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Olivine

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“A woman’s appearance and demeanor were altered in this period of Art Deco, so as to highlight her independence and allure” (Fischer, 2003, p. 33).

Olivine was designed for wearing by an elegant, middle-aged woman for attending special occasion events such as a black-tie gala fundraiser. The woman who would be interested in purchasing and wearing Olivine is someone who is educated and has appreciation for the arts, history, and design. The target customer for Olivine is a financially privileged woman who seeks unique couture pieces – both for her home as well as for her wardrobe.

The design of this gown was directly inspired by the Art Deco linear lines found in the staircases of the Boston Avenue Church, the 1920s movie actress Greta Garbo, and the elegance and glam of Elle Saab’s Spring 2013 couture collection.

The Art Deco artistic movement was a "modernization" of a great many artistic styles and themes from history. The Boston Avenue Church is one of Downtown Tulsa's most prominent and stunning Art Deco buildings and is an amazing example of the Zigzag Art Deco style prominent during the 1920s (TPA, 2013).

Olivine’s design was greatly influenced by the zigzag and streamline modern Art Deco artistic movements. The zigzag design movement was used to make qualities of height pronounced (Striner, 1990). The standard shape of the Art Deco skyscraper is that of a wide base, and as the building grows taller, narrows gradually until the tower extends into the sky at a consistent narrow width, which is visible in the A-line silhouette of the gown. The vertical lines of the ribbon embellishments reflect an attitude of the soaring ambitions of the 1920s and emphasize the height of buildings that were climbing higher into the sky than ever before.





The streamline modern Art Deco influence is easily identified through Olivine's clean, smooth lines, which convey a modern, sleek quality. Streamline modern architecture utilized glass bricks, speed stripes and alternative windows, with some looking like the portholes of an ocean liner (Ziegler, 2012). These concepts were incorporated into Olivine through the glass-like crystal and striped-ribbon embellishments on the skirt, the overlapping, woven structure in the waist belt, and the "window" opening on the back of the gown.

The unique, armhole-collar of Olivine stemmed from the structured stole design from master patternmaker, Tomoko Nakamichi, and adjusted to accentuate the shoulder blades of the wearer – fashioning graceful seduction (Nakamichi, 2011). The continuous smooth lines of the armhole-collar pattern piece also gives a sense of the streamline modern porthole shaping with the emphasized skyscraper height of the zigzag movement. These specific shapes and emphasized height may be most effectively interpreted in the back-view of the gown.

Shades of olive colored silk and polyester served as the main textiles in this piece. The color olive was selected as the primary scheme for this gown as it was a commonly used hue ("green-tint") in Art Deco architecture (Juster, 2013). Two separate layers of an olive silk charmeuse and two-toned burnt olive polyester chiffon create the body of the gown. French seams enclose all chiffon edges to keep seam allowances at a minimum while allowing for separation and flow of the two fabric layers. Hand-dyed silk ribbons, in varying widths, were used to create a woven belt as well as distinctive, flowing embellishments on the skirt. Swarovski crystals were randomly added to the ribbons and the outer layer of the skirt to add some 'Elle Saab' sparkle and shine. Olivine was completed and fit to the model in December of 2011.

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