

Evening Dress - Joan of Arc

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This dress was inspired by Joan of Arc, the tragic heroine from the Middle Ages. Joan was a girl, a soldier, and a savior who played a major role during the Hundred Years War leading her troops (Bartlet, 1859). However, despite her patriotism and great achievements, she was captured and sold to the enemy, the English, for heresy and perjury, when she was only nineteen years old (Thurston, 1910).

The unfortunate death of Joan of Arc made her even more powerful and heroic. She became a holy warrior, a symbolic figure, and a saint (Thurston, 1910). In spite of her young age, she became an inspiring leader and powerful heroine who possessed strong faith and courage.

Her military exploits are represented in the hand-smocked sides of the bustier. They signify the firm and rigid armor and discipline required by soldiers, and also their resilience and bravery in tough situations. In contrast, the dress possesses a mermaid silhouette, which emphasizes the femininity and the beautiful curvature of a woman's body. The white color symbolizes femininity, purity and virginity,

which describe Joan very well (Smith, 2013). She was a virgin, an innocent and pure girl, but also strong and determined. The center of the front of the bust and the knee areas have hand-beading to give a pinch of evening-wear glamour. The entire dress is lined, and has invisible zipper at the center back. The front skirt has radiating pleats at the waist, whereas the back has three parts of pleats to portray the scales of the armor. These pleats are also designed to direct one's attention to the focal point, which is the upper body. The bottom flare is longer and wider

at the back than at the front, with several pleats at the center, which add fullness to the train. As a result, it presents a beautiful, graceful, and statuesque heroine aesthetic. The bustier is boned and twill-taped to provide more support. The dress is made with bridal satin, lace, and organza, which are commonly used for evening and bridal gowns.

This gown was designed for women who are looking for artistic and unique bridal or evening gowns that also have great stories behind them. Every woman wants to be the special one standing out at a party, and definitely at her own wedding. Nowadays, however, there are increasing numbers of mass-produced wedding gowns and inexpensive, machine-made dresses that are boring and standardized. The mix of the traditional couture hand techniques and modern techniques can produce a fine, beautiful garment. Moreover, an inspiring story and a theme can make this garment a unique piece of art of which one can dream. It is not just all about feminine beauty when creating and choosing evening or bridal dresses. There is a variety of different characteristics and other types of beauty that can be discovered in each and every woman. Furthermore, these unique traits of each individual woman can be portrayed onto the dress to make it an artistic identity of the wearer that represents who she is on her special day.



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