

Drawings from the Golden Age Transformed

What is Fashion Art?

It is the fusion of clothing and a figure into one entity- transforming the garment by conveying a mood, style, or attitude (Stipelman, S. 1996, p. x)

-Introduction- The Purpose of this project was to find historical illustrations from the Gold Age of Fashion (approximately 1912-1930) and transform them into illustrations appropriate for the modern viewer. The original illustrations were updated from what some may consider a stagnant, two-dimensional piece of art into a creative interpretation of that picture, emphasizing fabric detail, figure movement, and overall mood.

-Design Process-

I. Background Information

A. Fashion illustration up to the early 1900s were extravagant lines drawings, created as realistically close to the human figure as possible

B. By 1911, design couturier Paul Poiret saw the need for a new approach to design illustration (Mackrell, 1997, p. 158):

-He produced the innovative fashion journal *Les Robes de Paul Poiret* containing ink drawings colored by the Pochoir process (Mackrell, 1997, p. 158)

-"Pochoir"- a method where a monochrome drawing was colored by hand using a set of stencils, layered one on top of the other (Mackrell, 1997, p. 159)

-This form of illustration characterized the Art Deco Period where purity of line remained the hallmark of Art Deco style (Mackrell, 1997, p. 160).

C. Signature illustrators of the time were Georges Lepape, Georges Barbier, Charles Martin, Andre (A.E.) Marty, and Paul Iribe

D. Popular fabrics of the time were lightweight chiffons and sheer lace, and supple, richly textured materials, especially velvet and fur (Payne et al, 1992, p. 562, 572).

II. Design Criteria

A. *Aesthetic Qualities*- the illustrations should be appealing to the average viewer, regardless of their previous exposure to fashion illustration. They should display proper balance, rhythm, proportion, and color in its entirety, enhancing not detracting from the original image.

B. *Expressive Qualities*- The final pieces must display a mood or setting that unifies the garment and the figure. The illustrations should not change the garments themselves, but should display them in a striking, unique way.

III. Visual Documentation and Illustration process



Medium- PrismaColor markers and colored pencils
Technique- Print was applied to garment, followed by the deepest shade of the background color. A blender was used to create tonal variations in the shading, followed by the use of white and black colored pencil to create the velvet effect. A blender was used to apply print to the window pains. The feathers were created using swirls of marker color, covered by long strokes of colored pencil



Medium- PrismaColor markers, colored pencils, gel pens
Technique- Figure was lightly drawn with pencil, then background color was applied with marker in a circular swirl pattern. Velvety on garment was colored at the same time as the background to blend the two. A blender was used for tonal variations, followed by a black and white colored pencil for the velvet effect. Stars were applied using a white gel pen. A blender was used to apply light shading on fur.



Medium- PrismaColor markers and colored pencils
Technique- Dark shades of gray marker were used to create the black velvet. A blender created tonal variations. White and Black colored pencils applied velvet effect. Three shades of green and grey in short sweeping strokes mimic fringe, covered lightly with white colored pencil. The background was applied with a blender

-Conclusion-

1. Choosing to re-create historical illustrations rather than design new ones provided for a wonderful opportunity to "play" strictly in the field of art. Creativity was unleashed in full to successfully provide an alternate look at the Golden age of fashion. Colors were enhanced, textures were emphasized, and each of the three illustrations displayed a creative angle to the common style of illustration.
2. I am excited as to how the final pieces turned out. After spending nearly two years practicing fashion illustration I believe these are the best I have developed. However, though the illustrations are beautiful, I would like to see more movement in the figures themselves. One of my goals was to bring a two-dimensional figure to life, yet I feel only the re-creation of A. E. Marty's *En Plein Coeur* did that completely, incorporating emotions, movement, and mood.
3. In the future I would like to illustrate one historical piece in multiple ways in order to capture the original essence of the artwork and find the pose that breathes life into the entire illustration. Choosing a relatively straight pose for a voluminous garment completely hides the figure (as in Georges Lepape's piece *Les Hermines*), and I would like to explore various ways to enhance the art without having either the garment or the figure overpower the other.
4. I believe I could expand on this project in two ways: First, I could find more illustrations from the Golden Age and draw multiple versions of each, finding different color combinations and experimenting with different fabric renderings within each set, rather than creating a single copy of the original. Second, I could find illustrations from different eras. I especially enjoy the svelte look of the 1940s, the seemingly "twiggy" look of the 1960s, and gowns from the late 18th-early 19th centuries.