CHAPTER II.

DESIGN AND COLOR

"Art needs no spur beyond itself." — Victor Hugo.

When designing modern costumes, endeavor to make practical use of the esthetic principles of art, for time has proved that they produce successful results. Visit the best shops often, and read the best fashion and design books to see what other craftsmen are doing; learn to see quickly the way in which garments are designed and made and train the eye in memorizing color effects. The latter may be done by trying to match colors from memory. Study pictures and objects in the museums; above all, study and learn to appreciate nature.

Fashion. (The part of creating a costume which may be considered first is that of Fashion. Fashion means,—conforming to or established by custom; genteel; refined; elegant. No one wishes to be out of style, no matter how artistic he may appear. He does not wish to be spoken of as queer, freakish or eccentric. True art is never any of these, whether found in costumes, architecture, interior decoration, paintings or what not.

Follow the fashions of the day, but not extremes in style, create original designs of artistic value and charming colors, becoming to the wearer, but keep close enough to the general social ideas as not to appear behind the times. There is a reason for styles changing and a very good one, too. Ideas are constantly changing as the nation progresses; people’s garments reflect their ideas, so the style of raiment changes in proportion to their progress. One only need to look to the Orient to see a striking illustration of the spirit of stagnation. While the civilization of the Orient was practically standing still, the costumes were not changing in style. Then do not discourage those who wish to be fashionable, for they are conforming to the
general customs of the age, but always and everywhere make that fashion genteel and refined, or in the biggest sense, artistic.

Next consider the construction work. The eternal fitness of things or the clothing suitable for the occasion and person, the ornament appropriate for the gown, are of great importance.

**Clothing suitable for the occasion.** One must consider how and where an article is to be used before she purchases it or makes it, if she is wise in her business affairs and careful of her appearance. The climate or season of the year in which the garment is worn must always be considered, and the clothing designed so as to protect the health of the wearer.

The occupation should govern the style of dress during the working hours of the day. The dress should be comfortable so the worker may perform her task with the greatest possible ease; it should be neat and attractive that it may give pleasure to those who look at it. For instance, persons serving as nurses are most efficient when dressed in washable material; it gives one the feeling of cleanliness; those in the office, school room, library, etc., find it best to wear clothing that does not require constant washing; while persons in the home find that still different kinds of garments are more practical. Because the garments are used for work, is no reason why their artistic effect should be neglected. It is really more important that one should look well when at work than when at play. Cast-off finery, when used as business clothing, usually marks the wearer as one of very poor judgment and little skill in his line of work.

Various forms of pastime may come under the subject of play. When distinctive suits are used for the various kinds of amusements, they should be selected with designs and colors suitable for the place where they are to be worn and the amount of exercise to be taken. If the clothes are for golf, tennis, skating, horseback riding or any other sport, they should be made of strong, closely woven material that will not tear easily; soil quickly, or change color when worn in the rain or bright sunshine.
If gowns are to be selected for social functions, they should be of daintier, more fragile material and artistically decorated with lace, embroidery, beads, etc. Garments designed to be worn for evening or under artificial light may be of strong colors and in great contrast, for artificial light has a tendency to detract from the brilliancy of the color, and to cause many combinations which are beautiful in sunlight, to be gray and monotonous looking in the evening.

If one's work and play are so arranged that there is not an opportunity to change apparel, then the clothing should be so designed that it will not look out of place at either time. It should be simply constructed to meet the requirements of business, but sufficiently ornamented not to look too plain for social affairs.

**Clothing suitable for the person.** To design clothes suitable for the person is a more difficult problem than that of designing them suitable for the place. No two persons are the same in appearance, proportion or coloring, and the attractive points for each, should be made more prominent instead of emphasizing their weaker ones. For instance,—if a person is extremely tall, she should design her clothing so that there will be horizontal lines in the creation; if one is short and heavy, she should avoid plaids and horizontal lines and use vertical lines.

The general character of the lines of the figure should be given great consideration, especially in dressing children. If the figure has a tendency to appear angular and a little awkward, be careful not to emphasize that by designing the garments with similar lines; rather design in curves. For instance, the collars and cuffs may be circular, the design in the ornament flowing and curved, the material of the garment soft and gracefully draped, to overbalance the angular lines of nature. If the figure shows curved lines, then the garment may be more attractive if arranged in pleats, panels, and with the ornament square and angular in construction.

If one has a great deal of color in her face, she may select more somber clothing, while one of paler complexion may find that vivid color makes her more attractive.
If the hair is soft and straight, hats with curved lines will take away an extremely plain look, while if the hair is coarse and fluffy, tailored hats of severe lines are more attractive. The attractiveness of the head-dress depends upon the shape of the face, however, but the artistic arrangement of the hair adds greatly to the appearance. A free, natural arrangement is much more attractive than artificial ornamentation.

Ornament appropriate for the gown. When designing ornament appropriate for the gown, the material, the general character and color of the gown should always be considered. The ornament must be a part of the whole, and although the detail of the design may be ever so complicated, it should hold together so well that the effect is not spotty, or the decoration seem more important than the main part of the garment. It is very easy to become so interested in the ornament itself that the appearance of the garment as a whole is forgotten. It may be most beautiful in itself, but not appropriate for the article being constructed. Then the result is similar to a chair with one leg elaborately carved, regardless of the proportions and ornament of the rest of the furniture.

Decoration is to the dress what the blossom is to the flower; as the blossom grows out of the plant, so should the decoration grow out of the body of the dress, rather than appear to be stuck on; it should add to the general appearance rather than detract; it should never be more important than the simple construction work; it should be designed in proportion to the whole and in attractive colors.

Proportion. Artistic proportion is the comparative relation of parts that produce a beautiful whole. It has been proved that when space is unevenly divided, the effect is more pleasing; that is, the proportions one to three, two to five, three to seven, etc. cause a more artistic spacing than two to four, three to six, two to eight, etc. Notice the proportions in the fret and other Greek ornament. The proportions of a costume depend, to a great extent, upon those of the figure, but they may be modified to a certain extent by the costume designer, and the ornament may show entire originality.
NO. 2. FIGURE OF YOUNG WOMAN
The waist, the sleeve or the skirt of a gown is better in design, when divided according to the proportions previously mentioned, rather than with lines of gathers, tucks or trimming in the center of the space.

The proportions of the various parts of the human body are beautiful, and should be carefully studied by those interested in costume work. For instance, look at the hand, five fingers in place of four or six, and no two the same length; notice the space as divided between the palm and the fingers. Again study the proportion of the head,—forehead one-third, nose one-third, mouth and chin one-third of the vertical line of the face; the horizontal line from temple to temple divided into three parts by the eyes and the space across the nose.

See Illustration No. 3—Chart showing the proportions of adult. The human adult figure varies from seven and one-half to eight times its head length. Notice the various divisions on the chart. The width of the shoulders is a little less than two head lengths; the width of pelvis about one and one-half the head length. When the arms are outstretched the distance from finger tip to finger tip is equal to the height of the figure. The distance from elbow to wrist is three-fourths the distance from shoulder to elbow. The length of the hand is about one-half the distance from shoulder to elbow, or two-thirds the distance from elbow to wrist.

The chart shows the figure eight heads high, since that is the simplest way to show the divisions.

Those who wish to make the most of costume designing should know as much as possible about the anatomy of the human body, for the modern scientific idea is to adorn the figure rather than to enclose it in a shape some fanciful person has created. The idea is to assist nature in making more beautiful what she has created; to attract greater attention to the most beautiful and to detract from the homely parts of the figure.

One must learn to feel good proportion rather than to measure it. The eye should be trained by constant observation of interesting objects and should be made so sensitive that at a glance it can tell whether or not the division of parts produces a harmonious whole.

**Rhythm.** Rhythm in design is similar to that in music. It is the regular succession of the same or similar spotting, in place of the succession of sound. Notice the rhythm in the Egyptian ornament.
NO. 3. PROPORTIONS OF ADULT
Balance. Balance is the equalizing of two quantities, either space or color. The simplest illustration of this is the teterotte where the different weights of the children are balanced by the distance from the support to the child; imagine the small child dressed in vivid color, and the larger in gray and you will see the effect of balance in color.

Harmony. Harmony may involve either one or both rhythm and balance; it consists in producing the various elements of design in a modified form so as to produce a pleasing whole. For example, the eye craves variety and contrast, but harmony demands that the contrast should not become too great; detail pleases the eye, but harmony causes it to be properly united with plain space so that the detail does not become obtrusive.

Color. The coloring in the hair, face and eyes must always be given first consideration; the colors in the costume must either be in harmony with or contrasted to the natural coloring, so that they become subordinate to it.

There are many ways of producing beautiful color effects in costumes; for example, — by placing one material over another, a thin crape of one color over one of contrasting color; a plain material over a figured one or a thin figured material over a heavier plain one; another result is obtained by using adjacent colors, while still another is gained by the use of lace, ornament, etc. The color problem is not difficult providing one has a little knowledge of the theory of color and is a close observer of nature.

Unless the knowledge of the process of dyeing is desired, those interested in costumes are chiefly concerned with the effect of the dyes rather than the pigments themselves. The student should understand what causes certain effects and of what certain colors are composed, so as to work more intelligently when matching colors or arranging materials to form attractive color schemes as well as when designing ornament.

The combining and balancing of spots of colors, the grading of hues and tones has more to do with the beauty of the result than the
nature of the colors themselves. A color may be beautiful in itself, but not attractive when combined with others.

Ruskin says, "Give me some mud off a city crossing, some ocher out of a gravel pit, a little whitening, and some coal dust and I will paint you a luminous picture, if you give me time to gradate my mud and subdue my dust. But, though you have the red of the ruby, the blue of the gentian, snow for the light, and amber for the gold, you cannot paint a luminous picture, if you keep the masses of those colors unbroken in purity and unvarying in depth."

There are many theories concerning color but all are based on the division of the spectrum of the colors found in a ray of light. A very simple discussion will be given here, as that is sufficient for those who select colors. Those interested in dyeing and staining fabrics should make a more thorough study of pigments and color theory. A clearer understanding of color will be gained if charts are made, using pieces of fabric for the various colors.

**Primary colors.** The three colors, red, yellow and blue, termed primary, exist by themselves in-as-much as they cannot be divided into other colors. They are the standard from which all other colors, shades and tints are theoretically made.

**Secondary colors.** The secondary colors are orange, green and violet. They are composed of two primaries; green is composed of yellow and blue; orange, of red and yellow; violet, of blue and red.

**Tertiary colors.** The tertiary colors are citrine, russet and olive. They are composed of two secondary colors; citrine is composed of orange and green or one part red, one blue and two yellow; russet or brown, of violet and orange, or one part blue, one yellow and two red; olive, of green and violet, or one part red, one yellow and two blue.

**Positive color.** Positive color in textiles is the color produced by dyes representing the primary or secondary colors of the spectrum. When a positive color is made darker, it becomes a shade of that color and when made lighter, a tint.
Tone. When a color is made lighter it is said that the tone of color is changed, thus light tones of a color are termed tints, dark tones shades.

Hue. A change in hue is caused by the variation in color. For instance, green is composed of yellow and blue; if a person had on a green dress and stood in a shadow which was violet, the color of the dress would become bluish in hue, while if she stood in the yellow sunlight, the hue would change and the green appear yellower.

Value. The term value is applied to the relative amount of light reflected by the different colors. For example, there may be six tones of the same color in one piece of fabric, three grades in the light and three in the shaded portions. A piece of satin or velvet draped in folds serves as a good illustration. The high lights along the edge of the folds will have the strongest values in the light, while the deepest shadow will have the strongest values in the dark.

Local color. Local color is a term applied to denote the general color of the material without reference to the effect of light, shade, distance or reflection.

Warm and cold colors. The colors which have a reddish and yellowish hue are spoken of as warm colors and those of a blue cast as cold colors; for example orange is warm; blue-violet cold; blue-gray cold; red-gray warm.

Receding and protruding colors. Cold colors may also be termed receding colors, for they have a tendency to retire in the background; warm colors to protrude and attract attention in the foreground. The main part of an ornament may be made more prominent by coloring it in warm colors, and the background with cold colors. An interesting experiment with receding and protruding colors is to dress four figures in the following colors, — red, blue, violet and orange, and have them walk down a dimly lighted passage way. It will be noticed that the one dressed in blue disappears from sight first, second the one in violet, third the one in red, and lastly
NO. 4. MOTIF AND DESIGNS
the one in orange. Since orange is composed of yellow and red, both warm and luminous colors, it carries farther than any other color. The use of this theory is helpful when designing costumes for groups of persons, where one or two take prominent parts and the others form the background.

Gray. Gray is a combination of the three colors, red, blue and yellow, and varies in hue according to the proportion of each.

Complementary colors. Two colors which beautify or complement each other are spoken of as complementary colors. One of the colors of the spectrum becomes the complement of the combination of the other two; for instance, orange is the complement of blue; violet of yellow, etc. Make a chart showing the following and notice the result. Place circles of gray cloth on squares of red, yellow, violet and green. Notice how the circle on the red square appears greenish, thus emphasizing the complementary color of red; the circle on the purple appears yellowish; the circle on the green square appears reddish and the circle on the yellow shows a purple tinge.

Contrast. Contrast is a term applied to the effect produced when two or more colors, or different tones of the same color, are placed next to each other. The combination of a tint and a shade of the same color produces a contrast of tone; a combination of two distinct colors of the same tone produces a contrast of hue; a combination of colors, one of light, the other dark, produces a contrast both in tone and hue.

Motifs. When selecting motifs for designs, secure flowers or plants which have character; do not feel discouraged because you may not select from cultivated plants. The wild flowers at the back door often hold as much interest as a greenhouse plant; a common dandelion is considered only second to the beautiful Greek acanthus. The plant or animal from your own community, because it adds individuality to the design, should be used as often as possible.
“Think not so much of what thou hast not as of what thou hast; but of the things which thou has select the best, and then reflect how eagerly they would have been sought if thou hast them not.” — Shakespeare.

LESSON II.

Part 1. Copy the chart of the "proportions of the human figure" as given in the book. At the side of this arrange, on the same sheet, a chart giving the proportions of the student. This chart will be very helpful during the remainder of the course.

On separate sheet make drawings of the head, hands and feet. (B) Collect prints of figures of various proportions including the Greek statue of Venus. (D)

Part 2. Arrange a sheet of prints showing costumed figures clothed suitable for the occasion and one showing clothing suitable for the person. Also arrange a sheet showing examples of clothing not suitable for person or time.

Make a sheet of sketches showing the silhouettes of several gowns and the spotting which the ornament when properly placed would create. Do not work out the ornament in detail, just give the mass.

Arrange a sheet of prints showing costumed figures clothed suitable for various kinds of plays. (C)

Part 3. Arrange a color chart out of woolen, cotton or silk cloth. (A) Arrange a sheet of silhouettes of costumes cut out of Milton Bradley colored paper to show the effects of color combinations, complementary colors, contrast, harmony, etc.