glittery gold. In contrast to the plaid, solid white cotton fabric was used for the blouse and handkerchief hem decoration of the skirt. Ordered placement and alternating rhythm of the plaid emphasize the symmetrical balance of the jacket and skirt as differentiating them from the solid asymmetrical layer. By using the different types of fabric and design balance, this look keeps the cohesion of contemporary and unique Hepburn look in the group collection. The originality of this look is the juxtaposition of the symmetrical balance of the tweed suit and asymmetrical elements in the handkerchief hem layer of the skirt. It helps the design organization of the symmetric-balanced tweed suit look distinctive and offers a main aesthetical impact of this look.

Date completed: December 15, 2019; Measurements: Female Small (Size 2-4) (32"-24"-33")

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References

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