

## ***SAVIOR OF THE WORLD: His Birth and Resurrection*** **Costumes**

The following costume description is based on the production as shown at the Conference Center Theater in Salt Lake City, Utah. Please adapt the information to fit the needs of your production. Simplicity in costuming will enhance the spirit of the production by allowing the characters to take prominence.

### **OVERALL DESIGN**

Costuming for *Savior of the World* was inspired by the paintings of Carl Bloch (see “[The Life of Christ: Painted by Carl Bloch \(1834-90\)](#)” article in the *Ensign*, January 1991, 30–50; see also pictures 200, 217, 222, 224, 225, 229, and 231 in the Gospel Art Kit, available from Church Distribution Services). The desired look was the flow and folds of fabrics that Bloch captured in his paintings.

Costumes also helped create a marked difference between the representation of earth and heaven. The feel of earthly costumes was one of encumbrance, being weighed down and entangled by earthly matters—basic robes layered with drapes and other articles. In contrast, the angel costumes were simple and flowing, without encumbrance or entanglement.

### Color Palette

Colors for Act I were soft and pastel, a spring palette. The colors used for lead roles in Act II were deeper and slightly darker. The chorus wore the same costume in both acts. Nearly every robe in the show was dyed with color then over dyed with tan or taupe to create a soft, worn look.

### Adapting Costuming

Each costume director will create a basic approach that fits the needs and resources of their individual production. Many different approaches are possible. Simple biblical costumes give a sense of timelessness and can be easily created in a variety of ways. If modern white clothing is used for chorus members or angels, sensitivity to the guidance of the Spirit will assist costume directors in avoiding anything suggestive of temple attire.

### **BASIC COSTUMING**

Every cast member had four basic costume pieces: a robe, a drape, a belt, and sandals. The majority of the cast members also had an angel robe worn over their basic costume for chorus scenes in which they represent heavenly beings.

### Robes

The basic robe was a modified T-shaped garment made from rustic materials. Some fabrics that worked well were monk’s cloth, linen or linen looks, raw silks, textured cottons and rough woolen looks. Robes were worn about ankle length. Sleeve length was at or slightly above the wrist.



Youth in Basic Costume

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### Drapes

Drapes were rectangular lengths of fabric, about 2 1/2 to 4 1/2 yards long, wrapped around the body over the basic robe. Fabrics used included rayon, upholstery (without backings), wool, linen, antique satins, and chiffons. Carl Bloch's paintings greatly influenced the design and use of drapes. The way a drape wraps around the body helps create the feeling of encumbrance in mortality. Therefore, actors and directors should pay special attention to the use of drapes and how they are worn.

### Belts

Belts were made mostly from rope, fabric scraps and gimp (upholstery) trims. Many belts used combinations of these elements braided together.

### Sandals

Sandals resembled Jewish styles of the period. Some modern styles, such as thick soles, are not appropriate. Sources for the sandals were found through research on the Internet.



Examples of Head Coverings

### Beards and Head Coverings

If the men in the cast had time and it did not interfere with school or employment, they grew out their beards and hair. Head coverings were used to give variety to scenes and to cover short or blonde hair on both men and women (see picture).

## **ADDITIONAL COSTUMING NOTES**

### Angel Robes

Cast members representing the heavenly hosts wore a second robe over their basic robe. Drapes were not worn with the angel robe. Angel robes were made in a variety of styles and from more refined looking fabrics, such as lightweight drapery, chiffon, dupioni, and crepes. Colors used included light tans, creams and pale yellows. These colors appear white in stage lighting, whereas pure white becomes brilliant and reflective under stage lights and therefore was reserved for depicting angelic messengers and the Savior on stage (see Gabriel and Angelic Messengers and Depicting the Savior on Stage below). If considering other approaches to costuming angels, please see note above about Adapting Costuming.



Boy in Angel Robe

### Gabriel and Angelic Messengers

Angelic messengers who descend from the colonnade to the stage floor, such as the angels to Joseph and the shepherds, the angels at the tomb, and the ascension angels, were given specific costumes to distinguish them from the chorus members in angel robes. These costumes were more tailored than a basic robe and included a large belt around the waist and a cowled neckline.

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Angel to Shepherds



Gabriel appears to Mary

Gabriel wore the most fitted costume. His robe had set-in sleeves and was floor length. The drape had pleats across the shoulders that started in the belt at the waistline and spread out in a V shape to the shoulders. The belt gathered at the waist and fell in soft folds over the hips. It looked as if it were tied in the front with ties hanging nearly to the floor. Because he only appeared on the colonnade, the angel to Nephi simply wore an angel robe over his basic costume.

Mary in Act I

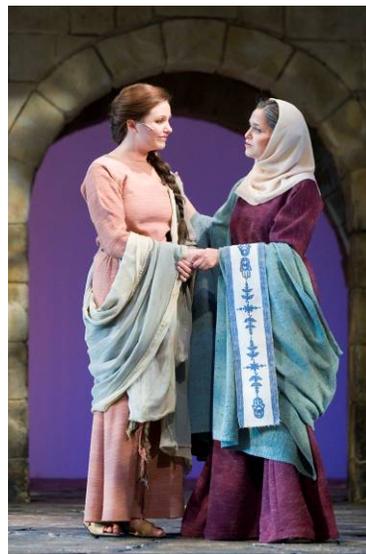
Inspiration for Mary's costume was taken directly from Carl Bloch's painting *Mary and the Angel* (see "[The Life of Christ: Painted by Carl Bloch \(1834-90\)](#)" article in the *Ensign*, January 1991, 30–50). Her costume had the most vivid color: her robe was a cranberry red and her drape an evening blue. The fabrics for both pieces were soft and flowed well. Mary's robe was hemmed long so that the robe could puddle slightly on the floor. The costume colors for the members of Mary's family complimented and blended with hers.

Mary in Act II

To look older, Mary wore a different costume in the second act. Her robe and drape for the second act were of similar colors but in grayed tones, and the fabrics were heavier with more body. Mary also wore a wimple to cover her head and shoulders. Her hair that was exposed was grayed, and she wore aged makeup.



Young Mary in Act I



Mary Magdalene (left) with Older Mary in Act II

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### Nephi

Unlike the rest of the prophets who were generally cast as mature men, Nephi was portrayed by a young man. He was also given a unique costume, inspired by Arnold Friberg's painting *Nephi Subdues His Rebellious Brothers*. Nephi wore an off-white, knee-length, short-sleeved robe with a cowl neckline. Over his robe he wore a leather-like sheath. He also wore a headband, gauntlets, a large belt similar to the one in the Friberg painting, and sandals that laced up his legs.



Nephi Costume

### Pregnancy Pads

Pregnancy pads are used by Elisabeth and Mary in Act I Scenes 2.3 and 3.3. These pieces were worn underneath their regular costumes and must be easy to get into and out of as there is little time for the actresses to add them between scenes.

### Priests and Temple Boys



Temple Priests

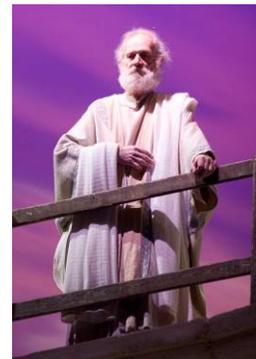
Priests wore a tabard-like drape over the left shoulder. The drape was pleated at the shoulder line and was held in place by a sash tied around the waist. Both drapes and sashes were made from tightly woven, smooth surfaced fabric in a muted grape color. Sashes were also trimmed with gold. Sashes were tied by placing the center on the belly button, crossing the ends behind the back, and bringing the ends forward to be tied in a square knot.

Head coverings were made from 1-yard squares of fabric folded diagonally. The bias fold was placed across the forehead with the ends twisted and knotted in back. The tails from the knot were twisted, crossed, and brought to the front of the head and secured. The remaining corners on the back of the head were separated, twisted, and tacked onto the knot on the back.

Temple boy's tabards and belts were made from the same fabric. The tabards were rectangular pieces of fabric with a hole cut in the center for the boy's head. Temple boys also wore sashes at the waist to hold their tabards in place.

### Prophets

To distinguish prophets who speak from the colonnade—Malachi, Abinadi, Micah, Luke, and Samuel the Lamanite—from the ensemble, prophets wore off-white drapes over the basic robes, rather than wearing an angel robe. Costuming all prophets except Nephi (see note above) in this way unified their appearance, while the flexibility of how each drape was used still created individuality among them.



Prophet on Colonnade

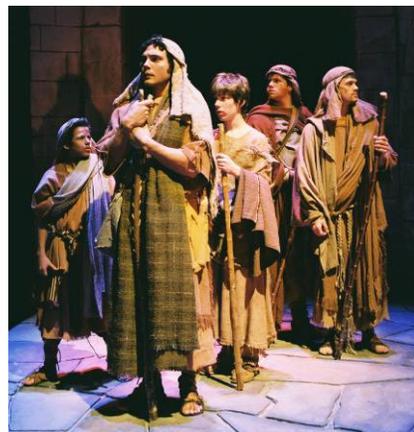
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Roman Statesman

Roman Statesman and Soldiers

The Roman statesman wore a robe with a jumper over it, then a large drape around the body, and a drape over his shoulders that matched the soldiers. Roman soldiers wore knee-length robes with elbow-length sleeves. Their drapes were a cranberry red and were worn with cowl-like folds of drape in the front, while the ends of the drape fell from the shoulders down their backs. They also wore distinctive belts.



Shepherds

Shepherds

Shepherd costumes were created mostly in browns and greens. Robes and drapes were very rough, worn and frayed. Shepherd robes were shorter, from mid calf to below the knee. Pants were worn under the robe, laced to the lower legs with rope, shoelaces, or leather strips.

Wedding Scene

In the wedding scene Mary's mother and Anna replace Mary's light blue drape with an off-white drape and place a veil on her head. Prayer shawls—rectangles of off-white fabric with tassels on the corners—were worn by the adult men in the scene. The four boys who carry the canopy had smaller shawls of similar color but without tassels. Wedding wraps and prayer shawls are also noted on the props list because these items were added to the actors' basic costumes while on stage.

**DEPICTING THE SAVIOR ON STAGE**

Costuming for the man representing the Savior was the only instance in which bright white colors were used deliberately to reflect the stage lighting. The actor wore a long white robe, hemmed long to puddle slightly on the floor. The sleeves were hemmed at the wrist so that the hands would be visible. He also wore a belt over the robe. Over this he wore a sleeveless coat with a lightweight fabric drape attached horizontally across the neckline. This drape was pulled over the head as a hood, and the ends fell freely down the front. A second rectangular drape was attached to one shoulder on the bias so that the drape hung diagonally across the body in front and back, falling to about the knees.



Appearance in Upper Room

In the Conference Center production, the entrances and exits of the man representing the Savior were disguised so that his appearances were unexpected. Cape-

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Front View of Costume

like disguise cloaks were used to cover his costume so that he could walk in with the other Apostles at the beginning of the scene segment. The actor would hide behind a pillar until time for his entrance. He would then drop the cloak and walk onto stage. When he left the stage, he walked behind another pillar and put on a second cape that had been preset. Three disguise cloaks were required to make the two entrances and exits. The cloaks were made out the same fabrics as the Apostles' robes so as to blend in with the other actors in the scene. Each cape had a drape attached at the neckline that was used to hide the face.

For more information about casting and direction when depicting the Savior on stage, see [Portraying the Savior and Angelic Messengers](#) under Production Helps.

## ***SAVIOR OF THE WORLD: His Birth and Resurrection*** **Instructions for Creating Basic Costumes**

The following instructions explain how to create basic costume robes similar to those used in the Conference Center Theater production of *Savior of the World*. These garments are a modified T-shape with the slope of the shoulder cut into the garment (a regular T-shape garment does not include the shoulder slope). Because the directions below use measurements as the cutting guide, the resulting robe will be customized to a specific individual. If preferred, basic sizes like small, medium, large, and extra-large could be established and patterns created from the following guidelines so that robes could be constructed by size.

### **Key to Figures:**

In the following illustrations, dotted lines are guide lines. Fabric is cut on the solid lines.

### **Measurements**

Constructing a customized robe requires the following measurements:

- Circumference of head
- Circumference of neck at base
- Shoulder width between base of neck at shoulder and top of shoulder above the arm
- Chest or Bust circumference
- Waist circumference
- Hip circumference (if hips are of extreme proportion to waist)
- Shoulder to floor
- Length of arm from shoulder to wrist

### **Fabric Requirements**

Using 45- to 60-inch wide fabric, each robe will need two times the shoulder-to-floor measurement plus 4 to 6 inches. Depending upon the width of the fabric, extra yardage may also be needed for sleeves and neckline facings.

### **Prewashing**

Prewashing the fabric eliminates potential shrinkage problems and adds to the warm, worn look of the costumes. If desired, fabric can also be over-dyed with tan, taupe, or cream to further enhance this softer appearance. Dyeing can also be done after the garment is constructed.

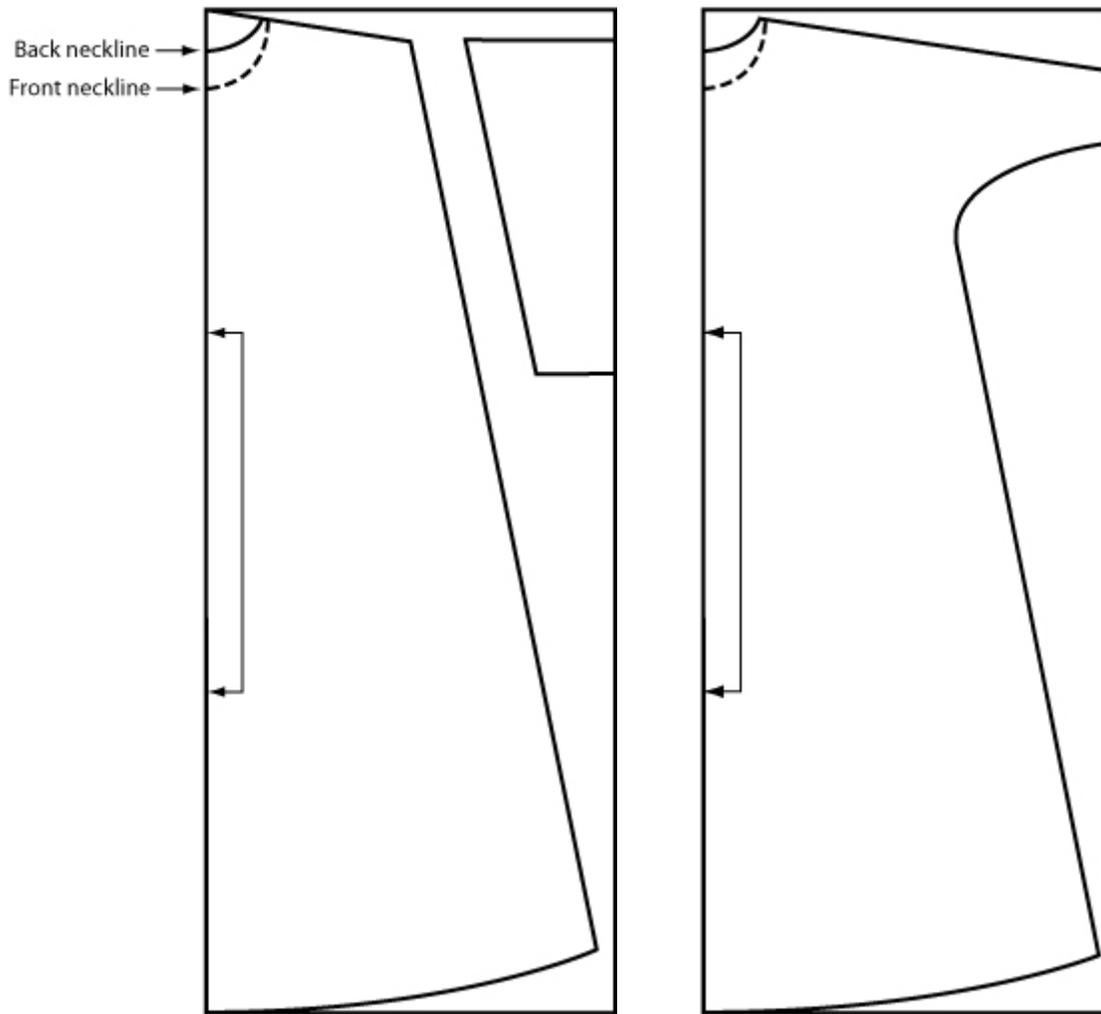
### **Layout of Fabric**

Fold fabric lengthwise matching selvage edges. Then fold the fabric in quarters matching fold lines and selvages. This will enable you to cut both front and back pieces simultaneously. Before cutting, you will need to determine whether the sleeves are cut separately—Style A (see Figure A)—or as part of the basic robe—Style B (see Figure B). You may also wish to measure and mark all guide lines before actually cutting the fabric.

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Figure A

Figure B



### Shoulder and Neckline

The shoulder slope is cut from the center fold of the fabric quarters on a diagonal that drops down 4 inches at the selvage edge (see Figure A1). If the sleeves are set into the robe as in Style B, you can simply cut this entire line from center fold to selvage. If the sleeves are separate pieces (Style A), you should mark the shoulder slope but wait to cut it until you have determined the side seam diagonal. Then, when cutting the shoulder, be sure that the length from neckline to side seam is at least the individual's shoulder width measurement plus seam allowances. You may also choose to cut the shoulder longer to create a dropped shoulder seam.

After cutting the shoulder, cut the neck openings, beginning with the back neckline—the higher neckline. Make sure the opening is wide enough to go over the individual's head. Then separate the two pieces of fabric, and cut *only one* lower, front neckline (see picture).



Necklines of Robe

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Figure A1

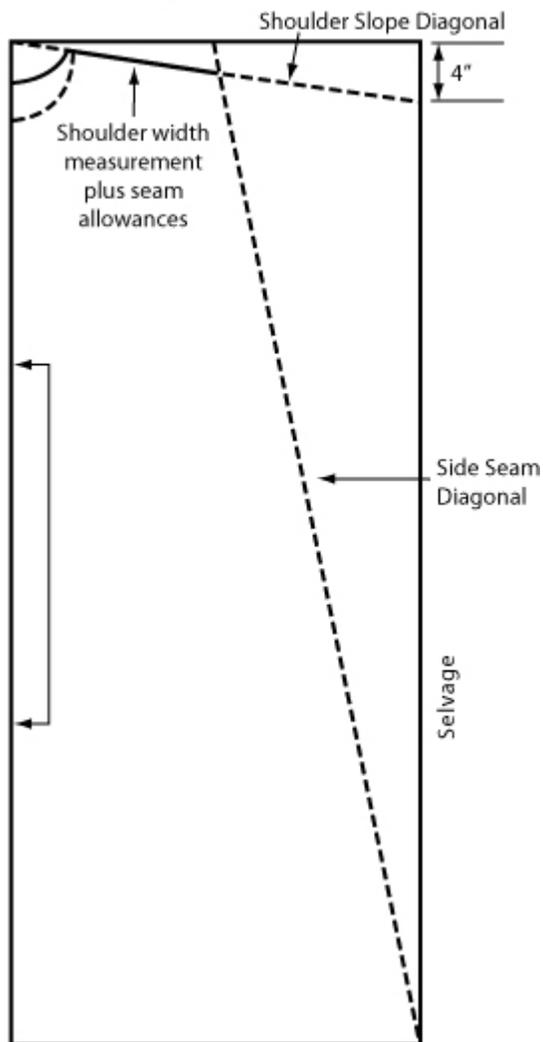
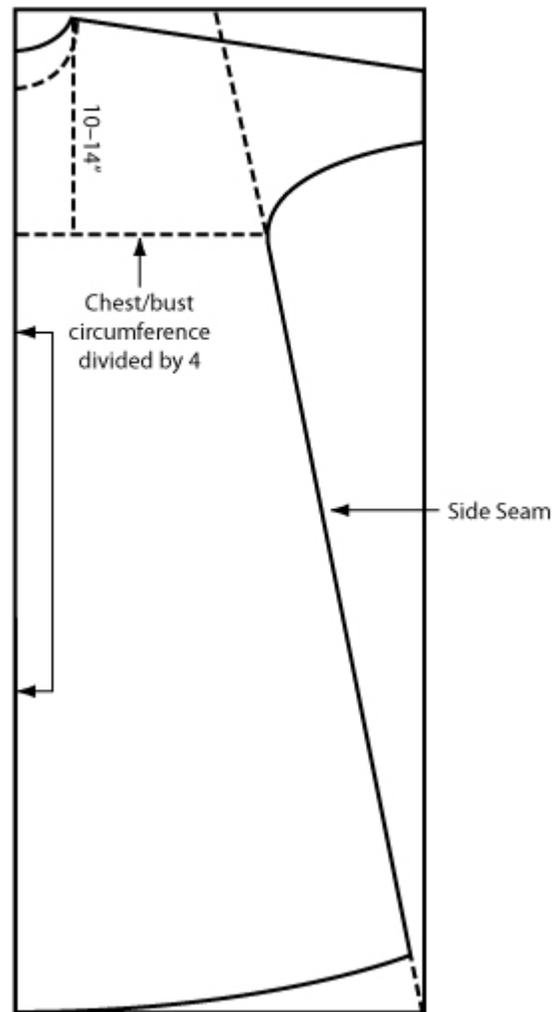


Figure B1



**Side Seam**

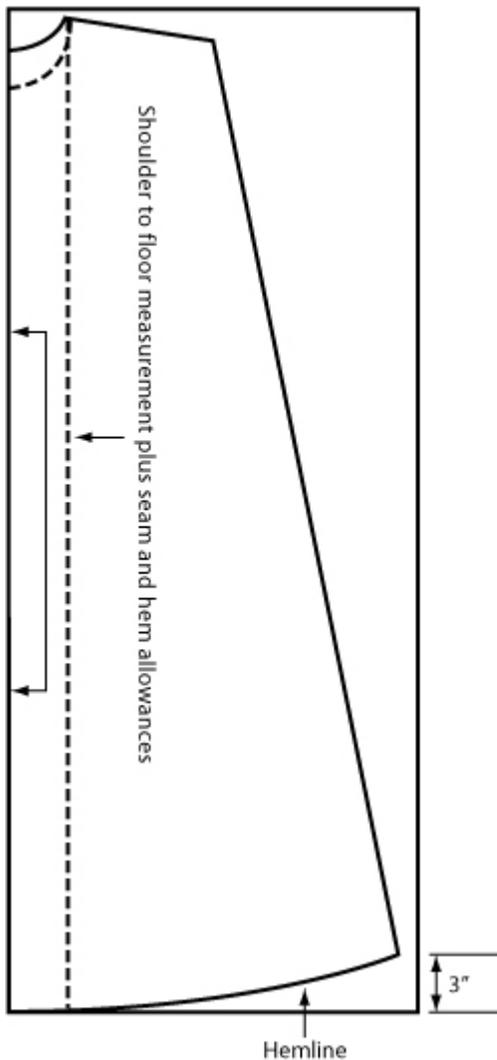
The side seam is cut on a diagonal from the shoulder to the full width of the fabric at the hemline (see Figure A1). Before cutting, make certain there is enough width to cover the fullest part of the chest/bust. To do this, measure from the fold across the chest/bust area to the side seam diagonal. (On most adults, the fullest part of the chest/bust falls 10–14 inches below the shoulder point, where the shoulder meets the base of the neck. An average of 12 inches works well as a guide. If you are working with a particularly large or small person, it may be helpful to take this measurement.) From the fold to the side seam diagonal should be *at least 2 inches larger* than the individual's chest/bust circumference divided by 4 (see Figure B1). This provides for seam allowances and additional ease in the robe. If necessary, adjust the side seam diagonal outward to accommodate. Usually if there is enough width for the chest, the diagonal will also accommodate the stomach and hips. If working with an extremely small or large individual, you may also wish to check the hip measurement against the diagonal in the same manner.

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**Length**

To determine length of the robe, take the individual's shoulder to floor measurement and add shoulder seam and hem allowances. Measure this length parallel to the fold from the high point of the shoulder. At the appropriate length, draw a straight line perpendicular from the fold to the selvage. Then mark a point on the selvage 3" above this baseline and draw a gradual curve from baseline to selvage. This creates the curve at the hem line (see Figure A2).

**Figure A2**



**Sleeves**

Style A uses a flat sleeve that is set in, while the sleeve in Style B is cut as part of the robe. The choice of fabric, its weave, and any shrinkage may necessitate adaptations in how the sleeves are cut and constructed.

Style A

The set-in sleeve is cut as shown in Figure A. The sleeve's length is determined by the individual's length of arm measurement plus seam allowances. Sleeve width should allow plenty of ease through the upper arm and is tapered from the armhole to the wrist, with enough room for the hand to fit through the opening plus seam allowances. If the sleeve is cut as laid out in Figure A, you will need to seam the sleeve along the selvage edge and therefore should also include a seam allowance for the selvage edge in the width. This same sleeve could be cut out on a fold where it would not require additional fabric for that seam allowance.

Style B

If the fabric is wide enough, you can easily cut the sleeve right into the body of the robe, as in Figure B. This is done by continuing the shoulder slope diagonal out to the selvage edge. This line creates the top of the sleeve. The underarm of the sleeve should start at the chest/bust measurement or slightly above (see Figure B2). Allow enough ease for the upper arm and taper toward the selvage edge, leaving enough room for the hand to fit through the wrist opening. Depending upon the size of the person, you may need to add a sleeve extension to provide extra length.

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Figure B2

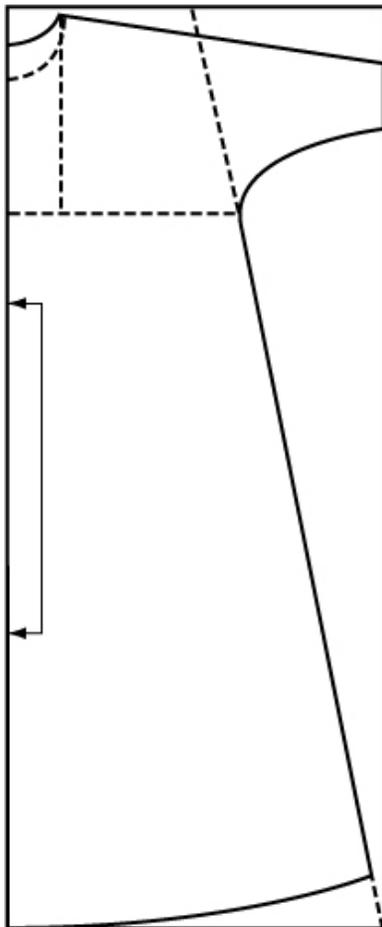
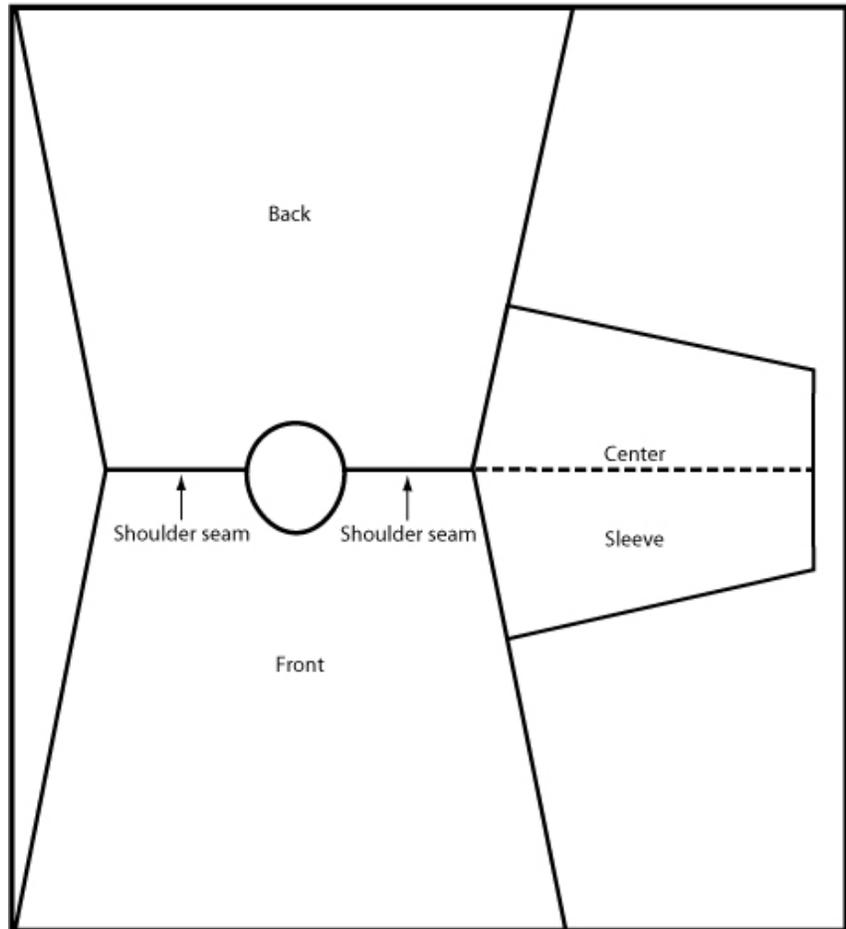


Figure A3



### **Sewing the Robe**

Once the fabric is cut, sewing the robe is simple. For Style A, sew back to front at shoulder seams. If sleeves were cut as in Figure A, seam the top of each sleeve. Then set the sleeves, matching the shoulder seam with the center of the sleeve cap (see Figure A3). Sew underarm and side seams as one continuous seam. For Style B, sew back to front at the shoulder seams (which includes top of sleeves) and side seams (which includes underarm seams). For both styles, hem the sleeves and bottom of robe to fit the individual, and finish the neckline as desired.

### **Finishing the Neck**

The neck can be finished in many ways. The easiest way is with a bias strip. Facings can also be used and can be made in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Facings may be turned to the inside or lie on the outside of the garment with a decorative finishing stitch. If the neck opening is not large enough, a slit can be made down the center of the front or back of the garment to allow it to be pulled over the head. These slits can be finished with bias or a facing. They can be laced closed, or snaps or other fasteners can be used. All necklines can easily be finished and/or filled in so

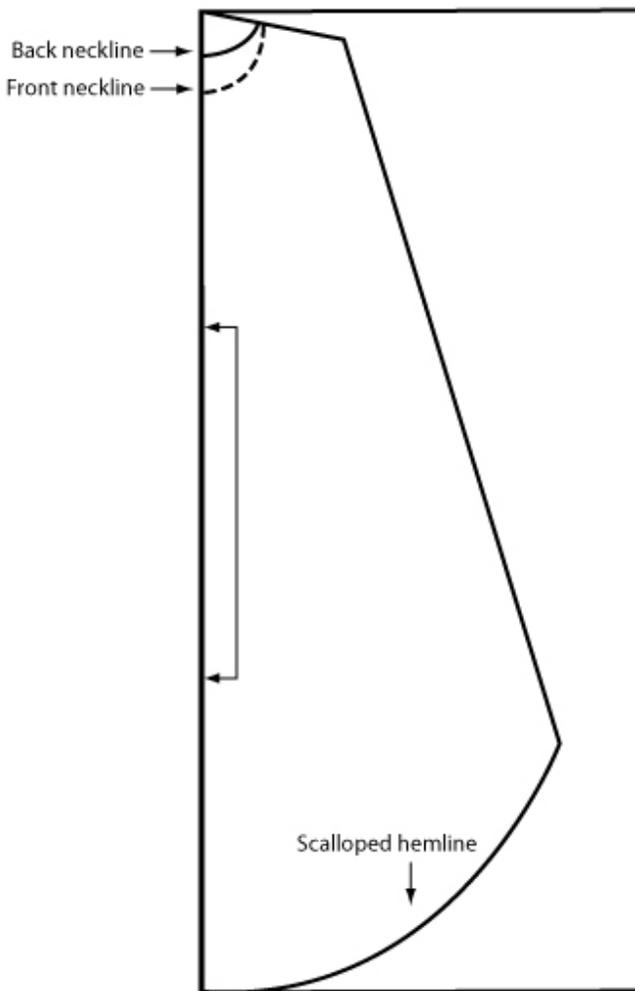
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that temple garments can be worn underneath the costume. Creativity and detailing will add to the individualism of each costume (see pictures below).



Examples of Finishing Details

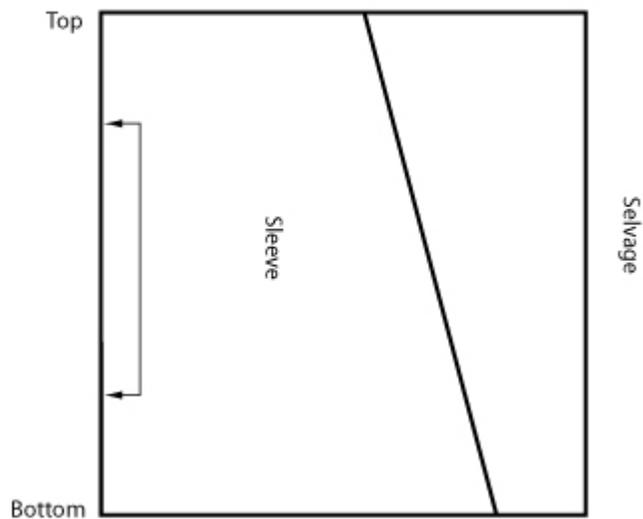
Figure C



**Angel Robes**

For the Conference Center Theater production, angel robes were constructed in a manner similar to that of basic robes with three differences. First, they were most often cut shorter than robes. Sometimes they were cut with a deep scallop on the hem line (see Figure C). Second, the sleeves were cut in a bell shape. Rather than tapering to a narrow wrist as in the basic robe, the sleeves on angel robes were wider at the wrist (see Figure D). Finally, all necklines were finished with a bias and were kept very neat.

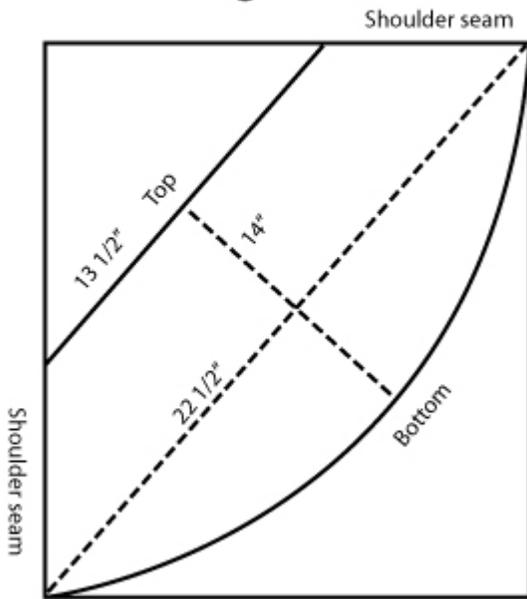
Figure D



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To create greater individuality, additional details such as cowls and streamers were added to some of the angel robes. Cowls were made from strips of fabric cut on the bias (see Figure E, dimensions are approximate). The two pieces were hemmed on top and bottom and then pleated into the shoulder seams of the robe. Some angel robes had cowls in front and back.

Figure E



Examples of Cowls on Angel Robes



Other robes had streamers that fell from the shoulders down the back. These were made by using bias strips about 12–14 inches wide and 3–4 feet long. The strips were hemmed on three sides, leaving one short side to be pleated into the shoulder seam. The longest streamers were used on the tomb and ascension angels' costumes (see picture below).



Act II Scene 1.1 - two angels roll the stone away from the tomb entrance