



Ethereal Effervescence

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Key Words: Ready-to-wear, Couture Techniques

Statement of the Purpose

Travel to France and a study and perusal of the French gardens blended with ethereal reflections inspired the creation of this statement piece, *Ethereal Effervescence*. The design challenge was to create a botanically inspired gown drawing inspiration from floral gardens and the array of texture and volume in various floral species. Secondly, the designer sought to recreate floral appliques that represented elements of the flowers studied for inspiration. The story began through a photographic essay of Flower gardens, flower boxes and floral reproductions from abroad and domestic sites. Research was done on flower making at all levels from craft to finely crafted elegant flowers. Several styles from Amy Barickman (2012) were used to give direction to the flower-making process. This data gathering and photographic story was used to begin the design process.

Process, Technique and Execution

The finalized sketch was interpreted into fabric and function using combinations of flat pattern and draping to create the desired effects. Chiffon, taffeta, tulle, organza and satin were selected as fabrics for use in creating the layered fullness in the skirt, while chiffon over satin on stiff cotton interlining created the stability needed in the bodice. The pleating was pinch-pleated and created one panel at a time on a dress form to achieve the fit needed. Hand stitching was used to tack pleats to the inner lining.

An elaborate testing process was used to create versions of the flowers used for the gown. Frayed selvedge edges from chiffon and other fabrics were kept during the gown construction process to use in floral building. The rough and fraying edges created texture and realism to the finished gather, wrapped and pleated versions of flowers. Some silk petals were blended with the handmade flowers to draw in a variety of colors. Additionally, selvedge edges were hand painted for tonal coloring and finishing. Multiple layers of tonal tulle were used over the rayon lining to give iridescence to the gown, ranging from silver to iris, and navy and lilac. The gown was finished with rayon lining, invisible zipper and hook and eye closure.

A combination of flat pattern and drafting techniques was used to create the desired silhouette. Structured interlining was used in place of boning to provide support through the bodice and allow a layer for prick stitching to attach the pleated chiffon. A balanced blend of hand techniques and machine sewing was used to finish the gown. The appearance of the finished

gown is light and airy with novelty floral décor to enhance the French garden ambiance of the style.

References

Barickman, A. (2012). *Indygo Junction's Fabric Flowers*. UK, Perfect Publishers.

Measurements: B - 34", W - 27", H - 38"



