

# The Gentle Men

Real Leather | ArtsThreads

LILY LOAT



The design I am submitting is from my graduate collection titled The Gentle Men. My main source of inspiration came from a community in downtown Los Angeles, who defy societies expectations of them by reclaiming equestrian culture. Often misjudged as rappers or associated with gang culture, they embody a softer, more introspective masculinity; one rooted in care, resilience, and connection. This sparked my interest in the contradictions of modern masculinity, how traditional expectations are being reshaped, resisted, or unravelled entirely. My design explores this with twists, slouches, and an off-balanced silhouette to reflect a change from the rigid structure often seen in menswear.

I was initially drawn to an image of a Compton Cowboy wearing jeans and an open denim jacket, standing in front of his horse. He carries a sense of strength, but there's also a surprising delicacy and tactfulness to him. Denim is a material you see a lot in both western and urban styles, and what I've always loved about it is the level of detail and how universal it feels, it's something almost everyone owns. I wanted to hold onto that sense of familiarity but rework it in leather, using the silhouette to reflect the more twisted, complex side of modern masculinity, like what is captured in this image. Like the man himself, leather is strong and durable, yet my design introduces a sense of delicacy. It's these kinds of contradictions that I love exploring as a designer. It also captures the sense of unexpectedness I'm always drawn to: it has all the familiar details of a denim jacket, but the silhouette is off-balanced and reimagined in a new material.





Confident



Refined



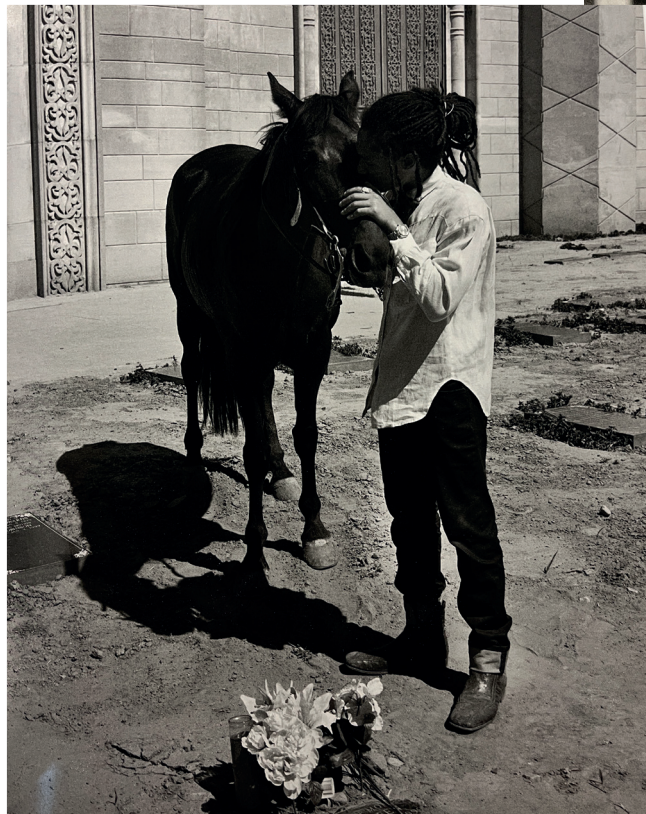
Western



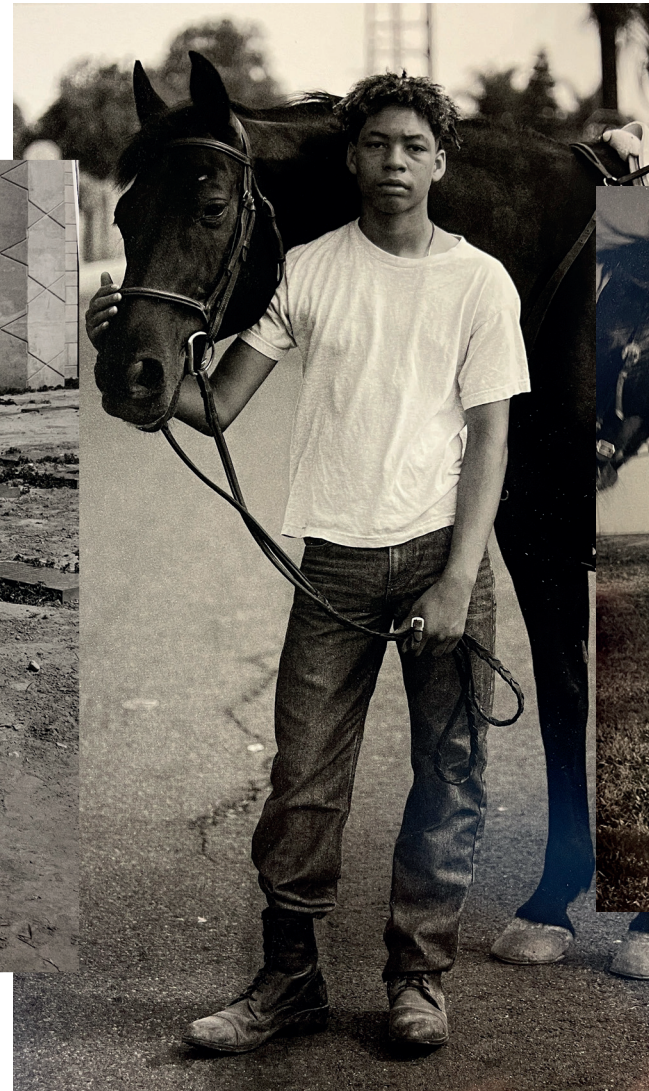
Urban



# The Compton Cowboys



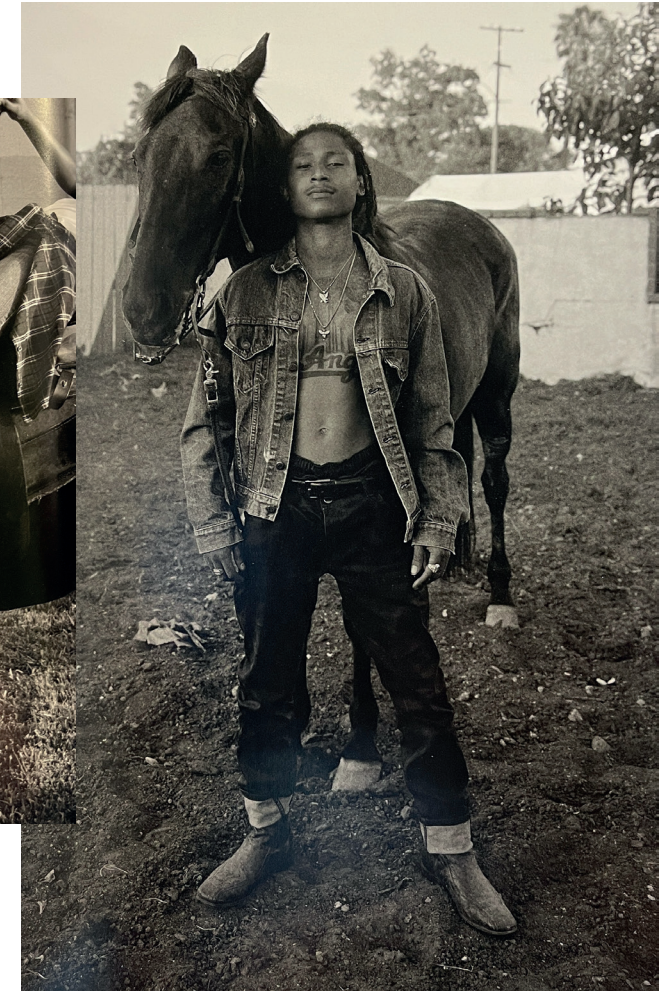
Thoughtful



Compassionate



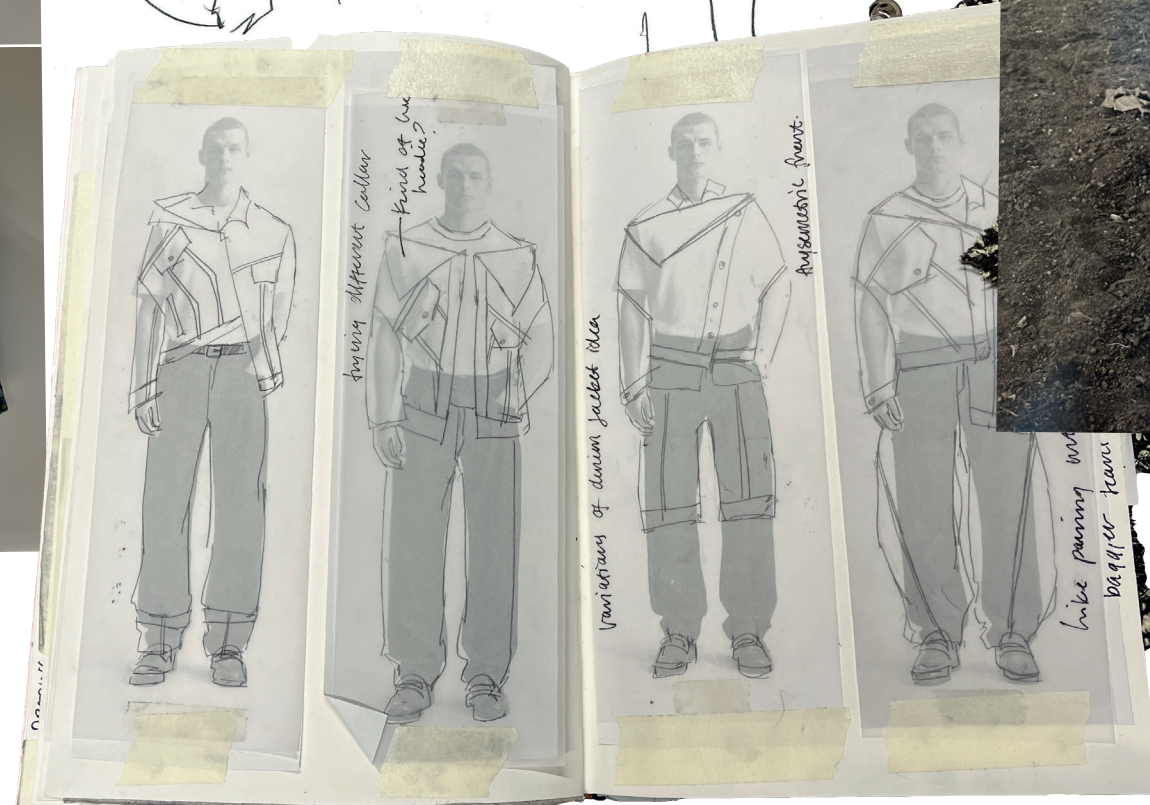
Vulnerable



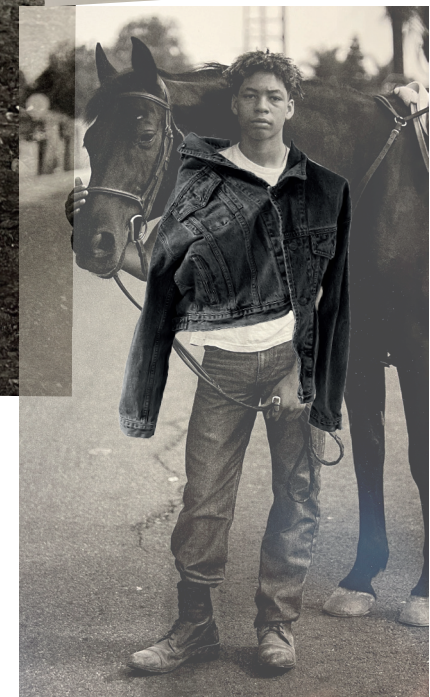
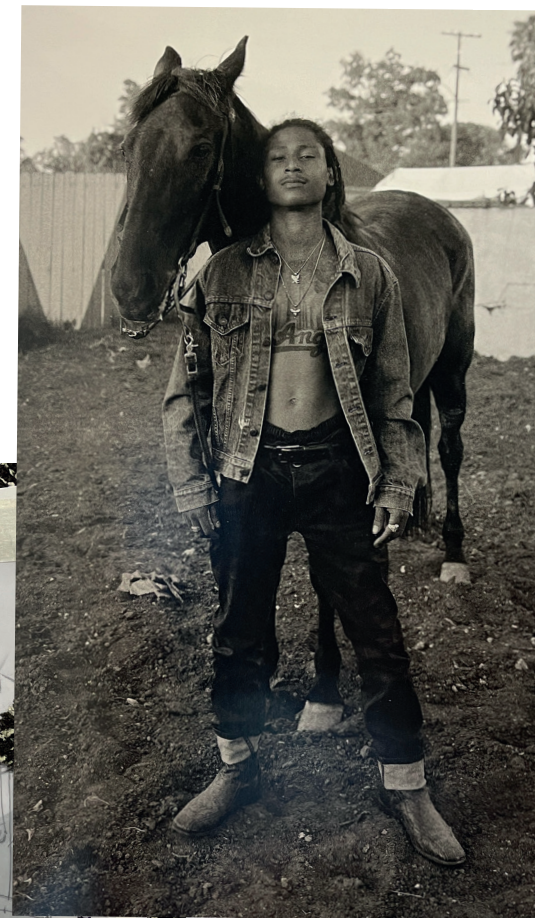
Unexpected



Draping a jacket  
on the stand to get  
twists & slouches



Subverting classics  
such as the denim jacket



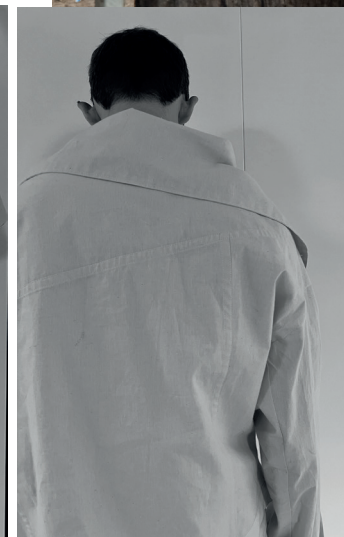
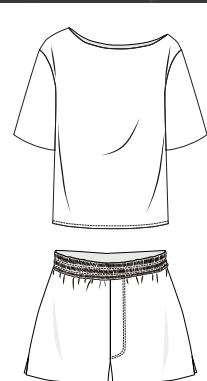
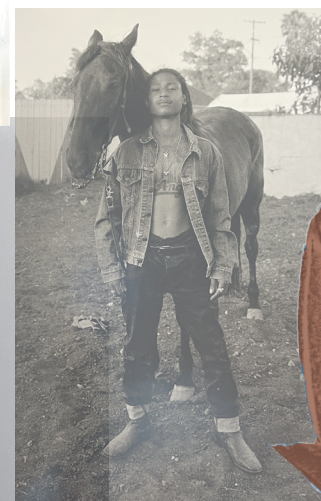




Boxer shorts  
Re-imagined in suede



Re-imagining the classic  
denim jacket



Asymmetrical details, slanted seams, exaggerated elements



## Materials

This design was originally created for my graduate collection and made up in pig suede, which unfortunately doesn't meet the competition requirements. However, since then, I've carried out further research specifically for this competition and became even more invested in the concept. I now want to recreate the piece using the most sustainable leather option available to me, something that aligns both with the Real Leather ethos and my own commitment to responsible design.

When choosing the material, longevity and quality were key factors, hence the appeal of leather. However, what happens to the garment at the end of its life is even more important to me. I want this piece to have as little impact on the environment as possible, so that it could be buried and naturally decompose without leaving any harmful trace. That means no chemicals. For this reason, I would source leather from British Pasture Leather, a company specialising in 100% vegetable-tanned leather sourced from traceable, regenerative farms in the UK. I am wanting to use a leather that is free from chrome tanning and exclusively tanned using vegetable methods. This ensures that when the garment eventually decomposes, it won't leach harmful chemicals into the soil, which is super important. Within this theme of having a garment that is fully decomposable I would stitch it using undyed, fine grade linen thread. I want to go with a linen thread for its strength but also for its natural properties.

Bringing back some of the denim the details, I will be using the original buttons that I used when the design was first made up, screw in shank buttons. Although these are metal, they are reusable due to being screw in. This means that when the garment is finished with the buttons can be removed, unlike in traditional denim, and be reused on another garment. My original garment was paired matching shorts and a hand crumpled taffeta t-shirt. I would make these along with the jacket if I was short-listed. The shorts would be out of the same material as the jacket and would have an elasticated waistband using a plastic-free elastic made from organic cotton and natural rubber. The t-shirt would be made out of 100% silk taffeta. Using all 100% natural materials ensures the aim of creating a garment/ look that is fully biodegradable and is not harmful on the environment.





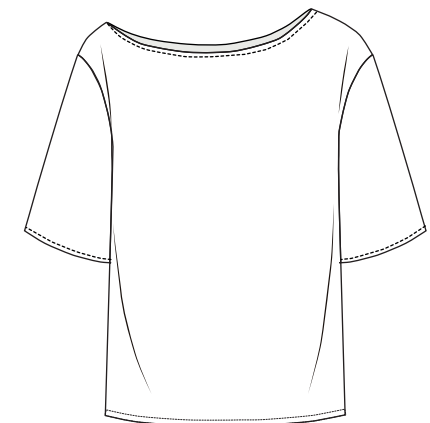
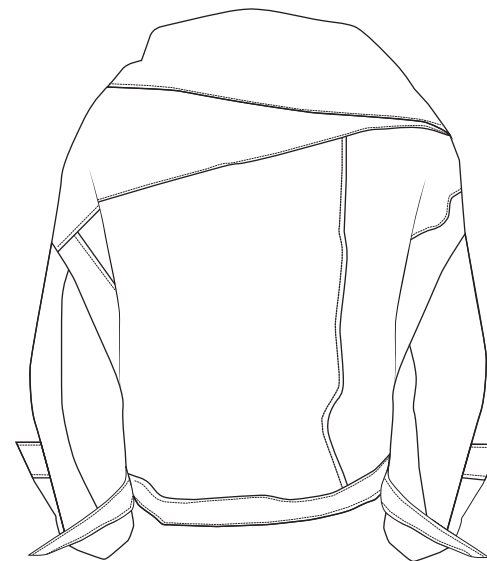
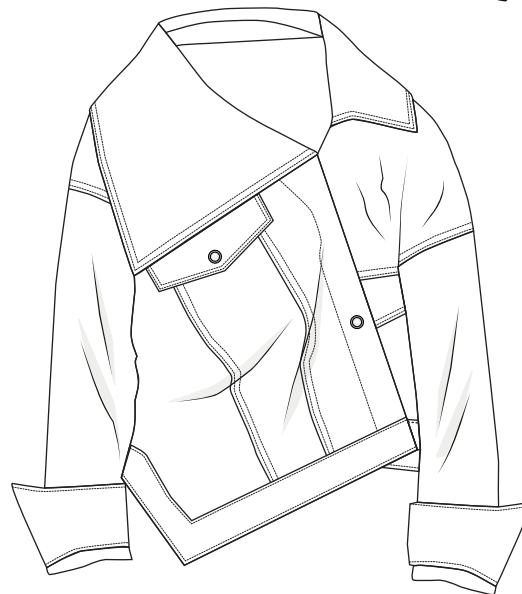
Design initially made up in Pig Suede for graduate collection.



Proposed version if made up using a chestnut cow hide from British Pasture Leather



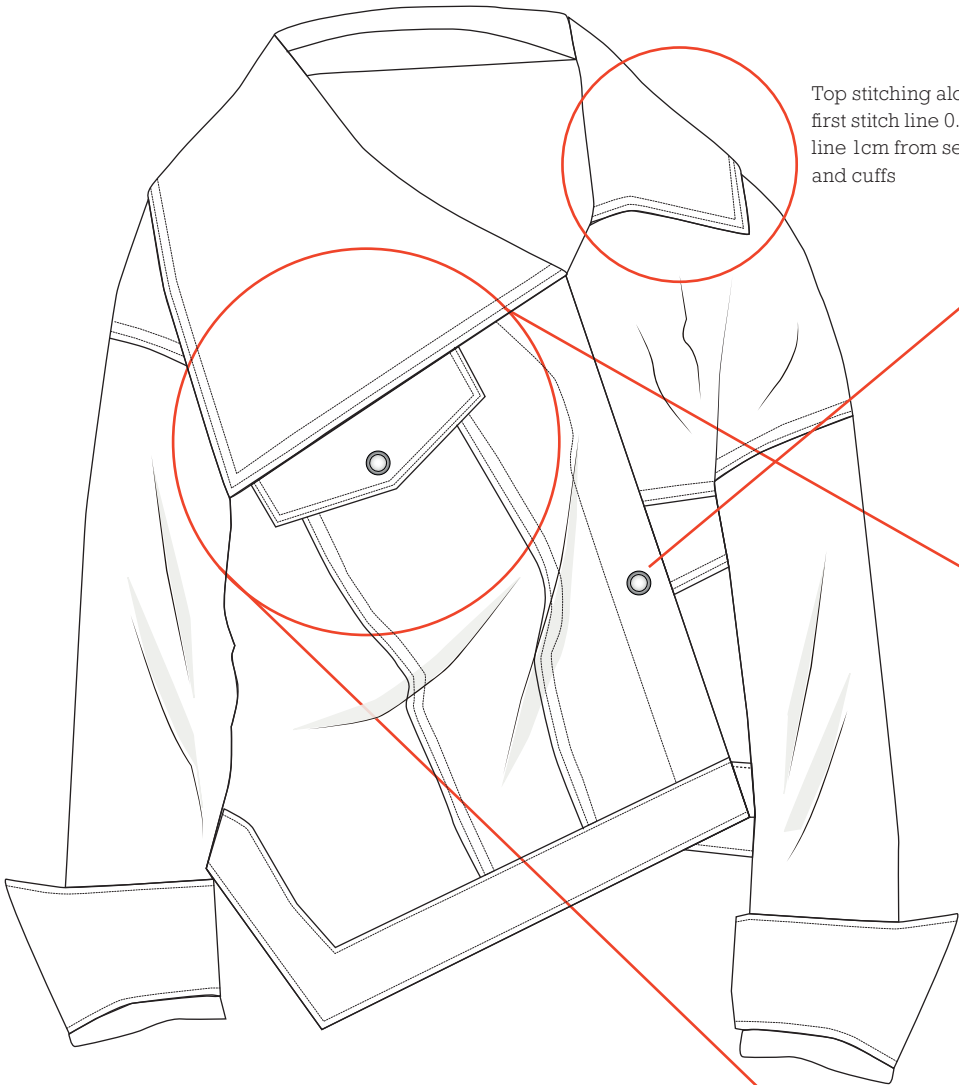






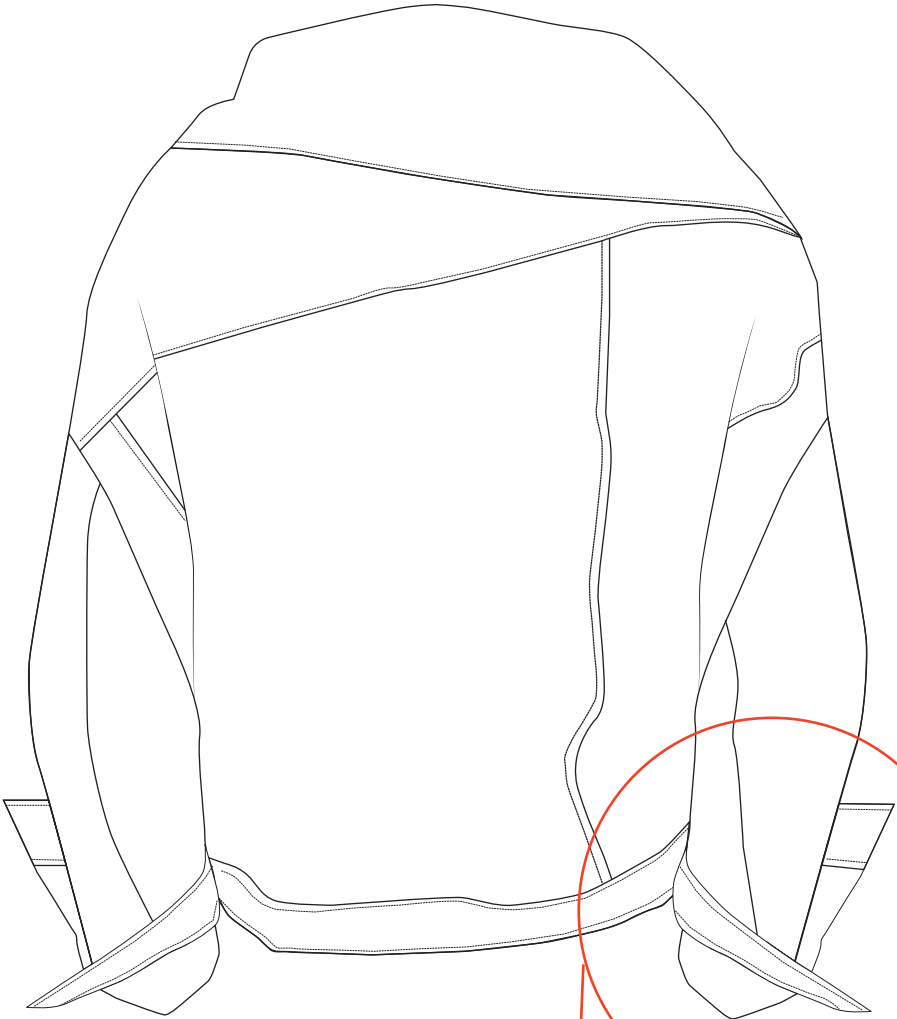
Design Specification Sheet – Construction Sheet

Construction Notes:

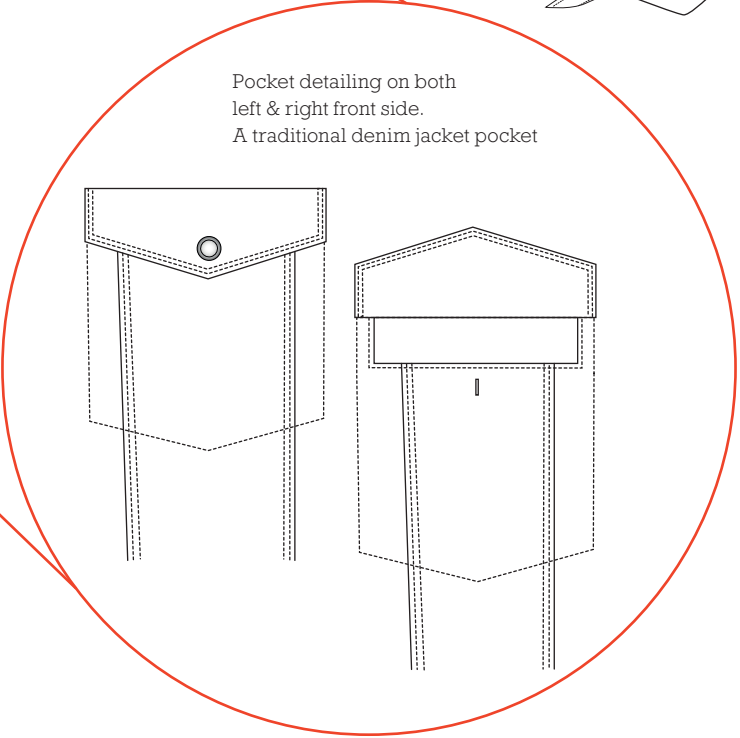


Top stitching along all seams,  
first stitch line 0.2mm from edge, second stitch  
line 1cm from seam edge. The same for the collar  
and cuffs

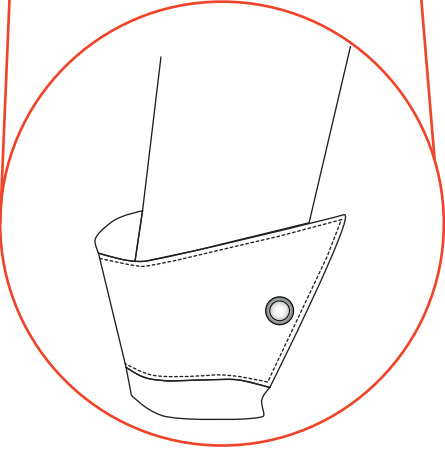
Jacket fastens with two buttons.  
One at the top under the collar, the  
second doubles as the fastening for the  
pocket as well as the jacket.



Cuffs held up with  
a singular screw on button



Pocket detailing on both  
left & right front side.  
A traditional denim jacket pocket



Season: SS 26	Collection Name: THE GENTLE MEN	Developed by: LILY LOAT
Designed By: LILY LOAT	Sketch Date: 07/05/25	Developed Date: 07/05/25