Costume Design:
The Art of Process

Sarah Elizabeth Bryan
Hot Springs, AR

Bachelor of Arts, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2010

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Dedication

Thank you to my parents, Cynthia and Steve, for always encouraging my love of the arts, and for going along with my decision to create a career in entertainment.

Thank you to my mentor Mark for seeing my potential in costume design and technology, fostering my skills and giving me the possibility to go further into graduate studies.

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Introduction

Ever since my childhood I have always been mesmerized by costumes in films and on stage. I grew up watching classic Hollywood films of the 1930s and 1940s. These actresses glide across the screen dripping in elegant gowns, jewels and furs, and actors stand tall looking sharp in three-piece suits and fedora hats. As my sole creative release, I danced, and in a similar vein, I loved wearing the sparkling rhinestone and sequined costumes on stage and seeing the movement of chiffon on my fellow dancers. At the time I did not understand why costumes captivated me: however, through my education I now know their significance. The art of costume design serves to tell the story through the characters on stage in relationship to the physical, emotional and psychological "special world." Costumes embody the essence of the character and assist the actor in delivering the playwright's idea.

The costume designer brings to bear her understanding of the playwright's idea along with the other individuals involved in producing a play from the director, the other designers, the actors and the stitchers. All involved work together to help the audience understand this idea. During my three years at the University of Virginia, in the Master of Fine Arts Costume Design and Technology program, I have had ample opportunity to learn the work a costume designer puts forth for a production, as well as to apply the skills required for a technician to construct the costumes. In some cases, I wear both hats at once, experiencing design and technology working in tandem to bring the design to life. Communication and collaboration stand as key elements in a designer's arsenal.

Looking back at my work, I see patterns emerge from the projects. An analysis of these projects reveals my process – how I work through a design from the initial reading of the play

script to the building of the costumes. Reflecting on my class assignments and realized productions, I identify what natural abilities and learned skills I rely on to accomplish this. In the process of writing this thesis, I have been able to analyze my work to discover what does and does not improve my skills and to pin point areas I need to continue to adjust. In the end, I more clearly understand how I fit into the world of theatre.

When analyzing these patterns, I incorporate them into a system established in the early 1960s by American psychologist Jacob Getzels. He contributed to a way of working which eventually became known as the Getzels Model, articulated by Betty Edwards in her book *Drawing on the Artist Within*. The origin of the Getzels Model began in the nineteenth century with German physiologist and physicist Herman Helmholtz. The first to create a "conception of creativity," Helmholtz included "the first stage of research *saturation*; the second, mulling-over stage *incubation*; and the third stage, the sudden solution, *illumination* [*ah-ha moment*]" (3). In 1908 French mathematician, Henri Poincaré, added, "a fourth stage, *verification*" (3) to Helmholtz's original stages, described by Poincaré as "one of putting the solution into concrete form while checking it for error and usefulness" (3). The *first insight* invented by Getzels, and indeed the stage that gives this "conception of creativity" its name, initiates the whole process. This beginning stage, actually termed *first insight* by American psychologist George Kneller, became known as the "preliminary stage of problem finding and formulating" (3).

In this document I will analyze my artistic process through the framework of Getzels creative process. Each expression of my creativity falls within this model, and following each stage sparks a new direction. As I review my work of these past three years, I will evaluate how I work as an artist using the Getzels Model to articulate my process. Though each project I explore does, in fact, contain each step of the model, I will focus on project details regarding each stage,

one-by-one. I will use the Getzels Model as an organizational tool for evaluating and articulating my own personal process. Though outsiders might only see what a costume designer does as sketching or sewing, through my thorough investigation into my work and artistic process, I will articulate how I create a design from inception to reality.

Chapter 1

As I explore my creative process and the trials and errors that have been instrumental in my mastery of costume design and technology, I break down each stage of my design process. I look at the initial ideas discovered through script analysis, the research that follows, the costume decisions and the final stages of a design/production that reveals the success or failure of a project. I begin by focusing on instances from my design classwork and realized productions, which exemplify *first insight* and *saturation*, specifically through initial ideas, research, and communication.

I start with *first insight* and *saturation*, which form the beginning stages of a foundation for the design work I produce. Inherent in every project, the work of these stages prove to be the most valuable stages to me in my design classwork and realized productions, as well as in my work with directors, other designers, and actors. Focusing on these stages serves to explain the developmental stages of my design process, particularly in the following examples.

First insight as Edwards writes, is "… a term that encompasses both problem solving (of existing problems) and problem finding (asking new and searching questions)" (3). This two-fold approach occurs as soon as I get the script. However, when breaking down each project, other challenges also activate *first insight*. This stage of the model generates the "design problem" at hand. While exploring the stages of the Getzels Model, I discovered that the script analysis, the foundation of all costume design work, creates the initial *first insight*. The playwright's script presents the original design problem for the costume designer to solve. From the playscript I get the information necessary to understand the characters and the world around them. An extensive and comprehensive analysis always precedes a design.

The Francis Hodge script analysis breakdown (Figure 1.1) establishes the "special world" of the play, the physical, emotional and psychological world that provides the foundational information needed to create the costume designs. I look at the text and the subtext to understand the world and characters better. The script provides the designer with a firm foundation about how a character presents himself/herself to the world he/she lives in, such as a character's demeanor towards other characters, his/her status in the community and public and private laws established in the play. The actor and director for the specific production will bring their unique visions to our collaboration process of moving this script to the stage. The script stands as our common denominator.

The script analysis breakdown process begins with identifying the given circumstances, which provide the environmental facts, such as time, place, and culture. Next the analysis deals with deconstructing and interpreting dialogue, which demonstrates how a character thinks. Another feature of the analysis, dramatic action, works with the subtext and how characters force action on other characters and which character possesses the power in relationships. An ample breakdown of each character also occurs by looking at his/her desire, strength/will, moral stance, decorum and other descriptive adjectives, as well as the character's inner nervosity, or his/her physical reaction to "flight or fight." I also take apart the idea of the play by dissecting the meaning of the title. Writing down illuminating quotations from the text that state the playwright's intentions of the story also helps in this comprehension of idea and the characters. The final two areas of analysis examine the tempo and mood of the play, how the action is paced and what visuals, based on the five senses, come to mind when reading the text. These greatly influence the tone of the production as the team responds to the play as contemporary artists.

Through this process I begin to create ideas and images in my mind in order to better understand the characters and the world of the play. For instance, when looking at a particular character's dialogue, I form ideas about his/her educational, socioeconomic, and cultural background. I begin to make design decisions about types of clothing based on this dialogue, as well as the given circumstances. Using the character breakdown of moral stance, decorum, etc., I start to fabricate the image of the character in my mind. I begin to make references to people I know or other characters I have seen who resemble this new character which helps inform ideas about the clothing he/she might wear. I also create ideas about the character's physicality, which helps in my understanding of period garments. After finding illuminating quotations and discovering the possible meaning of the play, I get an overall concept of the "special world" the playwright invented, and I again move into creating visuals in my head to support this world. This means of breaking down a script serves as the groundwork for all that unfolds in my artistic process. Without the analysis sequence, there would be no basis for my ideas.

After this foundational beginning of *first insight*, the next step of the design process searches for ideas. Four specific instances, both in my classwork and realized production, demonstrate this inceptive stage of *first insight*. My first example of *first insight*, relates to classroom projects assigned in my first semester, tasked me to take a sketch from my undergraduate portfolio and make it more comprehensible and striking. I chose a sketch of Irina from Anton Chekov's *The Seagull* (Figure 1.2). I began by just doing the drawing, yet eventually reached an impasse. During this project I realized a fear of drawing and painting ideas from my imagination, of not creating a "perfect image." These fears made the drawing process feel relentless as I struggled to draw and redraw Irina's arm. The painting process also proved

challenging as I tried to control the water and mix the color. I confronted this fear again going into the next project in our graphics class.

Building on my confidence based on what I learned in this last project, my third project for the graphics class contained two components: first, choosing a photograph of an historical garment from any time period; second, translating the photo's reality of the garment into four different styles: a realistic painting of the garment, a fashion plate style from the era of the garment, a portrait painting from the era of the garment and a painting of the garment in a style of modern abstraction. For my photograph of an historical garment, I chose an English dress (robe à la française) circa 1760 from Japan's premier collection of the Kyoto Costume Institute as captured in *Fashion: A History from the 18th to the 20th Century* (Figure 1.3). The three different styles selected included a 1700s fashion plate (Figure 1.4), a portrait of "Diana, Vicountess Crosbie" by Sir Joshua Reynolds circa 1779 (Figure 1.5), and a painting entitled "Dancer in Green Tutu" by Edgar Degas circa 1880-1885 (Figure 1.6). As I apply Getzels Model to my work when considering this particular project, I recognize my *first insight* to be the choosing of the initial historical garment and the sources that would inspire my color sketches. The decisions I made with each sketch became the solution. In relating back to what Edwards says, selecting my garment also became problem finding, as I worked out how to translate this burnt orange dress into each artist's style (Figure 1.7, 1.8, 1.9 & 1.10). I then solved the problem of how to draw in the specific styles, interpreting how each original artist's hand moved. For instance, the fashion plate required repeated pencil hatch marks, whereas the Reynolds needed more blended tonality in the use of paints to express volume and movement.

The three-fold objective of this graphics class consisted of getting my body used to sketching, my mind comfortable with activating ideas in preparation for the challenge of

designing a play, and my eyes recognizing what works and does not work within a sketch. The above project assigned me to look at other artists' drawing and painting styles. This investigation opened my eyes and mind to the possibilities of capturing body positions, fabric texture and movement in a variety of ways. Through this process, I learned the importance of adapting my own sketching style to the nature and style of any show I would design. For me, the overarching goal of the project proved to be finding an open-mindedness, flexibility and freedom from boxing myself into one style. Ultimately, I needed to feel confident designing and sketching in multiple styles and to adapt to any production style.

I keep revisiting this project because during the process of sketching I discovered many things about myself. A reluctance and fear of drawing stems from the boundaries I create, telling myself my drawing looks incorrect. A drawing style emerged where I attempted to keep the line light and sketchy, and a realization made that faces do not help my costume sketches come to life. I always struggle with time management; however, working on this project forced me to divide the project and my time up more evenly to feel successful in the final product. In the same vein, I discovered an ability to get work done when down to the wire. Though the next semester's classwork focused on research and design of entire plays, my working habits created in graphics remained.

As I proceed through my design classwork, a second project assigned during the course on research serves as a perfect example of *first insight*. This course focused on script analysis as the foray into the research of the "special world." Being able to immerse myself in the visual world and images of people parallel to characters of the play helped me discover my understanding on which to create designs. The play assigned required me to design clothes for the three characters of Jake, Flora, and Vicarro from *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, Tennessee

Williams' Depression-era one-act play. The script analysis that followed created a visual of Jake in my mind as an older Southern farmer, selfish and overweight, who breathes the air of a plantation overseer. In contrast, my image of Vicarro brought forth a smaller built man, sleek and educated, who might swindle someone in a poker game. The image I created of Flora established her character as a shapely, older woman, meek and innocent, a simple and naïve woman who dreams of anything outside her small world in the cotton field.

I responded to this play from personal life experiences. Being a southerner from Arkansas and knowing the dialect, the smell, the color and the culture, I related immediately to the world about which Tennessee Williams writes. Revenge dominates the play as two men seek retribution for what they have lost. Jake, a cotton gin owner in the Mississippi Delta, burns down the Syndicate plantation at the top of the play. Vicarro, a northerner and the plantation manager, seduces Jake's wife, Flora. When reading this play, I envisioned a dusty, humid, isolated world, deep in the rural south. From these initial emotions, I focused on the real world of these characters. This foundation would serve to support my character work. The *first insight* centered on fully exploring this special world created in my mind. I began searching the Farm Security Administration, or FSA, photographers of the 1930s – the most prolific collection of visual images from the Great Depression.

The *first insight* into the problem to solve with *27 Wagons Full of Cotton* became finding the correct visuals to support my understanding of the play and the characters. This, in turn, would support the design of the costumes. With this play, the photographs of FSA photographers Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans spoke to me about Williams' time and place, as well as to the rural isolation I felt when reading the script. The FSA photographs would later prove to be invaluable when designing the costumes for the play.

Continuing with understanding the stage of *first insight* and going back through my realized productions, I found two noticeable instances. One occurred during my produced design of Caryl Churchill's *Vinegar Tom*. Written in the 1970s in collaboration with a feminist theater company, Monstrous Regiment, *Vinegar Tom* focuses on mythical witch trials taking place in 1600s England, supported by a modern rock band chorus. In order to grasp this abstract piece of theater, I explored the reality of the 1600s hoping to better understand this play. Through the script analysis, I discovered realistic characters living in the country intrigued by witchcraft, terrified of the unknown of new ideas and persecuted for being unique individuals. Though I found realistic characters, the dialogue and dramatic action created non-realistic aspects, such as hanging two women who then come back to life as two men at the conclusion of the play. The director wanted to emphasis the non-realistic style of the world by posing questions like, "what would be the 'normalcy' of the play and how would the audience relate to the themes of women's rights – specifically, a woman's right to live in any manner she chooses, to say and think however she chooses and to control what happens to her own body?"

While exploring these themes of the play, completing the script analysis and collaborating with the director, my *first insight* came when the director confessed that he lacked confidence in his knowledge of costume design. How could I communicate with a director about the ideas of a show and how the costumes can support those ideas when the director did not feel comfortable speaking in costume terms? Through multiple conversations, the director and I discovered the idea of "piecemeal" clothing for the actors. Desiring to capture the audience's attention immediately, he wanted the actors to look like actors, not characters, as they came into a found space wearing contemporary clothes and bringing with them random pieces of period-style clothing to put on during the play (Figure 1.11). This signified that though none of the

characters or actions were real, the audience should pay attention to the message of the play. Initially resistant to this idea of actors putting costumes on in front of the audience as it did not seem correct for my preconceived notion of what I thought costumes should be, I eventually let go and moved forward with the idea of "piecemeal" as the foundation of my design.

Jenny Schwartz's *God's Ear*, my second year production, would build on the previous experiences of *Vinegar Tom*, as well as the advantage of more time and experience in class. This modern play about the tearing apart and putting back together of a family challenged me to incorporate its non-linear style into the concepts of my costume design. Where the play *Vinegar Tom* creates abstraction in it's conception and themes, *God' Ear* creates abstraction in the storytelling through non-linear dialogue and action of the characters. Research images captured my emotional connection to the play. One particular image proved to be my dominant *first insight*. The square painting appears to have paint dripping down from the top in cool colors of blue, magenta and green with accents of yellow (Figure 1.12). The muted and dripping colors evoked in me a sense of sadness, yet playfulness, both elements which I found in the play. During an early design meeting, this painting captured the attention of the director. After much team discussion, we decided its composition would be our touchstone and the basis of the play's color palette. It expressed to us just what we wanted the audience to experience emotionally in our production.

The director's decision to base the set, lights and costumes off of this one image felt gratifying. My instinct to choose this painting proved validating as it created the grounding of the production and a cohesive look to the whole. The problem to solve the *first insight* became how to translate the essence of this particular image into costumes. The obvious route to me being to base my "colorful" characters, who move in and out of the family's life, around the colors in the

painting. The Tooth Fairy, Lenora, and Guy's costumes each contained the bold colors of magenta, blue and orange, which propelled them forward on stage, just as the colors do in the painting. The Flight Attendant, though neutral in her navy blue suit, also wore a pop of magenta in her neck scarf. The dripping quality of the painting, itself, also sparked the idea of clothes hanging on characters. This idea comes through specifically on the mother in the comfort of her old grey wrap sweater with the dangling tie. The Tooth Fairy's skirt of strips of fabric also continued the same dripping feel as the painting (Figure 1.13).

After creating ideas such as these to solve the foundational world of *first insight*, I then move into the second stage of Getzels Model. *Saturation* gathers the resources. It consumes a great portion of the designing time and serves as the groundwork for all decisions throughout the creative process. Here I compile everything I will possibly need or could use in the ongoing pursuit of solutions for the *first insight*. Initially, *saturation* demands numerous journeys to multiple libraries and exhaustive searching on the Internet. It also requires the broadening of ideas about what research should be and how it could be used as a spark in the design process. *Saturation*, in the context of the Getzels Model, compiles imagery found through my natural instincts or by analysis as pertinent to specific plot or character details. With some design projects my *saturation* stage leads me to look at completely unexpected research. For example, when working on a paper project design of Igor Stravinsky's ballet *Firebird*, I explored many books about exotic birds found at the Science and Engineering Library. Though not the place one might think ideal for costume research, every possible resource imaginable, and sometimes unimaginable, must be exhausted in order to comfortably move on to the next step.

Five specific instances in my classwork and realized productions illustrate this essential stage of *saturation*. Beginning with my design classwork, I again focus in on my project of *27*

Wagons Full of Cotton. As discussed earlier, I refined the search to rural and Depression-era 1930s, as reflected in the play's "special world." The black and white photographs of the FSA photographers including Evans and Lange became the focus of the research. I felt a connection to the stark contrast of the black and white, barren, dusty emptiness the photographs captured. Empathizing with the faces in the photographs, I related their story to that of Jake, Flora and Vicarro.

In a similar way to my work on *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, I compiled an abundance of sources and images during the *saturation* stage of my design process for the production of George and Ira Gershwin's *Crazy for You*. Although set in the Depression 30s, in contrast to *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, *Crazy for You*'s world begins in the glamor and glitz of Broadway. Later, the plot throws us into a Wild West Saloon town. This Depression-era ghost town, though rural like that of *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, portrays a light-hearted and comedic atmosphere for the music and comedy, a complete opposite to the despair found in *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*. My exploration of the decade produced many possible ideas to depict these two contrasting worlds, well beyond the research of *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*.

Crazy for You, based on a popular 1930s Gershwin musical, *Girl Crazy*, adapted and reworked by Ken Ludwig, depicts the character Bobby Child, a banker who desperately wants to be on Broadway. He gets assigned the task of foreclosing on a theatre in Deadrock, Nevada. Once there he falls in love with the only female in town, Polly Baker, whose father happens to own the soon to be foreclosed theater. Bobby vows to make it his mission to save Polly's theater. A romping musical comedy with multiple song and dance numbers follows. My design process initially focused on the Ziegfeld Follies of the 1920s because the musical includes ten Zangler Follies showgirls (a take on the real Ziegfeld Follies). I found extensive images of what the real

women looked like; yet, I concluded that this family friendly musical comedy could not be that risqué. Ultimately, I used the images of real Ziegfeld Follies girls in their costumes (Figure 1.14) as inspiration for my Zangler Follies girls. However, I raised and shaped the necklines and added a lot of tulle to the neck and bottom half of the costume to give the sense of playful glamour instead of seductive glamour (Figure 1.15).

When it came to the *saturation* of the characters living in Deadrock, Nevada, the mining ghost town where all the action takes place, I referred to Will Rogers (Figure 1.16) and his contemporaries of vaudeville theater and film westerns from the 1930s, some of which included a few stills of young John Wayne (Figure 1.17). *Saturation* consisted of everyday clothing of men and women of the 1930s, Broadway glamor, dusty western and even some 1930s British attire. I tried to find any and all possibilities of inspiration for the realized design (Figure 1.18 & 1.19).

This *saturation* stage of the design process runs parallel to my work in the shop when executing those designs. To prepare for fittings with actors, I go into stock with design ideas in mind and pull garments I think might encompass the visuals I have created on paper that capture the character, as well as the actor who has been cast. This stage of *saturation* truly feels comfortable. I work in a visual medium. Touching and seeing the actual garments that may be put on stage helps me solidify the design. In fact, the design in my head does not become reality until the pulling begins. For me, I treat all the design meetings as a parallel to a paper project in class. The discussion and ideas flowing throughout the meeting do not move me to think these designs will eventually be on stage. Not until I go into costume storage, pulling the clothes, will the show plow forward in my head and into my reality. Looking back on my four realized productions, this style of working truly reveals itself during both *Crazy for You* and *Vinegar Tom*.

During *Vinegar Tom* when *saturation* became the solution to the problem of the director not being comfortable talking about costumes, I decided we would not talk. I would "show." My *saturation* became pulling and pulling and pulling. I would pull garments and put ensembles together on dress forms to show him how I would create the "piecemeal" effect of the costumes (Figure 1.20). I would also take photographs of the different costumes and combination of costumes on the actors to show him. This *saturation* period of pulling every garment possible and seeing the reaction to those particular garments from the director gave me direction, and in a sense created the environment of the costume shop as a design meeting – the director/designer collaboration. Where before I did not feel comfortable speaking up in formal design meetings, now I could talk about my ideas and flesh things out in the costume shop in a one-on-one session. The active experience of pulling the costumes inspired confidence in him, him in me, and me in myself.

As I progressed through my next two productions, Eugene Ionesco's *Rhinoceros* and *God's Ear*, I continued to pull anything and everything possible for fittings. I did not need to put costumes on dress forms for these two directors. However, had I not done so for the director of *Vinegar Tom*, I may not have found my creative niche pulling costumes, and essentially adapting designs as I go, which has become the foundation of my artistic process. Though my next and final production, Gershwin's *Crazy for You*, would still include a long *saturation* period of pulling costumes, I produced a more solidified and less flexible design. For this particular production, which included a cast of thirty-three actors, I created a system, an "organized machine," to facilitate my process of pulling.

In *Crazy for You*, our particular adaptation had a twelve-cowboy chorus, all of whom I designed as playfully similar allowing the actors to create their own individuality. Thus, I

designed all my cowboys to be in blue jeans and varying styles of plaid button up shirts in bright neutral hues like yellow, green, brown, and blue (Figure 1.21). For the process of pulling shirts, I chose every plaid shirt we had in stock that fit within my color palette and that I could be happy seeing on stage. A piece of paper pinned to the chest of each shirt identified the neck and sleeve measurements, which I then organized in ascending order. I pulled the shirts that fit the particular actor's measurements, and the rest I left up to them to make a character choice in which shirt they picked. This practice involved the actor's choice and helped them understand that I cared about their opinion and the work they put into creating their character. At the end of each fitting, both the actor and myself emerged satisfied with the final costume.

Though I moved forward in a similar way for the ten Follie's girls, when it came to their travelling suits (Figure 1.22) and play clothes (Figure 1.23), my ability to pull anything and everything from our stock proved tested. I pulled the few things that could work from our stock then rekindled a borrowing agreement with two other university costume shops and pulled what might work from their stocks that fit within my 1930s research and my blue, pink and white color palette. Next I asked two rental shops to send everything that could reflect my design. Once all the options arrived and prior to fittings, I organized racks of costumes from five stocks by chest and waist size using a spreadsheet of the women's measurements to know their size similarities and identify who could try on the same costumes. During each fitting, I photographed every costume option that each woman tried on and then reviewed the images to decide who looked best in which costume and how these balanced my color palette.

Simply articulating the individual processes of each task outlined above, I realize how much work goes into a class project or a produced show. By dividing my process into these manageable portions, I better understand how I attack a design or technology problem. When I

complete a project, I see it as a whole, never thinking to analyze how I got to the end. However, through this investigation, I see how script analysis informs design ideas and how conversation sparks new ones. I can see that I find my strength in doing research, pulling costumes and forming relationships with the different people. Even with focusing only on the first two stages of the Getzels Model, *first insight* and *saturation*, I see how one cannot work without the other. I cannot create art within an individual stage. My designs build from one stage to another; just as each experience I have through classwork and realized productions builds on the previous experiences.

Chapter One Appendix

ABBREVIATED PLAY ANALYSIS ….. Created by Gweneth West using Francis Hodge. *Play Directing: Analysis, Style, & Communication.*

I. GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

A. Environmental Facts

1. **Geographical location, including climate**
2. **Date: year, season, time of day**
3. **Economic environment**
4. **Political environment [public & personal]** **LAW**
5. **Social environment** **ETIQUETTE**
6. **Religious environment** **CHURCH**

B. Previous Action Summarize the playwright's use of previous action.

C. Polar Attitudes of the Principal Characters

1. **Attitudes toward the Special World of the play at the beginning and again at the end; in the form of an interview quotation.**
2. **Which character changes his/her attitude toward the special world? Whose play is it? Who changes most? Makes the most discoveries?**

II. DIALOGUE Summarize the way that the playwright uses dialogue to create character, mood. Note any special emphasis you believe that the playwright places on any of these:

A. Choice of words
B. Choice of phrases & sentence structures
C. Choice of images created by the words…..
D. Choice of peculiar characteristics such as dialect etc.
E. Sound of the dialogue
F Structure of the lines and speeches on the page…

III. DRAMATIC ACTION Summarize the dramatic action of the piece. Which characters are forcing the action? Which character is receiving the brunt of that force? Who changes? List 10 -20 action verbs that dominate for each of the principal characters throughout the play.

IV. CHARACTERS For each principal character complete the following by filling in the attached charts.

A. Desire: **What the character WANTS! State in a single, intangible word. [No two characters can have the same DESIRE!]**

B. Strength/Will: **How much strength does the character have to achieve this?**

C. Moral Stance: **To what lengths will the character go, break the laws of state, society, church?**

D. Decorum: **What does this character look like, how does h/she dress, carry h/herself? Well groomed? Slob? Posture? All external signs or manifestations of conformity/non-conformity. 8-10 images.**

E. Adjectives: **Describe anything that has not yet been said about the character. 8-10 adjectives.**

F. Nervosity: **Describe the 'character-mood-intensity' in two states: the neutral personality state and then in the high adrenaline state of 'fight or flight'. Remember: NORMAL does not describe anything!**

1. Heartbeat 2. Perspiration 3. Stomach 4. Muscle 5. Breathing

V. IDEA

A. Meaning of the Title Why to you think the playwright selected this title? What do you think that it means to the play?

B. Philosophical Statements: What are the messages the playwright is sending? These are those lines that seem to jump out at you, that seem to be in *italics.* Write at least 10 quotations directly from the script.

C. Write the bottom line lesson of this play. Do not use quotations from the play or common phrases. This should be in your own words.

VI. TEMPOS Describe the overall tempo of this play and its climactic moment.

VII. MOODS Write the overall 5 senses & bottom line Mood Image for your play.

Figure 1.1 Francis Hodge Abbreviated Script Analysis Breakdown

Figure 1.2 Irina – Undergraduate School Spring 2010 & Graduate School Fall 2011

Figure 1.3 Translation Project: Historical Garment, robe à la francaise, c. 1760

Figure 1.4 Translation Project: 1700s Fashion Plate

Figure 1.5 Translation Project: “Diana, Vicountess Crosbie,” Sir Joshua Reynolds, c.1779

Figure 1.6 Translation Project: “Dancer in Green Tutu,” Edgar Degas, c. 1880-1885

Figure 1.7 Translation Project: Historical Garment Translation – Fall 2011

Figure 1.8 Translation Project: Fashion Plate Translation – Fall 2011

Figure 1.9 Translation Project: Portrait Painting Translation – Fall 2011

Figure 1.10 Translation Project: Degas Painting Translation – Fall 2011

Figure 1.11 *Vinegar Tom*: Actors Add Costumes, Scene 1 Production Photograph

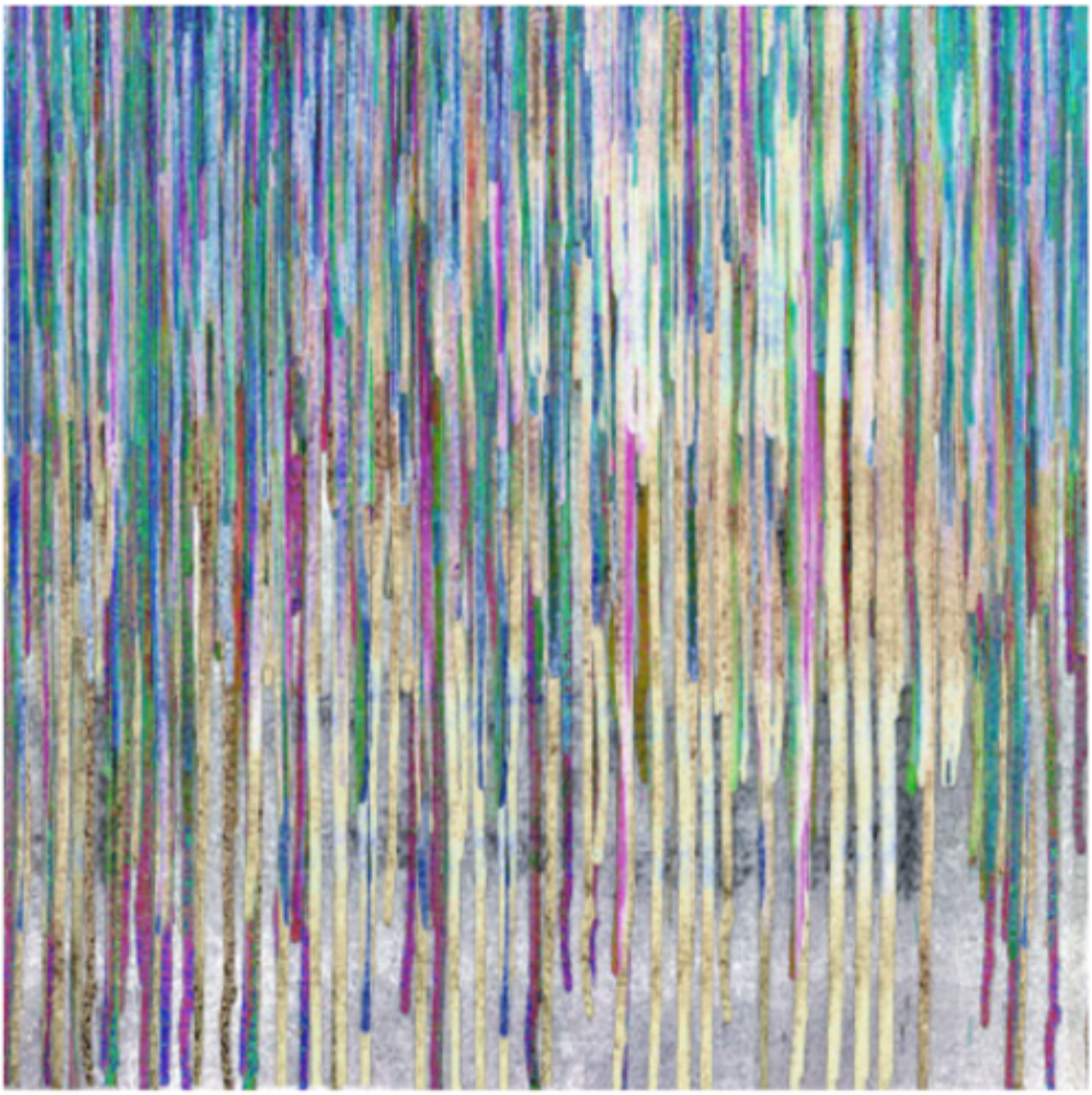

Figure 1.12 *God's Ear*: Special World Research

Figure 1.13 *God's Ear*: Color of Family Versus Other Characters

Figure 1.14 *Crazy for You*: Follie's Girls Research, c. 1920s

Figure 1.15 *Crazy for You*: Follie's Girls Production Photograph

Figure 1.16 *Crazy for You*: Will Rogers for Cowboy Research, c. 1930s

Figure 1.17 *Crazy for You*: John Wayne for Cowboy Research, c. 1930s

Figure 1.18 *Crazy for You*: Men and Women Research, c. 1930s

Figure 1.19 *Crazy for You*: Broadway and British Research, c. 1930s

Figure 1.20 *Vinegar Tom*: Initial Costume Pull

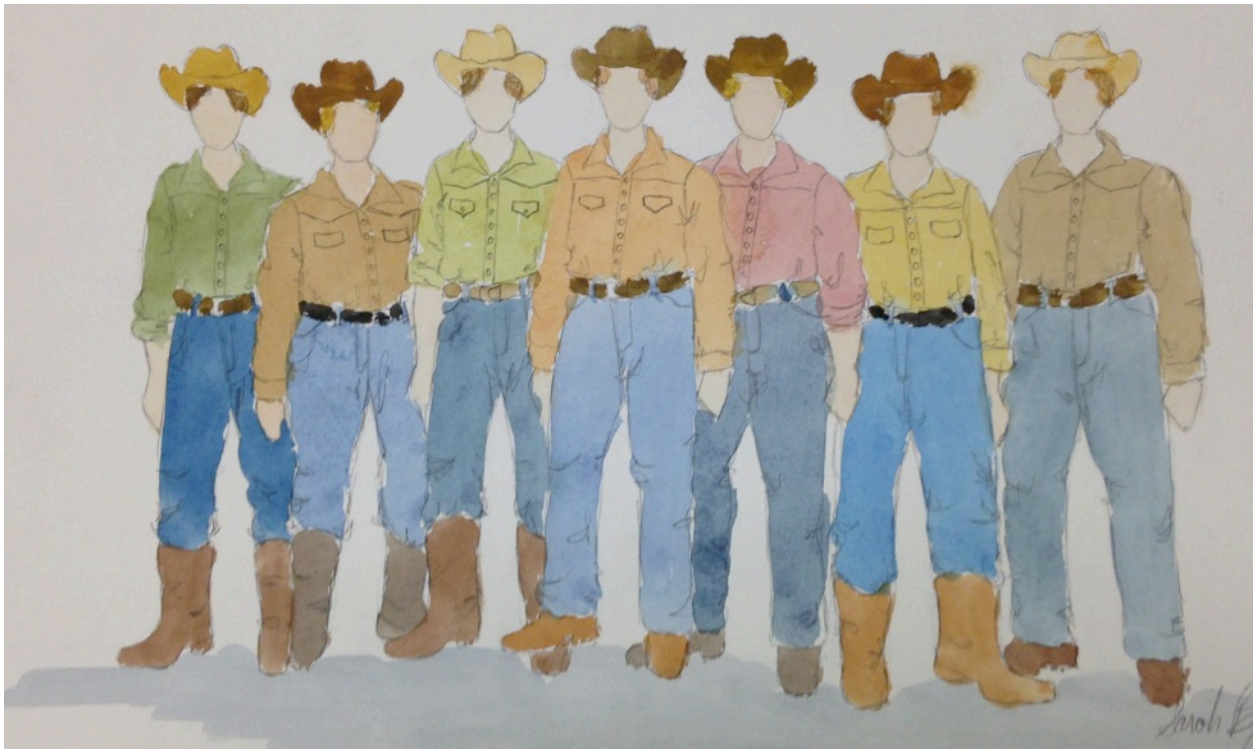

Figure 1.21 *Crazy for You*: Cowboy Chorus Color Sketch – Fall 2013

Figure 1.22 *Crazy for You*: Follie's Girls Traveling Suits Color Sketch – Fall 2013

Figure 1.23 *Crazy for You*: Follie's Girls Play Clothes Color Sketch – Fall 2013

Chapter 2

Where the *first insight* and *saturation* serve as the foundation stages of a design, *incubation* and the *ah-ha moment* make up the action stages, both mentally and physically. As I enjoy exploring the "special world," I spend endless hours in the *saturation* stage and sometimes feel like I do not want to move forward. However, to create something new and innovative, I must take the history and research that came before and move into my own ideas. I allow myself to critically think and listen to ideas and subconscious pondering that arise in my mind when looking at all the research. During the *incubation* stage, ideas constantly evolve and transform in my mind even while working simultaneously on other areas of the design or outside projects. This sometimes allows me to successfully work through multiple projects without getting frustrated.

While *saturation* allows me to actively gather research or garments, thinking dominates *incubation*, the "mulling-over" stage. Here I process all the information I gathered during the *saturation* stage and truly think through possibilities. I explore the meaning of a photograph's relationship to the character. I discover what clothing pieces actually work for the design. In essence, *incubation* integrates the philosophical ideas of the play on paper into the three-dimensional objects on stage that support the communication. The *ah-ha moment* sets the wheels in motion that result in solutions and quickly wraps into the *verification* stage. The *ah-ha moment* sparks a proactive decision and, at times, immediately a *verification* of "yes" that works or "no" that does not work. If "no," the *verification* leads back to a new *ah-ha moment* and continues back and forth until achieving a "yes." At times, a resounding "no" sends me all the way back to *first insight* to begin again.

When exploring *incubation*, I spend the majority of my time looking at research images. Initially, I instinctively pull images that speak to my understanding of the characters and the play. Then through the information gathered during the analysis, I begin to target the images that will ultimately inform my design. I want to learn as much as possible about the playwright's "special world" and its characters through images. I typically feel like I oversaturate any given design project. For me the oversaturation of images provides me with the background information from which I think the playwright works. In my mind the "special world" images provide the visual elements that make up the reality of the three-dimensional exterior of the play, both in realistic photographs and abstract paintings that evoke the same feelings in me as the words. After the initial culling of images, I separate specific images that speak to the essence of a character or the emotional connection to the play.

This idea becomes clear when looking again at the paper project, *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*. As mentioned, I explored the photographs of the FSA, especially those of Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange. After the first round of research, I selected numerous rural and quintessential Depression-era images to create the "special world" of the play, particularly landscape and architecture photographs (Figure 2.1). I then searched for characters. I wanted to have enough thought provoking evidence to translate this fictional world of the play into real photographic images in my mind. This would help me transform actors into truthful characters through costumes. I pulled out many faces of women who looked prematurely aged, faces of hardworking men, faces of struggle, all of which spoke of a harsh, poor and dreamless life. Looking through these photographs I found my specific Jake, Flora, and Vicarro (Figure 2.2, 2.3 & 2.4).

After finding the most evocative images that spoke of my connection to the world of Williams's play, I further narrowed down my images to the actual clothing. The photographs not only provided an external visual aid for my emotional connection, they also sparked inspiration for the costumes. In my perception, a contemporary audience would think of those FSA photographs I initially pulled during *saturation* as being the ultimate visual statement for the Great Depression and expect to see it represented on stage. Though it can be argued that Jake and Flora have money, as Jake owns a cotton gin, I continued to view the play as two characters living in rural, Depression-era south. I wanted to create a realistic and poor quality to her costumes. Trying to support my understanding of the characters, I discovered an important part of my design process, which taps into personal experiences and observations. Using this information as a source enhanced my designs and created a stronger reality.

Thinking about the circumstances of these characters and using my personal experience, I recognized my paternal grandparents who lived in rural Arkansas, as each being children of the Great Depression. Though I knew them from 1987 onward, they lived by their established patterns of childhood. For instance, in the 1990s my grandmother still wore housedresses and aprons from the 1960s. She owned bath towels from the 1970s, worn bare, but still serviceable. She kept cash under her mattress and canned food stored in the pantry long past its expiration dates. My grandfather operated a successful veterinary practice, yet they still lived frugally. I did not see my grandparents as representations of the personalities and characters of Jake and Flora, but their lifestyles resonated with me.

To fully realize this paper project, I wanted to find a way to connect to the play and Williams' characters. Relating to my grandparents proved an excellent connection. When thinking about the clothing and my design, in my mind Jake and Flora try to make what money

they have last. Williams never states in the script how much money Jake and Flora have from the cotton gin business, so as the designer, I am left to decide their economic status. One reference found in Williams' text that lead me to choices of frugality in their lifestyle and clothing occurs when Flora takes special care of her kid leather purse. I envisioned this act of someone who might have the means to afford nice things but will keep them looking their best for as long as possible. In this particular world, Williams writes about practical, not flashy, people. Thus, Flora might have purchased a new fashionable dress years before the economy crashed, but she would not have done so since. She would do her best to keep things clean and darn holes in that dress for as long as possible. To achieve this, I sketched clothing that looked a little out of date and worn (Figure 2.5).

In contrast to the worn dusty world of *27 Wagons Full of* Cotton, the world of *Rhinoceros* by Eugene Ionesco lives in excitingly vivid color. *Rhinoceros*, a French farce about one man, Berenger, attempting to stand against the conformity of the masses in his community and create his own individuality. He faces a force greater than himself and finds his true being. This production required immense research into the 1930s, yet a different style from the realistic research of *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*. The script creates a sense of playfulness through the lyrical language, farcical action and fantastical rhinoceroses, once human members of the community, now running amuck in the village. The director and design team wanted to create a world of whimsy and comedy in strong visual forms to convey Ionesco's message, while also creating a reality of conformity through the idea that everyone at some point in their lives yields to societal expectations. Ideas formulated about what the "rhinoceros" symbolizes for each audience member such as, a thing he/she conforms to in society, such as dressing appropriately in public, having a steady job fulfilling your position in life. This element of our production

helped ground our team and, thus, we all worked together towards creating a play that would speak to the audience.

The scenic design created the tone of the play early on in the design process by visually evoking the idea of whimsy. This feeling came through in the paint quality on the set pieces by being more translucent than the typical opaque finish, giving a washed watercolor look. The furniture pieces themselves provided their own whimsical and caricature quality by being painted with uneven black cartooned edges around everything. This set up the surroundings in which my costumes needed to live. If the scenic elements looked unrealistic, then my costumes needed to have a more realistic feel to them to balance the visual elements in front of the audience. In order to achieve the goal of whimsy with my costume designs, during the *saturation* process for this production, I gathered sketches, pen and ink drawings and watercolor images of France in the 1930s. Though these images came from different artists and time periods, a commonality arose between each in the line quality, color wash and essence of abstraction. Not realistic in the character movement, actions and narrative, this "larger than life" play goes beyond research of real people. I discovered many images with a sense of caricature, lighthearted movement and style (Figure 2.6, 2.7 & 2.8).

This proved valuable when creating the clothes for characters like Jean, the best friend of Berenger. During *incubation*, I wanted to understand the reality of 1930s France in order to move beyond it in our production's abstraction. Jean presents himself as an over-the-top caricature of a respectable member of society. For instance, he dresses to impress the community with his bowler hat, pinky ring and tiepin. He flits across stage with an air of royalty about him. Situating the community in upscale style and panache, I created an individual look for Berenger. Where Jean conforms to social norms of the time by wearing a three-piece tailored navy

pinstriped suit, Berenger wears an ill-fitting mismatched tan vest and slacks, with the option to add a plaid jacket (Figure 2.9). During design meetings with the director, I developed ideas such as this to take the whimsical research and turn it into physical look for each actor. This became the counterpoint for the cartoon style of the set with its hand-drawn black border around furniture pieces. The set captured more of the "special world" of the play and my clothes became the balancing act between real characters taking on this crazy world the design team created on stage (Figure 2.10).

In order to move forward into character transformation through clothing, these design meetings created the trial and error period, in essence the *incubation* towards the *ah-ha moment* and ultimate *verification* between myself and the director. In the design meetings, I presented my research and ideas about the play and specific characters. Research images usually sparked conversation about how a character lives in this world we designed. The conversations became a part of my *incubation*. One such image, an untitled painting by Jackson Pollack from 1946 (Figure 2.11) brought up conversation about the swirl of color the actors would create from their movement on stage. The director wanted our production to incorporate a lot of physical movement for the actors. This concept not only accompanied the comedic language, but also conveyed the sporadic chaos the community creates as each member succumbs to the new society of rhinoceroses. This idea influenced the design of the clothes. For instance, I took the images of 1930s women's fashions and adjusted the fullness of the skirts to allow free movement of the legs to climb over railings and out of windows. Without the *incubation* of design meetings, I could not have made concrete decisions in my sketches, and ultimately my design.

As I could flesh out many ideas during design meetings, I found the sketching process uncomplicated for *Rhinoceros*. I easily made decisions about color and line, due to the constant

conversation in these meetings. I discovered that I work best when in a collaborative design team willing to experiment before laying out concrete decisions. The quality of my sketches became whimsical from the weight of the pencil line and the translucent watercolor (Figure 2.12). In retrospect, the *incubation* during design meetings served as my clear decision-making period. Unlike the design process for *Vinegar Tom*, *Rhinoceros* traveled an unobstructed path towards finding successful solutions to ideas. I remember this design process as the most exciting because of the constant sharing of ideas and the cohesive connection with all the designers as we discussed what our play would convey to the audience.

While conversations during design meetings prove beneficial within *incubation*, conversations with actors, while in fittings, provide important elements to the process as well. In conversing with the actor and looking at a garment on him/her an idea will spark the *ah-ha moment*, which immediately leads to *verification*. If we think the garment works, we essentially finish the fitting and complete the model. However, if the *verification* says "no" this garment does not work, then we try another garment. In this way, we work through pulled items just as I did through pulled images.

This process proved to be most prevalent with a graduate student who played the lead in all four of my realized productions. As stated earlier, *Vinegar Tom* generated a valuable learning experience where I not only found the power of real clothes to communicate with the director but also found my stride pulling garments and developing a comfortable working relationship with actors. I also discovered that the play speaks to the audience through its story and themes, not the costumes. The costumes should enhance a character, so that the audience believes what he/she says. Uneducated, the character of Jack behaves childishly in his manner towards women. He hides behind his wife's skirt tails when nervous, as if she embodies his mother, and he sexually

harasses women when he feels intellectually inferior. I initially created his design by pulling a shirt, vest and trousers in line with the look of "period-style" (Figure 2.13). I decided the vest should have texture to create the feel of rural England and living close to the land. Prior to the fitting, I pulled all the appropriate vests that had a textured, neutral color.

One particular vest the actor tried on clearly looked too small for him. I liked the forest green wool tweed fabric but also wanted him to be comfortable. We continued to try on the rest of the vests, yet none seemed to capture the character like the smaller vest. He put it back on and altered his posture to fit into this small vest. He walked in character, posturing in the mirror while we discussed the possibility of him wearing this vest despite it being too small for him. He expressed his feelings that for him the vest created a childlike connection to the character. The fit of the vest forced him to adjust his posture helping him create the character (Figure 2.14). I agreed, and we began to invent the story of Jack's vest, suggesting that he had kept this vest for twenty years. As a stubborn man, perhaps he refused to get rid of it. This first instance where I found a garment different from my expectations yet determined, in conversation with the actor, perfect for the character, proved enlightening. I discovered my ability to speak with people and articulate my ideas in an informal setting, unlike the occasional pressure-filled design meetings. As this became the foundation of my process, I realized how many more design decisions happen in fittings as part of *incubation*.

The coming together of *first insight*, *saturation* and *incubation* culminates in the brief spark of a concrete idea, the *ah-ha moment*. This moment reveals to me what direction a design ultimately takes, or in a fitting, what garment on an actor suits the character best. As mentioned earlier, many *ah-ha moments* intertwine with *verification*, continually creating a loop. An *ah-ha*

moment must happen many times over, however, and through continual work, and trial and error, I learn to see the *ah-ha moments* that will be successful.

My most vivid *ah-ha moments* began with designing *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*. This first *ah-ha moment* occurred the instant I saw two specific images from Dorothea Lange. These captured the innocence and strife of the character Flora. One close-up of a woman's legs, her shoes a well-worn woven material and her nylons with runs everywhere, hand-repaired as best as possible, spoke to the woman's desperation to hold onto something nice (Figure 2.15). This attempt to repair the fragile material masks her pain and struggle. The second image captures a woman's face peering from the oval window of the back seat of a car (Figure 2.16). She looks emotionless, yet her face reflects a quiet life of silent struggle. The silence of this photograph connected to my image of Flora who says little to nothing about her day-to-day life or her secret sexual desires. Identifying these two images formulated my understanding of the play through Flora. I knew Flora so well I could now find her counterparts, Jake and Vicarro, in my collection of images. Vicarro, being the manager of the Syndicate plantation, came to control every element of Jake's life. As Jake's control of his cotton ginning business now seemed precarious, I understood how he came to crave power and strength. Since Vicarro strongly suspects Jake of burning down the Syndicate plantation, I comprehended how Vicarro found victory seducing Flora without Jake's knowledge. Though the *ah-ha moment* occurred through two research images for *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*, many other areas of the design process sparked *ah-ha moments*, as well.

Fittings for the production of *Crazy for You* involving the afore-mentioned graduate actor presented another clear *ah-ha moment*. Here cast as Bobby, he plays this young man dreaming of a tap dancing career on Broadway despite being forced into business. The director and I wanted

Bobby to look sharp and tailored to fit the New York society in which he lives, yet also have a sense of glitz and glamour to which he aspires. To achieve this notion, I sketched him in an elegant well-cut three-piece grey suit (Figure 2.17). I viewed this color as sharp and stylish to represent urban New York City, especially in contrast to the earthy cowboys of Deadrock, Nevada. I pulled many three-piece suits that fit within the actor's measurements. We eventually found the grey suit that would be his final costume (Figure 2.18). This particular suit shimmered under the florescent lights of the costume shop, which enhanced the idea of glitz and glamour. Though on stage the color of the suit looked normal, the actor had the sense of underlying magic. The pink and grey striped tie, which matched the Follie's girl's showgirl costumes, added a subtle connection to Broadway. Though *Crazy for You* would continue to be a mammoth challenge, solving the leading man's image created a sense of relief and accomplishment. I knew that this first *ah-ha moment* gave me the confidence to push through and finalize other design decisions.

The greater challenge during the production of *Crazy for You* proved to be the ten Follie's girl's. My cast included ten differently shaped women who would each need matching showgirl costumes and fully accessorized day clothes. I knew it would be unlikely that I could find a rental house with a set of matching showgirl costumes that would fit these women. After discussing this dilemma with the costume shop management, we agreed it would be feasible to build the showgirls (Figure 2.19). My next step being to find the material, I ordered the ornaments – 5,000 light pink rhinestones and two bolts of white and pink tulle fabric. The search began for the appropriate yardage of desired pink cotton satin-esque fabric for the structured bodice. We estimated each costume would only need one yard of fabric, meaning ten yards total. I began searching locally for the appropriate weight fabric in the shade of pink designed.

Through much perseverance, I located the fabric. What I feared would be the most difficult of the production process for *Crazy for You*, solved in an *ah-ha moment*.

To better understand this *ah-ha moment*, one must realize that my design life revolved around these ten Follie's girls. After laboring over the design of their showgirl costume, finalizing it in the sketch, and locating and purchasing the fabric, we finally began to build their garments. Next I focused on their other two ensembles, undergarments and robes. These women's garments totaled forty costumes, surpassing my two leads who only wore three costumes each. Generally perceived as a group on stage, I constantly pondered how these ten women could appear as cohesive yet individual in their day clothes.

The Follie's girls' day clothes proved a greater challenge than the sourcing of fabric. As I mentioned earlier, I sourced garments from five different costume stocks. I began fittings by taking pictures of each actor in every garment that fit them, a practice I started during *Vinegar Tom*. This would keep a record for myself to remember what looked best on each actor and provide a way to show tangible costume ideas to the director. Once complete, I collected the images and turned my mind toward exploring how they could look unified as a group. My *ah-ha moment* came after many rearrangements of photographs on the table. Working in a similar way to *incubation* where I culled and sorted research images, I continually had *ah-ha moments*, followed by immediate *verifications* of "no" this grouping will not work. Finally, the *ah-ha moment* occurred and an immediate *verification* of "yes" this grouping works.

My intention to create a cohesive unit of Follie's girls who could stand out as an impressive ensemble led to a balance of color and flattering garments for each girl (Figure 2.20). The design for *Crazy for You* moved forward on an up and down path consistently through to

opening night. The practice of *incubation* and *ah-ha moments*, sometimes followed by immediate *verification*, propelled me to think more critically about what I wanted my clothes to say to the audience. I discovered the Follie's girls needed to be flashy in contrast to the dusty cowboys in order to enhance the cultural divide the audience viewed on stage. I also discovered that as the constricting three-piece suit on Bobby transitioned into shirtsleeves and suspenders, the audience could see he belonged in Deadrock with Polly.

Though *incubation* allows a lot of time for thinking and the *ah-ha moment* usually just an instant, these stages of the Getzels Model contribute to the design moving into realization and completion. The earlier stages of *first insight* and *saturation* create recognition of the play's narrative and initial ideas about their meaning and continue through into research. Within *incubation* I experiment through conversation of ideas and implication of photographs. Then during the *ah-ha moment* I make decisions about actual design details in my sketch of the costume. The design becomes reality in my head and the characters come to life. At times, the *verification* stage immediately follows the *ah-ha moment*. The exercise of analyzing my design process through the Getzels Model shows me that though I may not consciously be aware of the role script analysis plays, I am constantly working to understand the characters and play through the clothes I design for the actors.

Chapter Two Appendix

Figure 2.1 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Special World Research, Dorothea Lange, c. 1938

Figure 2.2 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Jake Character Research, Dorothea Lange, c. 1937

Figure 2.3 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Flora Character Research, Dorothea Lange, c. 1937

Figure 2.4 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Vicarro Character Research, Dorothea Lange, c. 1925

Figure 2.5 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Jake and Flora Color Sketches – Spring 2012

Figure 2.6 *Rhinoceros*: Special World Research, Alfred Leete, c. 1927

Figure 2.7 *Rhinoceros*: Special World Research

Figure 2.8 *Rhinoceros*: Special World Research

Figure 2.9 *Rhinoceros*: Berenger Versus Jean Costumes

Figure 2.10 *Rhinoceros*: Scenic Design with Cartooning Style

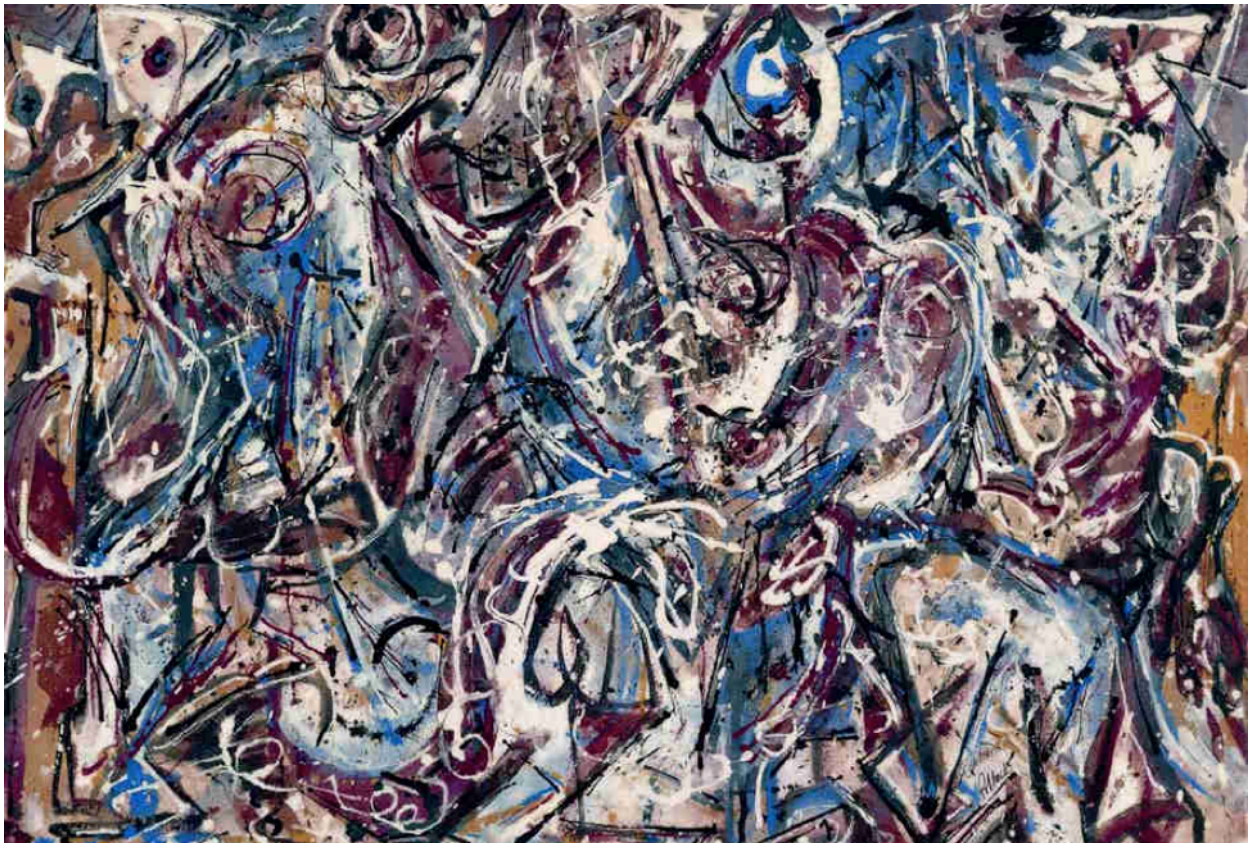

Figure 2.11 *Rhinoceros*: Special World Research, Jackson Pollack, c. 1946

Figure 2.12 *Rhinoceros*: Papillion and Botard Color Sketch – Fall 2012

Figure 2.13 *Vinegar Tom*: Initial Pulled Costume for Jack

Figure 2.14 *Vinegar Tom*: Jack in Fitting and in Production Photograph

Figure 2.15 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Special World Research, Dorothea Lange, c. 1934

Figure 2.16 *27 Wagons Full of Cotton*: Special World Research, Dorothea Lange, c. 1938

Figure 2.17 *Crazy for You*: Bobby Child Color Sketch – Fall 2013

Figure 2.18 *Crazy for You*: Bobby Child with Follie's Girl Production Photograph

Figure 2.19 *Crazy for You*: Follie's Girls Color Sketch – Fall 2013

Figure 2.20 *Crazy for You*: Follie's Girls Traveling Suits Production Photograph

Chapter 3

Script analysis continues to inform all areas of my design process. Only by fully understanding the expectations of the play can I create a design that truly expresses what the playwright intended. While the stages of *first insight*, *saturation*, *incubation* and the *ah-ha moment* continue to build the design process, the final stage of the Getzels Model, *verification*, completes that undertaking. *Verification* occurs when I determine if an element of my design succeeds or not. As Henri Poincaré described, *verification* solidifies ideas into concrete form and constantly checks for success or failure (Edwards, 3). When the designer sees success or failure without need of hearing it from others she achieves mastery.

As explored earlier, I found the process of designing *Vinegar Tom* rewarding in many ways. I found a breakthrough in pulling garments and in conversation with the director and actors. Being my first realized production, designing felt like a constant struggle. I continued to learn as I went through the process, and I discovered all the experiences benefitted my working habits and style for the next productions. Throughout the process of creating these clothes, I moved forward blindly, pulling just to bring tangible things to create conversations. I did not feel confident in the outcome. However, on opening night, every aspect of the design came together. For me, the *verification* stage of success came with that first performance.

Opening night of *Vinegar Tom* seemed magical and what I had hoped to feel every opening night. Though every opening night operates this way, as the designer, I never felt the anxiety of a full audience with no options to stop midway through the performance if a costume disaster struck. During the dress rehearsals other design elements caused the need to stop the performance many times; thus, I never had the opportunity to watch a full “run through.” I did

not get the chance to just watch the show and see the full scope of my costumes on stage. Though feeling a little stressed on opening night, just knowing that I could do nothing if something broke on stage or if the vital quick change at the end of the play did not happen, I also felt relief. In that two-hour period, I no longer reigned over designs and decisions. Thus, I could enjoy the final product of my designs within the experience of the play. As mentioned earlier, I found comfort in the costume pulling, not the formal designing. I think my ease of pulling came out on stage, as I felt all my pieces worked together. Though resistant to the idea of actors coming into the theater space at the top of the performance and putting his/her costume on over street clothes (Figure 1.11), I let my reservations fade away. In the end, I think that choice helped solidify the concept the director created with a found space and found clothes.

Until that moment sitting in the audience, I never thought this show would be successful. I thought my *verification* would be "this design does not work for the production." However, reflecting back, a small *verification* of success came in the form of the too small vest for my male lead. Eventually, I felt success in the period-style "piecemeal" clothing reading as a cohesive design on stage. However, not all projects create full positive *verification*, and as with *Vinegar Tom*, I may only see success in one area.

Contemplating this concept, I again look to the first class project described in chapter one. My final translation of the circa 1760 burnt orange English dress into Edgar Degas's "Dancer in Green Tutu" gave me a true sense of positive *verification*. I struggled with each translation in this project, seeing a negative *verification* with all but this final painting. I think this idea of failure in the translations stemmed from the initial constraints I put on the project to create a "perfect painting." As discussed before, I continually strive to work past this mindset, but at the time, "failure and incorrect" seemed to be the only fitting *verification*.

For some reason, may be it frustration, exhaustion or relief to be on the final translation, when I found myself painting the Degas translation, I let myself just paint without any mental inhibitions. I still see the end result as one of my best pieces (Figure 1.6 & 1.10). I see this final painting as one that I am proud to show people and to explain the project and how I created it. My *verification* came from my own eyes and thoughts about what the final translation should look like. Though right and wrong does not come into play in the world of art and creativity, that does not mean I do not set ideas of right and wrong in my own work. For this reason, I find the positive *verification* stage difficult to recognize on my own.

Working towards consciously seeing *verification*, I explore another classroom design project. The objective of the course focused on creating my physical portfolio, as well as designing one show on paper that would round out the scope of my portfolio. I chose to design William Wycherley's Restoration comedy, *The Country Wife*. Having worked on a few of the characters in an early design class, I decided to complete the play for this project. This comedy set in the late 1600s tells the story of a playboy, Mr. Horner, who pretends to be a eunuch in order to sleep with all the married women in town. Mistaken identities and multiple escapades in love and lust abound.

I felt that I understood this play and could see the characters moving around in my mind, especially the trio of ladies, Mrs. Dainty Fidget, Mrs. Squeamish and Old Lady Squeamish. These visions surprised me. Usually in my initial reading of a play I only see a black stage with grey shadows moving around. Now that I could see these characters, I wanted to capture this comedy by creating the potential for a lot of movement in the line, cut and vivid color. I chose a lot of textured, bold colored and patterned fabrics to use on the ladies and still brighter colors, yet more refined textures, on the men. The style of the late 1600s includes trains on women's

mantuas (gowns) (Figure 3.1), and full-cut knee length coats on men with tight knee breeches and three-inch Cuban heeled shoes (Figure 3.2). I wanted a lot of color and activity when the actors moved around on stage. The hairstyles of both men and women of the late 1600s added another aspect to the comedy. The men wore long, thick curly hair (Figure 3.3), which invariably would flutter as the characters became more involved in the heated moments. The women's hairstyles came in two varieties. One style contained full tight curls at the sides of the head with bouncy ringlets coming down around the forehead and ears (Figure 3.4). The alternative hairstyle piled the curls up against a fontange (headdress) towering vertically above the head (Figure 3.5). Fans, walking sticks, tri-corn hats and snuffboxes completed the image.

The self-conscious fussiness of all the characters helps make the play funny, and adding the lavish hair, textiles and accessories enhanced my vision for comedy. Seeing my final designs and the textiles all together, I found positive *verification* in the end result. Even though I used a lot of different hues, I think the color palette works. I find that the trio of ladies (Figure 3.6) and couples of men and women (Figure 3.7) or men and men (Figure 3.8) all work in relationship to each other. The color of the textiles and the movement of the silhouettes balance each other. The vibrancy and extravagance combine to create comedy for a modern audience, as these styles would look ridiculous in a contemporary play or even in the modern world. Perhaps the real comedy can be found in that at one point in history these styles were seen as appropriate for the time.

Striving to understand *verification* more concretely, I look towards my costume technology assignments. A costume technology project where I found positive *verification* in myself occurred during costume crafts class. Assigned to build a felt cloche inspired by an image from the 1920s, I chose to work from a studio portrait of Gloria Swanson wearing a sleek black

cloche (Figure 3.9). Following explicit instructions from the professor, I steamed the felt hat block onto a wooden head-frame, using elastic to mark the hat base line and t-pins to hold the felt in place while cooling. I patterned the brim separately, customized the fit and hand-stitched it to the crown. I then attached the final touches of bias copper tape, shaped bow and accent button to cover the brim seam line (Figure 3.10). I knew in my mind that I followed best practices and that it looked like the Gloria Swanson hat; thus, I found positive *verification*. Not only did I find this *verification* in the final result of my project, but I also acknowledge that I enjoy millinery. In a way this demonstrates elements of positive *verification* in my skills as a milliner, which I recognize on my own *verification*.

In contrast to this positive *verification*, I immediately dismissed one particular technology assignment during creative draping class as a "failure" doomed from the beginning. This innovative project asked us to play a game where we drew out of separate hats a name of a retail store and style period. For example, the time period drawn identified the period style of the finished garment. The store drawn identified the location where the materials for the garment must be purchased. I drew "1575-1599, woman" and "The Pet Store" as my two "givens."

I chose to work from a specific Elizabethan (1575-1599) image, a painting of a Spanish woman circa 1584 from the National Trust/Art Resource, NY (Figure 3.11). I liked the monochromatic color scheme of her gown, and I thought all the details in the dress would be fun to recreate out of pet treats. I decided to use the lining paper from the inside of dog food bags as the base of my dress as it contained the most surface area material. For the detail work, I would capitalize on the various shapes of dog bacon treats and rawhide toys to imitate the pearls, beads and jewels of this Elizabethan garment. I also would incorporate other materials such as cat litter

box plastic liners, cardboard scratchboards, and fur wipes. Though materials came easily, doubts crept in.

Constantly in judgment of this assignment, frustration prevailed. I gathered all the dog food bags from different colleagues in the drama building for free; however, other materials proved quite expensive. Once I purchased all the materials and attempted to drape an Elizabethan dress, I became more frustrated. The dog food bag liners proved greasy and too stiff to manipulate. I endured many hot glue burns and paper cuts, as well as multiple repairs to the structure, as the weight of the dog treats tore sections of the base garment. Eventually, I found the hot glue to be a useful tool to make the necessary repairs and to make the process of the detail work go faster. I finally finished the project, though remained unimpressed by my final product as I became engulfed with resentment.

At the time, this project did not seem worthwhile to me. I fretted over the burns, the lack of sewing involved and all the expense wasted, as everything eventually would be destined for the trash. This felt more like a Project Runway challenge than a culmination of an MFA technology program. When I put the garment on display with an image of the original 1575-1599 painting at the final showing of our work for the semester, I could not appreciate people's positive reactions. I saw the entire project as a waste of time, money and creative problem solving, and thus as a failure.

From my position, I could not see any positive *verification*. Yet time passes and as I look at the photographs now (Figure 3.12), as the dress did eventually go in the trash, I see how an outsider could be impressed. Though I do not think I will ever be making a garment for the stage out of pet store supplies, especially as the dog food bag material does not move, I now see in

retrospect how this project might serve me in the future. I do not know what projects I may be asked to work on in future jobs, but having the ability to expand my creative scope in ideas for materials may be helpful. The mere challenge of accepting projects no doubt must stand central to my professional work ethic. I must not judge but rather step into the opportunity to learn something new.

Comparing these two technology assignments, I see that I have challenges with new concepts, especially concepts, which feel incorrect. I first recognized this quality in myself when revisiting *Vinegar Tom* and the director's idea of having the actors dress on stage. I create preconceived ideas about right and wrong, which I assume works in costume technology, but which I have just proved to be false. The creative draping dog food dress could have been accomplished in a variety of ways. However, I came up with one idea and did not veer into other possibilities, which may have made the project less frustrating for me. With the cloche hat I used trial and error until I discovered an appropriate method for building the hat. Why could I not do the same with the dog food dress?

Though I do not always identify positive *verification*, I quickly find negative *verification*. I tell myself this stems from my quest to obtain my idea of "perfection," but I am discovering this masks the truth from myself. Sometimes I am unable to decipher any *verification* as it immediately tumbles upon *ah-ha moments*. I will have a spark of an *ah-ha moment* in my design or in a fitting, which instantly expresses "no," this does not work; thus, I move on to another option without analyzing why I think it does not work. These immediate "no's" result from intuitive reactions to garments. Yet that small vest moved from "no" to "yes" with the assist of an actor willing to fully explore the possibility. So what kept me from doing the same? At the time of fittings, presumably I know enough about the character and my design that I can make

those choices instantly. I also make temporary "yes" decisions in order to move forward in my design process to see if another part in the costume works. I am now realizing as I analyze projects, that some choices create Getzels Models many times over, immediately tumbling one on top of another as the process moves forward.

One such example of *ah- ha moments* tumbling on *verification* and tumbling back on *ah-ha moments* can be found in the paper project of *Firebird*. Briefly mentioned in chapter one, I chose to design Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's ballet *Firebird* to expand my portfolio. The course objectives got us thinking and designing in a much larger scale and dimension compared to the typical productions we produce in a university setting. We also looked at how the challenge of a non-traditional production might influence our visuals and design style. This first project asked us to think more abstractly about our sketching style, in order to design a ballet, opera or musical of an abstract or fantastical nature. The *first insight* became the music instead of the play script. Based on a Russian folktale, *Firebird* contained a few storyline details I could draw from, but the music became the problem to solve, as well as the inspiration. From the music I decided to use birds as the foundation of my design; birds of paradise; birds of prey; birds of farmland. For *saturation* I pulled countless images of birds, vibrant not only in their feather colors or patterns, but also in the shapes their bodies created (Figure 3.13). The *incubation* process became choosing which images inspired the shape and color palette for physical costumes and which images evoked an emotional connection with the music.

I also explored another style of *saturation* into *incubation* by creating multiple analogue sketch responses of each character and analyzing my emotional response. This process involves physically creating multiple analogue sketches while listening to the music. After compiling research images I created during the design process, I created analogues, or pencil doodles,

which connected my drawing process with my emotional response. Using a one-eighth piece of white paper I scribbled down my immediate gut response while listening to one particular character's music. I did this multiple times for each character, so as to explore more deeply the power of line in response to music. The music inspired me to create a stronger emotional reaction, as it engulfed my senses. I envisioned the movements my own body might do in response to the music and made my hand replicate that movement.

After completing the analogues for all of the characters in *Firebird*, I then moved into *incubation*. For this I looked in detail at each individual line, or groups of lines, and how they connected to a body position or a pattern motif of a tonality (Figure 3.14). I mostly searched to find abstract body positions in the lines which initially proved challenging. Though it took a while to get used to the practice of seeing body positions in the jumble of lines, I eventually found them (Figure 3.15). I see this practice as a parallel to the first time a person finds the man's face in the moon. Before that moment I am completely confused, but after the initial visual connection, I am surprised that I did not see it earlier.

After accepting the challenge of seeing the body positions, the *incubation* stage became finding them and experimenting. One analogue could contain many body positions, the trick being to find and copy them. Laying all the sketches on a table, I saw what body position truly worked best for each character. Though this *incubation* took longer than originally expected, it proved beneficial as it transformed my sketching process resulting in highly evocative images. The sketches still captured my style and my hand, and proved more expressive of my passionate connection to the ballet, *Firebird*.

The positive *verification* came individually for characters when I could visualize the renderings in my head moving with the music. The positive *verification* for the entire show, all the color sketches together, came when I could look at them and see that they stood together all of a piece (Figure 3.16 & 3.17). The visual concept of the design sketches captured my style anew, creating my unique vision for *Firebird*. I also garnered positive *verification* from my colleagues. Though I am unclear how any of the sketches would be turned into physical garments, that opportunity lies ahead of me. The objective of the assignment intended to stretch us beyond ourselves, to take us out of our comfort zones in how we imagine a production and how its costumes can be expressively drawn to tell a story to the director about character and designer vision.

Even though this innovative design project of analogues for *Firebird* parallels the innovative technology project of the Elizabethan/pet store draping project, I did not have the same frustration with the design project. I have always recognized that innovation and exploration in design serve as the foundation of success. However, as stated earlier, I assumed that technology stands as "right or wrong." Here, in this comparison, I acknowledge that technology, too, requires new methods. While the entire duration of the design process calls for experimentation, trial and error, I have always thought technology must provide the immediate answer. Not so. Without trial and error, the best solutions may never be discovered. Though late, perhaps this realization stands as the clearest evidence in my process of mastery.

For me, the mastery of costume design and technology comes as a two-level idea. First, I have achieved mastery through my ability to articulate character by the choices I make in the design of the costumes. Through my education and practical experience, I visually understand what choices work and do not work on stage. Though I always appreciate someone else's

opinion of the success or failure of my work, I am now able to pinpoint what specific details could change in a garment to make it successfully represent the character. However, I resist seeing success in myself. Through this analysis and deep exploration I now see how critically I judge my own work. In essence, the process of writing this document has lead to many important realizations such as this. I will continue to fight the "critic" that lives inside my head, yet strive to let my "critic" support my discernment and praise my work when appropriate.

The second level of my mastery comes through thinking and acting globally regarding the play and the playwright's ideas. My collaboration with the director, other designers, actors and technicians serve as the best source of my outside *verification*, deeply affecting my own internal *verification*. Being able to think critically about a play, as a whole, helps to unify not only the costume design but also all of the other areas of design for a production. As I have articulated throughout this document, when I could think globally and collaborate successfully with my colleagues, the process of working became easy, joyous. I also recognize on my own whether the choices I made worked or not for that particular project or production. With all the preparation work done during *first insight*, *saturation*, *incubation*, the *ah-ha moment* and *verification* through script analysis, research, pulling of garments and collaboration, I intuitively make good solid choices. I balance the ongoing process of working through the stages in collaboration with the other people involved with trusting my instincts and all the information gathered to make the appropriate choices in support of the playwright's ideas. Mastery comes from the understanding that the work put forth and the trust in myself creates a process, which will lead to the knowledge of how to succeed in future projects.

Chapter Three Appendix

Figure 3.1 *The Country Wife*: Mantua Gown Research, Bonnard, c. 1685-1690

Figure 3.2 *The Country Wife*: Cuban Heel Research, Jacob Ferdinand Voet, c. 1639-1689

Figure 3.3 *The Country Wife*: Men's Hairstyle Research, c. 1600s

Figure 3.4 *The Country Wife*: Women's Hairstyle Research, Casper Netscher, c.1639-1684

Figure 3.5 *The Country Wife*: Fontange Headdress and Hairstyle Research, c. 1690

Figure 3.6 *The Country Wife*: Trio of Women Color Sketches – Spring 2013

Figure 3.7 *The Country Wife*: Lady Fidget and Sir Jasper Fidget Color Sketches – Spring 2013

Figure 3.8 *The Country Wife*: Dorilant and Harcourt Color Sketch – Spring 2013

Figure 3.9 Costume Crafts: Cloche Hat Inspiration, c. 1929

Figure 3.10 Costume Crafts: Final Cloche Hat

Figure 3.11 Creative Materials Project Inspiration Image, Spanish, c. 1584

Figure 3.12 Creative Materials Final Project: Pet Store Elizabethan Dress

Figure 3.13 *Firebird* Ballet: Initial Research

Figure 3.14 *Firebird* Ballet: Firebird Character Analogue Sketch – Spring 2013

Figure 3.15 *Firebird* Ballet: Firebird Character Analogue Transformation – Spring 2013

Figure 3.16 *Firebird* Ballet: Firebird Character Final Color Sketch – Spring 2013

Figure 3.17 *Firebird* Ballet: Prince Ivan, Kashchei and Princess Color Sketches – Spring 2013

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