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21M.606 Introduction to Stagecraft  
Spring 2009

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21M.606, Stagecraft

Final Project Report

May 14 2009

Several modifications to my design have been made since the midterm presentation as I encountered challenges throughout the construction of my costume piece. At the time of the midterm my costume consisted of four major pieces: a body suit, a cape, a pair of boots, and laser pointer sunglasses. It now also consists of four pieces but one is slightly different, instead of the sunglasses I made a face mask – similar to the masks seen in the movie *The Incredibles*.

Even though all the other pieces of my costume are the same, they were built in a slightly different way than I had originally thought I would make them. The cape is not gathered at the buttons because I forgot to add allowance when I cut the material, didn't have enough to do it over, and liked how it looked anyway (very sleek). The material was quite slippery so it was hard to get the seams sewn without puckering the material. With a lot of patience and being very careful the edges ended up looking very nice with few mistakes. Thankfully, I only had to redo the top half circle about four or five times before it was acceptable. The buttons with insignia moved from the body suit to the cape as a design choice because I liked the look of the body suit by itself without the buttons and for ease of quick attachment they work better on the cape.

The buttons were a challenge in and of themselves. I had planned to carve them out of wood and paint them but ended up using baking clay and molding them instead. This worked rather well and was fun and easy to learn. I had never worked with this clay before, nor had I thought it would be so resilient to breakage. This change was made after I was given suggestions by the costume instructors about the benefits of doing it this way instead of carving. I'm happy I listened to them.

Boots were a fun time. I really didn't know how I was going to make them or if I would have time to get to this part of my costume. I used a faux-leather fabric attached to slippers with a silicone adhesive. The boots were made by meshing together two patterns found in a costume accessories book from the shop. I hand sketched the patterns onto pattern paper, cut the pieces and sewed them together. The original pattern made the calf section of the boot much larger than I wanted so I moved the seams closer together several times until the form was as fitting as I liked. This piece was then fitted over the slippers and the bottom portion of the boot, from another pattern, was tacked on then sewn on and the excess fabric cut away. This new piece was then joined to the slippers with the adhesive and the excess cut away to give a very clean, sleek finish.

The most elaborate and most time consuming piece of the costume was the bodysuit. I thought I would make a pattern out of paper and tweak it from there but with the influence of Leslie's and Diane's suggestions I made a muslin out of a leotard and then made a pattern out of that. This was a fairly simple process: I got a leotard that fit me well, traced what I wanted my suit to look like on it, cut along the lines, undid the seams, put the sections on pattern paper and made a new pattern which looked exactly as I had predicted it would. This pattern was then used on my fabric. Each piece was cut twice so that the suit would have a liner; the pieces were sewn together and turned inside out so that the seams were invisible. Front was joined to back, the top strap ends connected, and a back strap was added from extra fabric. The back strap posed more of a problem than was predicted. I wanted to be the source of some stretch to keep the front of the suit taut and I didn't want it to have any buttons or clasps. I eventually added a wide piece of elastic to the inside of the strap which gave the desired effect and also allowed the suit to be put on easily without breaking any seams. Elastic was also added to the leg holes and the top portion of the back bottom. This was rather difficult to do; since the fabric was slippery I had to use a paper to be able to feed it through the sewing machine. I also had to learn how to stretch elastic while sewing it to a garment. Getting just the right amount of stretch was difficult but

turned out well. Once the elastic was attached it pulled on the fabric and made it curl which, in turn, made sewing the seams under quite a task without getting puckers. Lastly, small rectangular patches were added on the neck strap on which hooks on the back of the cape buttons attached. Sadly I did this without having the cape with me so they were sewn on too low and the buttons couldn't be attached at the time of final presentations.

I couldn't find a laser pointer for my sunglasses in time so I made a very simple mask from fabric I had left over from making the boots. It was constructed by tracing out a shape a half-inch wider than my sunglasses on the fabric and then sewing a black cord to the ends of this shape so that it could be slipped over the head. The mask was what made the costume, or so I think.