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Honors Capstone

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Abstract

This capstone will be a three-part study of costume and set design from the concepts, design and function of costume design in the 2012 Senior Capstone. The first component is be a 10-page paper linking Alice Walker's essays *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens* with Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf*. The use of color in Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls* reflected the Womanism movement of the 1970s by using specifically African-American aesthetics. Womanism was a reaction to Second Wave feminism's focus on upper-class white females. *For Colored Girls* coincided with Alice Walker's *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*, both criticizing the Second Wave feminism's exclusion of women of color. Visually, the 1977 production supported the themes of exclusion and empowerment, and impacted the voice of African-American female playwrights. The paper is a close reading between Alice Walker's essays and Shange's 1977 production. The paper has 14 sources, including essays on *For Colored Girls*, interviews with Shange, reviews of the original production, and Alice Walker's womanist essays. The impact on theater design today on modern female African-American playwrights is also observed.

The second component is the design element. Working closely with the director, costume crew and actors to formulate the wardrobe needs for the show, conceptual goals and practical needs, 22 costume designs for the Senior Performing Arts Capstone *Sunday Post* were drawn. After they were drawn, costumes were pulled from all sources for the actors. Enclosed are the 22 designs. Finally, an interview of a professional costume designer in the DC area helped gain insight into the industry. Deborah Sivigny was interviewed and the account formed a 5-page paper.