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4

Character costume portrayal and the multilayered process of costume design in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937)

Maarit Kalmakurki

Without the requirement of dialogue, costumes function as a significant visual tool providing certain leads and guidance for spectators about a character's status and personality. An effective way to establish a connection between a character and the audience is by utilizing costumes in a manner that enables quick identification and empathy. In traditional hand-drawn animation, the process of costume design is integrated firmly into the development of the character, rather than executed separately by a costume designer. Nevertheless, costume plays a key part in the spectatorial identification of the character, portraying also the figure's body form and silhouette, and is therefore a fundamental element of their overall design.

For the analysis of how the costume designs evolved during the production of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (David Hand, 1937), this chapter will combine the story meeting notes, video footage filmed during the production of 'motion studies', character development and conceptual drawings alongside the design of the characters in the final animated feature film. Story meeting notes provide important information about the conversations that Disney artists had during the production of *Snow White*, which are useful in examining the design of costumes, including their shape,

structure and details, and the connection that is crafted with the character's specific personalities. The story meeting notes produced during *Snow White* indicate that most of the characters' costume development seems to have been made at the end of 1934 and throughout 1936. Only a few meetings are documented during 1935. The special editions of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* DVD provide a variety of bonus materials (video footage filmed during the motion studies), while others include several character development and conceptual design drawings, which share valuable visual evidence of the evolving costume design. With this analysis, I wish to highlight the different ways in which costume design is visible throughout the Disney animators' character design process, from initial concept designs to final character realization. With the examples shown in this chapter, I argue that costume design is an important part of the character design in the identification of the character's personality and their connection with the narrative. This chapter is therefore a welcome addition to the number of scholarly publications on animation, given that costume design has been a noticeably underrepresented area that discusses the character development in Disney's hand-drawn animated feature films.¹

Costume design as part of the character development

During the production of *Snow White*, character development, including costume design, was executed through collaborative labour. Story meetings between the animators were an important part in the evolution of characters and their costumes. However, Walt Disney himself had his own strong visions for the visual outcome of the film, which guided the story and style of character animation. At that time, the Disney animation studio did not have a separate costume department that would have been responsible for areas related to character costume design, including their research for visual inspiration or for providing material references. The notes and the literature sources indicate that Walt Disney wanted the film to be set in no specific era. For this reason, most likely, early concept and character development designs show a variety of costumes that include many elements of different historical dress styles, all blended together in one costume. This is visible also in the finished animation, in which the characters' costumes are a striking combination of fashions from different eras.

The Queen's costume design was mostly created through the collaborative effort of Disney, Art Babbit and Joe Grant. Babbit was the lead animator of the character, while Grant focused on animating the Queen's transformation into the Witch.² However, Grant did create several sketches of the Queen, thereby contributing to her overall design.³ In a story meeting that took

place on 30 October 1934, Disney suggested the following as an action item for the Queen's character development: 'Questions of the queen's portrayal; fat cartoon type or as a stately beautiful type. Sketches to be submitted, and story sections constructed for either angle.'⁴ These two different styles, proposed by Disney, can be observed in the Queen's early character designs.⁵ Most of the designs for the 'fat cartoon type' present the Queen in sixteenth-century dress styles visible in the shape of her bodice, skirt and dress as well as her headdresses, whereas the 'stately beautiful type' Queen is portrayed in late medieval fashions. Several of the early designs clearly show the Queen wearing a Medici collar, introduced to the French court by Marie De Medici and typical of late-sixteenth-century fashion. For the proposed designs for the Queen, the style of this high Medici collar evolved towards a considerably simpler shape and texture. A remnant of the Medici collar is visible in the Queen's costume in the film in which she wears a cape with a white, high stand-up collar (Figure 4.1).

In the same meeting in which Disney directed the animators of the Queen's portrayal, he also requested the animators 'to draw the Queen

FIGURE 4.1 The high collar on the Queen's cape in the final animation evolved from a decorative accessory to a much simpler style.

Source: Screen grab from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937).

along the lines of the Benda Mask type'.⁶ The Queen's black headdress and pale facial appearance are clearly inspired by this note. The style and name of Benda mask refer to the Polish artist Wladyslaw Teodor Benda, who was actively working in the United States during the time of *Snow White's* production. Benda designed and produced theatrical masks, as well as other forms of art, and the designs of his masks were oval in shape, pale in colour and sometimes included a headdress.⁷ Disney's reference to the Benda mask is not visible in the character design drawings in which the Queen is depicted as a 'fat cartoon type'. On the contrary, in the majority of the designs showing the Queen as a 'stately beautiful type', her face appears to be similar to someone wearing a white Benda mask. This reference also remained in the final animation, in which the Queen's crown rests on a black, tight headdress, almost like a tight hood, providing a great contrast as it frames the Queen's chalk white face. In this way, her facial appearance functions like a pale mask. The black tight headdress in between her pale face and the white stand-up collar prevents the two elements of the costume from blending together.

The visual portrayal of the Queen's character, including her costume design, evolved during the production. Her comic features and the 'fat cartoon type' were dismissed and replaced, revealing her as a tall, severely thin and fearless character. The story meeting notes from 15 October 1934 indicate that the style of the Witch that the Queen transforms into was at first described as 'a Fat Peddler Woman', to better suit the Queen's design option of the 'fat cartoon type'.⁸ Interestingly, the meeting date indicates that the character design of the Witch was discussed prior to that of the Queen. On 16 November 1934, another description of the Witch was agreed upon, this time as 'a thin hawk faced old witch-type', that more obviously connects with the 'stately beautiful' characteristics of the Queen.⁹

This note certainly impacted the final design of the Queen's costume, as all the character development designs for this type portray her wearing a medieval dress. As a result, in the film the Queen wears a medieval-style long tunic with full-floor-length sleeves. No discussion from the story meetings indicates why a medieval dress style was chosen for the Queen. However, there is a connection between the 'stately beautiful type', medieval dress styles and the 1930s women's fashion and beauty standards. This connection is visible in the Queen's body shape, supported by her long dress that highly resembles the consumer and high fashion of the mid-1930s: it was popular for women to have a fitted, bias cut dress with a long, draped hemline, established by fashion designer Madeleine Vionnet.¹⁰ Robin Allan argues that the Queen's facial appearance is inspired by a Hollywood actress Joan Crawford, and her visual look was a combination of the 1930s femme fatale and a 'figure from an older world'.¹¹ Film stars became trendsetters starting from the 1920s, and it was natural to choose an actress as inspiration for the character. Furthermore, the medieval dress style connects with the costumes

of the male characters in the film, whereas Snow White and the dwarfs' costume designs cannot be associated with any specific era.

The story meeting notes for *Snow White* also indicate that the majority of the discussions regarding the nature of the characters as linked with their costumes were discussions concentrating on the dwarfs. The distinction between the diverse personalities of similar looking dwarfs was achieved by paying attention to the 'wearability', proportion and details of their costumes. The story meeting notes for *Snow White* refer to several discussions in which the costume portrayal is compared with each character's personality. Their character development therefore included topics which are related to the principles of costume design, even though costume design was not considered a separate entity from the character design. As an example, on 3 November 1936, animator Bill Tytla suggested in discussions regarding Dopey's costume that he is the 'sort of character that is dressed up in the cast off clothing of the others'.¹² Dopey's characteristic movements through his costume are noted many times in later meetings. For instance, in the same November 1936 meeting, animator Perce Pearce comments that 'Dopey's actions are loose, in keeping with his clothes'.¹³ Later on 9 December 1936, Walt Disney remarks, 'I think we want to work Dopey as a fellow with long sleeves – like Mickey in the Band Concert [sic]. It makes him look young to have on somebody else's clothes'.¹⁴ This comment supports Disney's analysis of Dopey a week later, in which he wants him to express that 'he hasn't grown up'.¹⁵ These comments clearly suggest that costume was a significant element in the character design of Dopey, fully supporting the representation of his identity. The ways in which costumes are utilized to portray the characters' diverse personalities, or to connect with the specific movements of the character, strongly belong to the theory and practise of costume design.

Costumes were also utilized to support the comedic elements in *Snow White*'s narrative. The earlier description of Dopey having oversized sleeves and a long length coat impacts both the movement and the walking style of the character. Mickey Mouse's coat in the film *The Band Concert* (Wilfred Jackson, 1935) is very similar to Dopey's coat design, as both garments have long sleeves and the hemline drags along the floor, giving the impression that they are wearing someone else's clothing. For example, in *Snow White* Dopey's costume reinforced the comedic scene in which the dwarf Sneezy hides underneath his long coat when he is dancing with Snow White.¹⁶

Another note related to costume design in the story meetings for *Snow White* between the animators concentrates on whether the dwarfs' hair should be seen or not. On 3 November 1936, Pearce emphasizes that the dwarfs' hair is seen only when they take off their hats.¹⁷ About a month later, in a story meeting dated 15 December 1936, Disney remarks that Sleepy's hat should be limp.¹⁸ Using different headdresses for the dwarfs is an important and decisive detail for depicting their different personalities.

This is clearly visible in the animation, such as in the way Dopey holds his loose hat on his head to prevent it from constantly dropping down. This detail is a significant addition to his costume. Dopey's big hat, together with his long coat, accentuates the appearance of oversized clothing. In the case of Sleepy, his hat's tip is limp, not the entire hat, to differentiate this from the similar headdress of Dopey.

The Disney animators' discussions regarding Sleepy's physical and visual appearance contain similar remarks to clothing and the design of costume as those that occurred in relation to Dopey.¹⁹ Sleepy is described as a 'tremendously sleepy person. His body is heavy, which causes him to move slowly, completely relaxed at all times – everything hanging clothes, hands and his knees bent.'²⁰ The difference between these two characters is achieved in the finished animation by making Sleepy's coat material hang over his belt, rather than having a long coat hanging on the floor as is the case with Dopey's costume. Sleepy is constantly falling asleep, his movements are sloppy and therefore the clothing represents this untidy appearance by hanging down over his body. Animator Bill Tytla supports this idea by suggesting that for the character of Dopey his 'belt line is quite low and things drag after him a bit'.²¹ The beltline is an easy way to visually represent the weight and proportion of the body and to signify the character's mood.

The beltline within the design of the dwarfs is also used to differentiate the personalities for the characters of Doc and Happy. In a meeting at the Disney studio on 15 December 1936, both of these characters' visual appearances are described similarly as either 'round' or 'fat'.²² Their personalities, though, are different, as Doc is described several times as a dignified person with a pompous attitude, whereas Happy has the personality of a comedian, bubbling with joy.²³ Doc's personality is shown through his beltline hanging low and with his stomach sitting big and high on top of it. The costume creates the impression of a big chest rather than of a big stomach, as he should be 'chesty in order to distinguish him from Happy who is also large and fat'.²⁴ On the other hand, Happy's beltline is high and his vest is short, which makes his lower body longer and the weight of his big stomach visible in his large round trousers.

Though every dwarf's costume was remarkably similar, the minor yet decisive details in the design of each costume differentiated their visual appearance. These small nuances in costume might be unnoticed, yet each dwarf had their own distinct costume style that functioned to convey the specific character's personality. The animators' numerous in-depth discussions on the dwarf's costumes is an example of the costume design practice that was a fundamental part of the character development at the Disney studio during the 1930s production of *Snow White*.

Snow White's costume was developed in parallel with the other characters and she wears two different costumes in the film. The visual materials available concerning the film's production, such as the character development

drawings and filmed motion study footage, largely present versions of the blue-yellow gown she wears for most of the film. Only one design, a finished costume drawing, can be found depicting the costume that she wears for a short time at the beginning of the film. As the development of this costume cannot be traced, the analysis of Snow White's costume design development in this chapter concentrates predominantly on her signature blue and yellow gown.²⁵

Snow White's characteristics were described in a meeting that took place at Disney on 11 November 1936, as slender, cute and dainty, for which the animators designed several versions of her costume.²⁶ An attempt to portray Snow White's sensitive nature can be seen in one of the early costume design examples, in which she wears a dress with an Empire silhouette that has a waistline placed just below the bosom. This design has an element that is almost like a fine layer of tulle over the skirt, a possible reference to a story meeting in which Hamilton Luske explains how she wears a dress 'made of tulle – more or less transparent'.²⁷ The material depiction of tulle refers to her personality, how a lightweight, delicate fabric would interpret the sensitive nature of Snow White as a character.

The animators who worked the most on the character of Snow White were Natwick and Norman Ferguson. Prior to working at Disney, Natwick had worked at the Fleischer animation studio developing the character of Betty Boop.²⁸ Some of the early character development drawings of Snow White highly resemble Betty Boop's design, particularly her facial expression, the shape of her head and style of hair. However, these similar character designs differ in terms of costume design, as Betty Boop often wore a mini-length skirt based on a 1920s flapper dress, while Snow White is always portrayed wearing a long dress. This difference can be observed in one of the early designs, in which Snow White is depicted in a dress similar in style to the one featured in the final cel-animated feature, but her face and hair have the Betty Boop appearance, although her hair is blond.²⁹ This is an addition to many other early character designs of Snow White where, interestingly, she has been designed with blond hair (Figure 4.2), thereby contradicting the film's dialogue in which the Mirror describes her as 'hair black as ebony, skin white as snow'. The blond appearance might derive from the illustrations with Scandinavian influence by Swedish illustrator Gustaf Tenggren, who worked in *Snow White's* production.

Nearly all of the early character designs of Snow White show her in a dress with slashed puffed sleeves, just as she is portrayed in the final film, although the shape of the dress and its style vary. None of the research materials indicate why the slashed puffed sleeves were chosen for the character. Slashing refers to a popular fashion starting from the Italian Renaissance and lasting until the sixteenth century and was a style often included in several parts of garments for both men and women. Even though the slashed puffed sleeves are visible in several versions of Snow White's costume designs, the

FIGURE 4.2 One of Snow White's character designs, in which she is depicted with blond hair, although the Mirror describes her as 'hair black as ebony, skin white as snow'.

Source: Screen grab from the bonus material of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* 2002 DVD release.

rest of her dress includes styles and fashions from many historical periods. For example, one of her costume versions includes features from the 1830s gowns, containing a tight-fitting bodice with an oval neckline and small puffed sleeves attached to a dropped shoulder line. On the other hand, a few designs depict Snow White in a dress resembling late-medieval style, having a one-piece dress with a long train and extra fine fabric hanging down from the puffed sleeves.

While analysing Snow White's character development drawings, it is difficult to trace the original animators, as it was not a common practice for artists at Disney to sign their work. According to the story meeting notes, however, animators Albert Hurter and David Hand were heavily involved in designing and animating Snow White's costumes, as well as those of the other characters. Hurter controlled the keying of the character, in addition to dressing them, before the characters were handed over to

the animators.³⁰ Hurter also undertook some conceptual designs similar to those drawn by Tenggren. In one of the rare signed conceptual designs by Tenggren, Snow White is depicted in a dress similar to, yet not exactly the same as, the version in the finished film. Based on these materials, the assumption is that all of these men, Hurter, Hand, Natwick, Ferguson and Tenggren, together with Disney, had contributed to Snow White's costume design. It was a collaborative work in which they all acted as costume designers.

In the final animated feature film, Snow White's costume ensemble becomes a combination of design styles and details visible in several of the development drawings. Her bodice remained tight fitting with a white stand-up collar attached to it. The shape of the collar and the neckline is rounded for a much softer feel and to better suit the sensitive characteristics of Snow White. Her skirt had less fullness in the hem than what is seen in many of her costume development designs. The style of her hair has elements from the 1930s beauty standards and was designed to follow the hairstyle of Rochelle Hudson, a famous film actress of the era.³¹ The red ribbon was a decisive accessory for breaking down the hair and to avoid the impression of her having a high forehead.³² The bow in the ribbon is an addition that emphasizes the nature of Snow White as 'slender, cute, and dainty', despite this being a strikingly stereotypical detail in the representation of feminine characters. The red colour of the ribbon connects well with the red fabric visible in the slashing on the sleeves.

Costume design was evidently an important part of the character design development process and story meetings that took place between animators during the production of *Snow White*. Costumes assisted in character differentiation and the definition of personalities, and costume design development was connected with the development of story. The costume colouring for all characters, aside from Snow White, was decided during the development of the character design. The initial colouring for Snow White's dress was light-yellow, visible from some of the character designs and in the dress made especially for motion study purposes. However, her dress colours were changed during the motion study filming, demonstrating that this phase of the production was also part of the costume design process.

Motion, colouring, light and shadow: Finalizing realistic costumes

In parallel with the first year of the production of *Snow White*, the Disney studio released the short films *The China Shop* (Wilfred Jackson, 1934) and *The Goddess of Spring* (Wilfred Jackson, 1934), which were early attempts at introducing human characters. Disney used pre-filmed footage, named

motion studies, to teach animators to understand human movement and to enhance their skills at adapting these movements to animation.³³ The filmed footage assisted the animators not only with drawing the characters realistically through fidelity to authentic bodily movement but also in depicting garments, materials and their movement with a greater degree of accuracy.

Disney selected the daughter of a Hollywood choreographer, a young dancer Marge Champion (née Belcher), to act the part of Snow White during its production. Motion study filming started during the very early stages of *Snow White* as Champion was called to a costume fitting for her motion study dress in 1934.³⁴ The structure and silhouette of Snow White's motion study dress resembled the animated version in the film, and therefore her costume had seemingly already been defined in such early stage. This is significant, as according to the story meeting notes the character development also took place two years later. However, the creator of the motion study dress remains unknown, as at the time there was no special costume department at Disney who would have provided this dress for the filming. Someone at the studio might have sewn the dress for that purpose, as animator Kelly Kimball recalls: 'Sometimes they had somebody just sew them up ... they could get somebody working there to sew something.'³⁵ Members of the studio might have sewn the garment, or perhaps a family member, as, for example, during the production of *Sleeping Beauty* (Clyde Geronimi, 1959) when animator Marc Davis's wife, fashion designer Alice Ester Davis, made Princess Aurora's dress for the motion study filming.³⁶

Based on examination of the filmed motion study footage, the dress that Champion wore, including its material weight and drape, resembled the character costume of Snow White in the final animated film.³⁷ However, the construction of the dress differed from other kinds of mundane clothing, as a dark ribbon was sewn on top of the seams, edges, the centre-front as well as the details of her light-yellow bodice and skirt (Figure 4.3). The ribbon had most likely been sewn to clearly highlight the structure, detailing and seam-lines of the costume.³⁸ Another purpose for this ribbon is to indicate the correct place for the black ink outline in the animation cels. Its presence assisted the animators in perceiving the important details of the costume when they drew the actor in movement. Furthermore, as the ribbon easily indicated the costume structure, it accelerated the animating process and rotoscoping some parts of the live-action footage.³⁹ The unusual construction of this garment verifies that it was especially made for the motion study purpose.

During the motion studies of *Snow White*, other performers were also filmed and requested to bring particular clothes with them to the studio. Whenever Champion was absent, animator Ward Kimball's wife Betty who worked in Disney's Ink and Paint department acted as a motion study model for the character of Snow White. She was asked to wear a top with short

FIGURE 4.3 The dress that Marge Champion wore for her role as motion study actress for Snow White had a dark ribbon sewn on top of the details, seams and edges of the costume. Despite its initial function to highlight these details for animation purposes, the ribbon on the centre-front of the bodice remains an easily recognized detail of Snow White's iconic costume.

Source: Screen grab from the bonus material of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* 2002 DVD release.

puffed sleeves and a long skirt for the filming, resembling the silhouette of Snow White's costume.⁴⁰ Furthermore, vaudeville actor Eddie Collins was asked to bring baggy clothes to the filming, similar to Dopey's costume. In addition to her role as Snow White, Champion also acted as Dopey during the film's production by wearing a long coat. The footage of these motion studies reveals that the coat that Champion wears is a lot bigger than her body, visible in the way her sleeves hang and the length of the coat drags along the floor.⁴¹ This matches well the description of Dopey's character in the story meeting notes, in which the animators stated several times that Dopey should wear clothes which are too large for him. These examples show that it was important that the motion study costumes represented their animated versions, especially in their structure and silhouette. They assisted the animators to examine the garment fit and material behaviour during the motion study performance.

Motion study filming was also strongly connected to the final stages of animation, assisting in adding colour, light and shadow in the correct areas on the characters and their costumes. Disney remarked that 'You can make a good drawing of a girl, but to get all the shadings and all the things ... and make it move and turn, and keep it simple enough that it can be duplicated – we went through quite a bit of experimenting to do that.'⁴² Furthermore, 'the introduction of shadows added dimension to a character and depth to a scene'.⁴³ Once the animators understood the meaning of the material weight, movement and drapery, they were able to indicate the correct places for the light and shadow to achieve more realistic animation and more authentic character costumes.

The 'certain depth and realism' Disney was aspiring to for the film's aesthetics was achieved by the shadow painters and workers at the Paint Lab Studio.⁴⁴ The shadow painters added the light and shadow to the animation, creating the three-dimensional style of the garments and animating the correct flow of the material. This is especially important in the depiction of different fabrics, to create authenticity in the diverse ways in which they moved. The Paint Lab Studio was responsible for the character colouring, including accurate depictions of the costumes' fabric textures. Colours were mixed and painted to illustrate different materials. For example, linen material was chosen for Snow White's costumes and woven, textured linen for the dwarfs.⁴⁵ Textured material was achieved by adding different coloured patches on the coat elbows. Doc also has this particular visual detail in the design of his socks. The patches seem like they are hand sewn with long stitches, giving the illusion of an old, used garment. Linen material is difficult to copy with hand-drawn animation, and so the depiction of the linen material for Snow White's costume relies mostly on the recognizability of the fabric's movement and not the textured finishing. In Snow White's costume, the addition of light and shadow is very limited when the costume moves, which would have further enhanced the impression of a three-dimensional form. This visual effect is visible in scenes where there is a strong contrast with light or darkness shown in the

costume, such as the sunlight in the field when Snow White picks flowers and in the dwarfs' cottage during moments where the light comes from the fireplace and in candlelight.

Colour choices also assisted in the different material depiction. Although the film is not strictly tied to any specific era, the costumes in *Snow White* tend to refer to the late Middle Ages or the early Italian Renaissance. At that time, flax seed was grown largely in Europe and therefore linen was common fabric to use as both household and clothing material. Earthy colour shades were easy to achieve by colouring the fabrics using natural dyes. An earthy, light-yellow colour was therefore chosen for Snow White's dress, as it creates an image of linen better than a brighter colour. Additionally, brown shades were chosen for the dwarf's costumes to connect with the linen. Each dwarf has its own colour combination, which is used as one way in costume design to assist in the distinction of similar dwarfs. Snow White's costume colours differ from the dwarfs' brown shades, making her appearance stand out from the other characters and the milieu.

For the Queen's costume, a velvet effect was given to her cape and satin finishing for her collar.⁴⁶ When analysing the Queen's cape in the final film, the velvet material is achieved by placing sharp white lines on the highest part of each crease the material makes when it is moving. On the other hand, the same lines on top of each crease in her purple gown have a grey tone. The fabric in movement seems heavy in relation to the character movement, which enhances the depiction of velvet, rather than a lightweight fabric. A different effect of black velvet is seen when the Queen transforms into the Witch. The Witch's black cape clearly has some grey textured finishing on the material creases, instead of the sharp white lines. This stylistic effect on the black costume surface delivers the feel of velvet more accurately than the one used on the Queen's cape, while also making the Witch's cape livelier in appearance.

The Queen's costume colours also signify the status of her character. Purple colour dye was traditionally time consuming and expensive to produce and, due to its high cost, was restricted from use by the lower classes. Sumptuary laws also controlled the use of purple colour and, for example, its use was limited to the highest classes in the Byzantine and medieval periods. The presence of purple in the costume design of the Queen connects with regal clothing and expensive materials, such as velvet or silk, and therefore the colour is well utilized as a sign of the character's social identity.

Conclusion

The design of the costumes for each character during the production of Disney's *Snow White* was a process that included several animators and artists working across production departments. The analysis of the research materials surrounding *Snow White*'s production did not indicate that there

was a principal or lead animator who designed the character's costumes.⁴⁷ The costume designs were achieved with contributions from several artists, driven by Disney's vision. Costume designs were developed during collaborative story meetings, which assisted the artists in making revisions in order to achieve the best possible design that served both the character and the story.

Even though human character animation was in its early stages during *Snow White's* production, the character design process demonstrated that the animators were able to understand that costume can function as an indicator of a character's personality. Additionally, they recognized that costume can also provide comic elements and can therefore be used as part of the development of character's performance and as a visual cue for the narrative. As evident in the design of the seven dwarfs, costume assisted in the differentiation of characters that are otherwise similar in appearance. The many possibilities of costume were therefore not undermined in the character design process but served to support and reflect the personalities, identities and movements of *Snow White's* animated cast. There is ultimately an important connection to be found between 'characterization' and the design of costume as central components of character animation, despite the fact that there is an absence of critical studies of costume design within the scholarship of animation. However, this chapter's analysis of *Snow White* and its costumes design identifies the effect of costume upon the longevity of animated characters, with Snow White herself continuing to be depicted wearing her iconic costume throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.⁴⁸ The legacy of *Snow White* is therefore, perhaps, entirely connected to a memorable visual image that is itself rooted in the powerful effect of costumes and the ability of dress to establish the personalities of its animated characters.

Notes

- 1 See publications by Robin Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe* (London: John Libbey, 1999); John Canemaker, *Before the Animation Begins: The Art and Lives of Disney Inspirational Sketch Artists* (New York: Hyperion, 1997); Richard Holliss and Brian Sibley, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs & the Making of the Classic Film* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987); and Rebecca-Anne C. Do Rozario, *Fashion in the Fairy Tale Tradition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).
- 2 Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe*, 55.
- 3 Each animator had their own list of 'Outline of Characters' and Grant's personal copy of the list includes several sketches of the Queen, confirming that he also contributed to her character design. The list was dated 22 October

1934. According to Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.
- 4 Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 2.
 - 5 The early character development designs of the Queen can be found on the Special Edition DVD of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (2002) bonus material, disc 2.
 - 6 The story meeting took place on 30 October 1934. Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 2.
 - 7 Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe*, 52–5; and Maarit Kalmakurki, ‘*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Cinderella and Sleeping Beauty: The Components of Costume Design in Disney’s Early Hand-Drawn Animated Feature Films, animation: an interdisciplinary journal* 13, no.1 (2018): 11, 18.
 - 8 Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 2.
 - 9 Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 3.
 - 10 The bias-cut technique was introduced by fashion designer Madeleine Vionnet in the early 1930s. Bias cut refers to a way of cutting fabric in diagonal directions, instead of in a straight grain. This method allows the fabric to stretch, making the garment accentuate the body’s shape and drape beautifully.
 - 11 Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe*, 52, 55.
 - 12 Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 6.
 - 13 Ibid., 7.
 - 14 Ibid., 15.
 - 15 Ibid., 18. From a story meeting on 15 December 1936.
 - 16 To further develop the idea of Dopey being childish in appearance, Bill Tytla also suggests for Dopey that ‘His coat sleeves are much too long and hang over his hands. Everything gives him this sloppy feeling.’ From a story meeting on 3 November 1936. Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 6.
 - 17 Ibid.
 - 18 Ibid., 16. This was an additional note made by Walt Disney in the list of ‘General Characteristics and Personalities of All Dwarfs’, dated 15 December 1936.
 - 19 Ibid., 15. A list of ‘General Characteristics and Personalities of All Dwarfs’ was handed out in a story meeting on 15 December 1936.
 - 20 Ibid.
 - 21 Ibid., 6. A discussion of the personalities of the dwarfs in a story meeting on 3 November 1936.
 - 22 Ibid., 16. Both characteristics appear in a story meeting notes on 15 December 1936.

- 23 This description can be found in the list of 'General Characteristics and Personalities of All Dwarfs' in Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 16.
- 24 Ibid., 16. From a story meeting on 15 December 1936.
- 25 It is unclear why the DVD bonus materials only present the development of one of Snow White's dresses. One possibility is that the designs of her first dress have been lost. Another possibility is that as the screen time for this dress was very short and Snow White is remembered by her blue and yellow gown, there was no point in spending too much time on costume development for her first dress.
- 26 Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 7.
- 27 Ibid. In a story meeting discussing Snow White's personality on 11 November 1936.
- 28 Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe*, 59; Holliss and Sibley, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs & the Making of the Classic Film*, 30.
- 29 These designs can be found in Holliss and Sibley, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs & the Making of the Classic Film*, 20.
- 30 See Canemaker, *Before the Animation Begins*, 22–3; Allan, *Walt Disney and Europe*, 46; Kalmakurki, 'The Components of Costume Design in Disney's Early Hand-Drawn Animated Feature Films,' 10.
- 31 The dress style of Disney princesses in later classic Disney films such as *Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty* was also heavily influenced by the late 1940s and 1950s fashions. During these times both of the film's productions took place. Both of Cinderella's costumes contain features from Dior's New Look, established in 1947. Additionally, even though *Sleeping Beauty* was set in the medieval period, Princess Aurora's dresses have 1950s fashions combined with some elements of the medieval style.
- 32 In a story meeting discussing Snow White's personality on 11 November 1936. Disney Story Conference Notes relating to *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, 7, 9.
- 33 This process involved a real person acting as a model of the animated character.
- 34 Kalmakurki, 'The Components of Costume Design in Disney's Early Hand-Drawn Animated Feature Films,' 11.
- 35 Kelly Kimball is a distinguished animator and daughter of Ward Kimball, one of Disney's Nine Old Men. Kelly Kimball, interview by the author, 25 August 2017.
- 36 Kalmakurki, 'The Components of Costume Design in Disney's Early Hand-Drawn Animated Feature Films,' 16; Charles Solomon, *Once Upon a Dream* (New York: Disney Editions, 2014), 51; Charles Solomon, interview by the author, 6 April 2016.
- 37 Kalmakurki, 'The Components of Costume Design in Disney's Early Hand-Drawn Animated Feature Films,' 11.

- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Kimball interview.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 As with her dress, her coat also has the black ribbon, however, only sewn on the centre back seam.
- 42 Johnson, *Ink & Paint*, 134.
- 43 Ibid., 121.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid., 136.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 During Disney's later film productions, for example, *Cinderella* or *Sleeping Beauty*, character and conceptual designs indicate that the principal animator Marc Davis designed the costumes for the characters he was animating. Kalmakurki, 'The Components of Costume Design in Disney's Early Hand-Drawn Animated Feature Films,' 13, 15.
- 48 Moving examples of this can be found in the drawings from the Theresienstadt concentration camp during the Second World War, in which children drew pictures of Snow White wearing the same dress as in the film. The animated film also inspired the creation of a theatrical performance at the Children's Block of the Family Camp in Auschwitz, where the character of Snow White was painted on the walls of the children's barracks by a professional painter. Sofia Pantouvaki, 'Experiencing Visual Metaphors: The Perception of the Theatre and Imagery by Children and Youth in Oppressive Situations', in *Engaging Children Creatively and Critically*, ed. Mary A. Drinkwater (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2013), 52–3.