

Project Title: Soaked in Red

Designer: EDDIE LOUIS OCHOM

Category: Apparel Category

{ The Aesthetic Burden of Hyperhidrosis }

Project Brief

Soaked in Red is a conceptual fashion project that explores the lived experience and societal stigma of **hyperhidrosis** a medical condition characterized by excessive sweating. Through this design, the project challenges traditional fashion narratives by using materials, forms, and cultural references that embody both the internal and external realities of those affected.

Utilizing layered leather garments in crimson and maroon tones, the design reclaims the discomfort and invisibility associated with hyperhidrosis. The work fuses global aesthetics with emotional storytelling to provoke reflection, recognition, and dignity for those living with this condition.

Design Problem Statement

Hyperhidrosis is more than a physical condition; it is a deeply stigmatized experience that affects self-image, emotional health, and social interaction. In the context of fashion an industry that thrives on controlled perfection and "dry polish" the presence of sweat is not only unwelcome but often actively excluded from visibility.

This design seeks to confront that discomfort by making it central to the aesthetic. Rather than disguising the condition, Soaked in Red leans into its physicality using layering, heaviness, and restricted breathability to symbolize the constant negotiation between concealment and exposure. The result is a garment that both mourns and empowers, illustrating the hidden emotional weight of this overlooked struggle.

Source of Inspiration and Purpose of the Design

The inspiration comes from the psychological and social toll hyperhidrosis exacts on individuals. Often regarded as merely a "hygiene" or "nuisance" issue, hyperhidrosis is rarely treated with the

gravity it deserves. Sufferers are left to mask their condition through excessive grooming, cautious fashion choices, and self-imposed social limitations.

This design purposes by:

- ✓ Symbolizing the internal chaos with bold, saturated red leather.
- ✓ Referencing global dress aesthetics to illustrate the universality of the condition.
- ✓ Constructing physically heavy, non-breathable garments to provoke conversation about invisible suffering.
- ✓ Celebrating the wearer not by hiding their condition, but by transforming it into a centerpiece of beauty, identity, and power.

Design Explanation & Material Justification

1.Silhouette and Structure

The design showcases an elaborate, floor-length gown featuring dramatic flounces, layered peplums, and voluminous hems. These layers are not just ornamental they serve as a metaphor for the psychological weight and practical clothing strategies employed by those trying to hide excessive sweat.

Upper Bodice: Ruffled and adorned with pearl-like embellishments to represent sweat drops reimagined as couture detailing.

Midsection: Features tight construction with cinched elements symbolizing societal pressure to "keep it in" to stay composed despite discomfort.

Lower Skirt: A flowing mermaid silhouette extends the heaviness of the garment, evoking the long-lasting, dragging emotional impact of stigmatization.

Leather Gloves: Specifically chosen for its durability and tactile symbolism, referencing both constraint and control.

The gloves, in particular, serve as a metaphor for the unseen aspects of hyperhidrosis especially palmar hyperhidrosis (sweaty palms) and how fashion can either restrict or reveal these narratives.

Sculptural headpiece: Designed as a **mask** symbolizing the emotional burden of shame, concealment, and performance. This headpiece veils the face partially, a visual metaphor for the desire to **hide from gaze and judgment**, drawing attention to the psychological toll hyperhidrosis exacts in public spaces.

2. Color & Symbolism

Crimson/Maroon Leather: These tones are used to reflect the emotional and physical intensity of hyperhidrosis. Red symbolizes pain, shame, life-force, and heat all sensations connected to the condition. Leather, by nature, traps heat and moisture, paralleling the inescapable physical state of hyperhidrosis sufferers.

Pearlescent Details: Small, shining dots represent sweat as a form of beauty not shame. Their sparkle contrasts the matte leather to emphasize transformation.

3. Textile Choice: Leather

Leather is specifically chosen for its symbolic and tactile contradiction. While often seen as luxurious, sensual, and resilient, it is also restrictive, non-absorbent, and uncomfortably hot mirroring the paradox faced by people with hyperhidrosis who must endure internal discomfort while maintaining external appearances.

Mask material: Reinforced but lightweight leather, structured to cover the forehead and part of the face blending intimidation and vulnerability.

4. Fashion Aesthetic Integration

Soaked in Red integrates diverse cultural fashion elements to underscore that hyperhidrosis affects individuals globally, regardless of culture or background:

Western Costume Couture: Seen in the structured corset and sweeping train, reflecting societal standards of beauty and constraint.

African Power Dressing: In the bold ruffles and wide silhouettes that assert presence and reclaim space.

Asian Traditional Layering: Referencing kimono and hanbok forms, echoing how many use layering to conceal.

Middle Eastern Embellishment: Pearl-like details nod to traditional luxury, tying discomfort to adornment. This hybrid aesthetic ensures the piece is not limited by geography. It speaks universally.

The ***mask-like headpiece*** functions both aesthetically and metaphorically reflecting how those with hyperhidrosis often feel the need to **mask themselves emotionally and physically**, fearing stigma or misinterpretation.

The Stigma of Hyperhidrosis and Its Fashion Implications

Note:

Hyperhidrosis affects millions globally, yet remains one of the most socially minimized conditions. Fashion, as an industry and form of expression, plays a role in exacerbating this stigma:

- ✓ Fabric and Color Avoidance: Individuals are forced to avoid light-colored or sweat-revealing fabrics, limiting self-expression.
- ✓ Physical Discomfort from Layering: To hide sweat, sufferers often wear layers that intensify the problem.
- ✓ Social Alienation in Styling Choices: Many forgo current fashion trends out of fear of public embarrassment.
- ✓ Emotional Self-Censorship: The constant vigilance over one's body leads to anxiety and self-isolation.

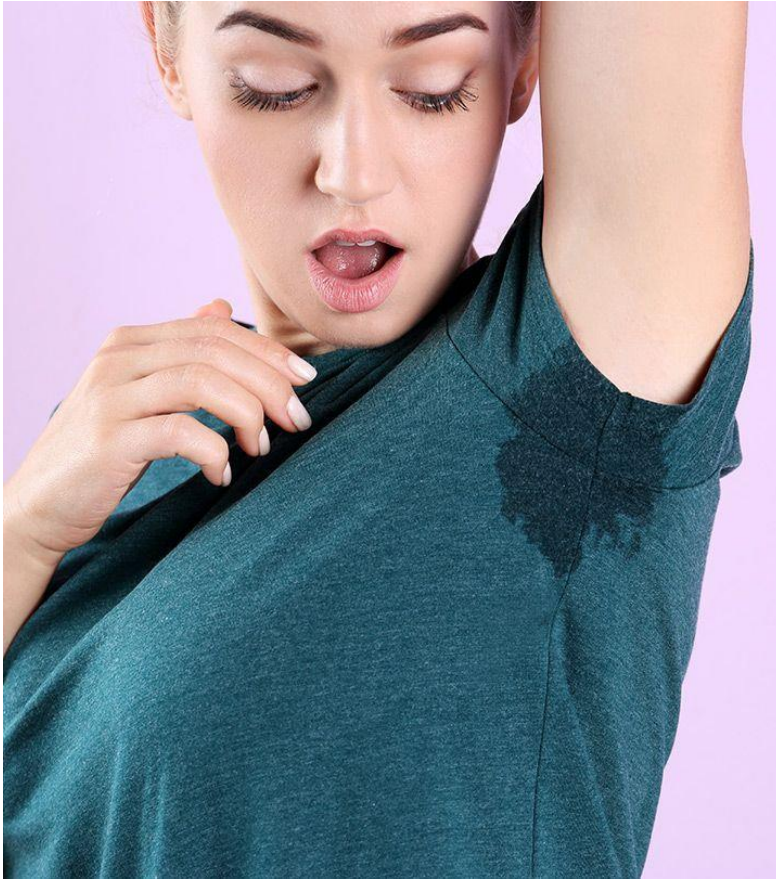
This design counters that narrative by drawing attention to sweat stylizing it, honoring it, embedding it into form the piece becomes an act of defiance. It insists that these bodies too belong in fashion.

Conclusion

Soaked in Red is not just a garment it is an embodiment of emotional resilience and aesthetic resistance. Through the language of fashion, it voices the often-silenced experiences of hyperhidrosis sufferers. It calls for inclusivity not just in sizing or skin tone, but in bodily function and lived experience.

In transforming sweat from something shameful into something sacred, this project redefines what it means to dress beautifully with honesty, humanity, and heat.

INSPIRATION BOARD



In fashion and social settings, such signs of excessive sweating are typically perceived as undesirable, leading individuals to feel **embarrassed, constrained, and alienated** from mainstream fashion norms. The visible discomfort in this image reflects the

emotional tension and self-monitoring that people with hyperhidrosis often endure.

The image above illustrates a common but often **stigmatized manifestation** of hyperhidrosis: visible sweat stains on clothing, particularly under the arms. This visual serves as a **critical reference point** for the fashion project *Soaked in Red*, which seeks to challenge the silence and shame surrounding this condition.

Soaked in Red responds directly to this by transforming the **symbols of sweat, discomfort, and concealment** into deliberate design choices such as **heavy layering, leather gloves, and a**

mask-like headpiece. These elements collectively **reclaim the narrative**, turning stigma into structure and invisibility into visual power. The design does not mask the issue it **amplifies it artistically**, making space for empathy, awareness, and inclusion within fashion's visual language.

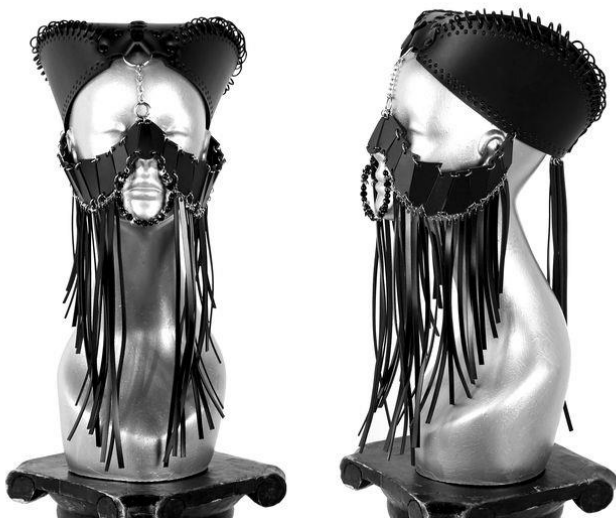
MOOD BOARD



A variety of different leather designs made to create the visibility on confidence on to people's day-to-day lives.





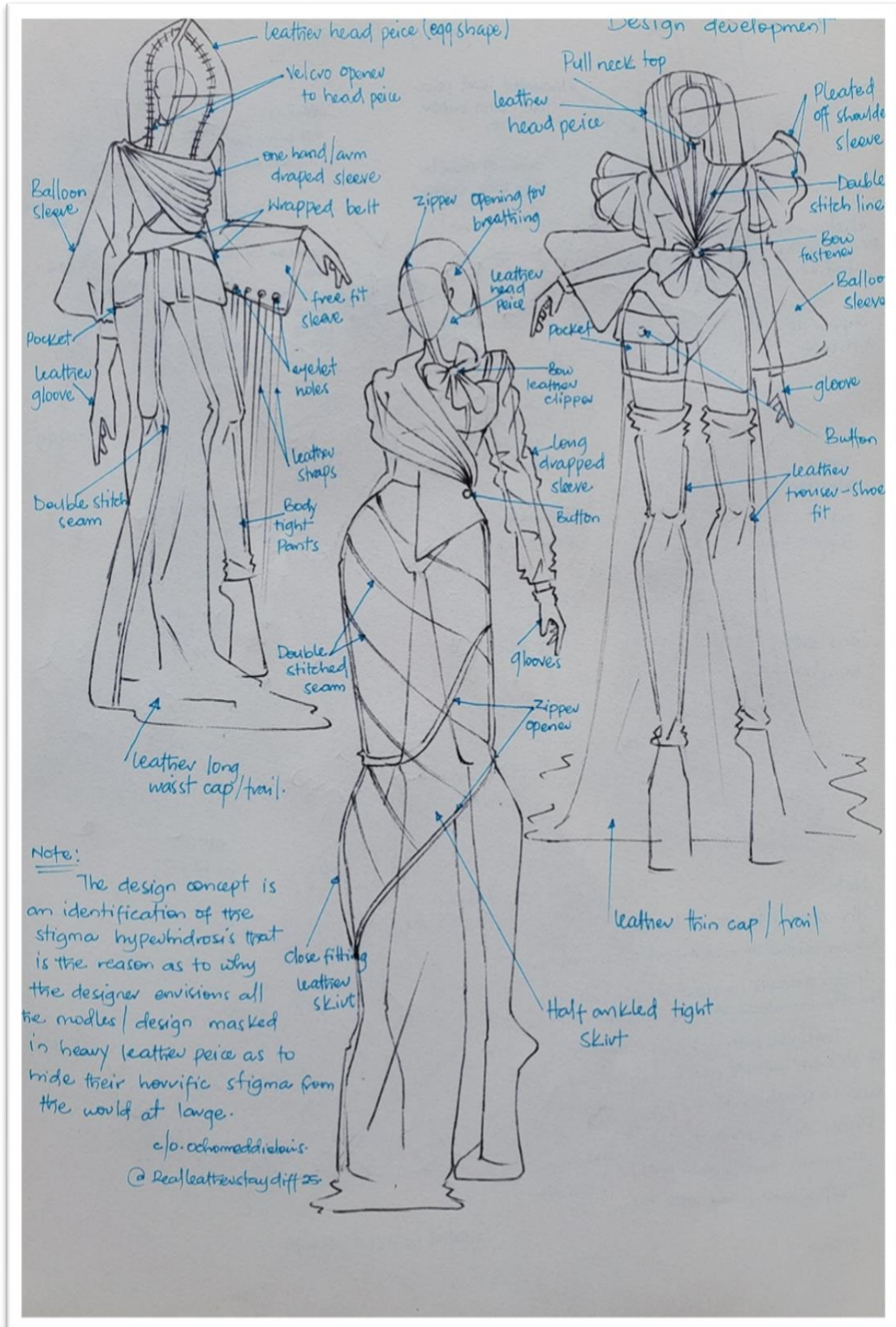


Different head mask-like headpiece I'm inspired from

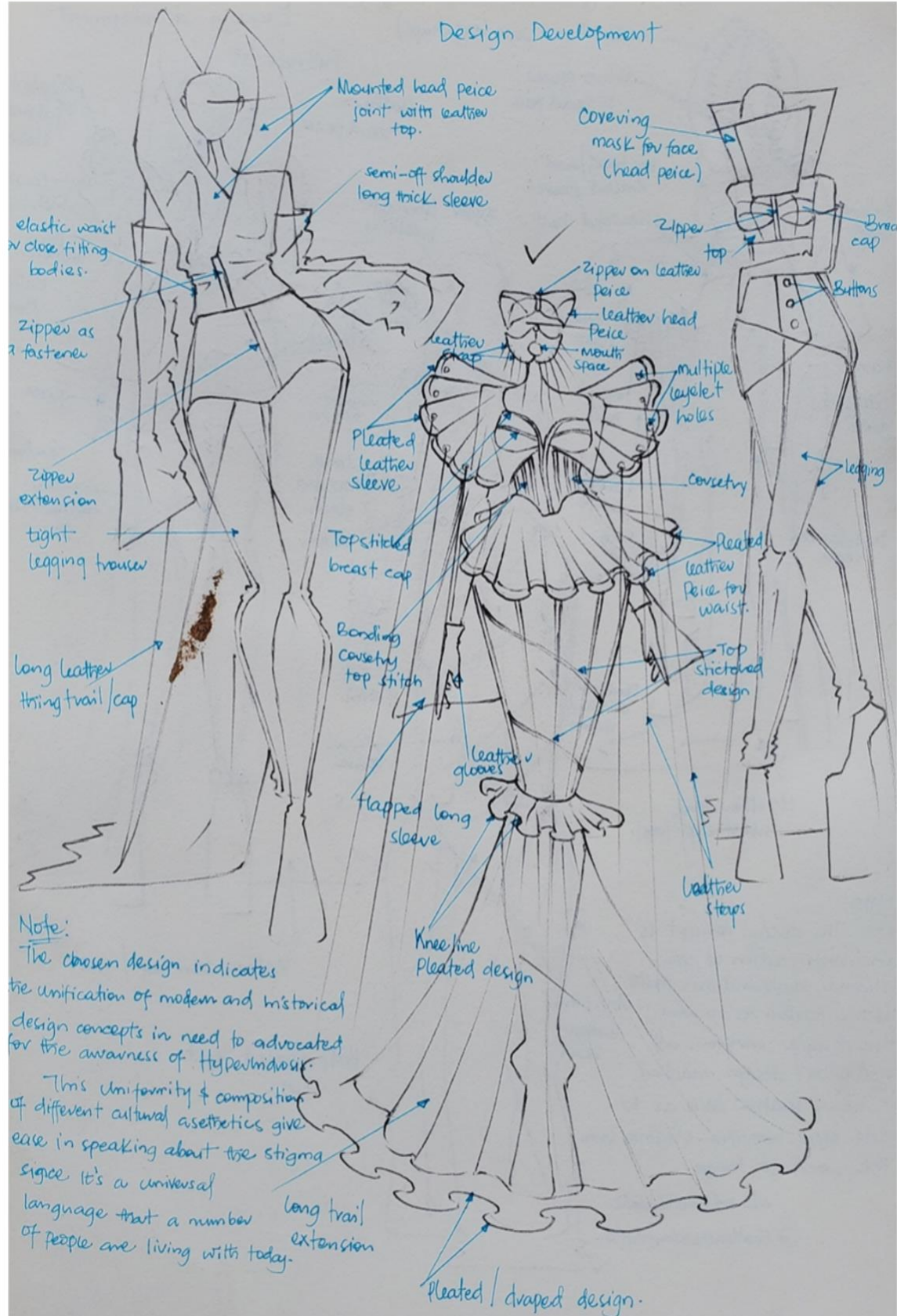


Gloves

- Design Concept Development



Design Development



Note:

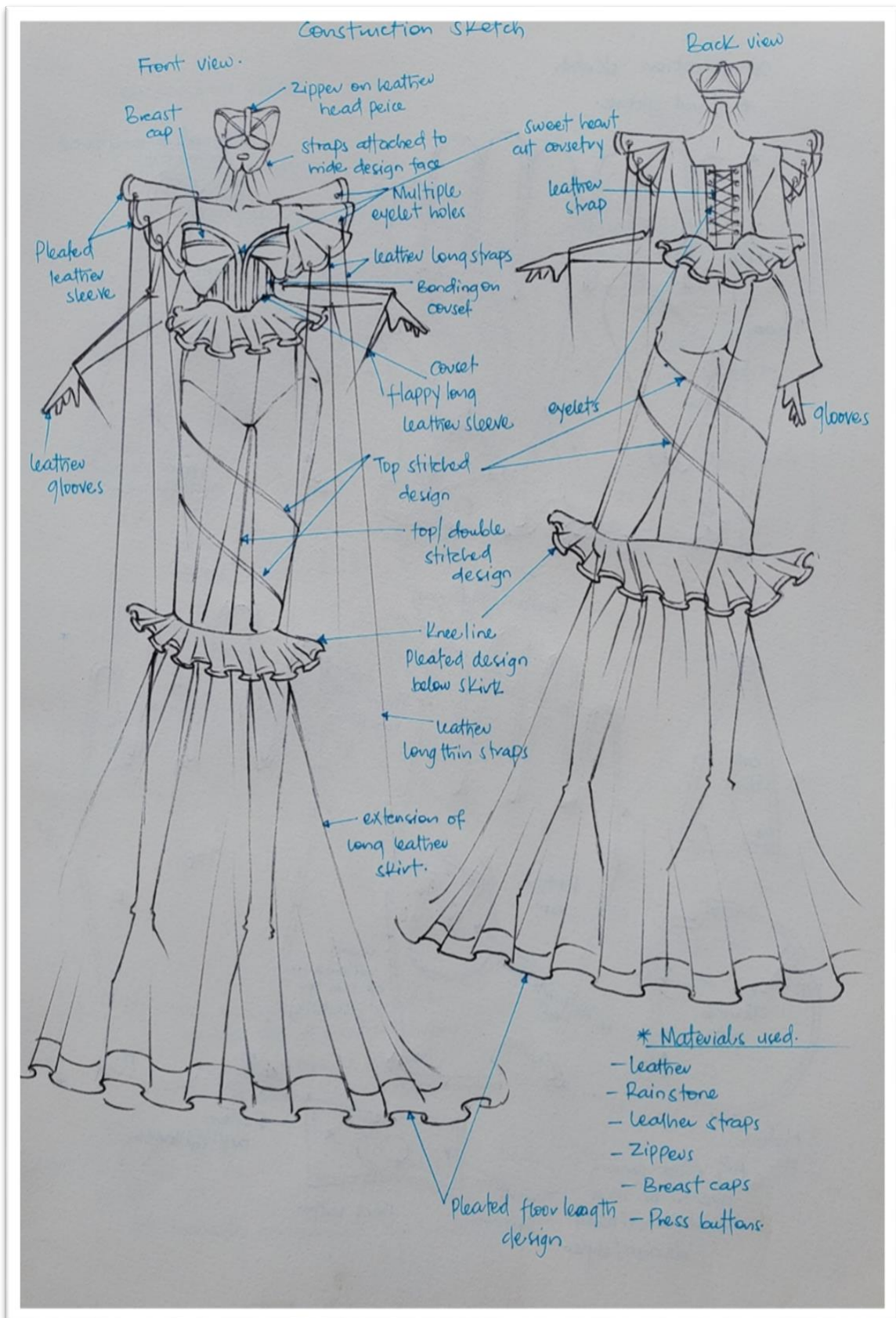
The chosen design indicates the unification of modern and historical design concepts in need to advocate for the awareness of Hyperindustrial.

This uniformity & composition of different cultural aesthetics give ease in speaking about the stigma since it's a universal language that a number of people are living with today.

- Color Development

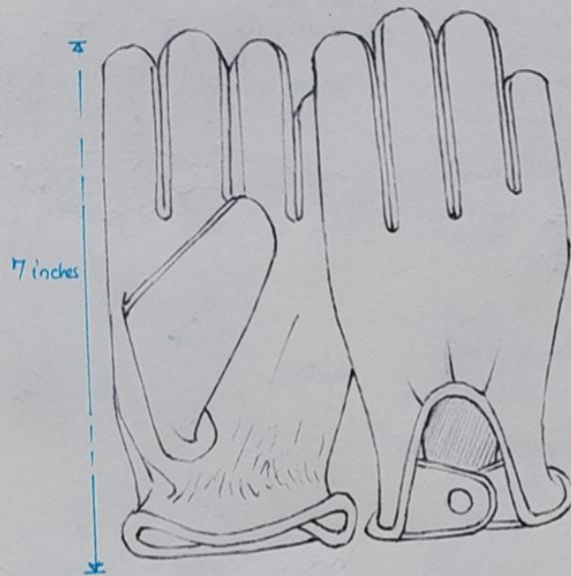


- **Construction Sketches**

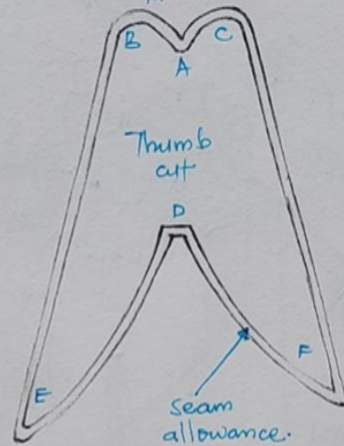


Construction sketch

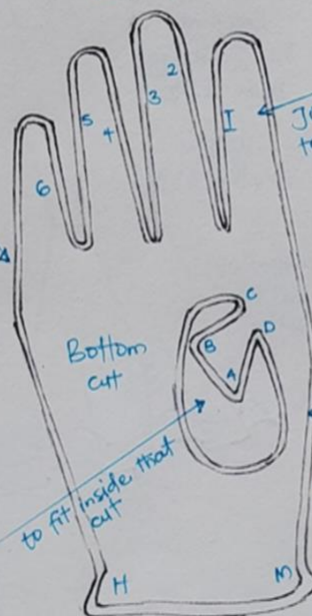
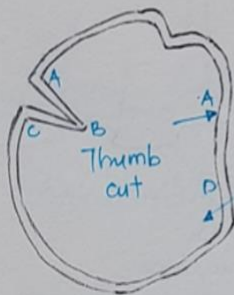
* Hand glove.



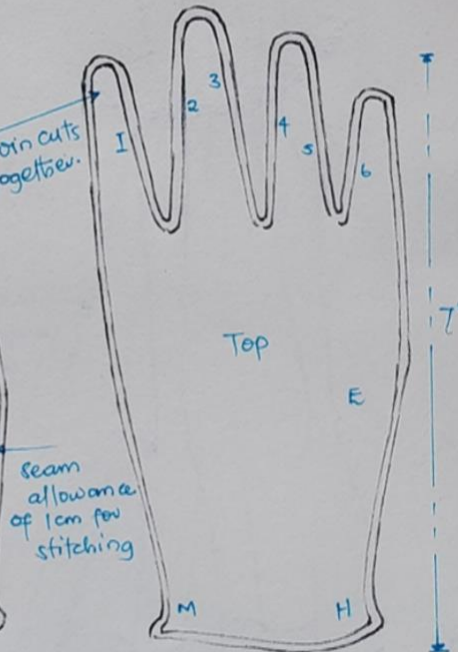
Alternative way to cut Thumb cut



Bottom/ Palm cut

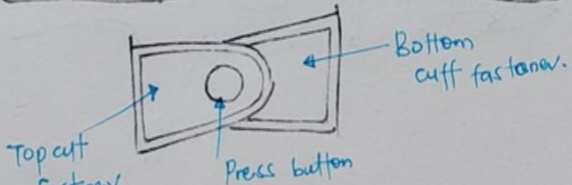


Top cut

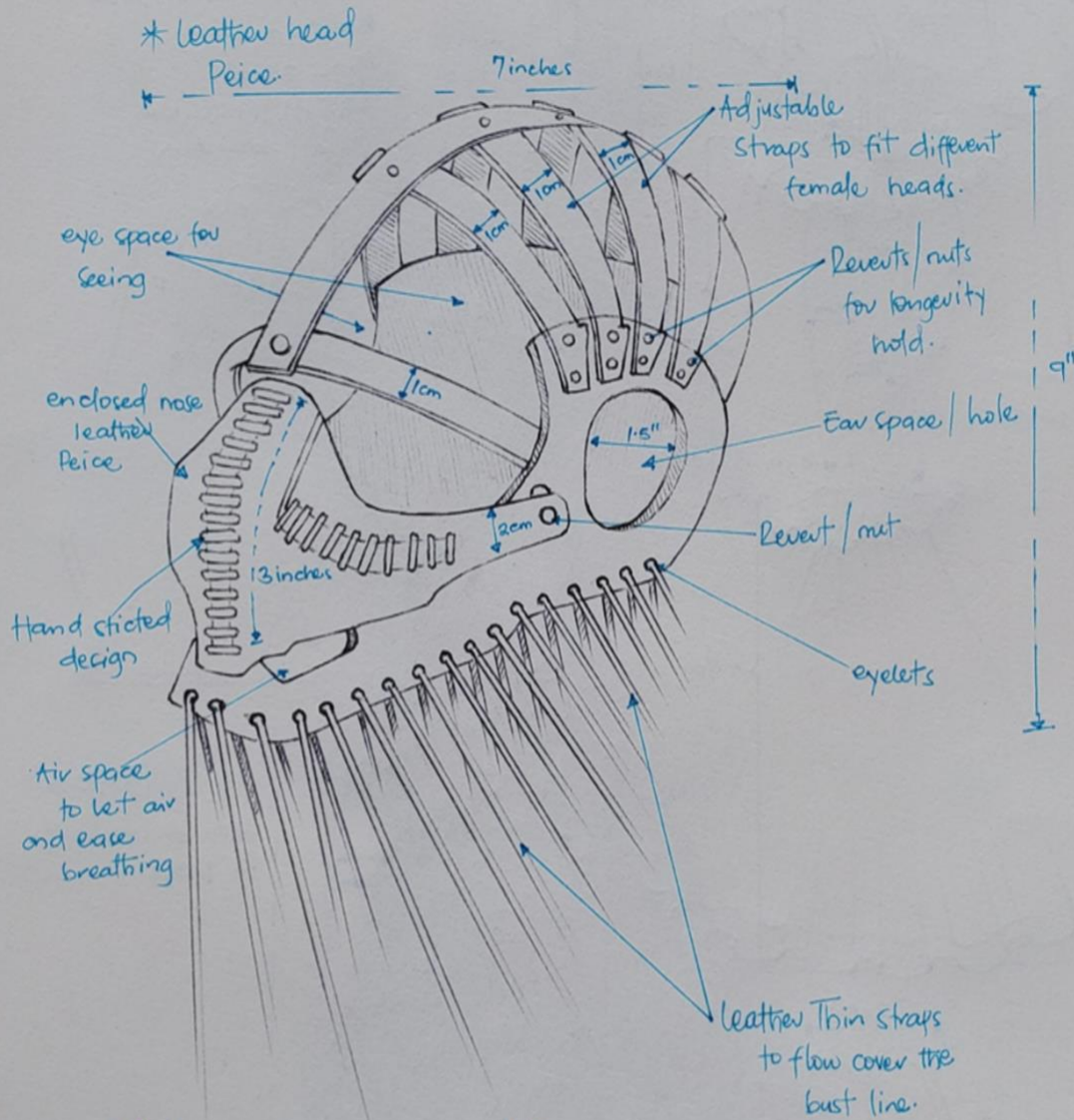


Note:

All other seams are to be in a saddle stitched design/style.



Construction sketch



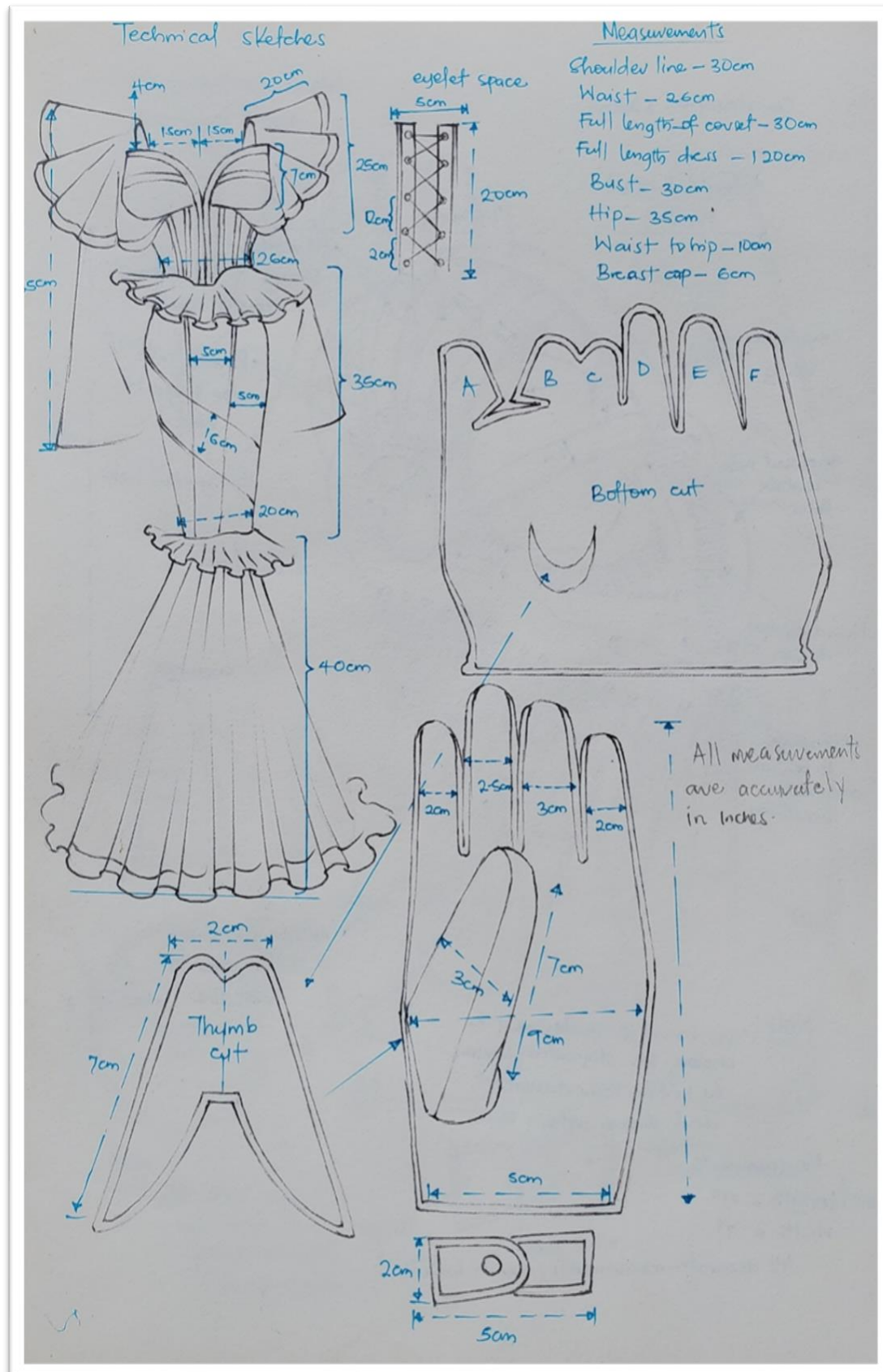
Note: - The mask is designed to enclose the stigmatized person by hiding their discomfort and shame within them.

Measurement

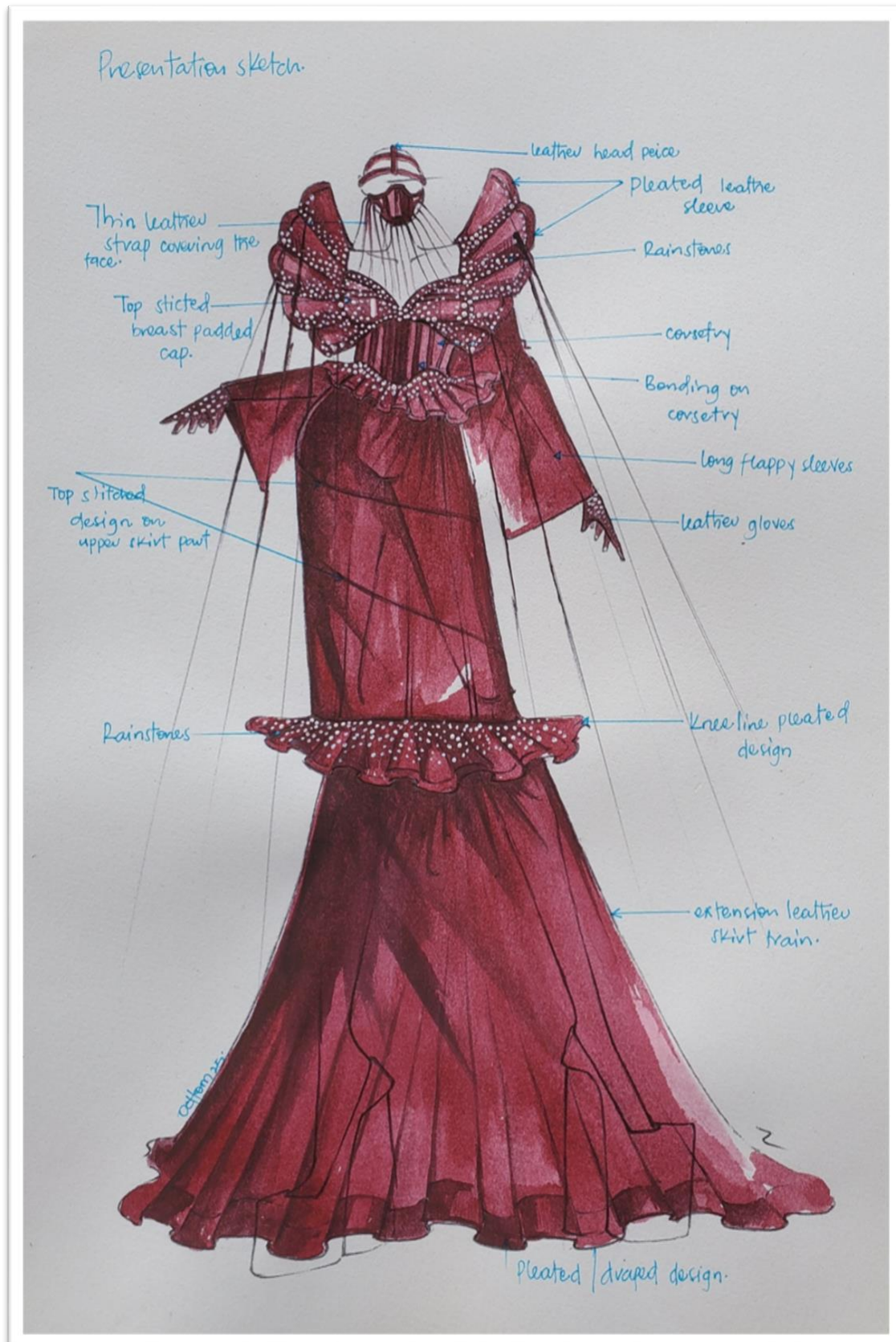
Height / length = 9"
Width = 7"

All accurate measurements are in inches.

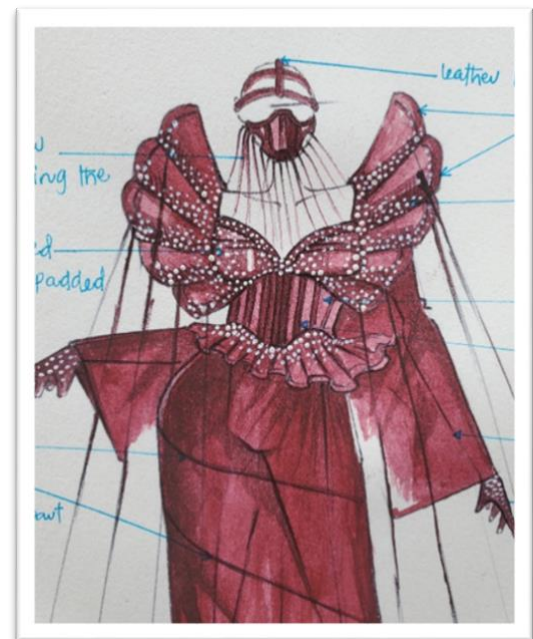
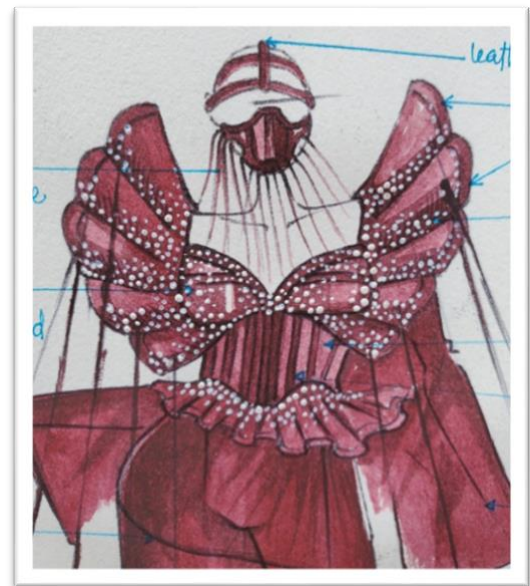
- **Technical Sketches**



- **Presentation final Sketches**



- **Presentation Sketches close ups**



Therefore Soaked in Red is not just a garment it is an embodiment of emotional resilience and aesthetic resistance. Through the language of fashion, it voices the often-silenced experiences of hyperhidrosis sufferers. It calls for inclusivity not just in sizing or skin tone, but in bodily function and lived experience.

THANK YOU...