

# Postcards from Morocco



Opera

Minor project

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## What Is it about?

Composed by Dominick Argento, This opera is set in a non-descript train station in 1914, Postcard from Morocco follows the story of seven travellers who are characterized by their possessions: a lady with a hand mirror, a lady with a hat box, a lady with a cake box, a man with old luggage, a man with a shoe sample kit, and a man with a cornet case

For this opera, I worked alongside a team of two other peers and followed directions from the director

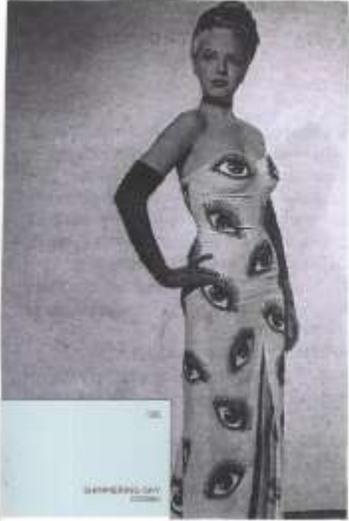
For the frame design for this project, given to us by the director, we followed a more absurdist/unusual element to the costumes

It was also noted that the director did not want a defined time for the looks .

How I Designed/ researched for this was;

1. Have a guideline period of 1930-1970 – This was to help me develop design silhouettes for each character but not have them tied down to that definite time.
2. I believe it was important to incorporate each character's items that define them as part of their clothing.
3. Dual colours were mentioned for the main colours

Initial mood board and research



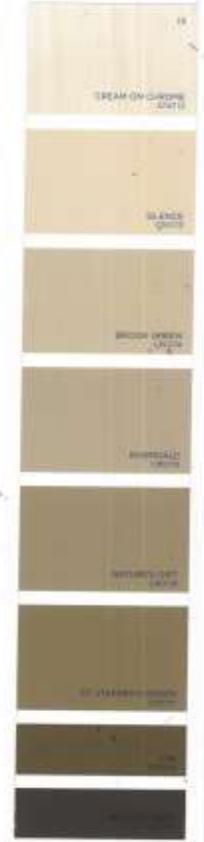
# Postcards from Morocco

## Character Concepts...

The vibe I got for the colour palette for this space is very natural blues, purples, pinks etc - potential adding pops of black to emphasise important elements of the costumes that getting the characters.



For the base stage of the outfits, we initially thought 1940s, but decided to lean more towards 1930s with a heavy influence of Salvador Dali.



"Christ in Limbo (1550)"

Notable Surrealist poets include André Breton, Paul Eluard, Louis Aragon, Marie Perle, Michel Leiris, Antonin Artaud, Henri Chouk, and Robert Desnos. The works through the poets were the seeds in the soil for the construction of the unconscious.



Portrait of Henri Breton (1931) by Salvador Dali. Dali is in Breton's costume. In addition to Surrealist poetry, a number of journals were published between 1933 and 1935 as well.

Surrealism Art



"The Great Masturbator" (1905)

Surrealism is not just a style, it's a way of thinking.



David Laing "Obscure plant"

It was not until the 1930s that the relative stability that it provided was as a dominating and destructive force in society.



Surrealism can be thought-provoking and sometimes disturbing as it reflects people and their society.

Character research, concepts, and final designs

Lady with the cake box

Main sketchbook pages



「Lady With the Cakebox」

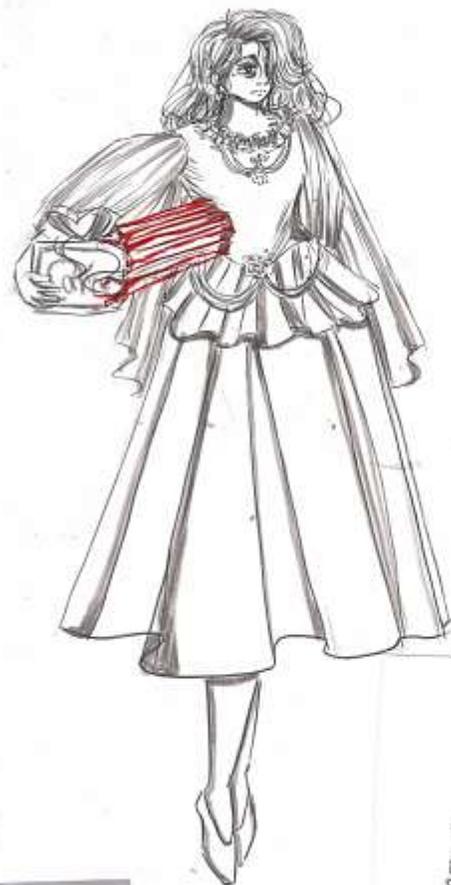


「When reading the script for this opera, I really imagine "the lady with the cakebox" as an uninvited, horror-inspired wedding!!!」





Transitioning into a different concept,  
It could convey her character  
nicely having her cake box and  
a bit of her clothing look like a  
cake slice, emphasizing that  
they are part of each other (heavily  
implied her husband is there)



## Main research inspiration



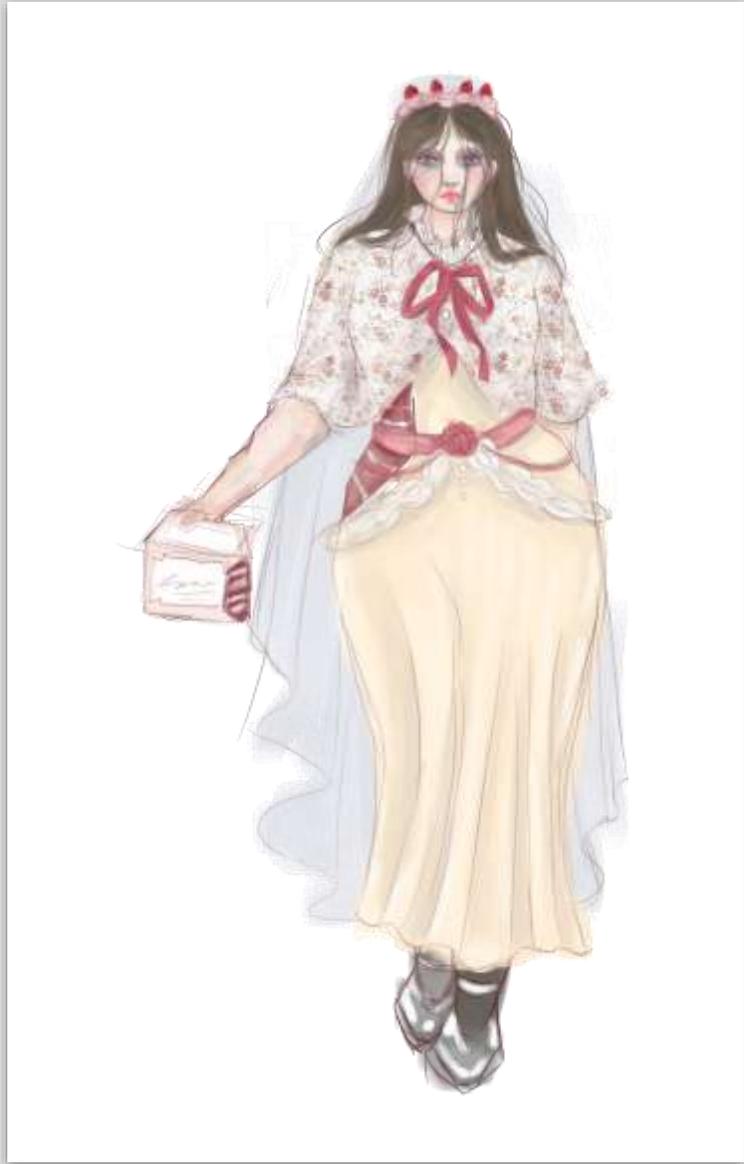
1936 sheer white dresses



an Crawford in "Letty Lynton," 1932. The party dress that inspired wedding gowns



Cake pipping décor



Man with the shoe sample

# Main sketchbook pages



I wondered if I should layer heavy similar to the old luggage "guy" but I believe it takes away from his character



gray socks will look great to emphasize his shoes!!



1920s Clark Gable in a Manrique Suit

Strips will keep the rest of his outfit interesting without overpowering the socks + shoes.

The idea of puff pants was a bit with the director  
 But I would imagine he would be made from cloth and no leather (too warm on stage)



1927 Trousers in cloth or leather



Man with shoe samples



1925 Single and Double-Breasted Suits



1925 Fashion Men's Shoes

important to show shoes



FORMAL EVENING WEAR - Dress shoes

important  
 It's important to show off his shoes or socks, so I believe having short trousers will emphasize this

# Main research inspiration



**QUALITY PUTTEES**

**\$129**      **\$219**

—Khaki color heavy, double canvas Puttees; rubber interlining—Two strong steel stays.  
Men's Sizes: 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-inch calf. State calf measure. Shipping weight, 14 ounces. 25 D 9843—Pair. \$1.29

—Heavy Brown Split Cowhide Puttees —Sturdy Straps —Abt. 11½ in. High  
Men's Sizes: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-inch calf. State calf measure. Shipg. wt., 2 lbs. 2 oz. 25 D 9844—Pr. \$2.19

**\$219**      **\$359**

—Smooth Black Split Cowhide Puttees —Strap and Spring Fastener —Abt. 11½ in. High  
Men's Sizes: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-inch calf. State measure. Shipg. wt., 2 lbs. 2 oz. 25 D 9845—Pr. \$2.19

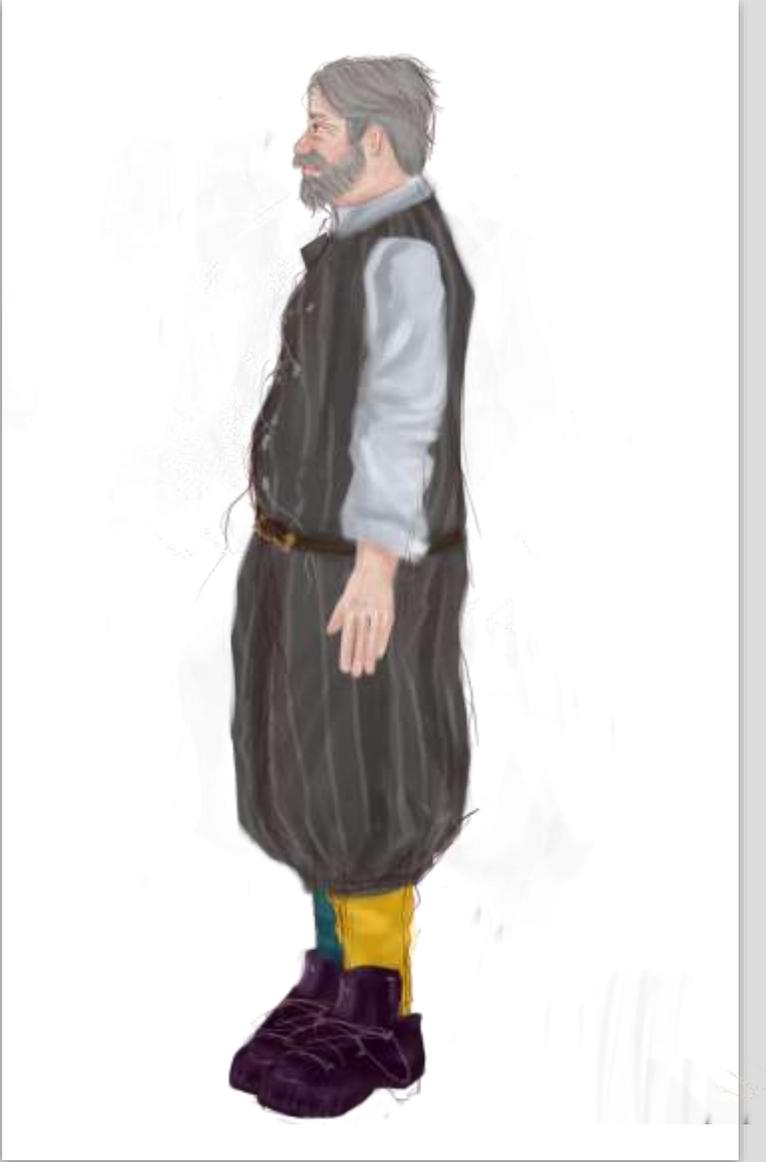
—Smooth Grain Cowhide —Strong Strap Buckle —Spring Style Front —Abt. 11½ inches High  
Men's Sizes: 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-in. calf. State measure. Shipg. wt., 2 lbs. 2 oz. 25 D 9846—Brown 25 D 9847—Black Pair . . . . . \$3.59

**HOW TO ORDER PUTTEES:** Measure around largest part, calf of leg, over laces with tape line. Your measurement is your size. If the measure shows between the inch marks, order next larger size. Not to be worn with Oxfords. No half sizes.

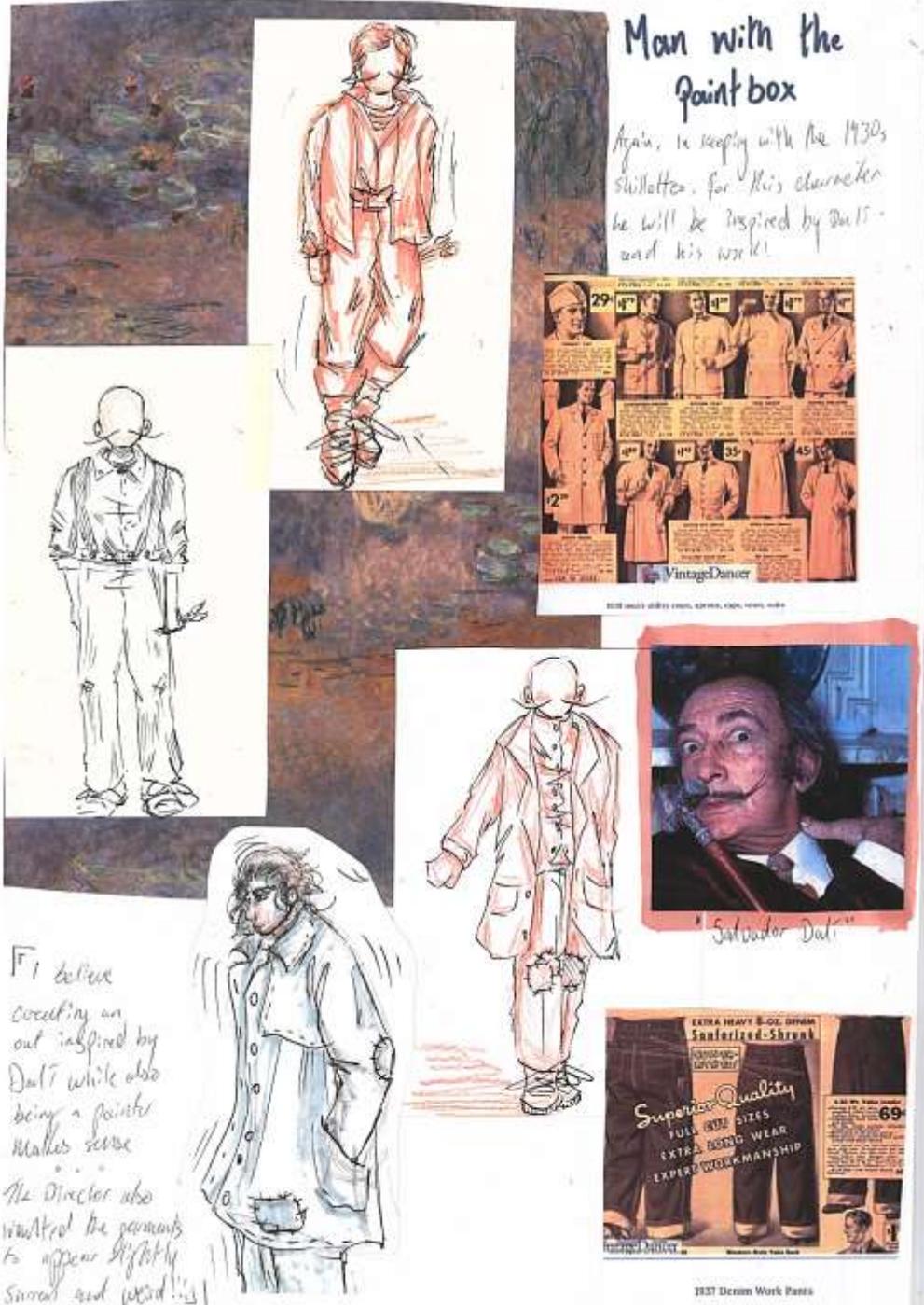
1939 puttees and breeches for work or uniform



Clark gable



Man with the paintbox

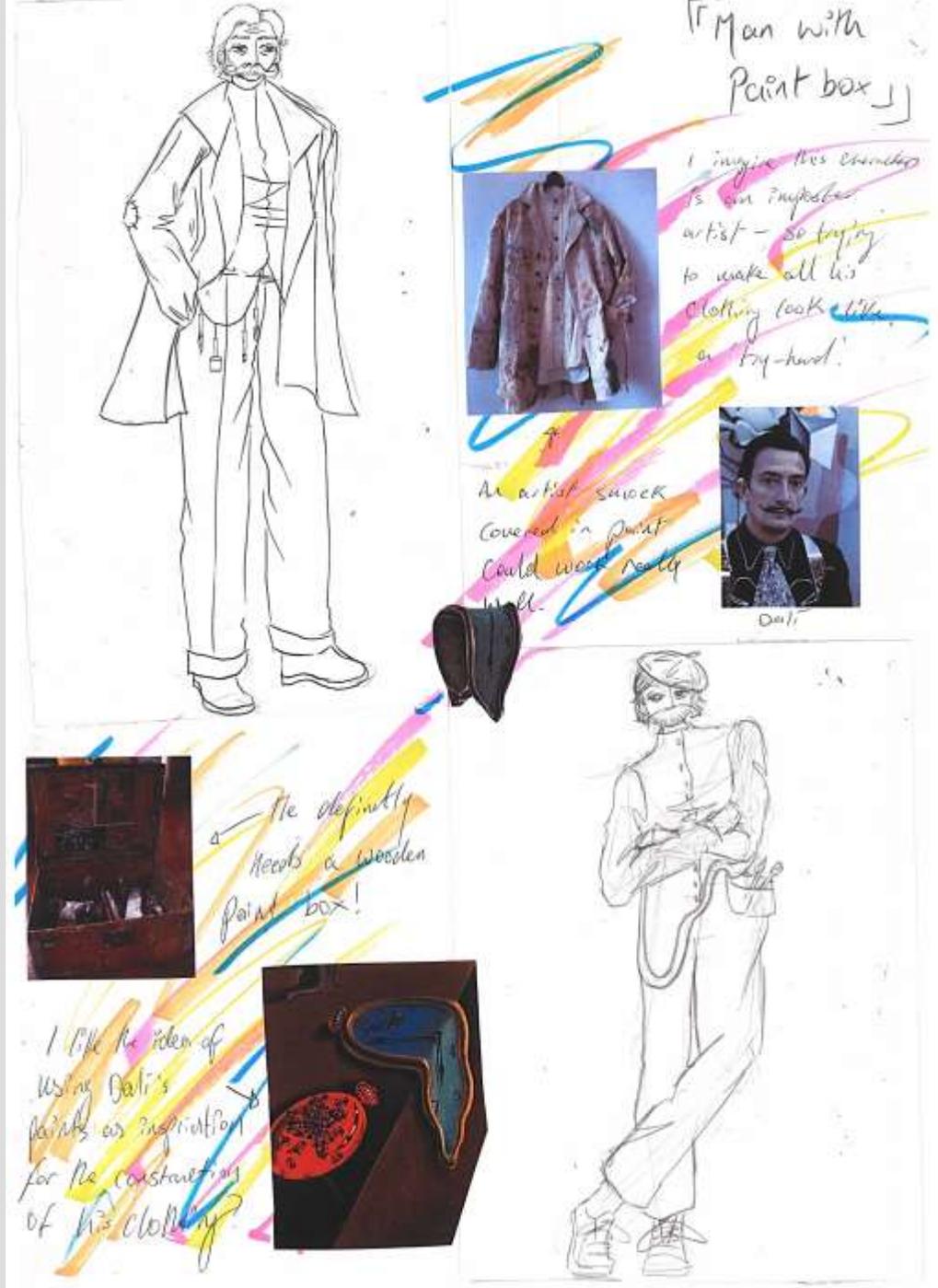


Man with the Paint box  
 Again, in keeping with the 1930s still better, for this character he will be inspired by Dalí and his work!

Salvador Dalí

I believe creating an outfit inspired by Dalí while also being a painter makes sense. The Director also wanted the garments to appear slightly surreal and weird!!!

Main sketchbook pages



Man with Paint box

I imagine this character is an important artist - so trying to make all his clothing look like a 'try-hard'!

An artist's smock covered in paint could wear really well.

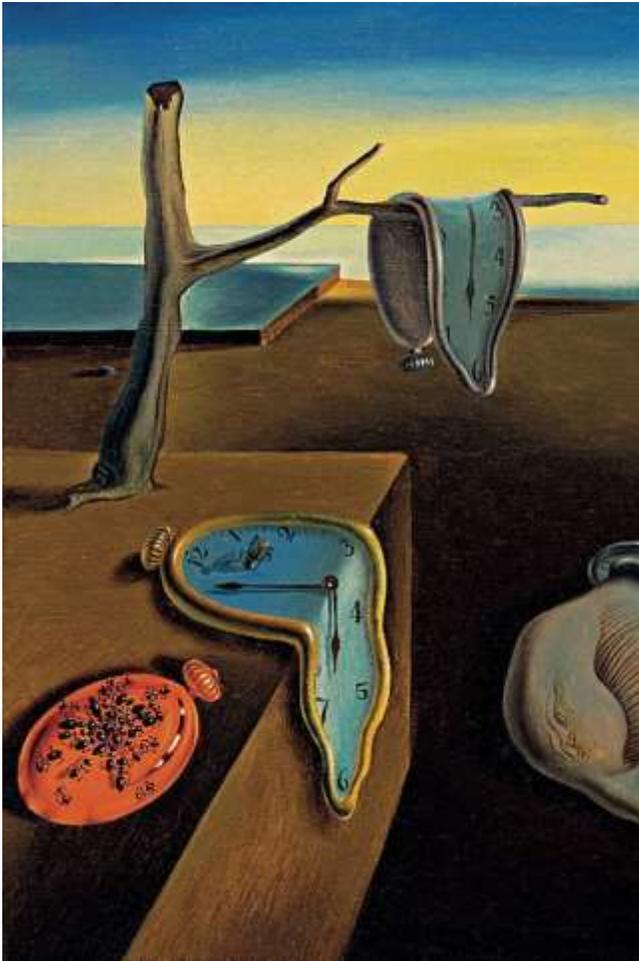
He definitely needs a wooden paint box!

I like the idea of using Dalí's paintings as inspiration for the construction of his clothing.

Dalí

1937 Decon Work Pants

## Main research inspiration



*The Persistence of Memory*  
Salvador Dalí



1937 Denim Work Pants



Artist smock



Ensemble

## Main research inspiration



Farmers wearing denim pants and overalls



1938 steel workers wearing cotton pants and shirts



1937 men's corduroy work pants.

Main sketchbook pages



Ensemble

↳ For the ensemble, it's important that they are in some sort of uniform style but not overflowing!

↳ Discussions with the Director lead to the ensemble looking like workers or train station staff

Making very natural colours for Ann will be key to not overpower the main characters.



↳ I like the idea of the clothing looking like paper packaging for the train station



↳ Adding denim could add that 'worker' vibe.



1937 types of denim fabrics for overalls, coveralls and shirts

1938 men workers wearing denim pants and shirts



Lady with the hat box



Main sketchbook pages



## Main research inspiration



1939 spring hats



1930s Day Dresses (Spring, 1937)



"My Fair Lady" 1964



Puppet master

Main sketchbook pages

Man with  
cornet box  
Puppet  
Master



Suit  
Wolkhoff



Do we get the other two actors/singers to puppeteer as well??



Some fun design concepts (had a lot of fun with this one)



1930's fancy-dress outfits

## Main research inspiration



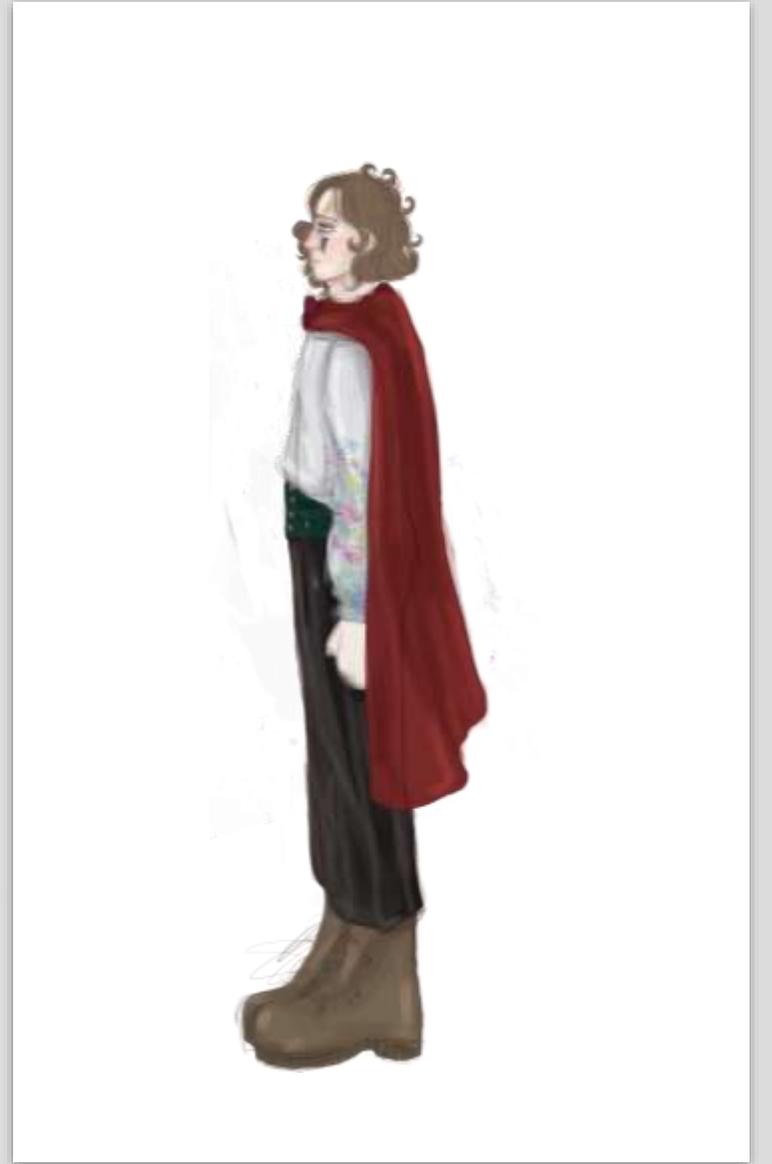
Mens Formal Wear- Tuxedo and Dinner Jacket



The magician 1958



Fancy dress 1930



Man with old luggage

# Main sketchbook pages

Old man with luggage



Henry Hudson and Woodland Park in the Sun Out a High Rise

When talking with the director, she really liked the idea of layer clothing (as he doesn't own his luggage, has to carry/wear all his clothing)



think of different types of layered clothing ideas.



It could look really nice to print or embroider country stamps onto his pants - conveying he travels alot



When finalising my designs, I still kept in mind that these actors need to sing and move on stage, so it will be warm!!  
That's why I kept with the shirts instead of the coats as I feel it would ~~be~~ restrict movement and would be too warm.



## Main research inspiration



Travel stamps



1933 brown sport coat over black and white check pants



1935 College styles with Hollywood waistband





1950s Vogue style dress

I move slightly towards the 1950's for this amazing skirt while still keeping with the 1930s/40s style.



I believe this could work as a final design as it holds all the important elements of her character and all the directors request.

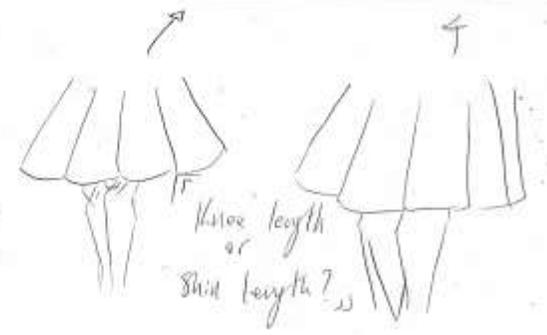
# Main sketchbook pages



Thin light sleeves (pleated) would look really nice with the heavy fabric of the bodice and skirt.



When it comes to deciding how to incorporate the eye motifs, subtle, like having one on the belt would be nice for film but not for theatre. I feel that having them larger and more of them would suit the theatre setting more.





Dress update



## Main research inspiration



"Mascara" Dress by Orry-Kelly, from The Dolly Sisters (1945)



Strangers on a train , 1950

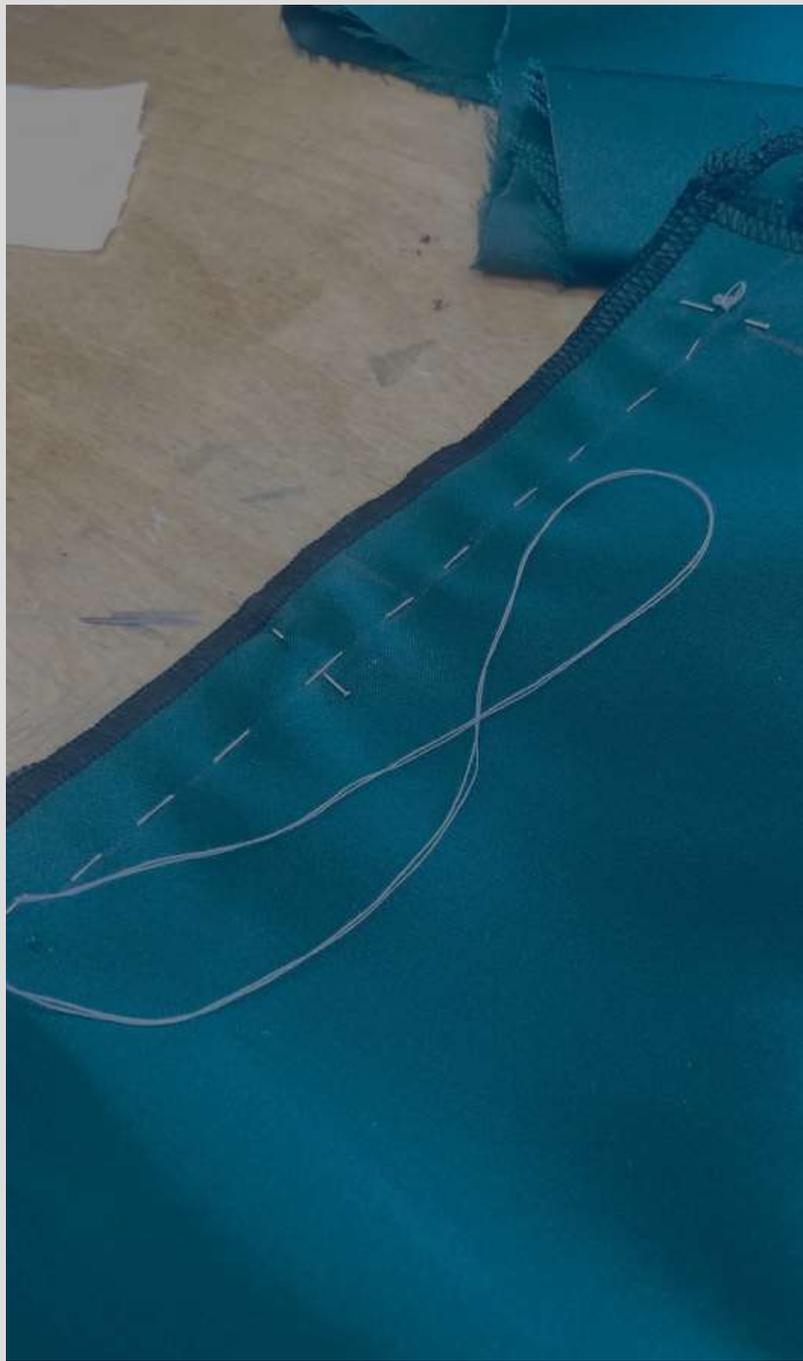


1950s fashion

The making of the garment





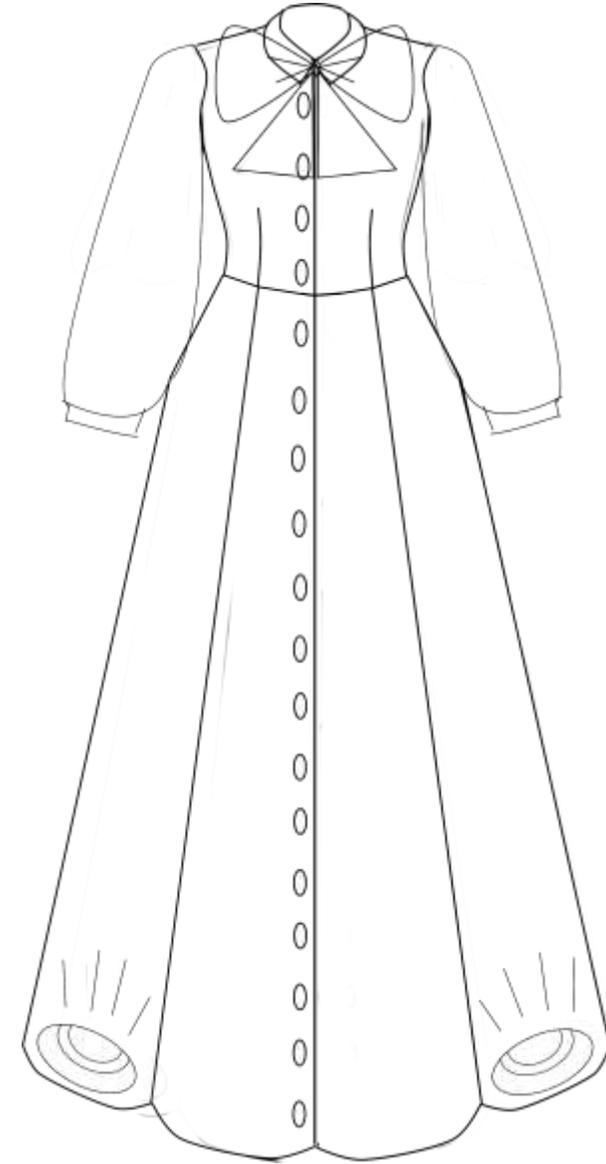




Final costume design for “ Lady with the hand mirror”



Working drawing









## What I Achieved :

- An understanding of the Opera
- Interacted with the director and followed what was asked of us design-wise.
- Being able to confidently change ideas when asked or directed.
- An understanding of the outcome of the garment
- Provided numerous designs and concepts
- Provided a detailed toile
- Tried my best when constructing my garment

## Improvements :

- Being careful with time management
- Ask for more help
- Improvement in my sewing skills
- Ask more garment construction-based questions
- To think more carefully before agreeing on projects or concepts.

End

Act 1	Abigail LaDuke Lady with a handmirror	Anastasia Sereda Lady with a cakebox	Emma Power Lady with a hatbox	Seán Tester Man with Old Luggage	Rory Lynch Man with paint box	David Kennedy Shoe Salesman	Boyu Liu Man with a cornet case
Track 1		x	x	x	x	x	x
Track 2							
Track 3	x					x	x
Track 4	x	x	x	x		x	x
Track 5				x		x	
Track 6	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Track 7	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Track 8	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Track 9				x			x
Track 10			x	x	x		x
Track 11			x		x		x
Track 12	x	x	x				x

Act 2	Abigail LaDuke Lady with a handmirror	Anastasia Sereda Lady with a cakebox	Emma Power Lady with a hatbox	Seán Tester Man with Old Luggage	Rory Lynch Man with paint box	David Kennedy Shoe Salesman	Boyu Liu Man with a cornet case
Track 1							
Track 2	x	x	x	x		x	
Track 3	x	x	x				
Track 4	x	x	x				
Track 5	x				x	x	
Track 6	x	x		x	x	x	
Track 7				x		x	x
Track 8	x	x	x	x	x	xx	
Track 9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Track 10	x		x		x	x	x
Track 11	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Track 12							