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I am a couture milliner who has created two hats, both of which are adapted from vintage garments, restyled/resized with new textiles/fabrics to meet the requirements of this challenging exhibit. Since these hats can be removed from their respective frames and worn, I have utilized design techniques including garment reconstruction in order to fit most/all head sizes and body types using garment repair as little as possible and new design and construction materials as much as possible.

Hat #1

My interpretation is of *Alice in Wonderland* as she grows from child to woman. Since this does not happen in the story written by Lewis Carroll, I have taken liberty to use my imagination and fantasy in the same way that Alice does in the book.

The brim of the hat is attached to a vintage buckram base to keep the hat in place. I took a piece of buckram millinery ribbon and dyed it to a lovely color by dipping it in coffee until I achieved the color/stain I desired. I wrapped it around the brim in a ribbon candy style which reminds me of the ribbon candy I ate as a child during holiday seasons. I continued that ribbon as one piece culminating it with a hand rolled rose in the front of the hat. The crown of the hat is raised up and kept in place by cutting and pasting plastic cupcake holders to the base in order to maintain the uplift and shape. When seen in the light, these plastic cupcake holders appear as lace. These cups are covered and surrounded by a very soft shade of ivory chiffon draped around the cups. To cover the hole in the crown tunnel I made a bouquet of white roses surrounded by white tulle and encased them with a gold/white dotted French wire ribbon infused with white pearls and rhinestones. This bouquet of netting and ribbon continues as one flowing piece intertwined and brought down through the crown to make the necktie and the veiling to cover the bride's face until the moment she reveals herself to her groom. Attached to the front flower rose I have made two bows out of a darker brown color French wire ribbon and attached gold threads. I made a bud out of a piece of turquoise leather and also added a velvet leaf dipped in gold paint. The flowers on the back of the hat are made from a combination of tulle and velvet flowers also dipped in coffee to get the deeper brown velvet look to add softness and volume. They are fitted loosely to the hat for fluidity and to add motion and movement to the static elements of the hat. Pink flower stamens have been placed in the center of these flowers. Throughout the hat I have used turquoise beads, white pearls, rhinestones and pink flower stamens. These elements of ivory stamens and turquoise stamens are made by attaching the beads one by one along a thread of gaged millinery wire.



The metaphors and symbolism in this hat are many: pink and turquoise colors and bead work seem more youthful than the white pearls and rhinestones of a girl who has grown to adulthood. The ivory colors stand as stark contrast to the white, which symbolize youth, innocence and purity. The bows are childlike whereas the veiling and tulle add a more mature element. The bouquet in the center of the crown covers the open tunnel in the crown representing Alice's descent into the rabbit hole and also would serve as the bouquet of flowers a bride would throw to her female wedding guests at her ceremony/reception.

I think the quote from the story that best illustrates my vision is Alice Kingsley's statement: *"If I had a world of my own, everything would be nonsense, nothing would be what it is because everything would be what it isn't."*

Hat #2

Has a vintage buckram base which I cut into a circle/oval shape. The outer edge of the circle is 11" w and the inner opening of the circle is approx. 21.5 in diameter which is the head size -small. Since the underside bottom/back of this hat will be visible when worn, I covered it in a garden green color woven fiber that resembles grass. The underside front will not be seen so I did not cover that in order so as not to distract from the jeweled flower face veil. Only if Alice raised this hat above her forehead, would her eyes be visible. This is meant to underscore her autonomy, privacy and her humanness, which separates her from the other anthropomorphized animals in the story who have human-like qualities but are not human.



Around the underside base, I also covered the wire that shapes this hat with a satin ribbon that matches the original vintage brim. The topside of the brim on both the outer and inner edge is covered throughout with pink and gold braided lace embroidery threads. The front of the top side of the brim is covered in white chiffon with two hand rolled flowers made out of ballet pink satin fabric. The rhinestone pin with a plastic flower center is followed up the center front of the hat with turquoise flower buds with pink stamens. The very top flower is made out of white tulle with another bud and pink stamen effect. However, it is embellished with turquoise beads to make sure that the whole front and center of this hat has all the signature elements located at the very front of the hat.

There are four hand rolled chiffon green and peach colored rosettes situated around the

hat and they are complimented by four butterfly winged shaped elements. These were formed by taking gaged millinery wire, shaping the form, covering the wire in ballet pink colored satin ribbon and filling the inside of these shapes with an iridescent tulle which changes color in the light. The brim has a few wired turquoise/white/pink leaves for balance. The crown is made of white tulle placed in the front center of the crown. There is a baby blue colored ribbon which flows down each side for an under the neck tie which keeps the hat in place. The millinery wire around the entire brim of this hat can be bent and reshaped in any way wanted, and the under-neck tie remains in place no matter what. I formed bows at the base of this ribbon and surrounded it with baby pearls.

The symbolism and metaphors of this hat are many: When Alice is having her gardening party, she will need to protect her face from the sun so the hat has a very wide width and somewhat oval shape. The tulle and shape of this hat are meant to resemble that of a bee keeper's hat in case Alice gets too close to bees while doing her gardening. The ballet pink color and satin fabric is the same color as some of the ballet type slipper shoes Alice wears in the story.

The element of blue ribbon is meant to match the blue bows in her dress. The butterfly winged shapes are there to resemble the wings of a butterfly who is coming out of the cocoon and undergoing a metamorphoses, as does Alice as she grows in wisdom and knowledge after losing some of her innocence, but maintains a spirit that is forever changing yet remaining the same. This is the paradox of *Alice Through The Looking Glass* and the mirror images she sees of herself that are both familiar and yet unknown to her.

The peach and green rosettes represent the green colors of vegetables in her garden and the peach color resembles the peach and fruit trees she maintains in her garden. The braided embroidery thread circumference coverings are there to remind us that she is still a young girl whose hair is most likely styled in braids. The hat is elegant but simple and easily takes her from an outdoor gardening adventure to a formal tea party. It serves many purposes at once and many personality traits at once, as well.

I think the quotes from the story that best illustrates my vision of Alice Kingsley's Gardening and Tea Party hat is her conversation with the Mad Hatter:

Alice Kingsley: *"Sometimes I believe in as many as six impossible things before breakfast."*

The Mad Hatter: *"That is an excellent practice."*