Design // Features

Center front closure makes it possible to put the dress on a chair, sit down and simply zip it up. A two-way separating zipper will make trips to the rest room easier.

The dress bodice is made from lycra spandex for comfort, ease of motion and a body-conscious fit.

Layered tulle and organza mermaid skirt features two handles at the sides that wrap around the legs and snap in front to pull the skirt fullness in, so it won’t get caught under the wheels.

The mermaid skirt zips all the way off, transforming the dress from a formal gown into a cocktail dress. This versatility will enable the customer to wear the dress to more occasions!

Ruching creates a flattering effect on the front of the dress, leaving the back smooth for added comfort.

Halter design makes the neck length easily adjustable for any customer.

Colors // Fabrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color Code</th>
<th>Fabric Type</th>
<th>Composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-1103 TCX</td>
<td>Pure Cashmere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-4936 TCX</td>
<td>Fanfare</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-4540 TCX</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17-5335 TCX</td>
<td>Spectra Green</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-5505 TCX</td>
<td>Glacier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-0501 TCX</td>
<td>Bright White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-4029 TCX</td>
<td>Clematis Blue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-3712 TCX</td>
<td>Nightshade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semi-transparent layered fabrics will create different shades in the mermaid skirt.

Inspired by a butterfly’s transformation and shimmering wings, this design enables a seated customer to wear an elegant, ballgown style dress as easily and comfortably as possible.

CHRYSALIS GOWN

AATCC & Runway of Dreams: Fashion for All
Spring/Summer 2019 // Seated Design
Katherine Alexandra Absher
Meet Rachel, the woman who inspired this design.
Rachel is a 25 year-old child-care provider, petsitter and wildlife rehabilitator. She has Friedrich’s Ataxia, a rare hereditary illness that causes damage to the nervous system. Although she could walk when she was younger, Rachel now uses a wheelchair and needs help to sit up, get around and complete daily tasks. She never attended her high school prom, because she was embarrassed at the time to be seen in a wheelchair. She did, however, wear a ball-gown style dress on horseback to get down the aisle on her wedding day!

Rachel and Katherine met each other when they were in elementary school. Although their paths diverged when they went to separate high schools, Rachel’s travel blog enabled Katherine to reconnect with Rachel about modeling for this project!

Target Market // Research
Women 18 - 25, for whom walking and standing independently is not an option. She wants a big, fancy dress for a special occasion but needs some special features and extra comfort. Current offerings in the market for formal attire designed specifically for seated individuals is quite limited. Consumers may choose to have something custom made or adapt an existing design. Although some dress sites may have search results for dresses for wheelchair users, it’s often the case that these results don’t necessarily mean the designs have been adapted in any way.

Dressing poses a big challenge for many with limited mobility, especially when it comes to eveningwear! Interviews with Rachel and some online research helped identify these unique needs. Below each is a description of how the design addresses each one.

01 | Trailing fabric, longer garments and added fullness gets caught in the wheels. Design converts to a more manageable length and has features to control fullness while in transit.

02 | Formal attire can be difficult to put on independently, due to closures being difficult to manage and hard to reach. Design features center front two-way separating zipper, making on and off as easy as possible.

03 | Fabrics must be soft around the arm area to prevent chafing while pushing the chair. The design must stay in place even when the wearer is moving. Smooth stretch fabric offers a formal appearance and body-conscious fit while maintaining comfort.

04 | The wearer needs to be seated as securely and far back in the chair as possible. Having a lot of bulk under the seat makes the wearer less stable and safe. Ruching is added only on the front of the garment, reducing bulk and increasing comfort. Mermaid style keeps dress fullness around the legs and not under the seat.

Inspirational Images

Initial Prototype Photos
*Two prototypes to test the fit and design features have been made. Please note that the sample fabric does not represent final colors!