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The costume design of Boeing Boeing

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The Costume Design of *Boeing Boeing*

A Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Visual and Performing Arts
James Madison University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

by Camille Melaine Petrillo

May 2014

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Theatre and Dance, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts.

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Introduction

The recent popularity of movies and television programs, such as *Mad Men*, have led to a public fascination with the 1950s and 1960s, resulting in the subsequent revival of fashions, music, and even numerous theatrical productions set during the period. Among these productions is *Boeing Boeing* – a farcical French play written by Marc Camoletti – which is set in Paris during the early 1960s. While the play was originally produced in 1962 at the Apollo Theatre in London, a rise in public interest has led to several productions in recent years, including the Broadway revival production which won the 2008 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play.

In the play, the unassuming Wisconsin-native Robert goes to visit an old friend from school, the suave bachelor Bernard. Robert quickly discovers, however, that Bernard is managing a revolving door of beautiful women – all three air hostesses, and all three his fiancées – coming and going from his Parisian apartment. As part of a grand scheme to prevent the women from ever meeting one another, Bernard uses the airline timetables and the help of his French maid, Berthe, to keep everything perfectly scheduled. These carefully scheduled arrangements run like clockwork until a change in flight plans leads to their world getting turned upside-down. Camoletti's play features a cast of several vivacious women. Among them is Gloria, the fiery and voluptuous New Yorker of TWA; Gabriella, the fashionable and elegant Italian of Alitalia, and Gretchen, the strong and proud German of Lufthansa. The out-spoken and frequently disgruntled Berthe also has quite a presence on stage, becoming a cohort to Robert when chaos breaks loose.

As part of the 2013-2014 performance season at the James Madison University School of Theatre and Dance, *Boeing Boeing* was produced on the Mainstage as a collaboration between Director Kevin (Wolf) Sherrill, Set Designer William J. Buck, Lighting Designer Emily Becher-McKeever, student Sound Designer Ian VanZandt, and myself, functioning as the student Costume Designer for the production. As part of this process, extensive research was conducted to gain a

better understanding of the world of the play and the character's relationship to it. In bringing this broad-stroke farce to life, the director wanted "bold precision" to be incorporated into all elements of the performance and design in order to create a world that reflected the over-the-top characters, as well as allowed for the various antics and mishaps that occur within the action of the play. The production as a whole aimed to capture the feeling of the era, and for the costume design, this meant accurately reflecting the fashions and airline uniforms of the 1960s while still appealing to a modern audience. Specific period uniforms were referenced for the various airlines featured within the play, with the choice to diverge in both color and hat style in order to better reflect the individual personalities of the women. Color also played a major role in the design, with specific color-coding of the air hostesses, requested by the director as a way of allowing the characters to be quickly and easily identified throughout the many entrances and exits, as well as create further opportunities for hi-jinks to occur onstage.

Due to the compressed timeline of the production, much of the preliminary design work was performed separately during the summer months leading up to the start of the Fall 2013 semester. Because of this, several meetings were held prior to the break, as well as during the interim before construction began on the designs. The four and a half week production schedule also required that the costume design remain flexible, adapting to the availabilities of the costume stock and purchase-able garments, as well as working within the budget of the design. Throughout the design process, a journal was kept in order to jot down personal thoughts on the process, notes from meetings with the director and fellow designers, and the various challenges that arose throughout. A series of paperwork was also created in order to keep the various aspects of the design process on track over the abbreviated production period. While not a typical part of the design process, a second set of design plates were produced following the end of the performances in order to reflect the various changes made to the original designs during the production process.

This entire process culminated in a production critique by the faculty and students who viewed the performances, as well as a personal reflection on the various aspects of the design, analyzing what was successful, and what, in hindsight, could have been improved. As part of a unique opportunity, the costume design was also taken to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Region IV Festival (KCACTF) with the support of the JMU School of Theatre and Dance where it received recognition in the National KCACTF Theatrical Design Excellence competition.

As a whole, creating and executing the costume design for *Boeing Boeing* was a very successful educational process that has allowed for an increased understanding of the production process and the creative exploration of the questions and challenges that arose along the way. The following paper is a reflection of the research, design, and production process, tracing its evolution from beginning to end.

Historical Context and Fashions of the 1960s

During an era characterized by social, political, and cultural revolution, the silhouettes and fashions of the 1960s were not only influenced by the changing aesthetic of designs, but by the changing mentalities of the general public. In the span of a single decade, the United States underwent the Civil Rights Movement, Kennedy's election and assassination, the Feminist Movement, the Vietnam war, and the launch of the Space Age, all of which radically influenced the world in which Americans were living.

The Soviets launched the space age in 1957, when they successfully put the first satellite in orbit. In 1960, it reached the US when President John F. Kennedy vowed that America would reach the moon by 1970 (Tortora 530). The fervor for all things space quickly disseminated into pop culture and the public eye, becoming integrated into everything from interior design, to movies, to high fashion. In the mid-1960s, fashion designers such as Couturier André Courrèges began to create sculptural space age fashions featuring helmets, body suits, clean lines, and geometric shapes (Hill 97). These Space Age fashions also made their way into the airline uniforms of the period, utilizing new materials such as vinyl and Velcro, and even via accessories such as the bubble helmets utilized in Braniff's infamous "Air Strip" uniforms (Omelia 76, Tortora 542). These same materials that arose out of the technological advances of the Space Age also became part of the regular fashions of the era (Heideking 61).

The Space Age was not the only period of conflict between the United States and Soviet Union during the 1960s. With increased political conflict and rising tensions around the world, the US and USSR nearly went to war in 1962 over the Cuban Missile Crisis (Tortora 531). In response to the increasing threat of war and US involvement abroad, by 1960, college students were growing increasingly concerned with events and affairs outside of their university life. This piqued interest led to involvement in various social issues via rebellion that manifested through protests, riots, and

even the clothing youths wore (Heideking 13). This involvement also signaled the beginning of several counter culture movements, with perhaps the movement most notably linked to protest being that of the Hippies. During the 1960s, clothing began to take on different meanings, moving beyond mere fashion to a way of expressing who one was – politically, socially, and creatively. Blue jeans in particular shifted from their previous associations with the American West to one of protesting against the establishment when they were adopted by the young people of the Hippie movement as a way of showing solidarity with the working people. These jeans eventually began to be used as a means of self-expression as well, with everything from embroidery, to patches, to paint being used to highlight an individual's own unique creativity. This new statement led to jeans being adopted by the fashion industry as a popular clothing item that could be worn by people of all social backgrounds (Tortora 537).

Another notable counterculture movement of the era was that of the “Mods”. Originally referring to the working class teens of London who had a flair for eccentric and outrageous tastes in clothes, the Mod style later gained an association with particular genres of music, thanks in part to its association with popular bands of the era (Hebdige, 87). The Mod movement emerged out of Carnaby Street and Portobello Road in London, and rapidly grew in popularity after the hit band The Beatles adopted the style. Due to the vast media exposure of the group, the trend quickly disseminated into the fashion world (Tortora 535). In many ways, the aesthetics of the movement were a reaction against the “rockers” of the day, instead favoring a more refined and graceful sense of masculinity via a sharp, neat style (Hebdige 88). As part of this movement, both men and women wore dashing and colorful clothes, often referred to as the “Peacock Revolution” for males. Mod styles were later used in American sportswear manufacturers, remaining popular for several years before eventually losing favor (Tortora 535).

During the Feminist movement, clothing was seen as representing oppression, leading to the development of undergarments that were much less confining and rigid than their 1950's predecessors, which required padding and constrictive corseting in order to create the artificial silhouette that was seen as fashionable (Tortora 538, Goodlad 167). This change was accompanied by a shift away from the belief that women's lives should revolve around pleasing and furthering their husbands – a sentiment that was reflected in the changing fashions (Goodlad 168). The Civil Rights Movement also picked up during the era, with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech taking place in 1963, and The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 being signed into law by Lyndon B. Johnson. Despite the legislation, however, change was still slow to take, and riots and rallies continued to take place (Tortora 531). As a means of identifying with the movement, Civil Rights activists adopted traditional African dress as a symbol of "black pride" and a way of celebrating their African heritage (Tortora 539). Other ethnically inspired clothing also became popular in the mainstream during this time, with Nehru-collared jackets and paisley designs appearing as common eastern influences in Mod styles (Hill 102).

Art movements during the era also had a heavy influence on the fashion trends of the 1960s. These movements, including pop art – which glorified ordinary objects and cartoon figures – and op art – which used large, geometric patterns to create visual illusions – were used to create wearable art (Tortora 542). The influence of pop art and op art led to the use of bright colors in clothing and decorating. It also initiated an era in which the definition of "art" was largely expanded to include household objects, comic strips, and even the clothes people wore (Heideking 61). Yves Saint Laurent's "Mondrian dress" is the most famous adaptation of these wearable art styles, with its geometric shapes and blocks of color demonstrating the art influences of the period (Tortora 542). This idea that clothing also served as art was further reinforced by the inclusion of notable fashion pieces into the collections of major museums around the world (Heideking 75). The revival of the

Art Deco movement during the decade led to a renewed public interest in 1920s styles which featured similar silhouettes to those worn as a part of 1960s fashions (Hill 105).

The 1960s were an era embodied by the feminine icons of Jacqueline “Jackie” Kennedy and Twiggy, an era that valued both elegant sophistication and flirtatious sex appeal (Goodlad 243). Jackie Kennedy served as a trendsetter – largely due to her pervasive presence in the public eye through media coverage of the Kennedy election campaign. Her style captured the simple elegance of the early 1960s, and Jackie was frequently seen sporting the iconic A-line silhouette and pillbox hat so heavily associated with American fashion of the time. Increased media coverage of Jackie as a style icon led to these styles, along with low-slung pumps, matching Chanel suits, and empire-waist evening dresses being widely adopted by the American public. She also helped to popularize the bouffant hairstyle, which led to radical changes in the way women cut and styled their hair (Tortora 539). Known for her short hair and exaggerated eye makeup, Twiggy’s style sharply contrasted with the earlier styles, instead embodying the Mod aesthetic that emerged later in the decade.

The predominate style of the previous period was the “New Look,” first introduced by Dior in 1947, which featured ultra feminine full skirts and figure-hugging pencil silhouettes that required a padded bra, padded hips, and boned corset in order to create the nipped waist and hourglass figure that was an iconic part of the style. This artificiality and impracticality of the “New Look” and 1950s silhouette, however, heavily contrasted with the more relaxed styles and iconic A-line of the 60s (Goodlad 167). In the period leading up to the 1960s, the predominant fashions began to shift from the fitted style of the “New Look” to the more unfitted silhouettes of the era. This new style, often referred to as “A-line” or “chemise style” began to appear as early as 1957, when fashion magazines began advertising suits with loosely fitted, short jackets ending just below the waist, paired with skirts that were shorter and narrower in cut. These newer silhouettes continued to appear alongside the older styles for a time, however by the mid-60s the unfitted styles were almost universally worn

(Tortora 518). The fashions of the early 1960s featured structured style lines, especially dresses with shorter hemlines that were either straight and unfitted, or princess-seamed with a slight A-line to the skirt. The sleeveless version of these princess style dresses was often referred to as a “skimmer,” and sometimes featured a small flounce or ruffle at the knee (Tortora 546, 553). During the 1960s, the House of Chanel introduced a suit that became a pervading style of the era, featuring a collarless, structured, and boxy jacket paired with an A-line skirt. These jackets were often three-quarter sleeved, and were sometimes paired with blouses featuring a bow tie at the neck or sleeves that extended a little beyond the jacket (Tortora 552). In addition to the shorter hems, mini and maxi styles of skirts were also introduced, however they did not become widely popular until the 1970s (Tortora 549). Sheer nylon pantyhose were introduced during the era as an alternative to the nylon stockings of the previous decade – which required the use of an additional belt or girdle to stay up – and became a necessity as hemlines continued to shorten. Later on, these pantyhose were available in a variety of bright colors and patterns (Tortora 550,557). Pants also gradually became acceptable leisure wear for women, eventually becoming appropriate for all other occasions, with advertisements in department store catalogues cropping up as early as 1961 (Olian). The necklines of garments began to become more variant during the period, with boatnecks, mandarin collars, and other standing collar details commonly seen on the various fashions and silhouettes. Coats of the period were straight and loose, following the structured lines of the fashionable silhouette, and became gradually longer towards the end of the decade. Short capes and ponchos were also very popular later in the 1960s, as were vinyl jackets (Tortora 556). The fashion trends of the era influenced the sleepwear of the period as well, with a variety of styles worn, including colorful nylon nightgowns ranging from floor-length to a “shortie” hip length (Tortora 557).

Artificial hairpieces were increasingly used in order to achieve the large volume hairstyles of the period, including the bouffant style that was popularized by Jackie Kennedy (Tortora 557).

Towards the end of the period, the vogue shifted towards a wider variety of cuts and styles, often associated with the various counterculture groups of the era. Among these were the long and straight hairstyles most commonly associated with the Hippies, and the geometric wedge cuts introduced by Vidal Sassoon which gained popularity as the Space Age and Mod fashions became mainstream (Hill 103). Despite the popularity of the pillbox, hats were decreasingly worn by women of the era, gradually shirring to a practical rather than fashionable accessory (Tortora 557). Boots began to be worn as a part of daytime fashion as well during this time, with tall go-go boots gaining popularity during the later part of the period. Along with these styles, pumps still remained rather ubiquitous among women, though flats were frequently worn as well. These shoes often came in bright colors and patterns, following the overall aesthetic of the period (Tortora 561, Olian). Costume jewelry and earrings of various sizes and styles were largely popular during the era, often made from plastics inspired by the space age movement. The eye-makeup worn during the decade became more distinctive, featuring liquid eyeliner, false lashes, and eye shadow in a variety of bold colors (Tortora 561).

Fashions for men also underwent changes during the period, with the most significant changes occurring after the mod styles and the “Peacock Revolution” began to gain popularity. While leisurewear was beginning to become more common in the average person’s wardrobe, a man of the era would typically leave the house in a two- or three-piece suit, button down shirt, and tie. Before the Mod influence, however, suits maintained neutral colors and subtle patterns with jackets that had a slightly slim fit through the body and were longer in length, and worn with pants that still came up close to the natural waist. The majority of suits were single-breasted, with double-breasted styles rarely seen. As fashion for men began to adopt Mod influences, extra pockets were occasionally added at the hips of jackets, creating a slight asymmetrical look. During the 1960s, Mod style jackets began to be adopted by men, and featured a fitted, slightly flared jacket, wider lapels, a

slimmer fit, and bold colors and patterns. Jackets sometimes incorporated mandarin or Nehru collars instead of the standard shaped lapels. Turtleneck shirts also began to be worn with suits instead of collared, button-down styles. As part of the Peacock Revolution, tuxedos began to be manufactured in a wide range of colors as well, and were often paired with ruffle-front shirts (Tortora 567). Both shirts and ties adopted a Mod influence during the 1960s as well, with bold – and occasionally garish – colors and patterns commonly utilized as decoration. Ties also became significantly wider towards the end of the period as compared to the skinny ties that were popular earlier on (Tortora 571).

Hairstyles for men also underwent significant changes during the 1960s, with shoulder-length hair worn by youths of the period, and moderate length hair and facial hair becoming increasingly acceptable for men of all ages. In congruence with the longer hairstyles, men's hats began to fall out of fashion, similar to what occurred among women of the era. Men's shoes became more varied during the period as well, with boots being worn along with the predominately square-toed styles that were commonly seen on dress shoes of the time (Tortora 571).

History of Air Travel and the Air Hostess Profession

Airline fashions were largely influenced by the mainstream fashions of the various eras, with airline stewardesses serving as an American icon of femininity throughout the history of the profession. From the very beginning, the profession was romanced, serving as an inspiration for media and popular culture, and representing the epitome of womanhood (Barry 11). In order to understand the effect that new uniform styles of the 1960s had on the perception of the air hostess profession and on the airlines of the period, however, it is necessary to look at the history of air travel and the vital role that stewardesses played in its development.

The history of air travel developed from rugged roots to glamorous luxury. The first scheduled air services began in the mid-1910s, and during these early years, non-pressurized and non-soundproofed cabins meant not only exposure to the altitude chill and weather extremes, but also to the cacophonous noise of flight. And since early flights needed to remain at a low altitude, even on a clear day there was a high degree of turbulence. When passengers were onboard, they wore flying helmets and goggles, and were issued a parachute for emergency situations (Omelia 8). To aid their comfort, passengers were also given cotton to stuff their ears and block out the noise, and chewing gum to ease the pain in their ears. For the adventurous, however, the new mode of travel offered up an exciting way to get from place to place (Kolm 40). During the early years, trains remained the faster, cheaper, and more reliable means of travel, and passengers were only occasionally onboard flights. To help counteract this, airlines carried mailbags to increase revenue as they traveled to each destination. Starting in 1926, various airmail routes were assigned to private contractors, including American Airlines and Transcontinental and Western Airlines (TWA). Decades later, TWA changed their name to stand for Trans World Airlines when the company expanded their routes to include areas outside the US (Omelia 8). In 1922, the first stewards, called “cabin boys” at the time, were hired as a regular fixture on airplanes. They were responsible for

preparing cargo and passengers for flight, and providing box lunches to those onboard (Omelia 9). As commercial airlines began to take-off in popularity, they abandoned the convention of tipping their cabin boys in order to set them apart from the still preferred railroad travel of the time (Barry 16).

In 1930, in-flight service was radically changed by the ideas of Ellen Church. Initially, Ellen Church approached Boeing Air Travel looking to work as a pilot, however a company policy preventing women from entering the commercial cockpits, so Church tried a new tactic, instead offering up her training as a nurse (Kolm 30). As a registered nurse, she believed her training made her well suited to aid passengers who frequently suffered from airsickness due to the turbulent flights. Convinced by her reasoning, Boeing Air Transport hired her and seven other young women, believing that the use of these young nurses would lend both dignity and luxury to the airline (Kolm 31). Nurses also had the additional appeal of being able to stay calm in a stressful situation, which could arise due to the unreliable nature of air travel at the time (Kolm 73). These nurses were trained as stewardesses and given a military-influenced uniform to underscore their professionalism, which was paired with a “shower-cap” tam and wool cape to provide warmth while in the drafty cabins (Omelia 12). Following the success of the initial group, the practice of having young women – specifically nurses – as part of the flight crew was quickly adopted by other airlines in order to boost the popularity of air travel among the public. Stewardesses were quickly accepted by the aviation industry and dramatically increased the bookings for the airlines that employed them (Omelia 17). These new stewardesses also became quite popular with passengers, with some phoning ahead in order to ensure that their favorite young women would be working before reserving their ticket on a particular flight (Barry 19).

The early stewardesses had to meet specific criteria in order to qualify for the job. Among these requirements were being single, a registered nurse, under the age of 25, 5’4” or less in height

(due to the low ceilings), have 20/20 vision, and weigh less than 115 pounds. They were regularly weighed and checked by pilots in order to ensure they met these guidelines (Omelia 17). The weight restrictions in particular were strictly enforced in order to limit extra weight and maximize the amount of valuable mail that could be carried. Later on, these weight restrictions remained in place once airlines became more concerned with their stewardesses maintaining an attractive figure (Kolm 36). Stewardesses were also expected to give a “rigid military salute” to both the captain and copilot, as well as maintain a ladylike demeanor at all times (Omelia18). While on board, they were required to address passengers by name and divide their attention equally among them, engaging them in conversation, keeping them comfortable, and perhaps most importantly, keeping them calm (Kolm 85). In addition to tending to the passengers onboard, these young women were also in charge of maintaining the cabin area, and in the event of a forced landing, stewardesses could provide passengers with railroad timetables and accompany them to the nearest station. During this time, they also started to be referred to as “air hostesses”, as they were known for the stellar service they offered on the airlines in which they were utilized (Barry 21). Since flying was still somewhat dangerous at the time, stewardesses were viewed as the heroines of the air, providing reassurance and peace of mind to their passengers (Omelia 18).

By the mid-1930s, more comforts and luxuries began to be regularly incorporated into the planes, including smoother flights, dining rooms, and sleeper cabins. As outlined in a TWA service pamphlet, cabins also had climate control, magazines, writing paper, medicine, and snacks that were provided for the passengers’ comfort (Omelia 21). These new amenities meant that flying was rapidly becoming the glamorous way to travel, largely due to the airline stewardesses whose “cheery presence” was always there to greet passengers. The profession itself began to be seen as glamorous as well, leading to air hostesses being used in a variety of advertisements during the era (Omelia 25).

During WWII, stewardesses – who were still registered nurses at the time – were released to aid the war effort. Subsequent new recruits were no longer required to have a nursing qualification, however height and weight restrictions still remained in place (Omelia 32). These non-nurse stewardesses were known as “co-eds” and were utilized by various major airline carriers, leading to a large boom in recruitment, particularly since it was one of the few profession that was seen as “acceptable” for a young woman to have before marriage (Omelia 38). Wartime restrictions on the amount of fabric yardage that could be used in skirts meant that stewardesses’ uniforms become shorter and more fitted, leading to the young women sometimes being viewed as pin-up girls – much like the Hollywood celebrities of the time (Omelia 43).

In the 1950s, the role of the stewardess shifted to one which embodied various different roles. In a training book from the period, it is suggested that the ideal stewardess should exhibit “the authority of a drill sergeant, the comforting qualities of a mother, and subservient, flirtatious attentions of a geisha,” all while simultaneously providing “the facts and conversation of a tour guide.” This new vision for stewardesses reflected that of the perfect wife – always courteous, always prim, and always ready to serve (Omelia 50). Since stewardesses were expected to maintain single status, most women held the glamorous career for about two years before retiring to marry (Omelia 61). In 1958, *Life* magazine released an article titled “Glamour Girls of the Air: For Lucky Ones Being Hostess is the Mostest,” asserting that being an air hostess was “one of the most coveted careers open to young American women today.” The opportunity to see the world, travel by plane, and meet all sorts of interesting people along the way gave the job “real glamour” in the eyes of the public (Barry 36).

As air travel moved into the 1960s, faster airlines were introduced which had smaller cabins that could no longer accommodate the sleeping berths and luxurious lounges of the previous era. Marketing for airlines also shifted away from the comforts and luxuries they could offer passengers,

and instead focused on the attractiveness – and sexuality – of their air hostesses. This shift in public perception went hand in hand with the sexual revolution of the 60s, favoring an independent “free-spirit” over the image of the ideal wife. Where uniforms had previously followed the fashion trends of the general public, they now created the trends, with major airlines frequently hiring internationally-renowned designers to create their new uniforms. As the Mod influence made its way into pop culture, so too did air hostesses’ uniforms adopt psychedelic colors, clingy fits, false eyelashes, hot pants, micro minis, and go-go boots. Long gone were the simple two-piece suits in dark neutrals. The wearable art movement also inspired uniforms of the time, with bold patterns and colors becoming a regular part of stewardesses’ ensembles. In 1966, there was a brief vogue for paper dresses that featured simple structured silhouettes and pop art/op art inspired designs that could be cut to the desired hem length using scissors. These paper dresses were featured on certain airlines as part of the air hostess’ uniforms, including the ones introduced in 1968 on TWA’s “Foreign Accent” flights, where the stewardess’ outfits and the food they served reflected each destination. The impracticality of paper uniforms led to the trend being short lived, however, quickly leaving both mainstream and airline fashions (Tortora 553, Omelia 82). Even the space age trends found their way into the uniform designs, with catsuits and plastic “space helmets” being incorporated into the uniforms of some of the more imaginative airlines. Among these airlines was Braniff, which was also one of the first to sexualize stewardesses, having them strip off one or two garments per city until they were wearing only a top and culottes in a performance known as “The Air Strip,” (Omelia 76). Advertisements began to adopt double entendres targeting male passengers, and even the more conservative airlines would allude to the bikini-clad women that one might meet at their various destinations (Omelia 90).

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act made it so that employees could no longer be discriminated against due to age, sex, or race. Because of this, the strict appearance, marital status, and weight

requirements of the past began to be challenged, and stewardesses began to be referred to with the more gender neutral term, “flight attendant,” (Omelia 95). Nonetheless, the media and the general public latched onto the image of the stewardess as a promiscuous, young, sex-kitten-of-the-sky (Omelia 97). Popular culture further engrained this notion with the idea of the “Mile High Club,” and novels featuring the promiscuous and sexually available stewardess. This view of air hostesses continued into the 70s, with “fly me” becoming a catch phrase, pick up line, and prolific innuendo throughout the decade (Omelia 110). When the Supreme Court ruled in 1971 that men could no longer be denied flight attendant jobs, women’s uniforms were redesigned to fit the professional image of the military-inspired uniforms for men (Omelia 116). Despite the tamer uniforms, however, flight attendants continued to be celebrated in popular media, and with the abandonment of strict physique and marital status restrictions, they began to be accepted as competent career women (Omelia 122).

Uniforms of TWA, Alitalia, and Lufthansa

The three air hostesses featured in *Boeing Boeing* – Gloria, Gabriella, and Gretchen – represent the three different airlines of TWA, Alitalia, and Lufthansa, respectively. These airlines, and nearly all of the air passenger companies of the period, were not exempt from the changing air fashions, and featured uniform fashions that followed the trends of the time. As one of the oldest airlines in the United States, TWA implemented stewardess uniforms that seemed particularly keen on the American fashion trends of the era. The summer and winter uniforms worn between 1960 and 1964 had already adopted the unfitted chemise style that was beginning to come into vogue. Featuring a loose, straight skirt and short boxy cardigan with three-quarter sleeves, these uniforms were reminiscent of the style introduced by the Chanel suits during the decade. Made in a drab brown and paired with a short, rounded pillbox, this uniform was yet to be affected by the sex appeal that was later introduced into the airline industry. From 1966 to 1967, the summer uniforms remained remarkably similar to the earlier style, this time in a light blue color with a more cap-like hat. Upon closer examination, however, one can see a slightly more fitted skirt and peter pan style collar, indicative of the more structured silhouette and varied necklines that were commonly seen during the period. The winter uniform, which was worn between 1965 and 1968, still followed the styles from earlier in the decade. Featuring a three-quarter sleeve jacket and matching skirt and hat, the style influences of Jackie Kennedy are unmistakable in these markedly conservative uniforms. The winter uniform also introduced a side-sweeping collar that remained an iconic and distinctive detail of the TWA uniforms for a period of time. It wasn't until the end of the decade that TWA began to embrace the wilder side of air fashions in their uniforms. As previously discussed, paper dresses for their "Foreign Accent" flights were introduced in 1968 – featuring kimonos, floor-length gowns, ruffled robes, and gold lame dresses – as well as a Rastafarian colored, mini-skirted suits, and a purple, safari-styled jumper that were utilized in the late 60s and early 70s (Muskiel).

Staying true to the iconic blue uniforms of the mid 1960s, for the purposes of the costume design for Gloria, the color was adapted to a much bolder tone that was better suited to the stage. Keeping the slightly A-line skirt that was a part of the period uniforms, a structured uniform dress with a somewhat shortened hemline was chosen over a two-piece suit in order to better highlight the flirty sexuality of the character that was lacking in the uniform of the time. In order to remain true to the period TWA uniforms, however, specific details were added to the redesigned dress. Included among these was a matching pillbox hat, evoking the iconic American look that was similar in style to the hats worn with the uniforms of the early 1960s. The sweeping collar was a signature detail utilized by TWA in 1965 – the target year for the production. Following the style lines of uniform dresses worn by other airlines during the era, this collar detail was added to the uniform design for Gloria. Other details were added to the design in order to emphasize the playful flirtation and fiery nature of the character. Inspired by a period photograph, white go-go boots and a white vinyl jacket were added in order to lend a Mod influence and edginess to the design. A playful pink scarf was also added, following the sort of details that were commonly seen on air hostess uniforms of the era.

Where the uniforms of TWA captured the iconic American fashions of the time, the uniforms of Alitalia – the airline for which Gabriella works as an air hostess – instead evoked a fashionable elegance in a put together, head-to-toe look. Between 1960 and 1966, the Alitalia uniforms featured similar details to those of TWA, but with a more refined silhouette. The bright blue uniforms still had a visible “New Look” influence indicative of the 1950s, with a three-quarter sleeve lapelled jacket curved in at the waist, and a pegged pencil skirt that subtly complemented the stewardess’ shape. The suit was paired with a matching pillbox hat and white, v-neck blouse that extended a bit beyond the hem of the jacket sleeves, worn with crisp white gloves and a pocket square. In 1966, Alitalia adopted new uniforms that featured the straight, unfitted silhouette that was more iconic to the 1960s. These double-breasted uniform suits abandoned shaped lapels for a

scoop-necked jacket, with a high-necked white blouse worn underneath and structured matching hat. These uniforms were only utilized for a few brief years before a new style was adopted, this one showing the fashion influences of the period most prevalently. The structured, green, slim cut uniform jackets had a contrasting stand collar and matching, prominently A-lined skirts. The influence of the space age can also be seen in the black, dome-like caps that were part of the uniform, similar in style to the hats that were introduced by designers such as André Courrèges (“Alitalia”).

Whereas the later uniforms were more true to the predominant silhouettes of the 1960s, the uniform worn between 1960 and 1966 served as the main inspiration for the Gabriella costume design, as it provided the desired fashionable sophistication and was best suited to the image of the airline. Given the necessity of establishing a unique identity for each air hostess, and the director’s request that each of the women be color-coded, the redesigned uniform was changed from the period bright blue to an emerald in order to provide a unique color while still corresponding with the airline’s colors of red and green. The pillbox hat of the original uniform was also changed for a military-influenced envelope hat in order to further differentiate the three air hostesses and add a sophisticated and streamline feel to the design, as well as a sense of subtle authority. Uniforms worn later in the decade by Alitalia air hostess often incorporated matching coats, however the earlier style from 1965 – which served as the inspiration for Gabriella’s costume design – did not feature these additional garments. Working from a research photograph that captured the desired high fashion look, the decision was made to include a dramatic, statement-making cape, which created a sophisticated look and allowed for a through-line in the design, with similar details that were incorporated into the other costumes for the character.

Lufthansa – the airline associated with Gretchen – utilized uniforms that were significantly more conservative and modest when compared to those of TWA and Alitalia, following the much

older styles of the “New Look” well into the 1960s. The styles worn up until 1965 featured long-sleeved jackets that curved in at the waist and a modest pencil skirt that went to the knees or a few inches below. Available in two different colors – a medium blue and navy – both uniforms were paired with rounded, navy felt caps that had a small brim. In 1965, a new uniform featuring the shorter, boxier silhouette of the 1960s was introduced, utilized by the airline until 1970. The bright blue and navy uniforms had a slightly A-line, collared dress that ended a couple of inches above the knee, and a short boxy jacket with a single front clasp, all paired with a matching pillbox hat. During the 1970s, the uniform hemlines continued to shorten as mini skirted dresses were adopted for the new, Mod influenced uniforms. These uniforms came in a bold yellow and navy – the colors of the Lufthansa airline – and were paired with matching hip-length jackets and tall, brimmed caps that sat quite tall above the head (Henkel, “Lufthansa”).

In order to evoke the strong and powerful portrayal of Gretchen necessary for the production, the earlier style of uniform was used as a basis for the costume design, with slight adaptations made in order to better suit the style lines of the era. The hem of the skirt was shortened to a modest length that ended at the knee, and the fit of the jacket was relaxed through the waist, following the style transitions seen between the 1950s and 1960s. Details from the uniforms of the 70s were also utilized in the design, with the yellow color in particular chosen because of its connection to the airline and presence it lent to the character. For the purposes of the production, however, a more toned down hue was chosen in order to prevent the uniform from becoming overpowering on stage. The hat chosen for the redesigned uniform was reminiscent of the tall structured caps worn as part of the later uniforms, featuring a fedora-like shape that sat tall on the head. As with the other redesigned uniforms, other details commonly seen on uniforms of the period were additionally utilized, including a band of trim on the hat and a contrasting scarf worn around the neck.

Creating the Characters

Due to the compressed time frame of the production, much of the preliminary research and initial phases of the costume design took place during the summer months, with interim design meetings taking place over the break and during the week leading up to the start of fall classes. In addition to the broad range of topics covered during the initial research phase, several aspects of the play were explored as part of the early production process. As a starting point, various past productions were researched via production reviews in order to surmise the ways in which other designers have approached the various characters, and how those various approaches were received by audience members and critics. In nearly every production researched, a saturated color palette of red, yellow, and blue was used, leading to the desire to try and break away from the primary color scheme while still remaining true to characters and airlines represented in this broad-stroke farce. During the target year for the production, 1965, all three of the airlines featured within the play utilized uniforms with striking similarities to one another. Given the director's desire to color-code each of the air hostesses – whereby allowing for quick identifications of the women during the various fast-paced entrances and exits – the colors utilized within the design shifted away from those seen in the bright blue seen in the period research. Utilizing colors found in the airline's other uniforms from around the era – and the specific colors of each airline – the slightly variant color scheme of blue for Gloria, green for Gabriella, and yellow for Gretchen was chosen, as previously discussed. Also among the previous productions researched, there was a frequently observed trend of loose interpretations of the period styles, often focused on a modern definition of “sexy” fits and fashions instead. The desire for this particular production was to maintain an accurate portrayal of the fashions of the time, utilized in such a way that they retained an appeal for modern audiences. Creating this appeal was aided by the recent popularity of 1960s-influenced fashion, having provided audiences with an increasing familiarity of the styles of the era (Goodlad 35).

As part of the typical design process, an in-depth script and character analysis was conducted in order to begin surmising the various aspects of the characters, and their individual relationships to the world of the play. Character quotations and other key pieces of information were extracted from the text, providing a basis for who the characters were, their individual personalities, and temperaments. These analyses were utilized in the development of the final designs, with specific characteristics reflected in the various details of the costumes, as well as through the chosen colors. With color as a jumping-off point for the design, color theory was largely utilized in the various costumes of *Boeing Boeing*. Working from a period painting that captured the broad-strokes and bold precision desired by the director, this color abstract was drawn upon for the various colors incorporated in the design. As a way of foreshadowing the ending couples and reflecting the various character relationships, a system of dividing the characters into warm and cool color palettes was devised. As foils to one another, Bernard and Robert were placed into opposite ranges of the color spectrum, with the sleek Bernard designed with cool colors to complement his refined style, and a warm color palette chosen for Robert to highlight his less put together looks. The opposite style of the characters, as well as the contrast between the crisp and smooth fabrics worn by Bernard, and the softer, slouchier fabrics in Robert's costume further delineate the difference between the characters. Since Bernard finally chooses Gabriella in the end, Gabriella was also placed within a cool color palette, with hues of green chosen for their connection to the colors of Alitalia, as well as the complement they provided for the actresses' complexion. For Bernard – the suave architect – a certain degree of flamboyance was needed in order to break up the look of the suit and bring him into the Mod influenced world created by the set. Selected use of purple added the necessary pop of color to stand out against the grey of his sharkskin suit. The nerdy and awkward Robert, who ends up with Gretchen, was assigned a warm brown to set him apart from the world of Bernard and play off of the somewhat meek personality of the character. Gretchen, on the other hand, as the much

more powerful and commanding of the two, was costumed using a bold yellow, working within the warm color palette in order to foreshadow her eventual relationship with Robert, while still utilizing the Lufthansa colors. Robert also forms a relationship with Berthe, who serves as a cohort to him as the all chaos breaks loose. Because of the connection between these characters, Berthe was also placed into the warmer palette. Given the quirkiness of the character, the color orange was utilized throughout the character design, featuring bold and saturate tones to lend a visibility to the maid as she moved about the set. For Gloria, the outspoken air hostess who ends up going her own way, the color fuchsia was originally considered for the character, placing her between the two color ranges and complementing her fiery nature. Due to the decision to have the actress as a red head for the production, however, the color would create an unappealing clash, so instead the iconic TWA blue was utilized, with accents of fuchsia in her scarf and jacket lining. This established color palette was agreed upon with the director and other designers via a specific color focused meeting in order to ensure that the various visual elements would work together harmoniously.

During an early discussion with the director, it was determined that, while somewhat cliché, the three air hostesses should be a blonde, a brunette, and a red head, each reflecting the personalities of the individual women. As the fiery red-head of the bunch, Mod influences were added to the iconic American style elements of Gloria's costume design. As discussed earlier, the redesigned TWA uniform worn by the character incorporated elements of the period uniforms, as well as the iconic influences of the American fashions of the time. As part of this design, the structured A-line shape of the dress highlighted the actress' body while still working within the silhouette of the period. During a collaborative production meeting with the director and other designers, a research image featuring a woman in an A-line mini skirt, thigh-high boots, and a white leather jacket was particularly well received, leading to the image subsequently influencing the final design. The shorter hem and silhouette of the uniform dress, along with the white go-go boots and

vinyl jacket, added an element of the Mod aesthetic into the design, showcasing the playful personality of the character. In addition to the red bouffant wig, the actress was styled with blue eyeshadow, a 60s liquid eyeliner cat-eye, false eye lashes, and bright pink lipstick, further highlighting the character's personality. In order to play off of the voluptuous and sexy side of the character, Gloria opened the play in period lingerie and long sheer robe, visually establishing the tone of the overall production in the process. Returning to this look throughout the play, the revealing ensemble set Gloria very much apart from the other women in Bernard's life.

For Gabriella, the sophisticated Italian air hostess of Alitalia, the actress' natural Brunette hair was styled with a full hairpiece and curled ponytail. Combined with a simple, fresh 60s makeup look and soft red lips, the styling lent a youthful elegance and subtle sultriness to the character. Since Gabriella is the woman who ultimately ends up with Bernard, sleek and sophisticated details were incorporated throughout the design to create a sense of belonging with the equally elegant Bernard. In order to set Gabriella apart from the other women, softer flowing elements were utilized in various aspects of the design, reflecting the more relaxed and down-to-earth nature of the character. During a meeting with the director and design team, a particular research image from the period was chosen for the way that it captured the desired feeling for the character. This in turn inspired the addition of a sweeping cape, worn with the redesigned Alitalia uniform. Combined with the sleek satin of the structured suit and elongated matching envelope hat, the cape created a dramatic and sophisticated look, giving the audience a clear indication of who Gabriella was the moment she entered. The cape also created a through-line for the rest of the design, with its fullness and movement mimicked in the wide sleeves of the day dress and the flouncy ruffles of the nightgown. More iconic elements of 1960s fashion were added to the design via the A-line evening dress, which featured the more typical structured silhouette of the era.

The strong and powerful – and at times intimidating – woman in Bernard’s life is Gretchen, the German air hostess of Lufthansa. As the most modest of the three, the costume design for the character utilized strong shapes and lines that incorporated subtle elements of femininity and sex appeal. Drawing from elements of the older style uniforms from the period, the redesigned Lufthansa uniform – with its imposing, 60s influenced, structured silhouette – strongly contrasted with the softer looks for the character seen later on. While presenting an almost daunting persona at first, as Gretchen began to open up and soften, so too did the elements of her costume. A pivotal costume change for the character took place during the scene in which Robert and Gretchen have dinner together and the two begin to form an attraction to one-another. In order to soften and feminize the overall silhouette, a period German sweater vest was added over the uniform blouse, which featured a deep, scooping neck that suggested a lower neckline despite the buttoned collar. Around her neck, a gauzy fabric flower was added, highlighting the somewhat romantic side to the character. This change in costume also helped to bring Gretchen into the softer world of Robert, seen in the fabrics utilized within his costume. The different sides to the character were also shown via the hair and makeup choices. Utilizing the actress’s blonde hair, it was pulled back into a controlled bun with added volume in order to maintain the 1960s appearance. A few romantic curls were mixed in, allowing for hints of movement and softness, and a plainer, more austere makeup look was used, once again featuring the iconic 60s liquid eyeliner and false eyelashes. The combined styling elements highlighted the dichotomy between the structured and controlled, and the romantic and feminine aspects to Gretchen, allowing them to function throughout the play.

As the surly and out-spoken maid, Berthe is a character that can be approached a variety of different ways, presenting an interesting challenge in creating the costume design. During an early meeting with the director the character was originally proposed in three potential veins – secretarial, frumpy, or quirky Mod-influenced – that could each be justified depending on the specific

interpretation of the character. Because of this, elements from all three were incorporated into two different costume sketches, featuring either an oversized tunic, patterned ankle pants, and flats, or a two-piece suit in the typical, unfitted 60s style, paired with a tie-neck blouse, odd-colored tights, and booties. Since the director wanted Berthe to be visually and stylistically separate from the world of Bernard and the air hostesses, a hybrid look of the two was developed. Featuring the lines and shapes of the period, the final costume design featured unstructured knits throughout, complementing the slouched posture of the actress with pants and a cardigan in saturated colors paired with a tie-neck blouse. In order to underscore the quirky nature of the character, colored plastic-framed glasses, oddly shaped earrings, and orange flats were paired with the design. The character was also styled using a short, bobbed wig and no obvious makeup, further setting her apart from the primed and made-up air hostesses of the play. For the brooding and regularly indignant maid, different aprons – each coordination with the three other women – were grudgingly donned in anticipation of each fiancée’s arrival, suggesting her unhappy status as a maid and providing the opportunity for additional stage business. This inclusion added to the comedy and confusion of the scenes, with Berthe often caught off guard by the unplanned arrivals of each of the women, subsequently rushing about to correct the mistake and reinforcing the typical farcical antics of the play in the process. The additional onstage business, as well as the deeper colors of the also costume allowed Berthe to be visible as she moved about the stage.

The grey flannel suit was an iconic look for business men of the early 1960s, and thanks in part to the popularity of characters such as Don Draper from the television show *Mad Men*, it has also become ingrained in the eyes of the public as being synonymous with a suave – and somewhat womanizing – wealthy man (Goodlad 35). As the suave American architect who owns the stylish Parisian apartment in which the action of the play takes place, Bernard suitably embodied this classic look. In order to lend a bit of modernity to the design, a sleek, well-tailored sharkskin was chosen

for Bernard's suit, giving his look a touch of flamboyance while still maintaining the iconic grey suit look of the era. The grey color also worked nicely for the character, as it allowed for a look that was overall "put together", while avoiding the harshness and formality of a black suit. Additionally, since a cool color was designated for Bernard, the use of a blue-toned charcoal grey suit worked nicely within the desired color palette. The original design for the character was quite austere, featuring very little color. Following a meeting with the other designers, however, the Mod influence of the set required a bit more "pop" to be incorporated into the overall look, particularly because, as an architect, Bernard would have chosen his own décor, reflecting his personal tastes in the process. This was accomplished by incorporating a colored vest, which broke up the visual column of grey created by the suit. Other Mod details were added to the suit via a subtly patterned shirt, a purple pocket square and tie (swapped during the show for a paisley ascot), and teal dress shoes. A topcoat and hat were briefly contemplated for the character, however after considering the quick entrances and exits – and the added Mod influences – the idea was abandoned due to being unnecessarily formal and complicated. Following a discussion with the director, the decision was made to place Bernard in a smoking jacket for the opening scene, setting the tone of the production, creating a sophisticated look and incorporating the garments iconic association with Hugh Hefner. To lend a dark and debonair look to Bernard – as well as allow for the scene in which the darker-haired Robert is mistaken for him – the actor's hair was darkened and groomed into a slick period style.

Robert was another character that allowed for various approaches to the design. In order to reflect the up-tight, non put together, conservative, and somewhat nerdy aspects of the character – while still making it seemingly plausible that Gretchen would fall for him – different styles of the 1960s were considered, several of which were abandoned early on. Adding a bowtie, while lending the "dweebish" and somewhat endearing quality necessary in the character, created a look that felt too fastidious for the character, and the use of glasses also presented a similar problem, as they made

Robert too visually akin to Berthe. Utilizing elements from the Peacock Revolution was also briefly considered, however, this was determined to be too fashion conscious and trendy to fit the character. Instead, a shaggy and somewhat unkempt style was created through the use of faded-out colors and less structured fabrics. Functioning as the visual foil to Bernard, Robert's plaid flannel suit with elbow patches, loafers, and slicked down but not overly groomed hair created a look that instantly set the two apart. In order to play off of the unrefined nature of the character and hunched posture of the actor, a cardigan was also utilized, with added elbow patches creating a through-line for the two looks.

Another way of showcasing the different sides to each character's personality was through the costume change opportunities written into the text and added to the onstage action. While very few costume changes are called for within the text of *Boeing Boeing*, additional garments were added into the design as a way of creating directorial opportunities within the stage action, allowing for additional delineation of personalities, and mirroring the development of individual characters throughout the play. As the high fashion character of the play, day and evening dresses were included in Gabriella's wardrobe, adding to the uniform and nightgown prescribed within the play. The utilization of multiple costume changes within the production created the image of Gabriella as a woman with an outfit for every occasion. For Gretchen, additional costume changes also affected the way in which the character was perceived by the audience. The strong silhouette of the Lufthansa uniform, coupled with the aggressive and dominant physicality of the character, allowed for the actress to have a very imposing presence onstage. In order to contrast with this appearance, a softer day look was added for when Gretchen and Robert – who end up together – begin to see each other in a different light. In order to break up the uniform silhouette, the structured jacket and neck scarf were exchanged for a sweater vest and feminine flower. This look helped to highlight the gentler side of the character, providing a bit of sexual suggestion while still retaining a modest

appearance. The nerdish and awkward Robert received a costume change as well, beginning in a plaid suit and then transitioning to a softer cardigan as he began to grow more comfortable and accept the chaotic environment. For Berthe, the maid's previously mentioned added apron changes provided the opportunity for additional comedy and stage business. A similar idea of color-coded neckwear was briefly considered for Bernard, providing an opportunity for him to individually coordinate with each of his fiancées. After charting out the action of the play and discussing the potential merits and complications of the addition with the director, however, this idea was abandoned due to its unnecessary complication. Bernard instead donned a green ascot when leaving for dinner with Gabriella, providing a subtle change that tied in with her color.

Changes in the Design During the Production Process

As part of the production process, weekly production meetings were attended in order to collaborate with the other designers and discuss the progress of the production. A regular presence was maintained in the JMU Costume Shop as well, monitoring the progress of the design construction, making decisions on any questions that arose, and aiding in the execution of the final designs. Selected rehearsals were also attended during this time, along with each of the dress rehearsals once the show moved into the performance space. In order to insure the quality and functionality of the design throughout the duration of the run, the costumes were continually monitored during the performances, and any repairs or adjustments were made as necessary. Before the costumes were used onstage, however, the abbreviated production period required that several changes and additions be made to the original designs, adapting to the various challenges that arose along the way.

The uniform dress for Gloria was originally designed to be turquoise with a large boat neck, and a wide band of white accenting the hem. Due to the limited availability of fabric and existing garments, however, a commercially available dress with the desired style lines was purchased and subsequently altered, subsequently changing the color to a deep, bold blue. This change proved to be beneficial, and was ultimately more complementary with the actress' complexion and red wig. The decision was also made to maintain the original neckline of the dress modified for the uniform rather than the expanded boat neck in the first design, and the plan to utilize a white band of fabric at the hem was similarly eliminated. These changes in the design, combined with the change in color, created a more professional and realistic look during the first scene, highly benefitting the final design. Other small changes were made during the dress rehearsal process as well, such as changing to a patterned neck scarf and utilizing the robe and lingerie for Gloria later in the play instead of a nightgown in order to better reflect the personality of the character.

As one of the major pieces that was designed and constructed from fabric— rather than altered to fit the design from an existing garment – the uniform cape for Gabriella also evolved from the original design. The redesigned Alitalia uniform was modified from a stock suit, which the cape was originally planned to match, as was common practice in airline fashions of the era. The unique hue of the suit limited the availability of matching fabric, and given the budgetary restrictions and timeframe for construction, a compromise became necessary. Because of this, the color was changed to a solid cream, which in the end added more sophistication and versatility to the design. The designs for Gabriella’s day dress changed as well. Although the day dress was originally envisioned to be patterned, a dress in the right hue and similar overall style was available in stock and could be easily altered to fit the period by shortening the hem, which in turn gave the garment a more youthful look. Instead of a cowl neck-line and loose sleeves that gathered into a cuff, the stock garment had sleeves that mimicked the lines of the cape and created visual interest when paired with the intricate belting on the bodice.

Upon the director’s request, a heavily padded bra was added to Gretchen, affecting the actress’ physicality throughout the play, as well as providing opportunities for physical humor. The addition of the padded bra complicated some of the costume changes, however, as the bra needed to remain somewhat disguised in order to look as “natural” as possible. The new exaggerated bust measurement was disproportionate to the rest of the actress’ body, requiring that a suit be built – a challenge to the already compressed period – or that one be purchased in a larger size and retailed to fit the rest of the actress. A unique opportunity arose at an online aftermarket-clothing site, allowing the latter to be option to be used in the realization of the design. Other changes that were made served the character and the play’s action, such as the choice to over-dye her nightgown to give it a deeper color and stronger presence on stage. Gretchen’s uniform jacket was also removed

prior to a “mistaken kiss” scene in the play, preventing stage makeup from getting onto the difficult to clean garment.

In creating the assimilation between the two proposed designs for Berthe, a series of fittings with the actress and meetings with the director were used to suss out which options were most effective in creating the desired look for the character. This process was particularly aided by the use of clothed dress forms, which served to facilitate conversations with the director, allowing multiple possibilities to be viewed side by side and the various merits of each to be discussed. It also allowed for experimentation within the various looks, as different outfits could be put together without the need to repeatedly bring the actress back in for additional fittings. This luxury proved invaluable during the compressed production schedule. Using this process, the final look of knitted pants, a cardigan, blouse, and flats was chosen. Other aspects for Berthe’s costume design changed later on during the dress rehearsal process. The various aprons for Berthe were originally designed to have painted decals coordinating with each of the air hostesses’ country of origin. Due to the slouched posture of the actress and the cartoony busyness the decals would have created, however, the plan was disregarded in favor of cleaner lines and blocks of color.

After an interim meeting with the director and other designers, it became apparent that the original, more austere design for Bernard had a disconnect to the Mod-influenced world being created for the production. To compensate for this, elements of the design were adjusted to provide more “pop”, and color was added via the various costume pieces. Included in these additions was a colored vest used to break up the overall stark silhouette of the suit. Originally designed to contain the colors assigned to each of the three air hostesses, the design was later changed to instead reflect the purple color assigned to Bernard. Upon exploring the various fabric options, a multi-colored vest had the potential of becoming overly busy or clownish, lacking the sleek refinement present throughout the rest of the design. Small additions and changes were also made during the dress

rehearsal process, such as the practical additions of suspenders and a handkerchief, and swapping to a green ascot instead of a purple one in order to subtly foreshadow the ending couples of the play.

The additions of the handkerchiefs for both men were justified by the fact that men during this time would not be caught with lipstick on their face, particularly when one had two other women on the side. For Robert, the handkerchief served an additional dual purpose of wiping the brow of sweat during the vigorous physical action on stage, and signaling to the audience the nervousness of the character. Due to the intense physicality of the performance, the original design of having a sweater underneath the suit jacket was paired down to a light-weight, short-sleeved shirt for the comfort of the actor, and the addition of a bit of color to the overall look. A major question that arose during the design process for the character was whether Robert should have a cardigan or suit jacket. While the original design placed the character in a jacket, the director was unsure whether this choice would be right for the character. Utilizing the dress forms via the same process used with Berthe, the various options were discussed. In terms of period accuracy, a jacket – often part of a two- or three- piece suit – would have been worn when going out to any non-casual event, including traveling. This typical look, however, had the potential of giving the appearance of a character that was more put together than desired. A cardigan was also well suited to the character, and worked well with the physicality created in rehearsal, but wasn't quite right for the opening scene, in which Robert unexpectedly arrives to visit his old school friend, Bernard, who he hasn't seen in nearly 20 years. Ultimately, a compromise was reached in which both garments were incorporated into the design, utilizing the strengths of both options while staying true to the character via the fabric choices.

Post-Mortem Feedback and Reflections on the Design

As part of the regular process during the theatrical performance season, each production is given a “post-mortem” critique by the faculty and students who supported the artistry and experience of the production, many of whom participated in some facet of the plays realization. Using their individual experiences as audience members who viewed the performances, a question and answer format is utilized to facilitate post-mortem feedback. As part of the responses, participants commented on the precision apparent in the various visual and staging elements, as well as the boldness of choices for actors and designers alike. This indicates the success of the production in interpreting the director’s desired “bold precision” in a way that was successfully conveyed to the audience members. Many of the post-mortem participants were additionally attuned to the significance of the various colors, and felt that the costumes, along with the changes that occurred onset, aided in clarifying the story. The costumes were also successful in that they helped to create clear and separate identities for each of the three air hostesses, reflecting both their personalities and nationalities in the clothes that they wore. Since much of the analysis and research in each of the design areas was carried out separately over the summer break, the question was raised as to whether a sense of unity existed between the visual elements, and among the participants, the general consensus was that despite the separation, the production retained a sense of cohesion and unity throughout.

Many choices of the production were openly embraced by the audience, however a few decisions were questioned by participants of the critique. Among these was the director’s choice to have the bust of Gretchen heavily padded, creating the illusion of a large-breasted actress. This decision, supported by a line from the text in which the character is referred to as “big”, was questioned as to its necessity in the portrayal of the character. While this interpretation of Gretchen

was adopted based on the director's insistence – rather than as a personal design choice – these sorts of compromises are a normal part of the theatrical design process.

Upon reflection of the design, some elements and choices were more successful than others in creating the characters and emphasizing the desired aspects of their personalities. Due to the physical nature of the playing style utilized in the production, many of the characters adopted exaggerated ways of moving about the stage, which in turn underscored the similarities and differences between the various characters. While in early discussions with the director it was decided that Berthe would be in her thirties, and her costume was subsequently designed for a quirky individual of that age. As the stylized movement of the actress evolved, however, the hunched and stiff, shuffling way of walking led to the character appearing quite a bit older, with this change becoming most notable during the tech process and performances, when the physicality – which started more subtly – was fully embodied. This subsequent disjoint between costume and character created a mild degree of confusion among audience members as to the intended age of the character. In hindsight, this dichotomy could have been alleviated by discussing the addition of grey streaks to the actress' wig. While the use of hair streaks is typically subtle, the hunched posture of the character would have provided a greater degree of visibility, whereby adding to their effectiveness.

The chosen shirt for the character Robert was another decision that was less effective in hindsight. In order to keep with the unrefined nature of the character, a light, short-sleeved button down was chosen. Due to the rigorous physicality of the performance and the nature of the fabric of the shirt, however, the shirt had the tendency to more readily show perspiration. While the use of the jacket and cardigan could disguise the issue, it ultimately lessened the comfort of the actor. A similarly hued polo could have been chosen instead, achieving a similar visual effect while still resolving the problem. The choice to keep the original shirt was not altogether detrimental, however,

as audience members tended to interpret the visible perspiration as a sign of the character's nervousness and anxiety, a perception that was aided by the use of a handkerchief to mop the brow and the venting of the shirt during particularly nerve-wracking situations.

The final decision reconsidered following the close of the production was the choice to have the air hostesses with bare legs rather than in more period-appropriate pantyhose. Originally this decision was made off of the supposition that using panty hose may have complicated some of the scene changes, particularly given the mix of outfits with which they would and would not have been worn. Upon reflection, however, given the extra time available during many of the changes, panty hose could have been utilized for all of the women, adding another small touch of realism to the otherwise farcical show.

In order to reflect the changes made during the production process, a second set of costume renderings were produced following the close of the production. This creation of revised renderings is not typical in the design process, however, it allows for a visual comparison between the beginning and final products of the production, reflecting the journey that was undertaken. It additionally allowed for the demonstration of improved rendering abilities, providing for strong representations of personal work to be included within an artistic portfolio for use in future career endeavors.

While not a typical part of the post-show process, the costume design for *Boeing Boeing* was nominated by the JMU Theatre Faculty to be taken to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) Region IV design competition for a chance to compete against other designs produced by graduate and undergraduate students. This experience afforded the unique opportunity to be able to discuss the design with theatre professionals outside of JMU, and provided valuable feedback on the overall reception of the design. For those not familiar with the play, the choice to have Berthe – the French maid – in a costume with pants rather than the

stereotypical French maid ensemble was questioned, particularly since pants were not as commonly worn by women during the early-1960s. These questions, however, provided the opportunity to explain the design choices and how they established character while still adhering to the director's vision, as well as to support the decisions with period research. While theatre artists seldom have the opportunity to discuss their work in this way, it was valuable to gain an understanding of the perceptions and assumptions that audience members may have towards a particular character.

Other aspects of the costume design were well received by the KCACTF adjudicators. The color abstract in particular was well responded to as the judges felt that it captured the “bold precision” and dynamism of the overall production, and was quite applicable to the finished costume design. The adjudicators also felt that the nationality of the individual air hostesses was well established in the design, with Gloria looking quite American – thanks in part to the iconic American style influences, Gabriella appearing very much Italian, and Gretchen presented in a way that conveyed the proud German that she was. This combined success of the design and response session with the judges lead to the costume design for *Boeing Boeing* being awarded the KCACTF Region IV Award for Theatrical Design Excellence, Honorable Mention in Costume Design.

From start to finish, the process of creating and executing the costume design for *Boeing Boeing* has been an invaluable learning experience. In preparing to enter a career as a theatre professional, this project has provided an increased understanding of all aspects of the design process, as well as resources that can be returned to throughout future endeavors. In reflecting upon this process, the project was very successful through the many changes and adjustments made as part of the typical journal from page to stage, and will help pave the way for more successes to come.

Appendix A

Research Images

1. Original advertisement for Braniff airline's "Air Strip," featuring Space Age influences.
2. "Mondrian Dress" designed by Yves Saint Laurent, demonstrating the op art influence of the wearable art movement, and Jacqueline Kennedy wearing the iconic Chanel suit, pillbox hat, and bouffant hairstyle that she helped to popularize.
3. Woman wearing a leather jacket, mini skirt, and thigh-high go-go boots. Served as an inspiration for Gloria's costume design, and matching wool cape and pencil combo that inspired the addition of a uniform cape for Gabriella.
4. TWA Summer and Winter Uniforms, worn 1960-1964; TWA Summer Uniform, worn 1966-1967; TWA Winter Uniform, worn 1965-1968.
5. TWA air hostesses, 1965.
6. Alitalia Uniform, bright blue, worn 1960-1966; Alitalia Uniform, adopted 1966; Alitalia Uniform, adopted 1969.
7. Lufthansa Uniform, worn until 1965, navy version; Lufthansa Uniforms, worn 1965-1970, Period photograph of Lufthansa air hostess in uniform worn 1965-1970; Lufthansa Uniforms, 1970s.
8. Color Abstract utilized for the design, painting from the 1960s

Appendix B

Character Collages and Original Renderings

1. Character Collage for Gloria
2. Character Collage for Gabriella
3. Character Collage for Gretchen
4. Character Collage for Berthe
5. Character Collage for Bernard
6. Character Collage for Robert
7. Original Renderings for Gloria and Gretchen
8. Original Renderings for Gabriella
9. Original Renderings for Berthe
10. Original Renderings for Bernard and Robert

Appendix C

Production Photographs and Revised Renderings

1. Production Photograph: Opening Scene, starting looks for Gloria and Bernard
2. Production Photograph: Gloria's redesigned TWA uniform, Close-up of Gloria in uniform and Robert in suit
3. Production Photograph: Gabriella's redesigned Alitalia uniform, Gabriella in uniform with added cape
4. Production Photograph: Gabriella's day dress, wide sleeve through-line with cape; Gabriella's evening dress; Close-up of Gabriella's nightgown, ruffle through-line with cape
5. Production Photograph: Gretchen's redesigned Lufthansa uniform, Gretchen's uniform in profile with hat; Close-up of Gretchen in day wear
6. Production Photograph: Bernard in suit and ascot; Bernard in vest and tie
7. Production Photograph: Berthe in yellow apron and Robert in cardigan; Robert in suit
8. Revised Rendering for Gloria
9. Revised Rendering for Gabriella, Uniform
10. Revised Rendering for Gabriella, Cape
11. Revised Rendering for Gretchen
12. Revised Rendering for Berthe
13. Revised Rendering for Bernard
14. Revised Rendering for Robert

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