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A Study of Cosplay

by

Stephanie Lathrop

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in the Department of Theatre and Dance

Idaho State University

Spring 2021

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To the Graduate Faculty:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the thesis of Stephanie Lathrop find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

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Dr. Norman Schroder,

Major Advisor

---

Professor Tara Young,

Committee Member

---

Professor Naomi Velasquez,

Graduate Faculty Representative

This thesis is dedicated to all those who helped me on this educational journey.

Thank you for your support and encouragement.

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## A Study of Cosplay

Thesis Abstract--Idaho State University (2021)

The purpose of this thesis is to show how historical cosplay has affected modern cosplay, as well as show how theatrical design concepts can influence and help in developing original cosplay designs and fully realized pieces. I have included planning, budgeting, and construction of four distinct cosplay costumes. Over the course of my process, I was able to discover methods that were effective in helping me create my own cosplays. The most important thing I learned is that there are ways to pursue design work outside of the theatre.

Key Words: Cosplay; Costume; Costume Design; Costume Technology; Design; Conventions; Comic Con; Cosplay History; Designer; Dye; Mask; Renderings; Mock-Up;



## **Part I: A Brief History of Cosplay**

Cosplay a global phenomenon reaching people of all ages. It is as simple as wearing the costume of your favorite character at a convention or as extravagant as competing in worldwide competitions. It is an art form where people can express their individuality and creativity through costume. We will be looking at the origins of cosplay and how it has evolved.

Although there are many people who are considered pioneers of cosplay, the most under-recognized person as the first cosplayer was a Los Angeles native and sci-fi magazine editor, Myrtle Rebecca Douglas Smith Gray Nolan also known as Morojo, a name given to her by the World Science Fiction Society. In 1939, at the first World Science Fiction Convention (also known as Worldcon), Myrtle and her romantic partner Forrest J. Ackerman wore futuristic costumes. These costumes included capes and breeches inspired by the pulp magazine artwork of Frank R. Paul that was based on the 1936 film *Things to Come*. Not one other person arrived in costume. This event would be the first recorded appearance of fan costumes. (Runnebaum)

Science fiction conventions like Worldcon continued to be all the rage. The second year at Worldcon, they began hosting costume events called masquerades that encouraged fans to dress in costume. The science fiction show *Star Trek* gained massive popularity, causing conventions to be held all over the world. Starting in 1969 at small gatherings, *Star Trek* inspired costumes became popular because they were easy to make. From there the community only began to grow larger. (Han and Runnebaum)

Cosplay was originally called costuming. The term Cosplay came about in 1984 coined by Nobuyuki Takahashi after attending the 42nd Worldcon in Los Angeles. The word *Kosupure* is the blend of two Japanese words meaning costume and play. Therefore, many people believe cosplay originated in Japan. When Takahashi returned to Japan, he wrote about the convention in the publication *My Anime*, making the term instantly popular. He wrote about what he had seen at the science fiction conventions and the masquerade of costumes. In the articles, he encouraged his Japanese readers to dress up for their manga and anime conventions. These events inspired the people to do just that, because of this, cosplay is seen as a mesh of Japanese and American culture. (Kincaid and Mai and Runnebaum)

In the beginning, cosplay did not require the participants to dress as a specific character, but rather for the genre, like science fiction. People would make up their own original characters and proudly wear the costumes. As time passed it became socially acceptable for adults to dress up in costume in public outside of Halloween. (Go)

Publications known as manga inspired Japanese people to create costumes based on their favorite characters. The most beloved cosplayed characters have come from manga even before they appeared in anime or video games. Japanese style character cosplay became popular in the US in the 1970s when the first Japanese pop culture convention was held. The first documented convention of the kind was Comiket in December 1975, there were around six hundred attendees. The same convention now sees around five-hundred thousand attendees twice a year. (Sarker)

In the 1990s due to magazines and TV, the term cosplay began to gain even more popularity in both the US and Japan. Cosplay cafes began to open in Akihabara, Japan allowing cosplayers to have a space to share their costumes all the time. The demand for cosplay content gained so much popularity that the costuming retail industry in Japan grew to meet it. It was around this time that people in the US began to gain more interest in anime and manga and in turn the cosplay culture. (Cosplay and Han)

Japanese style cosplay is not the only influence in the world of cosplay. Cosplayers' characters to choose from are only growing with each passing year. We now see characters not only from anime and manga, but also from comic books like Marvel and DC, as well as characters from popular TV shows, movies, and theatrical characters. More conventions begin every year giving people from all fan bases or fandoms a chance to show off their looks. (Winge)

Cosplay is becoming a big industry all over the world. In Japan people embrace cosplay culture so much that in cities such as Harajuku and Shibuya they wear it as their daily clothing. Though this was not always the case, for a long time Japan did not accept cosplay culture because it fought against the traditional values and beliefs in the culture. The US is more open to the culture of cosplay than Japan. In Japan outside of the main cities where cosplay culture is accepted people are asked not to wear their costumes outside of conventions. This is because Japanese culture focuses on community values and cosplaying outside of convention makes them seem like individualists. In the US people are seen wearing their cosplays at restaurants and other places outside of the convention, even performing skits on the streets for other convention-goers. (Kincaid and Mai)

With the boom of social media, cosplay began to become more widespread. People dedicate thousands of dollars to create characters that make them feel empowered. It is a lifestyle that people live all year long. Cosplay has become a way for people to feel good about themselves regardless of body type, race, or any other background. Cosplayers can dress up as their favorite characters and feel accepted by an entire community. Cosplay is such a new thing in the world that there still is not yet a lot of history, but we can continue to define what the world of cosplay is and what it will become. (Cosplay Culture)

## **Part II: Cosplay Culture and Conventions**

Conventions, Gatherings, and competitions continue to be organized just for cosplay. Cosplay is adaptable, you can buy it at the store or make it at home. It is not limited to one genre, style, or interpretation. Cosplay has become an entire subculture and for some people a way of life. It is an entire community of artists that help and support each other.

### **Cosplay Community**

People say they love cosplay because it helps them to become more confident in themselves and helps them to build a positive self-image. People in the community rally around one another and build each other up. Not only do cosplayers attend conventions, but they get together for parties, photoshoots, and to help each other build costumes.

The first convention I ever attended was FAN EXPO in Dallas, Texas and I was in awe at how open and accepting the community was. Everyone gathers to snap photos and share stories of their costume builds. I was able to witness several people acting out scenes and performing vocal selections as the crowds of people surrounding them cheered them on. We swap phone numbers and social media names, so that we can continue to share in our world outside of conventions.

Social media has created a huge gateway for people to share cosplay. It opened the cosplay world for people who are not able to attend conventions to share their work through photos and video. Social media platforms have made it so that even during a global pandemic people were able to continue to create cosplay content. Apps like TikTok and Instagram have made it accessible to people all over the world.

An important part of the cosplay community is the costumes themselves. Cosplayers spend a lot of time making sure that they put a lot of attention to detail in their costumes. Making sure that each part of the costume is right from the wig, colored contacts, makeup, and having the right props to go along with the costume are important parts to creating a great cosplay. Being creative with cross play also known as gender-swapping or gender bending is popular and a way that many cosplayers have gained their fame.

### **The World of Professional Cosplay**

Professional cosplayers have made a big impact on the cosplay world. Professional cosplayers make their livings by posing for pictures at comic cons and signing autographs with their fans. They are also taking advantage of the social media world; through these platforms they can promote themselves as professionals and make money doing brand deals for companies. Professional cosplayers also compete and judge in competitions that are hosted around the world. (Cosplay Culture)

In her book, *Yaya Han's World of Cosplay*, Han relates her experiences working as a professional cosplayer and designer. She discusses how when she became more recognized as a professional, she would get invited to conventions to model her costumes, sign autographs, speak at panels, and even judge masquerade costume competitions. She mentions that it is a lot of work, but she loves every minute of it. Miss Han is a big influence in the cosplay community, not only has she won many cosplay competitions, but she also has her own pattern and fabric line at JoAnn Fabrics and Crafts.



Besides just wearing the costume there are many other ways people can be involved in the professional cosplay world and make money. Some professional cosplayers work with designers to create their looks. There are also weaponsmiths, prop creators, cosplay photographers, artists, wig specialists and so much more. Some cosplayers think that the industry has become too commercialized, while others think that it adds to the richness of the community.

### **Conventions and Competition**

There are many reasons why people attend conventions, for some it is to check out the exhibitors or be wowed by the panels, but others see it as an opportunity to showcase their costumes. While attending a convention in Dallas I ran into several people who were just there to be cosplayers in a space with other cosplayers.

Conventions are a place where people in all aspects of the cosplay community can come together: fans, actors, writers, cosplayers, and shops. Most conventions are laid out in the same way. The first thing is the main convention floor, this is where the main exhibits and vendors are. The second area is an artist alley where artists, crafters, webcomics, and people who run small shops set up. The third area and usually the most anticipated part of a convention is the panel, signings, and photo op areas.

A big part of showing off cosplay is competitions. Competitions range from amateur to professional and each person must work their way through the ranks to get recognized. Most conventions have their own competitions, and the prizes can range from merch from vendors to large cash prizes. To compete in these the costumes must be handmade. Some competitions have an entry for bought costumes, but this is usually just on the amateur level.

Cosplay competitions involve walking the catwalk and getting judged on the costume. In the full masquerade competitions, there are prizes for both best costume and best skits.

Cosplayers get theatrical and take on the roles of the characters they are portraying to the best of their abilities. The cosplayers also show off the best aspects of their costumes such as wings that open or a dress that transforms.

One of the most important events in cosplay culture is the World Cosplay Summit, also known as WCS. When the WCS began in 2003, it was much smaller than it is now with only four countries competing. As of 2019 forty countries compete at the event. The event includes a red-carpet walk (aired on tv in Japan), the WCS competition, and a costume parade each with its own unique cosplay. The WCS is the ultimate goal for any professional cosplayer who makes their own costumes. (World Cosplay Summit)

It is important to note, Costume Designers and Costume Technicians play a big part in the competitive world of cosplay. As I earlier stated to compete on a professional level the costumes must be handmade. I see the industry and need for these roles growing.

### **Other popular conventions**

#### **Major Anime Cons**

Anime Expo

Otakon

Anime North

#### **Gaming Cons**

Penny Arcade Expo: PAX Prime

California Extreme

Gen Con

**All Things Geek Cons**

San Diego Comic Con

New York Comic Con

WonderCon

Emerald City Comic Con

Dragon Con

GeekGirlCon

Cosplay has yet to even reach its peak in popularity. I see many more conventions springing up and many more people donning cosplay costumes. I look forward to the cosplay community of the future. I hope that the community will be an inclusive and positive place for all.

I have been looking for a way to insert myself into the cosplay community. I believe that my skills in costume design and construction have prepared me for the cosplay world. In the next section I will be discussing how I designed and constructed my own cosplay.

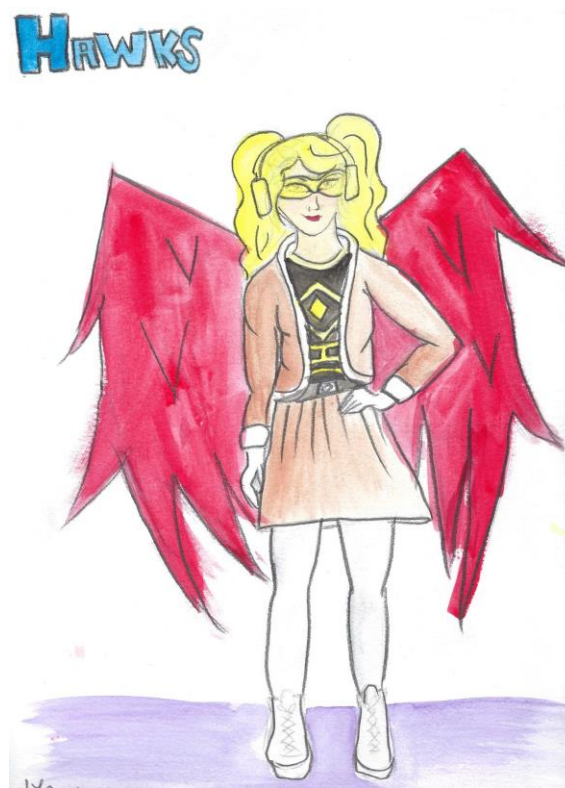
## **Part III: Design and Construction for Cosplay**

It was hard to find any references on how to approach designing for Cosplay, so this was a lot of experimentation on my part. I knew when I started this project, I wanted to focus on creating original works. Most people just take an original design and try to make a recreation of the existing costume. I decided that if I wanted to make something more original, I would need to create gender-bent looks, as well as create a new costume for an existing character that encompassed the original design. I found the best way to do this was to stick to the original characters color pallet and the general shapes of their costumes, this gave me a great starting point in my design process. I did end up deciding to make one recreation so that I could show that it was possible to buy and minimally build a complete cosplay.

When gender-bending a costume, you take the original design and colors of a character to create a character that is opposite of the gender identity. Most of the costumes I referenced the original costumes and made them more feminine or masculine. Gender-bending is popular in the cosplay community because people still look at the cosplay as being the original character.

The first thing I did after I knew what I wanted to accomplish was start researching all the characters for whom I wanted to create looks. I choose Hawks from My Hero Academia (Anime/Manga), Overhaul from My Hero Academia (Anime/Manga), Princess Peach from Super Mario Franchise (Video Game), and Ladybug from The Miraculous Ladybug (Cartoon) for my cosplay looks. I chose my models so that I knew the body types I would be working with and then I began to sketch out my costumes, I made sure that during this process I incorporated parts of the original character's designs so that the costumes I would create were easily recognizable as belonging to those characters. I drew out my ideas and painted them with watercolors.

Figures 1-4 Costume Renderings (2021)



Before I began to build any of my costumes, I created a breakdown of what I needed to build and what I needed to buy for each look to be completed. This is a must in any Design process because it affects the result and can determine if what you design can be fully realized or if it will be slightly different. You may not always be able to purchase what you could build. I decided that I would build all the main pieces for all the costumes except one, for one of them I wanted to see what I could achieve if I bought most of it. I also knew that I wanted to work on a budget of \$1,000 and tried to shop as many sales as I possibly could for my materials. I however know that this might not be possible and prepared myself to go over budget. I do however feel that I was very successful in the budget area and it is reflected in my costume cost breakdowns.

When starting my drafting or draping process I like to draw quick sketches of what the pieces might look like, this helps me to visualize what I will be creating. I then reference patterning books and online tutorials to help begin my process of putting it on large paper. I am a very visual learner and found that this process helps me the most. Once the designs were fully translated to patterns, I made Mock-ups out of muslin and had first fittings with my models. I think mock-ups are an important part of any costume process, it ensures that your costumes are custom fit to the bodies of your models or actors. It also gives you a chance to fix any mistakes and alter patterns.

For this next part, I will go over how each costume came together as well as their cost breakdowns and what type of fabric I used. The process for each costume was different as I wanted each look to be unique in their own way.

**Peach Costume:**

For the gender bend Princess Peach costume, I wanted to make sure that my design still allowed us to be able to recognize the character. I wanted to take aspects of Princess Peach's dress and incorporate that into a more gentlemanly suit look. I wanted to recreate the silhouette of the dress and I tried incorporating that by the style lines of the front of the jacket, I also included her iconic puffy sleeves and her color pallet. I wanted it to feel modern and fantastic at the same time.

The dye process took me a lot longer than I originally thought it would, testing out different dye colors was a big part of trying to achieve the look I was going for, I tested 9 different dye combinations before I achieved the color I call "princess pink" with the Rit Dye More (synthetic dye) product, I used 1 tbs of racing red dye and 1 tbs of super pink in 6 gallons of boiling hot water. I wanted to achieve a light pink color, so the fabric only had to be in the dye for 1 ½ minute, the longer you leave it in the darker pink color you get. Be careful as when I left it in too long it started to tint purple. This process was for the 100% polyester white herringbone suiting. This fabric was given to me, but originally it was \$20 a yard, making it both affordable and practical for cosplay.

**Figures 5-6 Dye Pictures (2021)**



One of the problems I ran into with this costume was that I had not worked with fabric that was stretchy and flexible like this before, so it was hard to cut properly. I realized after I had put most of it together that some of the pieces were cut out incorrectly and it did not lie right no matter how many times, I tried to fix it. Initially, I thought that it was the stitching, but it was the way it was cut out; therefore, making sure your grainlines match up with the fabric is important. I had run out of the dyed fabric, so I did not have a choice to fix it. I was however happy with how the final product turned out.

Princess Peach usually has a gem that sits on the center front of her bodice, to mirror this in my design I added an ascot where the gem was placed at the top. This was a fun project, I took a clip-on tie and cut off the tie leaving the top part, so I had something to attach the ascot to. I cut and sewed four layers of my fabric to create the ascot look. I then hot glued and sewed the ascot to the clip. I made sure to fully cover the top of the tie clip. I ended up with something that was both aesthetically pleasing and functional for cosplay.

#### **Figures 7-10 Ascot Process Photos (2021)**



I also purchased a white shirt, gloves, shoes, and princess peach's crown to finish off the costume look. Along with all the pieces, I added a wig styled with gel and some makeup to give our Prince Peach his youthful glow.

**Peach Cost Breakdown:**

9 Yards Polyester Suiting: Originally 180 (Free for me)

5 Yards of Pink Satin Lining: 25

½ Yard Interfacing: 2

Liquid Dye: 9

Thrifted Clip-on Tie: 3

Thrifted White Dress Shirt: 5

Scrap White Satin: 0

7" Pink Pants Zipper: 5

Thread: 8

Cosplay Gloves: 5

White Shoes: 7

Cosplay Crown and Jewel: 15

Wig: 17

**My Total: 101.00**

**Actual Total: 281.00**

**Hours: 82**

**Model: Jacob Wynn (2021)**

**Figures 11-12 Prince Peach Model (2021)**



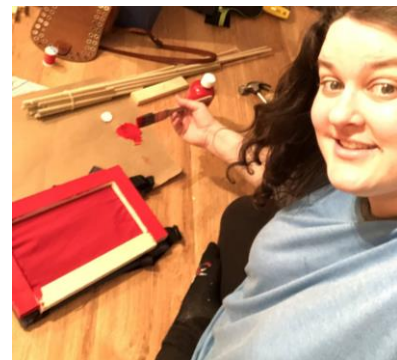
**Hawks Costume:**

For this gender bend look, I wanted to make Hawks more feminine. Approaching the design, I wanted to make sure that I honored the character, but I also wanted to put my own spin on the look. I wanted the look to include a skirt, jacket, t-shirt, and wings along with other accessories. I knew that this would be a challenge because it was a lot to build.

I designed a jacket that I hoped would be functional over the top of the wings. This was something that I have never done before in design or construction, so it was a unique challenge. I wanted the wings to be able to open, it was an important part of achieving the motion of this costume.

I built the structure of the wings first so that I could use them to drape the jacket over the top. I wanted the jacket to function over the wings as well as to be worn without them. I decided to do this by putting two strips of Velcro on the inside and one on the outside so that the jacket would look similar in both positions.

Building the wings for this costume proved to be a real challenge, but one of the fun parts of cosplay is figuring out how to construct various props and costumes. For the wings, I found myself at the hardware store buying 1 X 2 boards, screw hook and eyes, hinges, dowel rods, wire, carabiners, and metal braces. I also purchased a backpack, a clipboard, and 10 yards of red flannel. This was probably the most tedious and time-consuming piece I made. Clocking in around 150 hours of construction time.

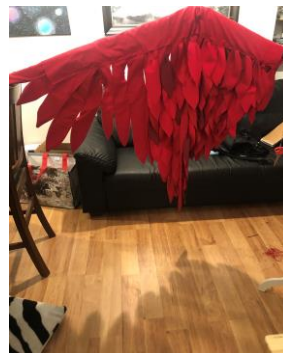
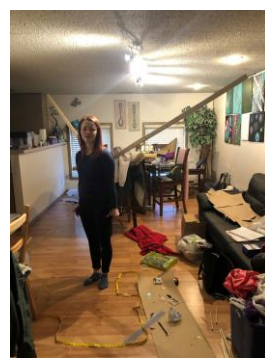


**Figure 13 Painting Wings (2021)**

I started attaching cut 1 X 2 boards to a clipboard and the back half of the backpack. I added padding and fabric to cover up the screws so that they would not hit my model in the back. I then attached the 1 X 2's together with hinges to create the up and down movement. I then screwed hooks into the dowel rods and then attached them to eyes which I screwed into the 1 X 2's, I clamped the hooks down to secure them. I did this to create motion when my model walked. I then created a rigging system using eyes, wire, and carabiners so that the model could pull the wings open.

I then patterned and sewed together the base feathers and attached those to the dowel rods. I covered the top of the mechanism with a quilted padded fabric to make the structure less boxy. I then hand sewed around 300 individual flannel feathers to the wings creating the final look.

**Figures 14-18 Wings Process Shots (2021)**



For the shirt, I took a plain back T-Shirt and I sewed in new side seams to make it more fitted. I was inspired by Hawks' original shirt design and I used photoshop to recreate the image, I then cut it out on iron-on vinyl to make the shirt. I wanted it to look sleek and this material helped me to achieve this. I did have a hard time with the vinyl on the collar, so it did not turn out ideally though once the outfit is put all together it looks nice.

For the skirt, I wanted to go with something that had the same vibe as the original costume but ultimately felt more feminine. I choose a pleated skirt that would give the cosplayer the freedom to move. The skirt is pleated and gathered in both the front and the back to give it a flared look, while also still creating an ensemble look with the jacket like the original character.

I also styled a wig to match my design. I purchased a pigtail wig that had detectable ponytails so that I could place them where I needed to. I wanted the wig to have a windblown look, so I messed it a little bit. I also curled the bangs back to help with the swept look and to keep them out of the face of my model.

Finally, to finish off the cosplay look, we added some headphones that had been doctored to look like Hawks ear protection, safety goggles, patterned tights, and combat boots. It was important to me that I had all these things to tie together the final look. Overall, I think that this Cosplay was successful, and it lived up to the original design that I had created.



**Hawks Cost Breakdown:**

2 yards of Tan Suiting: 18.18

½ yard of White Faux Fur: 5

1 yard of Black Satin Twill: 10

Thread: 8

Velcro: 6

Black T-Shirt: 1.99

Iron-on Vinyl: 6

Wig: 18

Accessories: 16

**Wings:**

Iron Cable: 2.60

Line End Clamps: 8

Carabiners: 6

Screw Hooks and Eyes: 4.78

Brackets and Hinges: 8.06

¾" by 48" Dowel Rods: 10.80

1x2 Boards: 3.16

Backpack: 4.29

Clipboard: 1

10 yards of Chili Pepper Red Flannel: 40

**Total: 177.86**

**Hours: 205**



**Figure 19 Hawks Sitting (2021)**

**Model: Bailey Oliver (2021)**

**Figures 20-21 Hawks Model (2021)**





**Overhaul Costume:**

What I wanted to achieve for this costume is showing that I could purchase most of the costume and have it turn out like my vision. For this costume most of the pieces I did purchase, but the mask that I bought online was awful and I figured that if I wanted something that would be like the character that it would have to be built. With the jacket I purchased I did also have to add faux fur stuffed with poly fill to complete the character look.

I did not really know where to begin when I started to make the mask for Overhaul. I found some images on Pinterest that looked pretty good, but nothing really showed me how. I finally found a video on Pinterest that led me to YouTube, the video comes from a Youtuber who goes by YOGA Cosplay. Although the video does not show me measurements, it did show me how to construct the mask. Based on the video and the terrible mask from Amazon I used my patterning skills and the measurements of my model to make templates of all the pieces I needed.

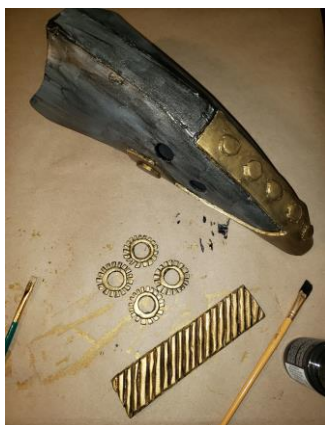
First, I drew out the patterns on craft paper. Using tape, I pieced them together to see what it would look like, I made a few adjustments and then it was time to transfer the pattern to EVA cosplay foam. I used 1/2" black foam. I got the basic pieces traced and cut. I started out using 3600 glue, but it was not bonding as quickly as I wanted, so I opted to exclusively use my low temp hot glue gun. I got all the seams glued up and I was impressed with how durable it was holding everything together. After all the large pieces were in place, I needed to make the smaller details. I cut out five circles for the front and the two for the sides, these would be used to look like a large metal rivet holding the mask together. I ended up cutting out four more circles for the straps, four large circles for the gears and four more medium sized ones that I additionally cut out the centers for the tops of the gears. The top arch of the mask is a strip of foam that I used my exacto knife on to get the ridged details.

With all the pieces assembled it was time to start painting. I used -- foam paint which allows the props to move, flex, and bend without the paint cracking. I had to experiment a little bit to get the colors right, and once I was satisfied with the colors the mask really started to come together. The “stitch” work around the edges of the face is made with hot glue. After all the “metal” sections were painted gold, it did not really look like realistic metal. I ended up putting a light coat of black over the gold and wiped it off before it could dry, I then used a brush to get any sections of the metal that needed a little blacker.

After everything was painted and dried, I needed to add the straps. The bottom strap is meant to hold the mask down around the neck, and the top strap secures it around the head. I ended up adjusting the top strap, because in the original placement of the foam on the side was almost in my models’ eye, it was a quick shift. The mask fits well and my model says that it is comfortable enough that they would be able to wear it for a day at a convention.

**Figures 22-27 Overhaul Mask Photos (2021)**

**Model: Richard Aufdermauer (2021)**



**Overhaul Cost Breakdown:**

Thrifty Black Button Down: 3.98

Thrifty Black Pants: 7

Green Jacket: 34

White Shoes: 26.48

½ yards Faux Purple Fur: 7.50

Cosplay Gloves: 5

Silver Tie: 7

**Mask:**

Eva Black Cosplay Foam: 7

Elastic: 2

Cosplay Paint: 12

Glue Sticks: 3

Purchased Mask that was Awful: 19

**Total: 133.96**

**Hours: 30**

**Model: Richard Aufdermauer (2021)**

**Figures 28-29 Overhaul Model**



**Ladybug Costume:**

For this design, I wanted to do something that made Ladybug look and feel older, but still encompass her strong and free youthful spirit. I wanted to create a formal look that she could still move freely in because she is after all a superhero and could have to fight crime at any moment. I decided on an off-the-shoulder dress with a high-low skirt.

If I had to do this over again, I would redo the bodice of this dress completely, something that was reflected in the final fabric that was not apparent in the mockup of the dress was just how revealing it was, it also did not allow for much up in the air arm movement. I do like how the final dress turned out. I just do not know if it is something that Ladybug would wear which was my objective.

I love the skirt on the dress, and I would keep this part of the costume the same. It is a high low half circle skirt. I made the spots from Vinyl and ironed them on the dress. I also decided to line the inside of the dress with the black fabric to give it variety in the look of the skirt. I also added red flats, white gloves, and Ladybug's superhero mask to help complete her look.

The mask for this costume had some trial phases. I ended up making two masks, one which was made of cosplay foam and then painted and the other which was also made of cosplay foam, but I decided to cover it with fabric from the dress. I also added vinyl dots to the fabric for the mask to mimic Ladybug's actual superhero mask. I attached the elastic to the back of the mask and then covered it with a sticky back felt so that the mask was comfortable to wear. Adding the elastic made it so that it would be able to be secured around her head and stay on her face, but not show because it was worn underneath her wig.

**Figures 30-31 Ladybug Mask (2021)**

Original Painted Mask



Final Mask

For the Ladybug wig when the wig arrived it was lacking a lot of the volume that it really needed. I used a crimping iron on the hair at the bottom and middle of the wig to help give it volume. I took small sections and crimped them and then immediately brushed them out, this helped to make the hair fluffy. I left the top layers of the wig untouched so that the wig would still have a smooth look to it. The rest of the styling took a lot of hairspray and some trimming to get it to turn out the way I wanted.

**Figure 32 Ladybug Wig (2021)**

**Ladybug Cost Breakdown:**

3 yards Red Satin Twill (on sale): 22.76

2 yards of Black Satin Twill: 20

20" Invisible Zipper: 5

Thread: 8

Iron-on Vinyl: 6

White Cosplay Gloves: 6

Red Flats: 6

White Tights: 6

Wig: 15

**Mask:**

Eva Black Cosplay Foam: 7

Elastic: 2

Cosplay Paint: 6

Sticky Felt: 2

Leftover Fabric from the Dress: 0

Leftover Iron-On Vinyl: 0

**Total: 111.76**

**Hours: 74**



**Model: Teegan Schriock (2021)**

**Figures 33-34 Ladybug Model (2021)**



**Total Costume Cost Breakdown:**

<b>Costume</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Princess Peach	281.00	82
Hawks	177.86	205
Overhaul	133.96	30
Ladybug	111.76	74
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>704.58</b>	<b>391</b>

## **Part IV: Showcase and Conclusion**

I was able to showcase my costumes outside of the theatre in the Stephens Performing Arts Center at Idaho State University. I put the costumes on dress forms and organized photos and my renderings into a display case. It was nice to be able to display the costumes and show them off to other people.

This was helpful for me because I was able to get several outside perspectives on how my costumes turned out. The response was very positive. A lot of people complimented me on the dye job of my fabric for the Prince Peach costume. I was also able to answer questions about my costume process. I am grateful that I was able to set up the small showcase as it validated the hard work that I had put into designing and creating the costumes.

**Figures 35-36 Showcase (2021)**



This process has made me appreciate the amount of time and effort that goes into planning and making cosplay. Most cosplay cannot just be produced overnight, not if you want a quality piece. I learned that cosplay can be done on a budget, but that it can also be very expensive depending on the choice of costumes to be made. It was easy to stick to my budget, but I did have a lot of help along the way.

I think having a knowledge of pattern drafting, draping, and costume design helped me to better understand the process of completing successful original cosplay. My knowledge on these subjects is still growing and I think it is something that will grow for my whole life. It is okay to make mistakes especially when we are just starting out, because we can only learn from those mistakes. I also think that it is possible for someone who is trained in theatrical costume design and technology to make a career out of cosplay. We should not limit ourselves to just the theatrical field of work.

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