

Period fashion contains the same dangerous potential as film for romanticization. When characterized by saccharine pastels, it denies the tones clothing has taken on over time and now bears, and fails to question whether fashion's present narrative is enriched by, or rather tethered to, the past. These irresponsible depictions water down fashion's potency. Garments absorb meaning as they are designed, created, styled, and worn in a constant cycle of rebirth. Jacqueline Durran's costume direction in Gerwig's "Little Women" recognizes the danger of romanticism and uses color with intention. This editorial asserts that in order

to use fashion of the past as a legitimate reference point for the present and future, color and silhouette must acknowledge the complexity of human experiences which have played out in the garments. Rich blacks, deep greens, and vibrant turquoise imply soulfulness and recur throughout feminine, masculine, and androgynous silhouettes. The feminine silhouette creates tension between rhythmic volume in the dress and the tight crossing of the wrap to establish a push-pull between movement and constriction. The masculine silhouette balances downward movement of the suspenders and trousers with the simultaneous outward movement

of the billowing sweater. The androgynous silhouette layers a typically feminine shape on a masculine faux leather pant and heeled boot, using variety to establish rhythm.

"Little Women" seeks to examine ways in which we can use fashion of the past as a vehicle for forward thinkers, taking inspiration from Louisa May Alcott's original writing, Jaqueline Durand's costume direction and Greta Gerwig's imaginative interpretation. ○

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# Greta Gerwig's "Little Women": *Garments as Authorship*



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