



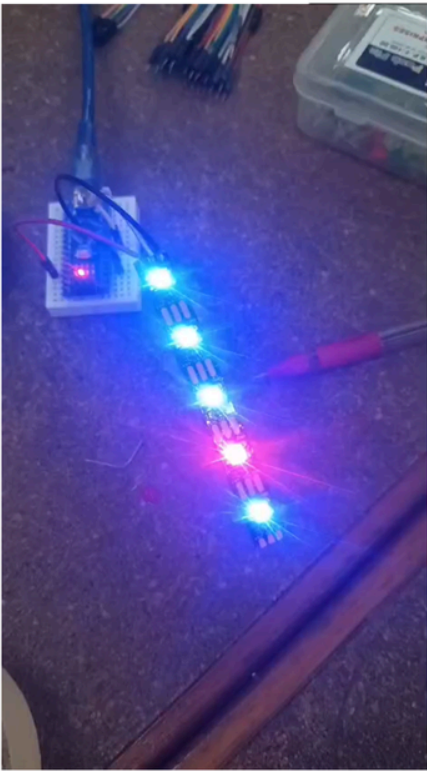
राष्ट्रीय डिज़ाइन संस्थान
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DESIGN

DESIGN PROJECT 1

WEARABLE ART

MENTORED BY : Mr. Varun Shashni





From Mechatronics Class

1. Even without using sensors or LEDs, the class shifted how I think about cause and response in design.
2. It helped me become aware of how a garment can interfere with the body, not just sit on it.
3. I started thinking of fabric as something that could behave—resist, restrict, or react—without the need for tech.
4. That mindset subtly shaped the tension and discomfort embedded in my forms.

From Calico Museum Visit

1. The visit reminded me that textiles carry memory and emotion, even when they appear silent.
2. The restraint and intentionality in the old pieces taught me to handle my concept of dissonance with care, not chaos.
3. It made me respect the quiet weight of garments—and pushed me to be more sensitive in how I construct conflict in my work.
4. The experience reminded me that even discomfort can be designed with grace.



INITIAL LEARNINGS



"Drag is about fantasy—it lets me become a version of myself that wouldn't exist in everyday life."
"I want to be a living piece of art."
- Violet chacki



- Drag is the beautiful dance between masculinity and femininity.
- Raja gemini



I love playing with gender in drag. I want to be feminine one day, masculine the next—why not both?
- Gigi Goode



Drag is not about fitting in—it's about creating your own universe.
- Nymphia Wind



My whole life I've been mixing gender, and drag is the ultimate F-you to gender.
-- Gottmik



Can drag truly prove that gender is just a curated illusion—one stitch, one silhouette, one transformation at a time?

Is clothing in drag a mask or a mirror? Does it hide the body, or does it expose a deeper truth about identity?

If drag can stretch, compress, or exaggerate the human form, does that mean our perception of gendered bodies is entirely artificial?

YOU ARE BORN NAKED AND REST IS DRAG

- RU PAUL

What happens when fabric, padding, and corsetry dictate the shape of a body rather than biology itself?

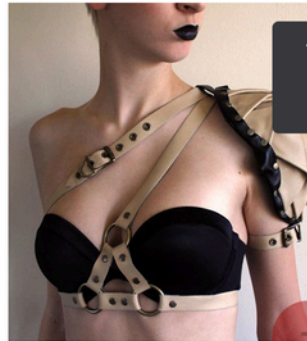
Is the body really the foundation of identity, or does clothing have the power to rewrite who we are?

What if the body is just a starting point, and fashion is the real force that shapes how we exist?



- SHOULDER Made broader or sharper (shoulder pads, epaulettes, military jackets)

Expansion
Confidence
Power Projection
Dominance



- CHEST Enlarged or flattened (push-up bras, chest binders, breastplates in drag)

Enhancement
Hyper-femininity
Sexual desirability
Exaggerated bustlines



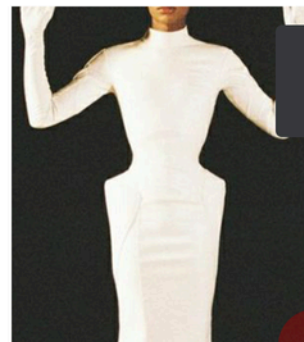
- HANDS Made delicate, covered, or elongated (gloves, nail extensions)

Aristocracy
Luxury
Status
Functionality lost



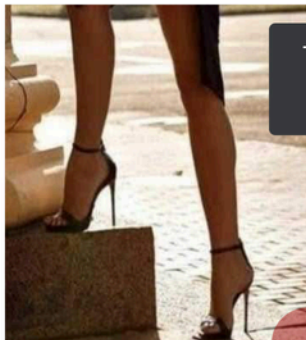
- WAIST Made unnaturally small (corsets, shapewear, belts)

Sculpting posture
Wealth and discipline
Unrealistic body



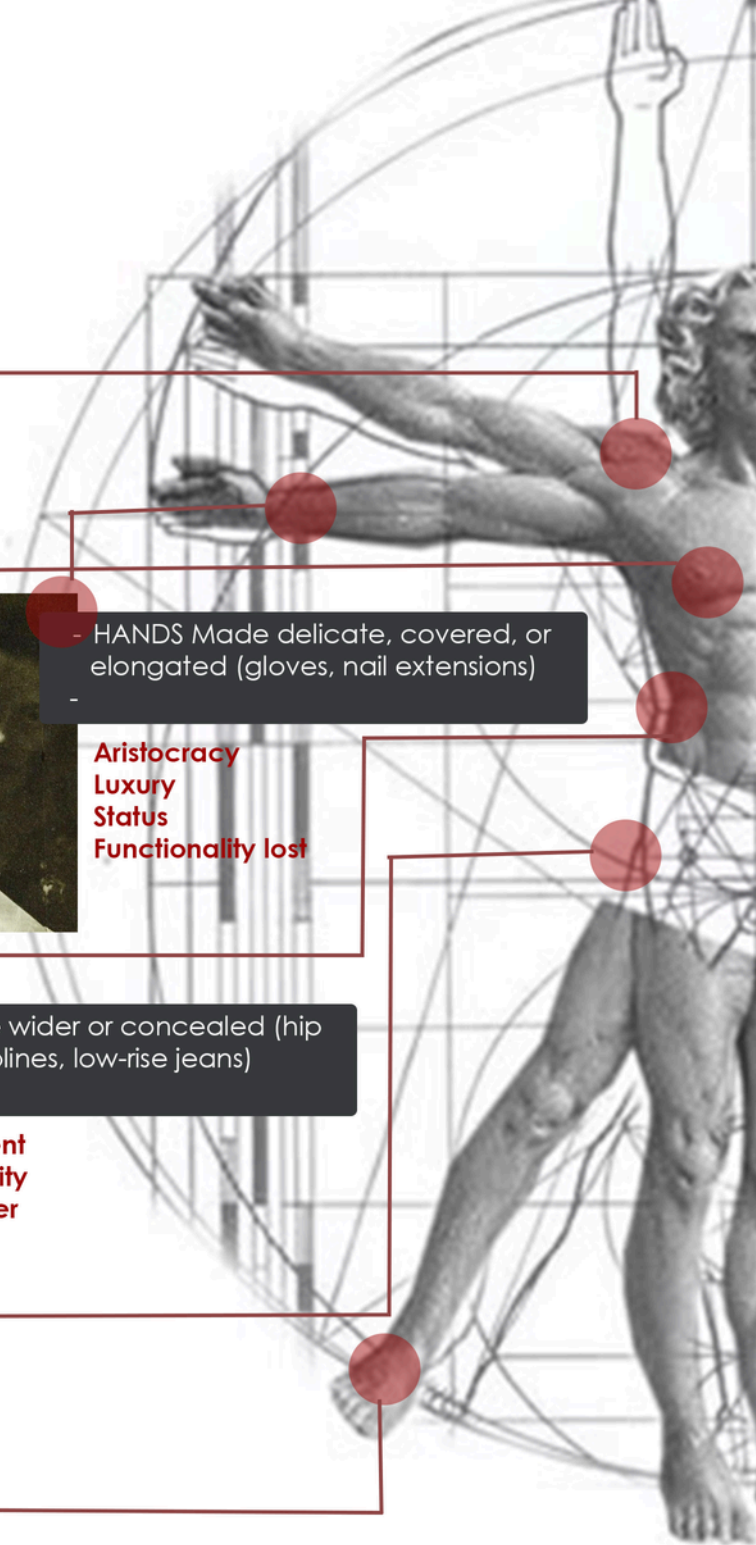
- HIPS Made wider or concealed (hip pads, crinolines, low-rise jeans)

Enlargement
Signify fertility
Waist eraser



- FEET Forced into unnatural shapes or made taller (heels, foot binding, pointed shoes)

Elongation
Enforces elegance
Status symbol

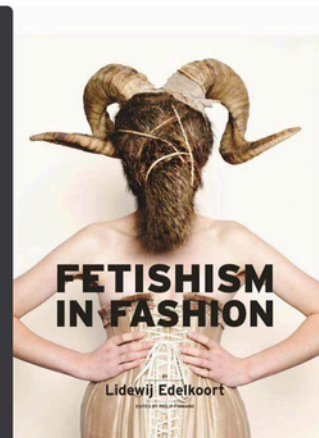




●
The **act of dressing** becomes
an exercise in
submission or control,
forcing the **wearer** to
negotiate between
pain and **pleasure**,
dominance and **vulnerability**.

which is **also** seen in **FETISHISM**

- Fetishism moves beyond its traditional associations with sexuality and instead delves into the psychological, cultural, and emotional forces that shape our relationship with clothing.
- Lidewij Edelkoort (Fetishim in Fashion)



Fetishism is not limited to Sexuality

it is also about how clothing disciplines, seduces, and
Shapes Identity

- "Fashion's obsession with fetish is about power - controlling oneself, commanding attention, and shaping the body."
- Lidewij Edelkoort

- Fetishism does not solely emerge from suffering; it emerges from desire, from the thrill of the unattainable, from the joy of excess."
- Gilles Lipovetsky, The Empire of Fashion

**Do we control what we wear,
or does what we wear control us?**



Code Noir – Black as a Fetish of Power and Submission
"Black is the color of authority, mystery, and seduction. It creates distance while inviting desire." – Lidewij Edelkoort



Elevation as Fetish – The Power of Being Raised

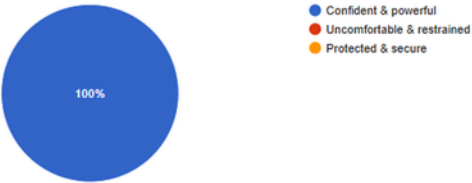
Height is the ultimate symbol of aspiration, from platform shoes to skyscrapers. To be elevated is to be revered." – Lidewij Edelkoort



Fish Fetish – Attraction of Slippery, Unpredictable Beauty
The fish is the embodiment of transformation—wet, fluid, and ever-elusive." – Lidewij Edelkoort



When you wear an outfit that fits tightly or restricts movement (e.g., corsets, bodycon dresses, heavy jackets), how does it make you feel?



When you think of "comfort" in clothing, which materials come to mind?



If clothing could dictate your posture or movement, would you feel:



How do you feel about clothing that alters your natural posture (e.g., high heels, shoulder pads, padded coats)?



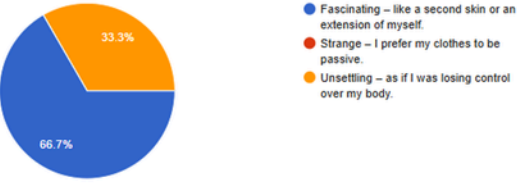
If you had to describe a material that makes you feel vulnerable, which would it be?



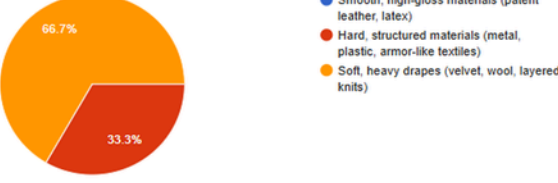
Do you believe apparel should challenge comfort, or should it always enhance ease and wearability?



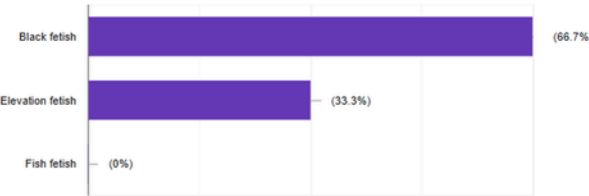
If a piece of clothing reacted to your movements (e.g., expanded, tightened, or shifted as you walked), how would you perceive it?



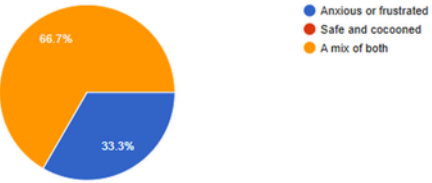
What kind of textures do you associate with power and control?



Any of these sounds familiar



Have you ever felt "trapped" in clothing (e.g., wet clothes, tangled fabric, stiff materials)? How did that make you feel?



Would you feel exposed or protected in a garment made of rigid, structured materials (e.g., metal, molded plastics, armor-like forms)?



If you had to design an outfit that makes someone feel powerful but slightly uneasy, what materials or structures would you use?

Velvet with combination of organza

using sharply tailored, structured pieces made from stiff, heavy materials like wool or leather can create a sense of authority and control. such as tight corsetry or bulky, awkward shapes, can further enhance the feeling of unease

Metal

How can clothing shape, control, or distort the body's perception and experience?

Visual Distortion
Forced Movement
Cognitive Tension
Shape Shift
Control
Expression
Romanticism



Garments can function as armor, home, exoskeletons, or prisons—fashion that unsettles, restricts, and disrupts the wearer's autonomy plays with the boundaries of body and identity

- Caroline Evans, "Fashion at the Edge"

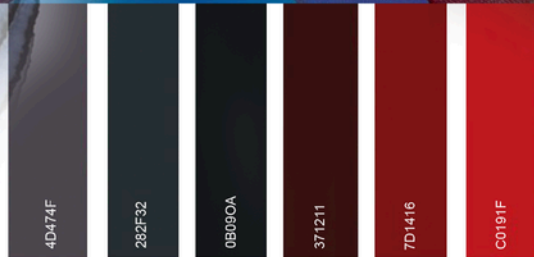


The body is a site of performance, structured by external forces—what we wear does not conform to us, but constructs us.

-Judith Butler, "Gender Trouble"

FASCINATED
ADMIRATION
EMPOWERED
CURIOUS
PLAYFUL

VIEWER



WEARER

POWER
VULNERABLE
UNSETTLING
TENSE
INTIMACY



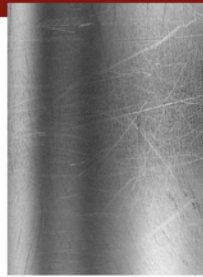
MATERIALS



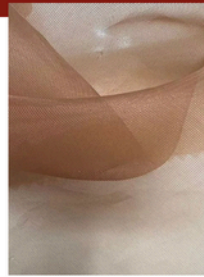
Latex



Leather



Metal



Mesh



Organza



Boning



Cotton

- Control, submission, seduction, and power, which can be expressed through material choices that heighten sensory experiences and exaggerate bodily perception

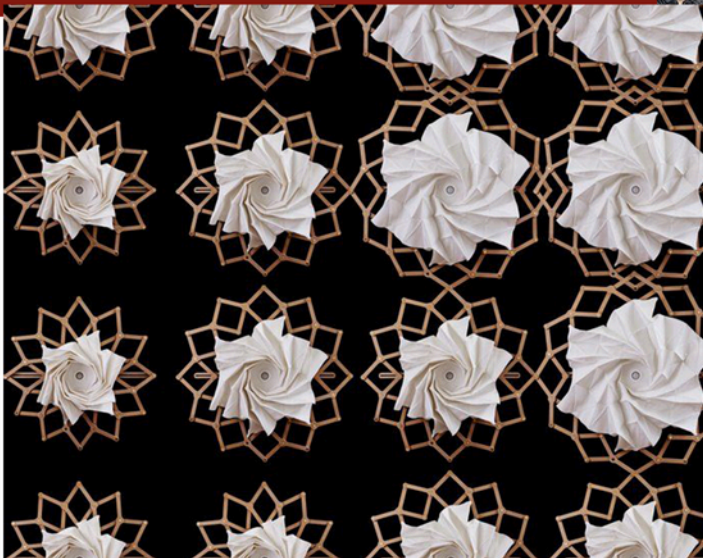
Micro Pneumatic Macro Structures

TECHNIQUES

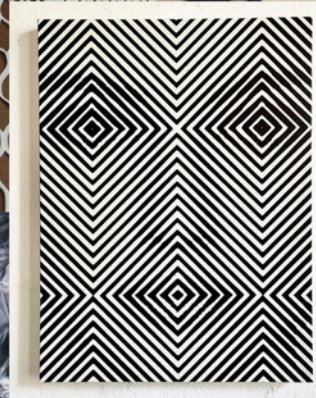
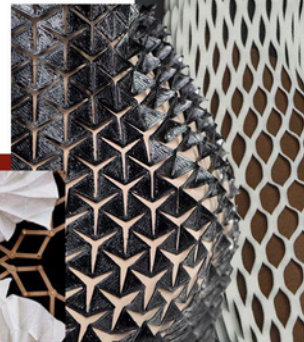
- Plays with contrasts—tight and loose, hidden and shown, comfort and pain using techniques that change how we see and feel the body

Laser cutting

Knitting



Origami



Optical Illusion



Padding

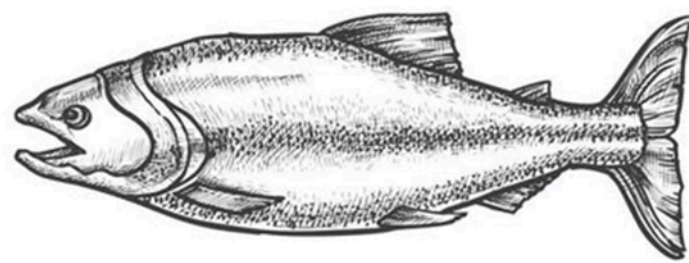


Leather Moulding



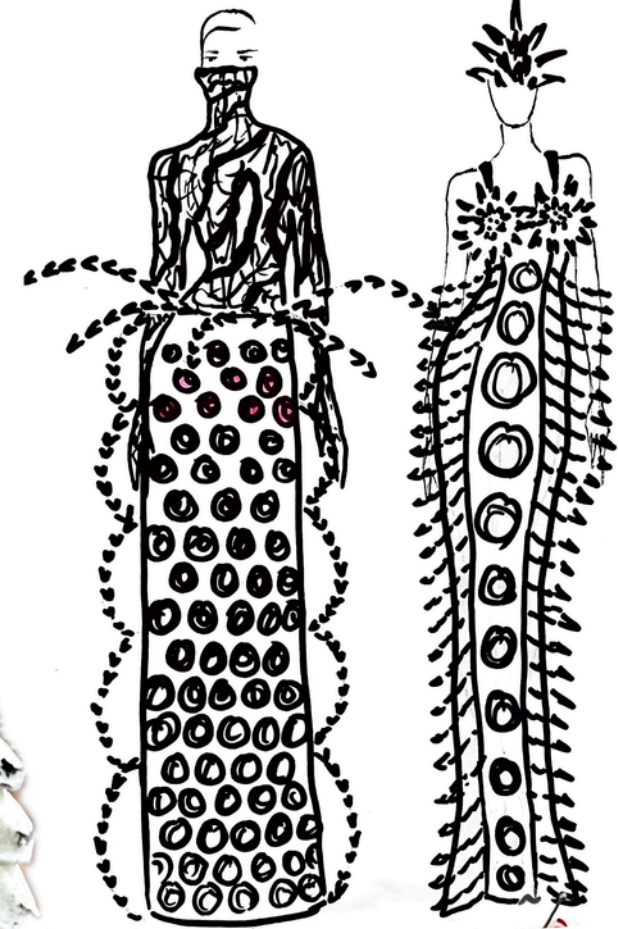
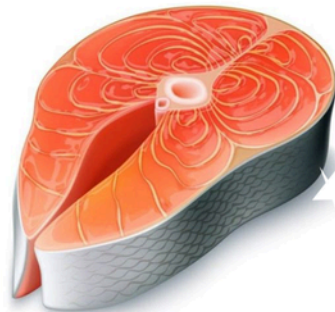
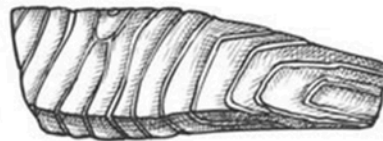
Lacing





A single rectangular piece, folded into form - a cross-section of a fish.

When multiplied and stacked, the structure shape-shifts from straight to sinuous



Shape shift

Like emotion layered in the body - at first linear, then swelling into a wave - this form becomes a spine, a defense, a song of silent motion.

It is the contradiction of wearable art: built from logic, but felt through instinct.

The woven pattern allows the form to stretch, compress, and curve, creating a dynamic, shape-shifting surface.

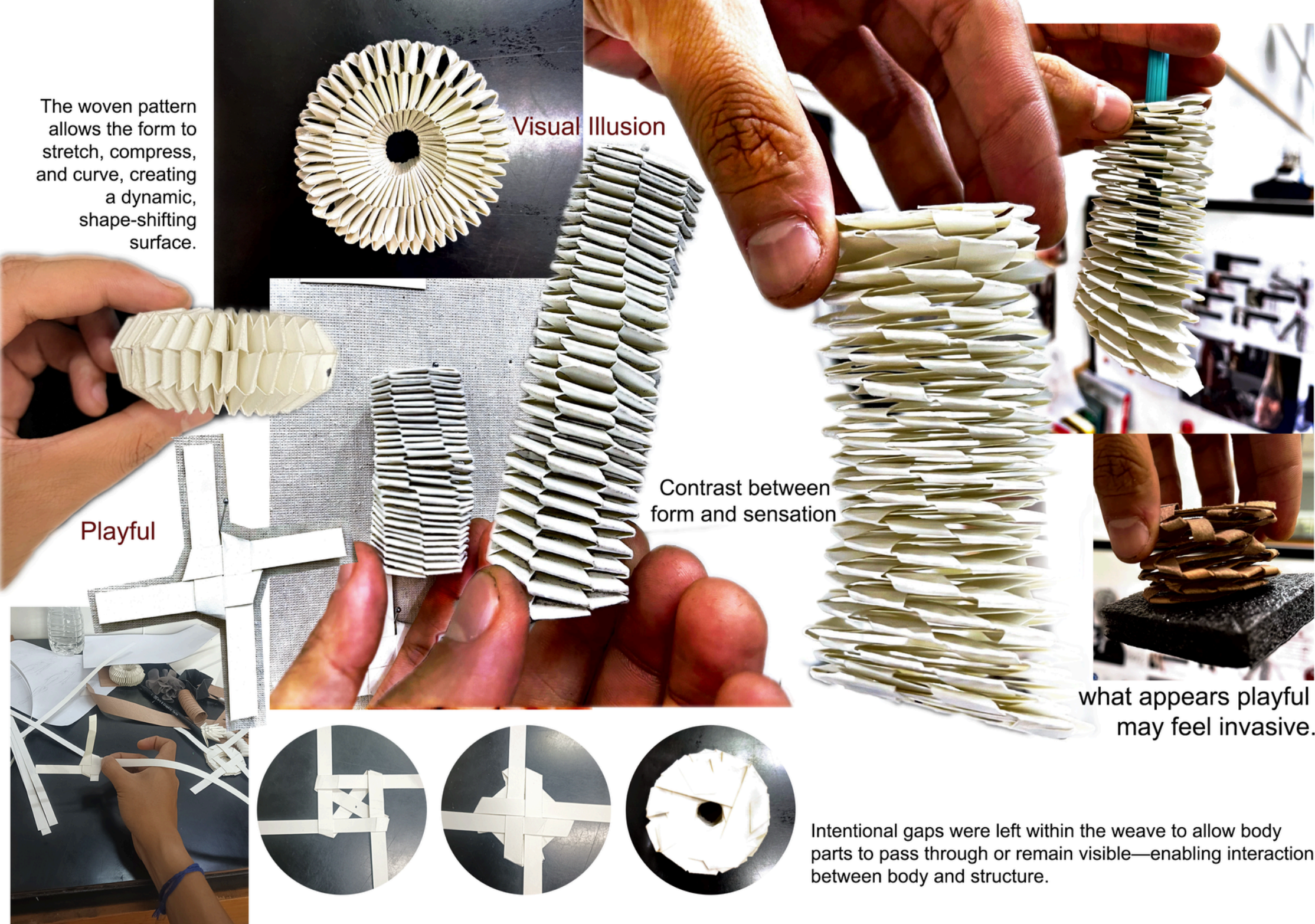
Visual Illusion

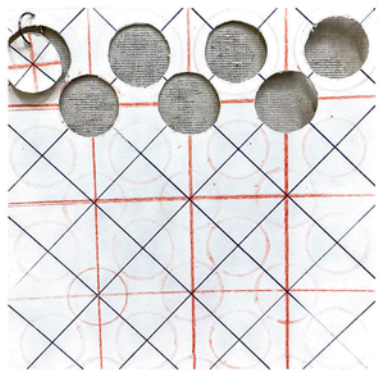
Playful

Contrast between form and sensation

what appears playful may feel invasive.

Intentional gaps were left within the weave to allow body parts to pass through or remain visible—enabling interaction between body and structure.





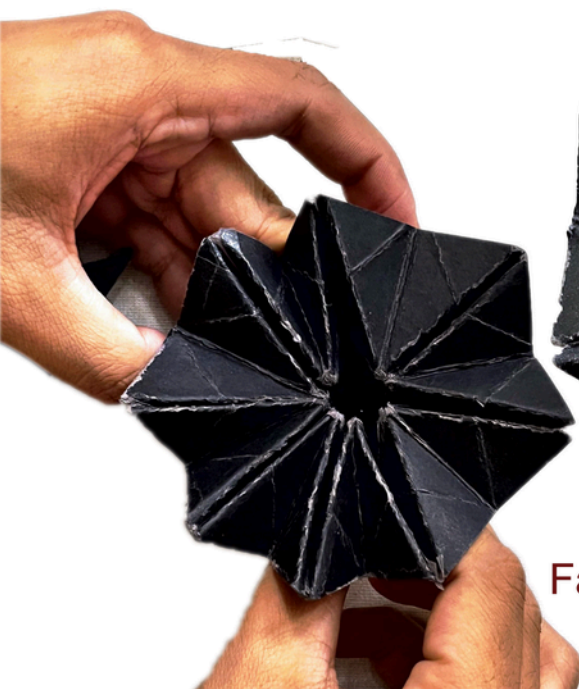
Developed a custom sequence system: circular pieces precisely cut and rejoined using metal rings, creating intentional distortions in surface continuity



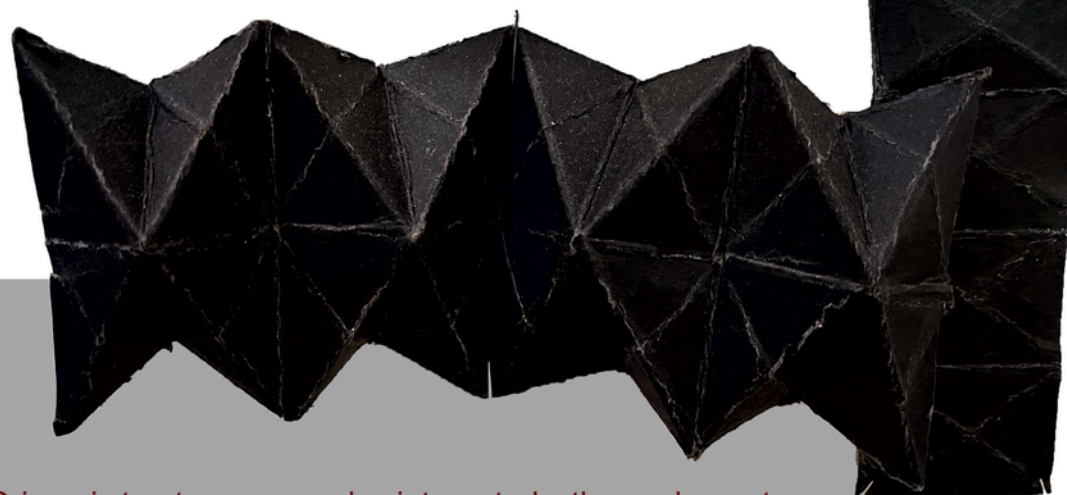
Playful



soft internal padding was added—not for comfort, but to amplify discomfort, exaggerating the sense of pressure or protrusion.

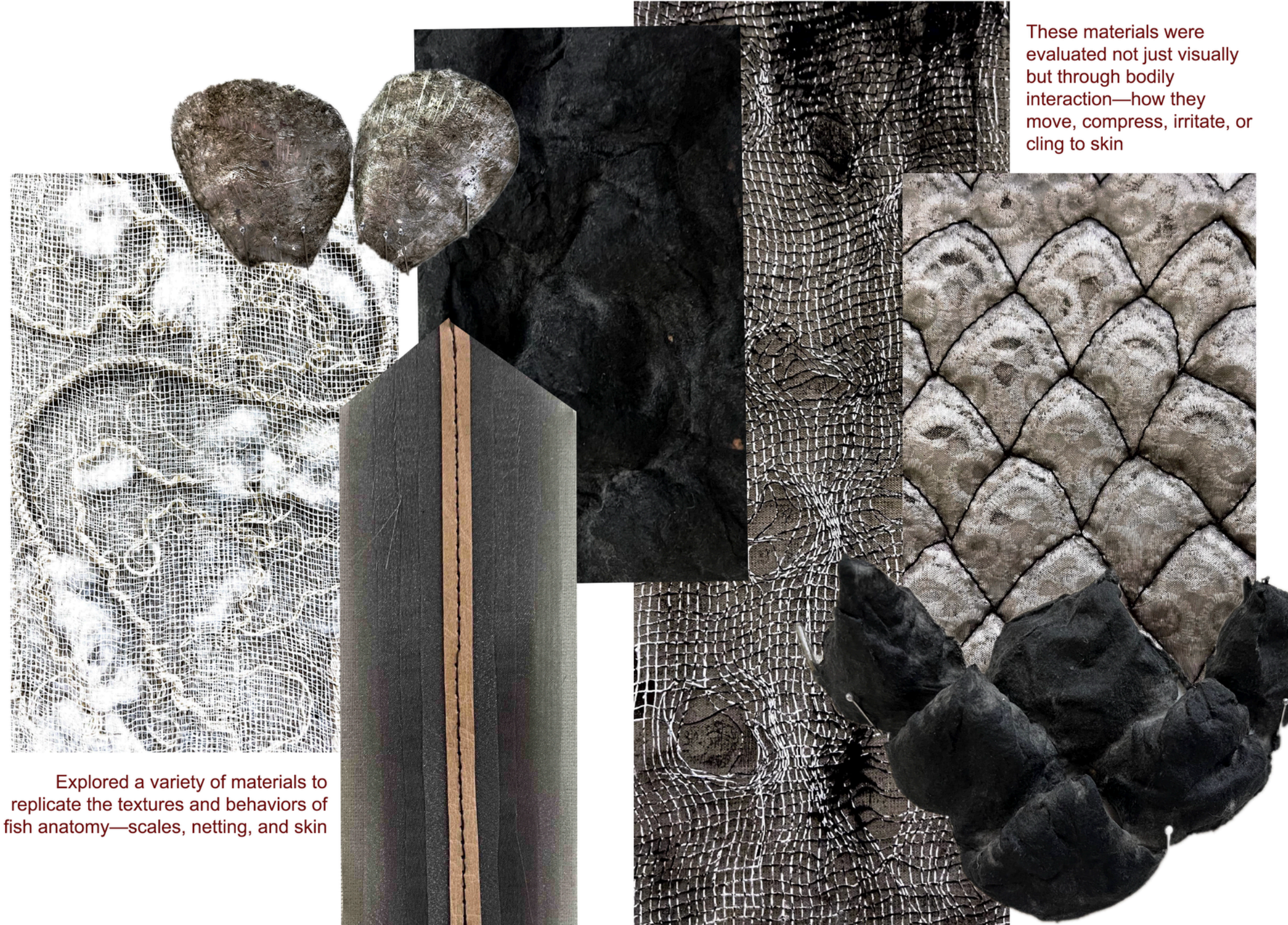


Fascinating



Origami structures were also integrated—these elements can open and close, responding to movement or force, reinforcing the idea of emotional flux and controlled exposure

These materials were evaluated not just visually but through bodily interaction—how they move, compress, irritate, or cling to skin

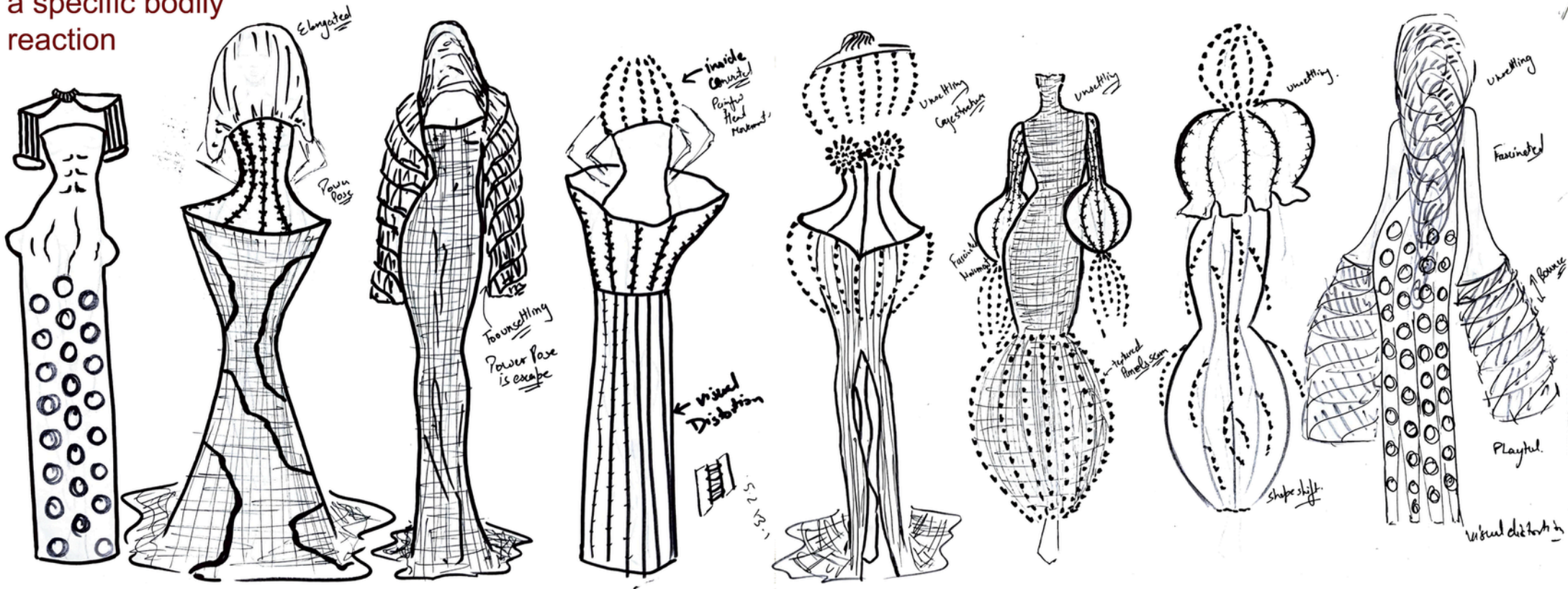
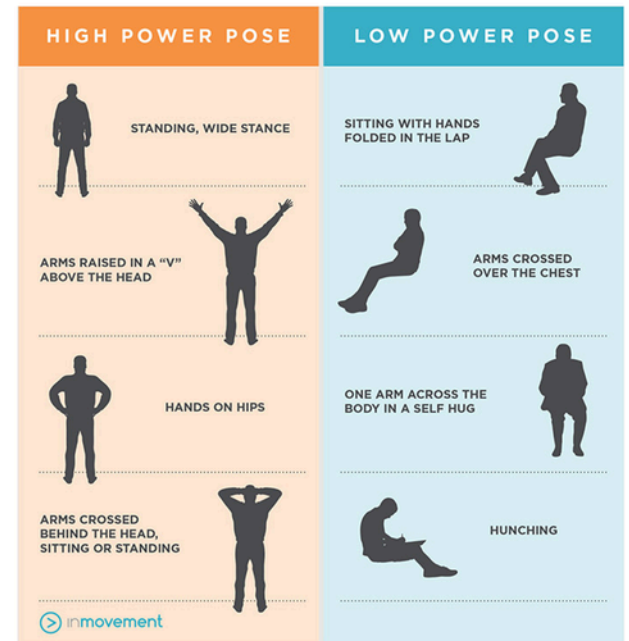


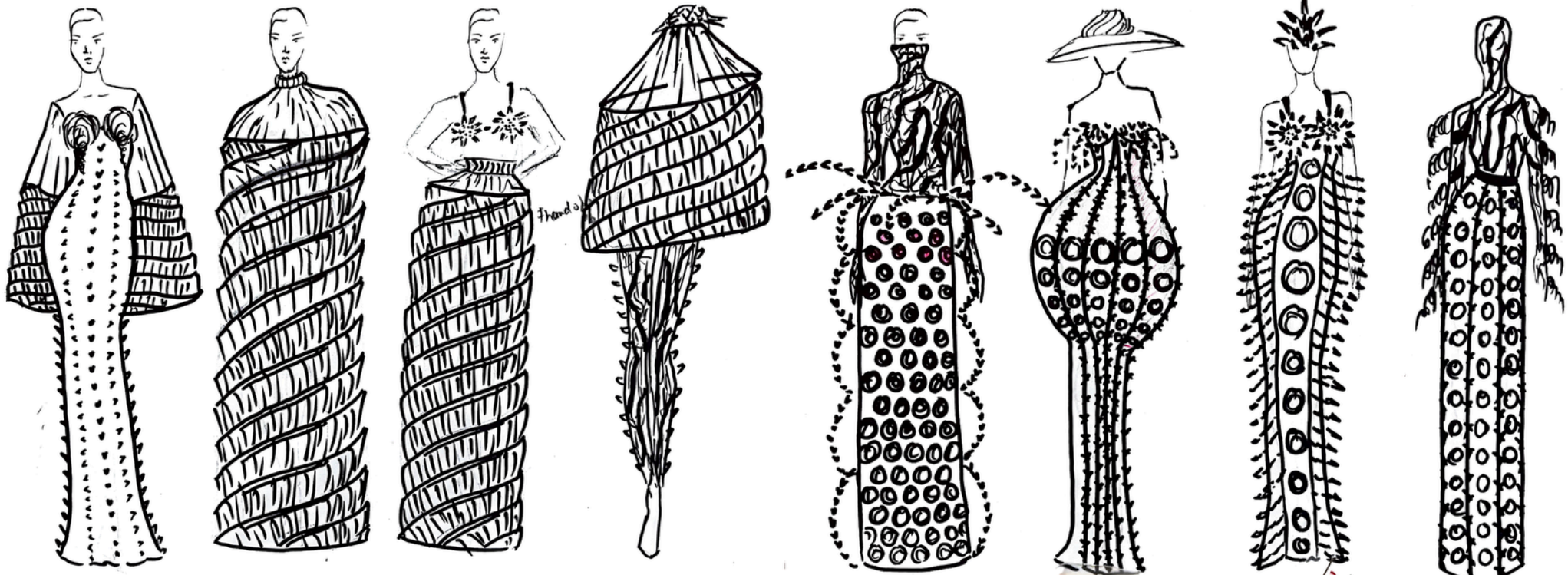
Explored a variety of materials to replicate the textures and behaviors of fish anatomy—scales, netting, and skin

Silhouette exploration

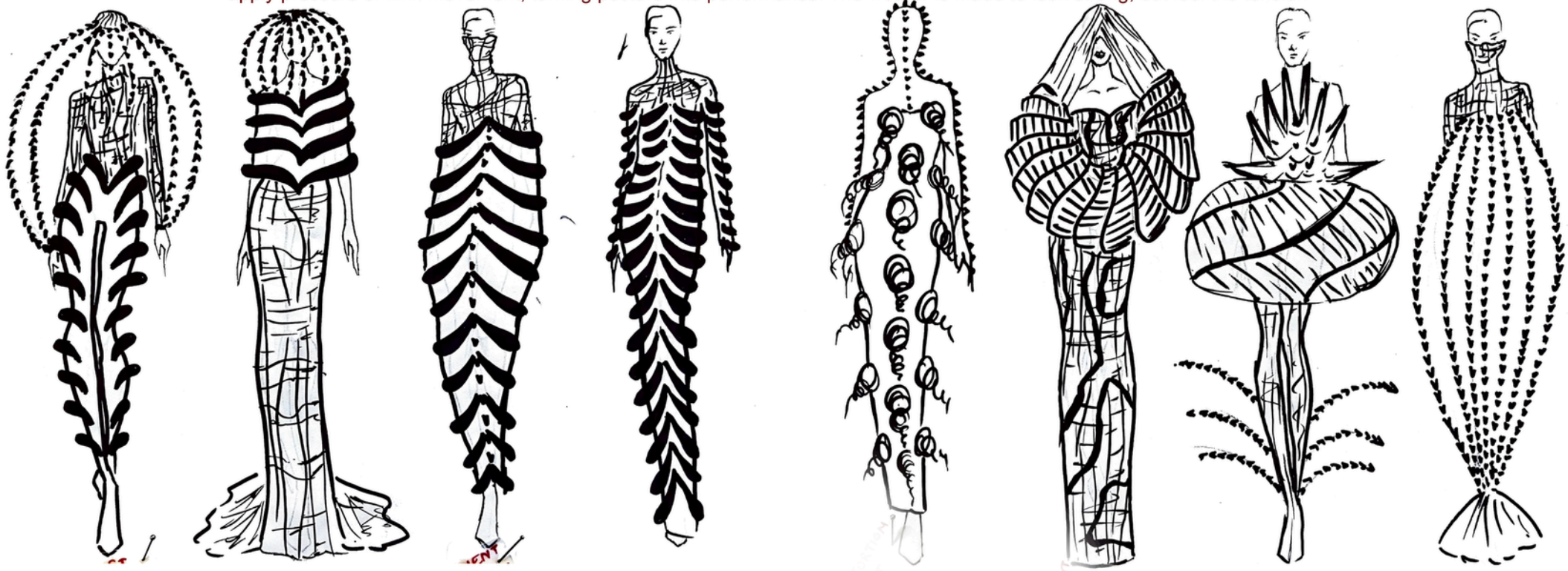
The silhouettes in this project were developed by integrating the three core fetishistic explorations—tactile texture, physical restriction, and strategic exposure. They are not designed for ease, but to invoke a specific bodily reaction

Based on informal interviews, many people described feeling powerful in postures such as the “Wonder Woman pose”—with hands placed firmly on the waist, chest open, and stance grounded. Drawing from this, the silhouettes are constructed to subtly force or encourage the wearer into these positions, using tailored arm placements, structural protrusions

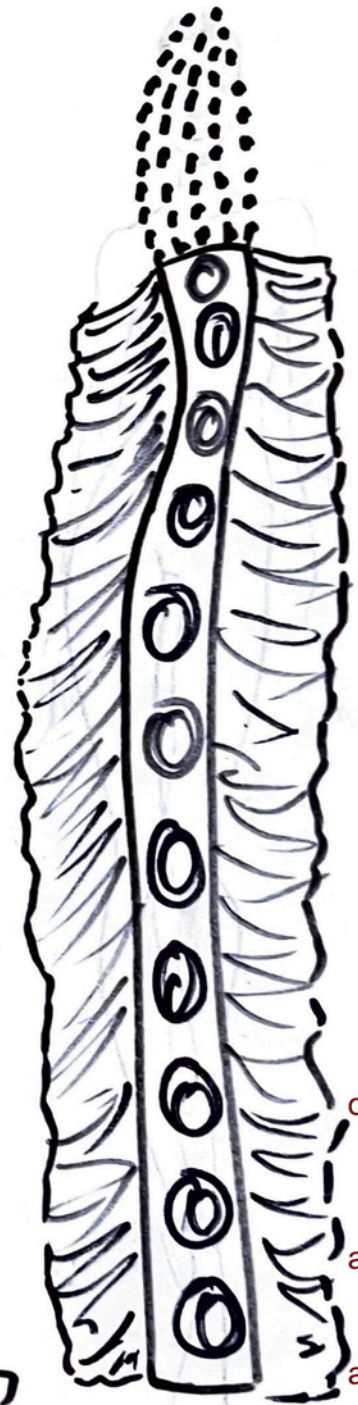
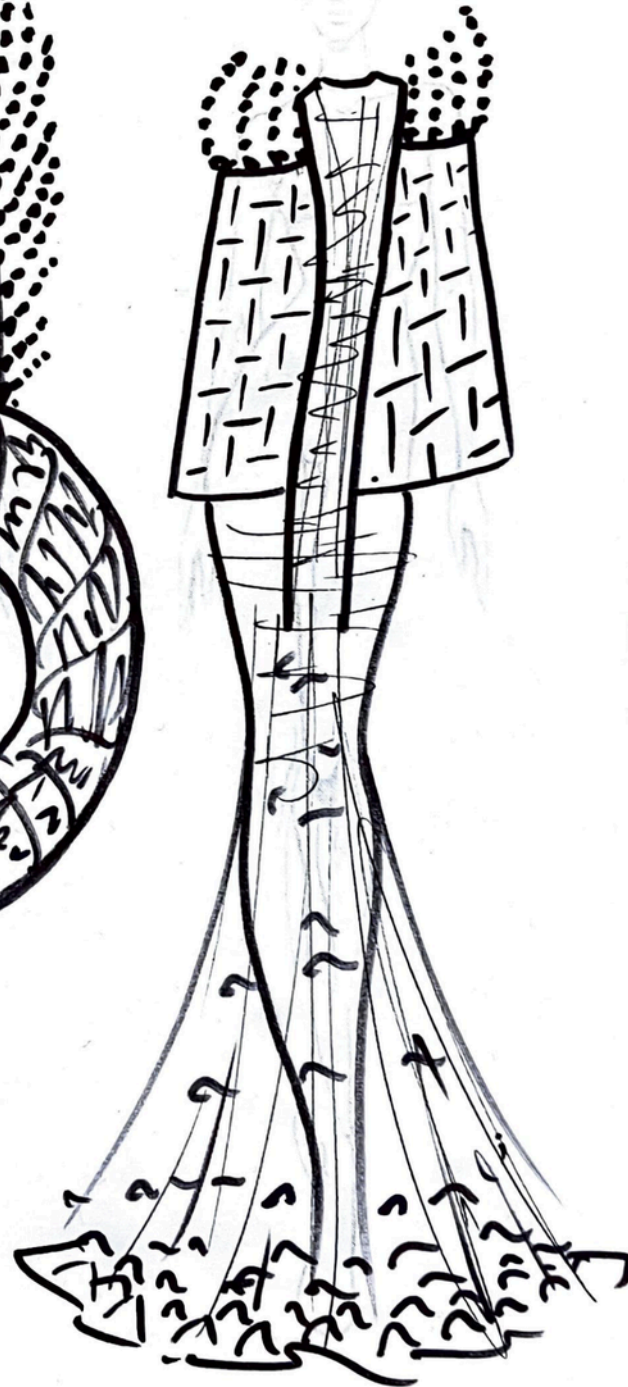
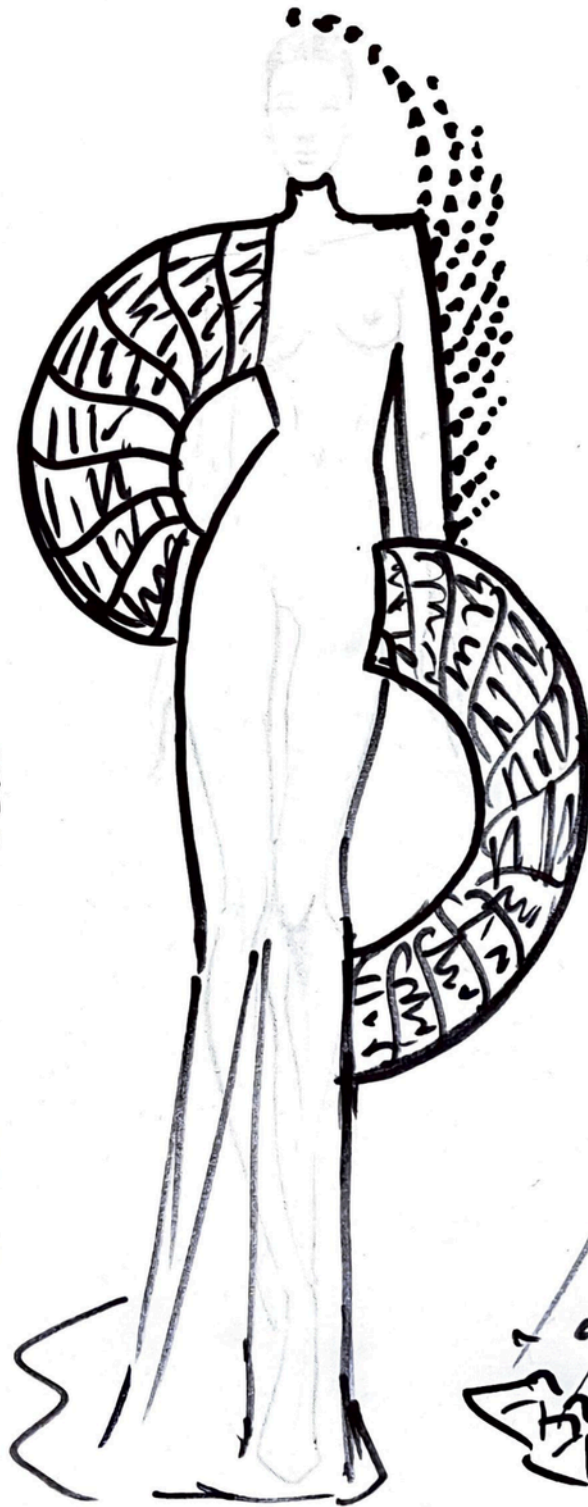
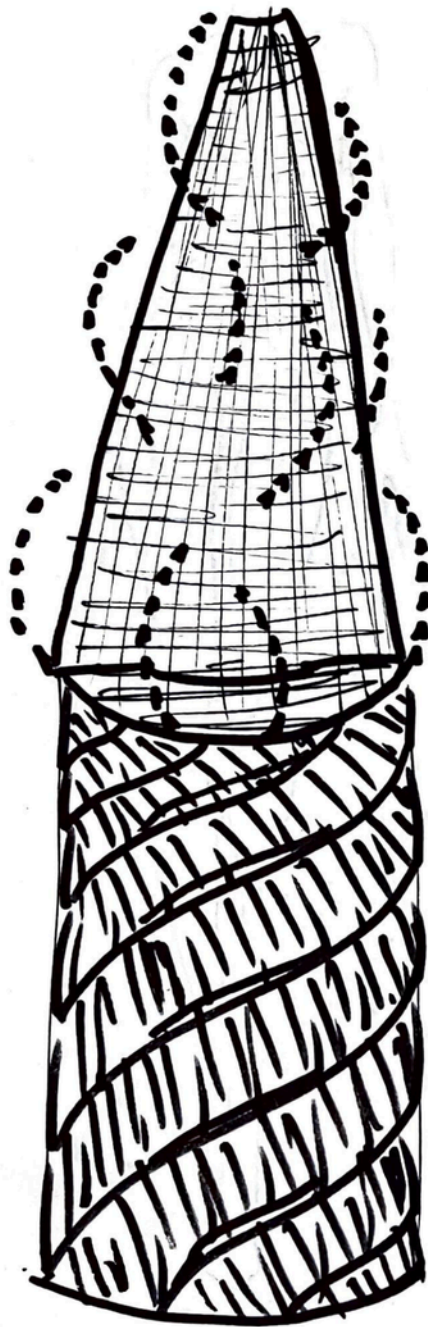




Silhouette are intentionally constructed to guide the body into such positions. However, this sense of empowerment is layered with subtle discomfort, as structural constraints apply pressure or limit movement, turning posture into performance. The wearer is made to look strong, but feel the tension



STANDING
WIDE STANCE



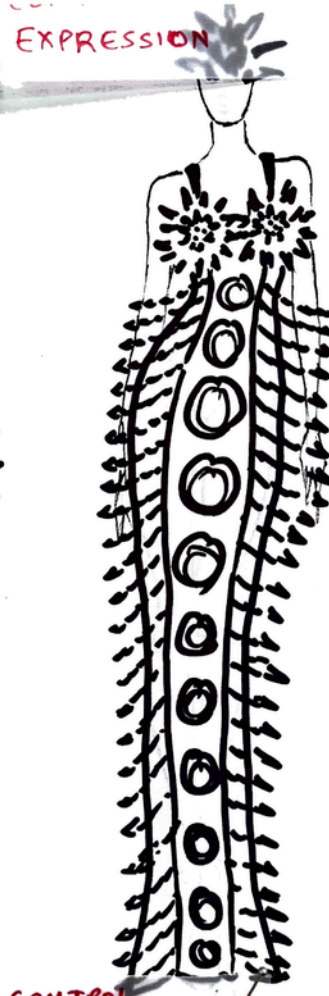
This
orchestrated
posture
projects
confidence
and strength
outwardly,
but comes
at a physical
cost.



SHAPE SHIFT
FASCINATED
UNSETTLING
VISUAL DISTORTION
PLAYFUL



VISUAL DISTORTION
SHAPE SHIFT
POWER
UNSETTLING
EXPRESSION



CONTROL
VISUAL DISTORTION
UNSETTLING
FORCED MOVEMENT



SHAPE SHIFT
POWER
FASCINATED
VISUAL DISTORTION



FORCED MOVEMENT
VISUAL DISTORTION
FASCINATED
CONTROL
EXPRESSION



VISUAL DISTORTION
SHAPE SHIFT
UNSETTLING
POWER
PLAYFUL



EXPRESSION
FORCED MOVEMENT
CONTROL
UNSETTLING
FASCINATED

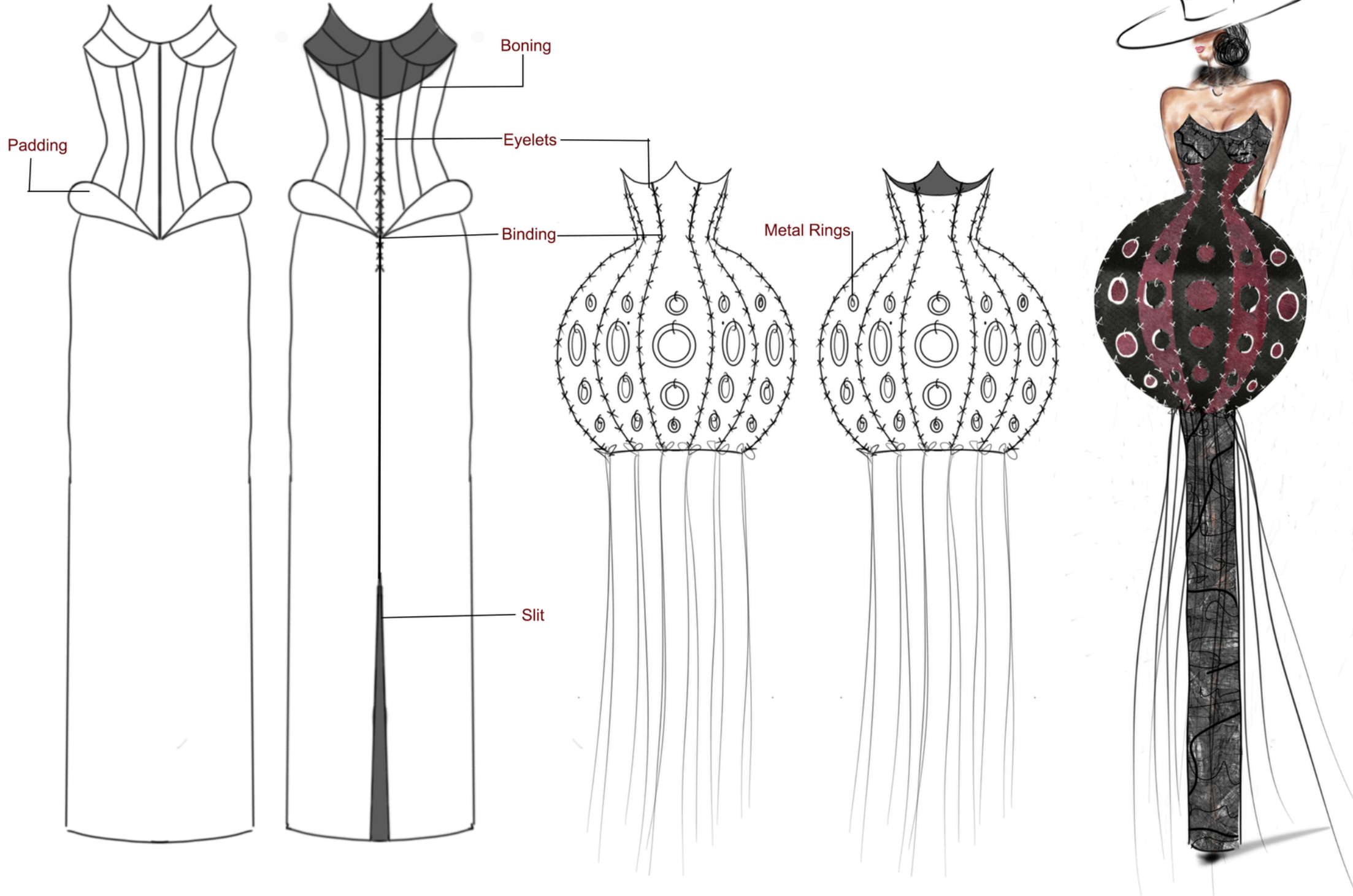
After a series of explorations, I began to refine and tone down the silhouettes, focusing on forms that best aligned with the emotional and visual language established in my mood and inquiry boards. I filtered each silhouette through the lens of my core keywords—curious, unsettling, powerful, distorted, and tactile—to arrive at forms that felt intentional rather than excessive

WHERE POWER HURTS



“The cost of being seen.”

Ensemble 1: WAISTBOUND



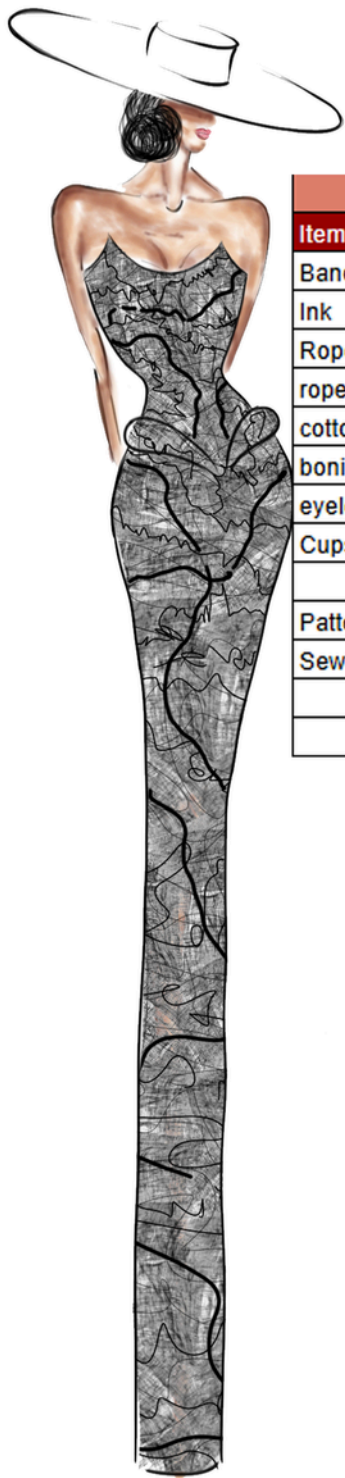


Construction process



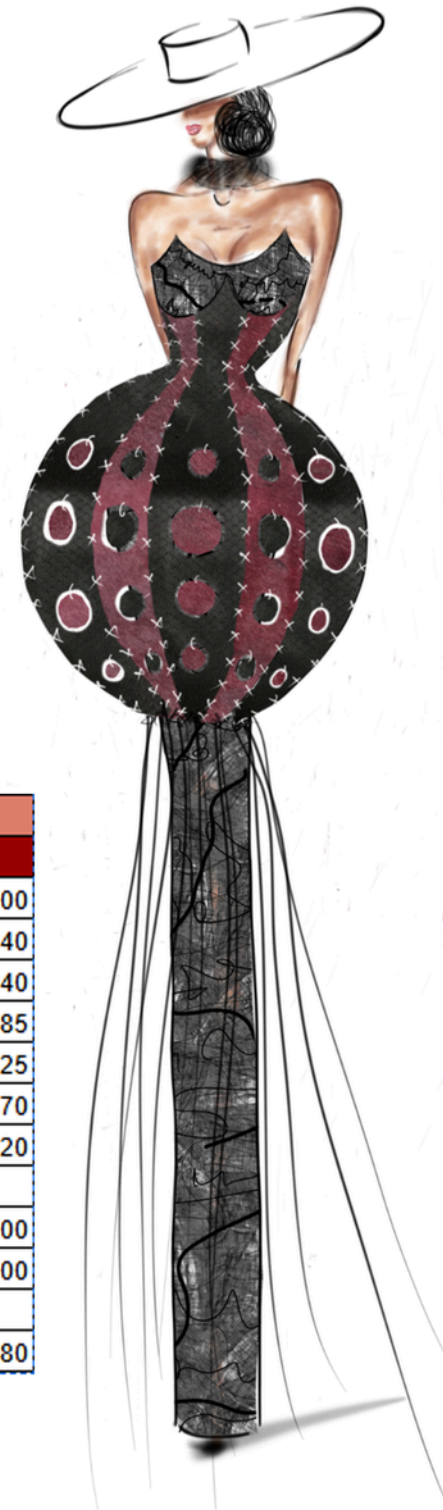






Bandage gown			
Item	Quantity	Price	Total
Bandage	15	20	300
Ink	4	60	240
Ropes	1	100	100
rope size mini	1	120	120
cotton	4	35	140
boning	3	60	180
eyelets	30	0.5	15
Cups	1	30	30
Pattern making		500	500
Sewing		2000	2000
		Total	3625

Corset			
Item	Quantity	Price	Total
Leather 1	2	600	1200
Leather 2	1	240	240
Canvas	2	120	240
Leather fevicol	1	185	185
Eyelets	250	0.5	125
Rings	1	70	70
Edge ink	1	120	120
Pattern making		500	500
Sewing		2000	2000
		Total	2180



This wearable art piece investigates the internal dissonance between what is felt and what is shown - where stability is performed, but discomfort is lived. The garment emerges from the idea that people often carry conflict silently, and in doing so, learn to wear tension like fabric.

The final piece distorts the body, not to dramatize it but to externalize emotional imbalance. Forms bulge, slant, and interrupt natural posture - fabric wraps and restricts in a way that denies ease, mimicking how dissonance shows up in the body as restraint, stiffness, or defense. Elements that appear voluminous are not always functional, and where the body is expected to rest, it is instead resisted.

In the final photographs, this tension comes through clearly. The silhouette becomes a psychological space - disjointed, asymmetrical, and sometimes claustrophobic. There's an intentional imbalance in how weight, shape, and exposure are distributed, suggesting a person caught between contradicting roles or feelings. The piece doesn't scream discomfort - it wears it quietly.





A handcrafted leather mask, possibly a traditional Indian mask, featuring a red and black color scheme. The mask is adorned with white lacing and has several circular cutouts, some of which have red and black discs hanging from them. The mask is positioned against a white background.

THANK YOU

Ashish Kumar Panchal