

Arnolfini Double Portrait

Research Intensive

By Hannah Grace Shirley

Research Topic

- Exploring the art style and fashion of the Northern Renaissance.
- Understanding the message communicated through the inspiration piece.
- Creating a modern gown inspired by Jan Van Eyck's *Arnolfini Double Portrait*.

Figure 1
The Arnolfini Portrait, Jan Van Eyck



From The National Gallery, n.d.,
<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-the-arnolfini-portrait#>

Art and Fashion Interest

Figure 2a & 2b
The Arnolfini Portrait, Jan Van Eyck



- Van Eyck's captivating attention to detail
- Bright, luxurious gown
- Mysterious identity of couple

Literature Review

- Art
 - Northern Renaissance
 - Dutch Naturalism
 - Perspective, emotion, portraiture
 - Jan Van Eyck: oil paints, attention to detail, manipulation
- Fashion
 - Doublet, huke/tabard, hose, hats, pattens
 - Chemise, dress, houppelande, collar, veil, pattens
 - High forehead, “pregnant” look

Figure 3

Portrait of a man (self-portrait?), Jan Van Eyck



Adapted from The National Gallery, n.d.,

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-portrait-of-a-man-self-portrait>

Figure 4
Infrared reflectograms of Arnolfini Portrait



From Billinge and Campbell, 1995, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42616093>

Literature Review

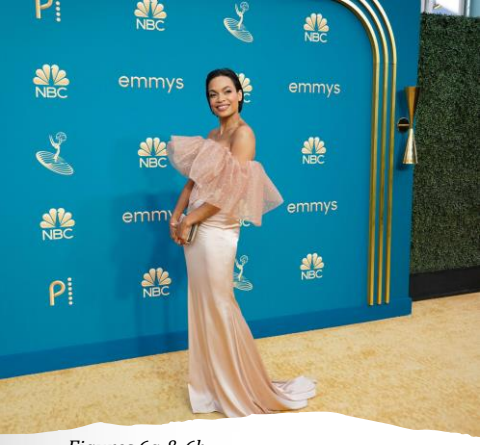
- People
 - New class: merchants
 - Traded cloth
 - Imitated nobility
- Painting
 - Luxurious fabric + bright colors = wealthy
 - Portrait = prestige
 - Hung bed, dog, oranges
 - Edits: shapes of faces, placement of hands, last-minute additions
 - Nicolao + Costanza? Wife died in childbirth?



Figure 5
Examples of late Medieval fashion
From Font, 2021, <https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/1430-1439/>

Information, Innovation, and Contribution

- Synthesized art period, historical context, and period fashion to understand the painting's background and meaning
- Artwork focused on the natural world, elevating human subjects
- Merchants highlighted social status through portraits and clothing
- Luxurious clothing with fine details emphasized wealth and desired figure



Figures 6a & 6b

Emmys style

From Holland & Steele, 2022,

<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/2022-emmys-red-carpet/index.html>

Figures 6c & 6d

Oscars style

From Wurzburger & Lieberman, 2022,

<https://people.com/movies/oscars-2022-red-carpet-arrivals-photos/>

- Unique contribution: no well-known fashion pieces inspired by *Arnolfini Double Portrait*
- Elements of garments and painting incorporated into a modern fashion garment
- Follows timeless trends: making a statement, being remembered, emphasizing social status

Information,
Innovation,
and
Contribution

Sketch and Inspiration

- Artistic inspiration: Jan Van Eyck's *Arnolfini Double Portrait*
 - Details
 - Color
 - Luxury
- Sketch of *Costanza* dress: Evening gown with embellished sleeves and underskirt train.

Figure 7
The Arnolfini Portrait, Jan Van Eyck
From The National Gallery, n.d., <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-the-arnolfini-portrait#>



Figure 8
Detail of mirror
From Hendricks, 2011,
<http://arthistoryblogger.blogspot.com/2011/09/arnolfini-wedding-portrait.html>



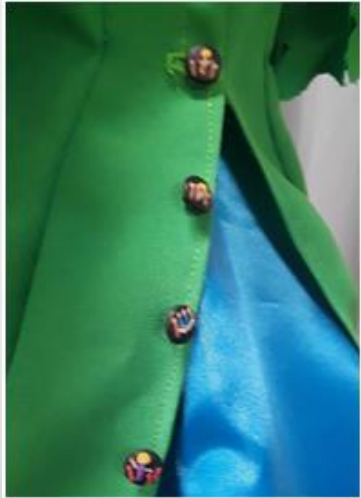
Figure 9
Costanza Dress sketch, created by Hannah Grace Shirley



Photos of the Draping Process

Photos by Hannah Grace Shirley

Photos of Final Product



Photos by Hannah Grace Shirley

Biblical Principles: Identity and Modesty

- Identity
 - Historically established through artwork and clothing
 - Dutch patrons used artwork to establish their own importance and piety
 - Merchants wanted to emulate the nobility
 - The Bible teaches that our identity comes from our relationship with Christ (*Ephesians 1 & 2, Colossians 1 & 3, 2 Timothy 1, Philippians 3*)
 - Expressions should align with what God says about us, not what we want to say about ourselves
- Modesty
 - The Bible calls us to modesty, focusing on actions that glorify God rather than clothing that glorifies the self (*1 Peter 3, 1 Timothy 2, Romans 12, Ephesians 4*)
 - Medieval/Renaissance clothing aimed to first cover the body
 - Modern formal wear focuses on revealing sexual parts of the body
 - *Costanza* emphasizes beauty through proportion, color, and details while remaining modest

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