

Brazil Student Design Competition
2026 Edition Apparel Category



Between
past and future.

By Quéren
To RLSD

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 IDEATION
- 3 MOOD BOARD
- 4 PROCESS
- 5 CONCEPT



QUÉREN RAMOS

A 23 year old Designer based in Bauru, São Paulo, Brazil. Currently finishing my degree in Graphic Design at Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP).

My passion for fashion started early, grounded in the belief that it is one of the most powerful tools in the world. It was my path in Design that made me realize that being a creator also means generating waste, shifting my focus towards creation that always starts from what already exists. To deepen that journey, I independently study the history of fashion and take sewing and pattern making courses.

Circular fashion and sustainability are at the heart of my work, and that vision shaped my final graduation project: a visual identity for a fashion studio focused on circularity and material reuse, a project that bridges my two areas of expertise and marks the launch of my own brand.

I have also been recognized beyond academia, receiving two design awards, one national and one international, both granted by a magazine that includes circular fashion and Brazilian fashion among its themes. I actively engage with the fashion community, participating in events such as Fashion Revolution.



Every culture imprints itself on the space it inhabits. In Brazilian cities, this culture often materializes in facades, materials, and ornaments — and when a culture begins to be silenced, it remains in the details that no one knows how to name anymore. Preserving these stories is not nostalgia: it is refusing to let forgetting complete the work that violence once began.



Adinkra

Brazilian architecture is a living archive of the past. Among its most recurring elements are wrought iron gate fences — a common presence in residences across the country, from the Northeast to the South.

What few people know is that many of these gates carry engraved **Adinkra symbols**: ideograms of the Ashanti people, a subdivision of the Akan people of West Africa, trafficked to Brazil between the 16th and 19th centuries. These symbols were forged into the gates by enslaved African artisans as a silent act of resistance and cultural continuity.

The most recurring of them is the **Sankofa** represented by a bird that turns its head backward while moving forward, symbolizing exactly this: go back and fetch what was left behind, conveying the importance of learning from the past to build the future.

Today, most people walk past these gates without recognizing what they see. Many refer to the symbols simply as "hearts". The houses that display them are being demolished one by one, replaced by generic constructions that preserve nothing of the territory they occupy.

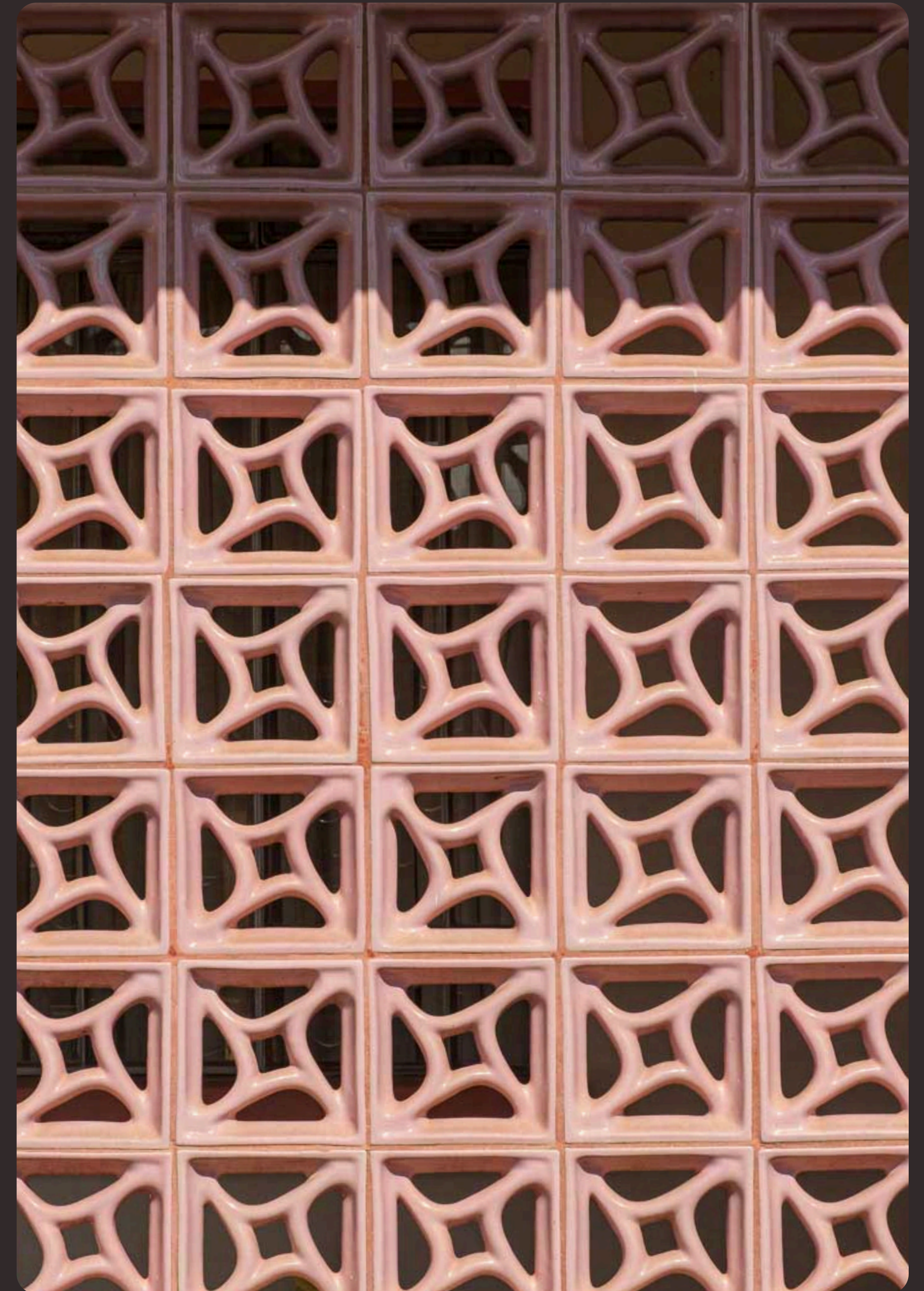


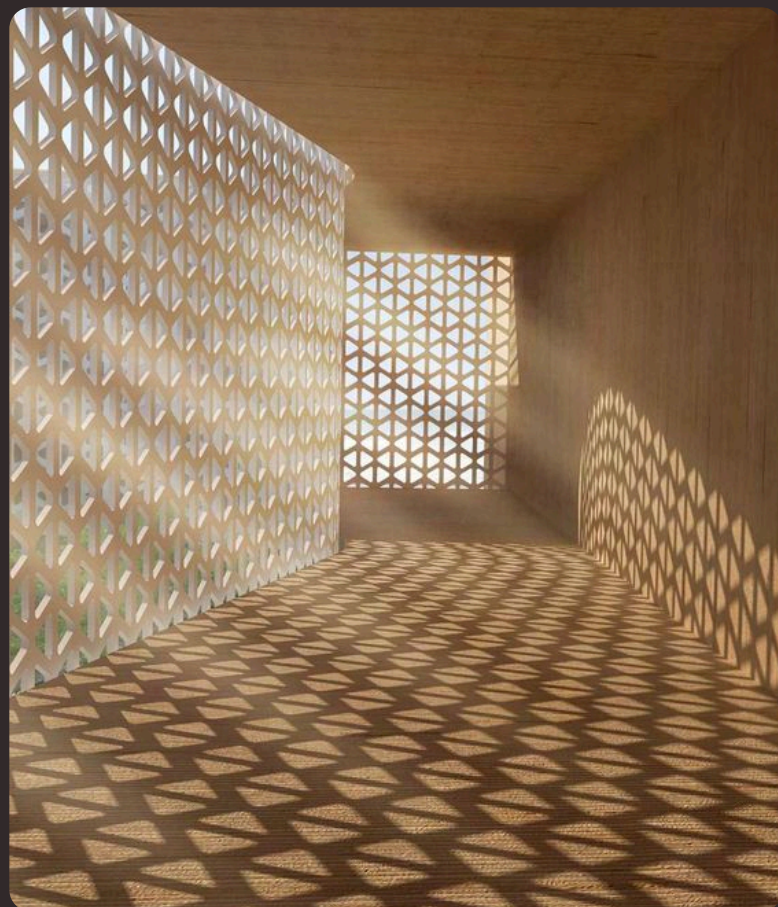
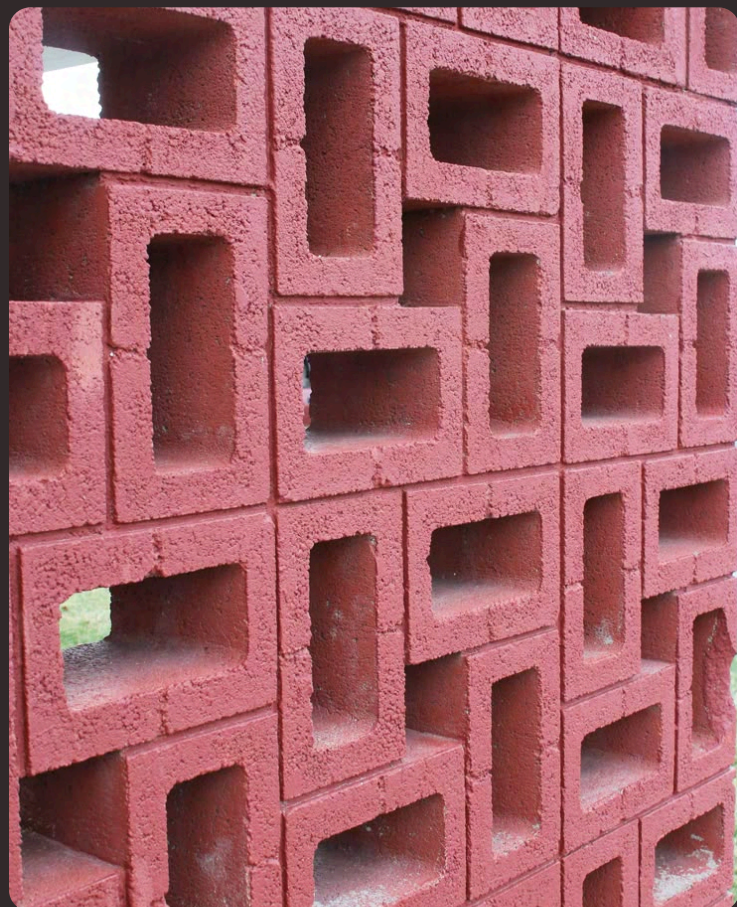
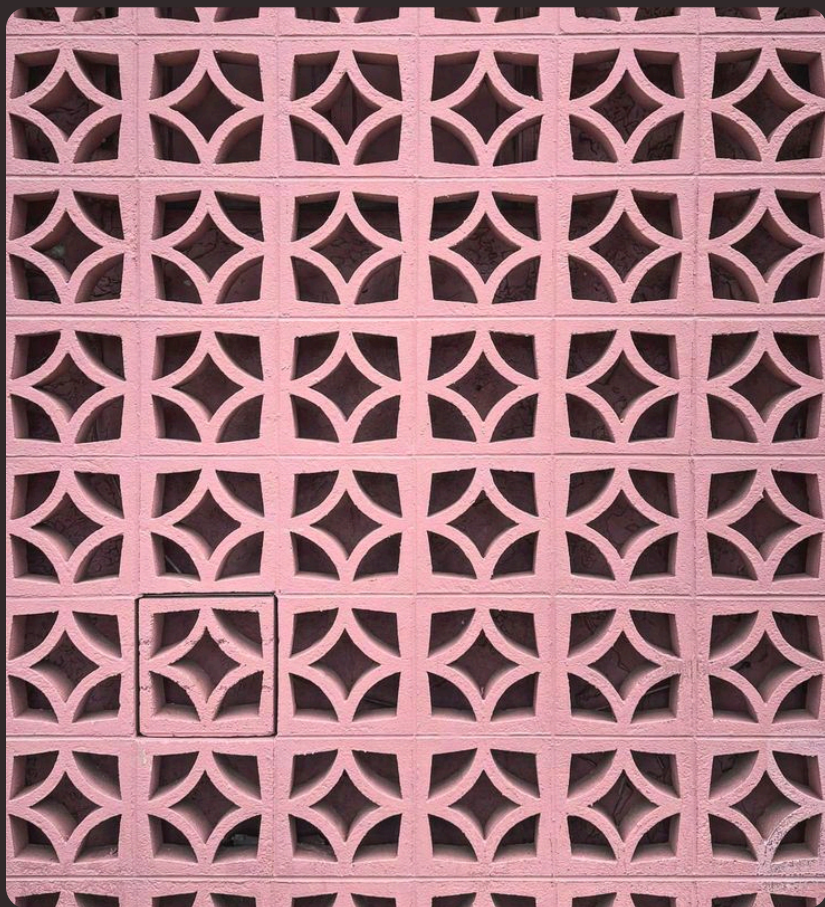
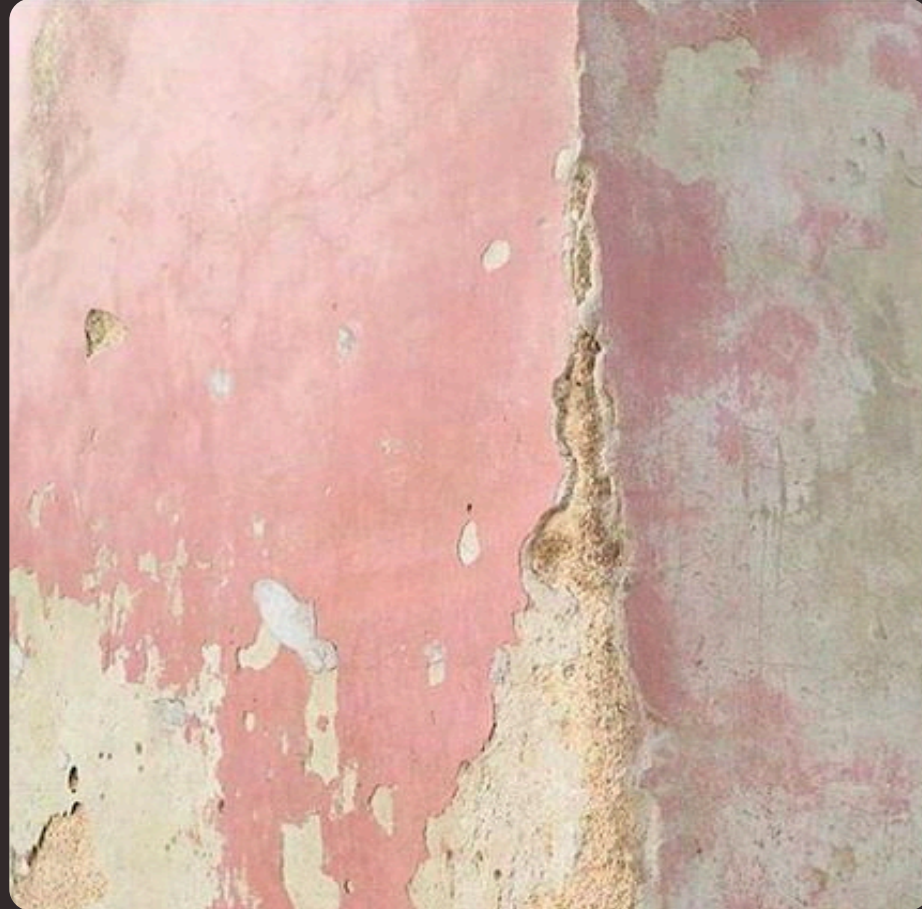
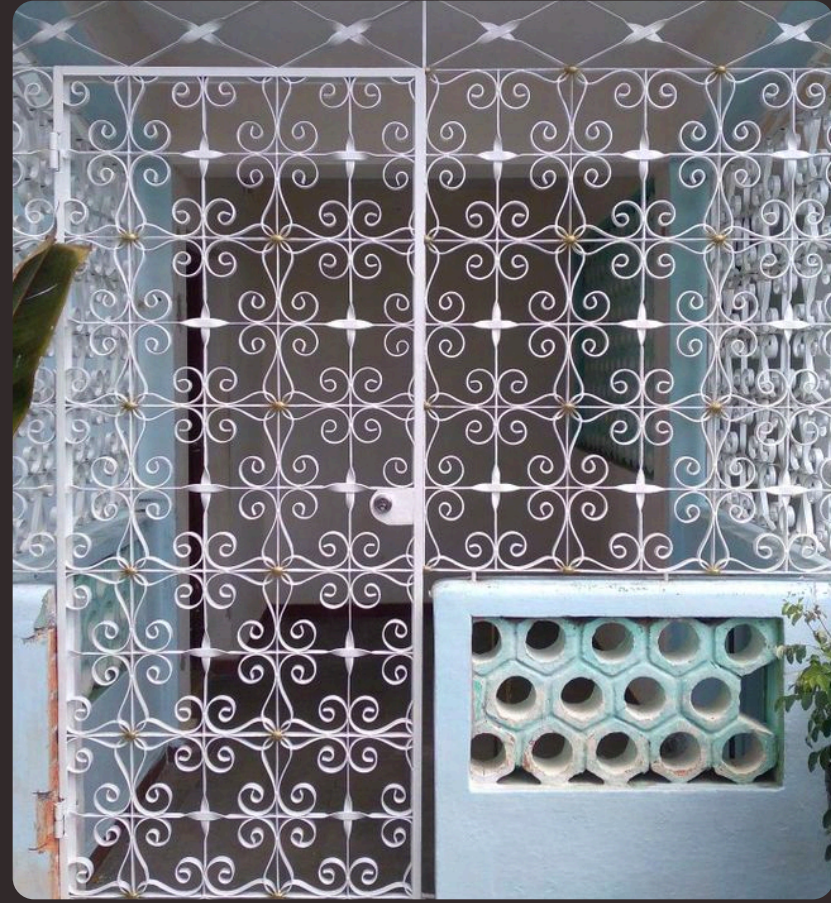
Cobogó

Another element disappearing from Brazilian architecture is the **Cobogó**. Created in the late 1920s in Recife by three engineers whose initials form its name, the cobogó is a perforated block that allows primarily air circulation and additionally controls natural light without sealing the environment.

It was born as an intelligent solution for the Brazilian climate: functional, affordable, and aesthetically precise. With the modernism of the 1940s and 1950s, it became widespread across the country as a facade element and room divider. Today, paradoxically, it is being abandoned.

The architectural style advancing through Brazilian cities — closed volumes, smooth facades, what could be called "shoebox architecture" — ignores that it was developed for temperate climates. In Brazil, this model results in spaces entirely dependent on air conditioning to be livable, wasting energy and disconnecting the building from the place where it exists.





PROCESS

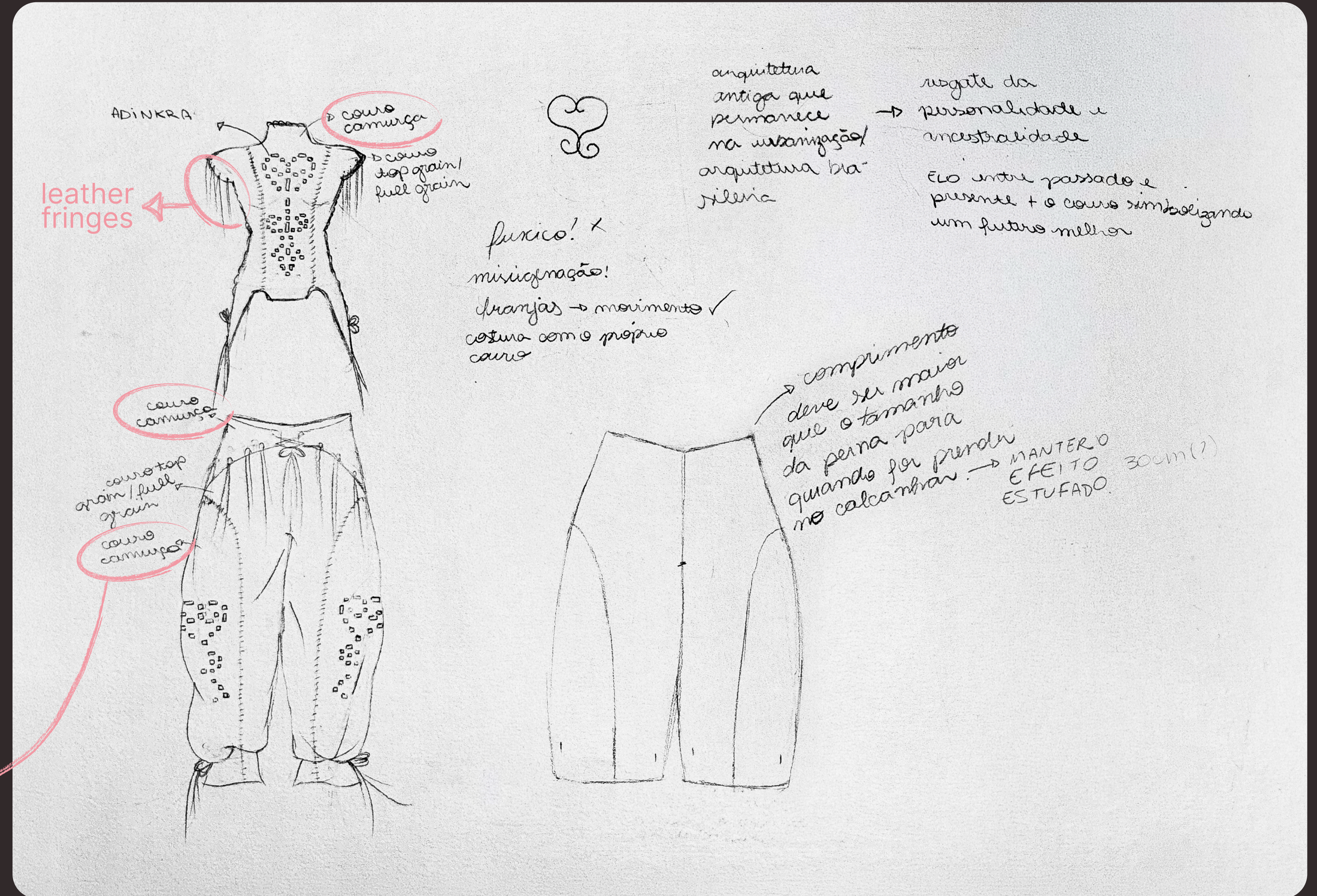
It is within this double erasure, of the African symbol on the gates and the cobogó on the facades, that this garment is situated.

The look consists of a structured top and trousers, both in leather, a material that aligns with the project's concept while taking into account the Brazilian context and the wearability of the pieces:

In a country with a predominantly hot climate, multiplying layers over leather and developing a voluminous and heavy garment would render the clothing unwearable.

The choice of short sleeves and no layering is as much a climatic decision as an aesthetic one.

suede leather



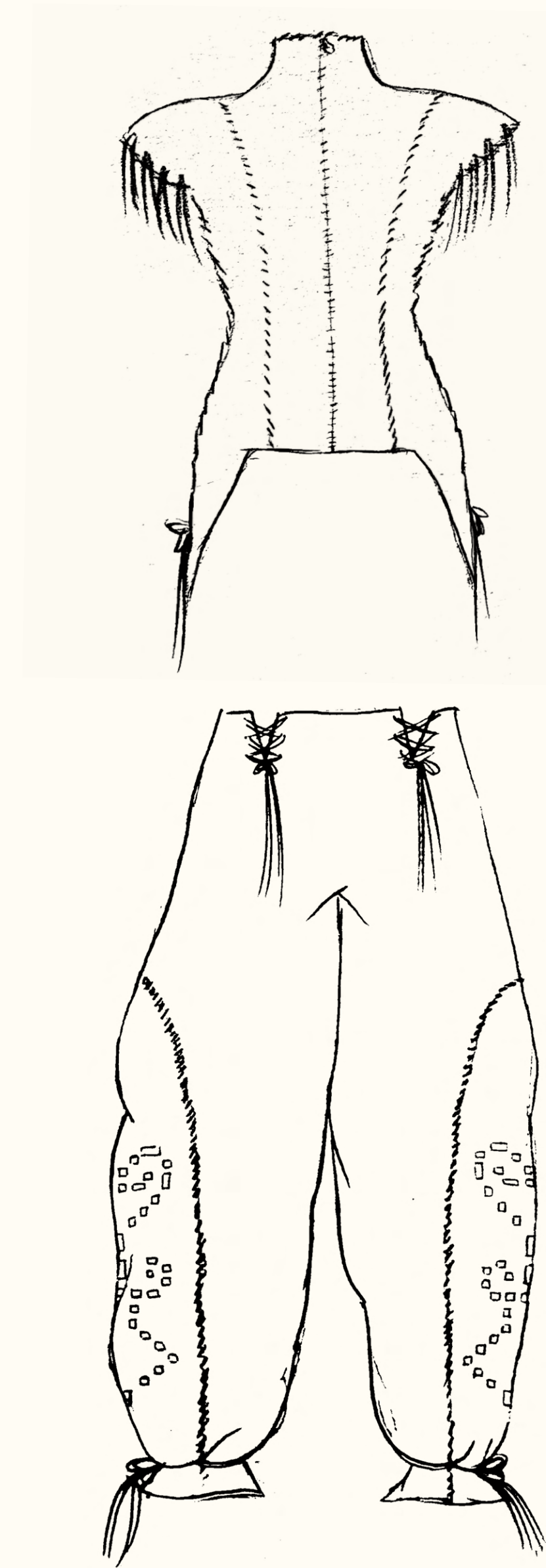
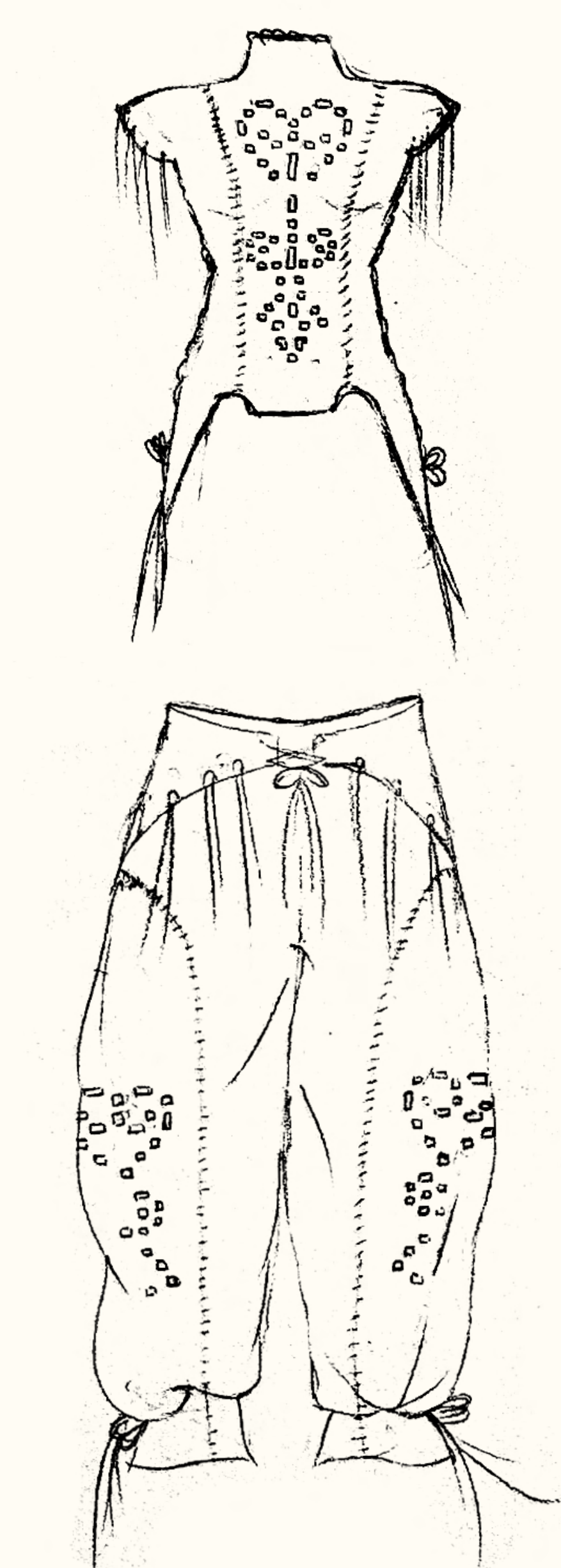
FLATS

The central element of the top is the distribution of cutout perforations that form, at the center of the upper piece, the Adinkra symbol. These cutouts are not decoration:

They function exactly like cobogós, allowing air to circulate over the body, making the leather breathable, and translating into clothing the same logic that made the Recife block an icon of tropical architecture.

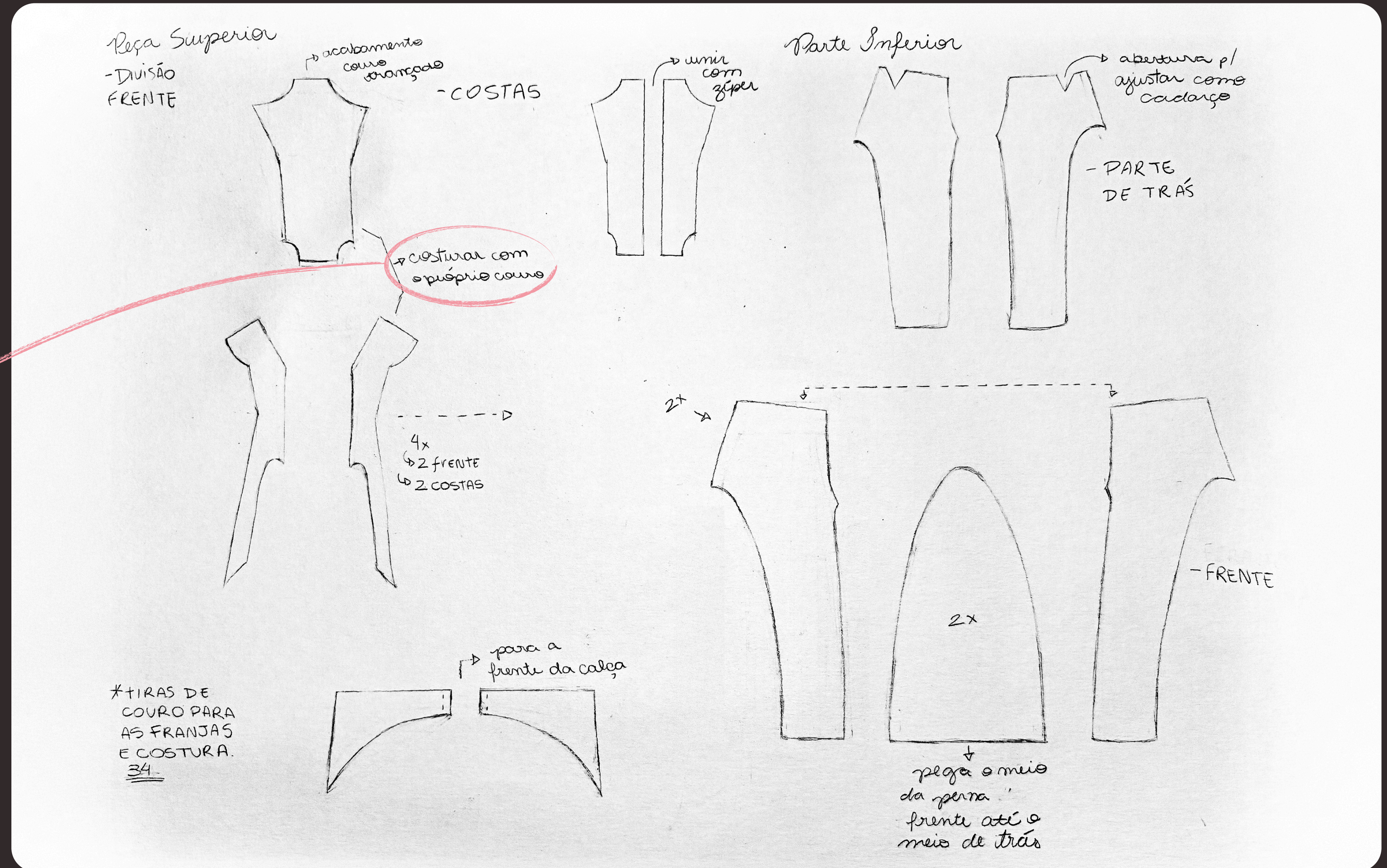
The same principle is repeated at the hems of the trousers, where distributed cutouts create ventilation in the areas of greatest heat accumulation.

The stitching made from the leather itself simplifies these pieces in a refined way, the fringes add movement, and the combination of leather types constructs a garment that is simultaneously structured and fluid, referencing the iron of the gates and the fluidity of the air that passes between the cobogós.



MATERIALS

- zipper for the back of the top
- suede leather
- leather



SPECIFICATIONS

- bovine leather: 6,20m²
- suede leather: 3m²

THE CONCEPT

The intention is not to recreate a traditional African garment. The Adinkra symbol is at the center of the piece because it belongs at the center of Brazilian history — and because, carried on the body of the wearer, it keeps circulating.

Wrought iron endured for many years on the gates. Perforated leather will carry that forward.





To achieve the result of this mockup, several digital resources were used, not just pure AI. Interactive tools from Adobe Creative Suite, Nano Banana (Google), and Image 2 (OpenAI) were employed to generate images following the structure of previously presented drawings and sketches, in order to present the garment in a more tangible way. However, the image does not faithfully convey the richness of detail that the physical look will actually look like.