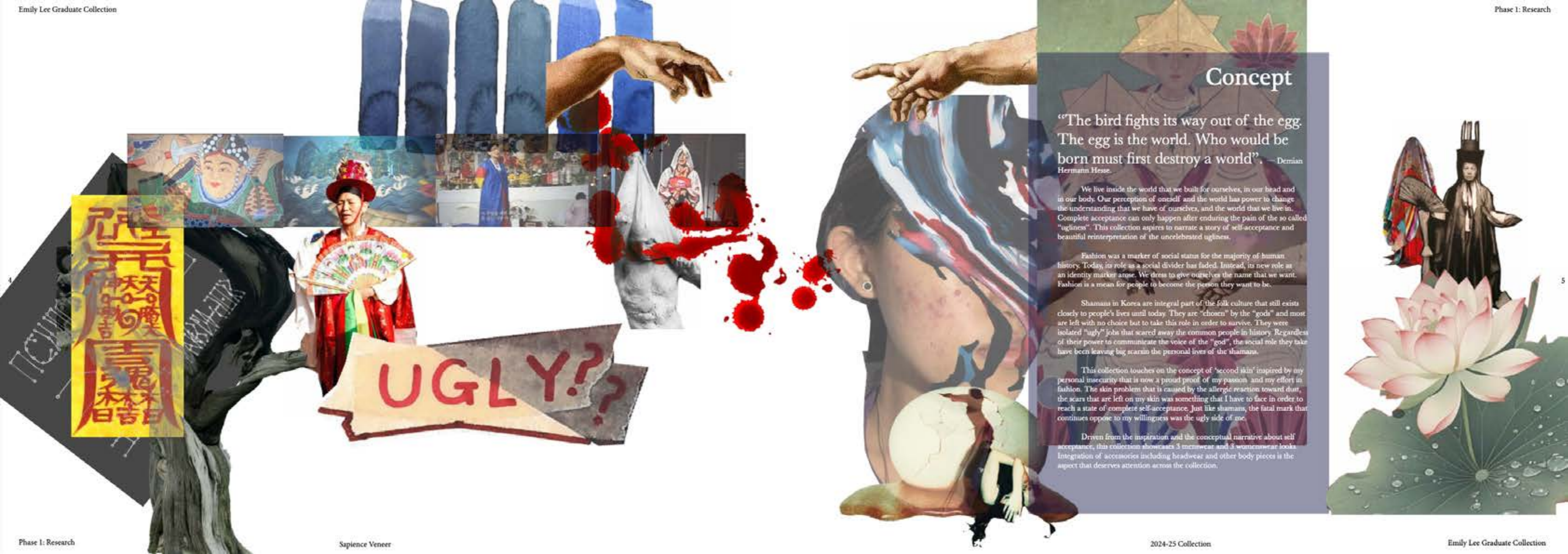
The background of the page is an abstract, textured artwork. It features a complex, layered composition of organic shapes and textures. The primary colors are various shades of blue, ranging from light, airy tones to deep, dark, almost black hues. Interspersed throughout these blue areas are vibrant, saturated red shapes, some of which appear as elongated, vein-like structures or irregular patches. The overall effect is reminiscent of a microscopic view of a material, a cross-section of a mineral, or perhaps a close-up of a biological tissue. The textures are varied, with some areas appearing smooth and others more fibrous or crystalline. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a sense of depth and movement. The composition is non-representational and highly detailed.

Sapience Veneer

Emily Lee

Graduate Collection



Concept

“The bird fights its way out of the egg. The egg is the world. Who would be born must first destroy a world”. — Derrian Hermann Hesse.

We live inside the world that we built for ourselves, in our head and in our body. Our perception of oneself and the world has power to change the understanding that we have of ourselves, and the world that we live in. Complete acceptance can only happen after enduring the pain of the so called “ugliness”. This collection aspires to narrate a story of self-acceptance and beautiful reinterpretation of the uncelebrated ugliness.

Fashion was a marker of social status for the majority of human history. Today, its role as a social divider has faded. Instead, its new role as an identity marker arose. We dress to give ourselves the name that we want. Fashion is a mean for people to become the person they want to be.

Shamans in Korea are integral part of the folk culture that still exists closely to people's lives until today. They are “chosen” by the “gods” and most are left with no choice but to take this role in order to survive. They were isolated “ugly” jobs that scared away the common people in history. Regardless of their power to communicate the voice of the “god”, the social role they take have been leaving big scars in the personal lives of the shamans.

This collection touches on the concept of ‘second skin’ inspired by my personal insecurity that is now a proud proof of my passion and my effort in fashion. The skin problem that is caused by the allergic reaction toward dust, the scars that are left on my skin was something that I have to face in order to reach a state of complete self-acceptance. Just like shamans, the fatal mark that continues oppose to my willingness was the ugly side of me.

Driven from the inspiration and the conceptual narrative about self acceptance, this collection showcases 3 menswear and 3 womenswear looks. Integration of accessories including headwear and other body pieces is the aspect that deserves attention across the collection.





Mu-Seok

Mu-soak, the Korean terminology that refers to the folk religion, consists of many gods. Mu-dang, the shamans who play central role in the folk religion, is "selected" by the gods. My collection is inspired by the Mu-dangs' life, religious rituals and Mu-dangs' accessorized appearance.

Korean folk religion, or shamanism, is a unique part of the culture that is relevant to the people living today just as much as to the people from the past. Mu-soak, the Korean terminology that refers the folk religion, consists of many gods. Mu-dang, the shamans who play central role in the folk religion, is "selected" by the gods. My collection is inspired by the Mu-dangs' life, religious rituals and their accessorized appearance. Once "chosen" by the god, an individual goes through phases of physical pain and array of harmful accidents, which all is believed caused by the god showing destiny of becoming a Mu-dang, leaving the life as a 'normal' person behind. When the individual refuses to pick up the role as Mu-dang, the illness or accidents can threaten their life. A ritual called "sin-nerim" (meaning descending of god) in form of "gut" (a term that refers any ceremonial act and performance done by a mu-dang for various purposes) needs to be done for an individual to accept the god and become a mu-dang or "man-shin" (another term for shaman meaning ten thousand gods). Before, and still today to some extent, mu-dangs were isolated from the society by their uniqueness and power as a messenger of god. Mu-dang was and still is interpreted as a tangible representation of god. The significance of their role is ironic to the incredible emotional and physical pain that an individual has to endure to accept who they are. The fact that their destined fate is given to them rather than derived from their own will emotionally resonated with me. As a Korean who adores her cultural uniqueness, the folk religion is something that speaks to me very personally. The history behind the religion is something that I have never encountered in any other culture, which motivates me to celebrate it.



Wiseok is an indigenous religion in Korea. A shaman called Wiseok, a shaman, has a special character as a shaman who serves as a mediator between the spirits of the ancestors and the human world. In some cases, it has similarities with shamanism in other cultures. It is related to a traditional religion of Korea people and has a great influence on the development of Korean culture.

Trees in Korean Ritual

If Mu-dangs are human form of god's presence, trees are interpreted as a static but powerful presence of god. Often times, trees are believed to have its own soul, which is celebrated as a type of god in traditional culture. In many ancient villages, a tree that is centuries old would stand at the gate to "protect" the village as a spiritual being of the village. Many important celebrations may happen in front of the tree (in front of the god, essentially) and the villagers would "dress up" the god by tying and hanging long strips of colourful cloth on tree branches.



비로관 : a type of headwear worn by monks & monks.
→ BI RO Gwan

HEADWEAR & ACCESSORIES

Mu-sok and Korean folk clothes make use of various accessories and props to tell us how well. These have symbolic meanings, but the most important job they have is to create visual stimulation and intensify the shocking feeling for the audience.

A bag from a commoner is placed in a container.

Accessories are documenting this history.

They were placed in a bundle to make robes that distract audience.

Fan and cloth with a silk with bundle of hair are common prop in museum.

Developing into Accessory Integrated Collection: Looking at Full Body Silhouette

The collection's development into accessory integrated collection allowed me to change my sketch development method to consider the relationship between the accessory and the garment. This wider scope of design consideration helped me to develop a fuller silhouette for the whole collection.



I began to design full looks incorporating accessories to envision the silhouette of the whole body rather than focusing on accessories and garment separately. By considering the head-to-toe silhouette, more diverse approach of design could be achieved.

The idea of hanging cloth led to connecting a part of the headwear to the body and let it "hang" around the body. By trapping the wearer within the array of cloth strips, the narration of "shell" could be visualised.

Colour palette and Colour Distribution with Consideration of Fabric Choice

Based on the initial colour palette inspiration, the colour scheme of this collection was narrowed down to navy, black and aqua green with the hint of red.



The mysterious and eerie mood of the folk religion could be expressed in the most dramatic way with emphasis on the dark tones. I could source various shades of blues during my fabric research, so this colour palette also ensured diverse but controlled development of colour and texture of the collection.



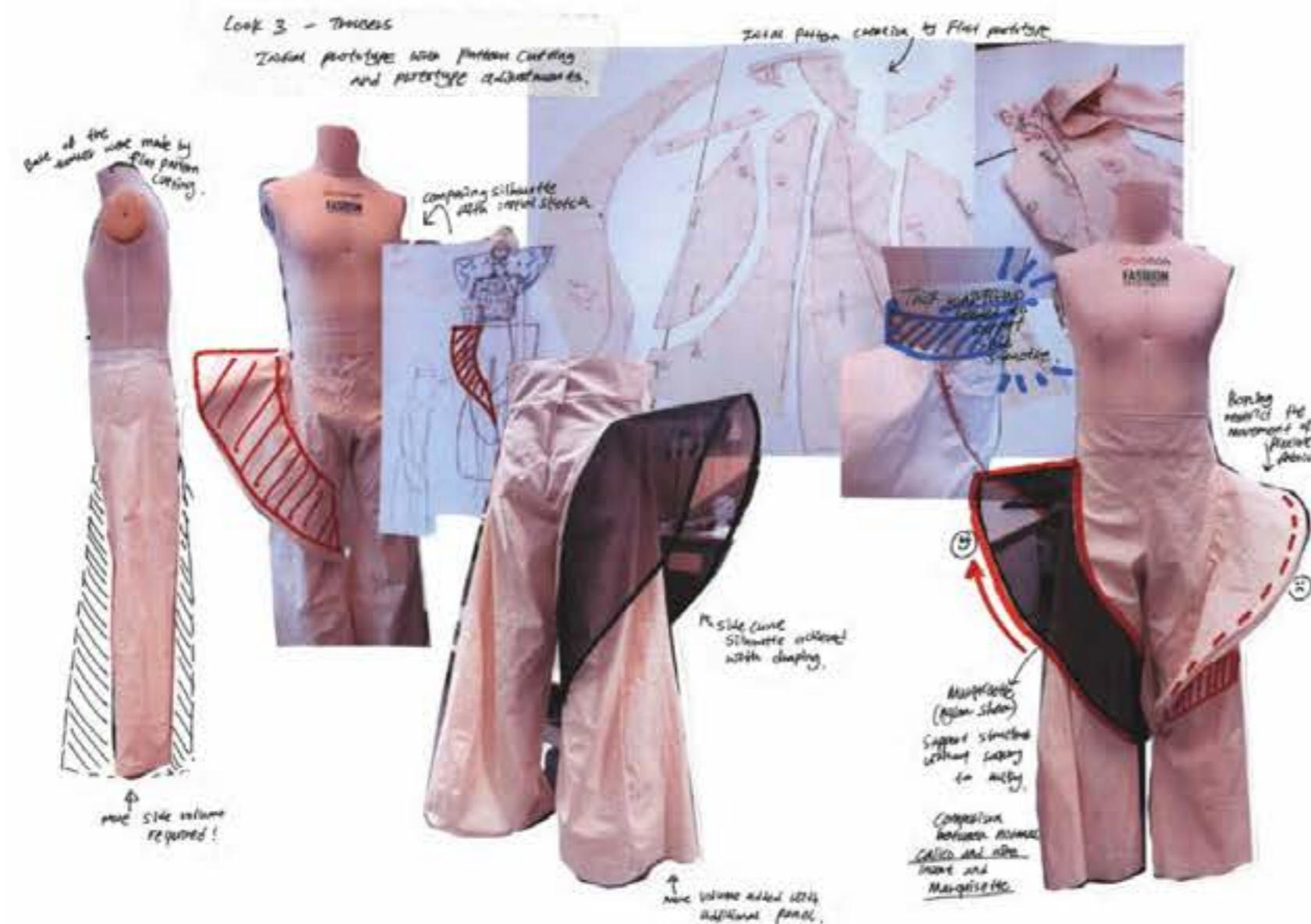
The motif of this collection which is the idea of second skin naturally led to selection of sheer and see-through fabrics like organza and power mesh. Apart from sheer fabrics, I could source shiny fabrics like satin and lame, which depth of colour by dynamic surface illumination.



Mind map developing ideas to refine concept

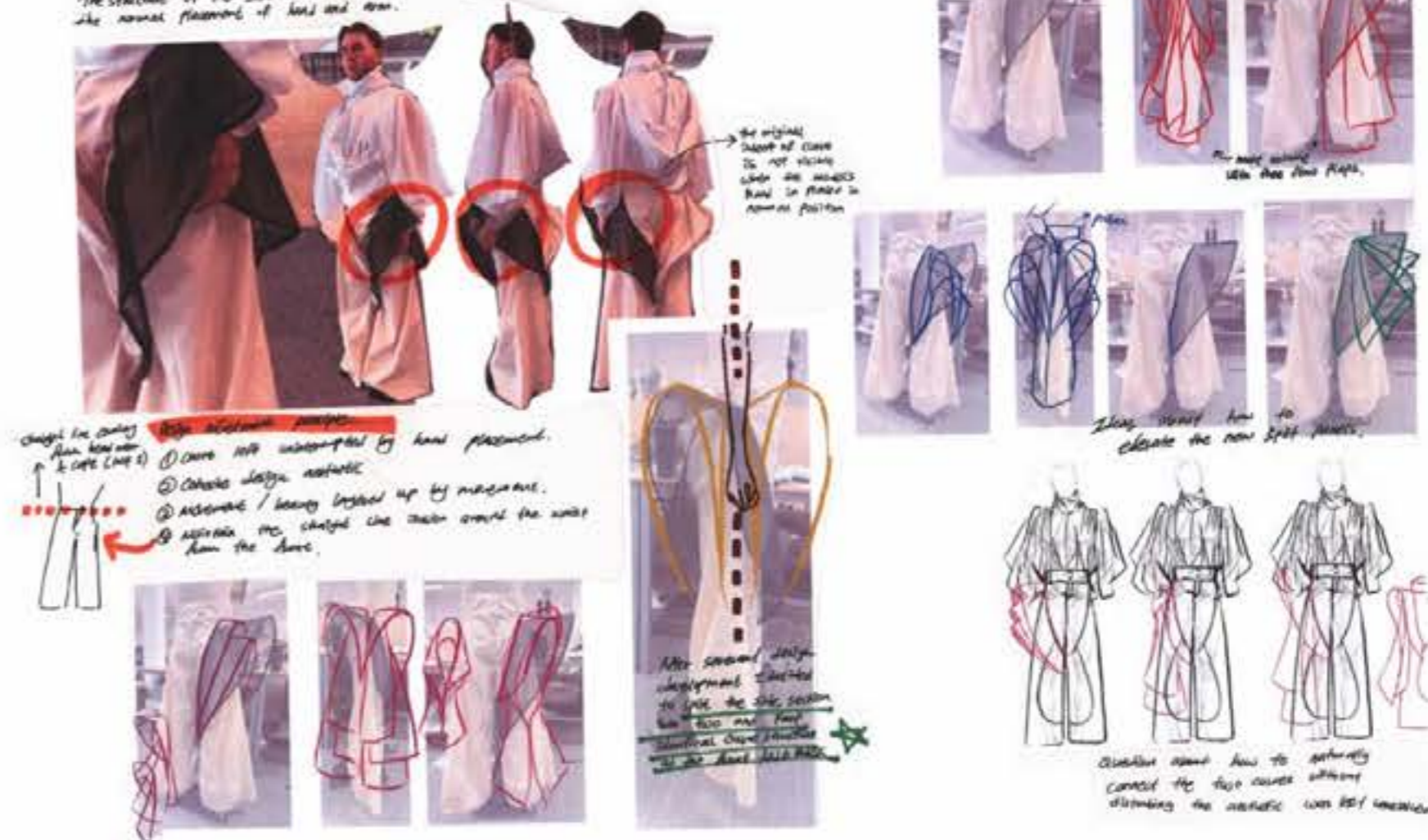
Developing Final Designs from Prototype: Look 3 - Trousers

First prototype of the trousers were made by flat pattern cutting. The structure of the side curve were experimented with calico and nylon material used for look 2 skirt. It was evident that the nylon material achieved the intended structure better.



Look 3 Trousers - Final Garment Development

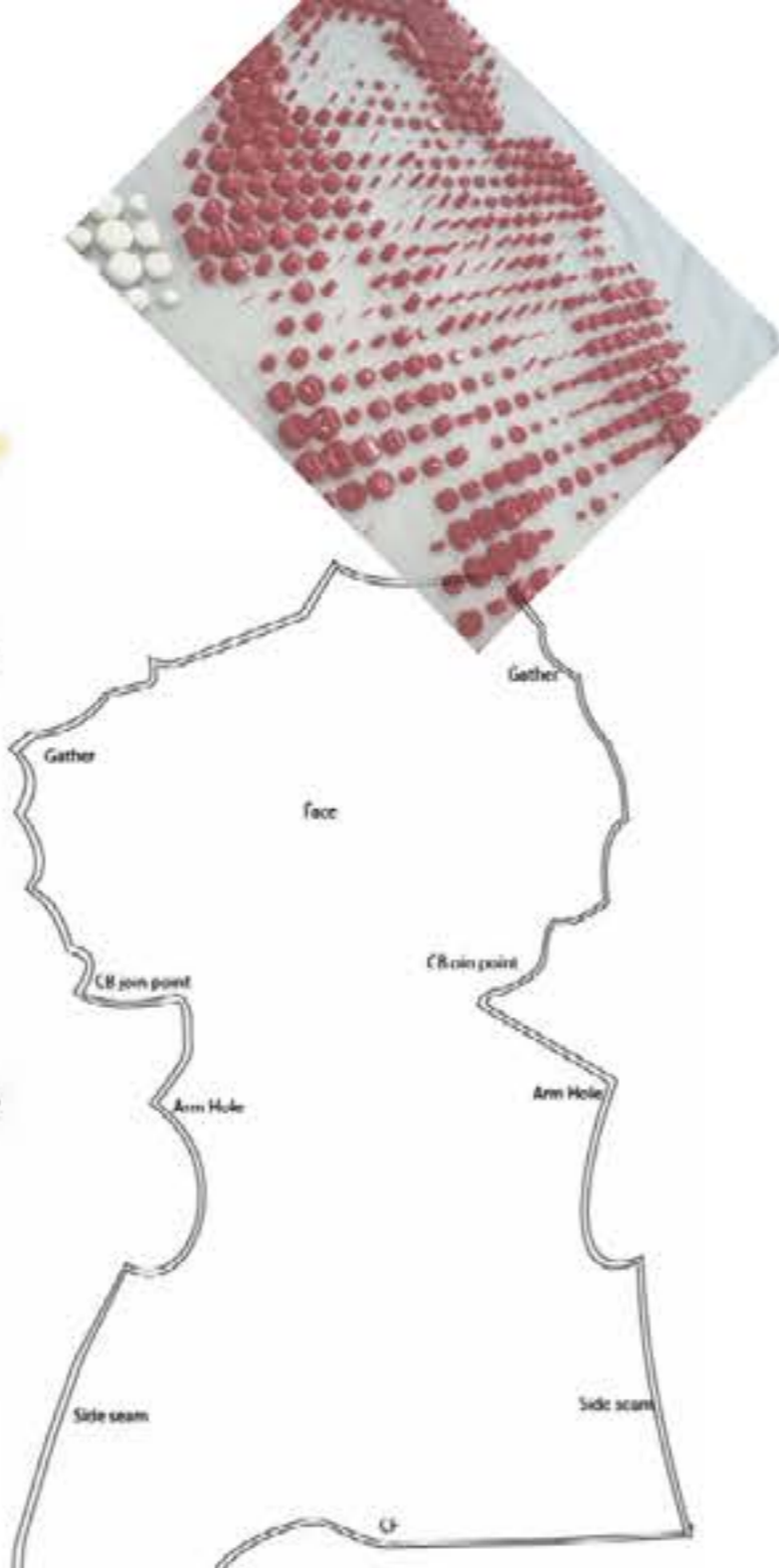
The structure of the side curve was disrupted by the normal placement of hand and arm.



After fitting it was evident that the side structure needs design adjustments. I developed various ways to make the trousers to maintain the curves when it is worn and capture the important design element of the collection. Idea of free flow fabric panels and layering were considered during this design development due to the successful result from look 2 skirt.

Developing Final Designs from Prototype: Look 4 top

Developing 3D printing samples and using it for accessory of look 2 stimulated repeat of the similar design for look 4. I decided to use the same organza material and draping method to extract unusual pattern for the top.

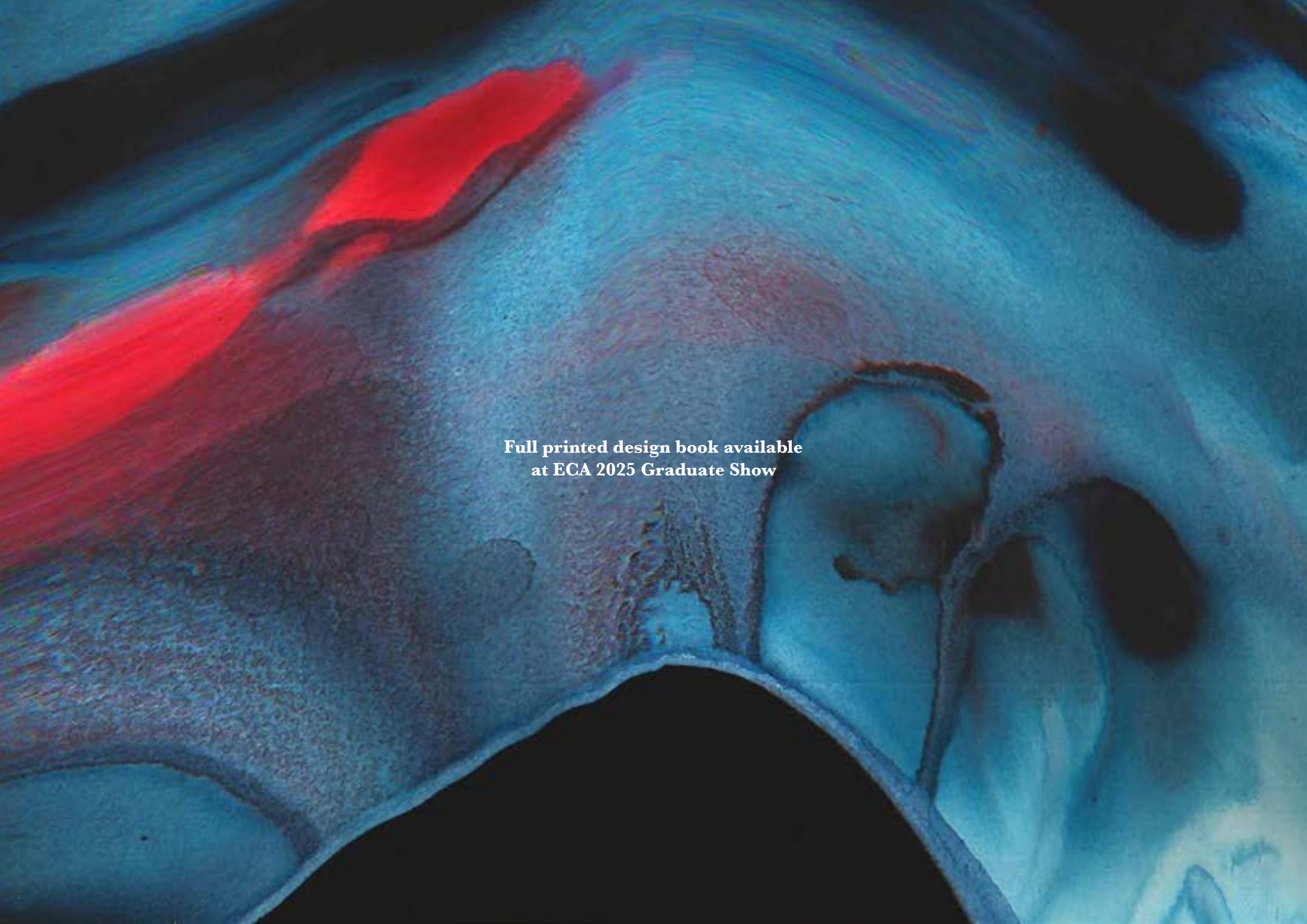


Developing final designs from prototype: Look 4 Coat

First prototype of look 4 coat was drafted by flat pattern cutting. I followed the classic tailored coat pattern cutting for the initial prototype in order to achieve the tailored look that look 4 aspires to have.



Sleeve was draped in the same way as sleeve from look 3 top. The shoulder line acted as a guide for the central line of pivot. This created a unique silhouette of sleeve that varies significantly depending on the material.



Full printed design book available
at ECA 2025 Graduate Show