



THE 'DRAGONS' ARMCHAIR

Dragons is an armchair designed by Irish architect and furniture designer, Eileen Gray in 1917. Gray was first introduced to the Asian art of lacquered furniture while attending the Slade School in 1900, and eventually opened a lacquer workshop with Japanese specialist Seizo Sugawara. While lacquer was normally used to restore pieces, Gray revolutionized the technique by creating new pieces.

Dragons was first featured in the art deco Paris apartment of Madame Juliette Mathieu-Levy. Gray was commissioned as the interior designer for the project, which included lacquering and polishing the famous chair by hand for several days. As with many pieces from the art deco era, the chair pulls inspiration from Asian culture and symbolism. Dragons, in Chinese culture, are associated with power and luck. The two dragons are featured in the arms of the chair and are thought to be sea dragons based on the shape and design. Gray's use of this symbolism combines traditional values with modern design elements. In 1971 the chair was purchased by an art dealer who sold it Yves Saint Laurent. When his estate went up for auction in 2009, the chair had been reupholstered from its original white finish to a black/brown leather. Although the piece was estimated to sell for \$2-3 million, it shockingly sold for \$28 million. This surprised many, as Gray was a relatively unknown designer who specialized in architecture rather than furniture design for most of her career. This auction price established the chair as the most expensive chair to ever be sold. Today, the chair is known as the epitome of art deco furniture design due to its reference to Chinese culture and use of leather and lacquered wood.

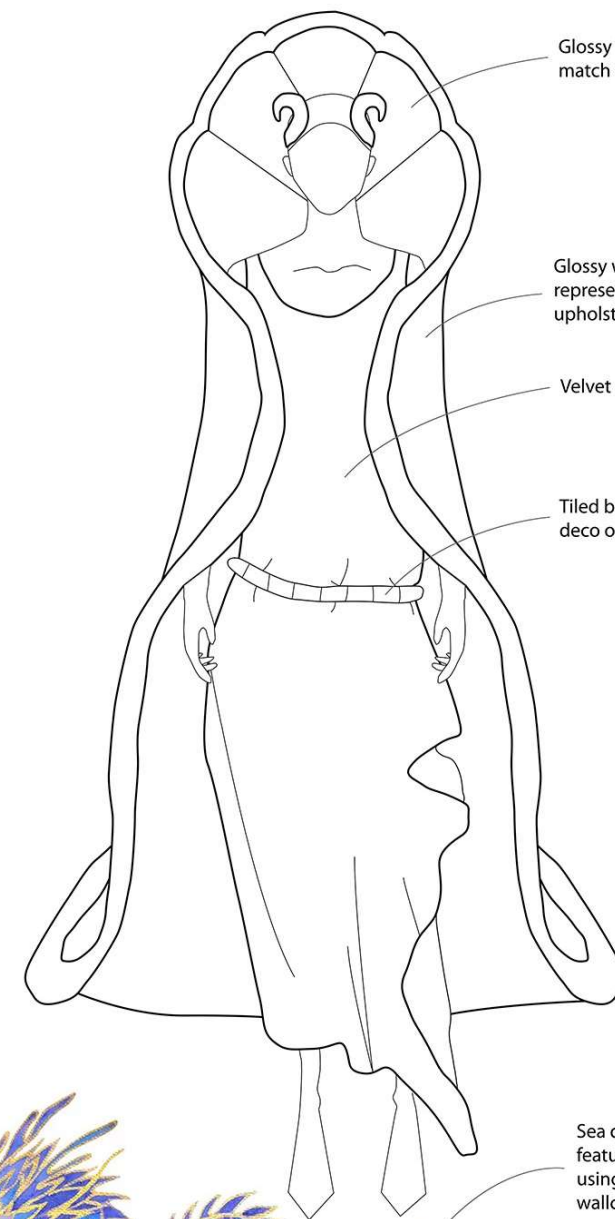
Our design will capture the silhouette and design elements of *Dragons* using tile from Tile Wholesalers and textiles and wallcoverings from Arc Com. Pulling from the same cultural inspiration as Eileen Gray, the garment will feature dragon symbolism and references. Encapsulating the 1920s art deco period, our design will use leather, velvet, metallic finishes, jewel tones, and geometric ornamentation to reference not only the famous armchair, but the architectural, fashion, and other furniture design of the time. Just as the chair was changed overtime during its change in ownership, so too will our design transform in order to represent the chair throughout history.



MATERIALS



CONCEPT SKETCH



Glossy black leather interior to match current chair finish

Glossy white leather exterior representing change in chair's upholstery over time

Velvet upholstery

Tiled belt/bustle mimicking art deco ornamentation

Sea dragon imagery to be featured on the back of the cape using a mosaic of tile and wallcovering

