

# Great Expectations by Charles Dickens

## Setting:

For my major project, I designed & constructed an 1830s evening ball gown for the character Estella, the beautiful but cold love interest of Pip. I incorporated peacock style elements as she similarly flaunts herself at her mates just like a peacock...



Foggy, dark, shadows...

Navy blue velvet & Dark blue crinkle taffeta



Final illustration



1830 Undergarments:

## Toile process:



Pleated bodice

Feather-like shapes



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*Time: 1812 to 1840*

*Place: Kent & London*

*Time & place:* I decided to keep the time and place the same as the original novel as I think they both suit the narrative well and I enjoy the fashion of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

*Concept:* I would like to keep the costumes historical in their silhouette, mainly focusing on 1812 and 1830 to 1840 as my time range. However, I would like the story to have an otherworldly, supernatural sense, like *By the Bog of Cats*, incorporated into the setting and characters costumes.

*Setting:* I think this could be achieved well in the setting by using different lighting to convey different atmospheres in the story, a constant fog and an overall dark colour palette that is already associated with Victorian imagery.

*Costuming:* I would like to play with colour, pattern and silhouette with my costumes. Eg. Darker colours and sharper silhouettes for a character in a tense scene, over-the-top silhouettes for eccentric characters, softer fabrics and colours for scenes of resolution...

*Design for film:* I chose film as I think the supernatural effect comes across well in film and I think the small details on clothing, that can be seen on screen, are essential to character's stories.

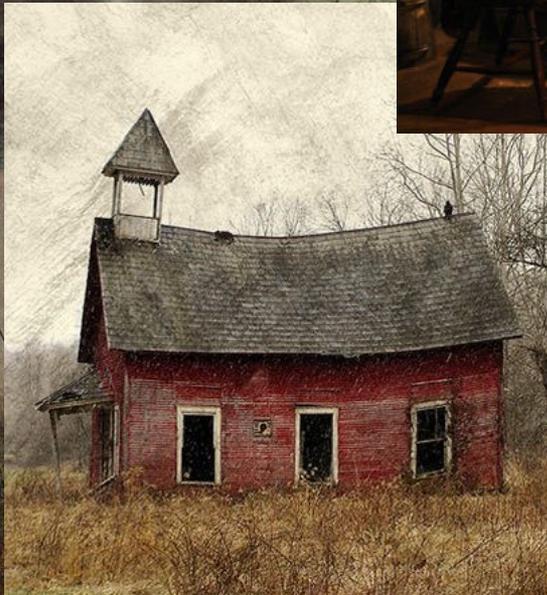
*Setting Mood-boards . . .*

# Gargery House, 1812, Kent



*Old church covered in fog...*

*Victorian kitchen...*



*Modest but comfortable house...*



*Wooden forge...*



*Old gravestones...*



*Marshes, foggy, dusk...*

# Satis House

*a feeling like the outside world is coming inside. . . everything covered in moss, vines, algae, mould*



*Dirty mirrors. . .*

*an other-worldly atmosphere. . .*

*torn drapes. . .*

*dead flowers. . .*

*melted candles. . .*

*Stained glass windows setting in green & purple light. . .*

*Wedding table with cobwebs & mice. . .*



*1830 underpinnings research...*



Chemise: 1830's American or  
European

Chemise: referred to as an undergarment, a knee-length, loose fitting garment of white linen with a straight or slightly triangular silhouette. It was worn next to the skin to protect clothing from sweat and body oils and was usually the only piece of clothing that was washed regularly.

## Corset: 1825 - 1835 England



<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O138890/corset-unknown/>

Materials and techniques: Cotton, silk thread, trapunto work

Description: White cotton corset with silk trapunto work. Busk down centre middle, separate breast double-gussets with trapunto strap in centre of each breast. Corded and quilted work down sides of corset, armholes set quite far back. Laces down the back.

Dimensions: 51cm waist approx.

Light control for a more natural figure Unlike 18th century stays, this corset has gussets over the breasts and hips which allow for the natural curves of the female body. Decorative quilting around the diaphragm supports and lifts the breasts which are separated by a broad central busk. The busk also flattens the stomach. The wearer would have needed help to dress because the corset laces at the back.



### *Petticoat: 1830's American*

The necessary underpinnings to create the 1830s silhouette were the corset, the petticoat, and sleeve supports. This cotton petticoat is corded which serves to stiffen it into a rounded shape that would push the skirts of the dress outward into a bell form. Petticoats in this period were also made of horsehair fabric and called crinolines (from the French word crin, meaning horsehair). To create the slightly raised waist, the heavy white cotton corset (1987.238) is reinforced with cording and boning and has a slot for a busk at center front, as well as a large interior pocket for a paperboard to flatten the abdomen. Gussets at the bust and hips of the corset serve to allow flesh to expand above and below. The neckline of the corset is low and open and is joined by off-the-shoulder straps, which serve to open the chest area further. The separate sleeve supports (C.I.66.38.5a, b), made of muslin and given shape with baleen, complete the wide-topped silhouette. Affixed to the body with drawstrings at the top and bottom, they created a balloon of fabric over the arm, which slipped slowly downward over the course of the 1830s and 1840s. Sleeve supports could also be made of down-filled pillows.

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/82076>

## Sleeve pads/plumpers



- England, 1830-1835
- Linen plain weave with down fill
- Diameter: a) 9 5/8 in. (24.38 cm );  
b) 9 5/8 in. (24.38 cm )

Sleeve pads were used to produce the puff sleeves that characterised the 1830's. They were made of cotton fabric and tailored three dimensionally with abundant gathers. The feathers inside are light and expand the padding.



<https://thequintessentialclothespen.com/2017/11/29/new-1830s-underpinnings-sleeve-puffs-skirt-puffer-hsm-11/>

<https://collections.lacma.org/node/214181>

# 1830 undergarments...

Sleeve plumpers



Chemise



Corset



Steel boned



Starching petticoat with cornflour



Corded petticoat

*1830 dress research...*

## 1830s fashion. . .

Womenswear during the 1830's was exuberant and dramatic, tied closed to Romanticism. Romanticism emphasised emotion, the beauty of nature, and individualism. Women's fashion of the 1830's is divided into two silhouettes: it began with overwhelmingly bold fashions and from 1836, style had collapsed into a dropping sentimentality. This was personified by Queen Victoria as, despite her young age, she dressed modestly, cautiously and more simply and represented the ideal Romantic woman through her maternal devotion.

The silhouette of the early 1830's consisted of a nipped waist that fell just above the natural waistline, giving a short-waisted effect, and wide sleeve and skirts that ended just above the ankle. Overall, fashion emphasized and highlighted an expansive width. The sleeve was, by far, the most significant element of fashion. Gigot or leg-o-mutton sleeves reached an apex in size between 1830 and 1833. Designs ranged from the standard gigot which was full to the wrist (fig 1), to the demi-gigot which was fitted from the elbow (fig 2), to the fanciful "à la giraffe" design in which fullness was banded down at intervals creating a series of puffs (fig 3).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

There were several varieties of bodices during the 1830s, but all of them emphasized an upside-down triangle with all points converging at the waistline. In addition to crossover designs (fig. 4) and simple darted bodices (fig. 5), a particularly fashionable bodice treatment was called *à la Sevigne*, in which a central boned band divided horizontal folds of fabric (fig. 6).



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

In the evening, necklines lowered to almost slip off the shoulder and sleeves shortened. There was a particular fashion for short puffed sleeves covered with a long transparent oversleeve of silk net or gauze (fig. 7).

Accessories were an important element of 1830s womenswear. Shawls, ranging from kashmiris and paisleys, to airy lace and net varieties were popular. The waistline was usually accentuated with a wide belt, completed with a bold buckle (fig. 8). The 1830s is notable for its lavish use of jewelry. Paired bracelets, often featuring a cameo or miniature, were stylish with gauze sleeves, for example (fig. 8). Long chains were worn around the waist (*chatelaines*), around the neck and shoulders (*sautoirs*), or woven into the hair and around the head (*ferronnières*) (fig. 9 & 10). Brooches and elaborate drop earrings were also seen.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

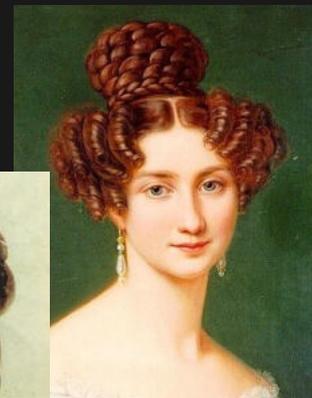


Fig. 12

Hair and headgear also showed a stunning variety of bold forms. Hair was arranged in high chignons of loops, braids, or curls, while the hair at the front was left in rows of sausage curls or hanging in ringlets (fig 11 & 12). The Apollo knot and hairstyle *à la Chinoise* were two such arrangements. Both hats and bonnets, worn outdoors, had expanded greatly in width to balance the sleeves, reaching an apex in 1830. Hats and bonnets featured a high crown and a huge, halo-like brim, and were loaded with trim. Throughout the decade, hairstyles were more elaborate in the evening, and could feature decorative combs, feathers, ribbons, and flowers woven into the arrangement.

*Estella ball gown  
moodboard*

*Pleated velvet bust with  
piped seams*

*Peacock feathers*

*Dark blue crinkle taffeta -  
The Fabric Counter*

*Feather-like  
open bodice*

*Navy blue velvet -  
Minerva*

*Dark blue pumps with satin ribbon*

*Velvet underskirt,  
pleated taffeta overskirt  
with feather like  
detailing on opening*



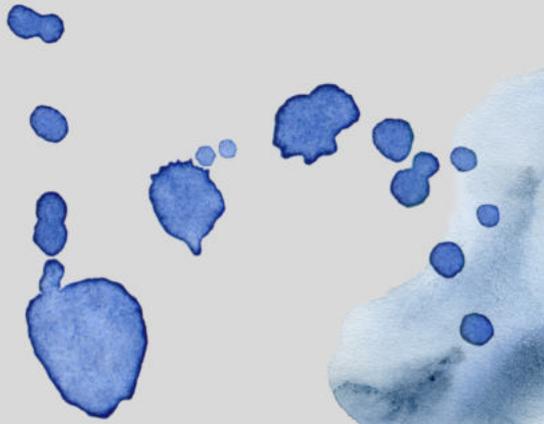
*costume drawing...*



*Estella final costume...*



Toile & construction process...



*Final costume...*



# Estella costume drawings

## Bodice & sleeve sketches...

Velvet fabric



Pleated bust with central divided band



Full-pleated wrap-around bodice



Asymmetrical pleats, wrap-around bodice

Adding lace trim & appliques



I think the pleated bust is the most formal looking...



Trim on pleated bust



White puffed under-sleeve, organza Gigot over-sleeve, velvet shoulder pieces with lace trim



Green velvet cuffs

Short, puffed velvet sleeves



*Velvet under-  
sleeve, organza  
lace Gigot  
over-sleeve*



*Lace trim added*



*Blue velvet*



*Demi-gigot  
over-sleeve*



*Adding  
accessories*



*Demi-gigot  
velvet sleeve*



*Purple velvet*





*Skirt sketches...*



*Open collar bodice,  
pointed trim, pleated  
bodice underneath*



*Velvet outer layer,  
taffeta under layer*



*Lowering collar piece  
at the shoulders*



*Pointed  
collar, folded  
over*



*Blue velvet*



*Teal crushed  
taffeta, blue  
velvet*

*Adding velvet  
gloves & binding  
around edges*



*Adding lace trims,  
purple, blue*





*Blue organza sleeves*



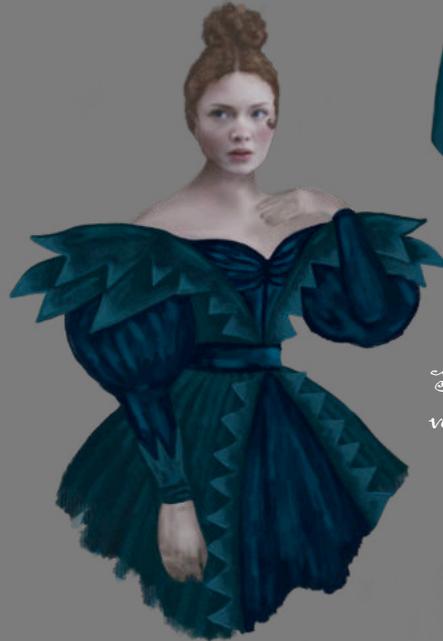
*Open skirt*



*Peacock  
feather  
headpiece*



*Wool felt  
Peacock  
feathers*



*Spiked cuffs,  
velvet sleeves*



*Adding accessories*



*Skirt sketches...*



*Blue crinkle  
taffeta & navy  
blue velvet*



*Costume Mood-boards . . .*

## *Young Pip (1812)*



<https://pin.it/5fH40UA>



<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O1129110/skeleton-suit-unknown/>

### *The Skeleton Suit*

The skeleton suit consisted of a tight jacket, with two rows of ornamental copper alloy buttons in front ascending over the shoulders, ankle length trousers buttoned to and over the jacket around the waist, made of heavy Cotton or linen. They also wore an open neck white cambric blouse with ruffled lace trim. Younger boys might have frills at the collar, wrists and ankles. They were worn with white stockings and flat-soled strap slippers or pumps. A military style cap was often added. Colours were generally light, blue and green being the most popular but sometimes made of scarlet or mustard instead.



[https://emuseum.history.org/view/objects/asitem/items\\$0040:1421](https://emuseum.history.org/view/objects/asitem/items$0040:1421)

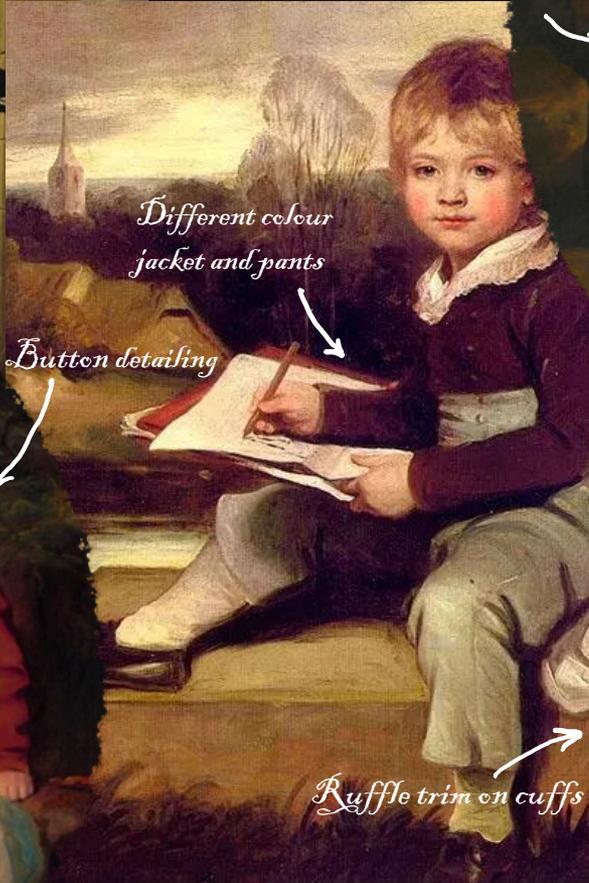
“An ingenious contrivance for displaying the symmetry of a boy’s figure by fastening him into a very tight jacket, with an ornamental row of buttons over each shoulder and then buttoning his trousers over it so as to give his legs the appearance of being hooked on just under his arm pits”. (Charles Dickens, Sketches by Boz, 1838-39.)

# Young Pip (1812)

"Sunday best suit"



Open-neck blouse



"Tight and restrictive, too short"





# Miss Havisham (1812 - 40)

1780's wedding dress...

Yellow & withered, torn



Alexander  
McQueen  
'Oyster' dress



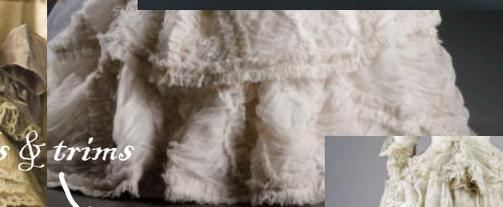
Satin, lace, silk...

Pointed bodice

Lace cuffs



Frills & trims



# Joe Gargery (1812)

Leather apron made from cowhide, waist to below knee length



Waistcoat



Tool belt



Rollled-up shirt sleeves



Thick leather boots



Flat-cap



"Well-knit",  
Scuffed clothing

# Uncle Pumblechook (1812)

"Well-to-do" man



Dress coat with tailcoat, high neck at the back and "M" shaped lapels, double-breasted

Hessian boots, leather with tassels

Pantaloons



Gloves



Single-breasted waistcoat



Hairstyles



The "great coat" with cape



Very high stand collar that skims his jaw



Puffed sleeves



White, ruffled shirt  
Top-hat



Cravat



I like the green colour

*Estella  
(1812)*



*Juliet sleeves...*



*Pantalettes...*



*White Muslin  
dress...*



*Spencer jacket...*



*Ruffled  
collars...*



*Shawls...*



*Overcoats...*