

## “If It Isn’t Baroque, Don’t Fix It”

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Measurements: Bust 34”, Waist 26”, Hip 36”

### Design Statement:

The ensemble was based on the contrast of Chinese adoption of exotic French Baroque influence and at the same time, France’s adoption of China’s influence in the visual and decorative arts during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Both cultures exchanged and adopted ideas simultaneously because of the vast influence of the trade route of the “Silk Road” between Asia and Europe. This cultural exchange and diffusion of change directly influenced traditional French Baroque and Asian architecture, interiors, and decorative arts.

The designers’ purpose was to create an ensemble reflecting this influence using a mixture of traditional interior design and fashion textiles. This purpose also includes incorporating old world textile and surface techniques while making the garment relevant and representative visually of high fashion. The ensemble marries the Asian and French Baroque interior and cultural influences. The intent is a whimsical ladylike pristine aesthetic mixed with a touch of Asian courtesan and a sprinkling of Christian Dior.

This ensemble was created with tea dyed burlap, a hand painted and stenciled textile print, and hand needle felting for the butterfly embellishment. Old world methods of textile development in tea dyeing, felting, and stenciling were used to represent the traditional ways of working in contrast with the change of a younger more whimsical approach to design. Tea dyeing gives an antique/old world effect to a textile and felting is one of the earliest forms of textile development. The use of stencils dates back over 37 thousand years, as evident in Neanderthal cave art found in Spain. (“On Design,”2015).

The felting technique is a deviation from the traditional method of needle punching the wool roving flat into a base textile. The roving was used in a painterly fashion to create color, texture, and movement by sculpting the roving and then slightly punching it down on the edges to not distort the movement of the wool.

The tailored jacket corresponds with the traditional method of bespoke tailoring mixed with whimsical fabric choices and development of pockets that travel around the sides and back of the jacket. The influence of French Baroque butterflies is also reflected in the jacket shape in silhouette, style lines, and collar.

The fabrics of this ensemble are a mixture of fashion fabrics and interior fabrics. Burlap represents the skirt and halter. Burlap is a sustainable natural product. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most important natural fiber in the world. The growing process is predominately manual and requires

very little help to grow. (“Burlap, the Green Choice,” 2010) Burlap is 100% biodegradable. The underskirt contains cotton batting used traditionally for quilting. The jackets textiles are vintage ivory wool blend tweed mixed with a modern Asian inspired satin brocade. Wool is also biodegradable and sustainable and represented in the jacket and wool roving for the surface design technique.

Burlap, the Green Choice. (2010).Retrieved from <http://www.luftandco.com/burlap-green-eco-choice>

On Design: The History of Stenciling.(February 2, 2015).Retrieved from <http://www.journalalabamachanin.com/2015/02/the-history-of-stenciling>

