

GOT CURLS? PERIOD WIG STYLING BASICS

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ABOUT ME:

I am a third year costume design BFA candidate at Central Washington University. I have spent the past seven years designing in the Seattle area, focusing on period 20th century costume, hair, and makeup design, while priding myself on historical accuracy. I am also proficient in wig ventilating, styling, and maintenance, as well as draping, clothing construction, knitting, millinery, dyeing, distressing, makeup/special effects and am also a capable crafts artisan and wardrobe supervisor.

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW:

We will be discussing the transition from research image to roll set pattern and employing different techniques to demonstrate how to achieve Marcelle/S waves through a variety of methods. We will also discuss the versatility of the Marcelle/S wave and how it can be implemented in numerous period styles throughout history. However, in this workshop, we will only be covering the basics of styling of synthetic wigs. We will not cover more in depth topics, or anything about human/natural hair wigs which require entirely different styling tactics.

RESEARCH TO ROLL SET:

When starting a period wig style, one must always start with extensive research. I personally like to look through books, google image searches, Pinterest, and even old family photos. It is important to find a variety of images that are all from the same period, but document a variety of similar, but different hairstyles. I have found it best to do this, as it is easy to let yourself down when trying to exactly replicate one specific period image. I like to start with 10-15 images that evoke what I am trying to replicate. I then look at the way in which the hair is cut and styled and start to plan how I will achieve this look. One of the first things that I consider is if I will be using rollers. Nine times out of ten, I will be cold setting a wig on rollers opposed to pin-curling, using a hot iron/curler, hot setting the hair, or just styling the straight hair. I then decide where the part will be (if there is one) and then draw that onto my roll set pattern sheet (attached). I select a wig with approximately the correct hair length and cut. I find that a deep horseshoe cut tends to be the best for most 20th century styles that I have practiced. I then pay attention to the directionality of the waves/curls, and decide the size of the roller I will use, and then the placement and direction in which the hair should roll. I draw (always using a pencil) on my roll set pattern, and draw where rollers will be placed and draw arrows to show the direction in which the hair will roll to achieve the correct wave. It is important to pay attention to what the hair is doing in the image and roll the hair in the same direction/angle in which you see.

GETTING STARTED:

To get started, I always start rolling from the front hairline at the part line. I pay close attention to my roll set pattern, and set the first roller. I work sideways and then backwards from there- always using end papers. Once the whole wig is cold set whether it be in rollers, or pin

curls, it is important to give it a good and thorough steaming. I like to use a handheld steamer and a plastic bag. I cover the wig with the plastic bag, and then put the steam nozzle inside and tie the bag around both. I then let the bag fill with steam, and full saturate the wig with and ensure that it is fully heated. Once the wig has been thoroughly saturated, I remove the bag and steamer, and allow the wig to FULLY cool and dry. This can be done with the aid of a hair dryer if you are in a hurry. Hot set rollers, and obviously curling irons require no steam/additional heat to set the curl, however, I do recommend setting the curls in large, upright pin curls using clippies if you choose to use a curling iron.

MARCELLE SETTING BASICS:

There are many different methods that can be used to achieve a Marcelle wave. I prefer to do it using cold set rollers. However, many people prefer to set the hair in pin curls, use a hot iron/curler, hot set rollers, or just force the waves with gel and duckbill clips. These methods are all effective, and are all techniques that I often use for different applications. I do however almost exclusively rely on cold setting hair on rollers using plain vertical brush rollers. I do however, always recommend the use of end papers with all applications. Also, always try to wrap curlers as tight and neat as possible, to reduce fish- hooks and fly always. I find it MUCH easier to control hair when setting if I use a liberal application of water from a spray bottle.

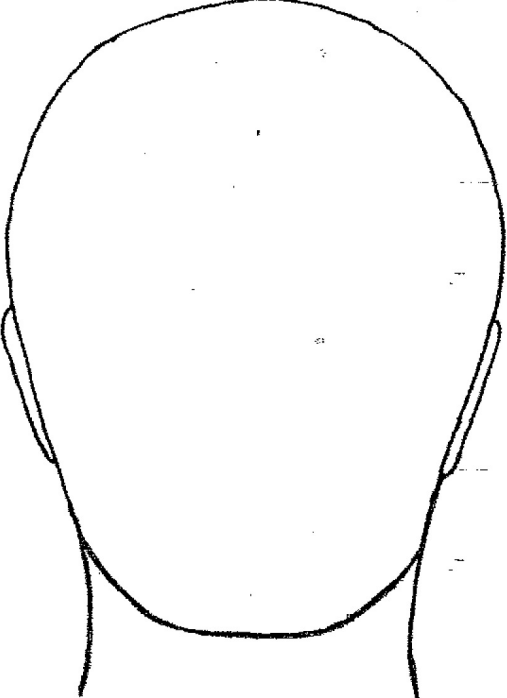
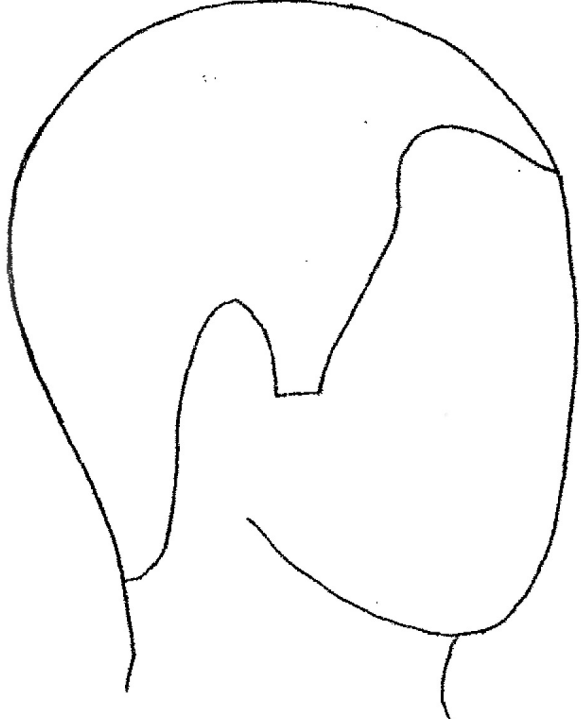
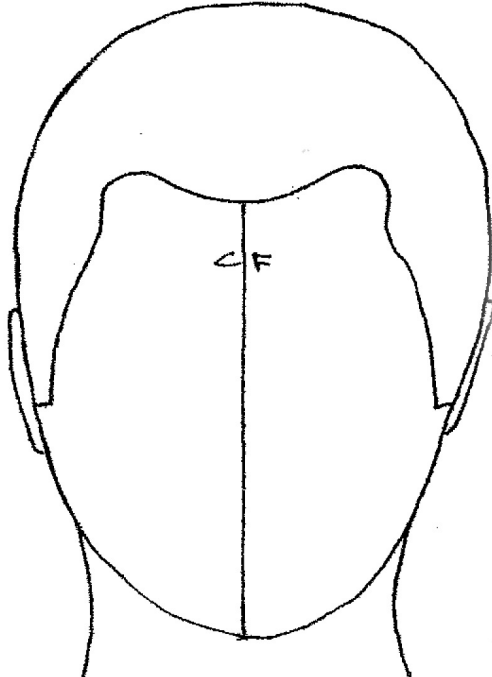
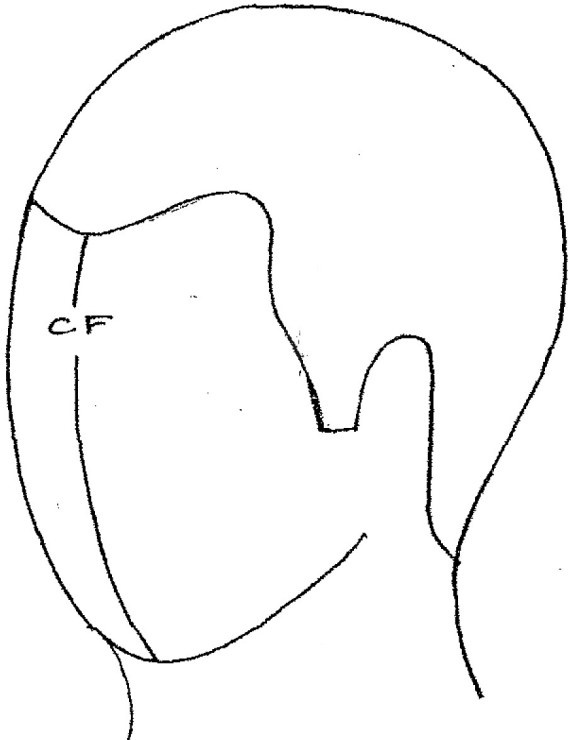
MARCELLE STYLING BASICS:

Once the wig is set, whether cold set on rollers, set in pin curls, hot set on rollers, or curled with a hot iron, the next step is to ensure the wig has fully dried and cooled. Once this is done, you can remove all the rollers. Once the rollers are removed, the next step is to brush the hair thoroughly. I know it can seem intimidating/frightening to brush the curls out of the hair once you have spent what seems like hours setting it on rollers. I will ensure to you that you cannot brush the curl out if it was set properly. Once you have heat set a curl into a synthetic wig, it will be there until it is removed again with heat. Brushing is essential to get the hair to behave as one unit, and once you have started to brush, you will immediately start to see the waves forming. Once you have brushed the hair from end to root, you must start sculpting the waves. I like to start at the part line, using two combs, pushing the waves back and forth, and then pinning them down, either using large duck- bill clippies, or twill tape and pins. Once you work your way all the way down to the end, you can either brush the ends under, or separate and reform individual curls to create a finished look at the ends. I then recommend a liberal application of stiff hold hairspray, and a good shot from the hairdryer. The wig is now performance ready- but do expect to have to clean up styles before/after each performance.

WIG RESOURCES:

- Amazon
- Kryssma brand wigs (from Amazon)
- Sally Beauty Supply
- Atelier Bassi <https://www.atelierbassi.com/en/>
- Manhattan Wardrobe Supply <https://www.wardrobesupplies.com/hair>
- Bobbie Pinz bobbiepinz.com
- Gex Worldwide gexworldwide.com
- The Wig Department thewigdepartment.com

Template Courtesy of Mary Catherine "Cat" McMillen:



Performer _____ Character _____

G Temple to Temple (forehead) _____

H Bridge to Center Front Hairline _____

I Bridge to Receding Point _____

J Temple to Sideburn _____

K Top of Ear to Nape _____

L Center Top Ear across Back skull _____
over hair prep _____

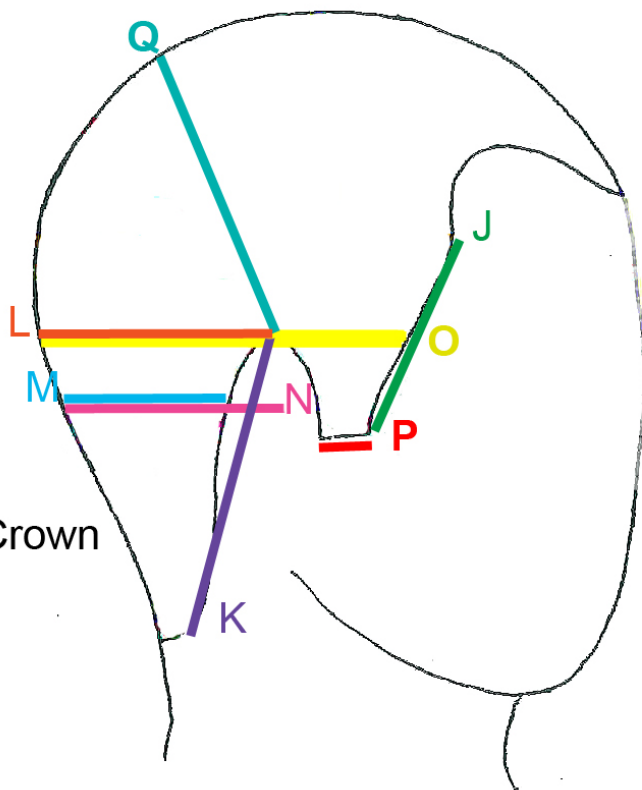
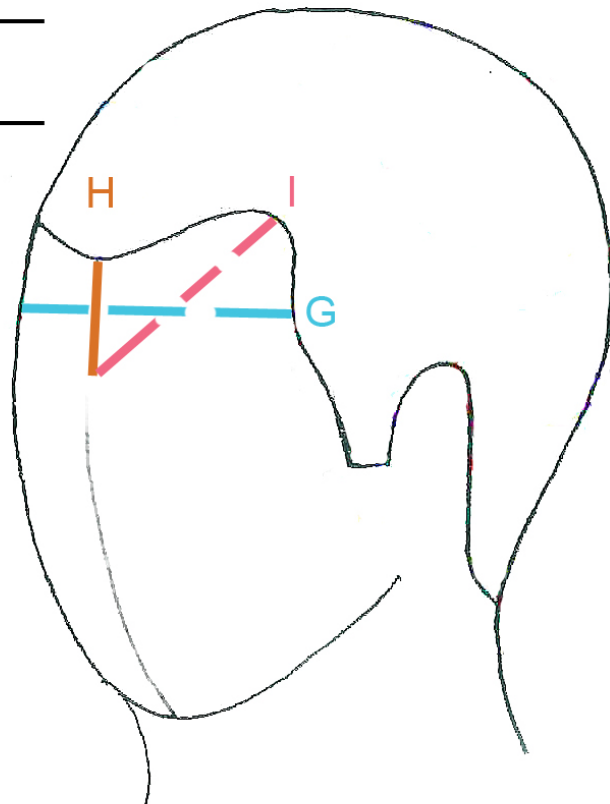
M Back of Ear to Back of Ear skull _____
over hair prep _____

N Front of Ear to Front of Ear across Back skull _____
over hair prep _____

O Front of Sideburn to Sideburn skull _____
over hair prep _____

P Width of Sideburn
left _____
right _____

Q Center Top of Ear to Ear Over Crown skull _____
over hair prep _____



Performer _____

Character _____

A Horizontal Circumference

- skull _____
- over hair prep _____

B Diagonal Circumference

- skull _____
- over hair prep _____

C Temple to Temple across Back

- skull _____
- over hair prep _____

D Front hairline to Hairline at Nape

- skull _____
- over hair prep _____

E Ear to Ear across top of head

- skull _____
- over hair prep _____

F Width of Nape _____

