

Fortuny & Vionnet Garment Compare & Contrast Paper

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The 20th century has been very historical and evolutionary in the fashion industry. Many talented designers created some amazing pieces back then, that are still remembered today. The two designers I have chosen were very popular and hardworking in their times. The first one is Fortuny who designed “Tea Dress, 1930-32” and the other one is Vionnet who designed “Evening Dress, ca. 1924.”

Mariano Fortuny was born in Granada, Spain in 1871 with artists in his family. His father passes away, his mother moves her family to Paris. Later again, Fortuny and his family moved to Venice where he starts his career and plans to spend his entire life there. He had knowledge of science, arts, and technology. Luckily, he met Henriette Negrin who was a Parisian and later became his model, muse, and wife in 1897. His design house was founded in Italy, 1906. His first creation was the Delphos gown in 1907. Later he started working in Fashion and textiles and he created a Knossos scarf that quickly became famous. He was great with draping and pleating. In 1927, he met Elsie McNeill Lee who fell in love with his creations and joined hands in the business. When Fortuny died in 1949, his wife Henrietta handed over the business to Elsie on her behalf. Fortuny created his garments in regional styles and ancient that was modern and comfortable for women. He also designed costumes for theaters and yardage for interiors. He also wanted to remove the corsets. Fortuny’s garment (figure 1) is called a “Tea Gown, 1930-32” that was specially made for women who had their own individuality. The gown was comfortable to wear. The garment is designed with black silk fabric and gold print on it. It’s a long robe going straight down with long wavy sleeves, and it also creates some pleats in the bottom. His garments are filled with simplicity and timeless quality that has been up to date.

Madeleine Vionnet was born in Aubervilliers, France in 1876 with her parents who were later divorced and separated when she was young. She worked as a lacemaker apprentice at the age of 12. Later at the age of 18, she got married and had a child who died as an infant and later she divorced her husband. Vionnet was hardworking, determined, and ambitious about doing something for herself so she left her family and friends to Surrey, England. She found a job in a lunatic asylum and worked as a laundress and soon later she moved to London. She had some other experiences that she got from her other job in London and then moved back to France. Where she worked with Callot Soeurs, run by three sisters, she learned a lot about high-end dressmaking and tailoring. She opened her own fashion house in 1912 in Paris and was known for her bias cut. She had many loyal clients and earned success right away. She also got rid of the corset and designed her garments that moved along with the body. The women could feel comfortable and don't have to wear something tight. She also faced a problem with plagiarism, people were copying her designs and selling them in the U.S., she created a campaign against copyists that started in 1921. She photographed her entire creation and labeled it with her name, numbering it, signing it, and marking it with her fingerprints. She retired in 1939 and later died in 1975. Vionnet garment (figure 2) is called "Evening dress, ca.1924," designed for a woman going to a party. The garment is designed with brown silk and metal fabric and gold lace design in the back that create a bow type of design. The fabric goes straight down and has a tail in the back. The garment is sleeveless with a V- neck. The garment looks comfortable and easy to move in it. She was a hardworking, ambitious and independent woman who was also great at bias cuts.

In conclusion, the two designers I have chosen are Mariano Fortuny and Madeleine Vionnet who have been incredibly hardworking and ambitious about their career and have earned so much success so quickly. The similarities between the two were that they both didn't want a corset in their garments. They both created garments that were comfortable and moved with the body. They both faced problems with plagiarism and made labels for their garments. In (figure 1) and (figure 2) they both designed a garment in gold and black and brown color silk fabric. They both look simple and unique in their own way. The difference between them is that they both have their unique ways of designing and have different knowledge in fashion. Fortuny is great with draping and pleating and Vionnet is great with bias cuts. The differences show in their garments such as in (figure 1) and (figure 2).



Figure 1

Mariano Fortuny

Tea Gown

1930- 32

Silk

C.I.51.86.6

Figure 2

Madeleine Vionnet

Evening Dress

ca. 1924

Silk & Metal

2017.314



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