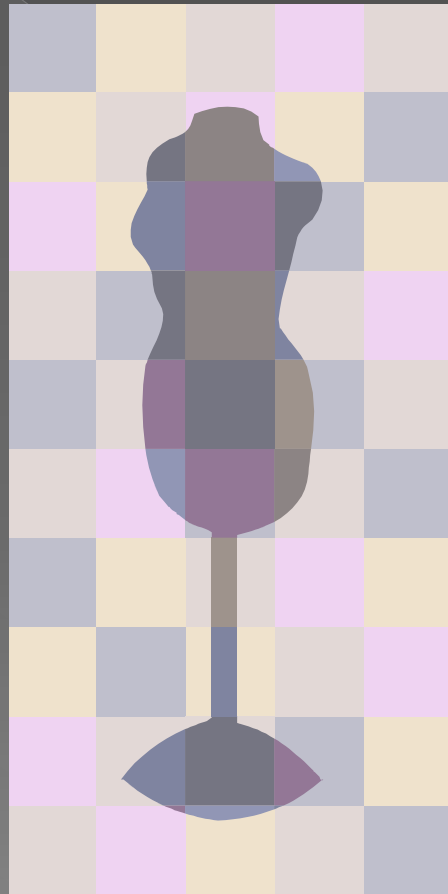


# CHAPTER 14

## COSTUMING



\*\*The costume is not merely a means of characterizing a role as effectively as possible. In its color and silhouette, it is also a vital part of the total stage design.

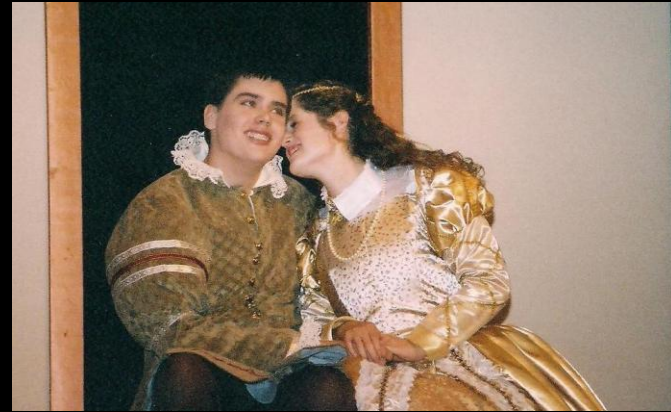
# Effective Costuming

- ◉ Express the personality of the character
- ◉ Should reveal social status, tastes and idiosyncrasies
- ◉ Aid the audience's understanding of the actor's relationship to the other characters
  - Color coding – matching characters by color or pattern – subtle means of identifying members of the same family, group or pairs of lovers

COLOR CODING



Beatrice and Benedick



Hero and Claudio



Don Pedro



Don John and Borachio

# Costume Design

- First step is to study the play carefully
- Meet with the director, scenic designer, and tech director
- Fit the theme, style, period, colors, scenery, lighting, and budget
- Chose fabrics and materials for costumes
- Measurements of the cast should be taken
- Preliminary sketches made
- Fabric swatches should be tried under the lighting planned for the show
- Actors must feel comfortable in the costumes
- Attention to the complete effect is essential
  - Details such as shoes, hats, purses, fans, jewelry and parasols can ruin the harmony of the design and mood of the play.

COMFORT LEVEL



A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum



West Side Story

FOR WHAT WILL THE COSTUME BE  
USED?



Will there be blood?

# Costumers' Considerations

- The kind of action that will take place
- The comfort of the actors
- The ease with which a costume can be put on and taken off, especially when costume changes are necessary
- The durability of the design and fabric
- The historical period of the play
- The total design of the production
- The director's conceptualization of the play

# Appropriateness

- Each historic period has its own distinctive line and form in dress – costume silhouette
- Small details become important on stage.



# Color, Line and Material

- ◉ Light materials or pastel color – comedies, farces, children's plays and fantasies
- ◉ Restoration comedy – satins, laces, and brocades
- ◉ High comedy – careful selection of color and material and attention to line
- ◉ Realistic plays – any material that will fit the characters' personalities
- ◉ Symbolic and allegorical plays – costumes are part of the symbolic meaning
- ◉ Costumers must keep in mind the individual actor's complexion, hair color and body shape
  - Blondes should wear cool colors, with warm color contrast
  - Dark-haired performers should wear warm colors and can risk brilliant fabrics and stronger color contrasts
  - Red Heads should wear yellow, orange, green and golden brown

# Obtaining Costumes

## ◎ Renting

- > Expensive
- > Not exactly what the costume designer wants
- > Not exact fit
- > Short rehearsal period due to availability
- > Good for large choruses and period pieces

## ◎ Making Your Own

- > Building – making costumes
- > Cost varies and can be close to that of renting
- > You get exactly what you want
- > Experience for high school students

RENTING OR BUILDING



Renting



Building