

Basic Detail Report



Reception Dress

Date

1845-1850

Medium

Heavy woven silk brocade, corded silk, glazed cotton, whalebone (baleen), silk gauze.

Description

Two-piece woman's gown, consisting of bodice (A) and skirt (B) with small separate decorative bow (C). Fabric used in skirt, bow and portions of bodice appear to date from the late 18th century, possibly 1780-1790, original fabric width was 20 inches wide. Luxurious brocade /lampas weave consisting of bow-knot garlands and floral bunches, in tones of bright red, pink, yellow, and white, on a soft purple ground. Overall this dress appears to have been re-made from portions of a late 18th century gown.

The dress bodice appears to use a circa 1845-1850 bodice originally made by a dressmaker based on quality of construction and seaming. The original bodice is of corded black silk, with a wide boat neck, back lace-up fastening, and princess points, front and back. The bottom of the bodice is finished with a double piping seam. Bodice has a lining of brown glazed cotton with sewn-in whale bone support strips. Original sleeves appear to have been removed. On top of original black fabric, the 18th cent dress fabric has been fitted and pieced to include new sleeves and a draped front and back panel. Draped ruffles along the neckline appear to have been made from sleeve ruffles taken from the original 18th c. dress. Ruffles are finished with the 18th century treatment of scalloped punching. In many areas on the bodice fabric original or older seamlines can easily be seen. Many of the seam lines are poorly done with crude running stitches of heavy black or dark blue thread and in numerous areas raw edges of the silk brocade are left unfinished. Dress skirt entirely of brocade silk. Relatively crudely made. Wide 3" waistband, partially lined with lightweight oyster silk. Small gathers in front with large cartridge pleating at back. Simple pair of hooks and eyes for closure at back. Wide 5" hem. Five full panels and two partial panels, one 10" wide and one 8" wide. Small decorative bow, also made from scraps of the silk brocade. Also crudely made. Simple small panel approximately 6 x 8", bound in center by small band of brocade. Edges left raw. Bow was probably worn in the center front of the bodice.

Dimensions

Bodice: 13.5 x 24 in. (34.3 x 61 cm) Skirt: 39.5 in. (100.3 cm) Bow: 5.5 x 8 in. (14 x 20.3 cm)