

I'll Bring the Balloons

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I chose to create a tangible pun – a literal party dress made with typical party decorations – brightly colored balloons and curled black ribbon streamers. One usually goes to a party, but this dress brings the party to others. In this way it is a representation of high energy and lightheartedness. The widely flared skirt is entirely covered with balloons that grow gradually larger from top to bottom. Those towards the bottom hem are partially filled with fiberfill to make them look slightly inflated. The balloons around the neckline are a smaller dart size. There are 1512 balloons made up of three different sizes that cover the dress.

To create the dress I cut a simple circle skirt; then, for shape and extra volume, I added eight godets. Starting with the bottom, I stuffed and stitched balloons, working my way up and eventually covering the entire skirt. I then made and covered a simple princess seam bodice with balloons. I used princess seams rather than darts so that it would be smoother around the bust, given the heavy weight of the fabric, and for stability. To continue the look of balloons that grow larger as they go down, I hand stitched smaller dart size balloons to the collar where black streamers are spilling out around the neck. The sturdiness of the nylon canvas base helps to support all of the balloons, which are stitched to it. The bodice is lined as to not snag rows of stitching.

When beginning this project I was conflicted as to direction, but after weeks of debating concepts, I chose to just have fun with it, to do something



totally out of my norm. To me, the purpose of this design is a reminder to not be confined, to not take things so seriously as to overthink them, and to keep a sense of humor and lightheartedness. I truly enjoyed the challenges of constructing a “party dress.”

