



Tyler Museum of Art's Lesson:
***The Black Dress: Selections from the Texas
 Fashion Collection and Works by Nancy Lamb***

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Figure 1: Pauline Trigère, *Dinner Dress*, 1972, Texas Fashion Collection, University of North Texas College of Visual Arts & Design.

<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1727934/?q=pauline%20trigere>.

Pauline Trigère was born in Paris in 1912. Her father was a tailor and her mother was a dress-maker¹, she was raised in the craft of sewing and could work a sewing machine by the age of 10.² In 1937, Trigère immigrated to the United States, specifically to New York with her then husband and two sons.³ Her recognition in the United States fashion industry grew from her ability and desire to hand drape fabrics on models, which created well-fitted clothing.⁴ She spent seventy years creating fashion items and contributing to American fashion with an array of high-

¹ The Washington Post, “Award-Winning Designer Pauline Trigère, 93, dies,” Accessed November 10, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2002/02/15/award-winning-designer-pauline-trigere-93-dies/5e452645-d7f8-4e60-bb08-1474b26eb5f3/>.

² Council of Fashion Designers of America, “In Memoriam: Pauline Trigère,” Accessed November 10, 2021, <https://cfda.com/members/profile/pauline-trigere>.

³ The Washington Post, “Award-Winning Designer Pauline Trigère, 93, dies,” Accessed November 10, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2002/02/15/award-winning-designer-pauline-trigere-93-dies/5e452645-d7f8-4e60-bb08-1474b26eb5f3/>.

⁴ Ibid.

end clients that she styled. These clients included celebrities and even royalty, such as the Duchess of Windsor.⁵ She died at the age of 93, leaving behind a legacy of mentorship, fashion and garment ingenuity. She placed her mark on American fashion and her contribution to the evolution of the “little black dress”.⁶

This dinner dress features all-black chiffon with a draping cape that is attached at the collar and front of the shoulders.⁷ The back of the dress has a swooping and deep U-shaped cutout, which the sheer cape covers. The dress drapes the mannequin eloquently while the sheer and maribou feathered cape gives the dress a lightweight and airy appearance.

Questions for All Levels:

What is your favorite feature about the dress?

Do the feathers give an illusion of weightlessness, if so how?

Works Cited

Council of Fashion Designers of America. “In Memoriam: Pauline Trigère.” Accessed November 10, 2021. <https://cfda.com/members/profile/pauline-trigere>.

The Washington Post. “Award-Winning Designer Pauline Trigère, 93, dies.” Accessed November 10, 2021. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2002/02/15/award-winning-designer-pauline-trigere-93-dies/5e452645-d7f8-4e60-bb08-1474b26eb5f3/>.

University of North Texas. “Dinner Dress.” UNT Digital Library. Accessed November 11, 2021. <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1727934/?q=pauline%20trigere>.

⁵ Council of Fashion Designers of America, “In Memoriam: Pauline Trigère,” Accessed November 10, 2021, <https://cfda.com/members/profile/pauline-trigere>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ University of North Texas, “Dinner Dress,” UNT Digital Library, Accessed November 11, 2021, <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1727934/?q=pauline%20trigere>.



Figure 2: Madame Alix Grès, *Dress of Black Crepe*, late 1930s, black dress crepe, Texas Fashion Collection, University of North Texas College of Visual Arts & Design.

<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1637645/?q=madame%20gres>

Madame Alix Grès, birthname Germaine Emilie Krebs, was born in Paris, France on November 30, 1903, to bourgeois Catholic parents.⁸ Her parents were unsupportive in her desire to become either a professional dancer or a sculptor. With this discouragement, she transitioned to clothing and apprenticed for three months at the couture house of Premet around 1933. It was here she learned the basics of dressmaking and also changed her first name to Alix.⁹ Her previous desire to be a sculptor is not lost upon her transition to clothing, she became known as the great “sculptress” of haute couture.¹⁰ Her clothing design mimics the Greco-Roman sculpture precedent of clothing hanging from the body. This accentuates the form and allows both the clothing and the figure to be seen as art.

⁸ Steele, Valerie. *The Berg Companion to Fashion*. (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 378.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid, 379.

Questions for All Levels:

What elements of the dress look sculptural?

How does the belt help the dresses' design?

Works Cited

Steele, Valerie. *The Berg Companion to Fashion*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015.

University of North Texas. "Dinner Dress." UNT Digital Library. Accessed November 11, 2021.
<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1727934/?q=pauline%20trigere>.

Texas Elementary School TEKS:

Kindergarten, First grade, Second Grade, Third Grade, Fourth Grade, Fifth Grade

Kindergarten:

§117.102.b.1.A: gather information from subjects in the environment using the senses;

§117.102.b.3.C: identify the uses of art in everyday life;

First Grade:

§117.105.b.1.A: identify similarities, differences, and variations among subjects in the environment using the senses;

§117.105.b.3.C: discuss the use of art in everyday life;

Second Grade:

§117.108.b.1.A: compare and contrast variations in objects and subjects from the environment using the senses;

§117.108.b.3.C: analyze how art affects everyday life and is connected to jobs in art and design;

Third Grade:

§117.111.b.1.A: explore ideas from life experiences about self, peers, family, school, or community and from the imagination as sources for original works of art;

§117.111.b.3.C: connect art to career opportunities for positions such as architects, animators, cartoonists, engineers, fashion designers, film makers, graphic artists, illustrators, interior designers, photographers, and web designers;

Fourth Grade:

§117.114.b.1.A: explore and communicate ideas drawn from life experiences about self, peers, family, school, or community and from the imagination as sources for original works of art;

§117.114.b.3.C: connect art to career opportunities for positions such as architects, animators, cartoonists, engineers, fashion designers, film makers, graphic artists, illustrators, interior designers, photographers, and web designers;

Fifth Grade:

§117.117.b.1.A: develop and communicate ideas drawn from life experiences about self, peers, family, school, or community and from the imagination as sources for original works of art;

§117.117.b.3.C: connect art to career opportunities for positions such as architects, animators, cartoonists, engineers, fashion designers, film makers, graphic artists, illustrators, interior designers, photographers, and web designers;

Texas Middle School TEKS:

Art 1, Art 2, and Art 3

Art 1:

§117.202.c.1.A: identify and illustrate concepts from direct observation, original sources, personal experiences, and communities such as family, school, cultural, local, regional, national, and international;

§117.202.c.3.C: explain the relationships that exist between societies and their art and architecture;

Art 2:

§117.203.b.1.A: identify and illustrate ideas from direct observation, original sources, imagination, personal experiences, and communities such as family, school, cultural, local, regional, national, and international;

§117.203.b.3.C: compare and contrast relationships that exist between a society's art and its music, literature, and architecture;

Art 3:

§117.203.b.1.A: identify and illustrate concepts from direct observation, original sources, imagination, personal experience, and communities such as family, school, cultural, local, regional, national, and international;

§117.203.b.3.C: evaluate the relationships that exist among a society's art, music, theatre, and dance;

Texas High School TEKS:

Art Level I, Art Level II, Art Level III, and Level IV

Level I:

§117.302.c.1.A: consider concepts and ideas from direct observation, original sources, experiences, and imagination for original artwork;

§117.302.c.3.A: compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while identifying general themes and trends;

Level II:

§117.303.c.1.A: use visual comparisons to illustrate concepts and ideas from direct observation, original sources, experiences, narration, and imagination for original artworks;

§117.303.c.3.A: examine selected historical periods or styles of art to identify general themes and trends;

Level III:

§117.304.c.1.A: analyze visual characteristics of sources to illustrate concepts, demonstrate flexibility in solving problems, create multiple solutions, and think imaginatively;

§117.304.c.3.A: research selected historical periods, artists, general themes, trends, and styles of art;

Level IV:

§117.305.c.1.A: consider concepts and themes for personal artwork that integrate an extensive range of visual observations, experiences, and imagination;

§117.305.c.3.A: research and report on selected historical periods, artists, general themes, trends, and styles of art;