

Costume Design Influenced by Seventeenth Century Color Palettes on a Contemporary Stage

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Abstract : The purpose of the research was to design costumes based on historic colors used by artists during the seventeenth century. The researcher investigated European art, primarily paintings and portraiture, as well as the color palettes used by the artists. The methodology examined the artists, their work, the color palettes used in their work, and the practices of color usage within their palettes. By examining portraits of historic figures, as well as paintings of ordinary scenes, subjects, and people, further information about color palettes was revealed. Related to the color palettes, was the use of 'broken colors' which was a relatively new practice, dating from the sixteenth century. The color palettes used by the artists of the seventeenth century had their limitations due to available pigments. With an examination of not only their artwork, and with a closer look at their palettes, the researcher discovered the exciting choices they made, despite those restrictions. The research was also initiated with the historical elements of the era's clothing, as well as that of available materials and dyes. These dyes were also limited in much the same manner as the pigments which the artist had at their disposal. The color palettes of the paintings have much to tell us about the lives, status, conditions, and relationships from the past. From this research, informed decisions regarding color choices for a production on a contemporary stage of a period piece could then be made. The designer's choices were a historic gesture to the colors which might have been worn by the character's real-life counterparts of the era.

Keywords : broken color palette, costume color research, costume design, costume history, seventeenth century color palette, sixteenth century color palette

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