DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE PROCESSES UTILIZED IN THEATRICAL COSUTME DESIGN

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by

Cherise Louise Mantia

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DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE PROCESSESS UTILIZED IN THE THEATRICAL COSTUME DESIGN PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE PROCESSES UTILIZED IN THEATRICAL COSTUME DESIGN PROCESS

by Cherise Louise Mantia

Theatrical costume designers are a unique group of people who tap into several different areas in their quest to communicate a character to an audience—they are fashion designers, visual artists, researchers, historians and psychoanalysts. Additionally, they help establish the tone and style of a production as well as the visual through line. This research study sought to understand how costume designers accomplish the task of visually creating a character and to understand if there is a universal process for the designers. Another purpose was to understand how imagination and creativity come into play in the costume design process. Available literature relating to the creative and the costume design processes were reviewed, six common phases were identified, and these phases were then utilized as a lens through which to view four of the nine 2005-2015 Tony Award winning costume designers. Data from video, print, and audio interviews were analyzed and coded according to the six common phases revealing that there are, in fact, commonalities between and characteristics of the creative and costume design process that could be immediately applied to costume designers and students of costume design.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES ix

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1
I. Statement of the Problem 1
II. Purpose and Significance 2
III. Methodology 3
IV. Inspiration of Study 5
V. Structure of the Thesis 6

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 7
I. The Creative/Imaginative Process 7
II. The Creative Process in Costume Design 19
III. Six Universal Phases of the Costume Design Process 24
Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understand the Domain and Its Symbols Phase 25
Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase 25
Phase 3: The Incubation/Ideation Phase 27
Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decisions (NDD) Phase 28
Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase 30
Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase 31
IV. Conclusion 31

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS 32
I. Tony Award Winning Costume Designers 32
II. Designer #1: Jess Goldstein (2005 Tony Winner) 33
Designer's Background 33
Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols Phase 34
Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase 35
Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase 37
Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase 38
Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase 38
Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase 38
Emerging Ideas 39

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III. Designer #2: Catherine Zuber (2006, 2007, 2010 Tony Winner) 39
Designer's Background 39
Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols Phase.....40
Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase 41
Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase 42
Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase 42
Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase 43
Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase 44
Emerging Ideas 44
IV. Designer #3 Paloma Young (2012 Tony Winner) 44
Designer's Background 44
Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols Phase.....46
Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase 47
Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase 48
Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase 48
Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase 49
Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase 49
Emerging Ideas 50
V. Designer #4: Ann Roth (2013 Tony Winner) 50
Designer's Background 50
Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols Phase.....51
Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase.....52
Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase 54
Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase 54
Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase 55
Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase 55
Emerging Ideas 56
VI. Conclusion 56

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CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSIONS.....59
I. Research Question #1 (Phase 1 of this Research) 59
What are the Commonalities Between and Characteristics of the Creative and Costume Design Process? 59
II. Research Question #2 (Phase 2 of this Research) 61
Which of These Commonalities and Characteristics Are Present in Professional Costume Designer's Work? 61
III. How Can the Understandings from This Study Be Used to Help Shape the Costume Design Process? 65

BIBILOGRAPHY 67

APPENDICES 80

APPENDIX 1: Theoretical Costume Design Process, and How It Corresponds to Other Creative Process Models 80

APPENDIX 2: Theoretical Costume Design Flowchart.....81

APPENDIX 3: Costume Designer Interview Protocol 82

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: The Creative Costume Design Flowchart 24

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

I. Statement of the Problem

When we choose our clothing each day, we often consider what we will be doing, whom we may encounter, the weather, our occupation, and our status. We think about how we wish to be perceived by fellow members of society (Lurie 119; Anderson 25). Our attire is a reflection of how we see ourselves either consciously or subconsciously. We continually send out messages about who and what we are based on our clothing. These messages and impressions are received by fellow members of our society before we utter a word and frequently inform them about who we are or who we wish to be (Lurie 3, 154-155).

Much as we form opinions about fellow members of society based on what they chose to clothe their bodies in on a given day, theatrical costume designers must choose what to clothe characters in for a theatrical production in order indicate time, place, social status, and other symbols about the characters to members of an audience (Anderson 16, 25). Before an actor speaks his first line, the audience has gained valuable information about the character being portrayed based on the clothes being worn (Barton viii). If a woman in a red dress enters a party scene and the other party goers are wearing muted tones, the audience immediately receives the message that this character is there to be noticed and endows the character with very specific traits.

Theatrical costume designers are a unique group of people who tap into several different areas in their quest to communicate a character to an audience—they are fashion designers, visual artists, researchers, historians and psychoanalysts. Additionally, they help establish the tone and style of a production as well as the visual through line.

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To accomplish this, they use a design process specific to their field and engage other artisans as collaborators along the way. How do they go about doing this? Is this process universal for costume designers? When and how do imagination and creativity come into play in the design process? Are there commonalities between and characteristics of the creative and costume design processes? And if so, which of these commonalities are present in professional costume designers' work? These are the questions that this thesis will address.

A variety of scholars have studied creativity and imagination in other disciplines, such as in the fields of education, business management, science and fine arts. However, an initial review of the literature revealed that the theatrical costume design is an area that could benefit from further research. Therefore, the intention of this research project is to begin to illuminate the possible commonalties and characteristics between the creative and costume design processes, and if they become apparent, to begin to identify how they might be present in a sample of professional costume designers' work.

II. Purpose and Significance

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a prominent researcher and expert in the field of creativity, believes that there are qualities of creative individuals that can be studied, learned and modeled. "Once we know how creativity works, we can make it work for us" (Sawyer xviii). By studying the creative process in theatrical costume design, resulting insights may be able to be applied to other areas of the theatrical design process, such as set or property design. This potential knowledge could also assist costume

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designers to gain a deeper insight into their own creative processes. The results might also be able to be used in educational settings.

III. Methodology

The first phase of this research project was based in textual analysis of the creative and imaginative processes. JSTOR, EBSCOhost, Project MUSE and ProQuest computerized databases were accessed using the key terms: creativity, imagination, creative process, and psychology of the creative process. Useful literature related to art design, theatre, theatrical design, and performing arts processes was identified by reviewing abstracts.

In order to understand the multiple characteristics of the costume design process, a variety of material was reviewed. Journal articles were researched utilizing JSTOR, Project Muse and ProQuest databases. As it was essential to understand how costume design was taught at the college level, a search was conducted for leading textbooks in the field that were then used to help the researcher to understand the intricacies of the costume design process. Prominent professional design books were also identified in the field of costume design using CSU and UC online print databases. Google searches were conducted for predominant newspaper articles on costume design.

Once relevant materials were identified, the scope of the data was narrowed to those items central to the topic. Depending on the source material, there appeared to be between five and eight phases to the costume design process and between four and seven phases to the creative process. In order to catalog the phases from both processes together to understand how they interfaced with each other, a chart titled

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Theoretical Creative Costume Design Process, and How It Corresponds to Other Creative Process Models (see Appendix 1) was developed and key information was recorded.

Upon completion of the chart, it became evident that the information could be categorized into broader categories that encompassed all of the ideas and blended the research in the creative process with the research in the costume design process. Similarities between the various processes were noted and consolidated into what became the Theatrical Costume Design Flowchart (see Appendix 2) which also illustrated the recursive nature of the costume design process. It was also possible to consolidate this information into six phases.

In the second part of the research process, the six phases of the costume design/creative process identified in the first phase were used as a lens through which to view the costume design process of specific designers. This was important to this project as it served as an avenue to begin to validate the initial research findings. As it was important to have a systematic approach, a coding protocol was used to gather information on the specific designers used in the study (see Appendix 3).

As the Tony Awards are considered the industry gold standard for live theatrical performance in the United States, Tony winners for costume design were used as a principle of selection for gathering data on the design process of particular costume design artists. The winners in the "Best Costume Design of a Play" category of the Tony Awards over the last 10 years (2005-2015) were used for this study. These particular years were selected because until 2005, the Tony Award Category for "Best Costume Design" had included both plays and musicals, and this study sought to identify costume

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artists of plays rather than musicals. It should also be noted that this limitation created a small sample size.

Nine Tony Award winning costume designers were identified between 2005-2015. Of these nine, four were used in the study as the others did not have sufficient information available that related directly to this study. The researcher used Google searches to identify designer websites, and utilized information from the websites that directly related to the creative and/or costume design processes. YouTube searches were also conducted to identify previous interviews with the designers, as well as searches for Podcasts. Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, ProQuest and OmniFile search engines were used to identify sources on the specific designers, as well as web searches for print interviews and industry magazines. Once the relevant materials were found, the information was coded into the six identified phases using the protocol chart for each designer.

Once the charts were completed for each designer, the researcher then searched for patterns and commonalities across the data of all four designers. Commonalities not specific to the six initial phases identified by the researcher also emerged.

IV. Inspiration for the Study

The researcher was both an undergraduate and graduate student in the Department of Television, Radio, Film and Theatre at San José State University, and worked on several theatrical productions in several capacities, including student costume designer and assistant costume designer. While performing these roles, aesthetic decisions based on personal knowledge of design and on research of the play were made. These included

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areas such as the era, location, economics of the location and characters, occupations of the characters, as well as the history of the play itself. Creative and imaginative processes were also involved, but the researcher was unsure of the origin of these processes and how they transpired. This ambiguity became the inspiration for this research.

V. Structure of Thesis

Chapter Two presents the literature that was reviewed in order to identify the links between the creative/imaginative processes, and the creative process in costume design. Chapter Three introduces the Tony Award-winning costume designers from the past 10 years (2005-2015). The background of each designer is provided as well as the results of identifying six phases of the creative/design process in each of the designer's work by utilizing podcasts, video interviews, print interviews and websites. Chapter Four includes a discussion and analysis of the results, as well as conclusions from the study.

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CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

To begin to understand the creative and imaginative processes in theatrical costume design, this literature review strives to address two significant areas: 1) the creative and imaginative processes in general, and 2) the costume design process.

I. The Creative/Imaginative Process

Keith Sawyer (xvi-xvii) investigated psychology papers published between 1950 and 2000 and found that less than one percent of them investigated aspects of the creative process. He also found little information on the evolution of human talent. He notes that cognitive skills have elaborate biological histories, and their evolution can be mapped over time. The exception was creativity. However, there are studies related to the development of creativity, and researchers have been able to identify many of the elements of the creative process.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, in his seminal texts *Flow* (1990), and *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (1996), defines creativity as "any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one" (28). He defines a creative person as "someone whose thoughts or actions change a domain, or establish a new domain" (28).

Sir Ken Robinson also defines creativity in his book *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative* as, "the process of having original ideas that have value" (151). He states that "being creative involves several processes that interweave within each other. The first is generative. The second is evaluative" (152). Robinson notes that "Creativity involves putting your imagination to work. In a sense, creativity is applied imagination"

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(142). Imagination, according to Robinson, "is the process of bringing to mind things that are not present in our senses" (2).

Eva T.H. Brann provides a more detailed definition of creativity and outlines three distinct ideas:

> In philosophy, the core definition for the imagination is that it is a power meditating between the senses and the reason by virtue of representing perceptual objects without their presence.
>
> In psychology, the preference is for defining the class of representations that is, the mental imagery, rather than the faculty. Mental imagery is a quasi-sensory or quasi-perceptual experience which occurs in the absence of the usual external stimuli and which may be expected to have behavioral consequences different from those attendant on their sensory counterpart.
>
> In ordinary discourse, finally, the imagination is most likely to be defined straightforwardly as a capacity for seeing things in one's head—the aforementioned "minds-eye" (24).

Possessing an active imagination appears to be one of the prerequisites for the costume design process, as well as the creative process in general. Jungian psychologist Janet Dallett cites and expands on analyst Marie-Louise von Franz's four steps in the process of active imagination. Dallett defines active imagination as "the relationship between ego and unconscious" (107). She acknowledges that while von Franz's four steps offer a "conceptually convenient way to break up the process in order to look at it more closely…, it is unlikely that anyone ever actually does active imagination in such an orderly fashion" (105). The four steps laid out by von Franz include:

> 1. …stopping the mad mind. The thoughts of ego-consciousness must first be set aside in order to give the unconscious a chance to enter.

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> 2. The unconscious begins to come in, usually in the form of fantasies, images, or emotions. These are written down or given some other external form at this point.
>
> 3. The ego reacts. There is confrontation with the unconscious material that has come up.
>
> 4. Conclusions are drawn and put to work in life (105).

Dallett further elucidates von Franz's four steps by arguing that during the first step, it is necessary to "set aside the critical, judging mode of the ego" and to "simply observe, uncritically, what comes up, remaining alert but not filtering out anything" (105). She quotes Jung:

> We must be able to let things happen in the psyche…. Consciousness is forever interfering, helping, correction [sic], and negating, never leaving the psyche processes to grow in peace…. To begin with, the task consists solely in observing objectively how a fragment of fantasy develops (105).

During this first step, one's subconscious or unconscious mind is at work during lateral or divergent thinking (usually during mundane activities; Porter's "Three B's of Creativity"). "What is really required at this first stage is the attitude of the child at play" (106).

The second step is the creating or doing phase in von Franz's process. "As the voice of the unconscious emerges, it is given expression… it is essential to give outer form to the material" (107). Merely using a medium to express the unconscious does not constitute an active imagination. For the expression to be considered one of the active imagination, "The ego must react to what has been expressed, draw conclusions, and put them to work in life before the process can be said to be complete" (107).

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Von Franz notes that the third step is crucial to the active imagination process, because it is during this phase that the ego reacts to what the unconscious has produced. It becomes necessary to decipher a meaning from the product.

In the fourth step, one must acknowledge what one has learned from the unconscious during the previous steps and apply that to their life.

Graham Wallas in his book, *The Art of Thought*, dissected a single thought into a beginning, a middle and an end in order to distinguish between the intermingling of psychological events that affect each other. Wallas takes the three observations that Hermann von Helmholtz described in a speech and contributes his own fourth observation.

> The first in time I shall call Preparation, the stage during which the problem was 'investigated…in all directions'; the second is the stage during which he was not consciously thinking about the problem, which I shall call Incubation; the third, consisting of the appearance of the 'happy idea' together with the psychological events which immediately preceded and accompanied that appearance, I shall call Illumination. And I shall add a fourth stage, of Verification, which Helmholtz does not here mention (Wallas "Stages of Control").

The Preparation stage involves education, and the rules to voluntarily or habitually direct attention to the elements of the problem. The Incubation stage occurs either during a period of abstention of conscious thought on a problem while working on another problem or during a time of mental relaxation. "The first kind of Incubation economizes time, and is therefore often the better [sic]. We can often get more result [sic] in the same time by beginning several problems in succession, and voluntarily leaving them unfinished while we turn to others, than by finishing our work on each

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problem at one sitting" (Wallas "Stages of Control"). Wallas notes that these four different stages occur in daily decision making and that they constantly overlap. "Even in exploring the same problem, the mind may be unconsciously incubating on one aspect of it, while it is consciously employed in preparing for or verifying another aspect" (Wallas "Stages of Control"). Illumination may be viewed as a successful train of thought associations resulting in a 'flash' of revelation. Verification and Preparation are similar in the way that the thinker uses their education and the applicable rules to verify their illuminations.

Dr. Shelly Carson of Harvard University created her own model to identify what she terms as "'brainsets' because these brain activation patterns are the biological equivalents of 'mindsets'; just as your mindset determines your mental attitude and interpretation of events, your brainset influences how you think, approach problems, and perceive the world" (14). Her book, *Your Creative Brain* is based on research "from neuroimaging studies, brain injury cases, neuropsychological investigations, interviews with hundreds of creative achievers, extensive testing of additional hundreds of individuals in her [my] research at Harvard, and information from the biographies of the world's most prominent creative luminaries" (14). From these she created the CREATES brainsets model:

Connect
Reason
Envision
Absorb
Transform
Evaluate
Stream

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She defines these as follows:

The Connect Brainset
When you access the connect brainset, you enter a defocused state of attention that allows you to see connections between objects or concepts that are quite disparate in nature. You are able to generate multiple solutions to a given problem rather than focusing on a single solution. The ability to generate multiple solutions is combined with an upswing in positive emotion that also provides incentive and motivation to keep you interested in your creative project. I've based the connect brainset on research that examines a type of cognition called divergent thinking, as well as on research into how we make mental associations, and a condition known as synesthesia.

The Reason Brainset
When you access the reason brainset, you consciously manipulate information in your working memory to solve a problem. This is the state of purposeful planning that comprises much of our daily consciously directed mental activity. When you say you're "thinking" about something, you are generally referring to this brainset. The reason brainset is derived from neuroimaging research that has examined consciously directed aspects of cognition, including establishing goals, abstract reasoning, and decision making.

The Envision Brainset
When you access the envision brainset, you think visually rather than verbally. You are able to see and manipulate objects in your mind's eye. You see patterns emerge. In this brainset you tend to think metaphorically as you "see" the similarities between disparate concepts. This is the brainset of imagination. I've based the envision brainset primarily on research that examines mental imagery and imagination.

The Absorb Brainset
When you access the absorb brainset, you open your mind to new experiences and ideas. You uncritically view your world and knowledge. Everything fascinates you and attracts your attention. This state is helpful during the knowledge-gathering and incubation stages of the creative process. The absorb brainset is based primarily on research that examines mindfulness, the personality trait of openness to experience, and investigations into how we respond to unusual or novel events.

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The Transform Brainset
When you access the transform brainset, you find yourself in a self-conscious and dissatisfied-or even distressed-state of mind. You can use this state to transform negative energy into works of art and great performances. In this state you are painfully vulnerable; but you are also motivated to express (in creative form) the pain, the anxieties, and the hope that we all share as part of the human experience. I've based the transform brainset on research that examines the relationship between mood and creativity.

The Evaluate Brainset
When you access the evaluate brainset, you consciously judge the value of ideas, concepts, behaviors, or individuals. This is the "critical eye" of mental activity. This brainset allows you to evaluate your creative ideas and products to ensure that they meet your criteria for usefulness and appropriateness. The construction of the evaluate brainset stems from research conducted on how we make judgements and eliminate options.

The Stream Brainset
When you access the stream brainset, your thoughts and actions begin to flow in a steady harmonious sequence, almost as if they were orchestrated by outside forces. The stream brainset is associated with the production of creative material, such as jazz improvisation, narrative writing (as in novels or short stories), sculpting or painting, and the step-by-step revelation of scientific discovery. This state is important in the elaboration stage of the creative process. The stream brainset comes from research conducted on improvisation in music, theater, and speech, and on a mental state described by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi as flow. This state has also been called being "in the zone" or "in the groove" (16-18).

Carson advises readers to use her CREATES model as a way to identify their mental comfort zone and to expand out from that comfort zone to expand and explore creativity. Carson adds variations to Wallas' model of the creative process (preparation, incubation, illumination, verification) by adding that there are four components to the preparation stage: gathering general knowledge; semantic knowledge (from education, books and other sources); autobiographical memories (your personal experience of the

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world); and physical skills (how to play an instrument, ride a bike, crochet a blanket) (63). This is your database.

The second part of the preparation stage is acquiring specific skills and information that are required for your specific creative endeavor. "Experts call this aspect of preparation "learning the domain." Since creativity is thinking or doing something that hasn't been done before, it helps to know what has been done before in order to take the game to the next level" (64). The third component of the preparation phase is problem finding. This is the search or definition of a problem that can be creatively solved. This component is an opportunity to find a new or different way to solve a problem (64). The final component is about immersing yourself in the problem or dilemma by mentally considering the problem from different aspects in an attempt to generate a plausible solution.

Once you are immersed in the problem or dilemma, you let it go and turn your attention to another task during the incubation stage.

> This is the point at which the deliberate and the spontaneous pathways to creative ideas diverge. If you're deliberately trying to solve the problem…you will resist the incubation period and you'll continue to consciously search for a solution to the problem. Your executive center will continue to call up information from the rear storage areas of the brain and you'll manipulate that information in your prefrontal lobes until you come up with a solution or insight. If you're taking the spontaneous route, you'll notice that taking a break from your creative problem can allow several beneficial things to happen in the brain" (65).

Taking a rest from the problem or dilemma allows the brain to rest from the hard work of the preparation stage (65). You may have generated an idea or potential solution from the preparation stage, but it may not be helpful and may in fact block new and more

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helpful ideas from emerging. The incubation period allows your brain to attend to other matters while the problem or dilemma is being worked on "below conscious awareness" (66).

The incubation period also allows you to pay attention to your environment and other things that are not related to your problem or dilemma, and this may allow for unrelated information to coalesce and generate an idea. "Just as Archimedes noticed the water overflowing when he sank into the bathtub so many centuries ago, something you see in the world around you could stimulate a connection between bits of information in your associational centers that will lead to a "eureka!" moment" (66).

Wallas describes that if a person spontaneously solves a problem it is called an "illumination," though it may also be called "insight" or "inspiration" and is often described as a creative idea that is "just suddenly there" (66-67).

Carson includes three steps in the verification stage: evaluation, elaboration, and implementation. During the evaluation stage, you need to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the idea that was illuminated during the illumination stage. If the idea has merit then you move on to the next stage, if not, then the idea is tossed out and you either re-immerse yourself in the problem or dilemma or wait for another illumination. If the idea has merit and is viable, you elaborate on the idea and flesh it out. Carson's final phase of the process is the implementation of the idea and involves "getting your work out there" (67).

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Carson acknowledges that "the process isn't always a straight line through these steps. You often go back and repeat several steps more than once before you can complete the process" (68).

Nigel Cross, design researcher and Emeritus Professor of Design Studies at the Open University in the United Kingdom, analyzed case studies and conducted his own interviews with designers to study design thinking as outlined in his book *Design Thinking*. While Cross' work is primarily concerned with the design work of engineers, architects, racecar designers and industrial designers, he states that "...design thinking is something inherent within human cognition; it is a key part of what makes us human" (3).

Because of his assertion that design thinking is inherently part of "human cognition," his research is applicable to costume design. Through his research, he has developed "a model of the design strategy followed by creative designers" (78).

> …at the upper systems level there is conflict, or potential conflict, between what the designer seeks to achieve as the highest goal and what the client sets as fundamental criteria. At the intermediate level, the designer frames the problem in a personal way, develops a solution concept both to match that frame and to satisfy the criteria. The designer applies that problem frame at the lower level, in order to identify and draw upon first principles of physics, engineering and design that help to bridge between the problem frame and a solution concept.
>
> At the lowest level is explicit, established knowledge of first principles, which may be domain specific or more general scientific knowledge. At the intermediate level is where the designer's strategic knowledge is especially exercised, and where that knowledge is more variable, situated in the particular problem and its context, tacit and perhaps personalized and idiosyncratic. At the higher level there is a mix of relatively stable, but usually implicit goals held by the designer, the temporary problem goals, and fixed explicit solution criteria specified by the client or other domain authority (77).

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Cross observed that "there is often a natural flow to design processes that can run counter to a prescription for what should happen when '…the emergence of design ideas cannot be constrained to a particular place or sequence in a systematic design methodology. It is clear that design ideas emerge where they will in the continuum of the design conversation…Ideation cannot be constrained to occur only during the prescribed time for this activity as dictated by notion of due process and proper sequence of phases in design'" (126).

Ann Medaille conducted research into the information-seeking behavior of theatre artists in a paper entitled "Creativity and Craft: The Information-Seeking Behavior of Theatre Artists" in which she used the framework of the creative process as a guide for her study. The goal of the study was to understand the particular research needs of theatre artists in an attempt to aid librarians in the decision making regarding collections.

Medaille also had another goal for her research. "A study of theatre artists can help to illuminate the connections that exist between two complex processes—the creative process and the information search and gathering process—and provide insight into the ways that people produce creative work not just in theatre but in a number of different subject domains" (328).

Medaille found that information seeking for the theatre artist involved cognitive processes that are related to creativity, namely, the combining and reorganizing of knowledge structures. "Information seeking challenges artists to use various cognitive strategies as they sift through and select the pieces that will play into their work, while

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information gathering provides artists with new information that they can combine with old material in ways that result in novel products and performances" (Medaille 344).

The information that is found and then combined to create new and novel works, can also contribute to the creative process to expand the theatrical artist's work:

> Information seeking and gathering not only provides a foundation for creative work—instilling theatre artists with greater knowledge about the subject of a production and greater confidence in their ability to be faithful to the text—but it provides some of the raw material that will be transformed into novel performances through play, exploration, experimentation, variation, visualization, evaluation, combination and recombination of ideas, problem solving, and use of imagery and analogies, as well as through the give-and-take that accompanies group creation. Theatre artists enjoy sharing information with other artists, and the back-and-forth process of independent search and group information exchange provides them with a constant source of stimulation.
>
> The process of seeking and discovering information allows theatre artists to make unique connections between their own experiences and newly discovered information. (Medaille 344).

While Medaille could not identify a singular model of the creative process that was utilized by the theatre artists in her study, nor was she able to identify one single activity that was the source for the theatrical artists' creativity, she found that "the creative process takes place over time and involves a complex interplay of resources, simultaneously occurring activities, and recursive processes. Although this study does not support a single creative process model for theatre artists, it does find that information seeking and gathering may come into play at several different points in the production of creative work, occurring heavily early on in the process but being practiced all the way up until the opening performance" (Medaille 345).

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II. The Creative Process in Costume Design

There are a variety of texts specifically written about the costume design process, the journey a costume designer embarks upon from the inception of a project to the completion of a project. A few of these authors also write about the imaginative/creative process contained within the overall costume design process. These author's ideas are described in this section.

One of the most comprehensive books on the use of the theatrical designer's imagination is Rosemary Ingham's *From Page to Stage* in which she poses several questions relating to what imagination is and how theatrical designers use it. In it, Ingham interviews several theatrical costume designers regarding their use of imagination in their work, with the goal of discovering the "elusive" (7) connection between the text and designing, which she states "is, in large part, a function of imagination" (7). Ingham states that "theatre designers have prodigiously acquisitive memories, strongly predisposed toward storing visual images and those miscellaneous facts that incite images" (15). The theatre designer calls upon these images when interpreting text and applying it to the image making process.

Rosemary Ingham and Liz Covey collaborated on *The Costume Designer's Handbook* which outlines the costume designer's process. They suggest that the play is read for the first time for pleasure. Ingham and Covey advise the designer to "stay put for a moment and experience your response completely…suspend judgement and examine the text in objective terms" (9). This is then followed by additional readings for costume and character references—the designer is searching the script for facts (11).

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After the designer has read and studied the script, an initial design meeting with the director and other designers (32-41) to discuss the production limitations (42-48) is scheduled. The designer then uses their previous readings of the script and initial design meeting with the director and other designers to conduct costume research (49-68). From this research, the designer begins "preliminary sketching and color layout" (69-87) leading to their final sketches (88-123).

Ingham and Covey stress the importance of possessing a "well-exercised imagination" as being as important to a designer's work as well as the "ability to read and think logically" (13).

> Imagination seldom approaches problems in a sequential manner. Instead it produces images, perceptions, and emotional responses which may, on the one hand, present themselves as fragments which seem to have little connection with one another or, on the other hand, spring forth whole and intact like Venus in the myth…both the intellect and the imagination are stimulated by facts discovered in the script. The intellect uses these facts to define and solve practical problems related to place, use, and historical accuracy. Imagination uses the same facts to reflect and evoke sensorial response and to support psychological and emotional forces. The intellect and the imagination work independently to create the play's visual environment. The two processes illuminate and check up on each other. A design that is all intellect may only serve the play in mechanical ways while one that is all image may be perfect for one moment in the first act but wrong for all the rest (13).

Rather than a convergent, linear mode of functioning, they note that intellect and imagination continually check back on each other in a more divergent mode and that a good design is built from both imagination and intellect.

In his seminal textbook, *Stage Costume Design: Theory, Technique, And Style*, designer and historian, Douglas A. Russell, describes his version of the costume design

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process. The first step is to read the script with "no thought of costume changes, problems of period, or methods of construction. The designer should absorb as much as possible of the author's story, mood, characterization, imagery, and pictorial intent before addressing the challenge of design" (20).

This is followed by a second reading where the designer keeps specific questions in mind regarding performance space, backstage facilities, and length of the run of the play. Subsequent readings of the play will assist the designer in assessing any particulars regarding the costumes: time and place, needed costume changes, references to specific costume pieces such as a specific colored blouse or the amount of wear on a pair of shoes, and any action that might affect the costume (such as fight scenes, blood, articles taken off or put on, quick changes etc.).

The designer takes these things into account to come up with a budget. The designer then begins conferences with the director and other theatre artisans followed by research. "Costume designers can seldom go directly from the script to their imaginations to produce finished designs" (Russell 23). This research is then the foundation on which designers can employ their creativity and imagination.

Russell also suggests that the designer keep an open mind when looking for material that "may strike a response" (24). For example, responses may come from going to a museum or looking through one's own inspiration files or a social history text. He stresses that, "theatrical appropriateness to the character and play are far more important than historical accuracy and an abundance of historical detail" (25). This suggests that

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the designer's service to the play need not be hampered by strict adherence to historical accuracy.

A part of the design process is the creation of "schedules, lists, and charts" (Russell 25). An important aspect of costume design is scheduling and planning. Some examples of the "schedules, lists, and charts" are: scheduling when items like reading the play and meetings with the director and other creative team should take place, research, designing the costume, shopping for fabrics or ready-made garments, construction of the costumes in the costume shop, fittings, etc. The action chart or plot is created to track characters in scenes and not any stage directions that might affect costumes. A costume list is created to break down the number of costumes that will be needed in the play. This is used to help plan the budget. The next phase for Russell involves the preliminary sketching of costumes based on the work done during the previous steps. These are created to visually convey all of the previous work to the director and production team, which is the next step in the process.

Michael Gillette dedicated an entire chapter to the design process in the fifth edition of his textbook *Theatrical Design and Production: An Introduction to Scenic Design, and Construction, Lighting, Sound, Costume and Makeup*. He believes that "design is more a process than an art. It is a series of steps through which we pursue the goal of creating what we hope will be a work of art—scenic design, costume design, lighting design, or audio design—or the artistry of an efficiently coordinated production. The design process is a method for finding answers to questions" (19).

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Gillette identifies seven parts in the design process: "(1) commitment, 2) analysis, (3) research, (4) incubation, (5) selection, (6) implementation, and (7) evaluation" (19). Unfortunately, the design process isn't a simple linear progression. As a designer moves from step to step, the designer must check back on their previous steps to make sure that they are headed in the right direction with their proposed solution (19).

Gillette acknowledges an emotional response to the designer's work that was not elucidated by the other authors. "…the [design] process...is primarily intellectual, it is essential for you to understand that emotions are an equally important part of the design equation. Your emotional reaction to the script and the production concept will intuitively guide your design work on any project" (19).

Professor Lynne Porter, a professional theatrical costume designer, lays out a similar but slightly different take on the design process in her book *Unmasking Theatre Design*. She believes that the steps to costume design include: 1) Comprehend the Problem—which in the design process translates to reading the play, 2) Gather Inspiration--by analyzing the play, and conducting visual research, 3) Invent Solutions--by generating design ideas, 4) Develop the Work--by refining and building on the previous design ideas and finally, 5) Present the (Best) Solution—by rendering and verbally explaining our work (71-73). Porter further explains the costume design process:

> At the end of the day, designing is a gloriously messy proposition. As much as we might think of a series of interconnected steps, designing actually involves a churning mass of impulses and decisions. A variety of both rational and emotional impressions flows through our work. Designing is usually a fluid, organic experience. Here is an example of the

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> myriad of factors swirling through a designer's brain at the beginning of the design process:
>
> - Excited impressions from the first play reading, mixed with
> - Insightful comments from the director, mixed with
> - Pressure from the director wanting to see sketches, mixed with
> - Trepidations about working with a new artistic team, mixed with
> - A recent dream that featured the color blue, mixed with
> - Comments from a friend about a previous production, mixed with
> - A fascination with classical architecture, mixed with
> - A recent trip through and art museum, mixed with
> - Swirling images from a recent Internet search.
>
> In my experience, every design unfolds in a unique fashion, though each designer uses all the elements of the creative process (74).

Porter describes what is happening in the mind of the costume designer as they begin the design process as a whirling dervish of colors, thoughts, ideas, experiences, and knowledge of the field and the domain as their mind makes connections and decisions between and among the various factors.

The costume design process as outlined by Ingham, Russell, Porter, and Gillette has many similarities. What becomes apparent is that while the basic steps in the design process tend to be universal, the areas in which design ideas are incubated are more ambiguous. Though several of the authors acknowledge these areas exist in costume design, what these areas consist of and where they occur in the process appears to be vague at best.

III. Six Universal Phases of Costume Design

There are, according to the researchers noted in this study, between five and eight steps that have been identified as belonging to the general creative process. For the purposes of consolidation for this thesis, I have organized these steps into the following six phases. While the steps appear to be hierarchical in nature, they actually occur in a

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recursive form—often evolving back on each other as illustrated in Figure 1: The Creative Costume Design Process Flowchart (see page 26).

The following is a description for each of the six phases that were identified:

Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understand the Domain & Its Symbols Phase

One must have a clear idea of the question or problem and understand the domain and its symbols (i.e. design theory, color theory, rendering skills, elements of art, principles of design, etc.) in which one is working before beginning to explore new possibilities and pushing boundaries (Robinson 152; Csikszentmihalyi 28; Sawyer 93; Medaille 336; Lehrer 93; Gnezda 49; Cross 70; Wallas "Stages of Control"; Carson 63).

Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase

It is important to research and gather information that will help solve the problem (Sawyer 88; Lehrer xvii). Medaille cites the importance of research and information gathering to theatre artists. "The process of seeking and discovering information allows theatre artists to make unique connections between their own experiences and newly discovered information" (344). According to Cross, experienced designers know that it is possible to continue in the research phase beyond the scope of the design problem before moving onto the generation of solutions, "which in themselves begin to indicate what is relevant information" (121). "Costume designers seldom go directly from the script to their imaginations to produce finished designs" (Russell 23).

Collaboration is a part of research because, as one costume designer noted "we come back together and share what we discovered and researched, because my research might influence the lighting designer's research (etc.), and we share pictures and ideas

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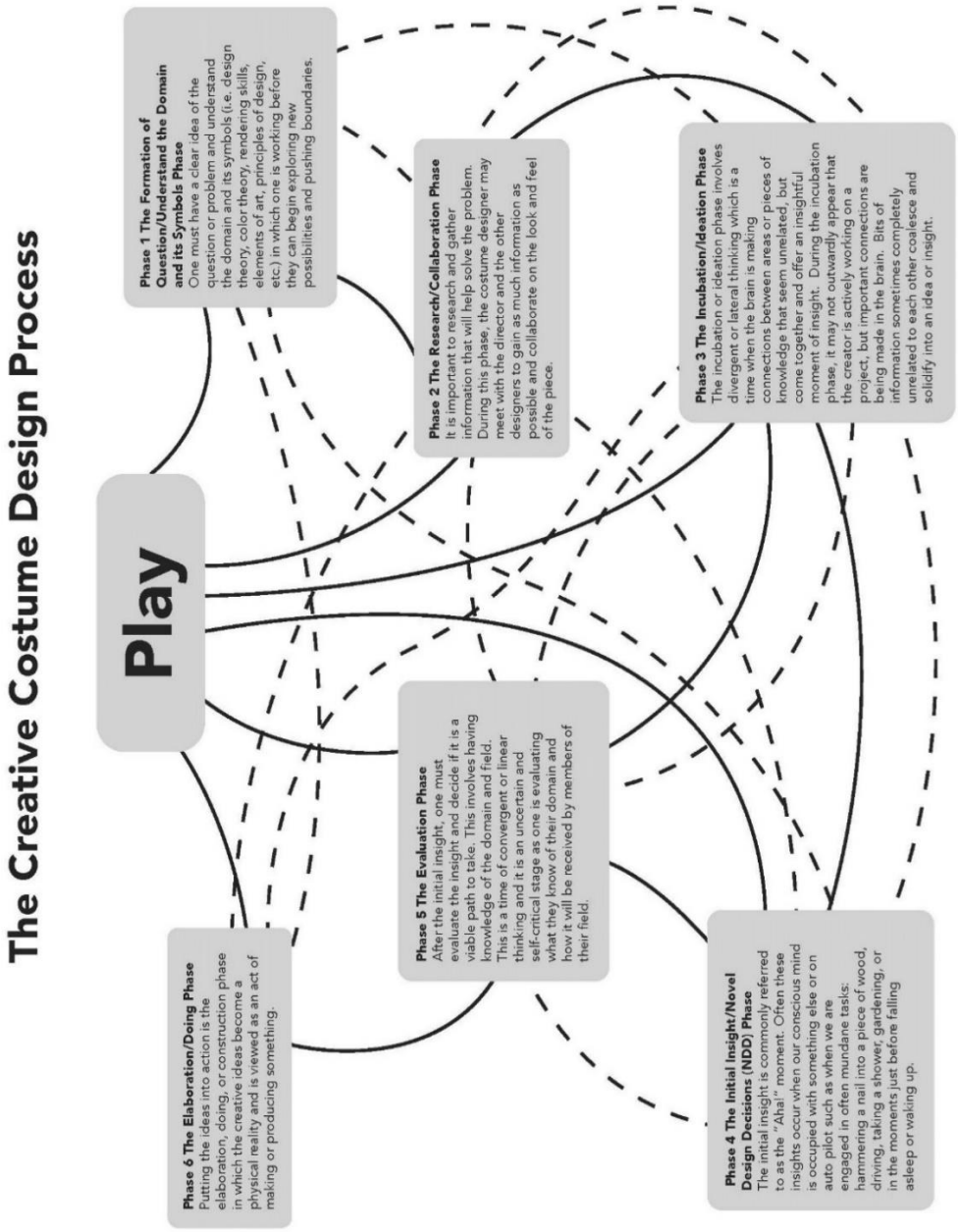

Fig. 1 The Creative Costume Design Process Flowchart, created by researcher

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and really try to make everything cohesive, so there's a lot of back and forth" (Medaille 335). During this phase, the costume designer may meet with the director and the other designers to gain as much information as possible and collaborate on the look and feel of the play.

Phase 3: The Incubation/Ideation Phase

The incubation or ideation (Gnezda 49) phase involves "focal and subsidiary awareness" (Robinson 155). Focal awareness is when we actively try to solve a problem in a more linear or convergent fashion (Csikszentmihalyi 79; Porter, 51-52; Sawyer 97-103; Wallas "Stages of Control"). Subsidiary awareness (subconscious) is what is taking place when a person is not actively thinking about the problem or question (Dallett 105-106). Csikszentmihalyi, Porter (51-51) and Sawyer (88) refer to this as lateral or divergent thinking and state that it is happening "below the threshold of consciousness" (Csikszentmihalyi 79; Carson 18).

Divergent or lateral thinking is a time when the brain is making connections between areas or pieces of knowledge that seem unrelated, but come together and offer an insightful moment of insight (Csikszentmihalyi, 79-80; Porter, 52; Robinson, 158; Kounios and Beeman 214; Gnezda 48; Smith and Kounios 1444; Wallas "Stages of Control").

During the incubation phase, it may not outwardly appear that the creator is actively working on a project, but important connections are being made in the brain. Bits of information sometimes completely unrelated to each other coalesce and

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solidify into an idea or insight. Cross uses the term 'creative bridge' to explain the illumination that occurs in creative design when a bridge is built "between the problem space and the solution space" (129). Robinson cites Arthur Koestler's observation of "bi-association: when we bring together ideas from different areas that are not normally connected, so that we think not on one plane as in routine linear thinking but on several planes at once" (158). The belief is that a form of parallel processing may be taking place when the elements of a problem are said to be incubating.

> When we think consciously about an issue, our previous training and the effort to arrive at a solution push our ideas in a linear direction, usually along predictable or familiar lines. But intentionality does not work in the subconscious. Free from rational direction ideas can combine and pursue each other every which way. Because of this freedom, original connections that would be at first rejected by the rational mind have a chance to become established (Csikszentmihalyi 102).

Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decisions (NDD)

The initial insight is commonly referred to as the "Aha!" moment (Kounios and Beeman 210; Csikszentmihalyi 80; Porter 52; Sawyer 107; Lehrer 14; Wallas "Stages of Control;" Carson 65-66). Gnezda notes that this "is the peak emotional experience for the creative process" (6). Cross cites fellow researchers Omer Akin and Chengtah Lin as recognizing these moments of insight as "'novel design decisions': non-routine decisions that 'turn out to be critical for the progress of the entire design'" (129). The novel design decisions are "characterized by three features: an NDD resolves a problem or bottleneck, it does not follow from previous assumptions, and the designer identifies the NDD as an important feature of the overall design" (Cross 129).

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Often these insights occur when our conscious mind is occupied with something else or on autopilot such as when we are engaged in mundane tasks: hammering a nail into a piece of wood, driving, taking a shower, gardening, or in the moments just before falling asleep or waking up (Cross 71; Dallett 106). Porter calls these "the Three Bs of Creativity: the bed, bath and bus" (57). These have been identified as times when we are more likely to be in lateral or divergent thought (Porter 57; Sawyer 97-104).

Current scientific research in the study of creativity in the human brain (see Kounios and Beeman; Smith and Kounios; Sawyer 163; Feist and Rosenberg 403) suggests that while the left hemisphere of the brain deals with "the processing of close or tight associations" (Beeman and Kounios 214) or what Lehrer describes as "*denotation*--it stores the literal meanings of words" (9). Beeman and Kounios observed that the right hemisphere is "processing remote associations" (214). Lehrer states that the right brain deals with connotation, or all the meanings that can't be found in a dictionary" (9-10). The left brain is looking for literal meanings and can be associated with linear, convergent thinking (Porter 51; Csikszentmihalyi 60; Sawyer 97-103; Cross 140; Ingham and Covey 15), and uses the acquired knowledge of the domain and the field. The left brain digests the information that was gained from the research phase of the creative process.

Conversely, the right hemisphere of the brain is looking for connections between the acquired knowledge of the domain and field and processing information from the research phase using lateral or divergent thinking (Porter 51; Csikszentmihalyi 60; Sawyer 97-103; Cross 140; Ingham and Covey 15). During creative problem solving, the

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creative mind will use both hemispheres of the brain; individuals with high creativity often diffuse their attention between both the left and right hemispheres of the brain (Kounios and Beeman 214) allowing for greater flexibility and shifts of thought.

When emerging from this incubation or ideation phase, Porter notes that there are a series of three ideas that may emerge depending on when the incubation takes place in the process:

> *Early Ideas* are the initial obvious answers that come to us, often very quickly. These are a result of linear, patterned thinking…Not all early ideas are bad, but there is no guarantee that they are the most innovative solutions to the problem. We need these ideas to get us moving in the process, but their relative importance can quickly expire. As an analogy, early ideas are minor characters.
>
> *Middle Ideas* tend to come once the obvious answers have exhausted themselves. Some odd, interesting new ideas will float into the mix. This happens as result of both linear and lateral thinking. These are the supporting characters in your personal ideation process.
>
> *Late Ideas* are the result of getting into brand new territory. Many of these late ideas will be silly and unworkable, but the truly innovate great ideas come in this part of the process. This is a result of lateral thinking. If we end our process before the late ideas appear, we may shortchange our design. I like to think of the late ideas as the star character in our ideation process (58).

Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase

After the initial insight, one must evaluate the insight and decide if it is a viable path to take. This involves having knowledge of the domain and field. This is a time of convergent or linear thinking and it is an uncertain and self-critical stage as one is evaluating what they know of their domain and how it will be received by members of their field (Csikszentmihalyi 80; Robinson 153-154; Sawyer 129-133; Cross 145-146; Carson 67).

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Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase

Putting the ideas into action is the elaboration, doing, or construction phase in which the creative ideas become a physical reality and is viewed as an act of making or producing something. It is not merely enough to generate the idea, but to be truly creative one must put ideas into existence (Robinson 142; Sawyer 137; Csikszentmihalyi 29, 80; Gnezda 49; Lehrer 91; Dallett 107; Carson 18, 67). Gnezda states that there may be a sense of disappointment with the work. While a person may also experience a lessening of frustrations found in the implementation stage and their mood may elevate, this stage is not as significant as the inspiration phase, when "a significant coalescence of thought occurs and enters consciousness" (Gnezda 49), thus potentially making the experience less gratifying (Carson 17).

IV. Conclusion

The review of the literature on the creative/imaginative processes and the costume design process indicates characteristics and commonalities between the respective processes as indicated in the six phases. These six phases will be utilized in Chapter three to code the research materials (recorded interviews, podcasts, print interviews, etc.) of the identified professional theatrical costume designers in order to gain insight into the costume designers' design process. (See also Appendix 1: Theoretical Costume Design Process, and How It Corresponds to Other Creative Process Models.)

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CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

I. Tony Award Winning Costume Designers

The nine Tony Award winning costume designers from the years 2005-2015 were: Jess Goldstein (2005), Catherine Zuber (2006, 2007, 2010), Katrina Lindsay (2008), Anthony Ward (2009), Desmond Heeley (2011), Paloma Young (2012), Ann Roth (2013), Jenny Tiramani (2014), and Christopher Oram (2015).

It should be noted that during the course of identifying and acquiring the data, it became evident that some of the designers who have been in the business of theatrical costume design for several decades had much more information available than others. Because five of the nine identified designers had insufficient data available (more than three identified sources) for the purposes of this study, only four Tony Award winning costume designers were utilized for Phase 2 of this study.

The designers who had more than three identified sources that contained sufficient information on the designer's background and their process were Jess Goldstein (2005), Catherine Zuber (2006, 2007, 2010), Paloma Young (2012), and Ann Roth (2013). Each of these designers also had biographical information and enough interviews available to code for their costume design process.

It became evident that some designers were more articulate than others about their process. Additionally, several of the interviews dealt with musicals, operas or ballets and while not in the scope of this research, the data that were used from the interviews were based on the designers' process rather than the specifics of the theatrical production they were discussing.

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The following chapter outlines the results of where and how the six phases of the creative process appeared when examining the variety of resources published on each designer. The phases utilized are identified in Chapter Three, pages 25-31.

II. Designer #1: Jess Goldstein (2005 Tony Winner)

Designer's Background

According to Jess Goldstein's professional website, Jess-Goldstein.com, Goldstein has been professionally designing theatrical costumes since 1978 (Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein"; Barbour). He graduated from Boston University's School of Fine Arts and the Yale School of Drama where he studied with Ming Cho Lee and Jane Greenwood, earning an MFA in 1978 (Barbour). He has since become a colleague of his former teachers and became a Professor of Theatre Design in 1990 (Barbour; Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein"). Prior to his teaching at Yale, he taught at Rutgers University for eight years (Barbour). In addition to his 2005 Tony win for Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals*, Goldstein is also the recipient of the Irene Sharaff Award for Lifetime Achievement in Costume Design, the Lortel and Hewes Awards and was the 2010 recipient of the Michael Merritt Award for Excellence in Design and Collaboration (Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein;" "Jess Goldstein Biography"). Not only has Goldstein designed for plays, he has also designed for operas and feature films.

The research revealed four interviews with Goldstein in which he discussed his costume design process. These interviews include a 2013 journal article from "Studies in Musical Theatre;" 1999 online print interview with David Barbour for *Live Design;* a 2011 online article with John O'Rourke for the alumni newspaper for Boston College,

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Bostonia; a 2015 online video discussion posted on *Broadway.com*; and a February, 2015, two-hour podcast hosted by Cory Pattak on *In1Podcast.com.* The designer's professional website, Jess Goldstein.com, also provided additional material on his professional design experience. There were numerous connections made to the six phases of the creative design process as noted below.

Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols

Goldstein clearly understands the questions or problems inherent in costume design and is known for exploring new possibilities. During his design work on the 1998 production of *The Uneasy Chair*, Goldstein was faced with the problem of costuming four Victorian-era characters in a fast-paced play which made it almost impossible for them to leave the stage for costume changes. Goldstein designed a unit costume for each of the four leads where items such as accessories, overcoats, or other alterations could be added to indicate a change of scene (Barbour).

Goldstein's training in design theory, his rendering skill, and his knowledge of the principles of design seem to play a big role in solving costume problems. For example, while designing for Shelagh Steven's *The Memory of Water* in which the deceased mother is on stage as a younger version of herself dressed for a party, a very specific problem was posed for Goldstein. "The playwright was very specific about it being a green taffeta cocktail dress. We tried a lot of different dresses on the actress, just for shapes. Then we used different parts of different dresses to design the best look for her. We got the shape of the bodice from one dress, the sleeves from another, the skirt shape from another" (Barbour).

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Another example of Goldstein's understanding of the costume problem was when he was costuming *The Merchant of Venice*. The director, Daniel Sullivan, wanted to set the Shakespearean play in 1910. This posed a challenge for Goldstein because historically during this time, men wore either black or gray frock coats and he felt it was important for the audience to be able to distinguish the characters from one another. In order to make this distinction, he incorporated subtle bits of color in their cravats, waistcoats and accessories. While knowing that the dress was historically correct, he was still able to differentiate the characters from one another (O'Rourke).

For Goldstein, the most important aspect of costume designing is for "a designer to serve the play. It's not about the conception of the costumes; it's about the conception of the whole production and how the characters fit into the play" (Barbour). Goldstein knows that his role in the production as the costume designer is to take what challenges arise either from the script or from the director and use his experience and training to find the best solution that will serve that particular play.

Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase

When Goldstein begins his research on a Broadway play he usually has a few months to design. He begins by reading the play and spends several weeks thinking about the characters and the situations. He starts his research in his studio with his vast collection of books, looking at photos of past productions, films, or online video clips on YouTube (O'Rourke; Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein"). Goldstein is not afraid to look at other images from past productions because he feels that these are part of the piece's

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history, and he seeks to gain as much information as possible about any given piece (Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein").

Goldstein repeatedly refers to his collaboration with the actors. He notes that "You're there to support how the actors become the characters" (Barbour). For him the most creative part of costume design is working with actors in the fittings. It is here that he and the actor collaborate on the costume, making edits and additions not only to his vision, but also to the actor's interpretations of the external appearance of the character. He believes that it is his role to help the actor feel comfortable in the clothes and to sell the character on stage (Barbour; Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein;" O'Rourke, Dee Das 377).

Goldstein's design work on Paula Vogel's *The Mineola Twins* (for which he won a Lortel Award) presented the challenge of costuming a single female actress playing twins, as well as costuming the male roles played by women. To differentiate between the twins, Goldstein collaborated with the costume maker and the set designer on a bra "because we couldn't find a period bra that fit Swoosie (Kurtz) and also had enough exaggeration. There's a graphic of a bra in the set design that comes from a Frederick's of Hollywood catalog illustration—Swoosie's bra is based on that" (Barbour). He understood that the problem was differentiating between the two twins and through the use of his collaboration skills, he was able to solve the design dilemma of how to make one actress look like two separate people. The Vogel play spanned three decades and to assist the audience with the jumps in time and place, Goldstein's challenge was to design costumes that would accomplish that. He needed to understand what the time periods were, and what costume pieces would assist in establishing that. He clearly understood

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that the jumps in time and place could be very confusing, but by using his research skills, he was able to add touches to the accessories to aid the audience in understanding the chorological journey of the story (Barbour; Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein").

Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase

Goldstein relies on the research material to inform his designs; however, he will put the research aside in order to allow what he has found to sit and incubate while connections are being made between seemingly unrelated information (Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein;" O'Rourke). He may have learned this while a graduate design student at Yale, where he studied under Ming Cho Lee with whom he now works alongside at the Yale School of Drama. He notes that "Ming made you think designers are thinking people, not decorators" (Barbour).

Goldstein talks about two instances where seemingly unrelated information coalesced and took place. The first one was during the designing of *Newsies* in which he connected the character of Medda Larkson to a pictorial featuring Marilyn Monroe in *Time Magazine* that he had seen as a young boy (Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein"). The other instance that is noteworthy occurred while he was designing the character of Maude Dilly, the vocal teacher in *On the Town*. He connects his design for her to an art teacher he had when he was in elementary school (*Broadway.com*). Goldstein was thinking about the characters' visual look and made connections to seemingly unrelated information.

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Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase

The example of Goldstein's design of the green taffeta cocktail dress for *The Memory of Water* fits into Phase 1, however, due to the recursive nature of the six phases, that example also fits into the Novel Design Decision Phase because he used the shapes from different dresses to come up with a new dress design for the actress.

The recursive process can also be seen in the in the example from Phase 1 of the black and gray frock coats in *The Merchant of Venice* where he incorporated small details into each character's costume to differentiate between them.

For the final scene in *The Mineola Twins*, the lead actress makes several entrances and exits as both twins. To help distinguish between the two sisters, Goldstein designed a padded suit to illustrate the different contours of the sisters (Barbour).

Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase

During Goldstein's evaluation of a design, his thoughts return to the actor. He evaluates his research and knowledge of the domain and adjusts his designs accordingly. When designing a period piece, he doesn't want to overwhelm them with lots of padding or corsetry and petticoats, rather he takes liberties with historical accuracy to accommodate the actors (O'Rourke).

Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase

As noted in Phase 1, Goldstein created unit costumes for the four lead actors in *The Uneasy Chair* who could not leave the stage for costume changes.

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In the example of the green taffeta dress for *The Memory of Water* from Phase 1, he could not find the right dress, so he designed a dress that looked best on the actress incorporating design elements from three different dresses.

Emerging Ideas

In three of his interviews, three reoccurring ideas emerged. Goldstein notes that a costume designer has to love the work because it is both physically and mentally challenging, that the costume design business is not for lazy people, and that designers have to continually prove themselves (O'Rourke; Barbour; Pattak, "#37 Jess Goldstein"). Goldstein feels that having to source costume pieces, while time consuming, can send him down another path for a character (Dee Das 378). Another idea that emerged from Goldstein was his philosophy on designing period costumes, "'you should begin that play [Shakespearean] by designing it in contemporary clothes. Because you'll understand those clothes more than you understand period clothes'" (Dee Das 380). Goldstein advises his students to think about period clothing's evolution to modern dress.

III. Designer #2: Catherine Zuber (2006, 2007, 2010 Tony Winner)

Designer's Background

Catherine Zuber immigrated to the United States from London, England at the age of nine (Sod). She studied photography at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and went on to the Yale School of Drama where she studied costume design with Ming Cho Lee and Jane Greenwood (Sod; Rothstein). Upon graduating in 1984 with an MFA, Zuber was recommended for her first professional costume design job with the American Repertory Theater (Sheehy; Sod). Her first Broadway costume design credit

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was a 1993 musical adaptation of the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale, *The Red Shoes*, which opened on a Thursday and closed on the following Sunday (Rothstein). Zuber won her first of three Tony Awards for Best Costume Design of a Play in 2006 for *Awake and Sing!*, one year after the Best Costume Category reverted back to two separate and distinct categories (Rothstein; Sheehy). She won again in 2007 for *The Coast of Utopia* and again for *The Royal Family* in 2010 (Rothstein; Sheehy). In addition to her Tony wins for plays, she has won three Tony's for her costume design work on musicals. Zuber's work spans plays, musicals and operas (Sheehy; Rothstein; Sod).

The research revealed five online print interviews: An April 2013 interview with Mervyn Rothstein for *Playbill*, an interview with Education Dramaturg Ted Sod for the Roundabout Theatre Blog from 2013, a 2014 piece from the *New York Daily News* written by Joe Dziemianowicz, a 2015 article on *FootwearNews.com* by Margaret Sutherlin, and a biogeographical piece posted *Opera News* by Helen Sheehy. A journal article appearing in "TCI: Theatre Crafts International" was also reviewed. Additionally, there were two video interviews with *Broadway.com*, one from 2011 where Zuber discusses her costume designs for the Broadway production of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and another from 2015 in which she discusses her costume designs for *The King and I*.

Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and its Symbols

Zuber understands that costumes are built on a human form and that they are not like other forms of art, they are made to be worn and help to tell the story of the character. A challenge for her was in delineating between the characters who had power

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and the characters who think they have power in the 2013 production of *The Big Knife*. The clothes had to show the inner personalities of the characters (Rothstein; Sod). She experienced another challenge when it came to reinterpreting the iconic white dress from the 1958 film, *Gigi*, for a 2015 stage production (Sutherlin).

Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase

Research for Zuber is thrilling. She likes to get inside a specific time and place. She researches all aspects of a time and place including the social and political environment as well as researching what people from different parts of society wore and where they shopped. She considers what materials would have been available to the characters and whether they ordered from the Sears catalogue or attended Paris fashion shows. For this research she uses her own personal collection of magazines from different time periods and sewing pamphlets as well. She often visits the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) to view their collection of publications of various time periods, as well as researching publication plates from department stores to discover what was for sale at a given time of year (Sod; Dziemianowicz; Sutherlin; *"The King and I* Catherine Zuber"; "Behind the Scenes: *How to Succeed in Business*"). Merely taking a trip to a museum was not enough research for a 1998 production of *The Sound of Music*, Zuber traveled to Salzburg, Austria to study the history of Austrian clothing and the Von Trapp Family story (Napoleon).

Zuber says that she loves to collaborate with other members of the creative team, the director, and the actors to create the world of the play. She enjoys collaborating with the actors on their look and how they would dress according to who their character is.

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She says of working with actors that if they don't like what they are wearing, it won't help the actor to build their character. If there is something she can do that won't compromise the character, she will happily work with the actor to find a solution to the problem to help support their work as the character (Sod; Sutherlin).

Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase

From her research, Zuber is able to come up with mental images of the characters and the world they inhabit. As noted in Phase 2, she looks at the materials available at the time and the financial means of the character in order to form a mental picture of the character and what they would wear (Dziemianowicz; Sod).

Coming to America from England, Zuber observed a sharp contrast between the cultures of the two countries and she cites this as the possible origin for her enjoyment in observing details in people and in society today (Rothstein).

When asked who or what inspires her designs, Zuber cites visiting museums, novels (particularly 19th-century French literature, because of the descriptive language), old films, and the history of fashion; photographs, and listening to music (Sod).

Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase

Zuber describes in her interviews that every show has a moment of insight where the character comes into focus in the costume and the world of the play (Dziemianowicz). Zuber recalls an instance where a moment of insight occurred stemming from a fellow member of the creative team's suggestion. During her work on *The Light in the Piazza*, she had done a sketch of Fabrizio which had him in slacks, a scarf, shirt and jacket. The show's composer said that Fabrizio had too much on and that the costume needed to be

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simpler. Zuber thought about this for a few minutes and decided that he was right, made the adjustments to the costume, and at the next rehearsal everyone loved the editing of the costume (Sheehy). While the suggestion came from outside of Zuber, she was able make the adjustments to help the character come into focus.

Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase

Zuber's materials reveal that she actively engages in evaluating her work. One example of this is when Zuber reevaluated her own design based on a fellow member of the creative team's suggestion as noted in Phase 4. However, it was up to her to make the evaluation as to whether the character of Fabrizio would be better represented by removing the scarf and jacket.

Another example of Zuber's evaluative skills was shown in her design for *The Sound of Music*. The play called for the postulate Maria to leave the abbey to become governess to the Von Trapp children. She dons an ugly dress when she does so. Zuber, who had to define ugly, decided the frock would be 15 years older than its time period and would also be homely and incredibly out of fashion (Napoleon). Zuber traveled to Salzburg to research Austrian fashion and the Von Trapp family, and gained valuable insight that allowed her to evaluate from an informed point of view what the character of Maria might wear and have available to her as a young girl leaving an abbey.

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Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase

As noted in Phase 1, Zuber embraced the challenge of reimagining the white dress worn by Gigi in order to suit the production and the actress. She also needed to evaluate her original design choice and make adjustments to work on *The Light in the Piazza*.

Emerging Ideas

While Zuber still sketches costumes by hand, she begins with a rough pencil drawn sketch, followed by very detailed sketches. Because it will be worn on a human body, she wants to show every little detail: the hair, the makeup, and the attitude of the character. She now embraces technology, computers, and scanners in her design process. This technology has allowed her to experiment with color and has made changing her sketches much easier (Sheehy; *"The King and I* Catherine Zuber"; "Behind the Scenes: *How to Succeed in Business*").

IV. Designer #3: Paloma Young (2012 Tony Winner)

Designer's Background

Paloma Young grew up in San Diego aboard her father's boat which he used to sail to the Caribbean to hold photography clinics ("Costume Designs of Peter and the Starcatcher"; Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"; Grieco). She recalls him telling her stories as they escaped the mugginess of the cabin of a lord and a princess, who were thinly veiled versions of themselves. Young remembers loving design as a young girl and would design her own Halloween costumes which her mother or a friend of the family would make for her. She recalls a particular Halloween, around the age of nine, after she had

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read Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, where she designed a sea nymph costume and people thought she was a mermaid (Taylor).

Young became interested in theatre in high school and when she later attended the University of California at Berkeley and studied social history, her electives included costume design classes (*UCSD Alumni Online*). She attended graduate school at the University of California at San Diego (UCSD), and studied costume design under Tony Award winning costume designer, Judith Dolan (*UCSD Alumni Online*). She appreciated that UCSD had an intellectual approach to costume design. Young did her internship (or as UCSD called it, her externship) at La Jolla Playhouse. After graduating with her MFA in 2006, she returned in 2008 to be the local costume designer for La Jolla Playhouse's workshop of an adaptation of Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson's novel *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"; Taylor). When the show moved to New York in 2011, she was asked to remain with the production as the costume designer. Young won a Tony Award in 2012 for *Peter and the Starcatcher*.

Research on Young indicated that the available interviews were all based on her Tony Award winning work on *Peter and the Starcatcher*. The three identified online print articles utilized for this study were: an article posted to *NBC 7 San Diego* by Sarah Griec, an interview with Jane Taylor for *Uptempo Media*, and a biography on *UCSD Alumni Online*. Additionally, a 2012 video interview, "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*" posted on *Broadway.com* and a podcast interview with *In 1: The Podcast* hosted by Cory Pattak were also reviewed.

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Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols

Young understood that there were several problems to costuming a Broadway show. She knew that with any production, the show budget would always be a concern. However, on Broadway, shows need to appeal to a wide range of audiences ("Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*"). For example, *Peter and the Starcatcher* originally had sixteen cast members and had been reduced to twelve, which meant that some of the characters would be consolidated into one character. She had to accommodate the character consolidation into her costume designs (Taylor).

She didn't want the designs to be too specific because an actor may need to become a pirate at any moment. The character of the Nanny was played by a man and Young was faced with the task of having this member of the ensemble needing to be able to quickly change from the Nanny back to a pirate (Taylor).

Young was also working with a very limited color palette of brown, grey, mousey blue, and faded black. Working with a limited color pallet coupled with the unspecific costumes created a design problem for her. She solved this by adding small details to the character's costumes. For example, a lot of the male actors wore vests, but Young clothed them in different styles of vests. Some vests were double breasted, some had buttons, and others wore their vest open. These small variations solved the problem posed, and helped create a unique ensemble (Taylor; "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*"; Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young").

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Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase

Young's research includes old photos, visits to the New York Library, and expensive fashion magazines (Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"). She looks at art for the texture and the mood of a piece and if it can be applied to one of her inspirational collages. One of her favorite research books is a Victorian book of New York street children that shows what working class people wore at the turn of the twentieth century. She gains a lot of details from these grainy sepia tone photos such as the fold of a worn wool coat, jeans with holes in the knees, and clothing that is too tight. (Taylor). When costuming the actor who played the part of the female Nanny, Young describes consulting another turn of the century book. The book contained images of dock workers and fish mongers and assisted her in imagining how she would make the actor's transformation on stage.

Young says of her work on *Peter and the Starcatcher* that it was a "collaborative effort and more than a sum of its parts" (Taylor). She collaborated with the director, actors and the choreographer on her costume designs. Young would make rough sketches and go back and forth between the director and the chorographer to make sure the costumes would be easy enough for the actors to move and dance in (Taylor; "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*"). When collaborating with the actors, she welcomed them bringing costume pieces to her and working with the actor to, if possible, incorporate them into her design. She will often take inspiration from the individuality of the actors themselves (Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"; "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*"; Taylor).

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Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase

As part of her design process, Young frequently uses the art of collage to allow her ideas to coalesce, as they allow for more freedom to change her research images and mark different aspects of the character or story's journey. Collaging allows her to not take things literally and to play with the look of individual characters (Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"; "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*") For example, after looking at her research and collages, she came up with the idea that the Nanny character in *Peter and the Starcatcher* should have some formality to her costume (Taylor).

As a child, Young was a keen observer of people and would imagine their life story, which she would then tuck away for later use (Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"). Young is also a frequent rider on the New York Subway and observes people during her rides (Taylor) which influences her designs.

Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase

In the example of the Nanny in Phases 2 and 3, Young used her research to inform her design of the Nanny character. While looking at her research material, it occurred to her that the aprons worn by the fish mongers and dock workers were very nanny-like and a lot of them wore vests and ties under their aprons. She decided that it would be a man's apron and the actor would already have a vest and possibly a tie on. Then he would need to add the apron, allowing for the actor to make a quick change between playing a pirate to playing the Nanny and then back to a pirate (Taylor).

When it came to designing the mermaid costumes for the male actors to put on over their vests, jeans and boots, Young decided to use found objects as the actual

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costume pieces. She wanted something that a group of young boy scouts would put on to do a mermaid review and she thought about what a juvenile males' idea of a mermaid would be. For one of the mermaids, she came up with the idea to use vegetable strainers with strings attached to them as a bra. She used things like keys on the crowns, spoons for scales, and juicers instead of starfish in her designs (Taylor; "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher";* Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young").

Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase

The example from Phase 2 of Young's collaboration with the director and the choreographer on the costume designs is also part of the evaluation phase. Were her designs viable and did her fellow collaborators think so as well? As the design process progressed, she used Photoshop to show intended changes in the clothing for approval by the director and choreographer (Taylor).

The actor who wore the vegetable strainers for the mermaid bra in Phase 4 did not have an opportunity to see them before rehearsal and Young did not have the opportunity to tell him where she thought he should pull the attached strings and have them open. The actor went on stage and just at the part that Young thought he should open them, he did. The peal of laughter from the creative team and crew validated her novel design decision to use the vegetable strainers in a new way (Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young").

Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase

It is evident that Young confronts a design problem, researches the problem, and then creates collages as possible solutions. From doing these steps, she is then able to create new ideas and solutions, which are often novel ideas. Her use of found objects for

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the mermaid costumes were a novel idea, but she was actually able to bring her idea into reality (such as vegetable strainers for mermaid bras and juicers for starfish) (Taylor; Pattak, "#31 Paloma Young"; "Costume Designs of *Peter and the Starcatcher*").

Emerging Ideas

Young uses Photoshop in her design work to quickly and easily make needed changes to the costumes based on her collaborative discussions with the director and the choreographer (Taylor).

V. Designer # 4: Ann Roth (2013 Tony Winner)

Designer's Background

Ann Roth graduated from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1953, and started her professional career as a scenic painter (Drubin and Kruger 29). She thought she wanted to be a scenic designer until she met the late Irene Sharaff, who was herself an Oscar and Tony Winner, and who advised her that being a female scenic designer in the 1950's was not very plausible for women. She began her costume design career in Pittsburg until Sharaff suggested she come to California (Durbin and Kruger 30).

Upon arriving in California, Roth began working at the Western Costume Company where she worked with some of the most legendary artisans and designers of the Golden Age of Hollywood (Durbin and Kruger 31). Roth went on to work with Sharaff on a total of five movies and five Broadway shows (Calhoun). During her time with Sharaff, she learned the ins and outs of costumes design while in the fitting room (Durbin and Kruger 32). While in the fitting room, Roth learned that a designer can't cheat on training, you have to know what to do in a fitting, how to work with a tailor, and

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you have to have patience and do lots of leg work. You have to know how to make the clothes to bring the vision into reality.

Since her days as an apprentice, Roth has designed over 200 productions that span theatre, film and television (Durbin and Kruger 11). She has been in the professional costume design business for 57 years and has won numerous awards and honors, including an Oscar for *The English Patient* in 1996, a Tony Award for Best Costume of a Musical in 2011 for *The Book of Mormon*, and a Tony Award for Best Costume Design of a Play in 2013 for *The Nance*. Roth is one of the few designers whom the United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT) selected for a monograph based on her outstanding career and design processes.

During the course of the research on Ann Roth, a total of four online articles were found that had enough substance to include in the research. These included a 2000 online print interview with *Live Design* by John Calhoun, a 2011 online print interview with Veronique Hyland for *Harper's Bazaar*, and a 2014 interview with Rita Braver for CBS News Sunday Morning. Additionally, the 2014 monograph co-written by Holly Poe Durbin and Bonnie Kruger and published by USITT was very informative and beneficial to this research.

Phase 1: The Formation of the Question/Understanding the Domain and Its Symbols

Roth frequently faces the challenge of mixing newly made garments with vintage pieces. She studies old garments from her own collection or visits museums to study how the garment was made and with what material, and she also looks at how the fabric hangs and flows (Durbin and Kruger). For *The Nance*, Roth used her knowledge of vintage

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fabrics to select contemporary fabrics with the correct weight, drape, and color for garments originating in the 1930's. While the characters in the play don't have a lot of money, they would have bought trousers that they could afford and have them altered to fit more like more expensive and refined fabrics, much like men did in the 1930's (Durbin and Kruger 96, 97).

Roth faced a challenge while designing the 1979 film, *Hair*, based on the 1968 Broadway musical. Eleven years had passed and there was a concern that the costumes would appear cliché. Roth was able to overcome this problem by using authentic clothing from the era that she found in local thrift stores and vintage shops and combining these with items custom made for the film based on authentic garments (Durbin and Kruger 59; Calhoun).

Phase 2: The Research/Collaboration Phase

Roth prefers to use research of real people from the time period she is designing. She frequently uses primary source material for her research such as photographs, magazines, and mail-order catalogues from the relevant era. She often seeks out unusual sources to gain extra detail. One place that Roth does not to look to for her research is a film version of a play or movie she is designing for; she believes that one should not look at someone else's work (Durbin and Kruger; Calhoun; Hyland).

Roth is committed to helping actors find their characters and fittings are often the time she can synthesize her research and preparations with the actor. The extensive research that Roth engages in not only informs her designs, but she often shares her research and her assessment of the character with the actor during fittings. She often

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gives the actor a very detailed description of the character's world in an effort to spark something for the actor, to create an important detail in their life, and to aid them in becoming a new and unforgettable character (Durbin and Kruger 91; Calhoun; "Ann Roth's Design for Living").

An example of this was captured in her monograph during a fitting for the 2012 production of *Death of a Salesman*, where she was working with the actor playing Stanley, the waiter. She began by telling him about Manhattan during the time of the play and then went into detail about the Eighth Avenue chop houses in the 1940's. She explains that he has a unique role in the neighborhood and that this was a time of conventions. She let the actor know that when Willy Lohman enters the restaurant he would be referred to as Mr. Lohman. As she gives the actor the details of his world, she asks him to roll up his sleeves and ties a long apron around his waist, and she folds the apron up to create a small pocket where he can keep his order pad. By the time she is finished with her story and putting the finishing touches on him, he no longer looks like a stock waiter, but rather a neighborhood guy who took the one-size-fits-all apron and arranged it to suit his needs (Durbin and Kruger).

Roth works in collaboration with other designers, namely her longtime assistant Gary Jones, but also routinely works with the same directors like Mike Nichols, John Schlesinger, and Anthony Minghella. She says it doesn't matter what medium she is working in; she must have a strong relationship with the director. She feels that working with a director on the script you want to realize is the way to spend your life (Durbin and Kruger; Calhoun).

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Roth believes that to be a good costume designer you must have a passion for observing people from the past and the present (Durbin and Kruger 23; Calhoun).

Phase 3: The Ideation/Incubation Phase

The example in Phase 2 where Roth gives a detailed description to the actor in *Death of a Salesman* is also an example of Roth making connections between bits of her research to form a fully realized character.

Roth is a keen observer of people and places. She has been known to stop the car on the way to location shoots and just watch people in their yards. Roth's observational skill came to good use while designing *Hair* where she wanted to use existing vintage clothing to depict the time period accurately. Roth recalled seeing kids walking to the Port Authority in 1969 on their way to Woodstock (Durbin and Kruger 59; Calhoun).

During a 1965 American Shakespeare Festival production of *Romeo and Juliet*, Roth used a color pallet of blues and pinks. She was also pregnant at the time with her daughter. The life circumstance affected her design choices, as she was engaged in divergent or lateral thinking (Durbin and Kruger).

During her research for the 2003 film, *The Hours*, starring button-nosed Nicole Kidman as larger-nosed English writer Virginia Woolf, Roth thought that the addition of a prosthetic nose would help the actress complete her portrayal of Woolf (Durbin and Kruger).

Phase 4: The Initial Insight/Novel Design Decision Phase

Roth made two Novel Design Decisions while designing costumes for *The Book of Mormon*. In the musical number entitled "Spooky Mormon Hell Dream," Roth had to

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design costumes for the little devils, and she wanted them to look like lost bad boys. She achieved this look by designing costumes that made them look weird with longer arms and curled-up toes. The costumes also had to be a break-away one piece because the actors had to get out of the costumes and appear in their Mormon uniform of pants, shirt and tie very quickly (Durbin and Kruger 24).

Roth also had to come up with her interpretation of Jesus. To her, the image of Jesus always reminded her of 1980's magazine cover model Cheryl Tiegs with bangs brushed to the sides of her face and large curls on the side of her face. Roth also thought of Jesus as having a glow to him. To create a glow to Jesus, she lit the costume from the inside (Durbin and Kruger 87).

Phase 5: The Evaluation Phase

When selecting costume pieces, Roth is often given choices from her assistants based on her designs. An example of her selection and evaluation process was discussed in her monograph. Her assistant, Michelle Matland, presented Roth with a rack of leather jackets for actor Rhys Ifans for the HBO pilot, *The Corrections*. Matland relayed an earlier design conversation with the actor regarding the actors' costume ideas for the character. Roth evaluated the actor's ideas, combined it with her own understanding of the character and the production, and selected a jacket. It was then sent on to the tailor for a scheduled fitting with the actor the next day (Durbin and Kruger 18).

Phase 6: The Elaboration/Doing Phase

The recursive nature of the Creative Costume Design Process can be seen in previous examples from Phases 2 and 3. Roth used her research skills from Phase 2 to

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scour local thrift stores and vintage shops to locate genuine items for her costume designs for the film *Hair*, which were based on her observational skills from Phase 3 when she recalled seeing kids walking to the Port Authority on their way to Woodstock (Durbin and Kruger 59, 62). She used her research skills as noted in Phase 2 to scour local thrift stores and vintage shops to locate the genuine items. She mixed the genuine items with custom made pieces for the principals while also meeting the needs, color restrictions and other technical elements for filming (Durbin and Kruger 59; Calhoun).

Emerging Ideas

Roth frequently uses her own life experiences in her costume designs, such as using a blue and pink color pallet for a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, remembering seeing the kids on their way to Woodstock; or using her interpretation of what Jesus looks like to create unique and memorable costumes (Durbin and Kruger 59, 62; Calhoun).

VI. Conclusion

The research revealed several commonalities in the costume design process between the four Tony Award winning costume designers. In each of the referenced examples, the four designers experienced the six different phases during their design process for various types of productions-- a Shakespearean play, contemporary plays; musicals; and films. Each of the six phases were observed throughout all types of productions.

Problems are inherent in costume design work and the designers were effective problem solvers when they encountered problems stemming from issues such as the

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pacing of the play, design theory, delineating between characters and character status, size of the cast, mixing new fabrics and pieces with original pieces, as well as understanding their particular role in a production.

Each of the designers placed a heavy emphasis on research and collaboration in design--the designer must have strong research skills and keen observational skills. Theatrical costume design is very much a collaborative effort and the play benefits greatly when the director, actors and fellow members of the design team work well together.

Good design comes from ideas, and the designers agree that allowance for time in which ideas incubate and coalesce is necessary for any project. To varying degrees, each designer expressed an initial insight or a novel design idea for productions, such as the use of a basic, unit costume or the use of vegetable strainers for the cups of a bra on a mermaid.

The designers had to evaluate their own designs in order to decide if they were a fit for the production as well as how the designs would be received by their fellow collaborators. Goldstein, Zuber, and Young all received external as well as internal evaluative feedback of their designs. Evaluation proved to be essential in all aspects of the designers' work.

It was also evident that the costume design process is in fact a recursive process that skips and jumps backwards and forwards and at times two or more phases are involved at the same time with no clear indication of which came first. A detailed

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discussion of the conclusions regarding the commonalities and characteristics follows in Chapter Four.

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CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The intention of this research project was to begin to illuminate the moments where insight, imagination, and creativity occur within the costume design process. By studying the creative process in theatrical costume design, I first sought to understand what the commonalities and the characteristics between the creative and costume design processes might be. I felt the resulting insights could possibly be applied to other areas of the theatrical design creative process, as well as illuminate the connections that exist between the creative processes in costume design and other fields that employ the use of creativity and imagination.

I was also interested in identifying which of these commonalities and characteristics that emerged from my initial research might be present in professional costume designer's work, and if they were, how these possible understandings could be used to help shape the costume design process. The following is an analysis of and my conclusions about that work.

I. Research Question #1 (Phase 1 of this Research)

What are the Commonalities Between and Characteristics of the Creative and Costume Design Processes?

For this phase of the research I reviewed literature in the areas of the creative and imaginative processes, psychology of the creative process, and the costume design process.

What emerged from the initial literature I reviewed (see Appendix 1, The Creative Costume Design Process, and How It Correspondences to Other Creative Process

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Models), was that there were many commonalties and characteristics between and among the four areas of review in the creative and costume design processes. Many of the steps or phases were identical. While the authors did not always use the same wording, the intention was often similar. Some authors combined steps or did not indicate that there was any difference between steps. Additionally, Dallet and Wallas' work was concerned with the overall psychological aspects of possessing an active imagination and therefore did not include some of the steps found in the creative, imaginative and the costume design processes.

What was particularly significant was that the processes were recursive and often double-backed on each other. As Cross stated, there is no prescribed way that the design process occurs, but rather the phases are what occurs in the process, not necessarily the prescribed time in which they occur. It is not that designers move methodically from one phase or step to another, but rather that the designers thinking processes move between focal and subsidiary awareness with ease.

It was interesting that the costume designers did not articulate their own creative process clearly in the research data that was reviewed. Rather, they articulated it through a specific design problem and how they came up with the solution to that problem. Further research through interviews aimed at pulling out these details could reveal more layers of their own particular creative processes.

The second problem is that the literature review revealed that there was only one, *From Page to Stage*, which explicitly included the input of theatrical costume designers specifically, and while this book was insightful, the questions posed to the costume

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designers that were interviewed were questions about imagination and not necessarily about their creative process. I believe that this is where my research can begin to fill the gap in the literature.

II. Research Question #2 (Phase 2 of this Research)

Which of these Commonalities and Characteristics Are Present in Professional Costume Designer's Work?

The limitations of this phase of the research was that it was difficult to locate sufficient materials on the nine Tony Award winning professional designers where they actually discussed their design processes. Thus, I was only able to use four of the nine designers. However, I believe that there is sufficient evidence to show commonalities and characteristics between the creative and costume design process.

It became evident that solving problems is inherent in costume design. Costume designers are routinely faced with the problems such as researching, charting, scheduling, budgeting, navigating the director's concept versus practical concerns (budget, time and space for costume construction, skill level and number of costume personnel, costume stock resources) and creating a stage picture appropriate to the world of the play.

For all of the designers, research proved to be the most important and informative phase in the process. Often this research directly informed their costume designs. Designers described beginning their research with reading the play, and from there they moved on to their own libraries filled with period books, magazines, and photographs, or they visited libraries or museums to gather information.

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Interestingly, none of the designers mentioned using the internet as a source of research and with the abundance of photos and historical material on the internet, this was surprising to me. They may, in fact use the internet, but specific references to using it did not appear in my research materials.

While some designers may look at other productions as part of their research, others felt that it is a not a good idea because they didn't want to be influenced by past work. Research and personal aesthetics combined seem to make the designs unique. Yet, one designer, Goldstein, felt it was important to look at past designs for other productions. He described that it was part of the script and production's history, and that he wanted to gain as much information as possible before creating his own unique design.

All of the designers discussed how important collaboration is to their process, whether they collaborate with the director or other members of the creative team. Every designer also felt that they had an important role and responsibility to the actors. Their desire was to be part of the team that helped the actors create their character, rather than forcing a design on them. There were specific references to this collaboration which often took place in the fitting room, where it is possible to assume that one-on-one discussions took place. The designers noted that particular insights and breakthroughs often occurred in the fitting room.

The designers unanimously referred to the incubation stage, where they described how they let the information gathered from the research incubate and often

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times mix and mingle with bits of their keen observations stored in their memory before beginning to sketch or collage their design ideas.

Interestingly, Phase 4 was where there seemed to be a pronounced occurrence of the recursive nature of the costume design process. Goldstein's Novel Design Decision double-backed to Phase 1, while Zuber's Aha! Moment came from Phase 5, and Young and Roth both experienced a reoccurrence from Phase 2. Zuber was the only designer who specifically articulated that there was always an insightful moment when the character comes into focus. While the other designers were not specific about their Initial Insight or Aha! Moment, it is evident that it did occur as they all came up with Novel Design Ideas.

The designers indicated that they used two forms of evaluation: other members of the creative team and the actors themselves. Ultimately, it was up to the designer to make the necessary changes, but they either consulted with their peers or made evaluations based on their knowledge. The recursive nature of the costume design process double-checks back to Phase 1 from Phase 6 as an indication of whether or not the designer was able to bring a design into reality.

Goldstein and Roth both noted that costume design is not easy and that the work is both physically and mentally challenging. They felt that future designers must be prepared not only to mentally design the clothing, but to also physically bring those ideas into reality either by sourcing fabric, or scouring vintage shops for just the right piece.

In addition to traditional sketching and collaging, Zuber and Young both described using technology in their work because it allows them the freedom to

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experiment and change designs easily. An area of further study might be how the creative process is affected by the use of computers. How are costume designers currently in the field utilizing technology in their work? Are they using Photoshop like Young or another Computer Aided Design program? What effect, if any, does the use of technology have on convergent and divergent thinking? Have designers that have used the available technology found it to be a help or a hindrance to their creative process?

Goldstein, Zuber and Young all have MFAs in costume design. What was particularly significant was that the four designers that were included in the study were either taught by Tony Award winning designers or apprenticed under one. I believe this to be particularly interesting because all four of the designers had access to highly successful costume design mentors during their formative years in design. How did this mentorship affect their ability to think creatively? While beyond the scope of this research project, this is another interesting question that arises for future research, especially from the perspective of training future costume designers.

Over the course of completing this research questions arose concerning the role of publicity and marketing and the media visibility of costume designers. For example, from the identified interviews, it was evident that some designers received more press coverage than others. Many of the articles were publicity pieces related to a show that the designer was working on, which meant that most of the questions were focused on the specific show and only a few questions on the designer's actual process. Why was this? Did it relate to the show that they designed or who the producers or the actors were? Did the box office earnings for that particular show affect press coverage? Did the show

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going on national tour affect the press received by a costume designer? These are some questions that came up that were beyond the scope of this study, but nonetheless, may be valuable in obtaining adequate study data for future studies on the costume designer's process.

III. How Can the Understandings from This Study Be Used to Help Shape the Costume Design Process?

What is evident from this study is that there are definite commonalties and characteristics between the creative and costume design processes that could be immediately put to use in the field as noted previously. This could help designers to understand their own processes on both the creative and psychological levels. It may also be possible to educate young designers on how to use the processes to assist them with their design work.

The next steps for future study might be to refine the phases, particularly a more refined description of phases three and four as they are very similar in nature and occurrence. It became evident that the language needs to be clarified in order to distinguish the two steps from one another as they both use convergent and divergent thinking. While the six phases worked for this study as a beginning step, I believe that these alterations would benefit future studies.

As this study had a small sample size, a larger sample size would be necessary in order to acquire more meaningful data. The refined steps, and the results of this study could be used to develop an interview protocol for conducting field interviews with

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professional theatrical costume designers in order to gain more focused and specific information directly from the designers regarding their processes.

This research for me has both personal and professional implications. I have always been fascinated by where thoughts and ideas come from. As a costume designer, I would frequently stop and ask myself how I came up with an idea and I would try to retrace my thoughts back to the moment of insight, many times to no avail. I would ask other designers how they came up with a design idea and they would not be able to clearly articulate the moments of insight either, except to say that perhaps it came from their research process.

As a costume designer, I find this study helpful because I now know what processes could be occurring in my mind as I work through a design. This gives me a starting place to understand and track what it is I personally do in the process. I plan to keep a journal of my next design project and attempt to deconstruct my own creative acts. As a Theatre instructor, I also find this information valuable as a resource for assisting my students in their creative endeavors. I hope to be able to help them to understand the overall design process and guide them toward discovering their own personal creative design process.

Costume designers, theatrical designers, and those who teach or utilize the creative process in their work may find this study helpful and informative as they pursue or teach creative endeavors.

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Appendix 1: Theoretical Costume Design Process, and How It Corresponds to Other Creative Process Models

Theoretical Creative Costume Design Process, and How it Corresponds to Other Creative Process Models

Theoretical Creative Costume Design Process	Csikszentmihalyi	Robinson	Porter	Lehrer	Gnezda	Campbell	Gillette	Russell
Play is given to the costume designer	First component- Immersion consciously or not in a set of problematic issues/ preparation	First Stage: play with an idea	1) Comprehend the problem	1) Every creative journey begins with a problem		1) Preliminary readings of a script	Phase 1 Commitment	1) Read the script
Designer reads the play for the first time								
Incubation	Second component- connections are made			2) Act of being stumped				
Designer reads the play for the second time								
Little incubation								
Analysis							Phase 2 Analysis. Includes reading the script and analyzing the script	5) Schedules, lists and charts
Conference/collaboration with the director and other designers								3) Conference with the director
Incubation					1) Ideation	1) Introspective		
Embrace the limitations								
Little incubation								
Research			2) Gather inspiration			2) Research	Phase 3 Research	4) Research
Incubation								
Inspiration/ideation	Third component-Insight	Second stage: Insight	3) Invent solutions	3) Answer arrives	2) Inspiration			
Good design ideas			4) Good design ideas					5) Preliminary sketching and layout
Little incubation								
Selection							Phase 5 Selection	
Evaluation	Fourth component- decide if an insight is worth pursing	Third stage: Evaluation	4) Best design ideas				Phase 7 Evaluation	
Best design choices	Fifth component- elaboration	Fourth stage: Manifest idea into the physical	5) Present the best solution		3) Implemation	4) Execution	Phase 6 Implementation	6) Costume sketch
Presentation					4) Complete			

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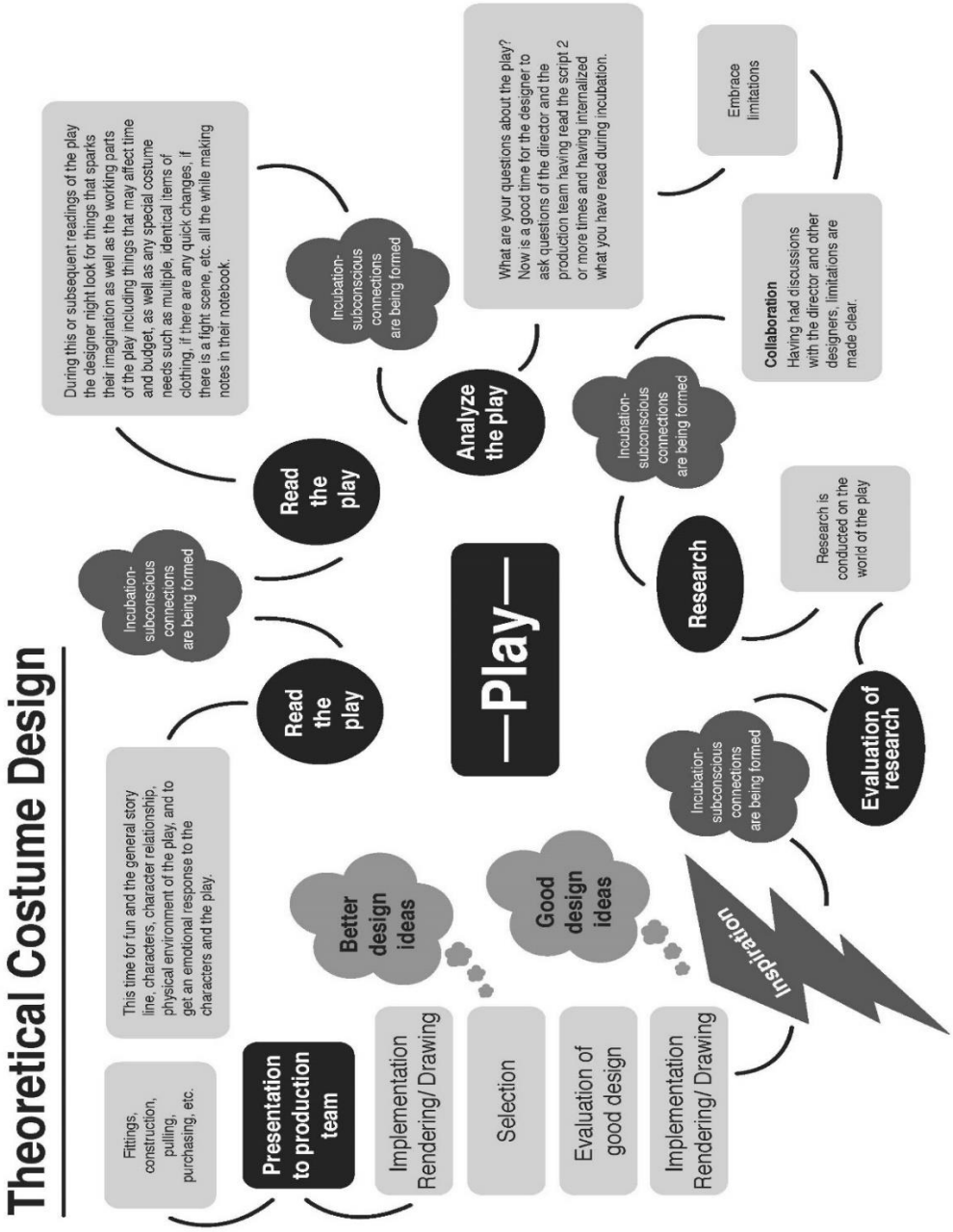
Appendix 2: Theoretical Costume Design Flowchart



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Appendix 3: Costume Designer Interview Protocol

Designer Interview Protocol Designer: _____Source: _____

Background	
1. Clear idea of problem	
2. Research & Collaboration	
3.A. Focal Awareness (Convergent & Linear)	
3.B. Subsidiary (Divergent)	

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Designer Interview Protocol Designer: _____ Source: _____

3.C. Incubation/Ideation	
4. Initial Insight • Aha! • Both sides of the brain • Solve Problem • Novel Design Decisions	
5. Evaluation Is it viable?	
6. Idea into Physical Reality	

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