







V E N I C E P R E S E R V E D .

It is the year 3000.

Venice is sinking.

The senate sit idly by, safe from the advancing
floodwater in their palaces and seraglios.

The people need a saviour.

The people need rebellion.





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SYNOPSIS

First staged in 1682, Thomas Otway's Restoration tragedy 'Venice Preserved' draws on themes of sexual perversion and political corruption.

From its creation, Venice Preserved held the London stage until the mid-nineteenth century with the key roles of Jaffeir, Belvidera and Pierre providing generations of actors and actresses with star vehicles Including most famously Elizabeth Barry, who debuted the role of Belvidera in 1682 when the play was first performed, and multiple times after, each time, 'forcing Tears from the eyes of her Auditory' with the tragic fate of Otways ill-fated heroine.

Jaffeir, a noble but impoverished Venetian, has secretly married Belvidera, the daughter of a proud senator named Priuli, who, upon hearing of her disobedience in marrying a man of her choosing, disowns his daughter Belvidera, leaving the young lovers to live in poverty.

Jaffeir's friend Pierre, a foreign soldier, stokes Jaffeir's resentment and entices him into a plot against the Senate of Venice. Pierre's own reasons for plotting against the Senate revolve around another senator (the corrupt, foolish Antonio) paying for relations with Pierre's mistress, Aquilina. Despite Pierre's complaints, the Senate does nothing about it, explaining that Antonio has senatorial privilege.

The audience are introduced to the senator Antonio in a bizarre scene in which during a visit to the prostitute Aquilina, he begs to be verbally abused and whipped, kicked and scolded 'like a dog' for his own sexual pleasure. Aquilina the courtesan, in love with Pierre, despises Antonio yet finds it difficult to refuse the lavish sums of money he offers in exchange for these sessions of degradation.

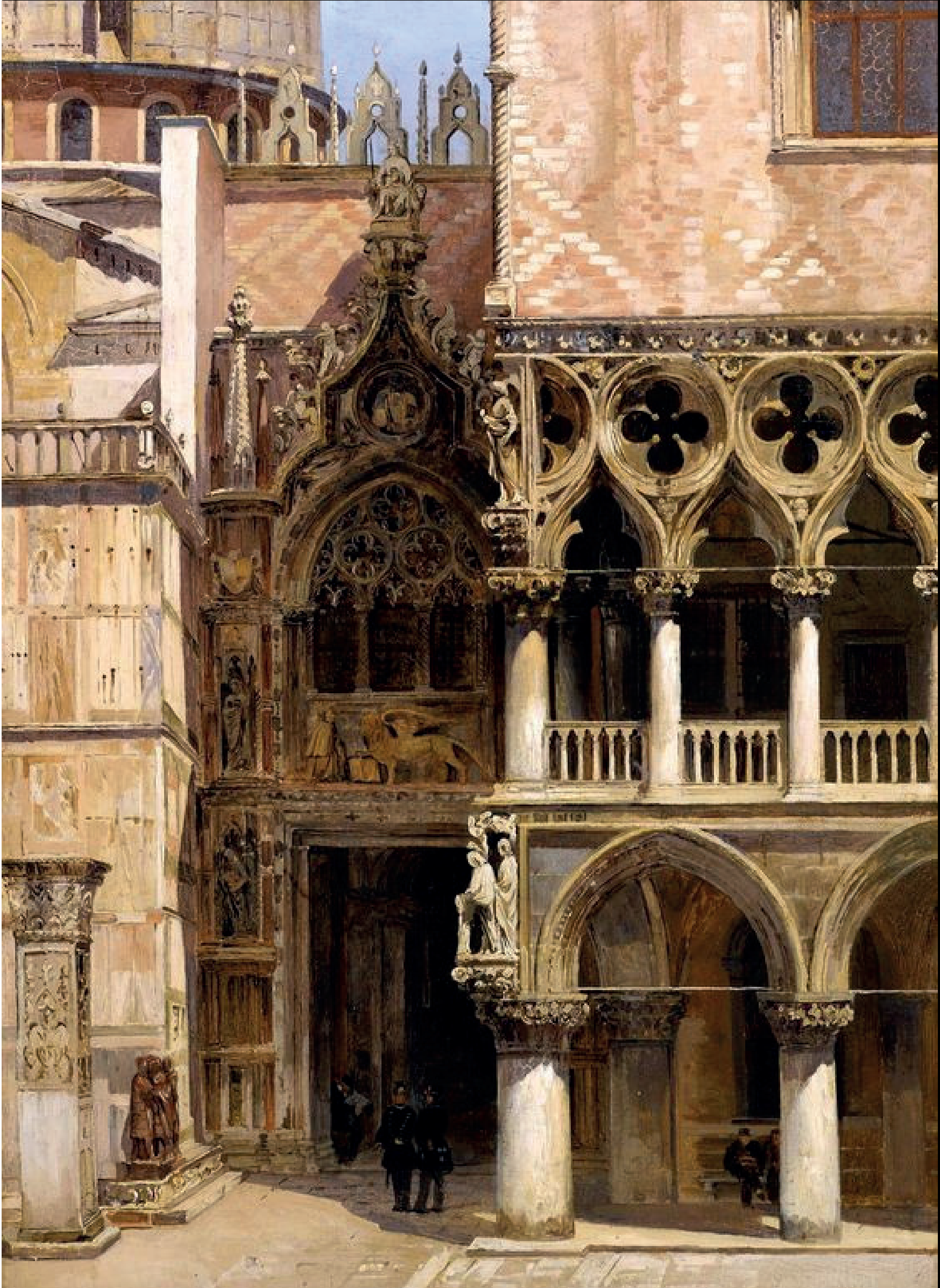
Pierre introduces Jaffeir to the conspirators, led by bloodthirsty Renault. To get their trust, Jaffeir must put Belvidera in Renault's care as a hostage. That night, Renault attempts to rape Belvidera, but she escapes to Jaffeir. Jaffeir then tells Belvidera about the plot against the Senate. She devises a plan of her own: Jaffeir will reveal the conspiracy to the Senate and claim the lives of the conspirators as his reward. (Jaffeir would then choose to pardon some or all of the conspirators, notably his friend Pierre.)

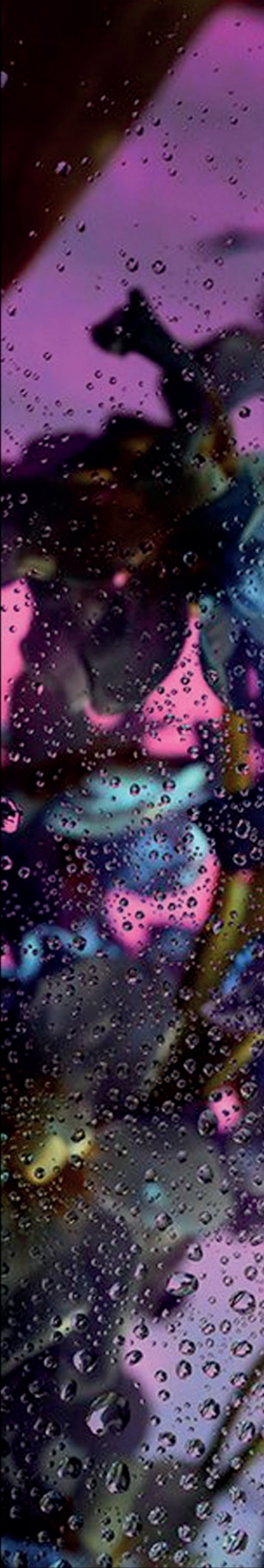
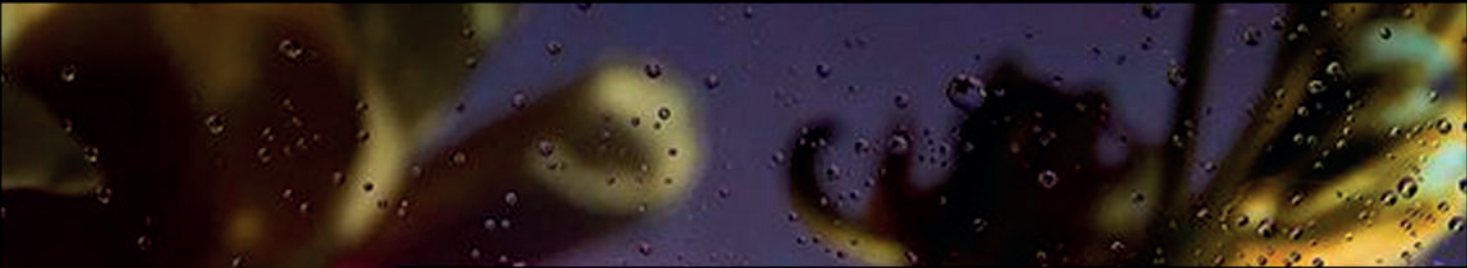
Jaffeir follows Belvidera's plan, but the Senate breaks its word and condemns all of the conspirators to death. In remorse for betraying Pierre and losing his honor, Jaffeir threatens to kill Belvidera, unless she can obtain a pardon for the conspirators. She does so, but the pardon arrives too late. Jaffeir visits Pierre before his execution. Pierre is crestfallen because he is sentenced to die a dishonourable death by hanging, not the death of a soldier. He forgives Jaffeir and whispers to him (unheard by the audience) to kill him honourably before he is executed. Just as Pierre is about to be hanged, Jaffeir rushes up to the gallows and stabs him; as a form of atonement, he then commits suicide to join Pierre in death. Upon hearing of her husbands death, Belvidera goes insane and is led away 'raving with grief' to die a tragic death offstage.

'BURN, BURN TO NOTHING. BUT LET VENICE BURN HOTTER THAN ALL THE REST.'



CONCEPT





The concept of my production is to retell Thomas Otway's 1682 Restoration tragedy 'Venice Preserved' through an anachronistic, absurd lens.

Inspired by the exuberant, spectacular nature of Restoration theatre, the aesthetics of my costume design will embrace the idea of 'everything, everywhere, all at once' with maximalist use of patterns, bold colours and exaggerated silhouettes. The absurdist nature of my production is inspired by the close links between tragedy and theatre of the absurd, with the visual and conceptual 'absurdity' within of my production highlighting the futile and tragic themes within Otway's script.

I intend to demonstrate this 'absurd' influence through use of a minimalist, non-naturalistic stage setting creating visual contrast to characters in bizarre, maximalist, anachronistic costumes that are a mix of 17th and 18th century fashions, 1980s fabrics and cyberpunk inspired accessories and materials. My hope for this anachronistic approach, inspired by the superbly stylised 'anti-historical' designs of hauteouturier Christian LaCroix, is to modernise this 3 century old play, as costumes with recognisably contemporary influences allow Otway's poignant messages of love, betrayal and corrupt governments to be communicated to a modern audience in an accessible way. Unrestricted by tradition and historical fidelity, my production will instead focus on creating costumes that tell stories using culturally understood symbolism and visual language.

I will keep Otway's script as written, however my setting, though inspired by the city of Venice, is left deliberately untethered to a specific time period, to allow for greater freedom with anachronism.

The costumes of my concept draw inspiration primarily from Spanish culture and wider European dress of the 17th-19th centuries, the art of flamenco dance and the editorial looks and shows of haute couturier Christian LaCroix.







RESEARCH.

SET RESEARCH



Inspired by the nature of Venice as a city built on a lagoon, the concept for my stage set contrasts the maximalist of my costume concept with a stripped back minimal stage covered in a shallow layer of floodwater, populated solely by neon poles rising from the surface of the water, in reference to the gondola poles of Venetian docks. This non naturalist approach to set was inspired by research into absurdist theatre, which uses bizarre, non-naturalistic stage sets to further distance characters and narratives from supposed reality.

My characters will wade through this onstage floodwater for the duration of the play, emphasising their doomed fates with costumes that float, swill and drag in the flood, as their city sinks further and further into corruption and disorder.

[minimalist set of shallow pool of water over whole stage with rippling neon lights under the surface and coming out as upright poles (referencing gondola poles) – trailing drapes of fabric in lurid colours to represent walls and rooms water runs continuously down these draperies to give sodden, insalubrious, damp atmosphere – constant sound of running water symbolises constant sense of sinking]



‘ A MATTER OF SCREENS AND FLOATS AND WINGS

‘ CURSE THY DULL STARS, AND THE WORSE FATE OF VENICE, WHERE BROTHERS FRIENDS, AND FATHERS, ALL ARE FALSE; WHERE THERE'S NO TRUSTS, NO TRUTH; WHERE INNOCENCE STOOPS UNDER VILE OPPRESSION ‘

‘ A CITY PLAUGED BY INSALUBRIOUS DAMPNES ‘





17TH CENTURY VENICE



During the 16th Century, Venice was predominantly known for its prosperity through mercantilism which was powered by the ruling class. Venice was a market place that was juxtaposed by prostitution and nunneries

Other European nations were growing more commercially confident, and maritime trade (as well as international piracy) in the Mediterranean basin flourished. The influx of immigrants into the city of Venice throughout the 16th century helped to reinforce an already well-established reputation for cosmopolitanism.

Francesco Sansovino writes about the 'Florentine, Genovese, Milanese, Spanish, Turkish, and other merchants from different nations of the world', who frequented the heart of Venice, St Mark's Square, however members of the venetian aristocracy retained a patrician aversion to people from outside the city contaminating their pure lineage, a prejudice evident in Priuli's outrage at Belvidera's secret marriage to the lower class Jaffeir.

' IN THIS CITY AN INFINITE NUMBER OF MEN FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD, WITH DIVERSE CLOTHING, WHO COME FOR TRADE; AND TRULY IT IS A MARVELLOUS THING TO SEE SUCH A VARIETY OF PERSONS, DRESSED IN DIVERSE HABITS .'



THE BEDMAR PLOT



During my research into 17th century Venice, I discovered The Bedmar Plot of 1618. The Bedmar plot was a political coup in which the Spanish ambassador to Venice, Alfonso de la Cueva, 1st Marquis of Bedmar, was unsuccessful in his plans to destabilize 'The Most Serene Republic of Venice' through planned usurpation and eventual assassination of Venice's senate. Cueva was executed publicly and his body displayed outside the Doge's Palace in Plaza San Marco as a warning to other rebels.

I used The Bedmar Plot as inspiration for my interpretation of the conspirators, imbuing their costumes with Iberian influences to contextualise the alienation and hostility with which the Senate treats them, as distrusted foreign parties in Venice, branded as potential usurpers simply because of their nationality.

Historians have argued that Otway in fact used the Bedmar plot as inspiration for the storyline of the conspirators plot in Venice Preserved, the plays fictional plot mirrors many details of the historical coup, including the planned overthrowing of a corrupt senate, foreign parties involved in rebellion and a tragic fate for those involved in the rebellion.

The most direct inspiration is seen in Otway's character Priuli, the cruel, aristocratic senator and Belvidera's father in Venice Preserved. The doge at the time of the Bedmar Plot was Antonio Priuli, a historical figure bearing two of the names used within Venice Preserved, Priuli's election began a brutal process of ferreting out individuals suspected of plotting against Venice. Hundreds were arrested, with or without cause, with attention specially focused on foreign soldiers and sailors. I therefore used this to further inform the Spanish influences within my concept as I was able to draw from an event grounded in reality that Otway himself was also evidently inspired by during his own creation of Venice Preserved.





L A C R O I X

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One of the strongest influences from my research was French haute couturier Christina LaCroix. Born in 1951 in the provincial French town of Arles, an area heavily influenced by the neighbouring Spanish cultures, LaCroix's designs combine luxury and insouciance, characterized by a strong sense of colour, rich fabrics and mixed patterns.

LaCroix famously drew heavy inspiration from historical dress, traditional costume and folklore, his opulent, fantasy creations show clear influences from the warm, earthy colours of the Mediterranean with fringe, bead, and braid embellishments identical to those on historical and military dress.

I was drawn to LaCroix's work because of his masterful use of unconventional colour combinations, his work is easily recognisable through his use of acidic greens and yellows contrasted with warm pinks and deep crimsons, and his consistent use of maximalist floral prints adds a whimsical touch to his sweepingly elegant creations.

LaCroix's work is anachronistic in essence. Silhouettes lifted from fashion history are warped and exaggerated into billowing masses of satin, tulle and lace. Bell shaped skirts in deep folds and patterned bodices crystallised with diamantes are staples of LaCroix's work, taking feminine elegance and exaggerating it to a fantastical degree. LaCroix simultaneously pays homage to the historical gowns that inspired him since childhood while creating a whimsical, breath-taking world of flamboyant matadors and silk clad femme fatales that is entirely his own.

" WHEN FASHION IS SIMPLICITY, CHRISTIAN LACROIX CHOOSES EXUBERANCE ; WHEN BLACK BECOMES THE NORM, HE PREFERS BLOOD RED, FUCHSIA PINK OR BRIGHT YELLOW . "

C Y B E R

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Cyber aestheticism is a visual movement that draws from 21st century technological advancements and inventions. Its focus is on the technology in humanities future, the machines that will become part of our everyday lives and wardrobes. Cyber aestheticism as a movement also recognises the links between past and future and how inventions from history inevitably inform the machinery of tomorrow.

Within this project I am using the self-iterative nature of technology to emphasise the pertinent and lasting nature of the conflict between power and duty that Otway presents with Venice Preserved. Showing that these cautionary moral messages remain as relevant to a modern audience as when they were written.

Taking an anachronistic approach to costuming this production, I decided to draw inspiration from cyber accessories and futuristic takes on historical accessories, adding them to historically based costumes to create a unique visual language. With the conspirators in Otway's play representing liberation and progressive action, I used cyber inspired accessories and metallic materials to indicate their rebel status as the new nation, rejecting the Senates archaic, traditionalist rule.



THE IBERIAN INFLUENCE

During my research I discovered The Bedmar Plot of 1618. The Bedmar Plot was a political coup in which the spanish ambassador to Venice, Alfonso de la Cueva, 1st marquis of Bedmar, plotted to destabilize 'the most serene republic' of Venice through planned usurpation and eventual assassination of Venice's senate.

I used The Bedmar Plot as inspiration for my interpretation of the conspirators, imbuing their costumes with influences from Spanish culture. This gave meaning to the alienation and hostility with which the Senate treats them throughout the play, as distrusted foreign parties in Venice, branded as potential usurpers simply because of their nationality.

Using mainly Christian LaCroix's fascination with the franco-spanish influences of his hometown Arles for inspiration, I researched into the practice and costumes of flamenco dance to inspire the forms, fabrics and patterns of my costumes:

The tradition of flamenco dance originated in Andalusia, when nomadic peoples from India and Africa influenced the dress and music styles of the region with their own varied cultures- Flamenco dance is characterised by rapid stamping footwork, hand movements closely inspired by Indian classical dance and powerful songs sung alongside drumming or guitar that tell intense stories of passion and betrayal. The colourful folk dress that became the uniform of Flamenco is characterised by skirts that flare at the hips into flurries of frills, polka dot and paisley patterns, fringing, and head coverings. Originally worn by the lower classes for social gatherings like markets and dances, this style of dress was eventually accepted as the cultural dress of Spain and exists in many iterations today.



HISTORICAL RESEARCH

In order to form a reliable frame of reference for my 17th century inspired costumes, I undertook research into 17th century dress, focusing mainly on western European dress trends, particularly from the Italian, French and English courts of the time. To consider mid seventeenth century fashion, one must take into account the political state of Europe at the time, particularly the Restoration happening in Britain. The Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in the kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland took place in 1660 when King Charles II returned from exile in continental Europe, following the death of Oliver Cromwell, bringing to an end over two decades of puritan rule and civil war.



A return to monarchic rule meant a return to more relaxed, romantic forms of dress. With the young, rakish Charles II on the English throne, fashion was excessive and luxurious, with billowing skirts and sleeves in rich shades of cobalt, gold and ivory. During this time, the Cavalier style for men emerged. Much less restrained than Renaissance fashions, Cavalier fashion copied women's styles of the earlier period with high waists, wide lace collars, and lace cuffs. This style also featured knee-high boots, often turned down with lace, wide-brimmed hats with feathers, long, loose hair, pointed beards and moustaches, and capes thrown over one shoulder. Cavalier fashion signified a royalist allegiance within the wearer, as its effeminate and excessive nature completely contrasted the severe, sombre styles of the opposing political party, the puritanical, anti-monarchy 'roundheads'.

1620s to 1640s: a departure from the rigid structure of the Elizabethan era into softer, more rounded, romantic forms – waistlines rise and reach to just below the bust in 1640. The silhouette, which was essentially close to the body with tight sleeves and a low, pointed waist to around 1615, gradually softened and broadened. Sleeves became very full, and in the 1620s and 1630s were often panned or slashed to show the voluminous sleeves of the shirt or chemise beneath, or gathered into multiple 'puffs' with rosettes to form hugely popular 'Virago' sleeves.



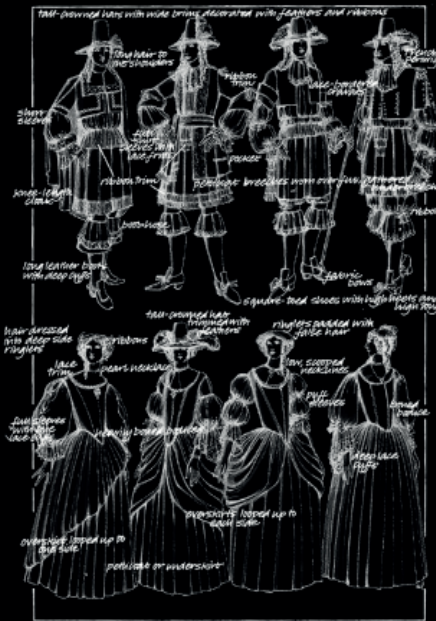
The 1982 arthouse film 'The Draughtsman's Contract' was a valuable point of reference for accurate period silhouettes and wigs from the latter decades of the 17th century

1660s-1690s - waistlines lower to natural waist - headdresses made of lace and ribbon over a wire frame called 'fontages' are worn atop the head, giving the dress of this period a tall, slim silhouette as skirts slim to narrower, 'column-like' silhouettes. Men's fashions became large and voluminous, with full skirted frock coats and petticoat breeches that hung loose about the legs giving the fashionable gent a bottom heavy 'frothy' silhouette, complete with extravagant lace cravats and full bottomed wigs of long, bouncy ringlets that, later in the century formed two fashionable peaks of hair atop the head.

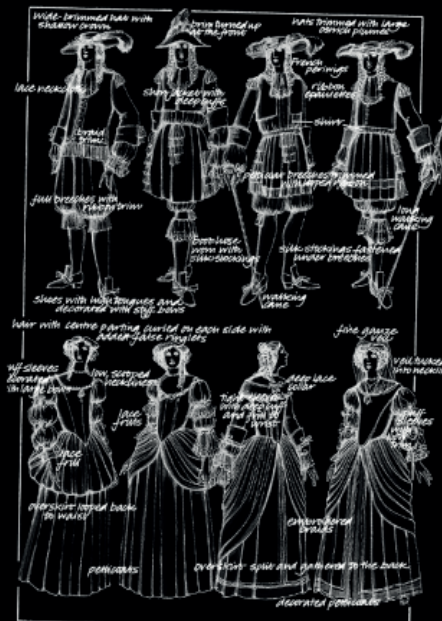


Fashion in the 17th century went from the structured, unnatural Elizabethan silhouettes, to the sloping, romantic draperies of the 1630s-1650s, then gradually transitioning to the tall, slimmer silhouettes of the late century as structural undergarments and fully boned bodices began to come back into favour. Men's fashion began the decade as highly structured and voluptuous, transitioned to the foppish, effeminate cavalier style with lace cannons and Rhinegraves breeches, then ending the century in more formal manner with the introduction of the three piece suit and tighter breeches

CHARLES II - 1660-85



CHARLES II - 1660-85 (continued)



During the period 1600-1650, Western European clothing was characterized by the disappearance of the ruff in favour of broad lace or linen collars. Waistlines rose through the period for both men and women. Other notable fashions included full, slashed sleeves and tall or broad hats with brims. For men, hose disappeared in favour of breeches. The general shift in fashions throughout the century was away from the stiff, unnatural silhouettes of the previous Elizabethan period, as structured undergarments fell out of favour and bodices began being made with less and less internal boning for a looser, more romantic look coined 'dishabille' as it mimicked a state of undress.

Men's doublets gradually flattened, losing the pigeon-breasted curve favoured in the 16th century. Breeches hems lowered and began to be decorated with lace and loops of ribbon. Influenced by Cavalier fashion, square toed heeled shoes of the previous century were exchanged for soft leather boots with wide turn-down cuffs, worn with fine lace 'boot hose' and spurs.

Skirts were very full- supported by hips pads and bum rolls, that added bulk to the hip and swell to the skirt. Skirts fell in heavy, irregular folds to the floor, sometimes slightly trained. During the 1670s/1680, overskirts were often split and held back in swags, revealing almost all of the underskirt, often made from a rich textured fabric strikingly different in colour to the overskirt. Overskirts now had substantial trains that were sometimes held up with loops and buttons.

Class and political alliances were marked out not by the silhouette of dress, which remained pretty constant for the majority of society, but was indicated instead by the choice of fabrics and trimmings - [concept idea] *Conspirators marked out by the use of brightly coloured fabrics and mix of patterns within their costumes, in contrast to minimalist, plain fabrics of the senate in mostly cold toned colours.*

17th century silhouette timeline :

- 1610s-1620s Conical and severe
- 1630s/40s/50s round
- 1660s (Restoration) romantic and 'dishabille'
- 1670s-1690s tall and thin





CHARACTER PROFILES.





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THE SECRET BRIDE

Belvidera's skirts and veil, trained in such a way to drag in the shallow layer of water covering the stage, serve as visual representation of how Belvidera's character is encumbered by her status as a woman within Otway's tragedy. Treated like a pawn by the men in her life, Belvidera struggles to stay afloat in a society that simultaneously lauds the importance of female subservience and devotion to husbands and fathers, yet gravely abuses the women who oblige these restrictive gender roles. Her luxurious layers of dress, leftovers from her previous life have now become a hindrance, creating sympathy for her status as a tragic victim as the audience sees her wading and struggling in vain against the water onstage, as something beautiful becomes cumbersome.

‘ NOW THEN, KILL ME,
WHILE THUS I CLING ABOUT THY CRUEL NECK,
AND KISS THY REVENGEFUL LIPS ‘





For the creation of Belvidera's character I was inspired by Russian empirical fashions, medieval dress and head coverings and, the idea of 'luxury' within fashion. Belvidera represents the high society of Venice, her costume is layered and billowing; luxurious, abundant and cumbersome. I wanted to represent Belvidera's tragic fate in the way her garments drag behind her in the water onstage, she is both resplendent and restricted in her gowns, being viewed as currency for bargaining by her husband Jaffier and a commodity to be abused by the nefarious Renault.

bow @ waist
pink

silver

cotton
puffs @ waist

(best) ✕
tinkles +
flowers
holding
shirt

silver?
- shimmer

silver

OR.
bold flc
shf pleats / m
satin
silver
silver &
indesenc
the star
cloud
prince

BELVIDERE.



light, light silver w/ lumps

* METALLIC
SILVERS
w/ pink + ochre lace
overlaid *

* + BOLD FLORAL

AQUILINA

THE COURTESAN

Aquilina is a Venetian courtesan, strong willed and fiery, as courtesan to Antonio and lover of Pierre, her main role within the play is that she opens her house to the conspirators for means of their meeting point, thus showing her support for the rebel's cause. Starkly aware of the unjust societal system within which herself and the rest of the conspirators are trapped, Aquilina exists within the play as a rare voice of reason and practicality, driven only by her own desires, thus removed from the conflict of loyalty the audience sees Jaffier experiencing. Aquilina's highest paying client is the lecherous Antonio, who frequently pays to be verbally and physically degraded for his own pleasure, much to both Aquilina and her secret lover, Pierre's great distaste.

Though repulsed by his demands, Aquilina repeatedly accepts Antonio's payment in exchange for her services, using her dislike for Antonio to fuel the phrases and stinging strikes of degradation she doles out to her all-too-eager victim. Aquilina's main priority is self-preservation; unlike Belvidera's self-sacrificing traditional femininity, Aquilina represents a stronger, more self-aware character within the narrative of Venice Preserved, she recognises the unjust nature of the society she inhabits, and strives to exploit this corrupt system in her favour.

Aquilina's proximity to the boastful Antonio allows her to glean valuable information about the state of the senate, which she relays to the conspirators and her secret lover Pierre later in the play. Ultimately, Aquilina represents a working class woman trapped in an unfair society, however, unlike Belvidera she also represents a willingness to defend herself in the face of adversity, in the hopes of a better future for herself and the lower classes in the play.

Aquilina's costume is directly inspired by Flamenco costume. Her unapologetically self-assured and dominant nature as a courtesan of Venice is represented by the visibility of her figure within the costume, her exposed breasts, bare arms and skirts draped sensually around her hips all point to her profession as a courtesan. The bold colours of her costume, inspired by the lurid tones of 1990s Christina LaCroix runways, are intended to catch potential clients attention.

The eclectic mix of patterns within Aquilina's costume highlight her lower class nature as a working woman, with bold clashing patterns drawn from folk dress, used as onstage contrast to the stark, cold toned minimalism of the senators.

Aquilina's headdress was directly inspired by Spanish 'mantilla' headdresses, consisting of a black veil worn at the crown of the head, supported by a wire frame. I chose a mantilla for Aquilina's character as they are worn for ceremonial or formal occasions, thus communicating Aquilina's power and influence as courtesan to Antonio, as, through means of seduction and flattery, she is able to persuade and cajole the senator to achieve her own aims.

‘ THE ADRIATIC WHORE ‘

‘ SHE WAS THY RIGHT BY
CONQUEST AS BY LOVE ‘

‘ FOR CURS MUST BE KICKED
WHEN THEY BITE ! ‘

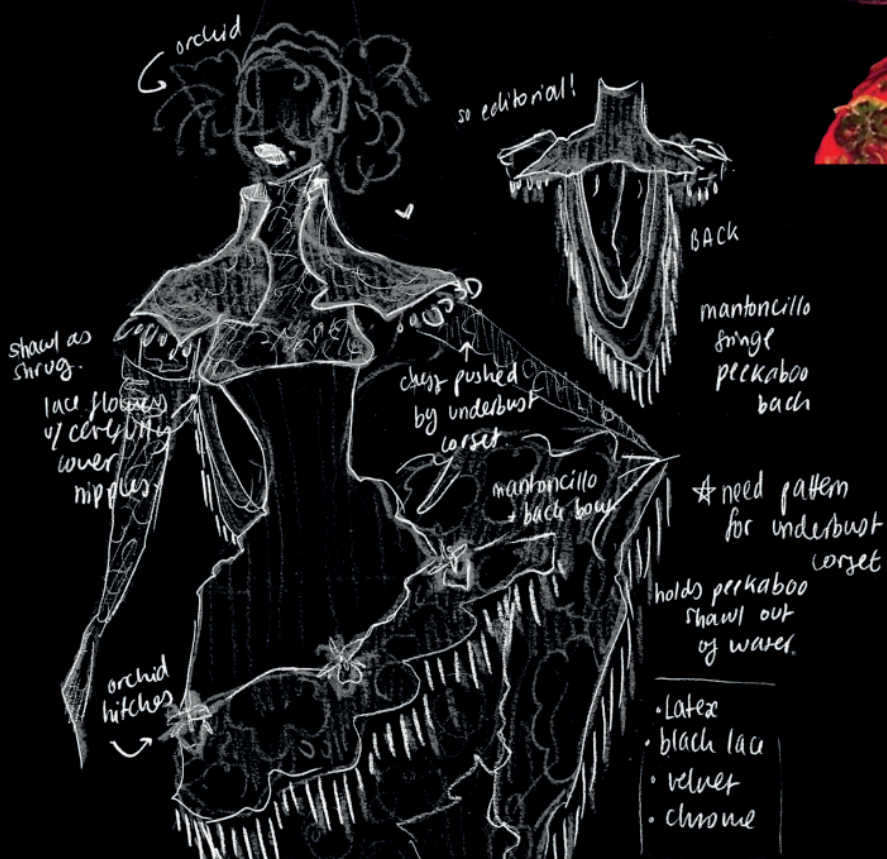
THE FLAMENCO

” AQUILINA, NAQUILINA,
ACKY, NACKY, QUEEN NACKY
“ - Antonio refers to Aquilina
as 'Nack'y, slang term for a
woman's genitalia, highlighting
the disrespectful and reductive
attitudes Otway's female characters
are treated with within Venice
Preserved.





Aquilina is sexually liberated, with form fitting silhouettes that are seductive yet powerful. The bold colours and clashing patterns of her costume are to catch attention of potential suitors, as courtesan historically wore brightly coloured petticoats, that they would hitch to covertly advertise their occupation. Research into flamenco inspired the patterns for Aquilina's costume, with heavy use of florals, high contrast patterns on dark backgrounds and paisley patterns, as all were historically used in Spanish cultural dress. Warm, rich colours contrast Belvidera's delicate pastels and silver tones, highlighting the difference in societal standing between Otway's two female characters.



- ELEMENTS**
- cropped bolero
 - underbust
 - hip shawl
 - peekaboo back
 - pattern mask shirt
 - flamenco flounce hem



JAFFEIR

THE COWARD THE TORTURED POET THE FALLEN NOBLE

Jaffeir, a Venetian nobleman fallen on hard times since his marriage to Belvidera, is one of the main male protagonist of Venice Preserved. Upper class in nature, Jaffier stumbles into his involvement with the conspirators through his close friend Pierre. Jaffier is easily influenced and weak in resolve, his cowardice and indecision borne from torn loyalties to both the conspirators and his beloved Belvidera is a driving factor behind the tragic climax of the play.

Renaults attempted rape of Belvidera enrages Jaffier, prompting him to test his already tenuous loyalties with the conspirators and their cause. Quick to anger and obsessed with honour, particularly his honour as a husband, Jaffier expresses several times throughout the play existentialist concerns about themes such as love, duty and purpose.

As a nobleman unsure of his purpose in society and constantly searching for a bigger meaning, Jaffier's indecision is a crucial driving factor of the tragic climax within the play, as his 'torn loyalties' for both Belvidera and Pierre dooms the characters and their cause.

Jaffier's relationships with Belvidera and Pierre both have romantic overtones, Jaffier's relationship with Belvidera is cluttered with traditionalist expressions of 'tender' and 'pure' love, however this supposed devotion is markedly shaken in the later acts of the play, as Jaffier turns hostile towards his 'lovely wife' when wracked by guilt for his role in the conspirators plot. In contrast, Jaffier's relationship with Pierre is fuelled by fierce loyalty, both men demonstrating a soldierly camaraderie to the extreme that merges undying loyalty into an obsessive love of sorts. Ultimately, Jaffier as a character is a noble fallen from grace, plagued by notions of duty and a loyalty he cannot fulfil, his inconstant, anxious nature drives the majority of the conflict within Venice Preserved.

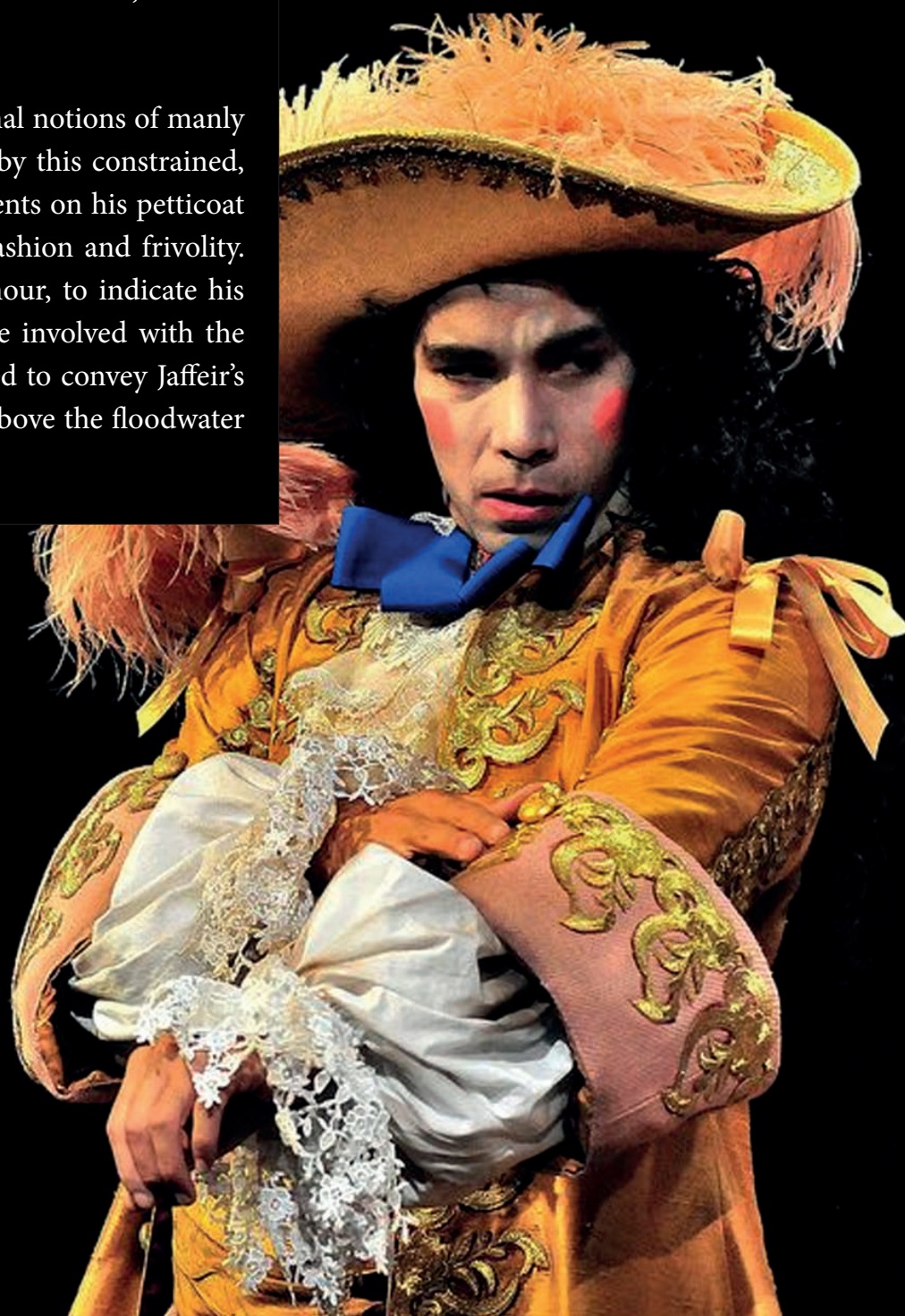
Jaffier's design was largely inspired by 1660s men's dress, his traditional notions of manly duty, and the relationship between woman and man is represented by this constrained, historical silhouette, however the pink breeches and ribbon adornments on his petticoat breeches attempt to convey his former nobility, as once a man of fashion and frivolity. His epaulets and boots were inspired by historical examples of armour, to indicate his inclination towards bloody violence and his initial willingness to be involved with the conspirators plot. The use of tall chopine platform shoes are intended to convey Jaffier's existentialist, self-concerned nature, as he physically places himself above the floodwater the rest of the characters have no choice but to wade through.

‘ BY ALL GOOD POW’RS ABOVE, AND ILL BELOW! BY LOVE
AND FRIENDSHIP, DEARER THAN MY LIFE! NO POWER OR
DEATH SHALL MAKE ME FALSE TO THEE .

‘ I AND ILL FORTUNE HAVE BEEN LONG
ACQUAINTED .

‘ O WOMAN! LOVELY WOMAN! NATURE MADE
THEETO TEMPER MAN: WE HAD BEEN BRUTES
WITHOUT YOU .

‘ [WHO GOES THERE?] ... A DOG THAT COMES TO
HOWL AT YONDER MOON .





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The majority use of yellow within Jaffair's costume represents his cowardice. The dagger protruding from his capacious sleeves, already dripping with blood, symbolises his role in the deaths of Pierre and Belvidera, Pierre killed by Jaffair's cowardly indecision, and Belvidera killed by the grief, following Jaffair's suicide at the end of the play.
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- KEY ITEMS
- dagger + holster
 - sash (high waist)
 - frock coat + capelet
 - mecha boots
 - neelcheit (flouncy)



PIERRE

THE FOREIGN SOLDIER

THE BULLFIGHTER

THE SAVIOUR

Pierre is a foreign soldier in Venice, and one of the leaders within the conspirator's group. Wise and realistic about the current state of Venice, Pierre's own reasons for plotting against the Senate revolve around another senator (the corrupt, foolish Antonio) paying for relations with Pierre's mistress, Aquilina. Despite Pierre's complaints, the Senate does nothing about it, explaining that Antonio has senatorial privilege, leading to Pierre seeking revenge against a corrupt system. Though in love with Aquilina, claiming her to be 'his religion', Pierre is not ensnared in romantic ideals like Jaffeir, he is practical and fiercely loyal, almost to the point of homoeroticism with Jaffeir, both traits that render his death at the end of the play, caused by Jaffeir's indecision in the face of the senate, all the more tragic, as he is killed arguably as a by-product of Jaffeir's own folly.

Pierre does however have his own set of irrationalities, as all characters in tragedy must, he is transfixed by the idea of dying a 'noble' death, and earning his mercenary status. Because of this I chose to have Pierre's costume mimic 17th century armour, to communicate to the audience his inability to reconcile his new identity as a citizen of Venice with his past status as a 'decorated and famous foreign soldier', with his armour representing an obsession with the chivalric values of pride and valour that he carries over from his days as a soldier. I also used Persian and Turkish battle and hawked armour to inspire Pierre's silhouette, to communicate to the audience his non-Venetian background, thus contextualising the distrust with which the bigoted, nationalist senate treats him with.

The colour scheme of deep reds and purples contrasted with acidic greens within Pierre's outfit was inspired by Christina LaCroix runways that combine cold and warm toned colours to create the impression of folk dress, used to communicate Pierre's lower class status when compared with the senators refined and limited colour palettes. I also wanted to coordinate Pierre and Aquilina's colour palettes to indicate their allegiance as lovers kept apart by a corrupt and manipulative senate.

Finally, Pierre's epaulets, cape and breeches were inspired by matador dress from Spanish culture, inspired by my research into the Bedmar plot of 1618, I wanted Pierre to look recognisably Spanish in silhouette, in order to visually associate him with the rebellious conspirators in Spanish influenced dress.

' DEAR REVENGE, WHENE'ER THOU
CALL'ST, I'M READY '

' I SCORN TO FLATTER A BLOWN UP
FOOL ABOVE ME, OR CRUSH THE
WRETCH BENEATH ME .'

' A SOLDIER'S MISTRESS IS HIS RELIGION '

' THERE'S A SECRET PRIDE IN BRAVELY DYING '

"I, WHO BELIEVED NO ILL COULD COME
NEAR ME .'





MATADOR x MERCEIVARY



like he's adjusted his battle armour to wear in polite society

frick co + arm

- ♥ scars
- ♥ turban
- ♥ sash
- ♥ big epauletts
- ♥ gauntlets
- ♥ jerkin



SHAMANIC
L'v'ligious



I used matadors as a visual reference for Pierre to communicate ideas of traditional masculinity and bravery in the face of danger, as well as needless violence and death, using the killing of the bull by matadors in traditional bullfighting sports to mirror the undeserved death of Pierre at the hands of the senate during the tragic climax of the play.





PRIULA

//////////////////////////////////// .

THE CLOAKED MAFIOSO THE OLD REGIME THE HIGH PRESITESS

Priuli, who I renamed Priula, as the mother of Belvidera, is a senator of Venice, a figurehead of the city state's corrupt regime. Priula represents glory days past, a solemn antiquated beauty who contrasts the idealistic, hopeful attitudes of the younger conspirators. Priula disowns Belvidera, her only daughter, after Belvidera and Jaffeir's marriage comes to her attention, plunging the young lovers into poverty. I wanted to represent Priula's icy, ruthless attitude in her silhouette, her collum-like silver shift cascades to the floor, hiding her natural body and lending her an air of ethereal sharpness in cold tones. The head covering was directly inspired by Galliano's work for Dior in the 1990s, with all her hair covered the headdress adds to Priula's imposing stature and removes even further traces of humanity. I did however choose to leave Priula's chest exposed below the Bedouin-inspired neck collar, as I wanted to imply that she is unafraid to use her female sexuality as intimidation, to reject the patriarchal idea of femininity requiring modesty, and that women can be equally powerful and self-expressive, This is also the reason behind my gender change of Priuli into Priula, as an attempt to subvert the heavily patriarchal overtones of Otway's original script, and to allow for a female character within the play that is more than just a tragic victim or a foil to the other, with real power to corrupt and control.

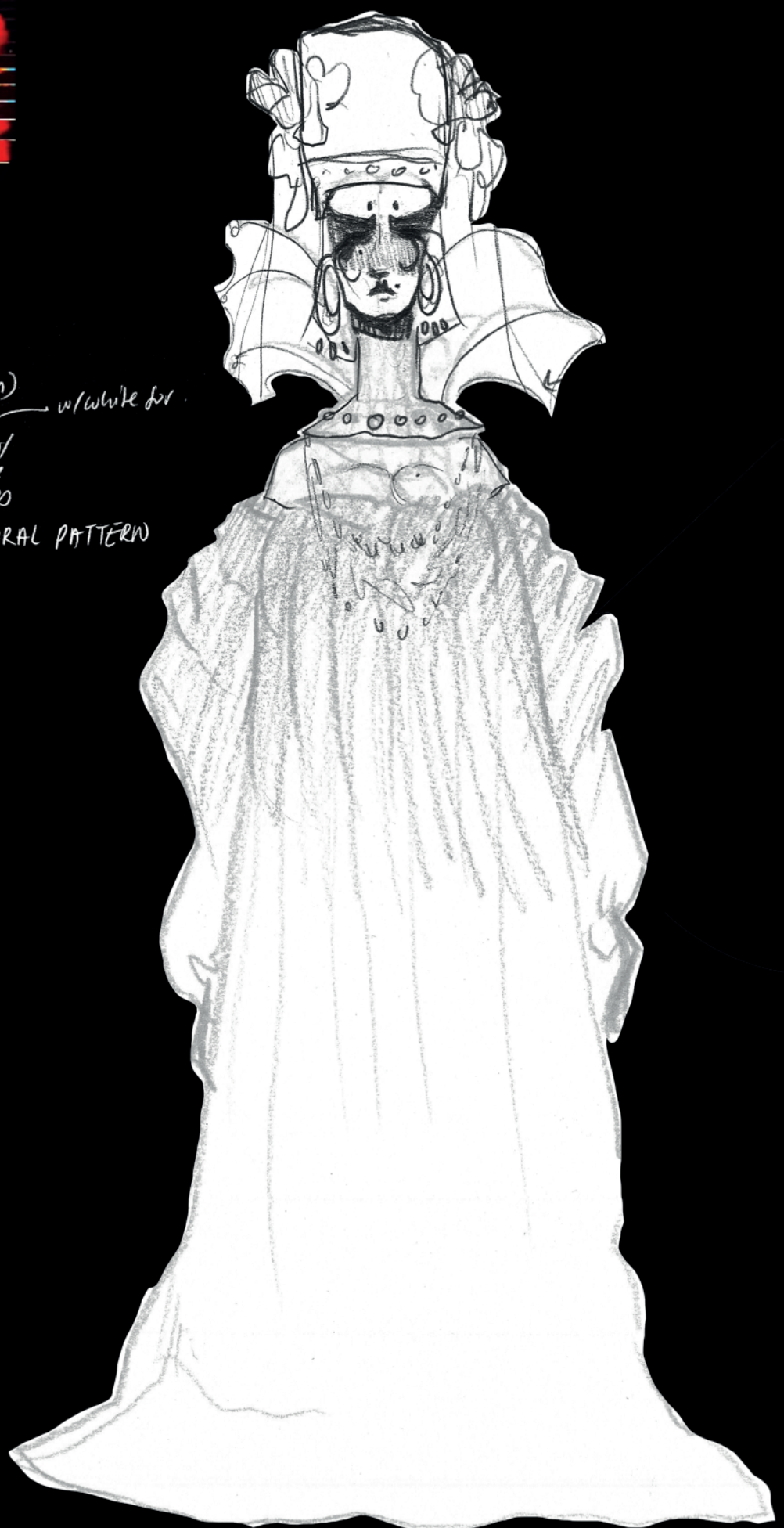
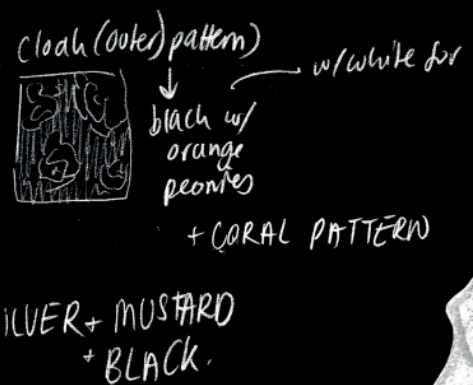
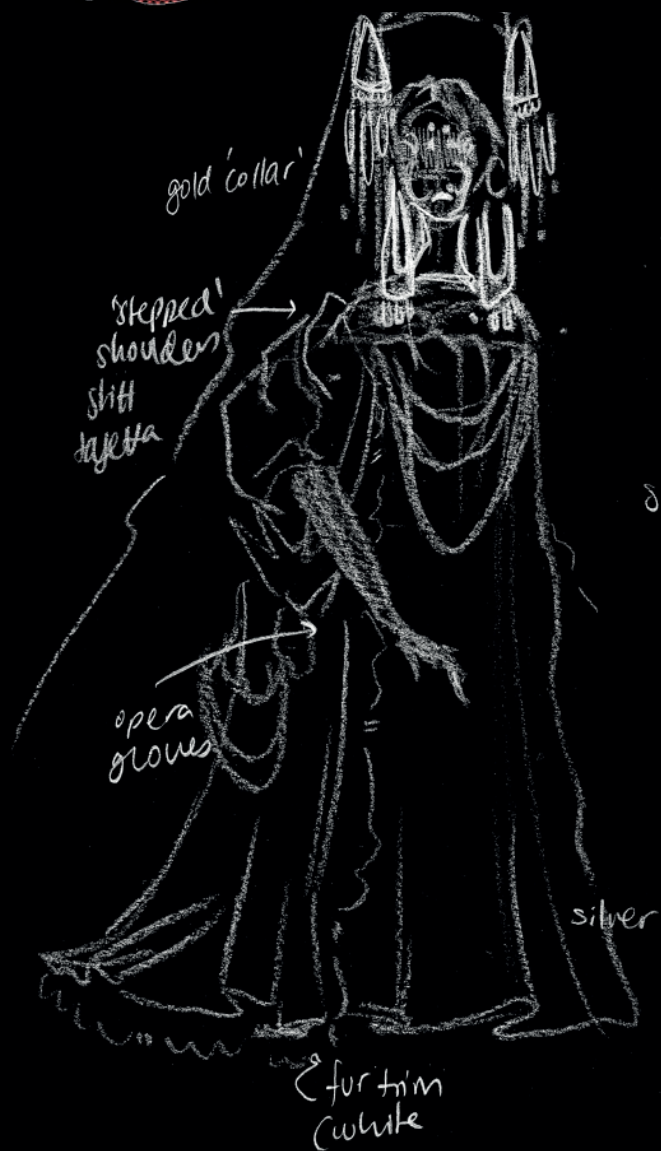
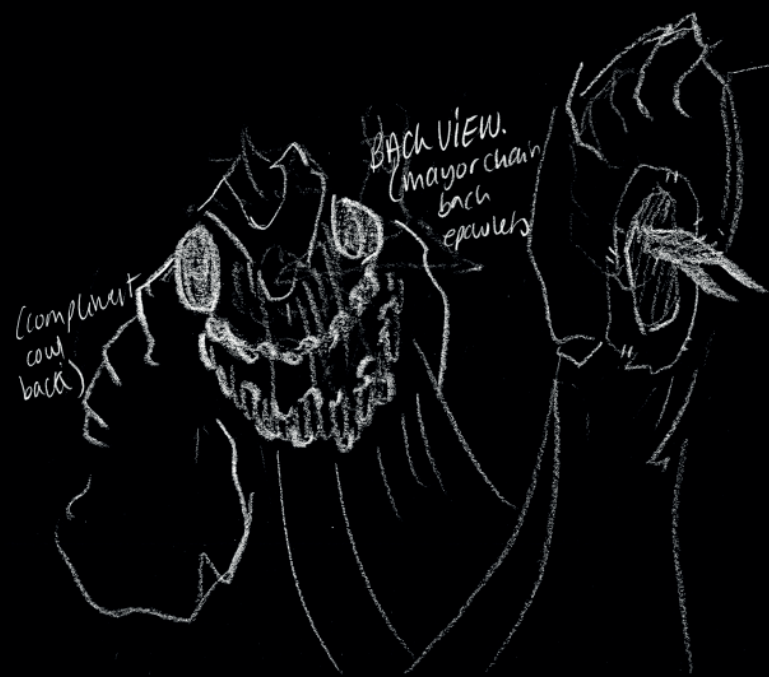
Priula's costume most importantly represents the Cromwellian austerity that preceded the Restoration era, the brightly dressed conspirators and younger characters are the total opposite of the sleek, streamlined minimalism and limited colour palettes of Priula and the aristocratic crowd of Venice Preserved, where the conspirators patterns and layering speak to their youthful folk culture rebellion, Priula's simple but imposing silhouette and plain, lustrous fabrics communicate ideas of stately, refined elegance.

‘ THE GREAT PRIULI ’

‘ THE VILEST BEASTS ARE HAPPY IN THEIR OFFSPRINGS,
WHILE ONLY MAN GETS TRAITORS, WHORES AND
VILLAINS ’

‘ VENICE HAS LOST HER FREEDOM ’





Priula's makeup was inspired by Chinese opera, with white painted faces, gestural sweeping marks of blush and staccato brows, the makeup gives the wearer an air of artificiality. Priula represents solemn ceremony and refinement, her costume is intimidatingly pristine, thus her makeup acts as a mask of sorts in this charade of artifice, by concealing her true face under layers of heavy makeup, Priula is made even more intimidating as the figurehead of the corrupt senate, her views and tyrannical rule as incapable of change as her painted on expression.

ANTONIO

THE HARLEQUIN

THE LECHER

THE SILLY OLD FOOL

Antonio is a lecherous old senator with a proclivity for sexual degradation, he represents the very worst of Venice's current government. The audience is introduced to Antonio as a regular client of Aquilina the prostitute, and the motivation behind Pierre's hatred of the senate, as Antonio's senatorial privilege allows him to continue paying for Aquilina's service, despite Pierre's protests. Though repulsed by him, Aquilina begrudgingly obliges the foolish but wealthy senator in his pleas to be mistreated and verbally degraded. Antonio is part of the Venetian aristocracy, with lineage and inherited wealth enough to enable him a seat on the senate despite his observed lack of skill in politics.

Antonio's crass attitude is demonstrated in his nickname for Aquilina 'Nicky nacky' (slang for female genitalia), his sexual tastes range from verbal degradation to physical punishment, shown to satirical extent in a scene where he pretends to be a variety of animals to rile Aquilina. Antonio's perversion is used by Otway in Venice Preserved to satirise the Venetian senate, showing that beneath the pomp and powdered wigs, those governing are often amoral frauds, masquerading as polite society.

Antonio's design takes a late seventeenth century frockcoat, Elizabethan inspired trunkhose (with the addition of a historically inspired cod piece to communicate Antonio's perverted attitudes), Elizabethan ruff, and 18th century dandy inspired heeled mules, and exaggerates them into ridiculous proportions. I was largely inspired by eighteenth century dandies and fops for Antonio's character, as they were often high society men dressed in fashions so flamboyant they attracted ridicule from society and satirists alike. I wanted Antonio to be a character worthy of ridicule, his light colour palette, inspired by the silver tones similarly worn by Priula indicates his senatorial status, and creates an ironic contrast between his lecherous character and

' A WRETCHED OLD BUT
ITCHING SENATOR '

' A SENATOR THAT KEEPS A WHORE / IN VENICE NONE OF
A HIGHER OFFICE BORE / TO LEWDNESS EVERY NIGHT
THE LECHER RAN / SHOW ME, ALL LONDON, SUCH

' A HAGGARD OWL, A WORTHLESS KITE OF PREY '

' A ROUGE THAT USED BEAUTY LIKE A LAMBSKIN,
BARELY TO KEEP HIM WARM '

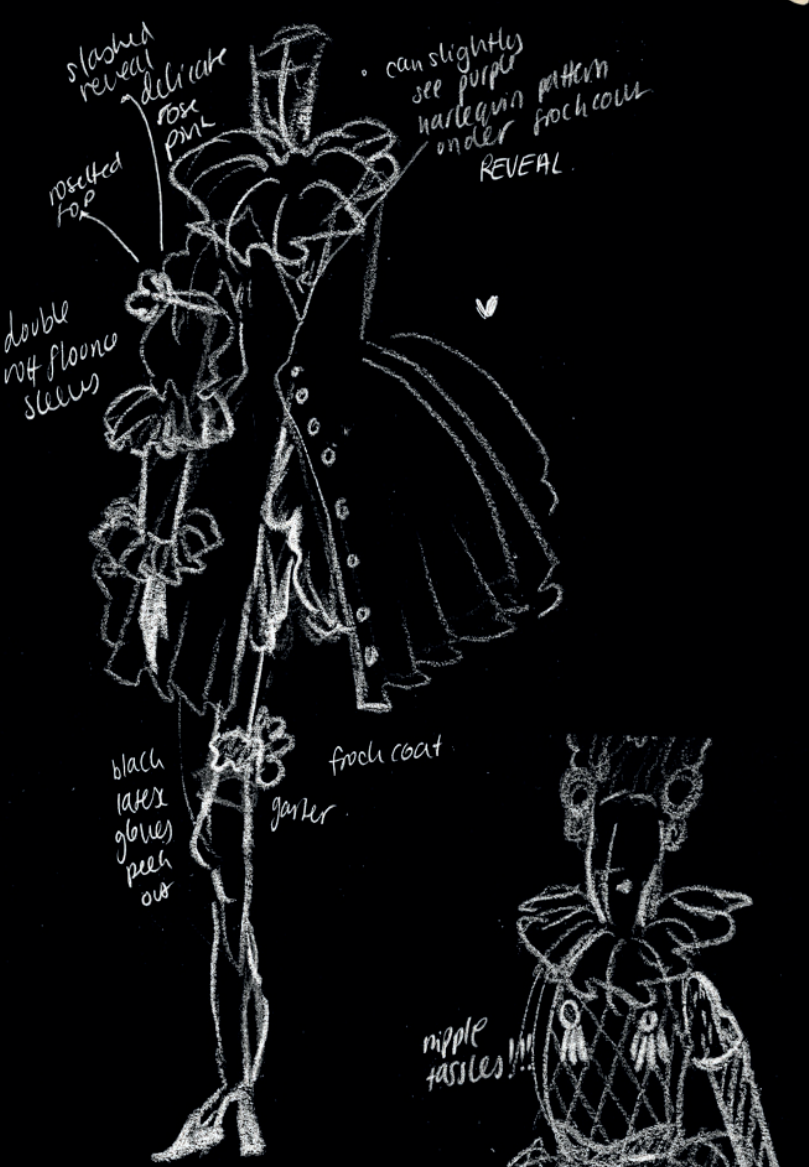
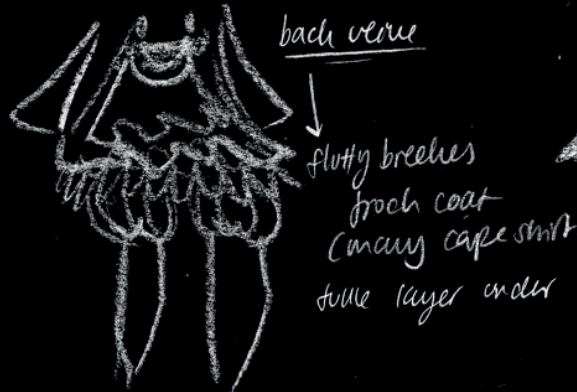
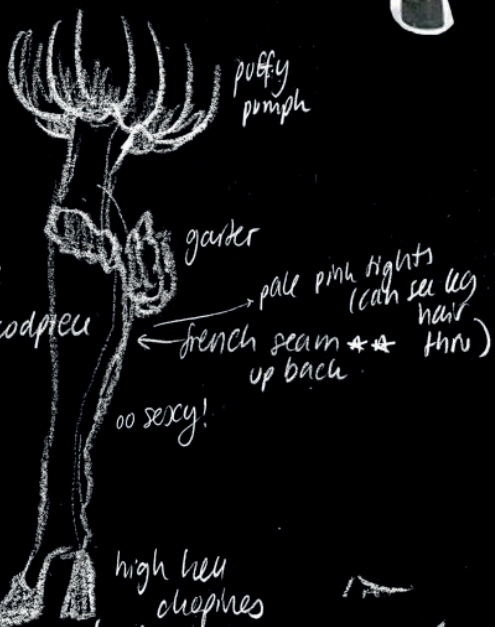
' A BLOWN UP FOOL '





Antonio's ruff and hairstyle, though historical in silhouette, were initially inspired by ppoint clowns, clown characters in 18th century operettas that represented foolish and frivolous attitudes, perfect for the fatuous senator.

Antonio's facial makeup and velvet facial patches add to his harlequin appearance

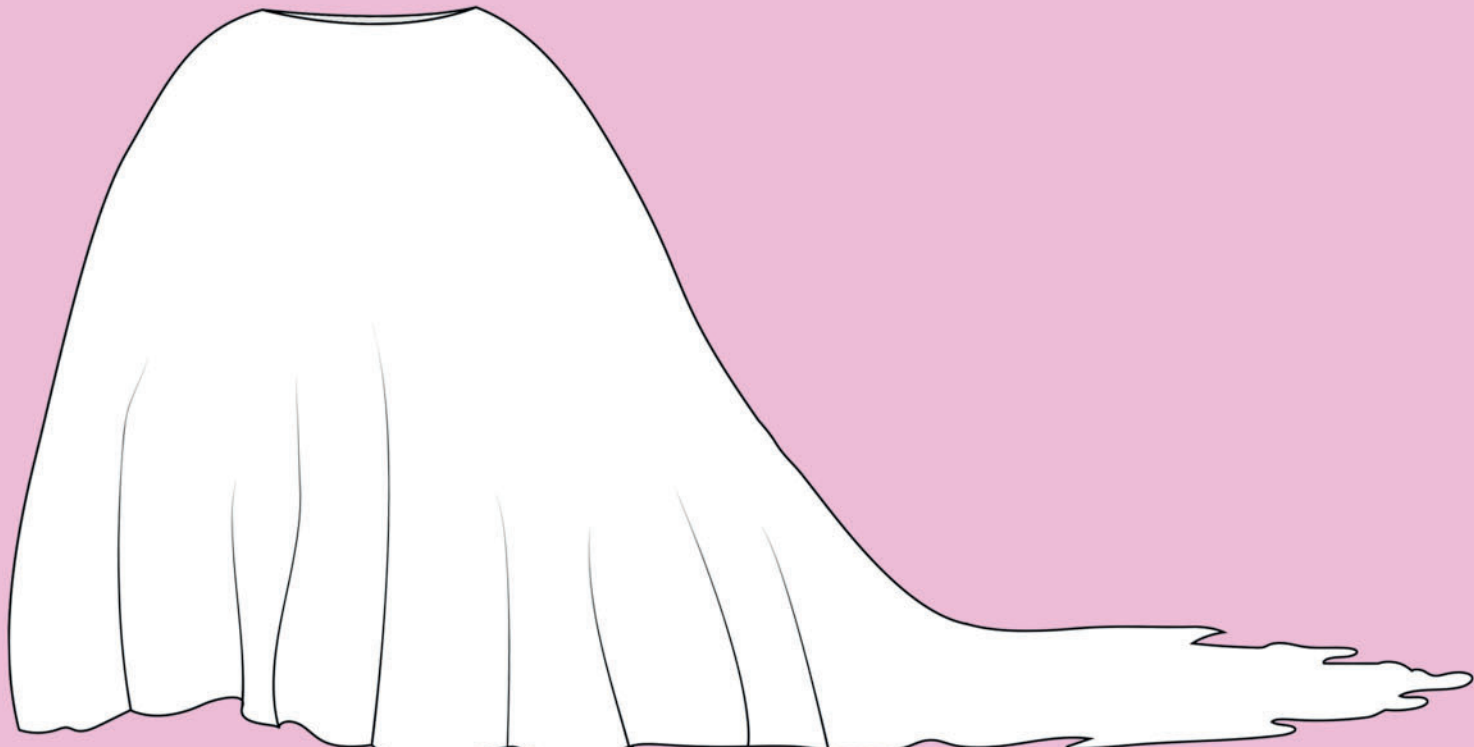
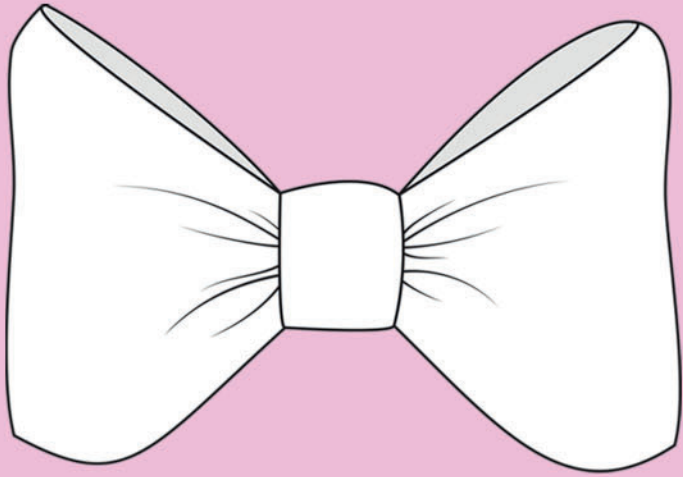
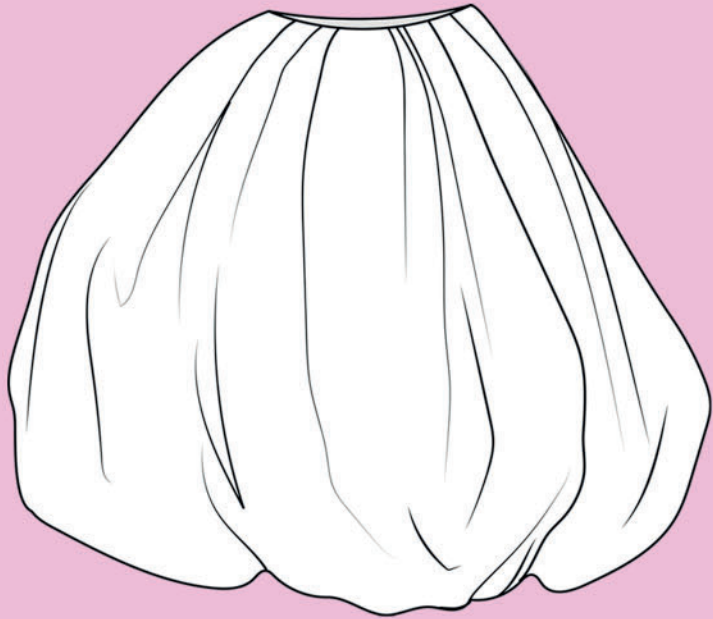
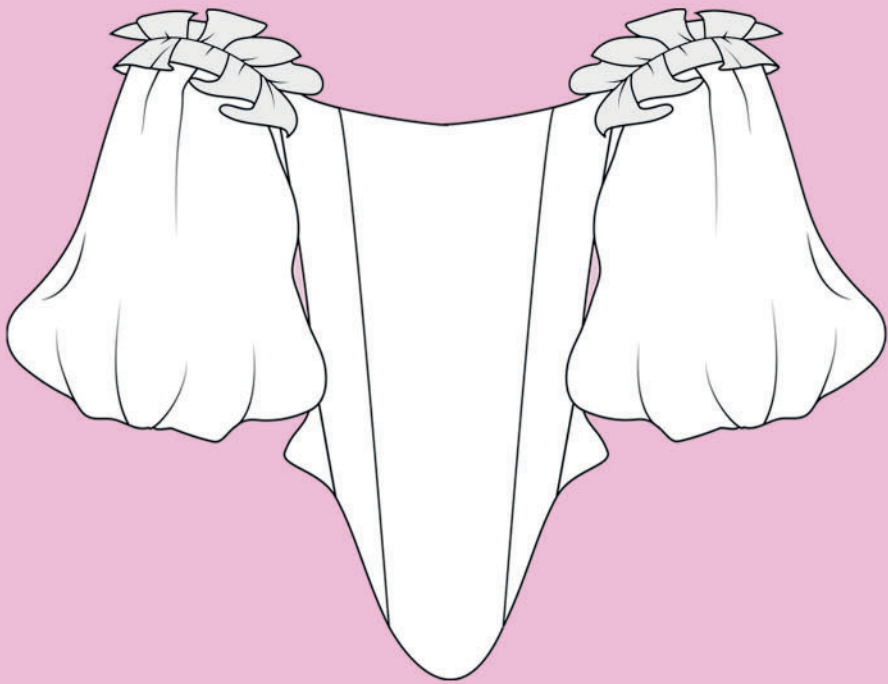




FINAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

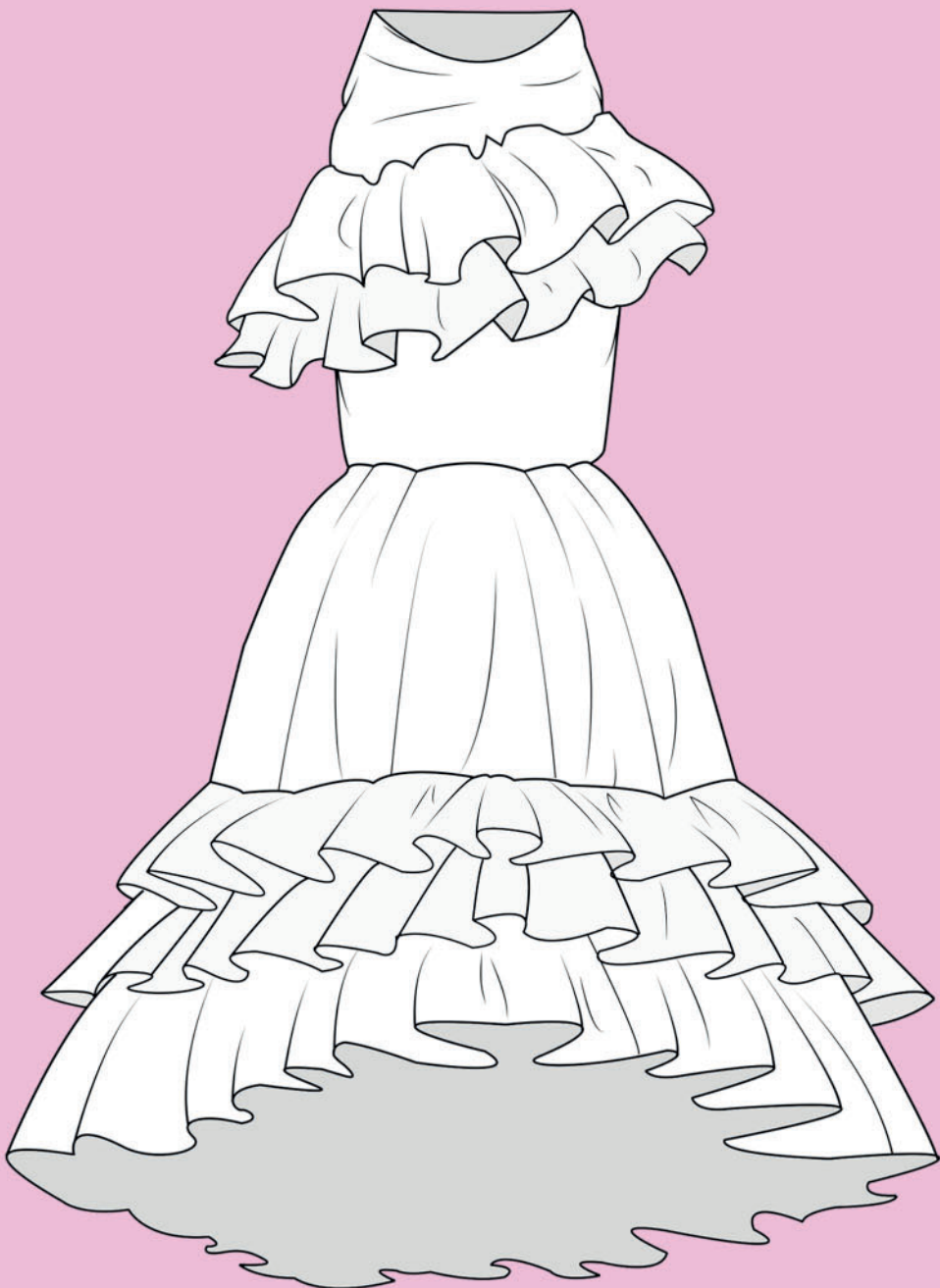
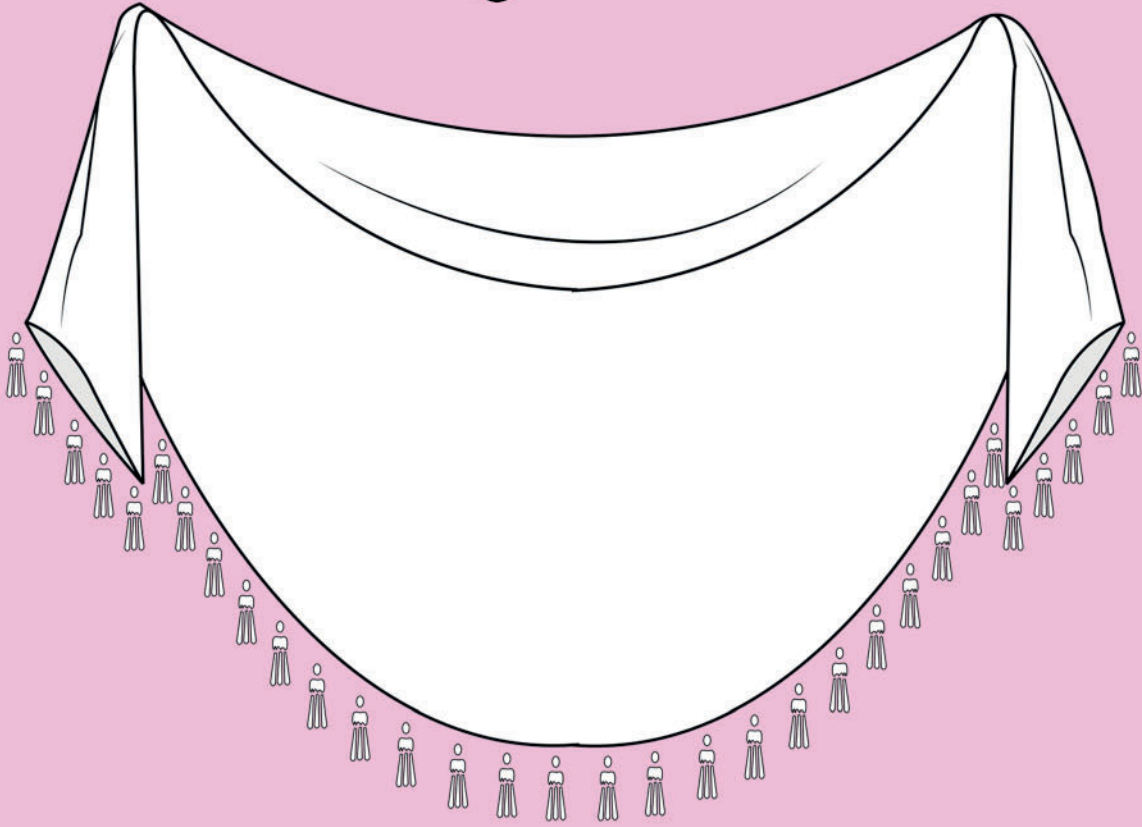
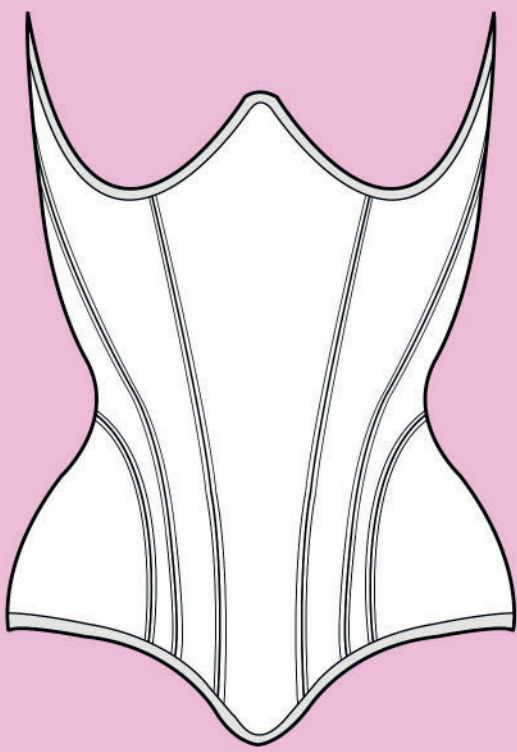


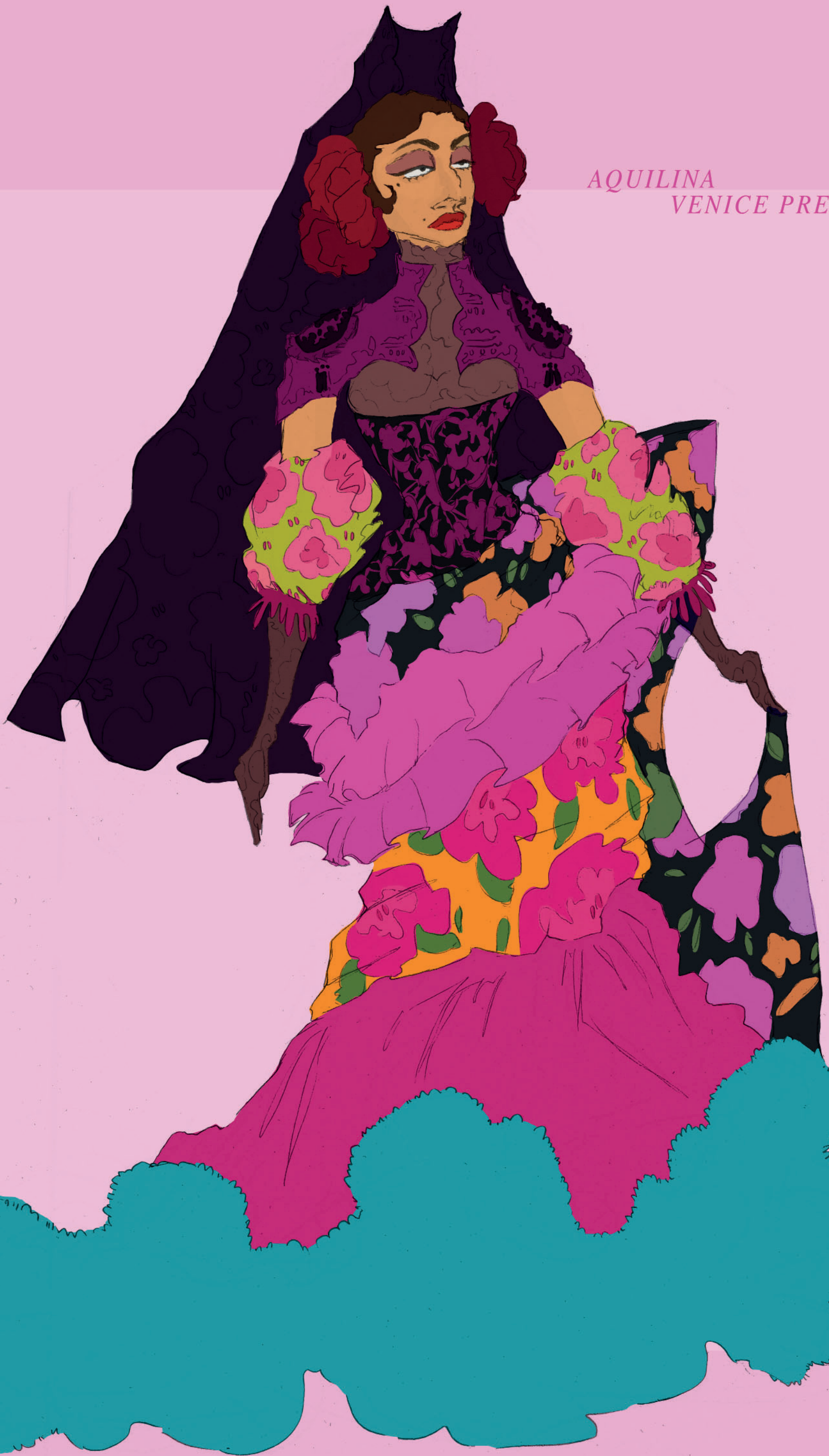




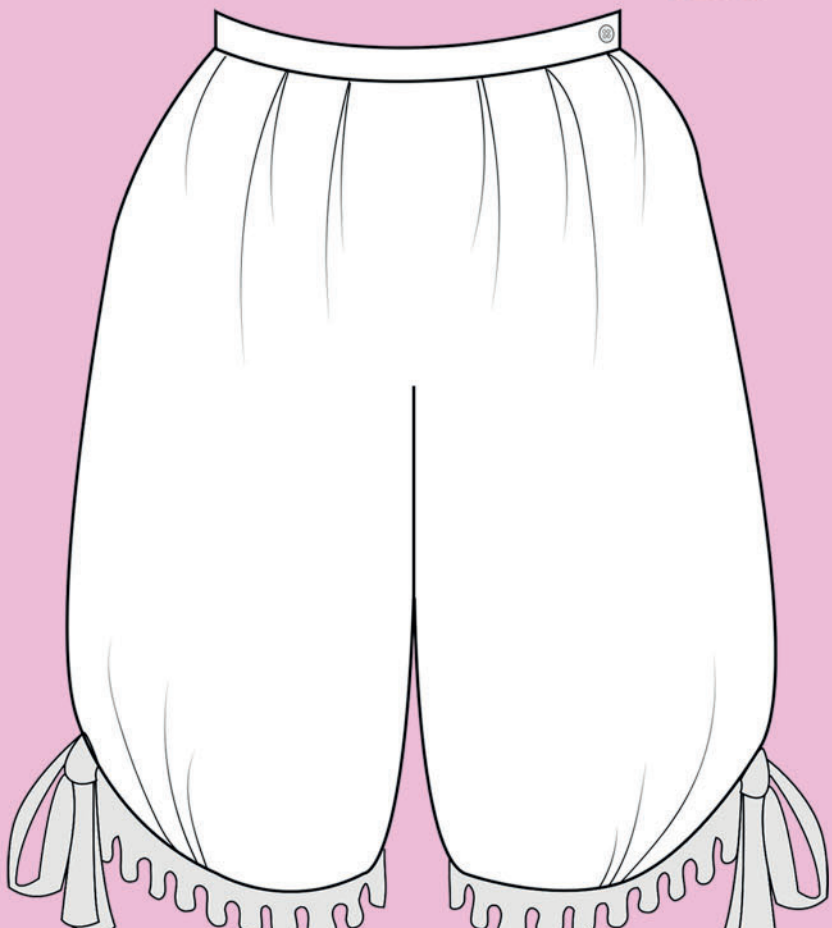
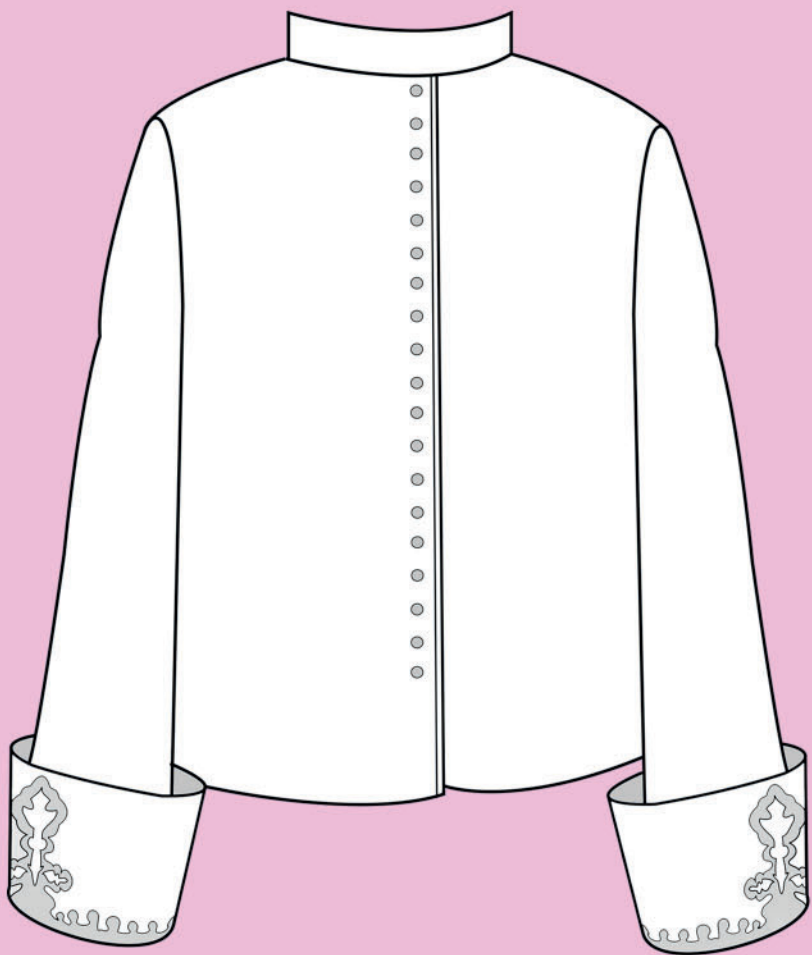
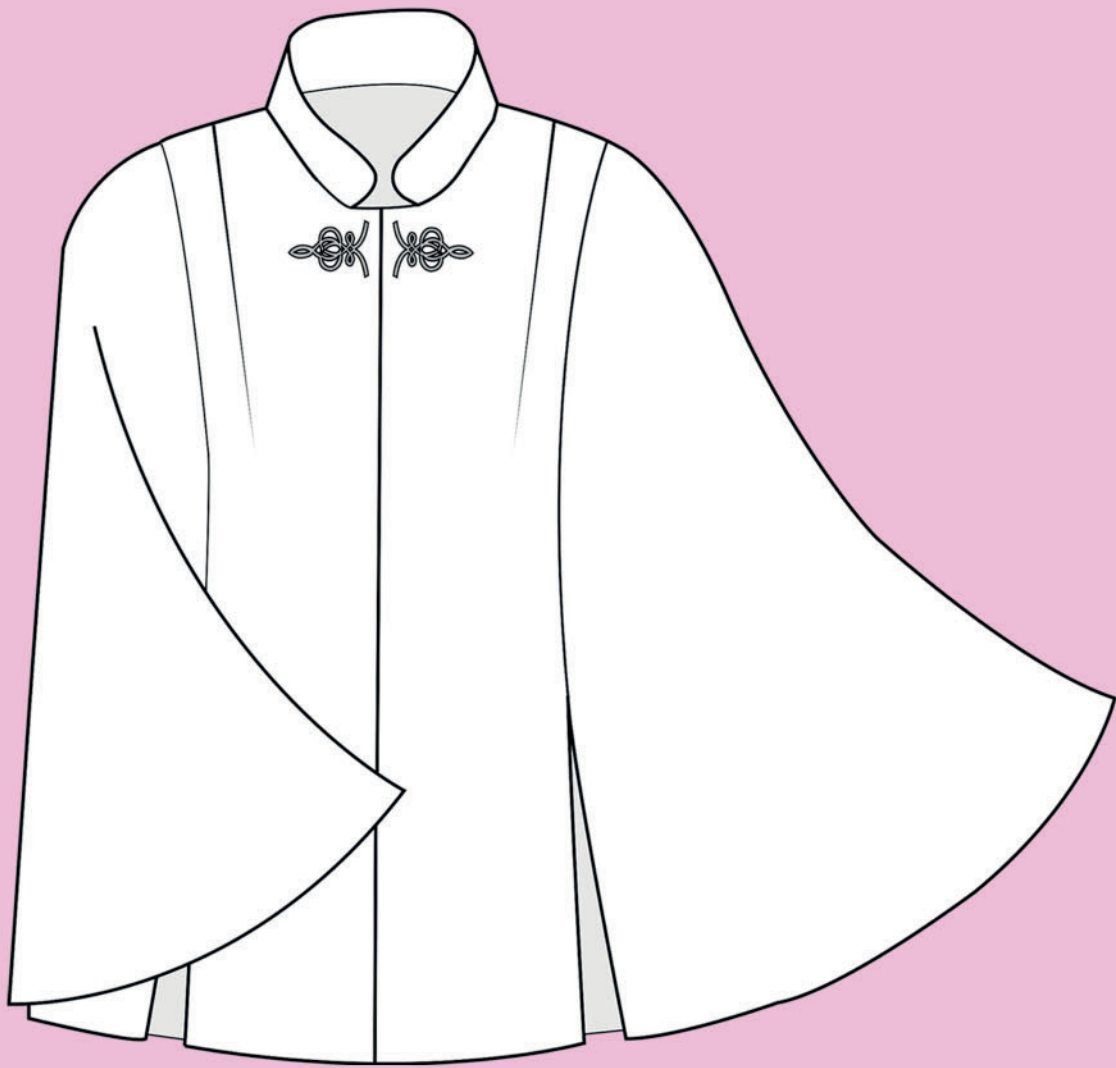


BELVIDERA
VENICE PRESERVE



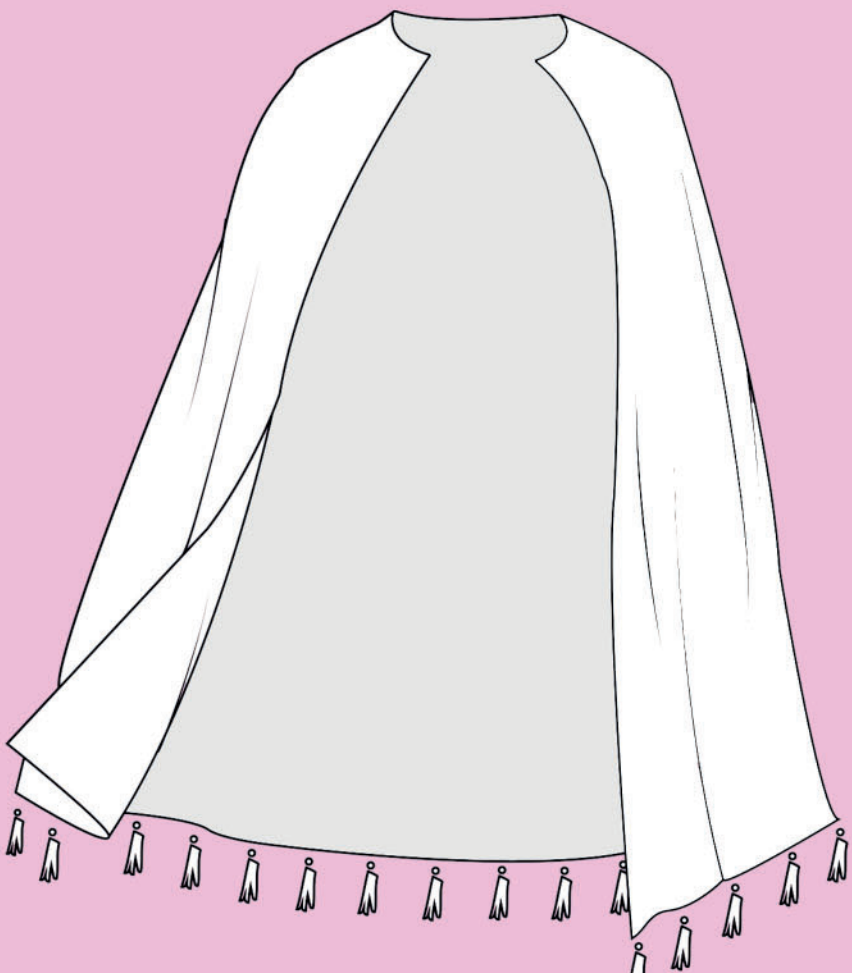
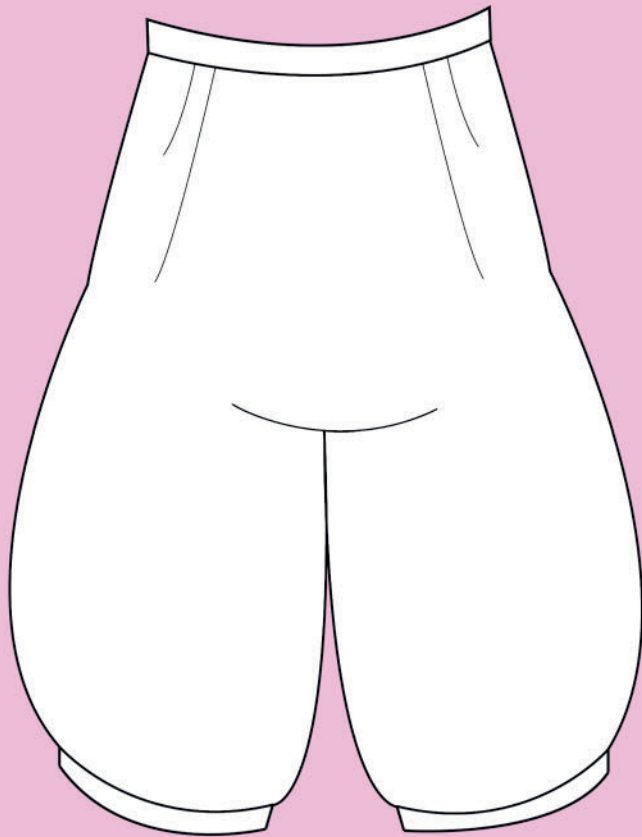
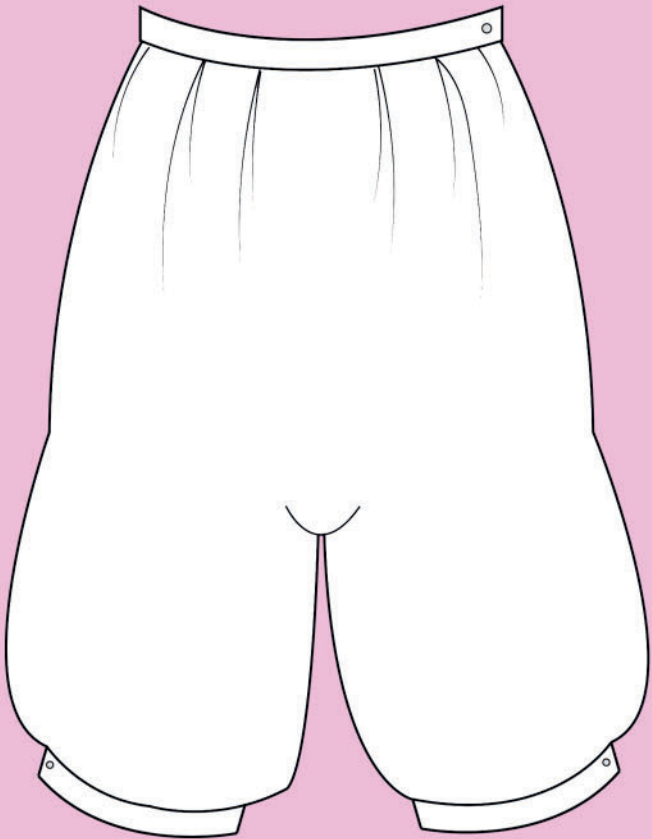
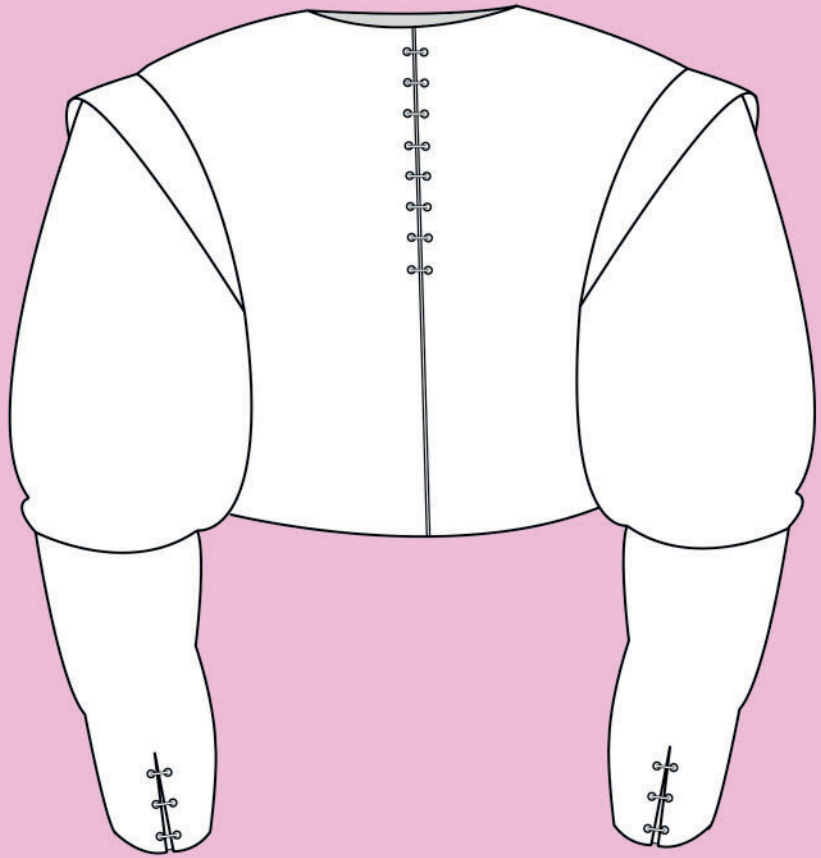
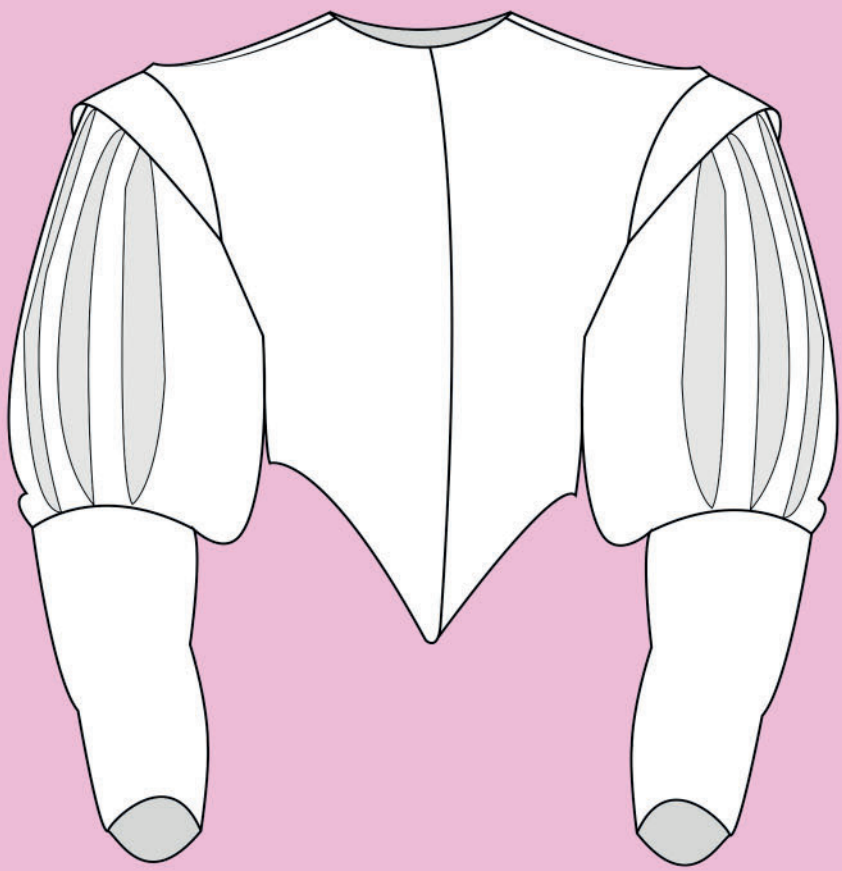


AQUILINA
VENICE PRESERVED



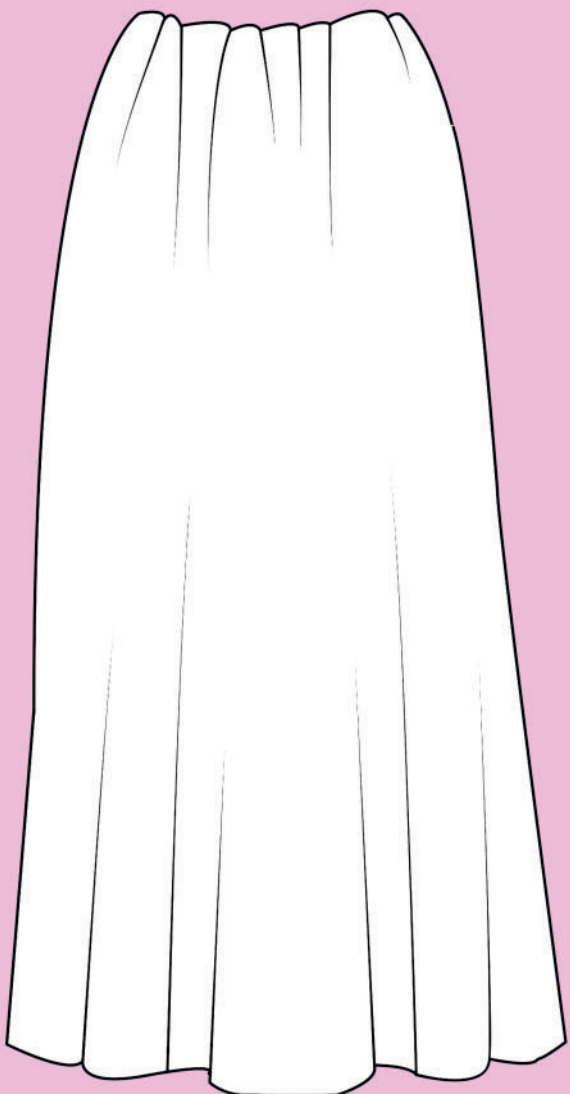
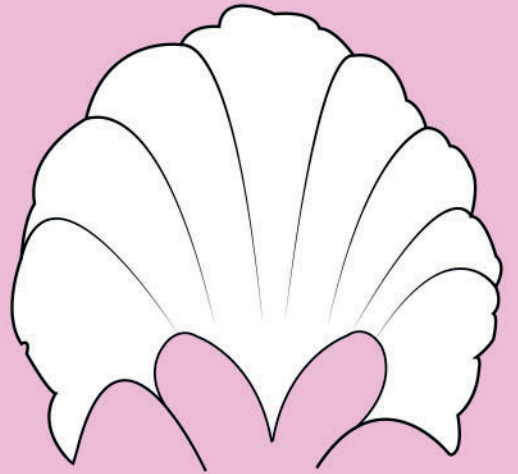
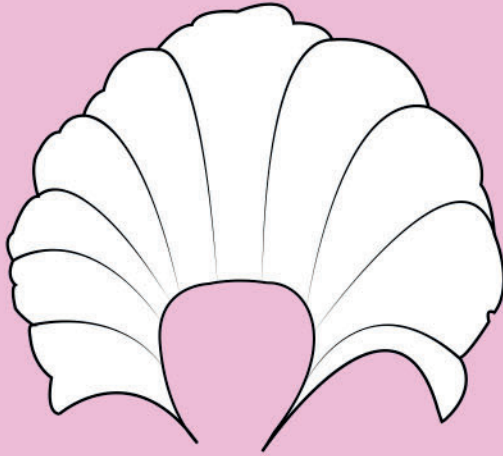
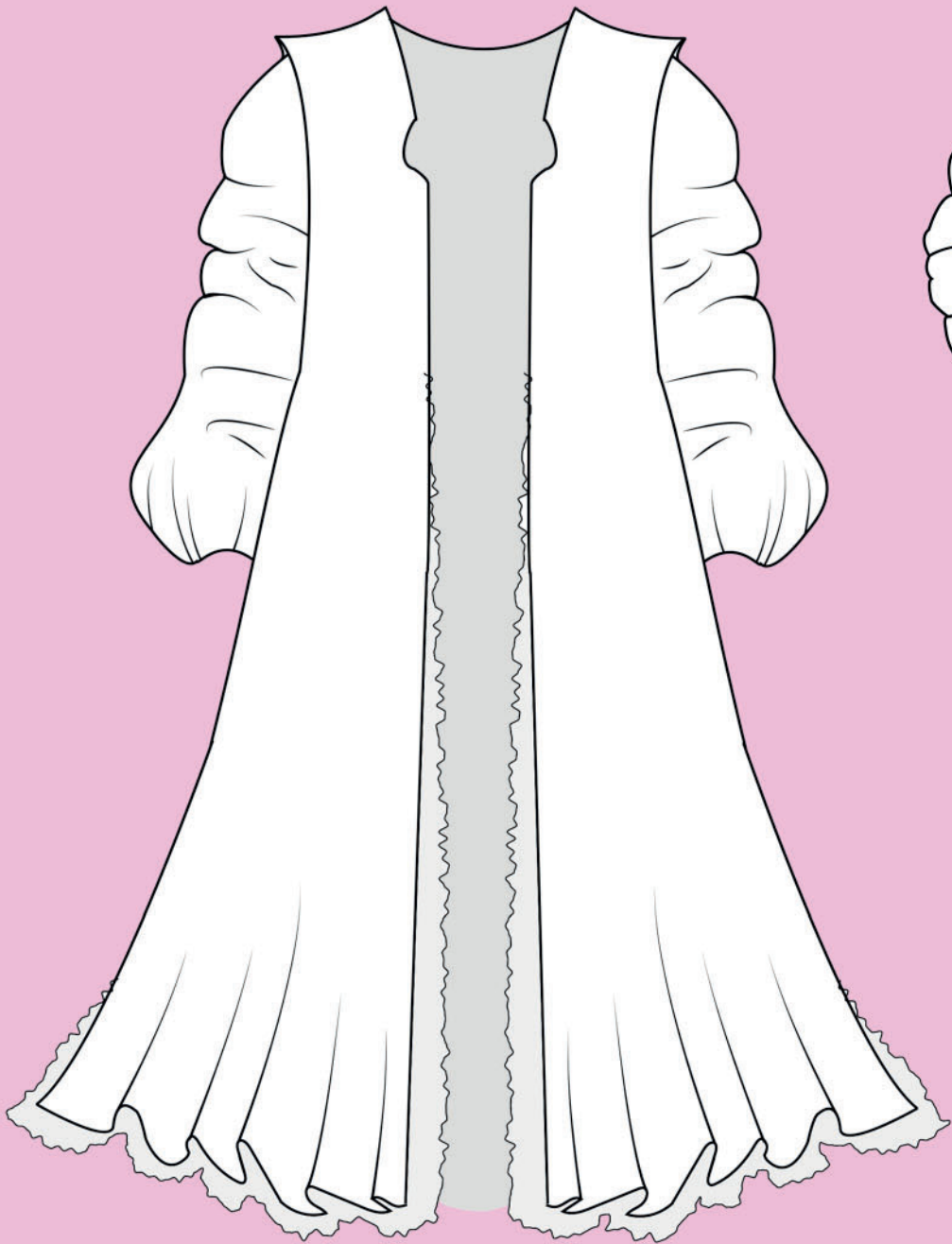
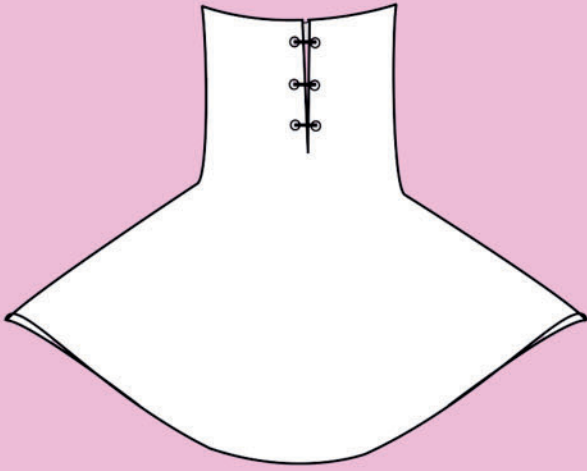
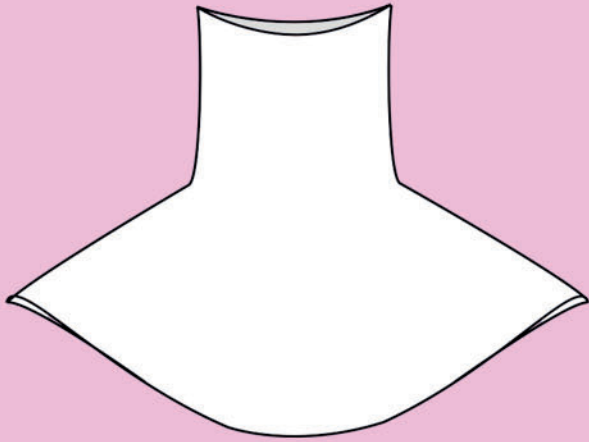


JAFFEIR
VENICE PRESERVED



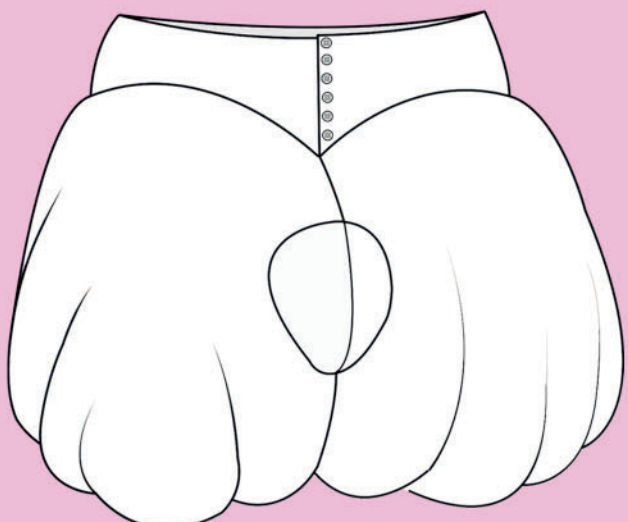
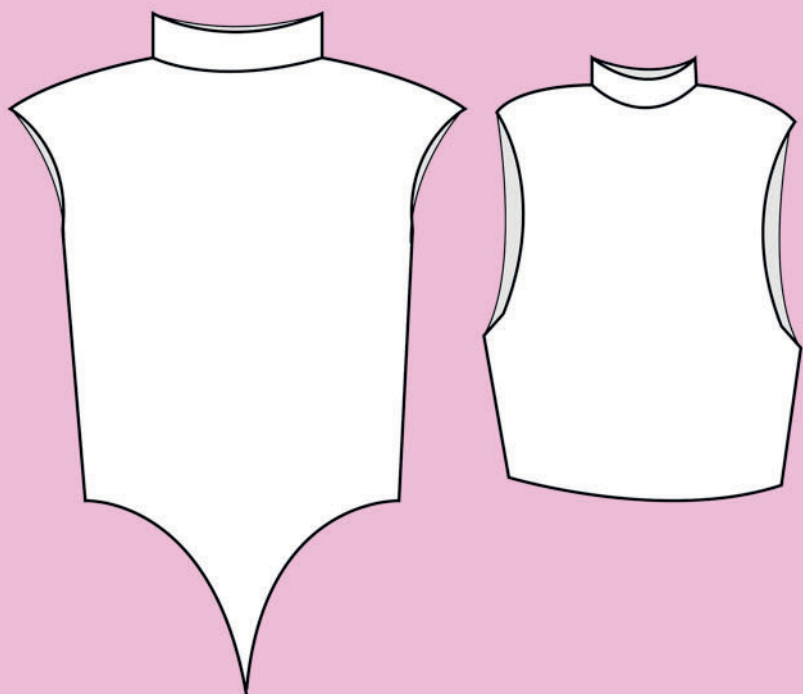
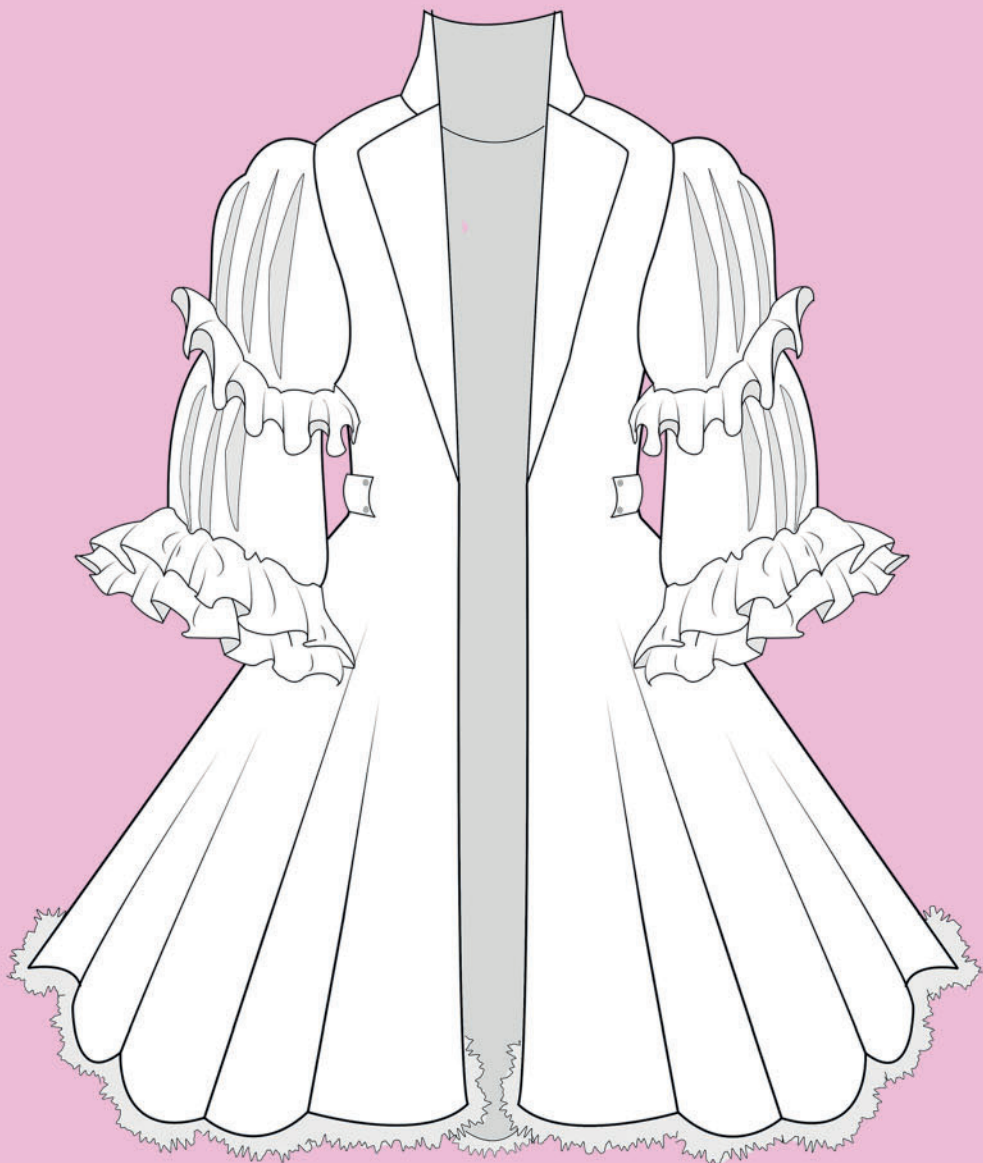
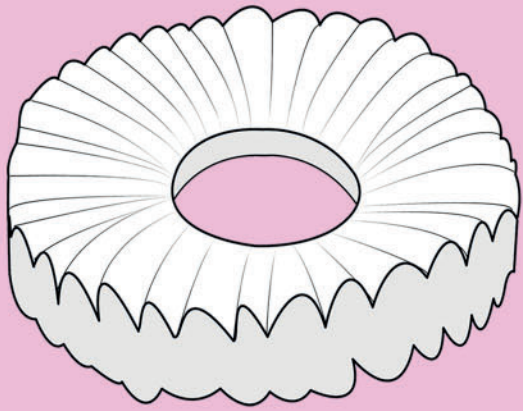


PIERRE
VENICE PRESERVE





PRIULI
VENICE PRESERVED





ANTONIO
VENICE PRESERVE



