NOT YOUR 'MODEL MINORITY':

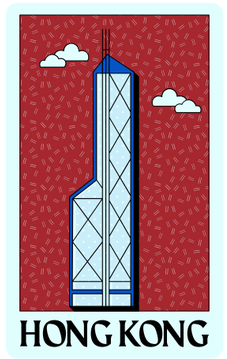
UNVEILING CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH DISMANTLING THE TROPE

Chinatown research

- Chinatown archi
- comparisons of Chinatown archi and China archi
- history of Chinatown and archi

Architecture Research

- Hong Kong archi
- Beijing archi
- Zhejiang archi
- contemporary archi vs old



INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Breaking Stereotypes about Chinatown and Chinese Culture

Jasmine: Hi Lana! I will be here today to interview you, as an American, on your opinions on Chinatown and the stereotypes you've noticed. To start off, How would you describe the common stereotypes or misconceptions you encountered about Chinatown in New York or the people who live there? Have you personally held any of these stereotypes?

Lana: Okay, so when COVID was on, no one liked Chinese people, and everyone avoided Chinatown, and you know, there was like a lot of Chinese violence, so I feel like that has actually changed. Because whenever I go to Chinatown, I go to like one of those... street restaurants. Um, it's just so crowded full of white people. And I'm like, damn, people really come back for the food. And I feel like it's the Chinese food that people really love, like a white American race. They all love Chinese food. That's what brings them back to China.

Jasmine: Oh! You once asked the Chinatown looks like China, right? Can you tell me more about this and whether the perception is common among Americans or how do you think the perceptions affect the way people feel about the neighborhood?

Lana: I feel like most Americans don't think twice about what China looks like, especially if they've never been to China. So when they say Chinatown, they're just like, oh, yeah, damn Chinatown.

Jasmine: So about the same topic How does stereotypes about Chinese food and cushion affect people's perception of Chinatown? Do you think there are any effects of that?

Lana: No, I really don't think so But I think for the most part Americans just see them see Chinese food as just good Chinese food And it really just comes down to like the basic foods that are very commonly known and it really doesn't go much deeper than that. But Um, the thing about, uh, Chinese food that Americans don't know about are like the exotic, uh, quote unquote exotic things, you know, like, like the raw shit, the, the obscure cuts of animals.

They don't know about that part. And when they do know about the parts, they're kind of grossed out by it. It's because they're ignorant and they only know the deep fried, overly saturated American shit, which is really quite unfortunate, but it is what it is, you know.

Jasmine: right, I understand. Are you aware of any way Asians and Chinese people are portrayed in American film and TV? And do you think that ever affected or influenced how you think they're portrayed it?

Lana: Yeah. Well, women in Asian women specifically in media are always portrayed as the meek and submissive, sexy little ideal image for the white man and you know, there's a problem with that. And also they always portray Asian men as the nerd who can't get the girl at the end of the movie.

Jasmine: Okay. I understand. So aside from what you know and what you say, like, are there any subcultures in China that you have encountered with, or any subcultures that you have an understanding of? It's okay if you don't have any.

Lana: No, none. Okay. I don't think about China that often.

Jasmine: Understood. Thank you for the interview! I love you!

Lana: Oh, no problem, I love you too.

CHINATOWN ARCHITECTURES

Chinatowns are established last last century in 1800's

- Chinatown, in turn, experienced much expansion in light of all these new people who sought to live and work there, looking for community and sense of familiarity.

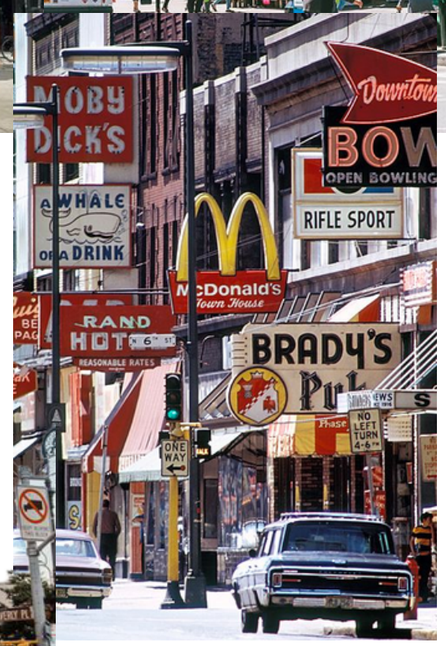
Stereotypes of Chinatown

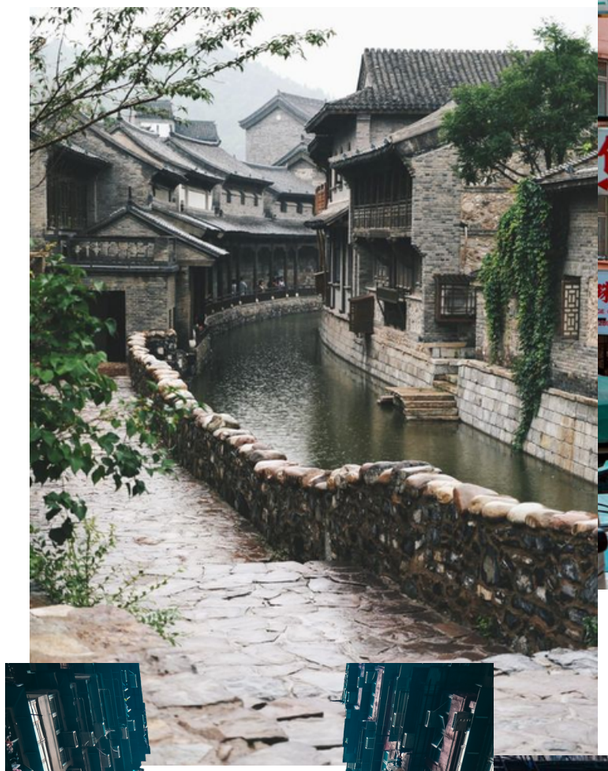
- Exoticization: Chinatowns are often exoticized, with people expecting them to be mysterious or otherworldly. This stereotype can lead to misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the culture.
- Kung Fu and Martial Arts: There's a common stereotype that everyone in Chinatown knows martial arts or practices Kung Fu. This is an oversimplification of Chinese culture and the people living in these areas.
- Lack of Assimilation: Chinatowns are sometimes wrongly perceived as places where immigrants refuse to assimilate into the larger society. In reality, these communities often balance maintaining their cultural heritage with adapting to their new home.
- Cheap or Counterfeit Goods: There's an unfair stereotype that products sold in Chinatown are cheap or counterfeit. While some stores may sell affordable items, this doesn't apply to the entire community.
- Untrustworthy Business Practices: Some people wrongly assume that businesses in Chinatowns engage in untrustworthy practices. This stereotype is both unfair and harmful to the reputation of these businesses.
- All Chinese People Are Alike: Assuming that all Chinese people share the same culture, language, and traditions is a harmful stereotype. China is a diverse country with various regional cultures.

HISTORY OF CHINATOWN

NUC

ARCHITECTURES

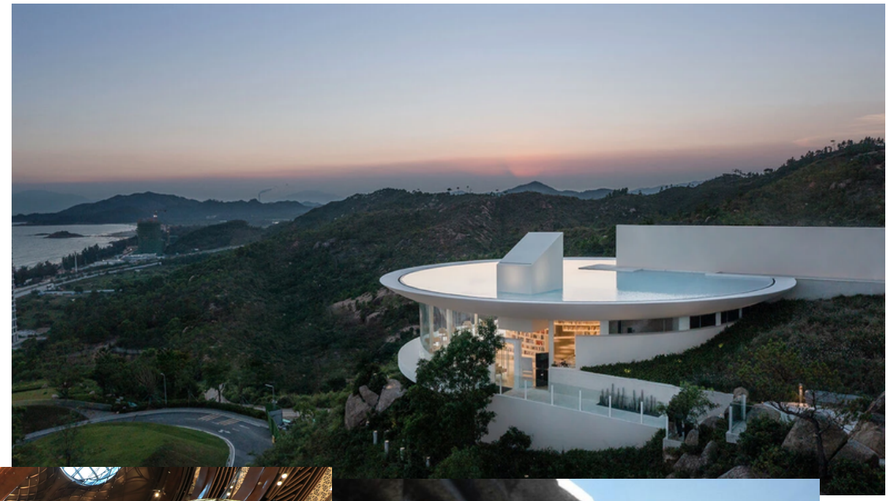


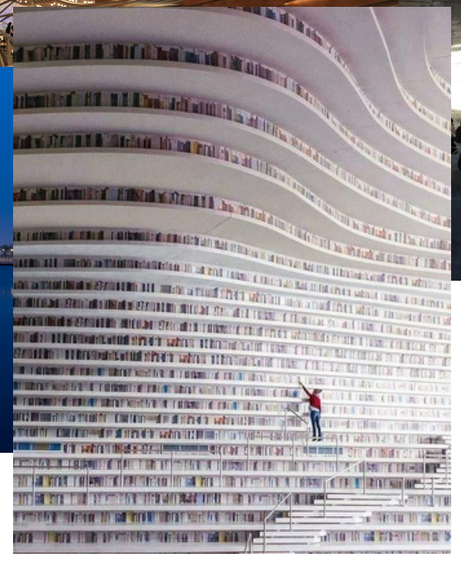


CHINA

ARCHITECTURES

CONTEMPORARY CHINA ARCHITECTURES



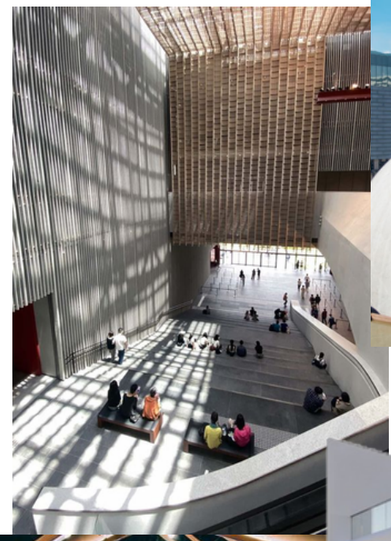


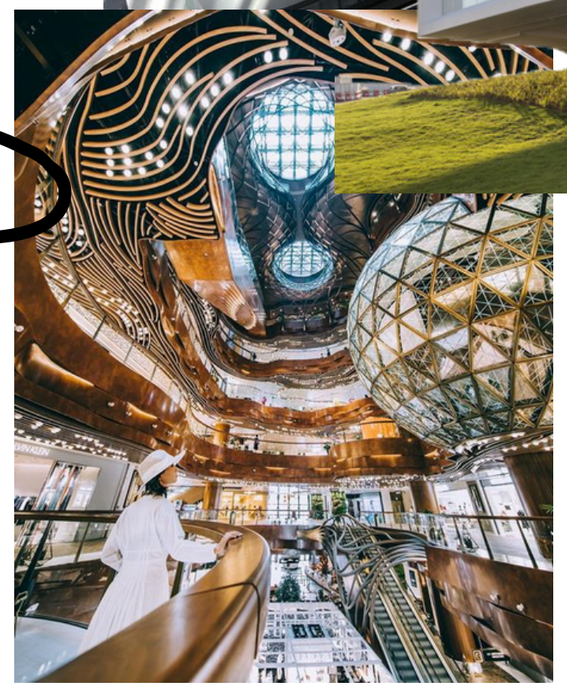
HONG KONG

OLD

ARCHITECTURES

VS





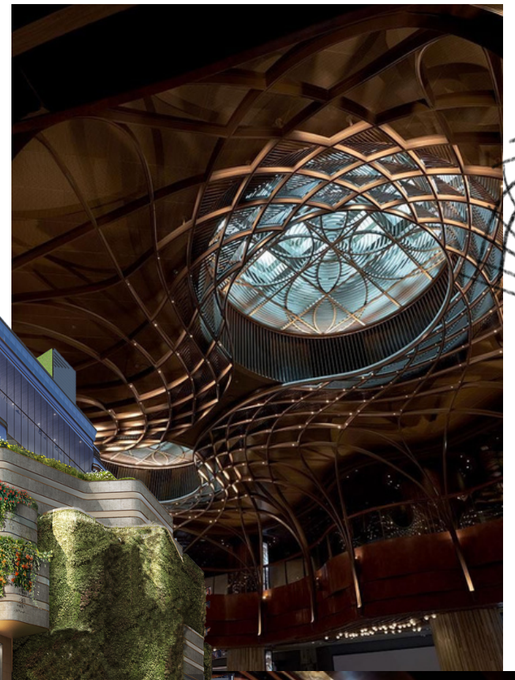
HONG KONG

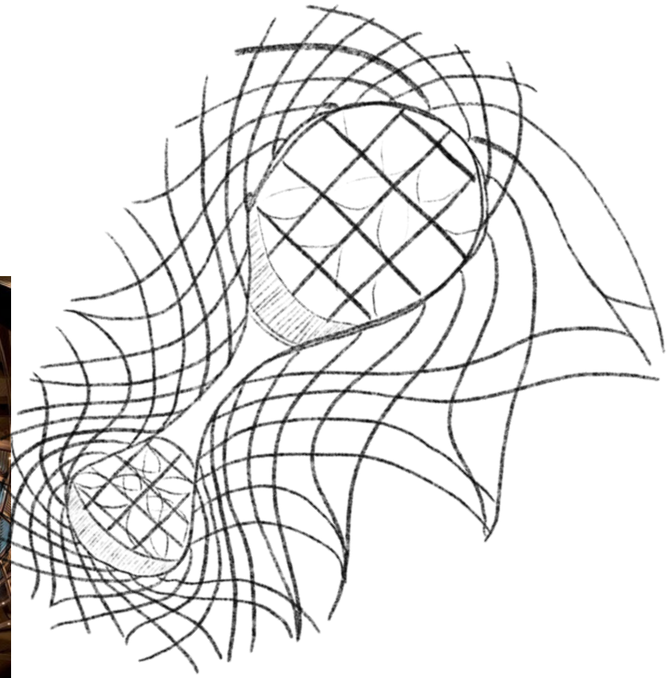
CONTEMPORARY

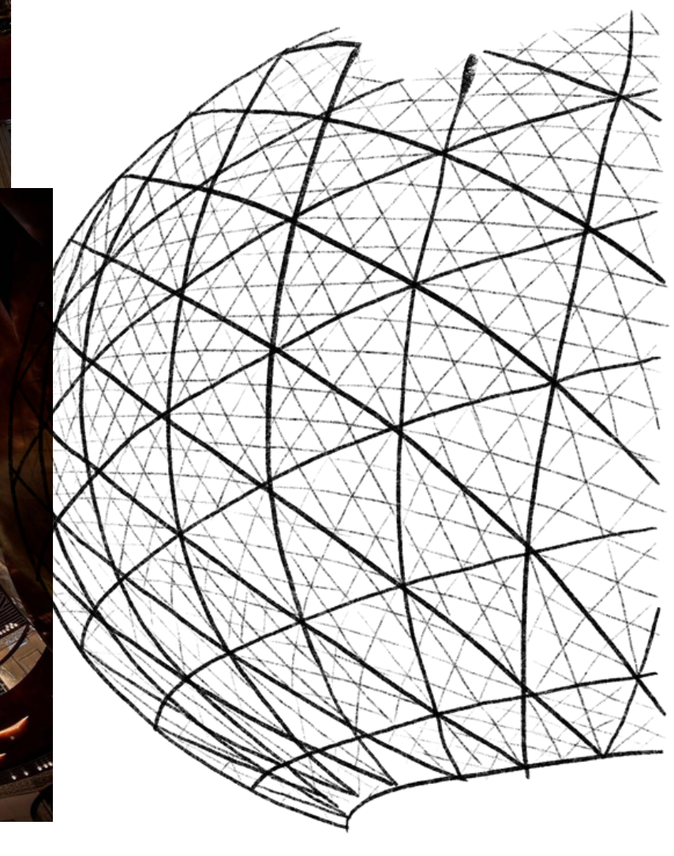
ARCHITECTURES

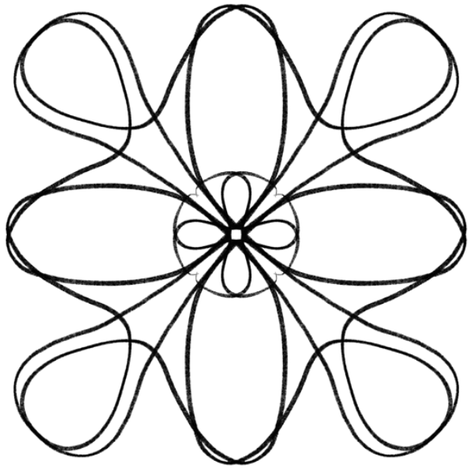
K11 MUSEA

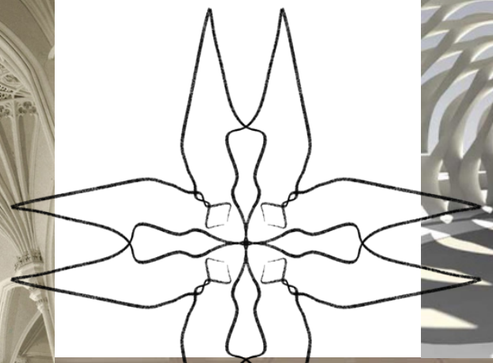
DENNIS LAU & NG CHUN MAN ARCHITECTS
& ENGINEERS (HONG KONG) LIMITED

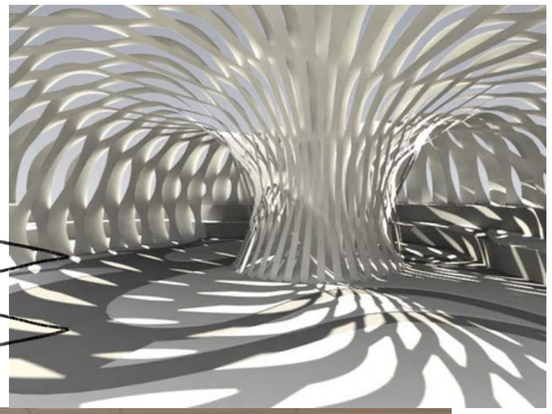


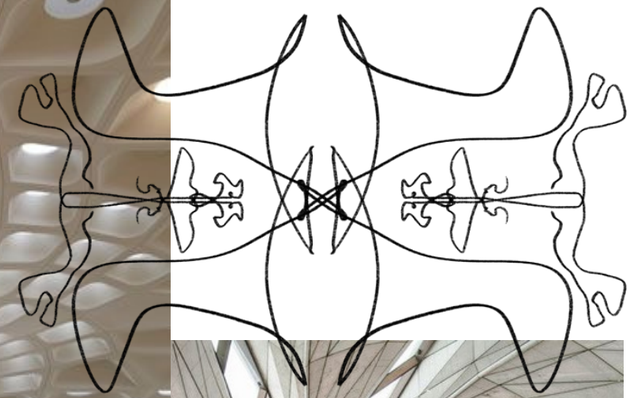


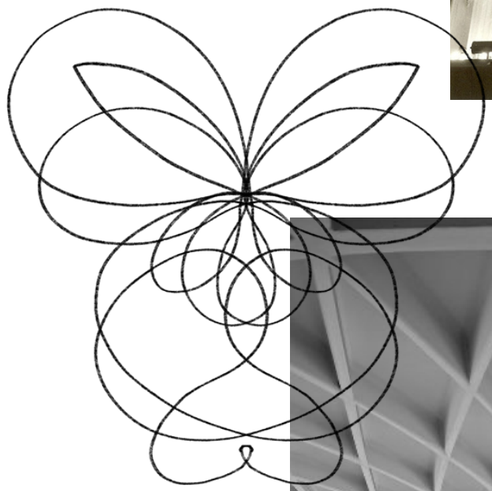


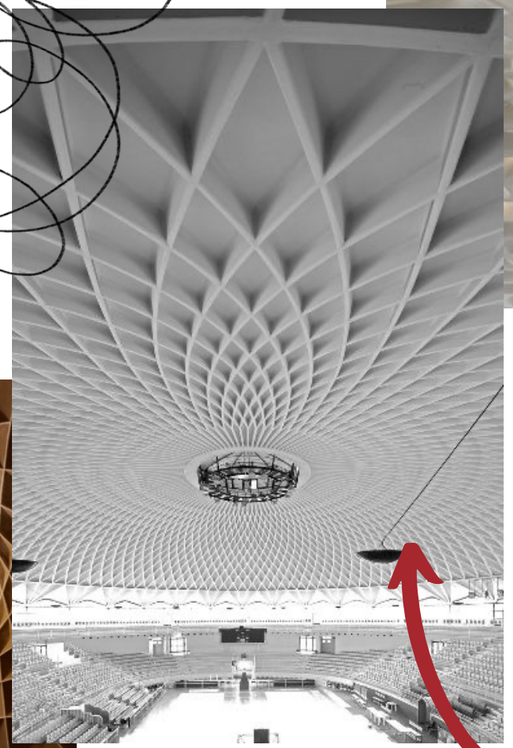


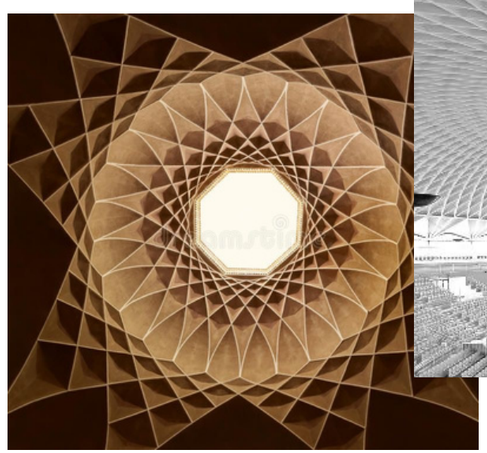


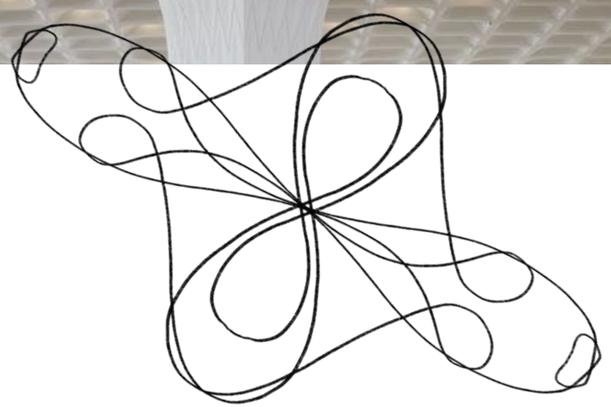


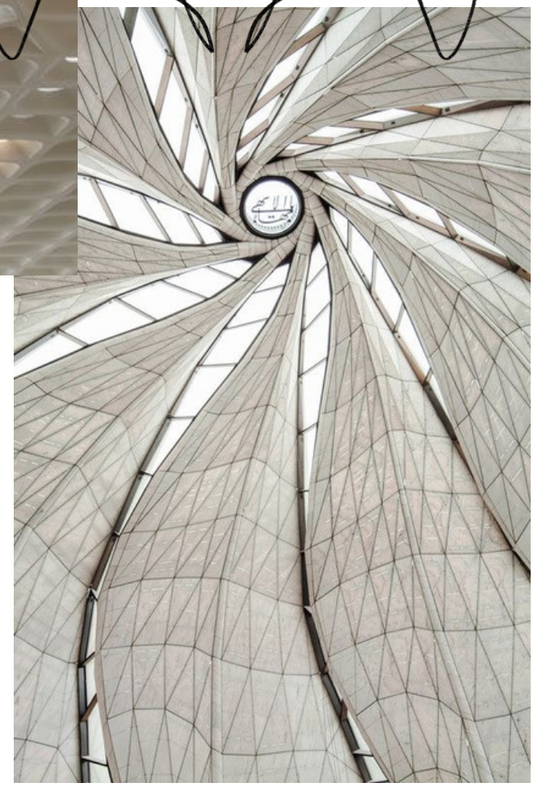






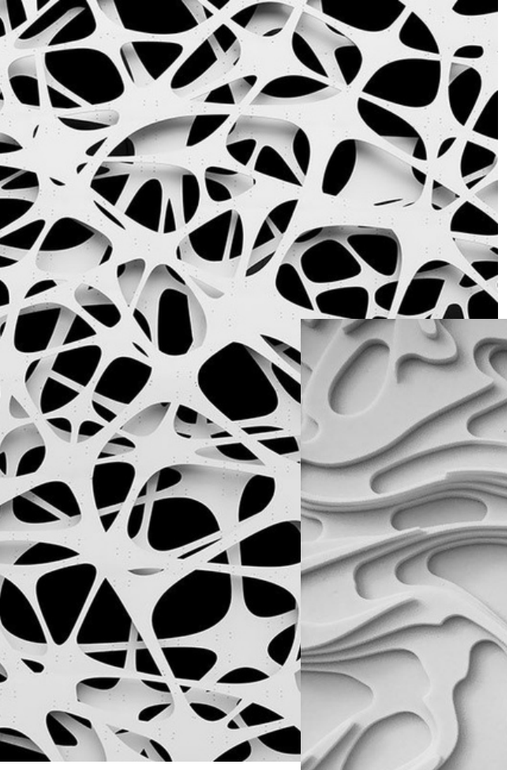


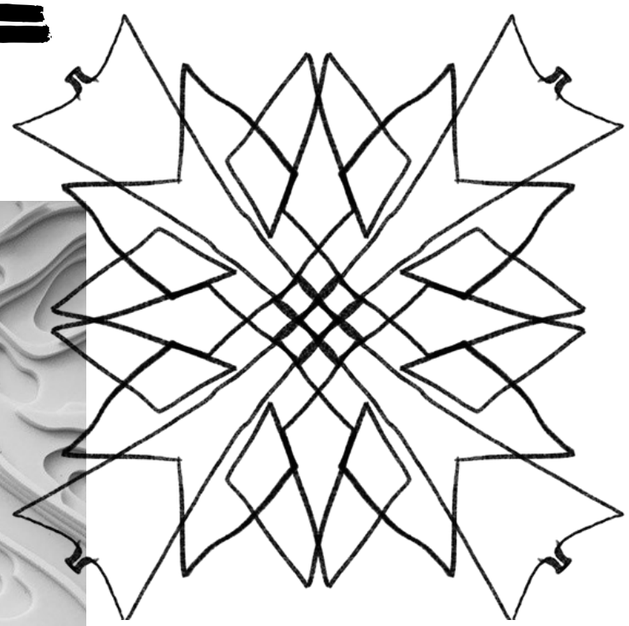


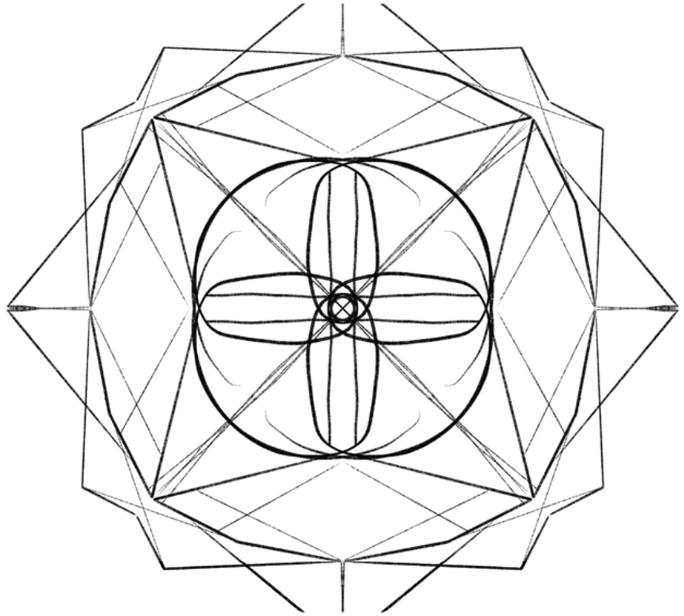


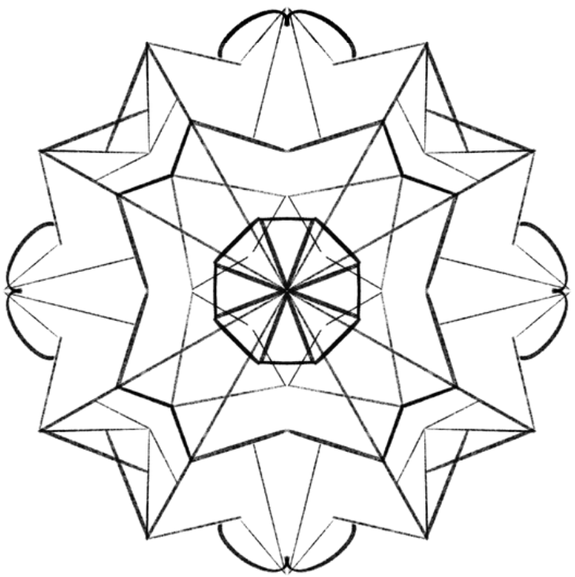
SYMMETRICAL CELING DESIGNS

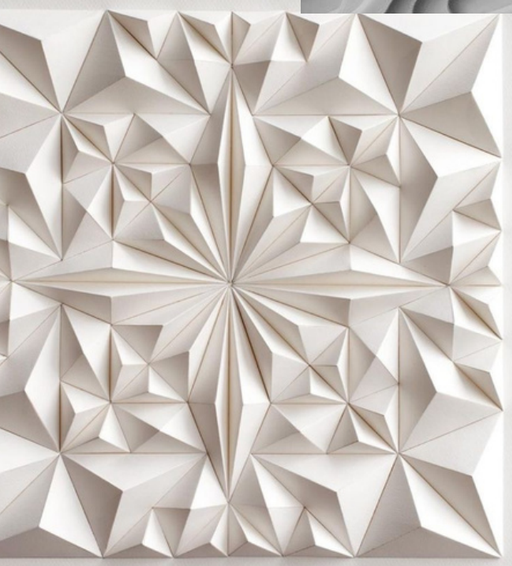
GEOMETIRCAL SHAPES

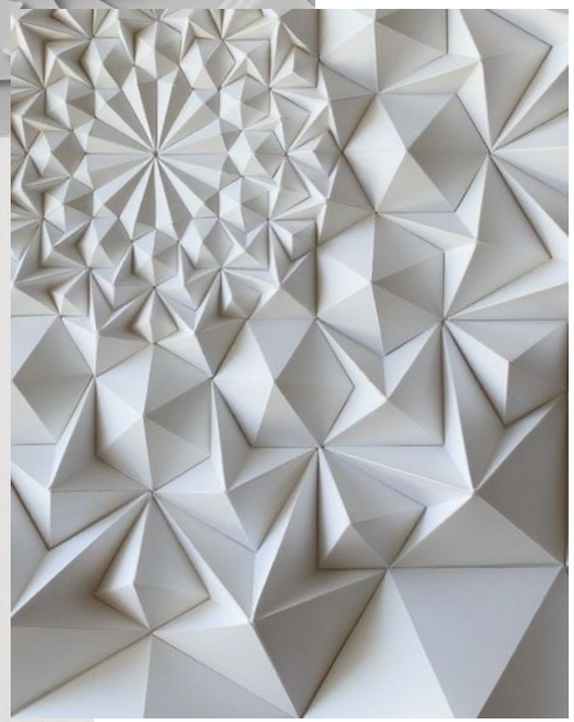


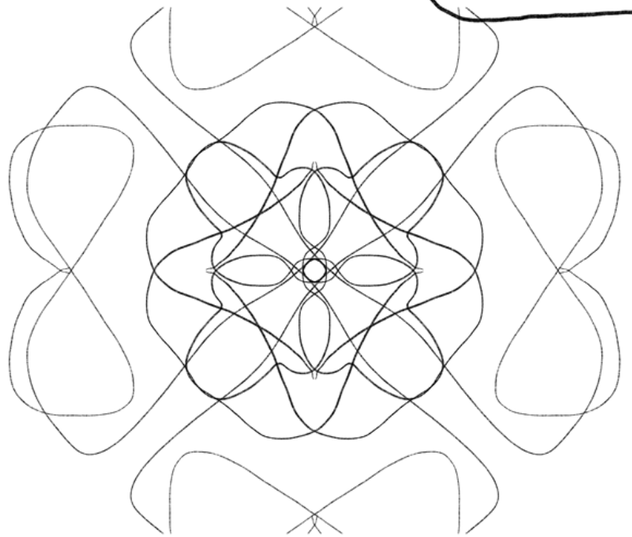




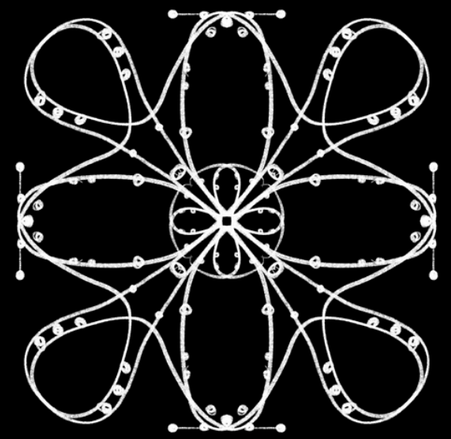


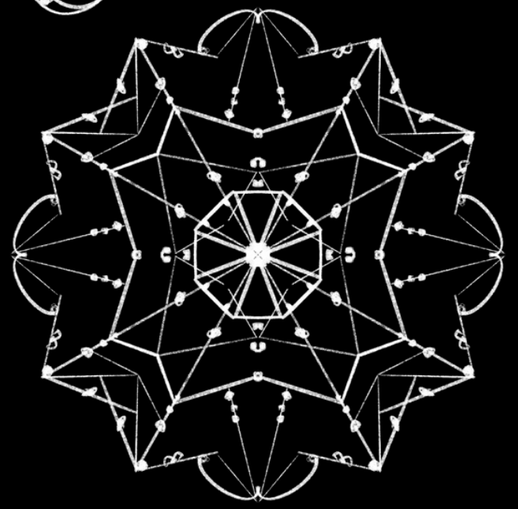


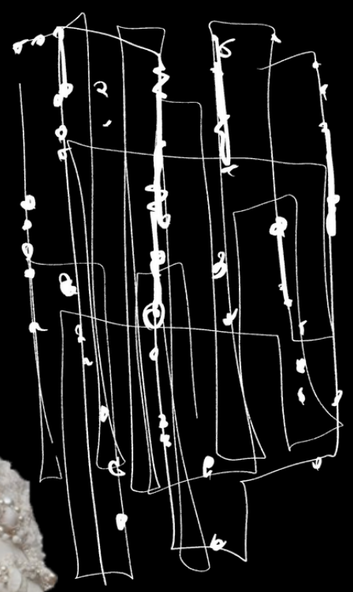


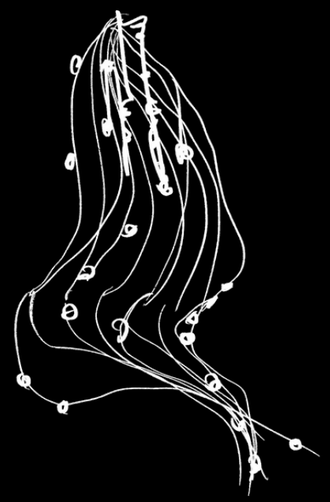


HONG KONG NIGHTSCAPE



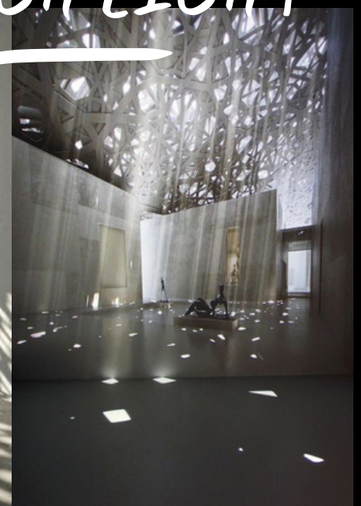




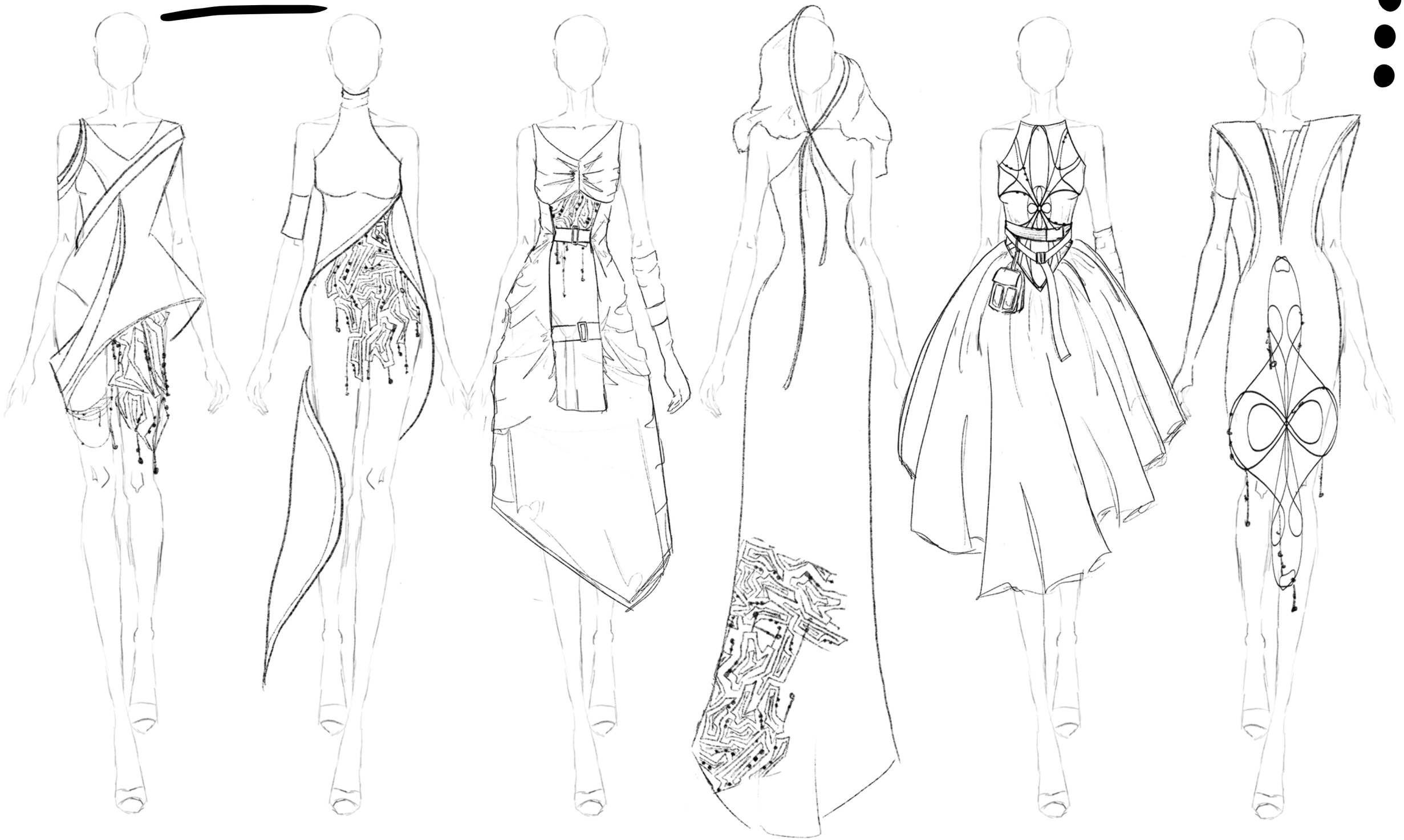


INCORPORATING THROUGH BEADINGS

NEGATIVE SPACE THROUGH LIGHT



INITIAL DESIGN IDEAS

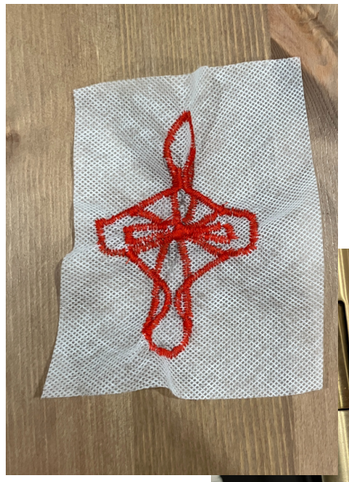


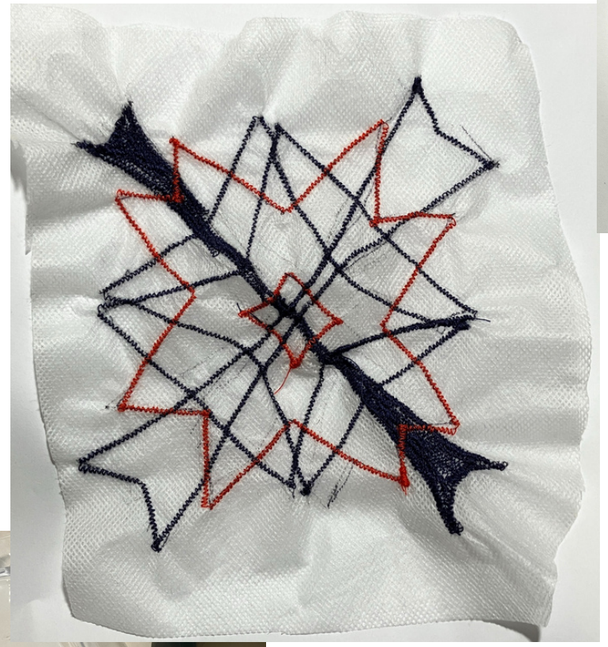
Futuristic

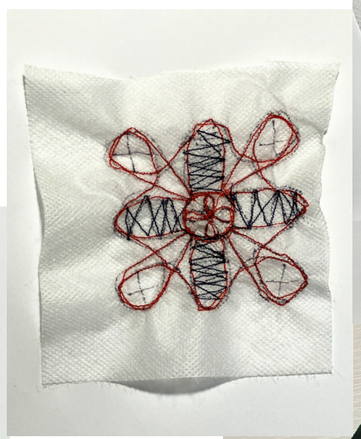
Contemporary

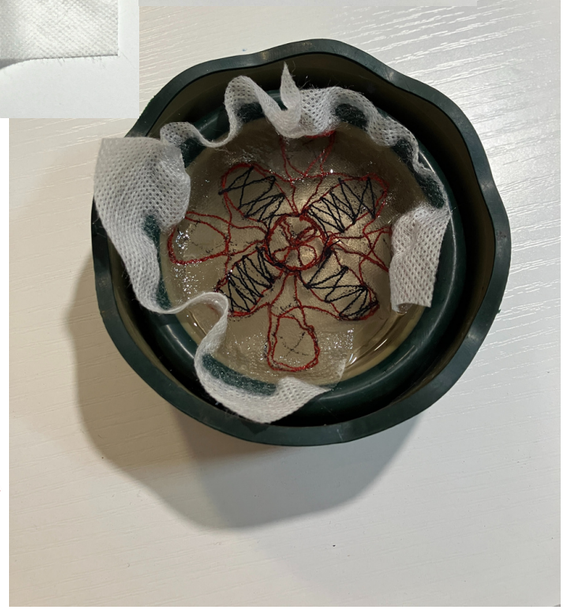
MEDIA EXPERIMENT

WATER SOLUBLE STABLISER









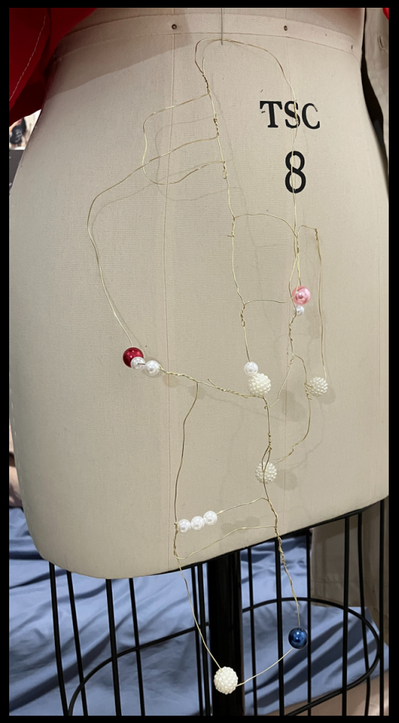
DOUBLE + ZIGZAG STITCHES

SINGLE STITCHES

MEDIA EXPERIMENT

LINES AND FORMS

NEGATIVE SPACE

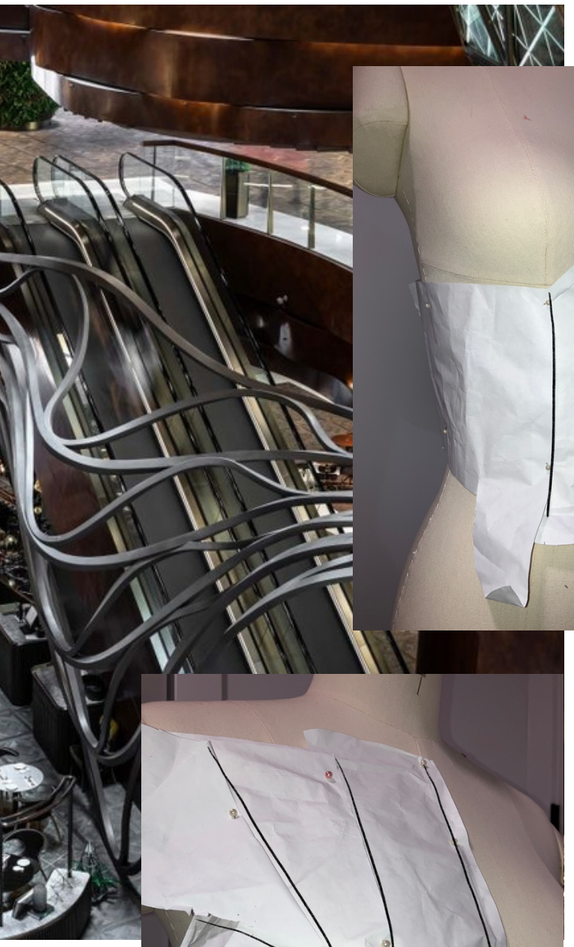


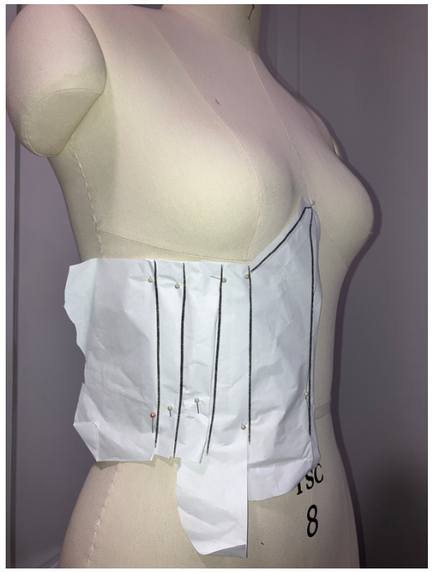
WIRES & BEADS

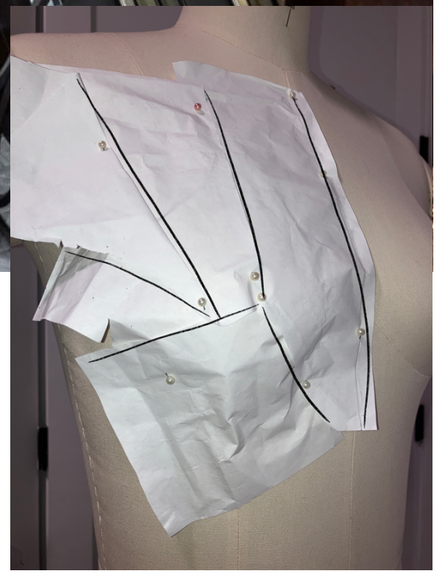
DRAPING

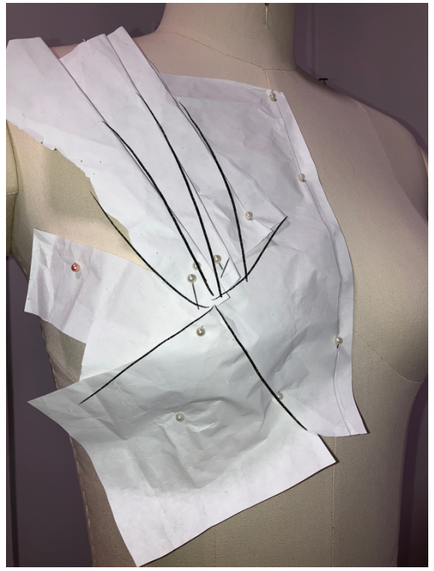
DART MANIPULATION

TO MANIPULATE THE LINES OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURES









JUXTAPOSING PACKED OLD BUILDINGS WITH CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURES

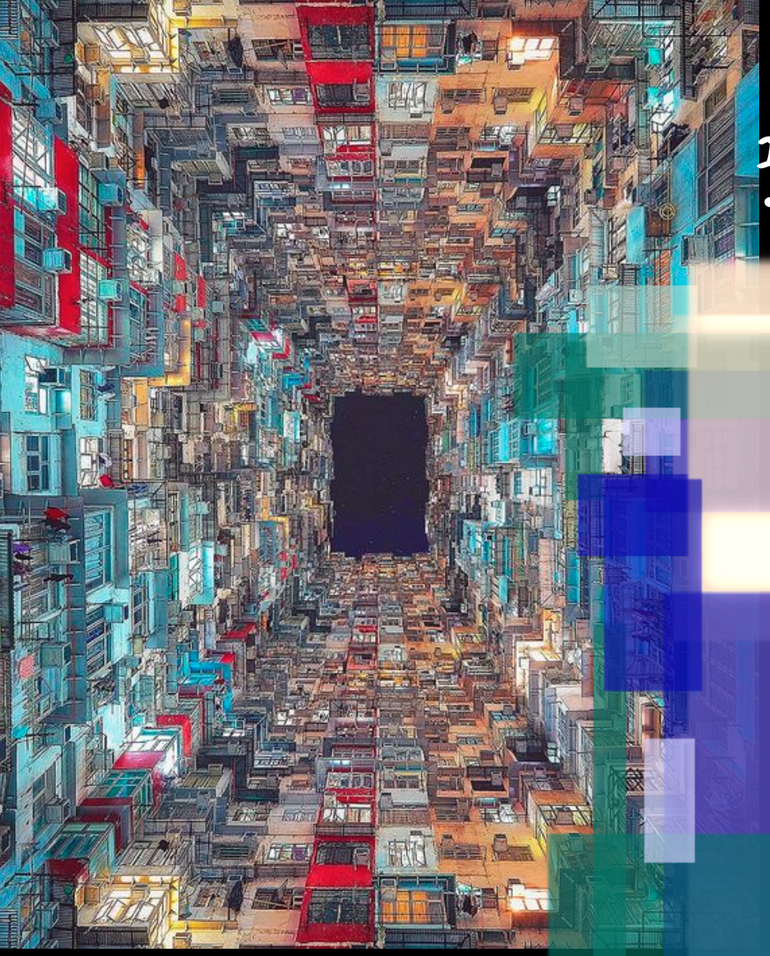
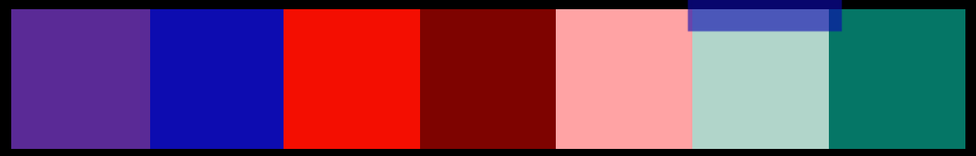


IMAGE BLOCKING

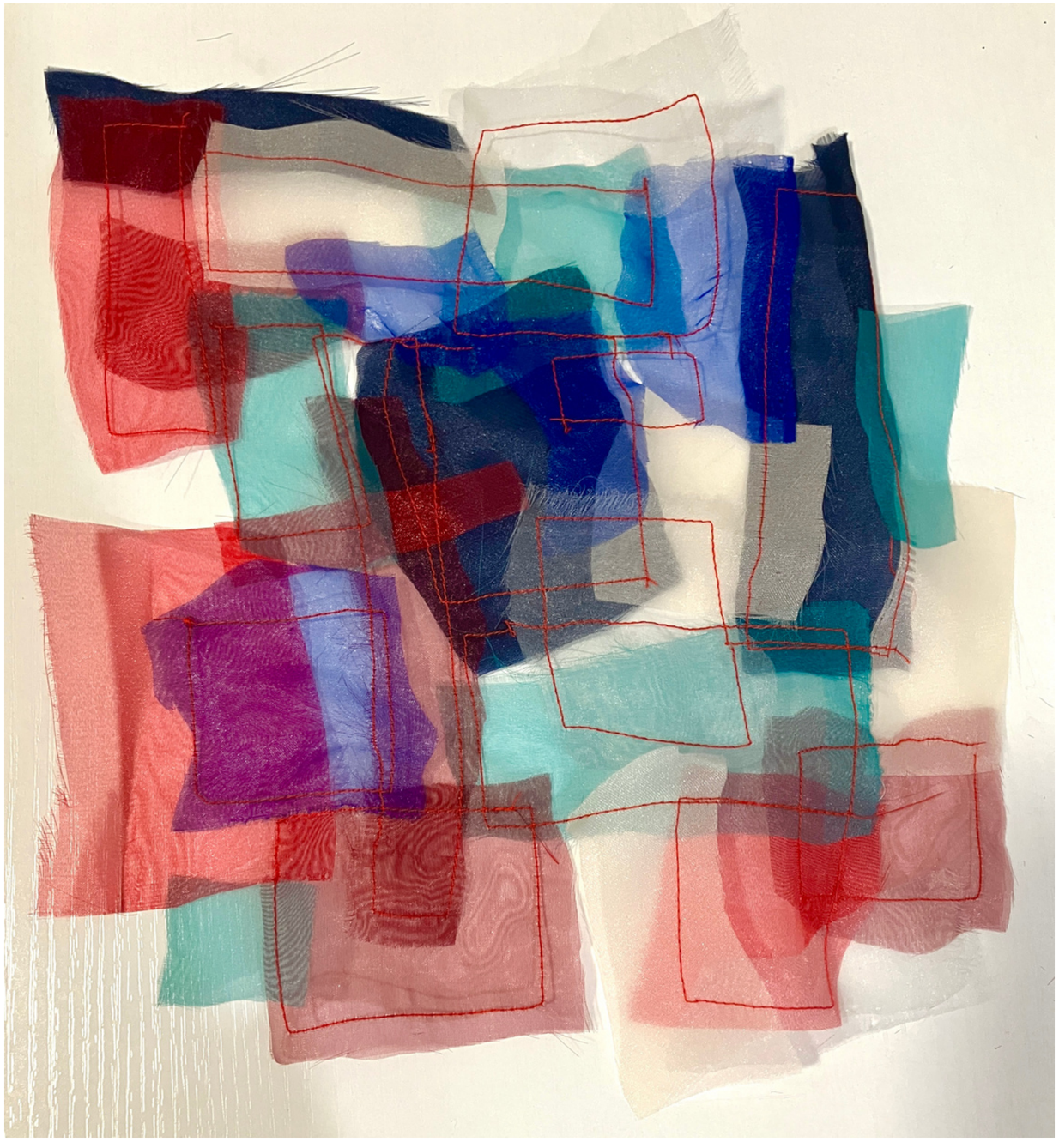
COLOUR PALETTE

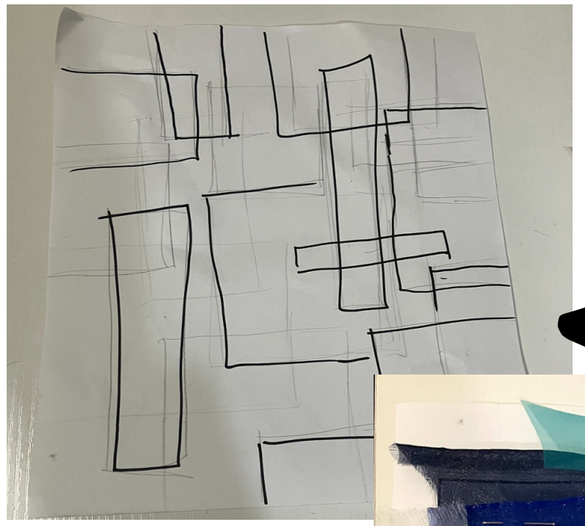


HONG KONG
AUTHENTICITY

MEDIA EXPERIMENT

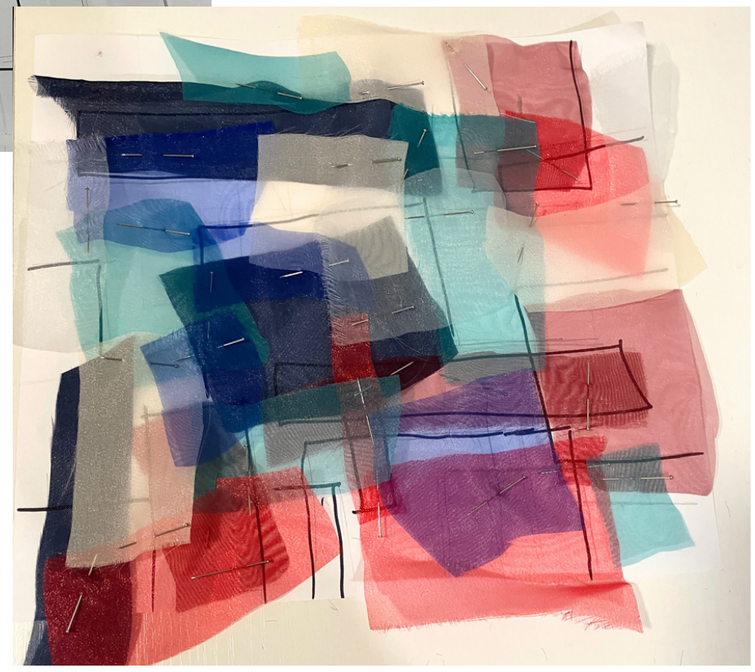
PATCHES WITH ORGANZA





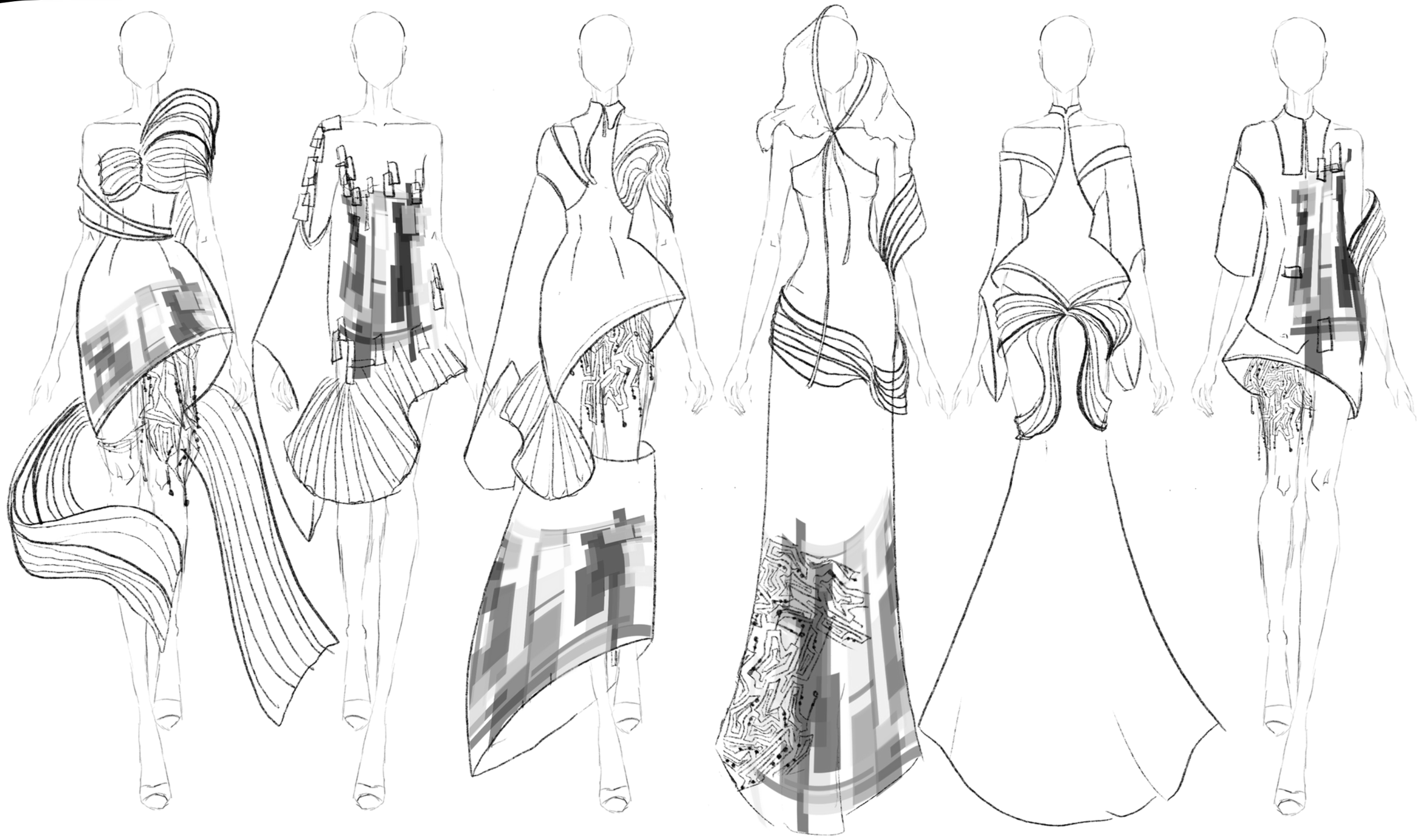
DRAFT PATCHES WITH PENCIL ON PAPER

PIN PATCHES AND SEW

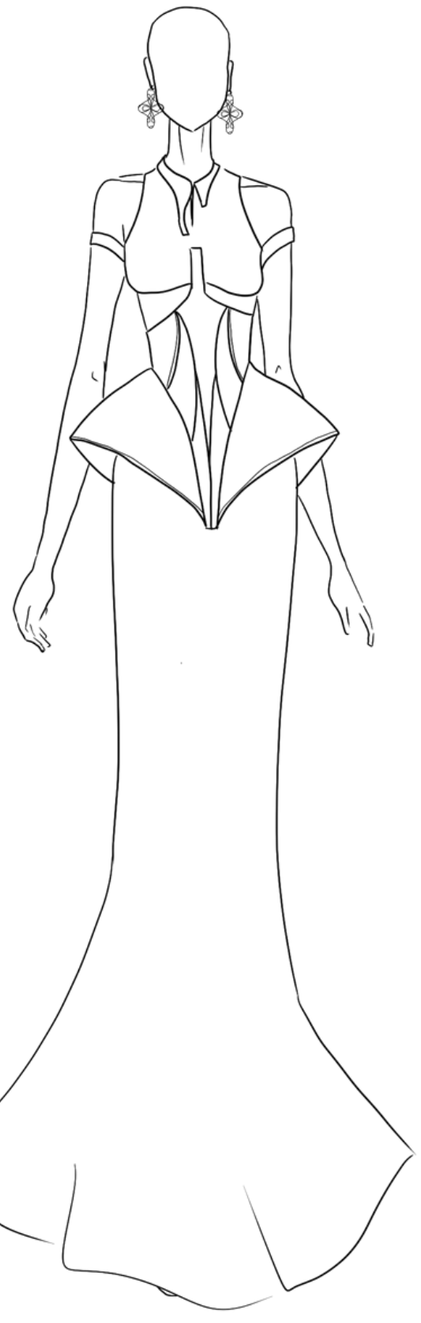


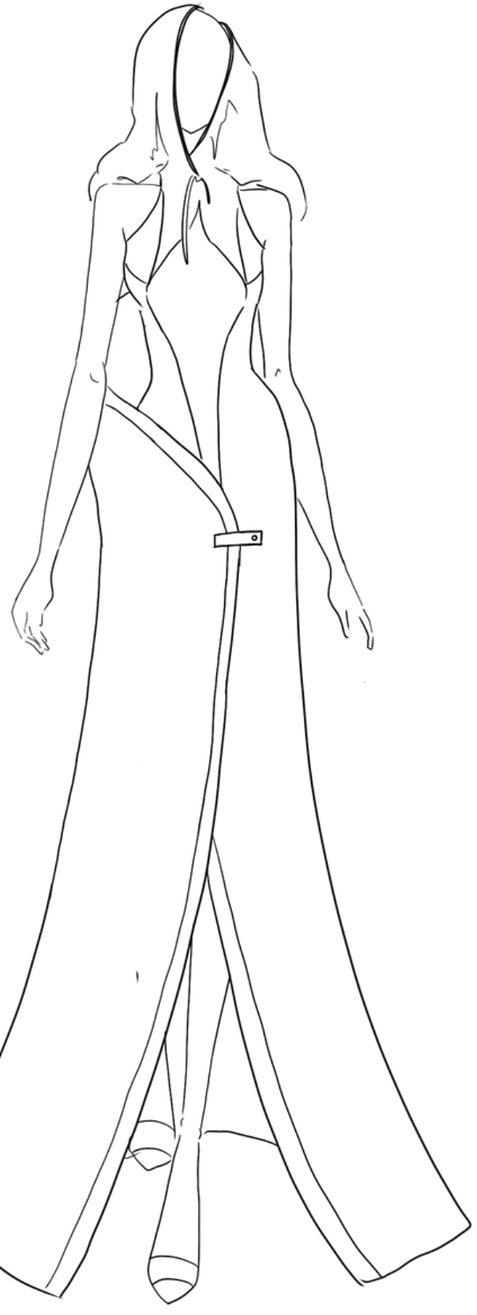
BURNT ORGANZA

DEVELOPED SKETCHES

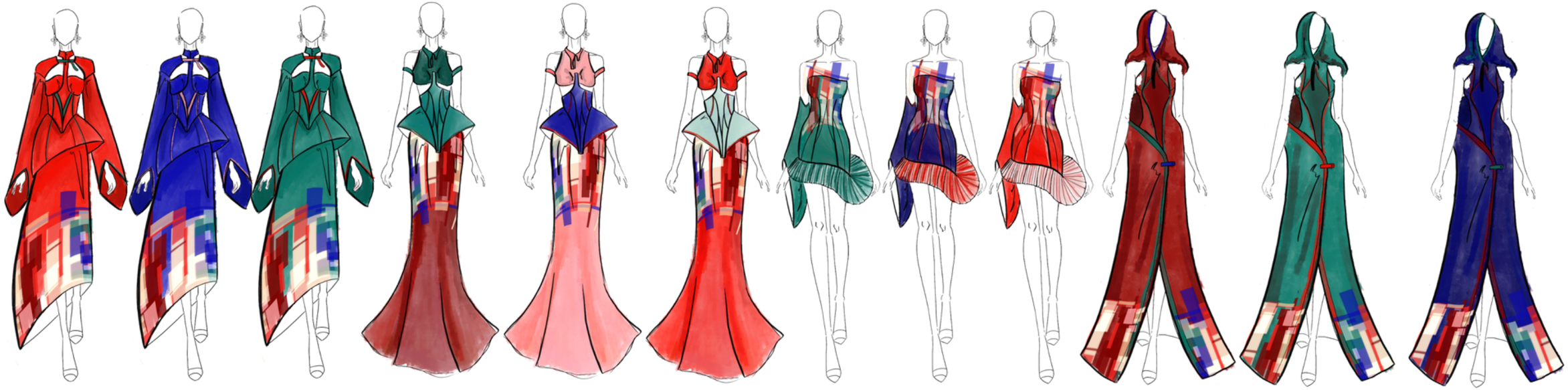


CHOSEN DESIGNS - SILHOUETTES

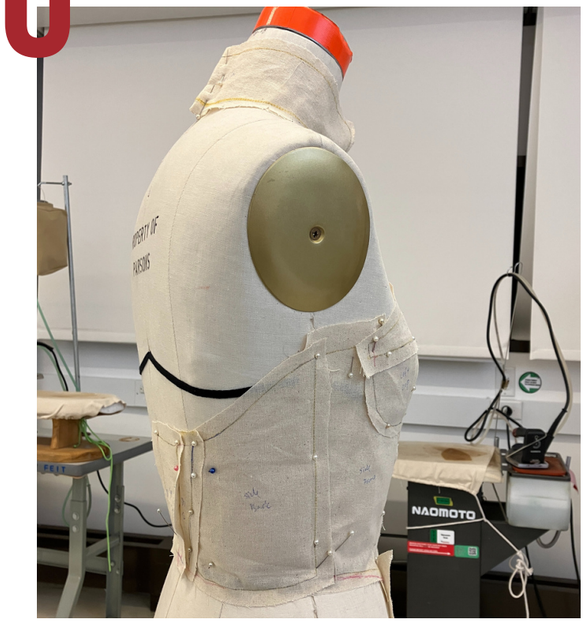


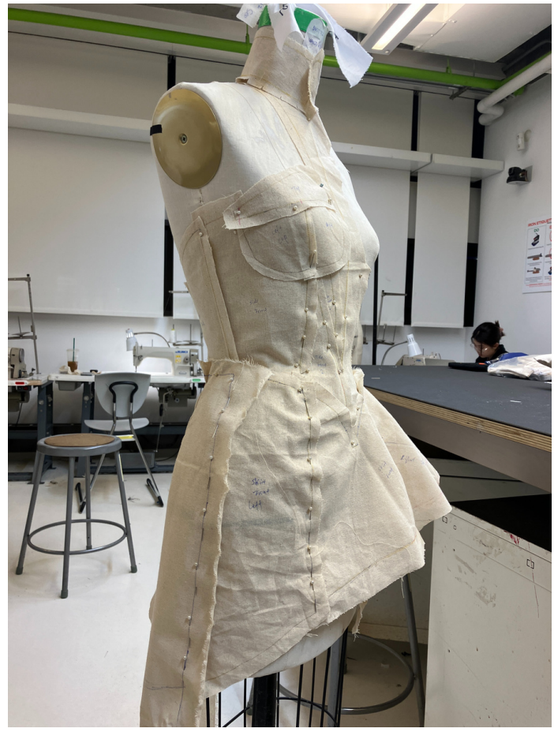


COLOUR STUDY



PATTERN MAKING



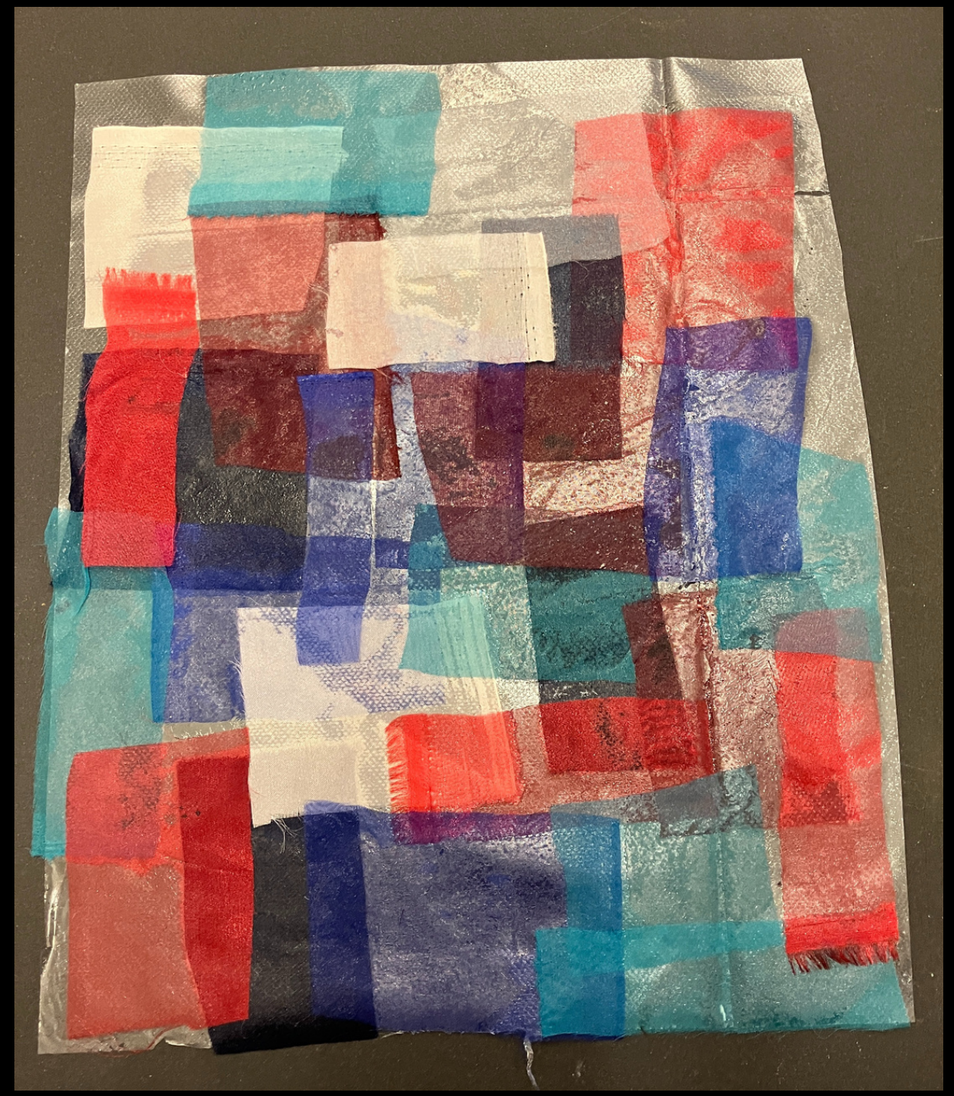


DESIGN REFINEMENTS

ZIPPER CHANGED TO CENTER FRONT

MEDIA EXPERIMENT

ORGANZA PATCHES WITH BONDAWEB



PLACED AND IRON ORGANZA PATCHES ON IRON ADHESIVE BONDAWEB

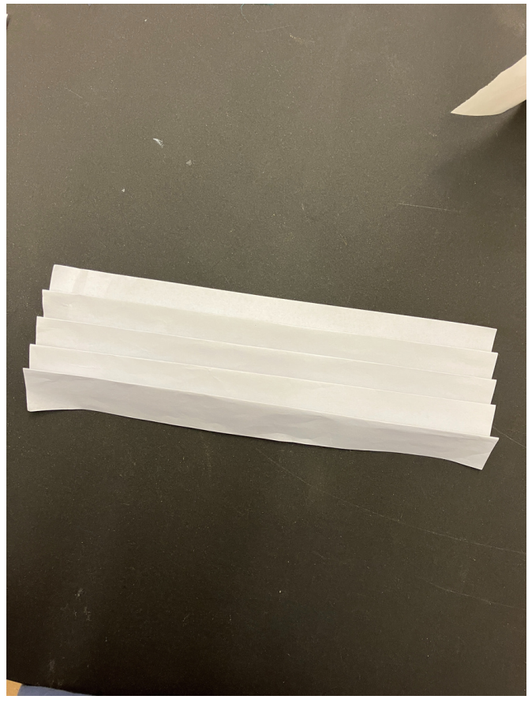
- TRANSLUCENT EFFECT
- NO STITCH LINES

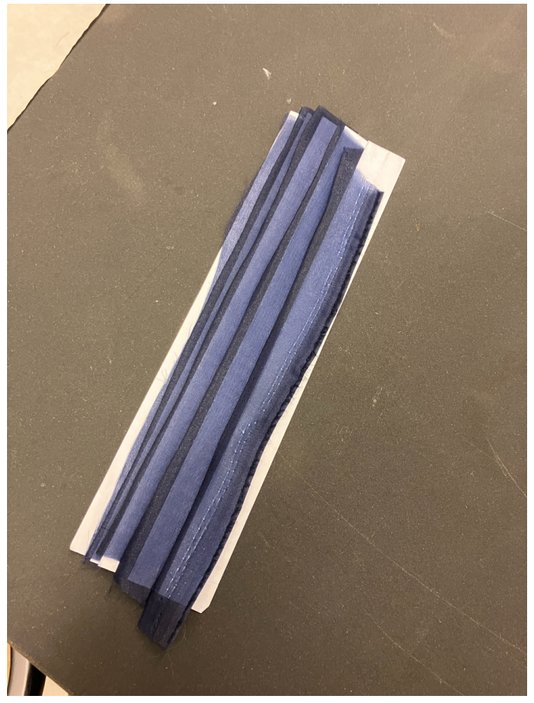
MANIPULATION

MANIPULATIONS OF ORGANZA PATCHES
ON DESIGNS + MANNEQUINS

MEDIA EXPERIMENT

ORGANZA PLEATS





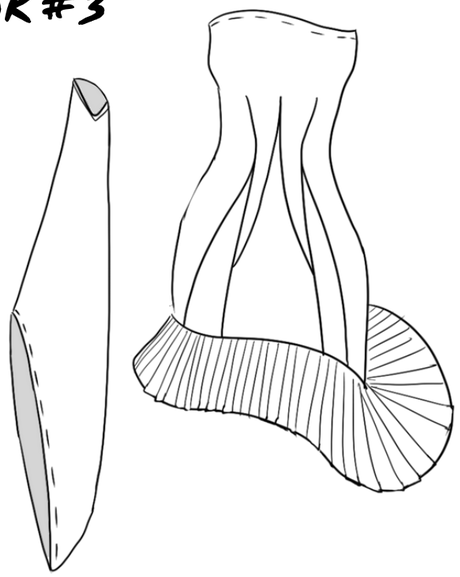
PLEATED POLYESTER ORGANZA AND MANIPULATED IT ON DESIGN 3

SILK ORGANZA

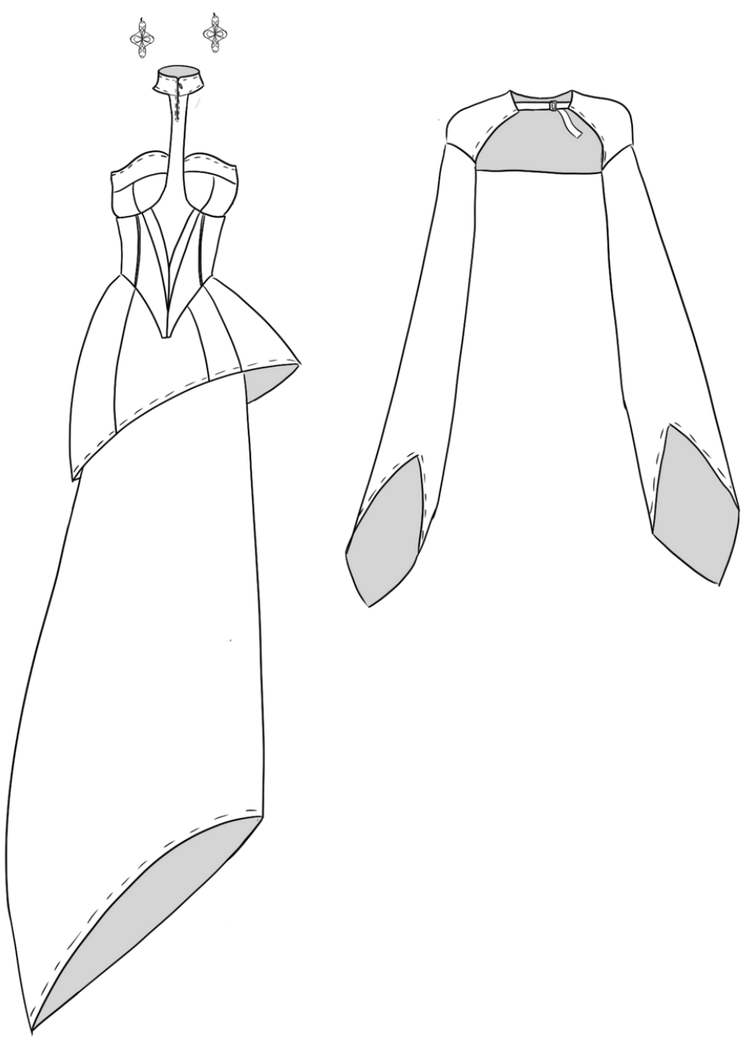
FABRIC SWATCHES

TECHNICAL FLATS

LOOK#3



LOOK#1



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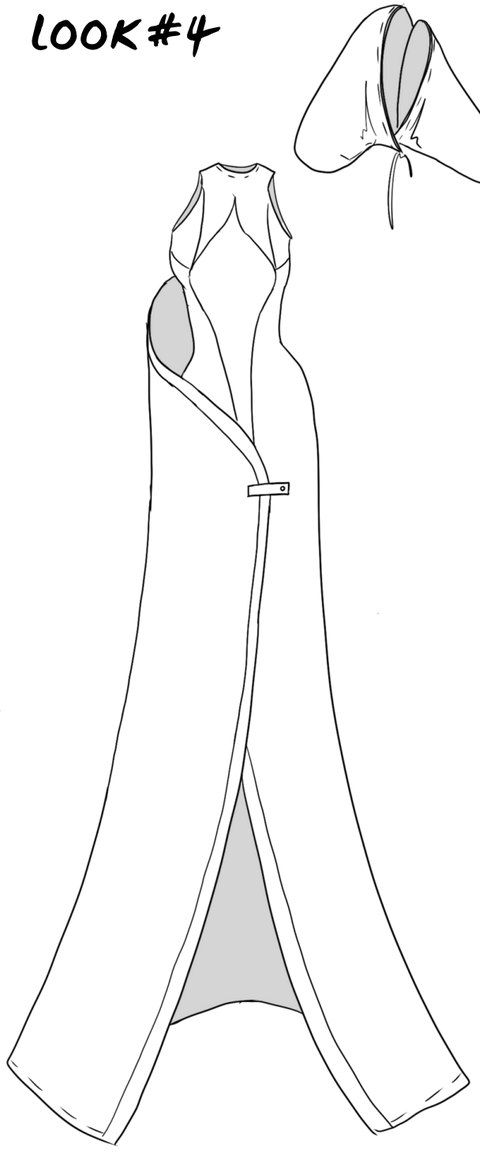
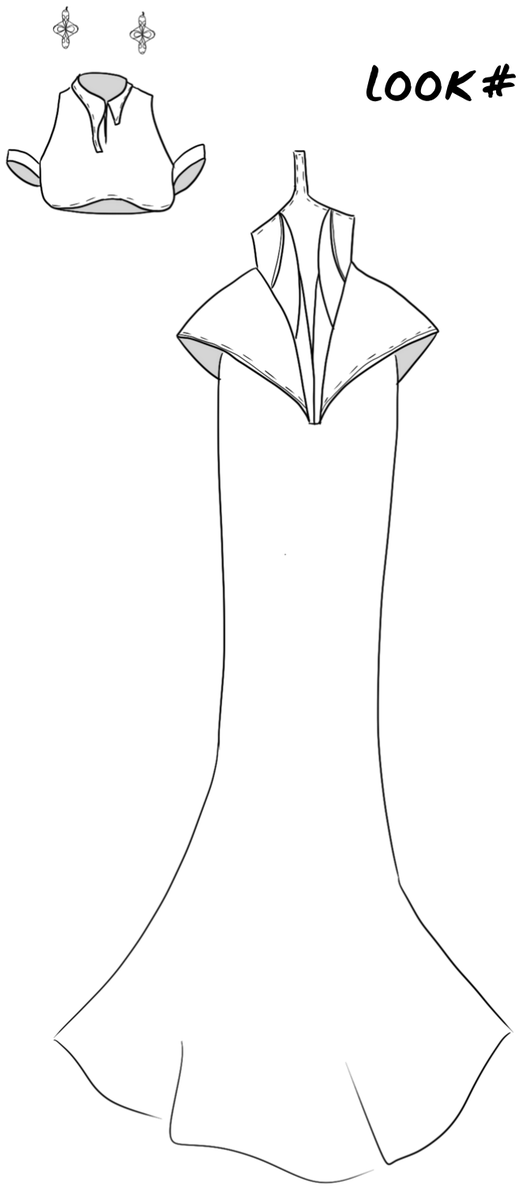
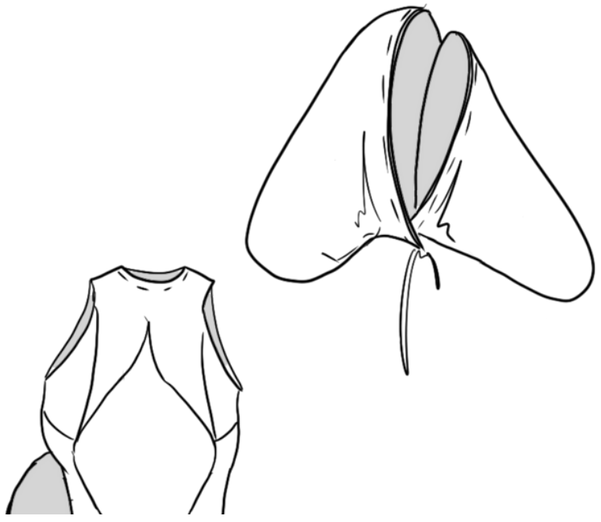


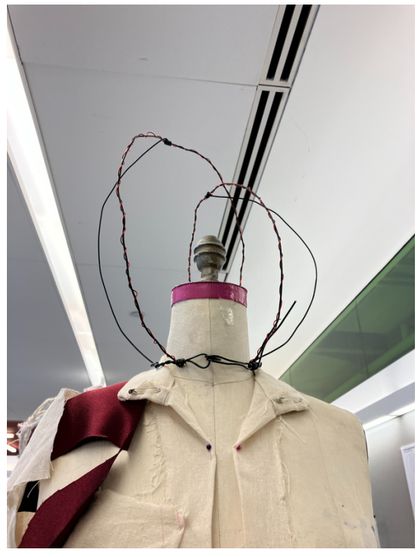
LOOK#2

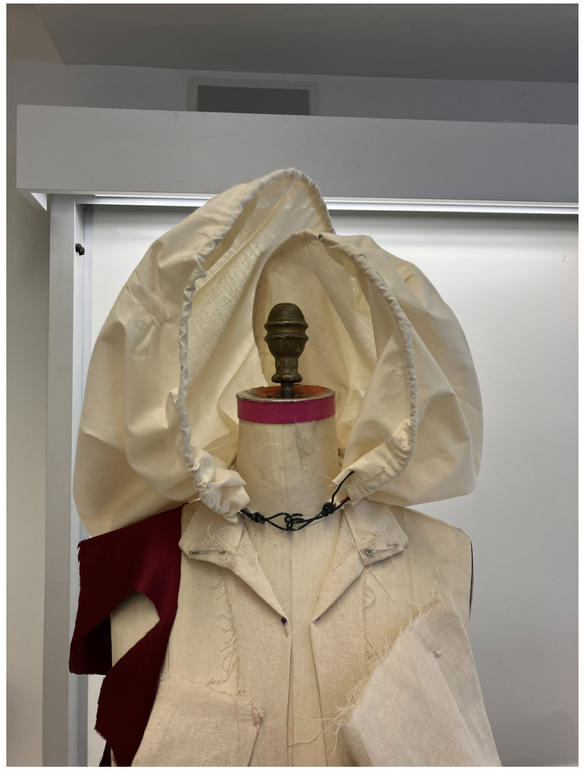


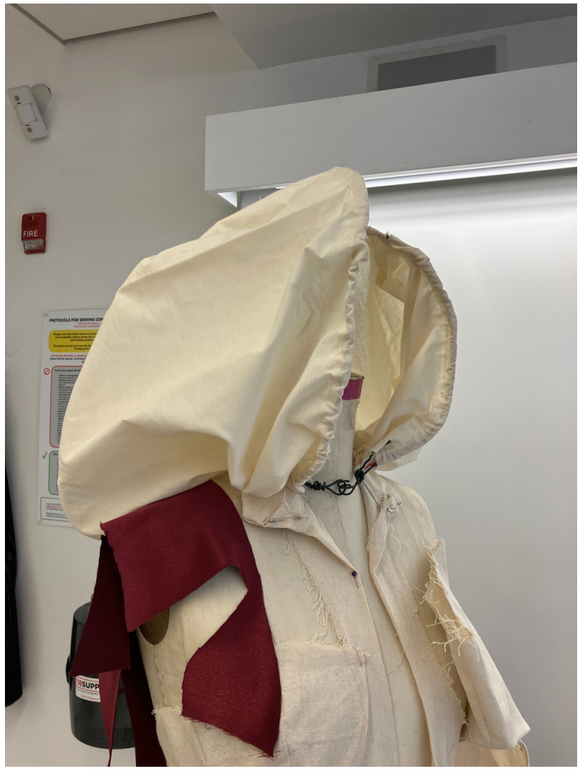
HOOD EXPERIMENT

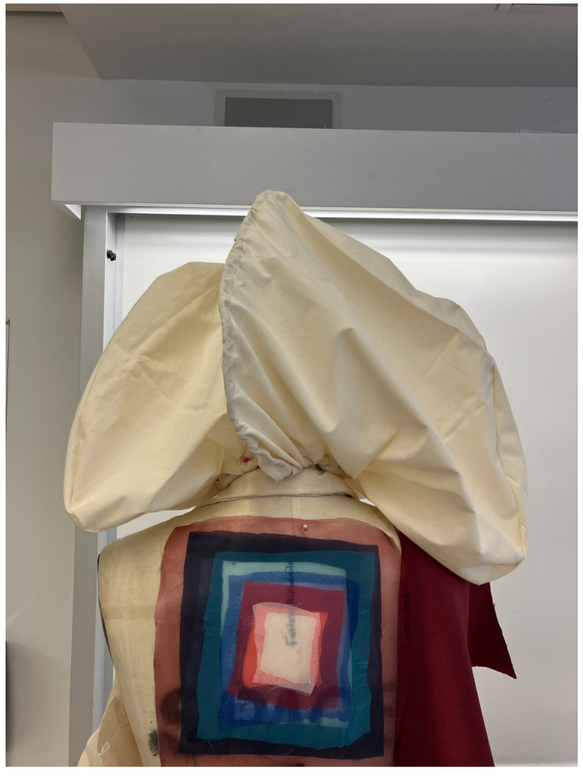
LOOK #4



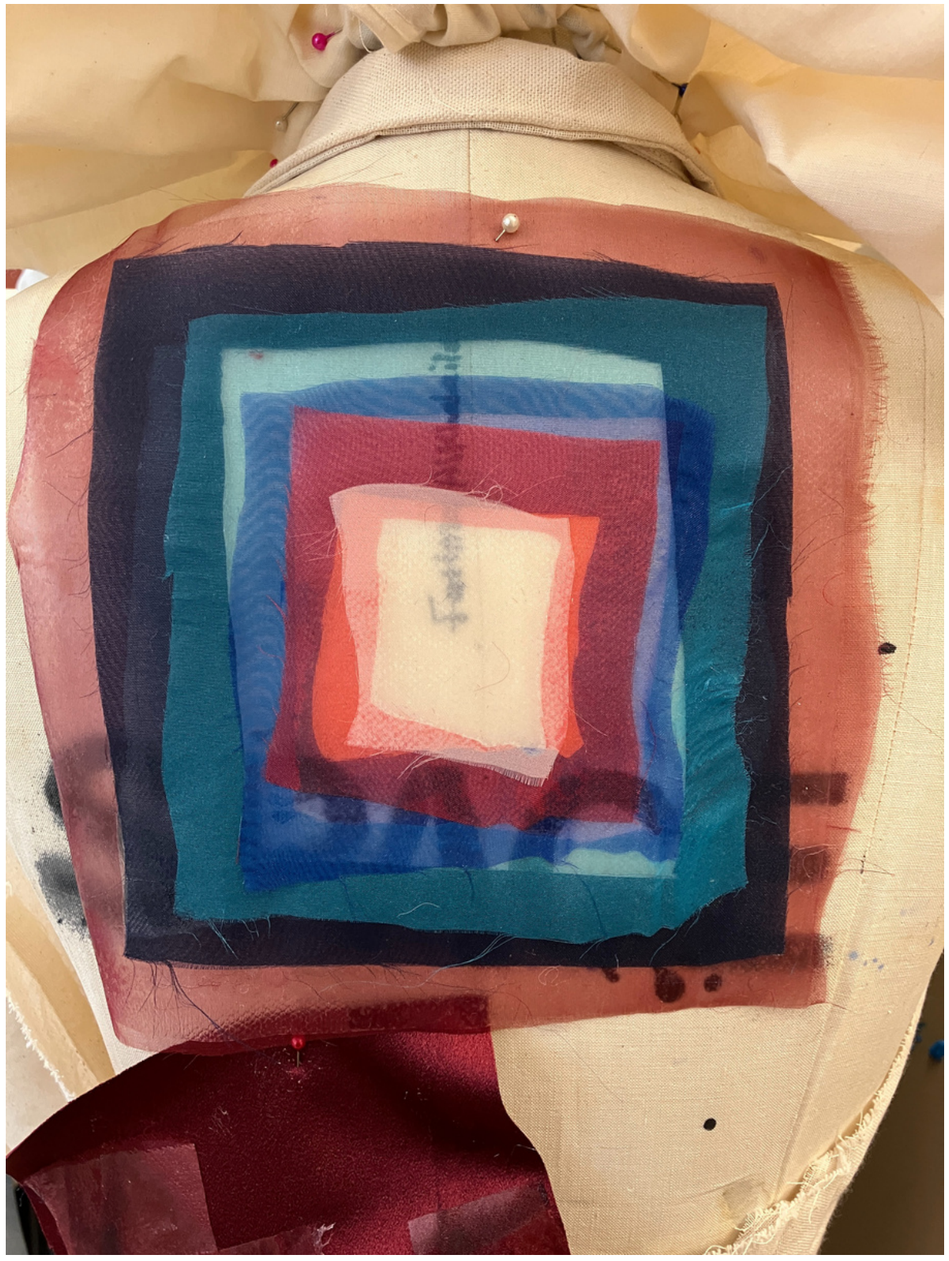


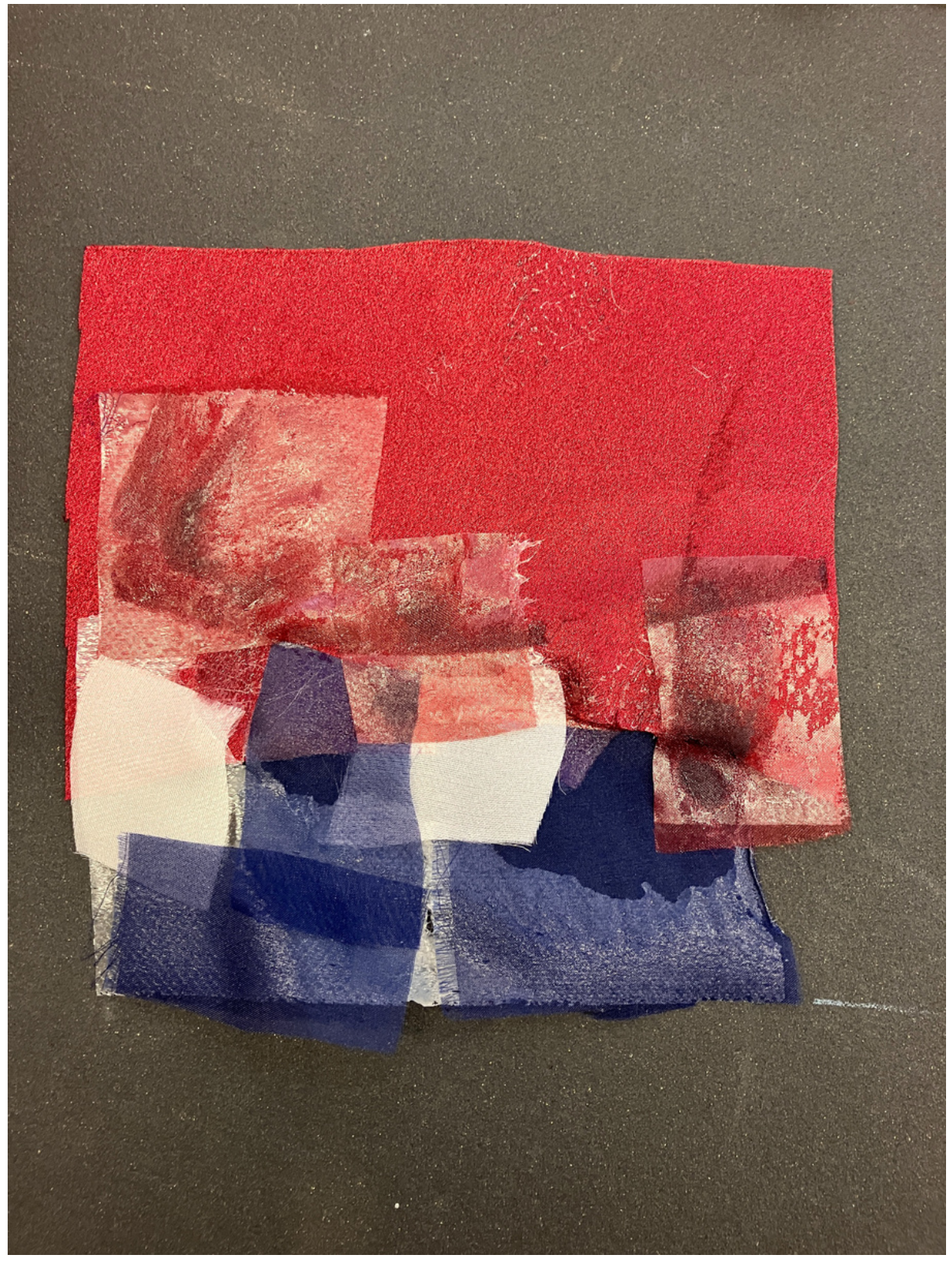






ADDITIONAL MEDIA EXPERIMENT





NOT YOUR 'MODEL MINORITY':

UNVEILING CULTURAL IDENTITY THROUGH DISMANTLING THE TROPE

ANGELINA, CANDICE, JASMINE

BFA Pathway: Collection

Focus: Social Justice, Responsible Co-Design, Historical and modern Fit (gender, race, class, culture, inclusivity)

A friend of Jasmine's once asked her, "does Chinatown actually look like China?" This brought us to the realization that although the New York City Chinatown is currently a popular tourist destination and fun place to get delicious food, it used to be a sanctuary providing safety and protection for the early Chinese immigrants. The issue that this project aims to tackle is the Chinese experience in America surrounding stereotypes. The history of Chinese immigrants in America has been marked by marginalization, discrimination and racism. The Covid-19 pandemic triggered historical misinterpretations rooted in xenophobia, as well as hate crimes happening at street level, media and political sphere. Together, we want to represent a system of resilience, community-building, and minority designers who act as catalysts for cultural preservation amidst discrimination and adversity.

Upon the issues mentioned, we are driven by the desire to dismantle the stereotypical representations of Chinese-Americans in America. Through visual communication, we intend to break the trope that flattens and limits the rich diversity of our community. Aiming to cast away the misconceptions associated with the so-called 'model minority,' while shedding light on the struggles and resilience displayed by Chinese-Americans both in the classroom and the workforce. We would be engaging the key theories of stereotypical Chinese-Americans by addressing the misrepresentations of this community in films and everyday life, seeking to juxtapose these stereotypes with the dynamic subcultures that merge Chinese culture with American influences. By reflecting on cultural norms and embodying our heritage, we hope to challenge the social wedge created by these stereotypes and promote a more inclusive and authentic representation of Chinese-Americans.

We first thought about several topics separately and then discussed each topic. Finally, we chose the one that interests us all. We are prepared to preserve everyone's uniqueness and ideas. So we are preparing to start our research from several different directions. We have selected several different Chinese elements (see below). Everyone will start designing a series of clothes based on their research direction. When we complete the research, we will start refining images and elements. Our design direction should be the dress direction. Evening dresses and exaggerated dresses. Because our designs are very different, during our design process, we will use each other's methods and modify each other's designs to make this series unified. In the end, we should design a total of 12 designs, each with 4. Then we hope to spend more time making some of these clothes, and we hope to make one per person.

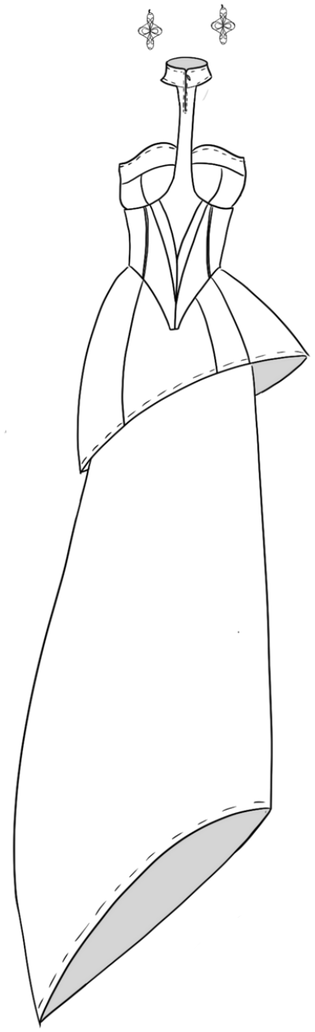
Subcultures Elements:
- Opera
- Architecture
- Food
- Traditional painting
- Caligraphy

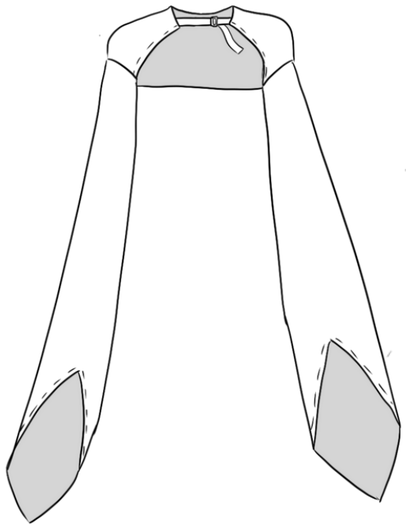
FABRIC SWATCHES

THESIS

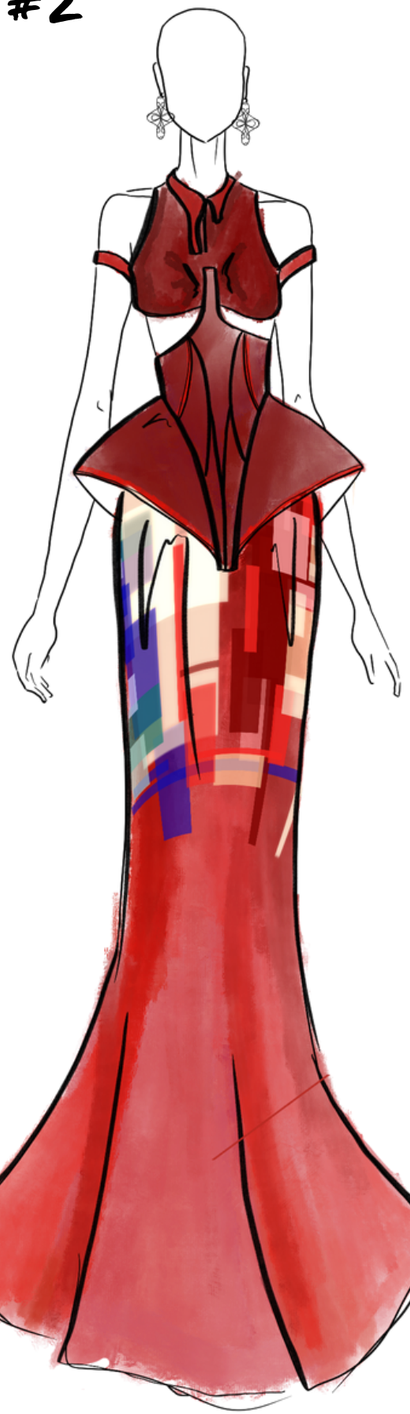
Wanting to embrace and elevate the cultural representation of our own, we hope to deliver a strong and bracing sense of the rich diversity of our Chinese community. Addressing this in fashion, we would be making an avant-garde couture collection that embraces our cultural identity; I would be focusing on the stereotypical image of Chinatown being old and musty, juxtapositioning it with the contemporary architecture in Hong Kong. Using the forms and lines of architecture as the subject, I hope to empower and unveil our subculture, that had been out of sight.

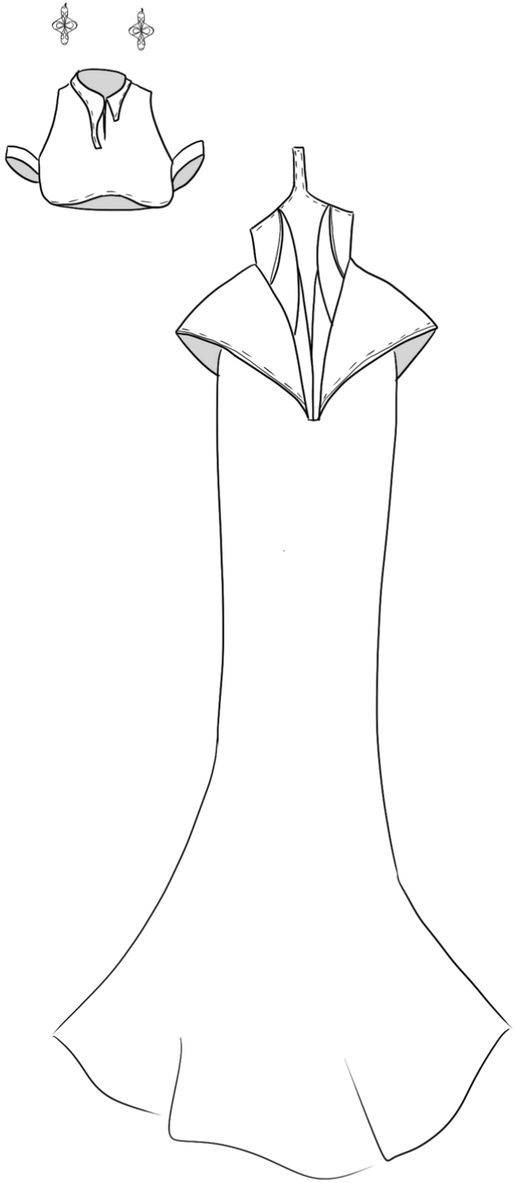
LOOK#1





LOOK#2





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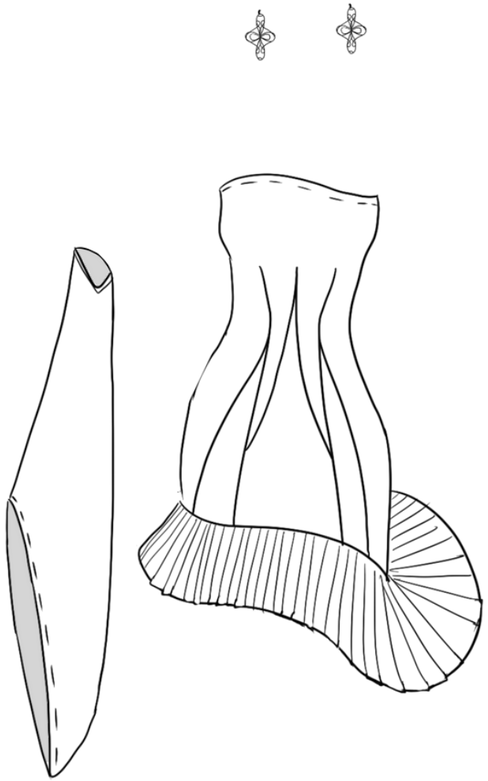
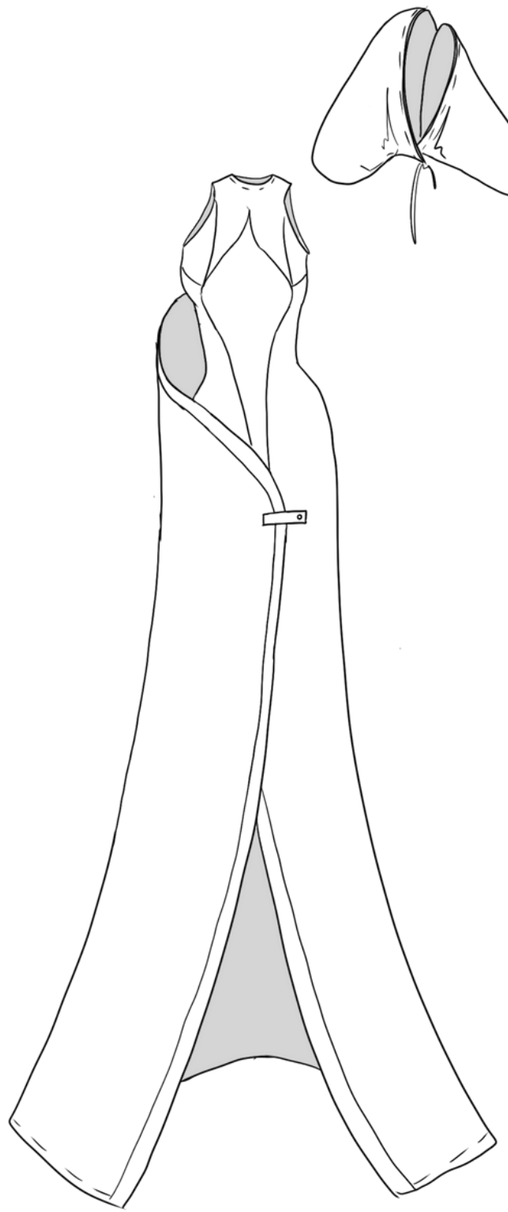
LOOK#4