

Re-Fashioning Fantasy:

Redesigning the Costumes for the Television Show *Game of Thrones*

By Alina Caldwell

A thesis presented to the Honors College of Middle Tennessee State  
University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from  
the University Honors College.

Fall 2026

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Theatre and Dance

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## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my thesis advisor Tommy Macon who helped me through the process and was a true encouragement. I would also like to thank Dr. Joan McRae for her help with the thesis process. Finally I would like to thank my friends and family who encourage me to be creative and pursue the things I am passionate about. I would never have done a thesis on a topic so dorky without your support.

## ABSTRACT

Refashioning Fantasy: Redesigning the Costumes for the TV Show *Game of*

*Thrones*

By

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This creative project thesis explores adapting the *Song of Ice and Fire* book series to TV through the lens of costume design. I consider the series' world-building, how different environments impose distinct requirements for clothing, and the visual appeal of a costume's aesthetics for the audience. I create multiple fashion illustrations for eight different families/locations in *A Song of Ice and Fire*. By designing and illustrating these costumes, I gain insight into adapting novels to reality, how sociological and cultural elements shape the clothing we wear, and how to clearly convey visual information about a garment through a drawing that would allow a costume shop to make it

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## **PART 1: RESEARCH AND PROCESS**

### CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM WITH COSTUMES IN *GAME OF THRONES*

This creative project had its genesis in *Game of Thrones*, the 2011 HBO adaptation of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, an epic fantasy novel series written by George R.R. Martin. *Game of Thrones* has a distinct visual style that blends the fashion of the 2010s with medieval European and Asian styles. However, I felt that the costumes never reached their full potential when compared to real medieval clothing and, at times, detracted from the viewing experience. The most outstanding problem encountered with the costumes in *Game of Thrones* is their overall lack of color. Partially to blame for the desaturated nature is the show's color grading; however, the costumes themselves often lack the richness in hue and shade one would expect to see in highborn medieval clothing.

The first synthetic dye was not created until 1856, when William H. Perkin accidentally discovered mauve while trying to synthesize quinine (St. Clair 2018, 169). Before this, dyes were made exclusively from natural materials and were often difficult to produce, requiring labor-intensive processes. For example, the process of creating indigo dye requires that the leaves be fermented to convert soluble indoxyl into insoluble indigo (Pattanaik 2021). This process takes several days and requires that the indigo leaves be beaten and oxidized, then dried. At this point, the indigo can be mixed with water filtered through ash, then fermented for several days (St. Clair, 190). Processes for creating vivid dyes in any color were similarly labor-intensive, and thus bright fabrics became an expression of wealth. During some periods in history, specific colors were designated to be worn only by royalty: Tyrian purple in Ancient Rome (St. Clair, 162), crimson in

Elizabethan England (Wood 2014), and yellow in the Chinese Qing Dynasty (Dickinson 2008, 116). Color played an important role in visually delineating class in medieval society, though the shade's intensity was more important than its hue. *Game of Thrones*' plot revolves around power, and who does or doesn't have it; it is therefore strange that often its wealthier characters are outfitted in desaturated tones when history proves that bright colors can be achieved with natural pigments.

Color could also be used to create visual distinction among the characters in *Game of Thrones*. In a show with as many plotlines and characters as *Game of Thrones* has, color and silhouette variety would help the audience members distinguish family alliances. This issue becomes especially apparent as the series progresses and the costumes increasingly include more black in their designs. Season 6 episode 9 of *Game of Thrones* includes a battle that signals the end of the North's contribution to the War of the Five Kings, the show's main conflict, and the reinstatement of Starks as wardens of the North. When watching the fight, however, it becomes hard to tell the sides apart because they are all outfitted in various shades of grey and black, and the visual impact is lost. In a show where house heraldry is often displayed, it would make sense to include distinguishing features for each house so the audience can tell the sides apart.

Along with using color to distinguish characters in *Game of Thrones*, silhouettes and fashion trends specific to different locations are another way to establish visual difference. Costume styles in *Game of Thrones* remain similar across the wide expanse of land that encompasses Westeros. Realistically, there would be some interaction among communities via trade and proximity, but different fashions would arise in response to the challenges of their environments and to social and cultural factors. The European

landmass from Spain to Norway is a good example of the variety of clothing that can emerge in response to environmental factors across even a small area. George R.R. Martin compared Westeros' size to South America in a 1999 blog post (Martin 1999); if we keep this size in mind and include the land beyond the Wall which is not part of the Seven Kingdoms, Westeros encompasses a vast amount of territory with relatively limited ability for travel and communication, so naturally distinct styles and clothing traditions would emerge as a result of the isolation and size.

My final concern with *Game of Thrones'* costumes is their underestimation of human beings' love of ornamentation. The artistic detail in clothing often demonstrates the level of civilization in *Game of Thrones*. The Freefolk, a group of people living both nomadic and sedentary lifestyles beyond the rule of the Seven Kingdoms, are shown wearing animal skins, sloppily stitched together without artistic embellishment. The nomadic horse herding group known as the Dothraki are given crude brown woven garments with only some metal and wooden jewelry and belts, and the people of the Iron Islands, who are comparable to Norsemen and their Vikings, are given no finery despite what the books say about them wearing the clothing and jewelry from what they have won in battle. Looking at real-life examples of nomadic cultures, all have some form of artistic tradition that displays technical skill and aesthetics important to the culture. Using the narrative of barbarian civilizations with lesser art forms in television reinforces biases about the superiority of culture and propagates false ideas about lifestyles different from our own. Avoiding reductive depictions of people groups in *Game of Thrones* also adds nuance to plotlines that explore these concepts of superiority and who has the right to govern.

## CHAPTER II: WORLDBUILDING AND REAL LIFE CONNECTIONS

Before creating costumes faithful to the *Song of Ice and Fire* books, I researched George R.R. Martin's worldbuilding. I used the novels as my primary source of information regarding Westeros, and took notes whenever relevant information about the culture and geography of the eight families arose. The factors I noted were anything related to geography, including the climate, land size, natural resources, the population of a family group, the people they wield power over, and their ability to trade with people outside that area. I did the same for social factors, such as any religion and customs that would impact their dress, as well as the political power and wealth a family has.

It was also important for me to match the book's tone, and I noted that the costuming described in the books was often slightly fantastical. For example, George R. R. Martin describes a mourning dress worn by Cersei Lannister. He highlights the surreal impression it made: "The Queen wore a high-collared black silk gown, with a hundred dark red rubies sewn into her bodice, covering her from neck to bosom. They were cut in the shape of teardrops, as if the queen were weeping blood" (Martin 1996, 374). Another time, he describes the armour worn by Loras Tyrell: "His plate was intricately fashioned and enameled as a bouquet of a thousand different flowers, and his snow-white stallion was draped in a blanket of red and white roses" (297). I chose to ensure my costumes had the level of detail used by Martin in the books, while avoiding direct copying of any clothing descriptions.

After researching the source material, I explored real cultures and locations that shared similarities with those in *A Song of Ice and Fire* to ground my designs in reality. I looked at a variety of cultures, both Western and non-Western, to avoid my designs

resembling any one group of people too closely. I also skipped across time and pulled from both modern and ancient fashions for inspiration. I was concerned less with historical accuracy and more about creating something original.

### CHAPTER III: DESIGN PROCESS

After completing my research, I began the moodboarding process. Creating moodboards is the most abstract part of the fashion creation process. It involves compiling images, textures, patterns, and colors that evoke the feeling you want to convey in the designs. I often also included music that reminded me of a particular house. A moodboard is everything but garments, and serves as a visual reminder of the energy you are capturing in a design. It was important to get the moodboard right because it was the halfway point where the idea began to manifest in reality.

Once I was satisfied with the moodboard, I could then synthesize my ideas with initial sketches. Throughout the initial design process, I referred back to the evaluation criteria I established in my thesis proposal to ensure that no costume would be impractical or make no sense in the world. The first question I asked was, "Is this garment likely to arise from the materials available to these people?" The second question was: "Is this garment practical for the people it is made for? Three: "Does it make logical sense that these people would create this garment?" And finally, number four asks: "Is the garment visually appealing, and does it align with the aesthetic of other garments from the region?"

After I was satisfied with my sketches and checked them against the criteria I established, I moved on to the final stage: creating the final designs. For these, I mainly

used watercolor and a semi-realistic style; in this, I differed from traditional fashion illustration, which emphasises gesture and is usually in a graphic style. For my final pieces, I wanted a viewer to be able to conceptualize what this would look like on the actors in the show. In the final stage of costume interpretation, the majority of the costumes were fleshed out, and it was a matter of conveying fabric textures and design details to the audience.

## **PART II: THE COSTUMES**

### **CHAPTER I: WILDLINGS/FREEFOLK**

The Freefolk, also referred to as wildlings by people in the Seven Kingdoms, are the people who live beyond the 700-foot-tall ice wall that separates the northernmost part of the Seven Kingdoms from the land beyond it. The land beyond the wall is generally extremely cold and harsh, though there exist warmer regions where larger tribes of Freefolk live more permanently. The Freefolk are a semi-nomadic, culturally diverse people living in a tribal system. The books explain that they have established communities and thus can delegate clothing-making tasks to people. In an environment where temperatures drop below zero, clothing is the difference between life and death for the Freefolk. Therefore, clothing would need to be practical to accommodate their hunter-gatherer lifestyle and the weather.

For the Freefolk design, I examined how Inuit people in Alaska survive by wearing animal skins and analyzed the artistic traditions that arose from this material. One thing that stood out to me about Inuit dress was that they used fur colors to create patterns and designs instead of dyes. I was also inspired by the Sámi people of the Sápmi



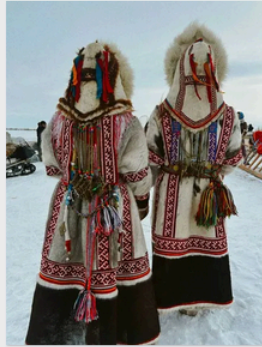
## patterns



stone beading, obsidian

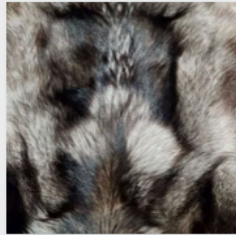
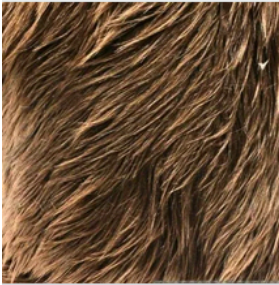


patterns achieved through fur color mostly



## textures

reindeer skin too



striped shadowcat fur too lol





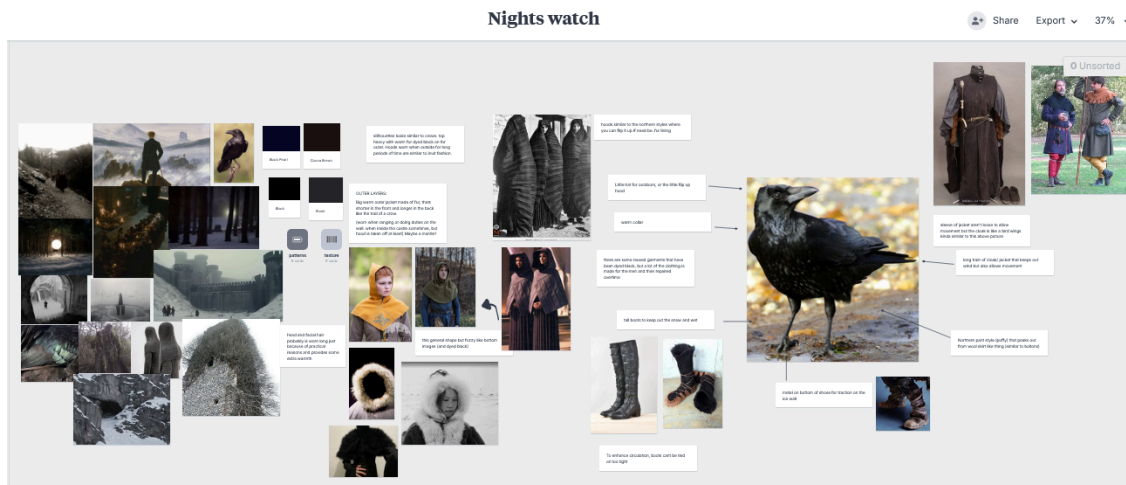
## CHAPTER II: NIGHT'S WATCH

The Night's Watch is a military order in Westeros that serves to protect the realm from forces beyond the Wall. At the beginning of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, the Night's Watch is dwindling, with their numbers now mainly drawn from male criminals forced to serve at the Wall as punishment. However, historically, the Night's Watch was a respected organization, and serving was an honor. The most notable visual aspect of the Night's Watch is that they can only wear black. Keeping this in mind, I reserved the use of black exclusively in my designs for members of the Night's Watch to maintain the impact of the color. Because the Night's Watch receives donations of weaponry, armor, and clothing from all over the Seven Kingdoms, dyes are used to turn them all black. As a result, there would be a variety of shades and tones in the blacks, which also helps the designs from becoming too monochrome and boring.

Because the Wall where the Night's Watch serves is located in the North, it can get extremely cold. The temperatures mean layering is crucial. In *Game of Thrones*, members of the Night's Watch are depicted with tears in their clothing. Some wear-and-tear is natural due to the level of activity and the availability of new fabrics, but holes in clothing can become dangerous in cold climates, as they interfere with heat retention. Also, the commanders of the Night's Watch would be concerned with maintaining the appearance of a once-respected organization, and walking around in ragged clothes does not support that image. I changed this using the Japanese tradition of *sashiko*, or 'little stabs', to reinforce the clothing (Embroiders' Guild of America 2024). Visible mending would be common, mostly because the repairs would have to be done by the men themselves, most of whom would only have rudimentary knowledge of sewing.

Rangers who venture out beyond the Wall are often nicknamed "crow" in both the book and show. I mimicked the silhouette of a crow to play up their appearance and guide my design. It was important to me that the Night's Watch members wore some kind of head covering to retain heat in the Northern climate, but *Game of Thrones* main designer Michele Clapton stated that the showrunners would not allow her to give the characters hats because it made it hard to see the actors (Kosin 2017). I tried to work around this by giving their cloaks hoods that could be converted into regular fur mantles by flipping them inside out. This way the actors' faces would still be visible, and the hoods could easily be taken off if needed.

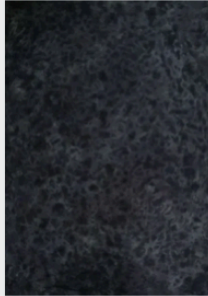
I imagine the Night's Watch shares many similarities in silhouette with Northern styles for House Stark and House Bolton; however, I wanted the members of the Night's Watch to wear coats that were longer in the back than in the front to mimic a crow's tail feathers. This would also give them greater mobility and allow them to wear long, waterproof boots that parody a crow's legs. I also created the coats with sleeves instead of a cloak that opens in the front, so they could wield weapons and perform tasks while staying warm.



## patterns

Share E

any patterning comes from the fabric that is underneath the black dye+ the natural variations in the fabric dye also any mending that the men did :)



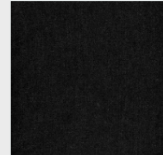
## texture

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0 Unis



I love the long brunched furrrrrr.  
could be made out of a lot of fur's, long  
sheep fur like bobbers, bear fur, shadow cat  
fur, etc.



the texture of this dress



### CHAPTER III: HOUSE STARK

House Stark is the most powerful northern house in Westeros, and its patriarch is known as the Warden of the North. The seat of House Stark is Winterfell; George R.R. Martin stated he based Winterfell's location on Scotland and Ireland, but the climate described more closely resembles that of Eastern Europe. With this in mind, I took more inspiration from Eastern European clothing, but tried to avoid drawing too heavily upon one specific culture to inform my designs.

For the House Starks' color palette, I imagined them wearing lots of white and light blues, and for Winterfell itself to be white, letting in more light in a castle where windows would have to be smaller to conserve warmth. House Stark is a noble house, by far the least ruthless in the series, so I wanted their clothing to be brighter and softer, while also displaying the more traditional values the north shares. Many people in the North remain closer to the old ways than those in Westeros, so I felt their clothing should look slightly more medieval than the Southern houses, where the culture is more modern.

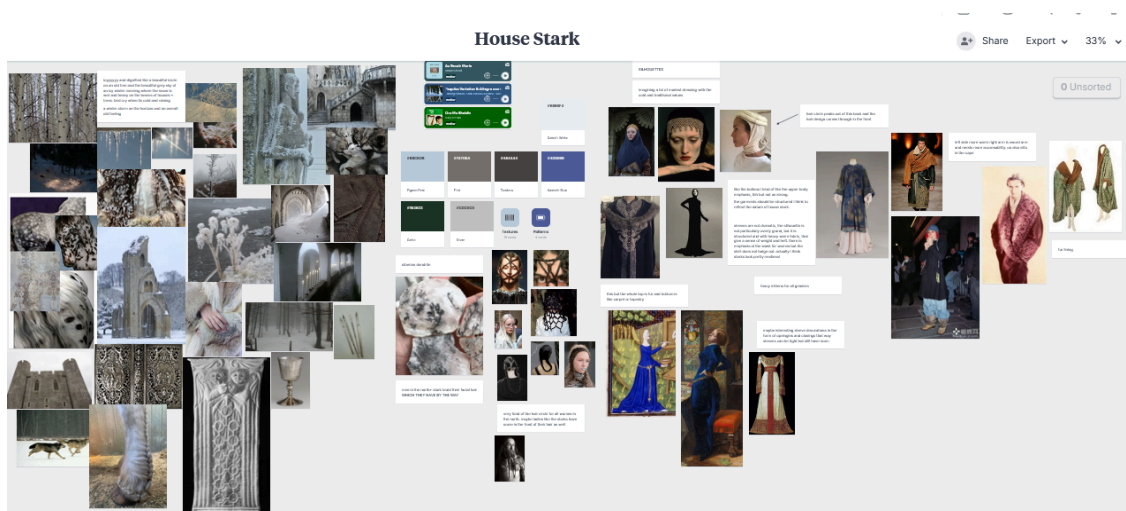
Head coverings and layered garments would be very important in the North due to cold temperatures. Textiles like velvet, wool, and fur would provide warmth to cotton and linen undergarments. Silver thread is worked into the embroidery of sleeves and shoes. Women in House Stark wear close-fitted wimples that cover the entire head. Because the ground is harder in the North, mining for gems and precious metals is more difficult, so embroidery and complicated hairstyles are more commonly used to express wealth. In order for the hair to be seen while wearing a wimple, it is fashionable to have two braids that come out the back of the wimple and meet to create an unbroken circle of hair. This

hairstyle is practical but still suggests wealth, as it requires servants to maintain it.

Northern men keep their hair and beards long but well-kept, occasionally braiding both.

Women of House Stark wear cloaks because they do not need to do as much physical labor or spend time outside. Their cloaks are tapestries woven with designs that represent their family history or serve as an homage to their religion. These tapestries are extremely ornamental and are made with one wearer in mind. The cloaks have a mantle made of wolf fur that can be removed when the days are warmer. Because their House sigil is a wolf, almost all the fur House Stark wears is wolf fur.

Despite jewelry being produced less in the North, it would still be worn, especially by the more direct descendants of House Stark. I imagined Sansa Stark wearing a circlet with sapphires that hang down across the whole of the crown and frame her face. House Stark jewelry often mimics the crystalline effect of ice and snow.



## Textures

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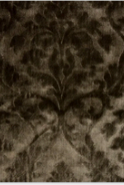
embroidery, hair art, fur, the north isn't known for its wealth of metals bc its harder to mine for them, and a lot of metal isn't worn bc its cold. Plate armour is heavy not as common and jewelry and opulence is expressed through embroidery, and like the idea of hair art in the north being popular amongst young women.



stoneware is worked into embroidered designs as seen above



Both raised and flat embroidery



wool for mats, tapestry or carpet texture for overall cloak



also lots of leather textures, v important.



## Patterns

wolf motifs in embroidery





STARK  
TUME



## CHAPTER IV: HOUSE BOLTON

House Bolton is the second most powerful house in the North, as old as House Stark and similarly wealthy but commanding fewer titles. The seat of House Bolton is located at the Dreadfort, to the east of Winterfell and surrounded by a mountainous territory, making the Boltons slightly isolated. The Bolton's geographic location is essentially the same as House Stark's, but the Boltons are more outwardly villainous, and I wanted to communicate this visually. Because House Bolton has a tradition of flaying their enemies, I wanted to create their costumes in layers, with each garment revealing a new facet of their personality, much as human anatomy has layers. I kept the overall color palette warm by using browns and reds to evoke blood and dirt.

House Bolton's outer garments are made of sheep hair to very clearly distinguish them from the Starks, who wear wolf fur. The sheep fur gives them a fuzzy, warm appearance that covers up the other layers. Narratively, wearing sheep hair works in the Boltons' favor as they present themselves as loyal to House Stark before betraying them and gaining the title of Warden of the North. After this betrayal, I imagined the Boltons would wear the wolf fur of House Stark as they gained the titles once held by the Starks. The transition from sheep hair to wolf fur also visually conveys the Boltons' use of their 'wolf in sheep's' clothing tactics to gain power in *A Song of Ice and Fire*.


The sheepskin cloaks created a distinctive silhouette that made the Boltons seem larger, and I wanted to retain that shape when the cloaks were removed. I was inspired by the gigantic shoulder pads of the 1980s for the Boltons silhouettes. Overall, I wanted the Boltons' costume design to lean into their creepy enthusiasm for being evil and flaying people. Because of House Bolton's history with flaying their enemies and wearing their




## Patterns

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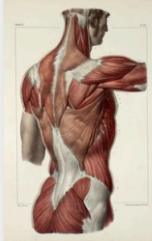



Some patterns are intentionally referential to human anatomy:







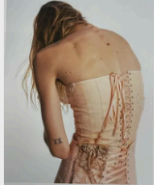
this but like flying of ppl



Others mimic the skeletal and muscular system.

Patterns are achieved through pleatings and intentional placement of seams and openings as well as embroidery (a common way to decorate clothing in the North), to create the effect of musculature system, nerves, veins etc.












## Textures



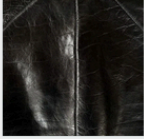



Share

[Dude] Textures include both raw and spun animal wool.





Under Stark rule, the Dornish wear sheep fur because of its warmth and elasticity. After the Red Wedding and the betrayal of the Dornish, the Dornish adopt the meaningful fur to signify their vengeance as Warden of the North.



[Mia] Textures of this level are primarily leather, interspersed with spun wool. New texture and design is achieved with leather moulding.


[Dude] Textures should be cotton to allow for some breathability and some wicking, also to create patterns. Sheep textures, fuzzy and close to skin.

Some cotton for doublet and skirt embroidered design achieved in more decorative seams, otherwise pretty basic draped.

Roses wear more raw dark wool (dark longer) than Dornish, who's seen more in another raw artificial/semi-wool.







## CHAPTER V: HOUSE GREYJOY

House Greyjoy rules over the Iron Islands, a rocky, overcast archipelago off the western shore of Westeros. House Greyjoy is one of the poorest of the great houses, especially downtrodden after a squashed rebellion attempt. The islands are unsuitable for growing crops and therefore rely on fishing as their main source of food. Much of Ironborn culture is tied to the sea and sea-faring, so I kept the color palette for the clothes limited to sea colors; greens and washed-out blues, as well as grey. The colors are not overly saturated because House Greyjoy is not very wealthy, but I still wanted them to feel light and airy, like seafoam.

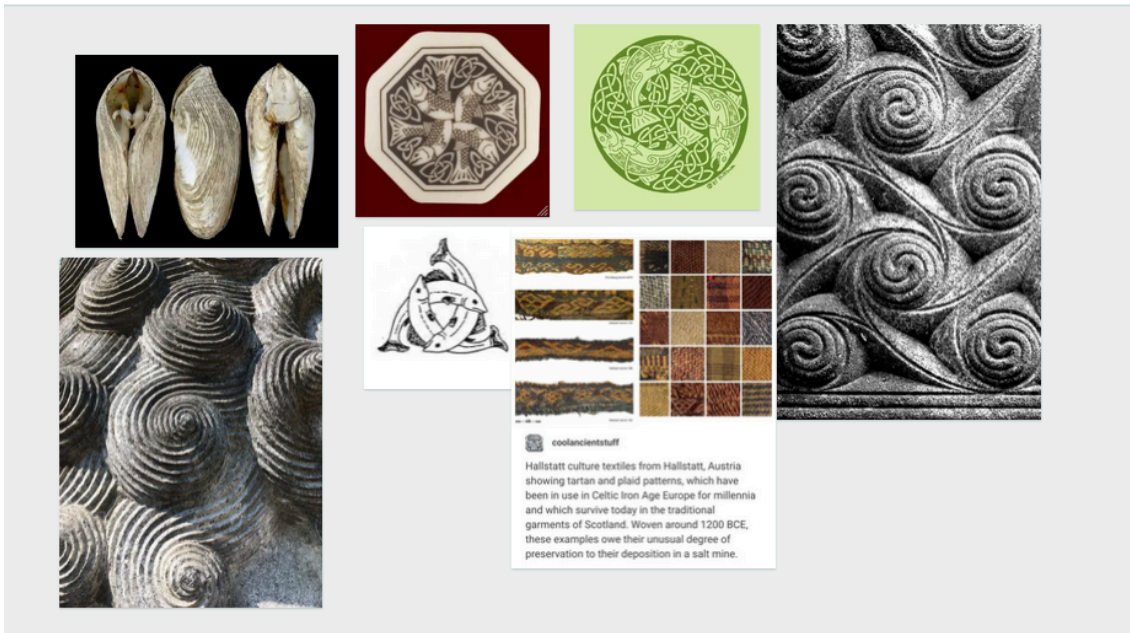
Ironborn culture looks down upon buying and selling fancy clothing and jewelry, instead choosing to plunder smaller areas in Westeros near the shores and wear the items gotten from said plundering. Therefore, the islands' style is eclectic. House Greyjoy's clothes would need to be more practical than those of the other nobleborn in the Seven Kingdoms, since it is expected that Greyjoys demonstrate that what they have was earned with blood and sweat.

Because the Ironborn have a culture that emphasises grit, I wanted to include tattooing as a cultural practice for House Greyjoy and the inhabitants of the Iron Islands. The tattoos would not be decorative, but instead demonstrate achievements and rank. Members of House Greyjoy would be given a tattoo on their forehead at their coming-of-age ceremonies to signify loyalty to the family.

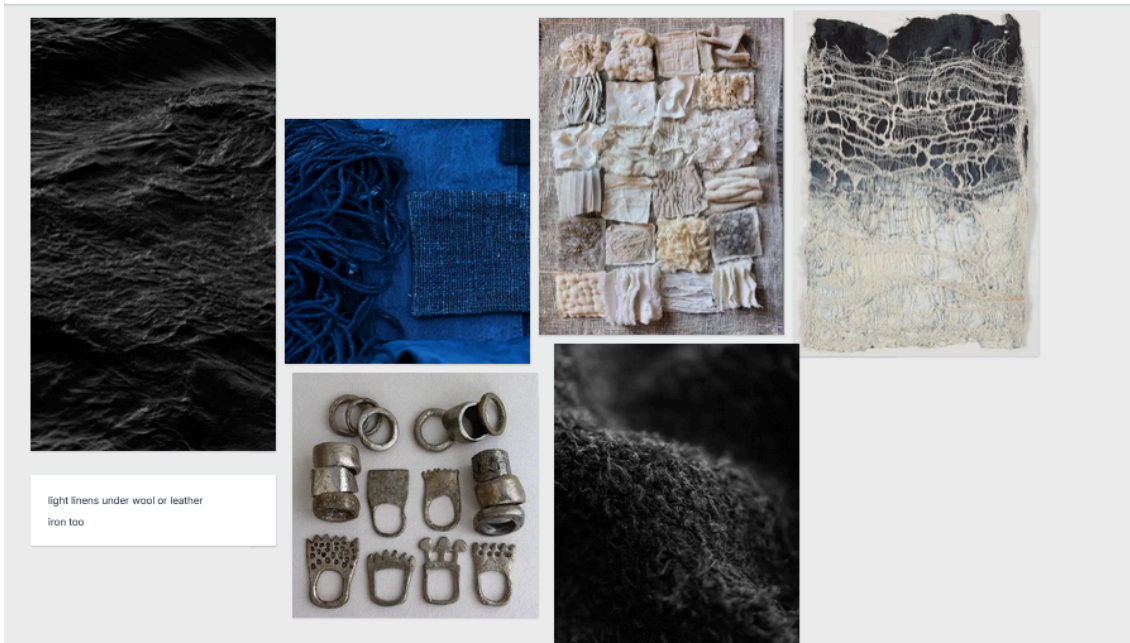
Since the islands are cold, wool skirts would keep out the chill. I looked at Celtic, Irish, and Scottish cultures for inspiration, given the similarities in climate with the



## patterns



## textures





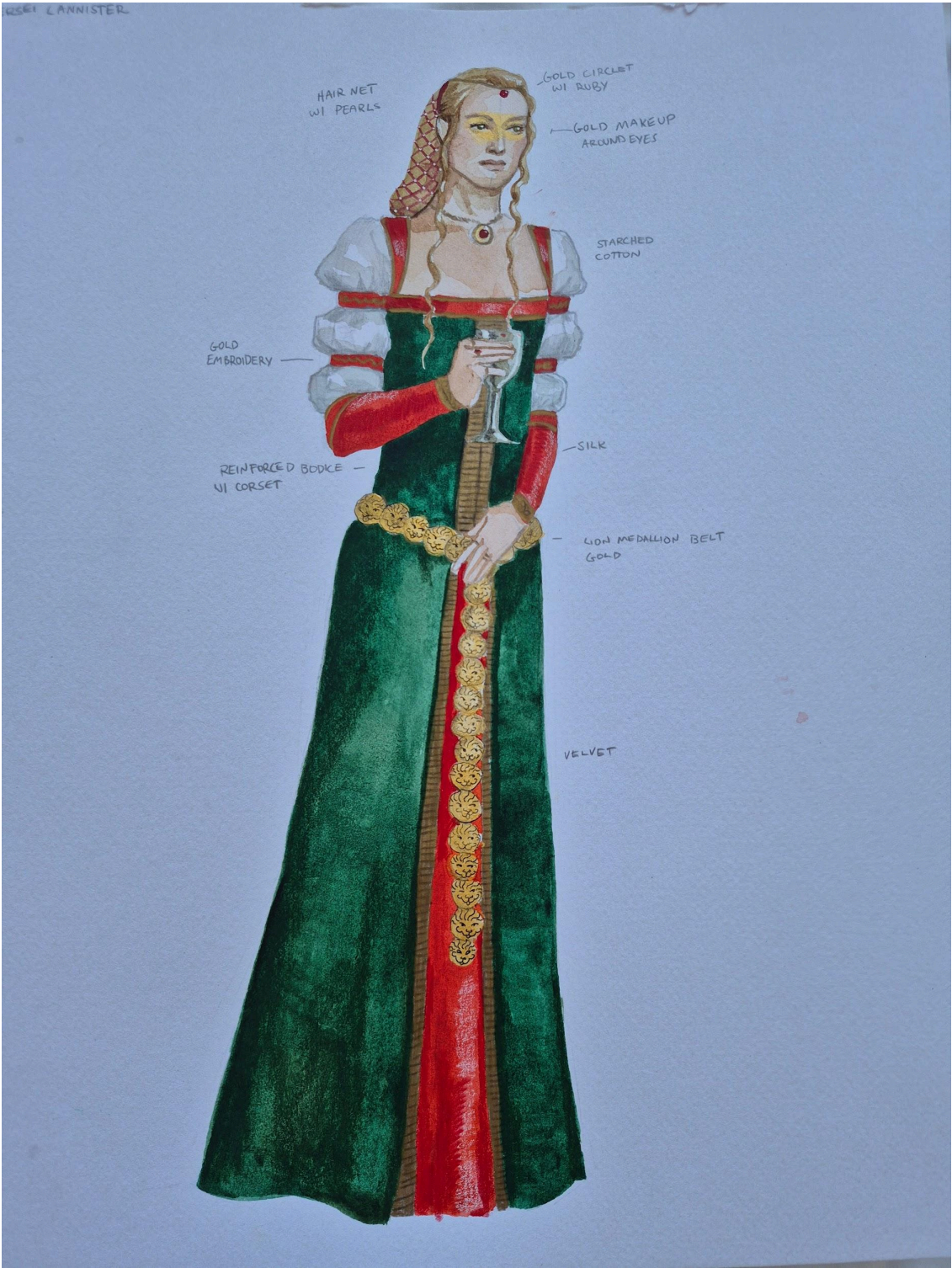
## CHAPTER VI: HOUSE LANNISTER

The Lannisters are widely regarded as being the wealthiest of the great houses in the Seven Kingdoms because their ancestral home at Casterly Rock is located on top of a large gold vein. At the beginning of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, the Lannisters also wield an enormous amount of political power because of their proximity to the throne; the Queen of the Seven Kingdoms is Cersei Lannister. The Lannister color palette is vibrant to show their wealth: crimson red, dark green, yellow, and gold.

House Lannister is an older, more conservative house; they are also very straight-laced and severe, so I wanted to make sure any garments I designed were structured and tight. In my illustration, I imagined the bodice resembling the geometrically corseted styles of the Italian Renaissance. Fabrics like velvet, thick cottons, and silk furthered the rich and conservative appearance. However, I also pictured the Lannisters following fashion in King's Landing (the seat of the throne in Westeros) to maintain their popularity. All of the fashion of King's Landing is modified slightly to make it look more royal when worn by Lannisters.

Instead of a wimple, I thought Cersei Lannister, the Queen, should wear a hairnet made with gold thread and jewels, which aligns more with the fashion I imagined in King's Landing and allows her gold hair to hang on display. In King's Landing, I imagined courtiers wearing crushed metallic pigments to display their wealth and adorn their hair and faces. The Lannister women would wear gold pigment (though probably not real gold, instead something like mica) around their eyes and across the bridge of their nose. This creates a slightly feline look to them as well, which recalls their house sigil of a lion.





WEST LANNISTER

HAIR NET  
WI PEARLS

GOLD CIRCLET  
WI RUBY

GOLD MAKEUP  
AROUND EYES

STARCHED  
COTTON

GOLD  
EMBROIDERY

REINFORCED BODICE -  
WI CORSET

SILK

LION MEDALLION BELT  
GOLD

VELVET

## CHAPTER VII: HOUSE TYRELL

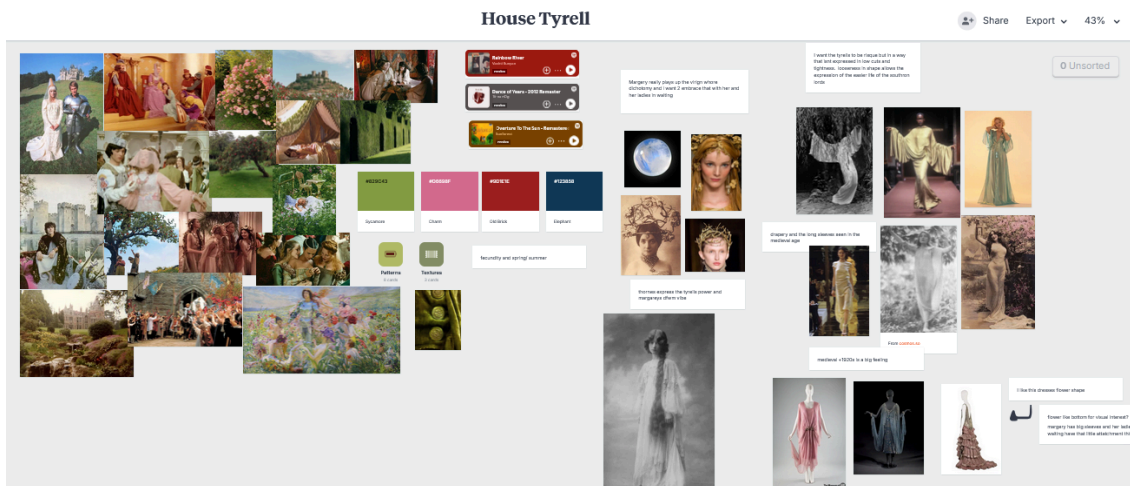
House Tyrell is well seated in the South of Westeros, beneath King's Landing at Highgarden. Because of its favorable location, food is usually plentiful, and winters are mild, making wealth and leisure easy to come by. House Tyrell exemplifies the glorified medieval era told in stories, so I based the costumes on the feeling of fairy tales and King Arthur. I looked at a lot of 70's medieval revival fashion and films to base my costumes on because many of these films take the most recognizable elements from the medieval period and use them in their designs. I was also inspired by a line spoken in *Game of Thrones* in which Cersei Lannister comments on how revealing Margaery Tyrell's dress was, and Margaery replies that the climate in Highgarden was warmer. She adds that "thankfully the Tyrell's blood runs quite warm" (Minahan 2013). Keeping this in mind I wanted to highlight the virgin-whore dichotomy that Margaery plays because it represents the Tyrell's way of keeping power. *Game of Thrones* gave Margaery dresses that were tight and revealed lots of skin, but I thought it made more sense for the younger Tyrells to be covered in extremely light and airy fabrics that bordered on see-through. This way, they remain covered from the sun but can still stay cool in the warmer climate of Highgarden.

I imagined the climate at Highgarden to resemble Georgia or Tennessee because of the similarities in agriculture. House Tyrell's color palette uses spring greens, deep pinks, and dark blues. Jewelry is worn in both silver and gold, with lots of light, reflective jewels such as moonstone, opal, and peridot.

I wanted House Tyrell's wealth to feel different in tone from the wealth of a house like the Lannisters in King's Landing, who always have to be on the lookout for

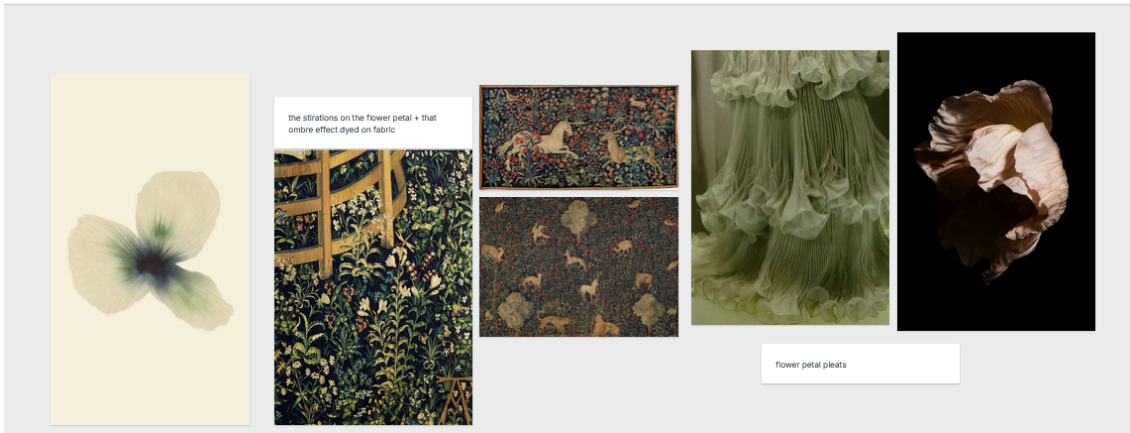
betrayal. House Tyrell can afford to relax because their wealth and power are uncontested, and living is easier in the South. Their clothing reflects this; loose and almost see-through, like the petals of a flower in bloom.

The Tyrells are not naive, however, and still recognize the need for some aggression to keep their power and wealth. To illustrate this, I designed a crown of roses, the Tyrells' sigil. The roses made from silver and jewels are delicate, but the thorns on the silver stems show that the Tyrells are not completely soft.



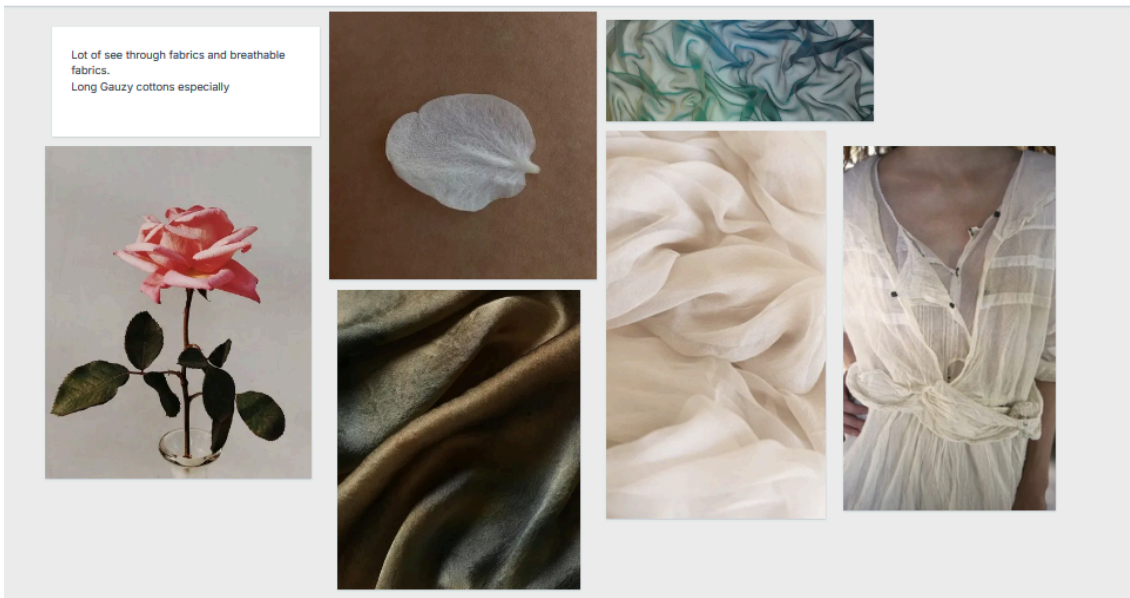
## Patterns

Quick notes



## Textures

Share



HOUSE TYRELL  
HANDMAID + MARGERY QUEEN V.I



## CHAPTER VIII: HOUSE TARGARYEN

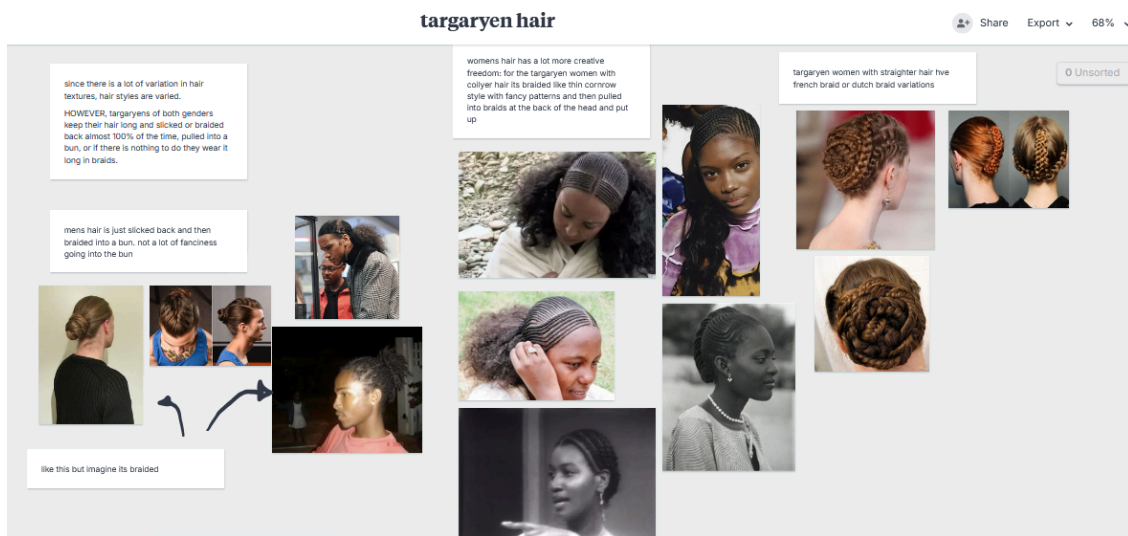
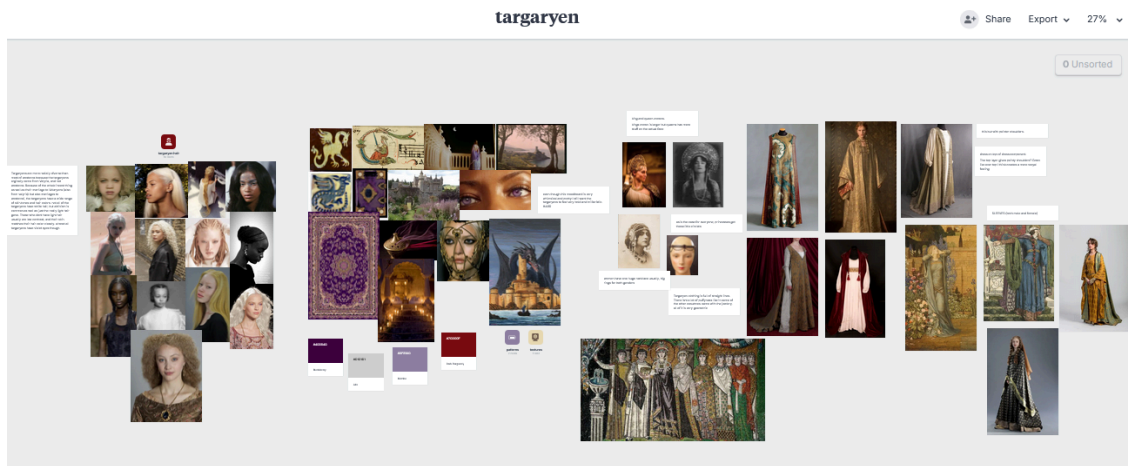
House Targaryen was once one of the most powerful houses in Westeros, ruling the Seven Kingdoms for 300 years. At the start of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, however, most members of House Targaryen have been killed, save Daenerys Targaryen and her older brother, Viserys. For these costumes, I wanted to illustrate what typical Targaryen dress would be at the height of their power.

I kept the color palette to golds, purples, and reds. I reserved the color purple for the Targaryens so that they would feel distinctly royal. I wanted the garments to feel heavy and structured, to illustrate the power and gravity with which the Targaryens ruled. For inspiration I drew from early medieval fashion, taking inspiration from the drapery of Byzantine clothing as well as the later Roman Empire. To further the impression of their royalty, I incorporated tight, intricate hair braiding for both men and women. The Targaryen style is androgynous, with men and women having little distinction in their garments, aside from higher ornamentation in women's clothing and a larger crown for the king. My design of the Targaryens includes sew on solid gold, so that their clothing is connected to some of their jewelry.

To distinguish Targaryen rule from the rule of non-Targaryen kings and queens, I created a crown that looked more like a halo-like headdress with a dragon motif to highlight the real source of their power and difference— the possession of dragons. The headdresses are where the majority of the beadwork and jewels are on display.

I imagined the Targaryens to be more racially diverse than other houses in Westeros since they originally came from Valyria, a southeastern country in Essos— George R.R. Martin's version of the East. House Targaryen practiced incest to keep their

bloodline pure, but they did also marry both Westerosi and Velaryons (a powerful Valyrian family). With this in mind, I felt it would make sense that the Targaryens would have a range of skin tones and hair colors. Generally I kept their hair and skin low contrast though, and imagined that albinism would be common with House Targaryen's practice of incest making it easier for recessive genes to be expressed.



TARGARYEN  
HEAD DRESS V.2



TIGHT  
BRAIDING

RUBIES

LIGHTLY  
DYED LINEN

SILK SLEEVES  
DOUBLE SIDED.

PURPLE ROBE - W/  
GOLD EMBROIDERY  
(COVERS MAJORITY OF SURFACE.)

## CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSION

In this project, I explore how geography and culture influence clothing by examining the world of *A Song of Ice and Fire*. My goal was to create costumes that are not only visually appealing but also reflect the characters' histories and the worlds they live in. By reading George R.R. Martin's novels, taking notes, and cross-referencing the fictional world with real cultures that share similar sociological and geographic traits, I was able to synthesize the characters' practical needs with aesthetics to create clothing that someone in this world may wear.

In the future, I would like to spend more time on each of the houses to further explore the ideas I had, but was not able to create within the time frame. This creative project was essentially worldbuilding through costuming; now that I have a broad scope of trends and fashions for each area of Westeros, it would be interesting to focus on specific character arcs and design clothing to reflect their personality and journey through the series. I would also like to consider designs for Essos in *A Song of Ice and Fire*, now that I have looked at Westeros.

Ultimately, costume design is a powerful tool in storytelling that allows viewers to fully immerse themselves in a fictional world. Designs should function on multiple levels: they should be visually appealing and fit the overall tone of the film, show, or production, while also revealing important aspects of the characters' histories, motivations, and personalities. Good costume design enhances a story without calling too much attention to itself, contributing to the overall impact of a story and enriching the audience's understanding and appreciation of the world they are escaping into.

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