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STATEMENT OF RESEARCH INTERESTS

I believe history is told through the way humans choose to adorn, announce, and protect themselves and their intimate spaces, and I am fascinated by the methods by which they do so. I am particularly drawn to researching subjects concerning women, femmes, and nonbinary people, disenfranchised peoples, and other untold pockets of history and society.

My past work has focused largely on fashion and social history. With each successive project in my career I have been most drawn to figuring out the “whys” of what characters would wear before I decide on the “whats.” For my Master’s thesis I researched 1850s French and American fashion, art history, and culture, as could be applied to costume designing Mark Twain’s farce, *Is He Dead?* For this task I approached the script from several angles: I read literature published in the United States and France in the time period for social cues and clothing descriptions, I studied Mark Twain’s life for parallels and inspiration for the play, and I researched the fashion and social histories of 19th century France and the United States; the setting for the play and the context through which the play was written, respectively. I used this volume of research to design the costumes and visual character arc for each character in the play.

Presently I am working on an academic creative work about Elizabeth “Lizzie” Keckley, a woman born into slavery who ultimately became Mary Todd Lincoln’s personal mantua maker. I find Ms. Keckley’s life both fascinating and inspiring, and I find particular personal connection with her as a dressmaker. I have read a wide variety of slave narratives alongside Ms. Keckley’s own autobiography, and researched the fashion of enslaved peoples to supplement the knowledge of American Antebellum and Post-Civil War fashion I have already amassed. When it is safe to travel once more I plan to visit some of the places where Ms. Keckley lived and worked, and glean as much information from visiting those places as possible.

I hope to ultimately become a professor of theatre or theatre design, and to teach while keeping relevant in my field through research and writing as well as through working as a designer. I am an ambitious, hard-working person with a clear point of view, a strong set of skills, and an ability to work with people from all walks of life. I love witnessing students go through a transformation over the course of our time together. I believe I could be the ideal addition to a teaching staff, because I will strive to uplift both my students through teaching and support, and the department through research, publication, and keeping relevant outside the academic environment.