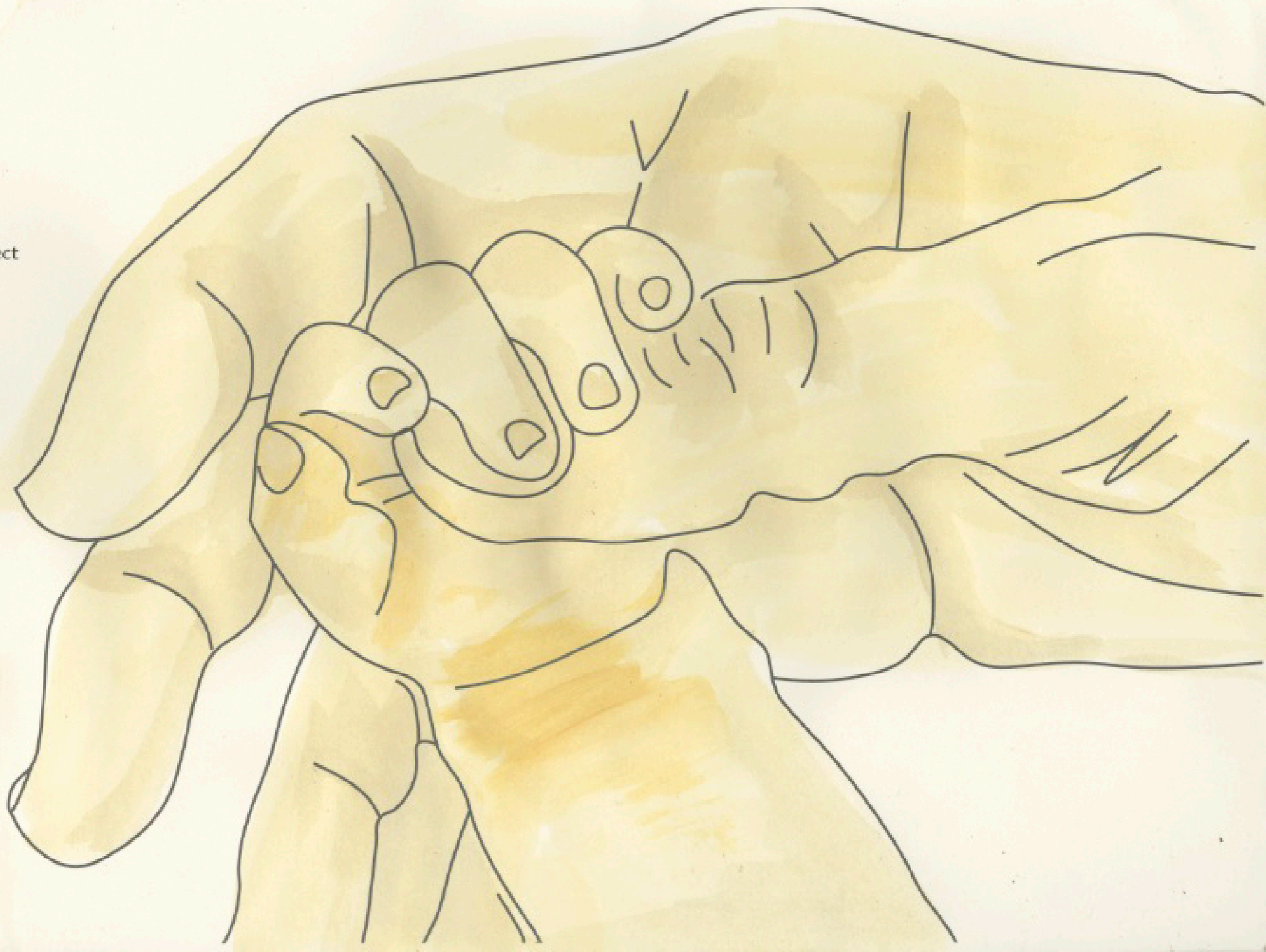


tactile dialect



concept

i wanted to develop a fall/winter collection that reflected the warmth i felt through a dialect my mom created: something that communicated hope. i focused on thick knits, tweed, wool, and even some sheer fabrics. my collection does not include any buttons or extravagant trimmings because i want the garments to be simplistic, minimalistic, and easy to wear. there are however, many thick on thin layers to express the buildup of familiar stability.

i also included wraps and clothes that require square knots and ties to represent the interconnectivity of human touch. colors are muted and slightly monochromatic, because my mom's hand felt like a dim, lowkey light that shone in darkness.

my mom's language was gentle, frail, and full of fear, but also incredibly self-sacrificial and full of love.

this project was inspired by a time in my life where my mother's touch strewn itself into a language full of hope in a season of darkness.

when my grandmother exploded with spurts of rage in random times toward my family, it felt like shards of metal scraping onto my skin.

in those months of a muddy, tarnished family life, my mother communicated her hope for a happy ending through touch.



inspiration

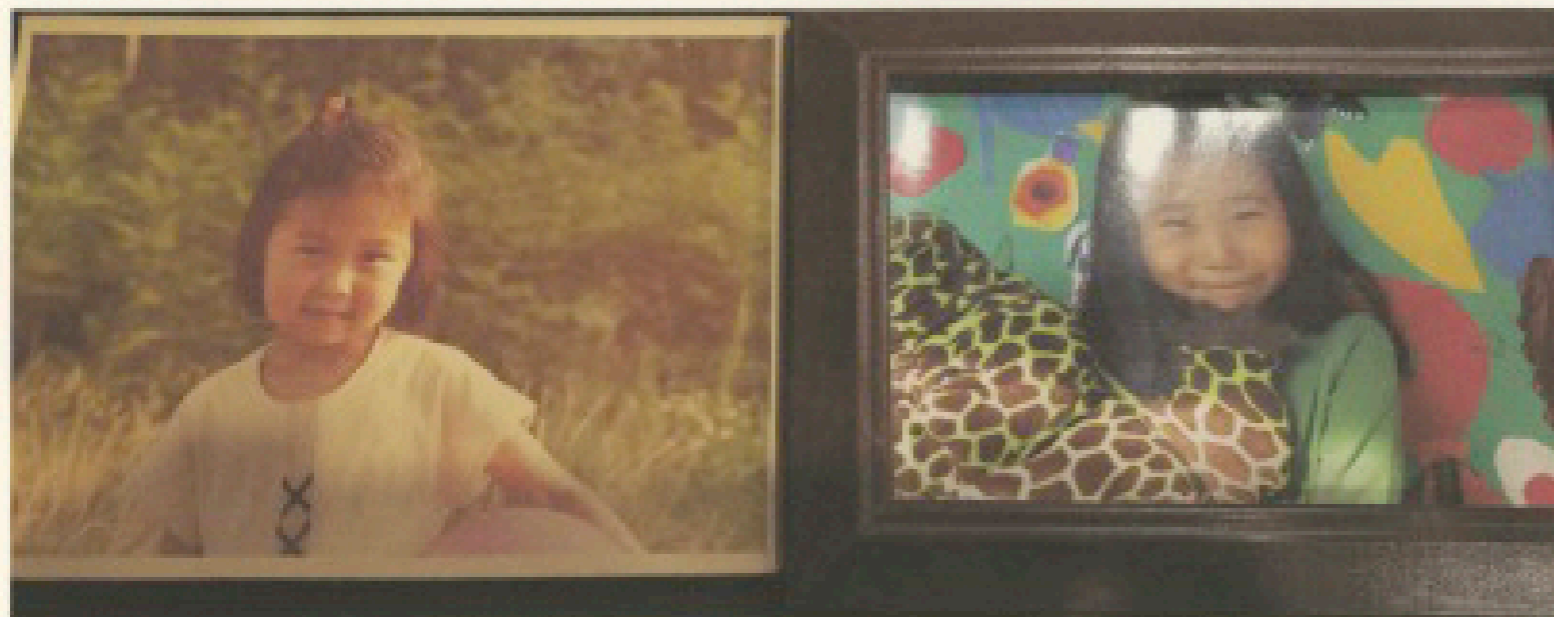
every night after fighting with my grandmother, my mom would come into the room where my two siblings and i slept.

she would lay down comforters on the floor and invite us to sleep next to her, cradling my sister with her left arm and my brother with her right.

my mom refused to isolate me from her embrace and instead offered her hand, and we both held hands until i fell fast asleep.

it is unorthodox to go against my grandmother's rules but my mother sacrificed the culture she was raised in in order to protect my family.

her small act of rebellion was stringing together "i love you's" and instilling hope for a happier life without my grandmother, just by holding hand in the late hours.



mind map

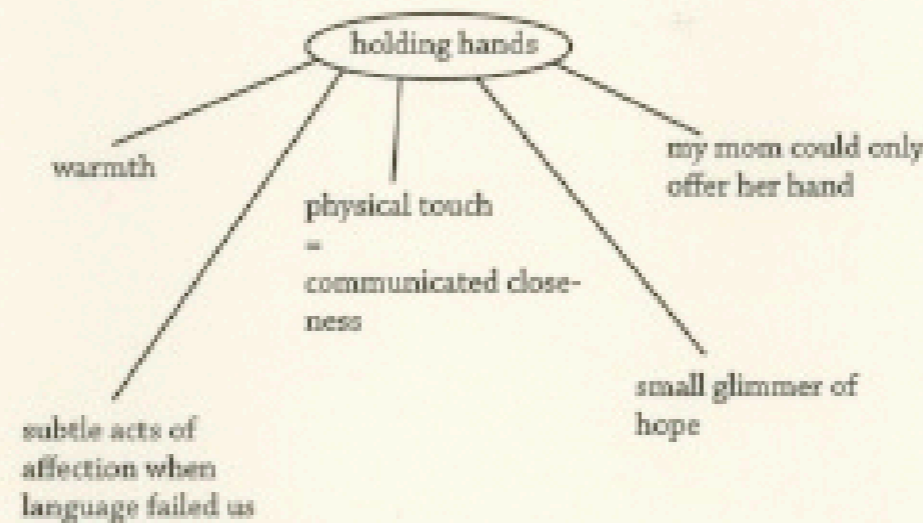
how did this affect my personality?

- very sensitive
- acquired defense mechanisms (projection)
- naturally in a nervous, overthinking state (did i do something wrong? why does it have to be like that?)
- shy, withdrawn, reserved
- spurts of anger
- sheltered, naive, unintentionally ignorant
- close to my mom
- receptive to physical touch from others
- became a validator of mental therapy and professional help



research:

- hand holding
- physical touch
- palmar reflex
- evolutionary, humanist, behavioral psychological perspectives on a mother's relevance in a child's growth



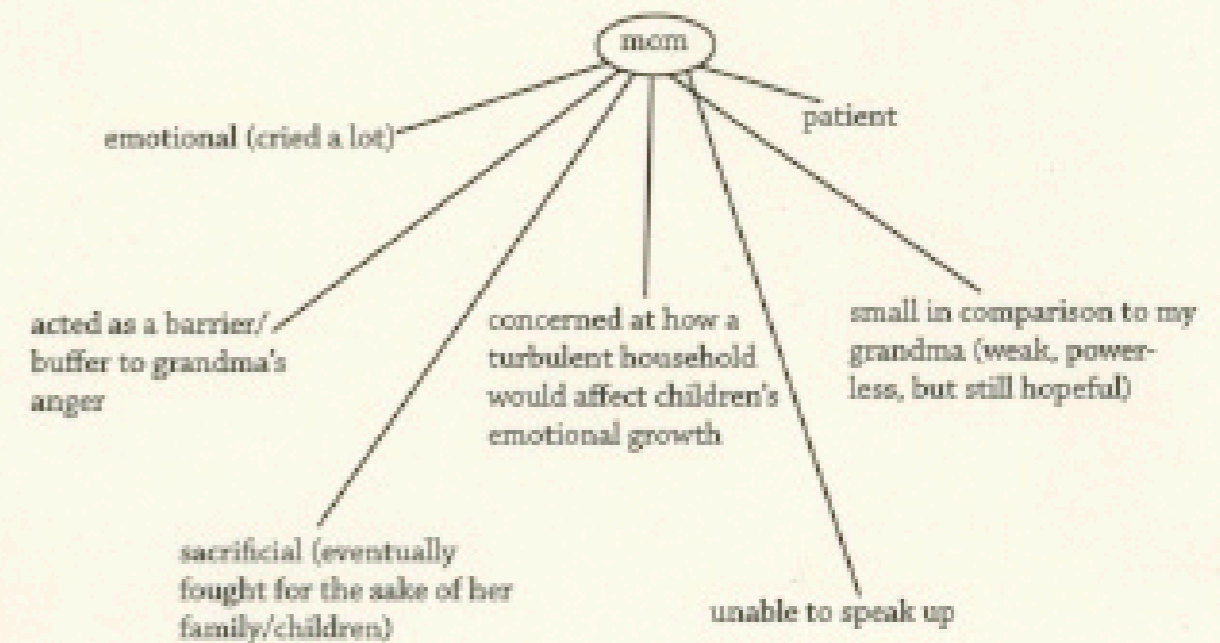
holding hands

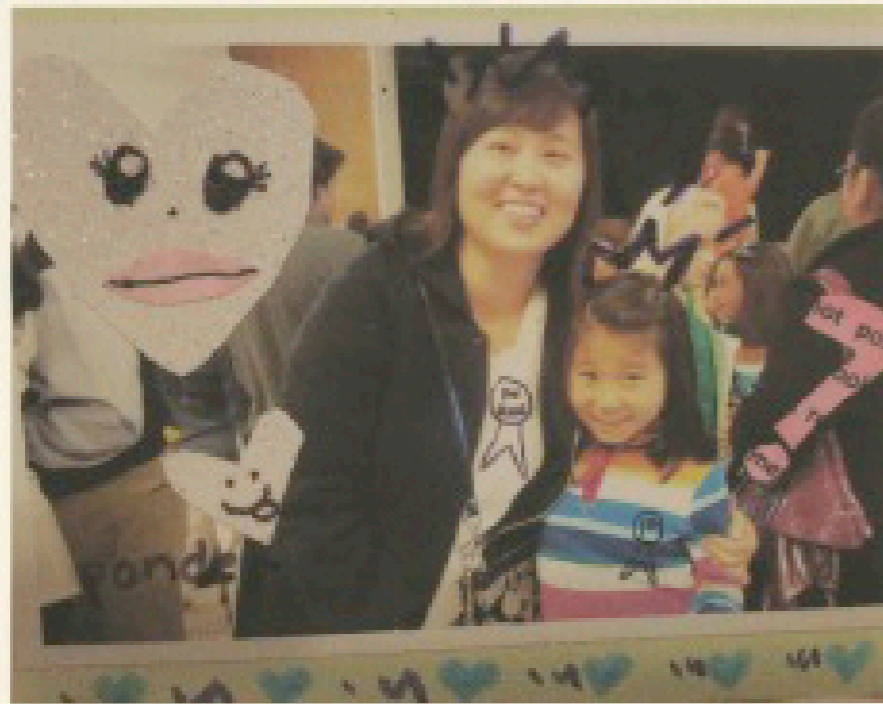
my mom and i would sleep next to each other with my siblings. my mom would lay my brother and sister next to her on each side, but could only offer her to me

- it's important to note that this was during a time when my family was fighting with my grandmother. this action gave me hope in such darkness.

design brainstorm

- mix fabrics
- imitate comforting fabrics
- simple construction, muted colors
- lots of binding and knots (to represent emotional ties and physical affection)
- soothing and comfortable feel on skin
- binding/teary clothes/metallic can represent anger felt on grandma's side





first week in irvine

primary research



birth



grandmother (mom's side), grandmother (dad's side),
me,
my older cousin jichang



mom, dad, me, little sister sharon



first birthday



kindergarten yearbook picture

primary research



grandma and i three weeks after birth



grandma, little sister sharon, and i aged two years and one year



grandma, older cousin jiehang, eldest cousin yuna, and i at my first birthday party

NOTE

my grandma and i are no longer in contact due to distance and hostility felt on both sides. this is why i only have three photos with my grandmother. but according to my mother, my grandma had favored me out of all of her grandchildren because i reminded her of her youth. she used her favoritism towards me as vengeance against my mother. my mother's side is no longer in contact with my immediate family.

interview with mom

Q: when you and grandma fought, what was your first inclination?

A: to protect my kids. grandma was especially fond of you, and often used you to manipulate me. i've been through that before, and i could never let that happen to my own kin.

Q: why were you so hesitant to stand against grandma's oppression? what was stopping you?

A: grandma took care of the kids when i was working for most of the day and i felt like i owed her for her services. korean culture doesn't permit rebellion and i was raised in a conservative, collective society. i was raised with the understanding that i worked hard enough to provide for my mother when i became independent.

Q: do you think that logic is flawed? what do you believe now?

A: i believe that good parenting is teaching children their own independence. not necessarily so that they can serve me in the future, but that they don't have to be dependent on me anymore. korean culture is defined my generation and tradition, but i identify with western beliefs more. i raised you in america, you are korean-american. not korean.

Q: what inclined you to sleep next to us during such a difficult time?

A: sam (little brother) already had a brain condition that required my emotional support and physical touch. sharon (little sister) communicates well with touch. it was therapeutic for me as well--to be with my children in such harsh times. it gave me peace and the courage to persevere; my children needed me to be strong.

Q: do you have any regrets acting the way you did?

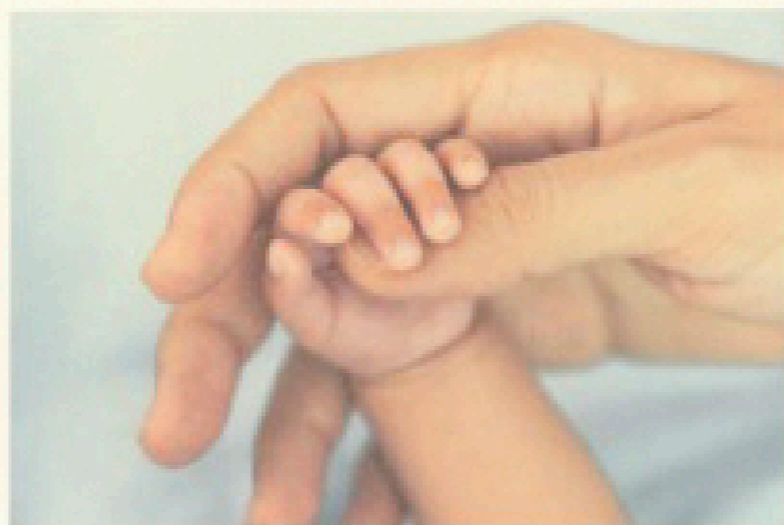
A: absolutely not. perhaps i miss her because she is my mother, but i believe that i can love someone from afar.

Q: do you think touch is an effective dialect?

A: truly, language is the most human trait of all homosapiens. it highlights the very nature of who we are: we are social creatures. but what is beautiful about touch is that everyone can understand it, there is a collective interpretation when it comes to touching others in context. so yes, touch is an effective dialect and the most human one as well.

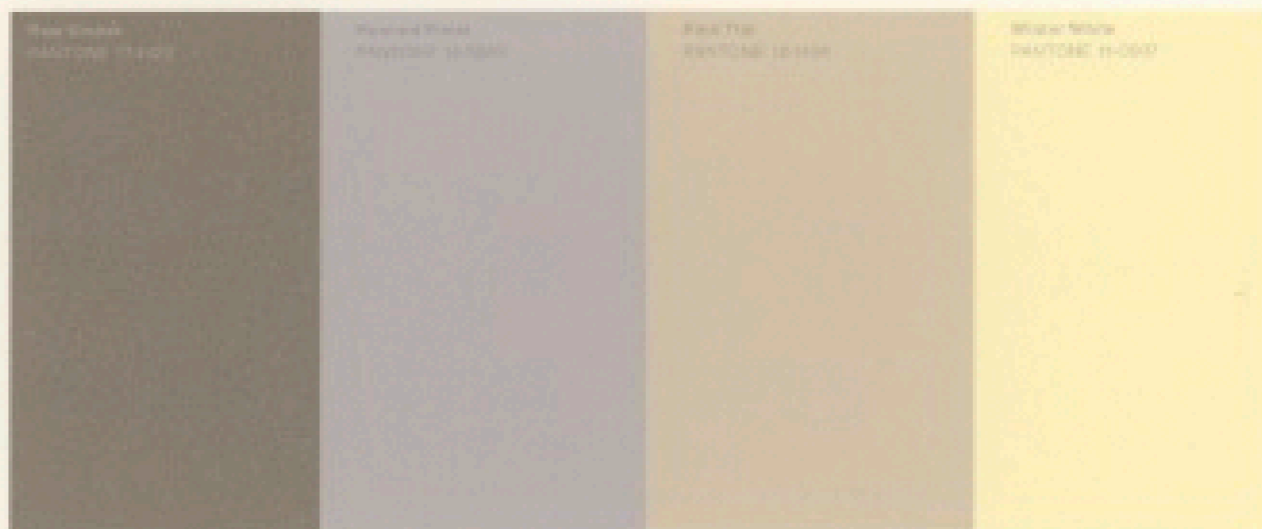


brainstorming

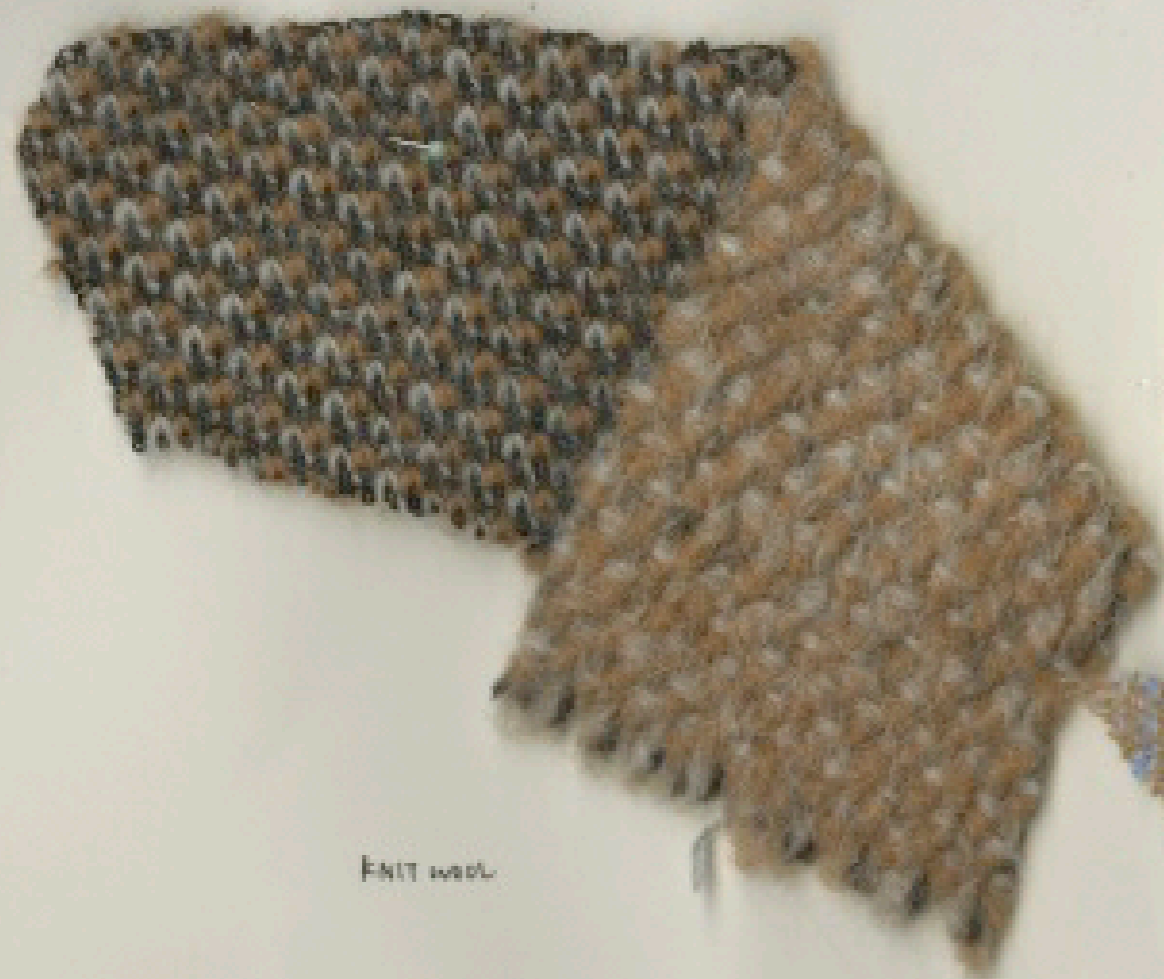


Breakfast in Bed

A soft, cozy bed warmed by a ray of morning light. Add a peaceful breakfast for two. Don't we wish we always felt this way? These deeply human tones of violet, ivory, and umber whisper a palette for luxurious linens—and layered textiles of all kinds.



fabric swatches



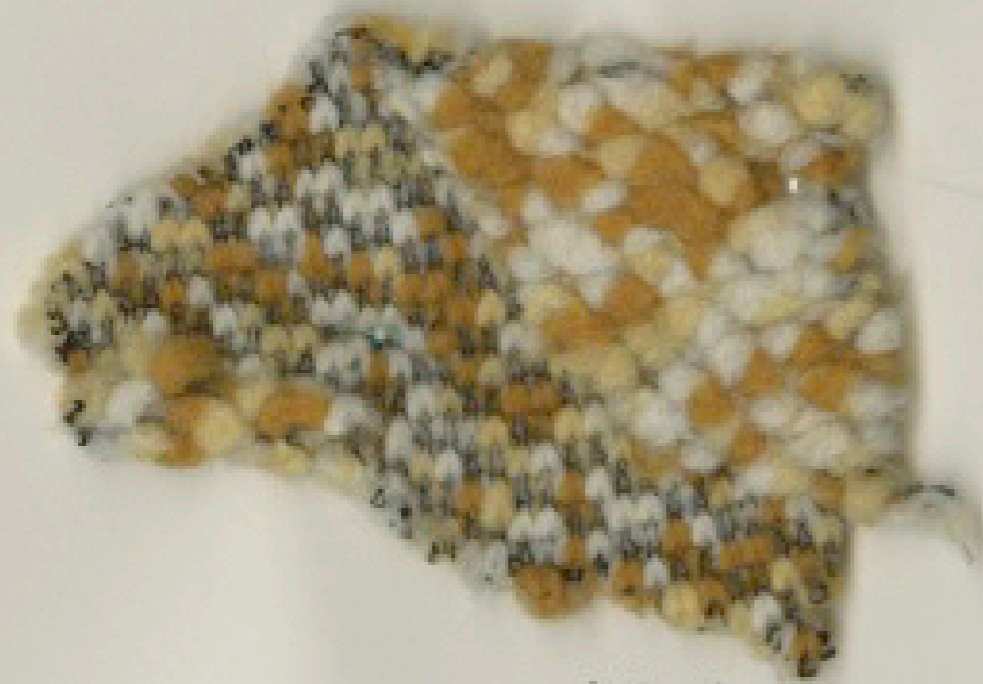
KNIT WOOL



POLYESTER



TWEED



KNIT WOOL



TWEED

fabric swatches



WOOL / POLYESTER.



KNIT



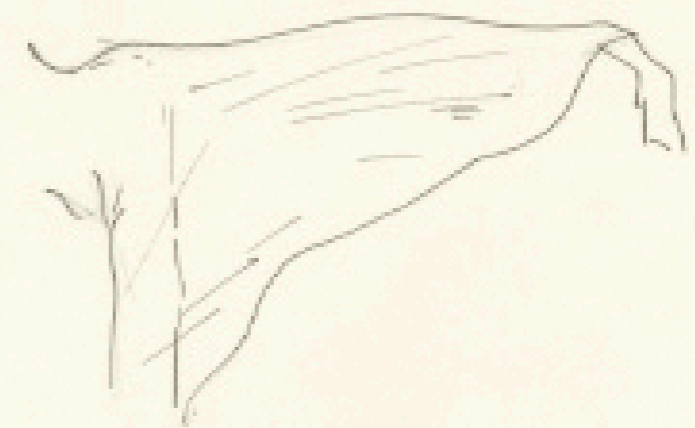
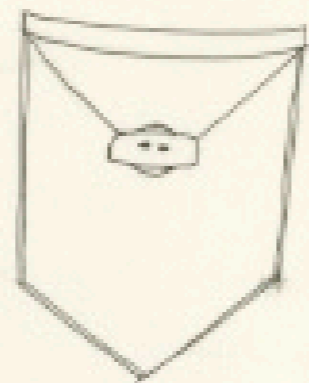
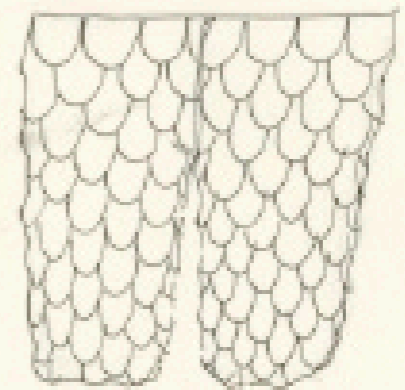
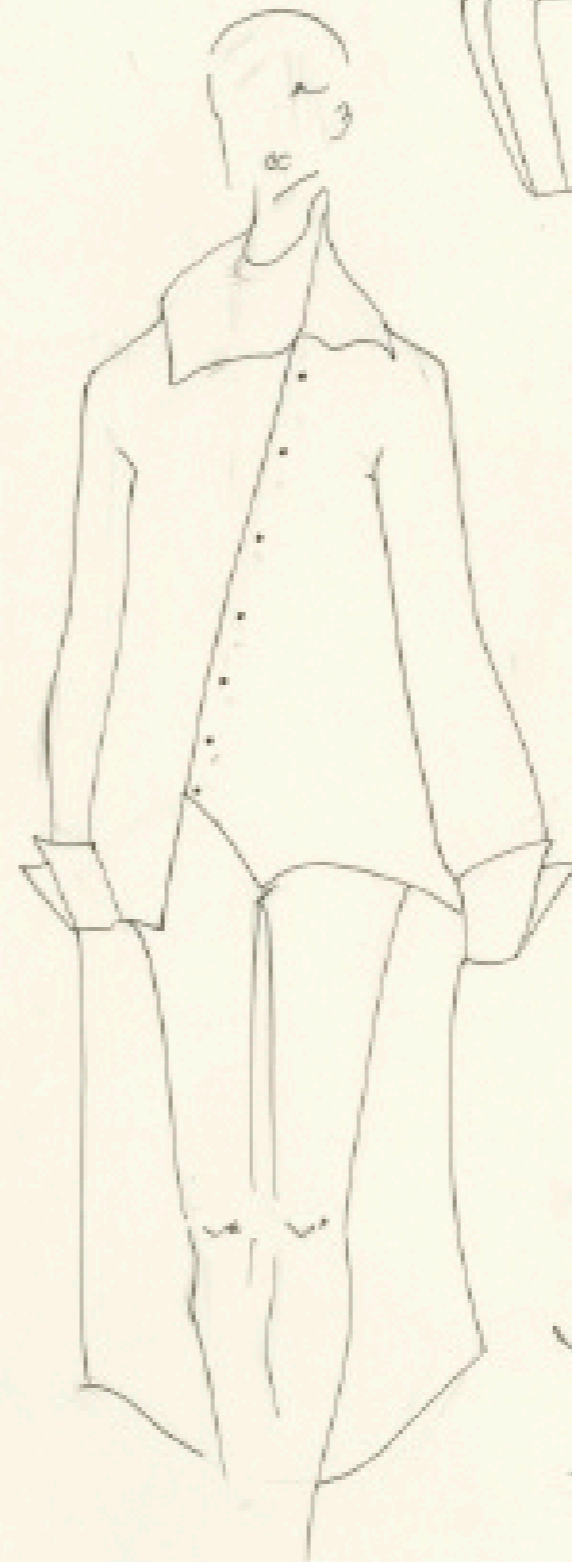
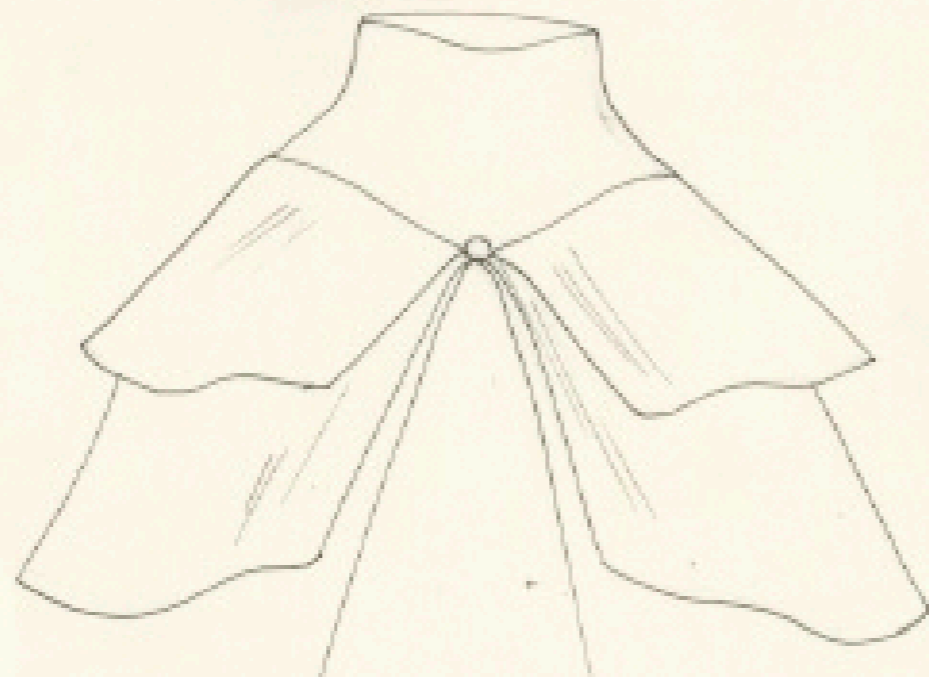
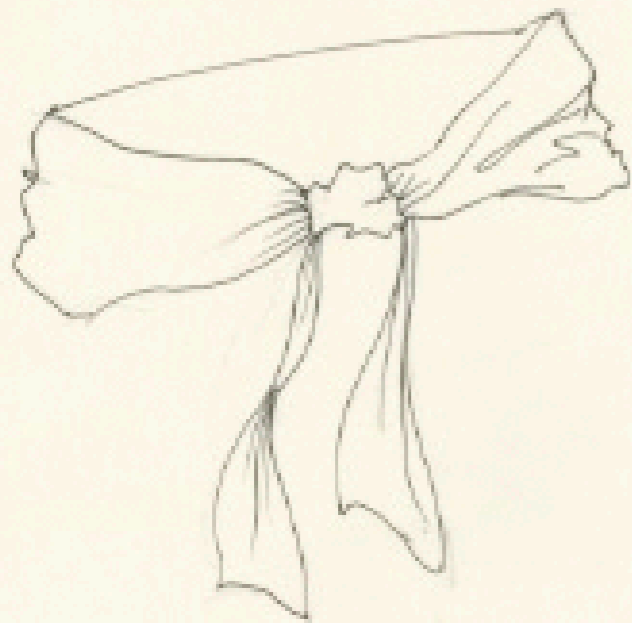
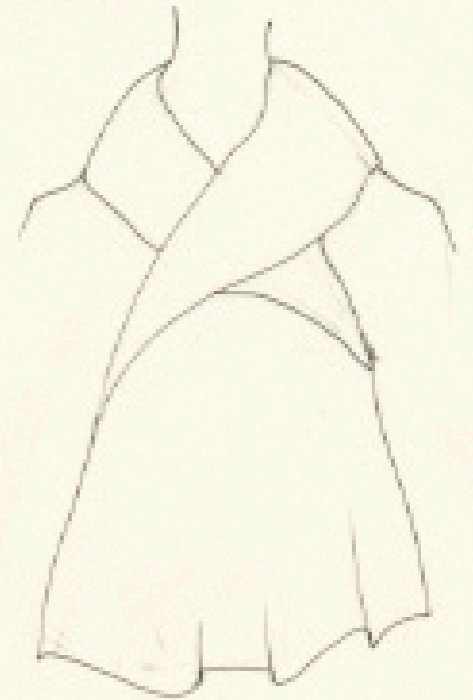
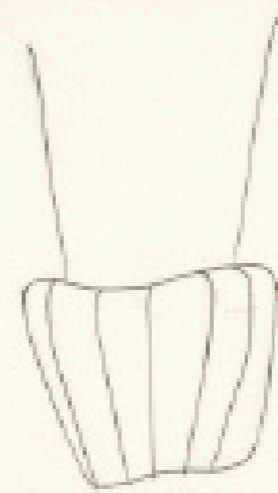
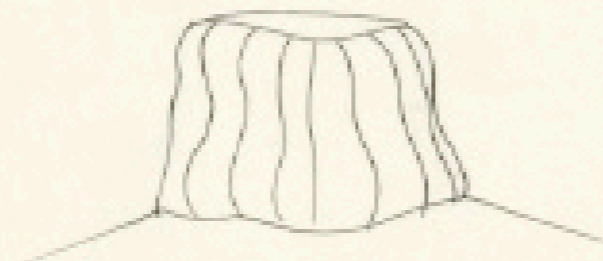
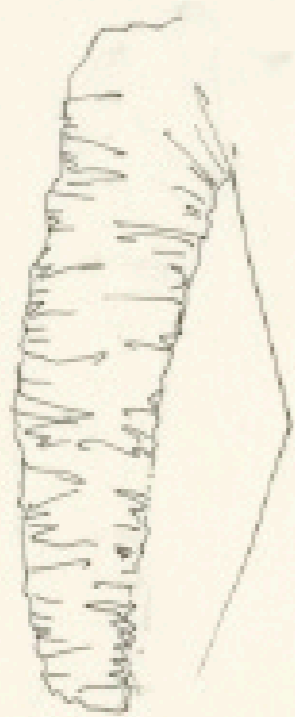
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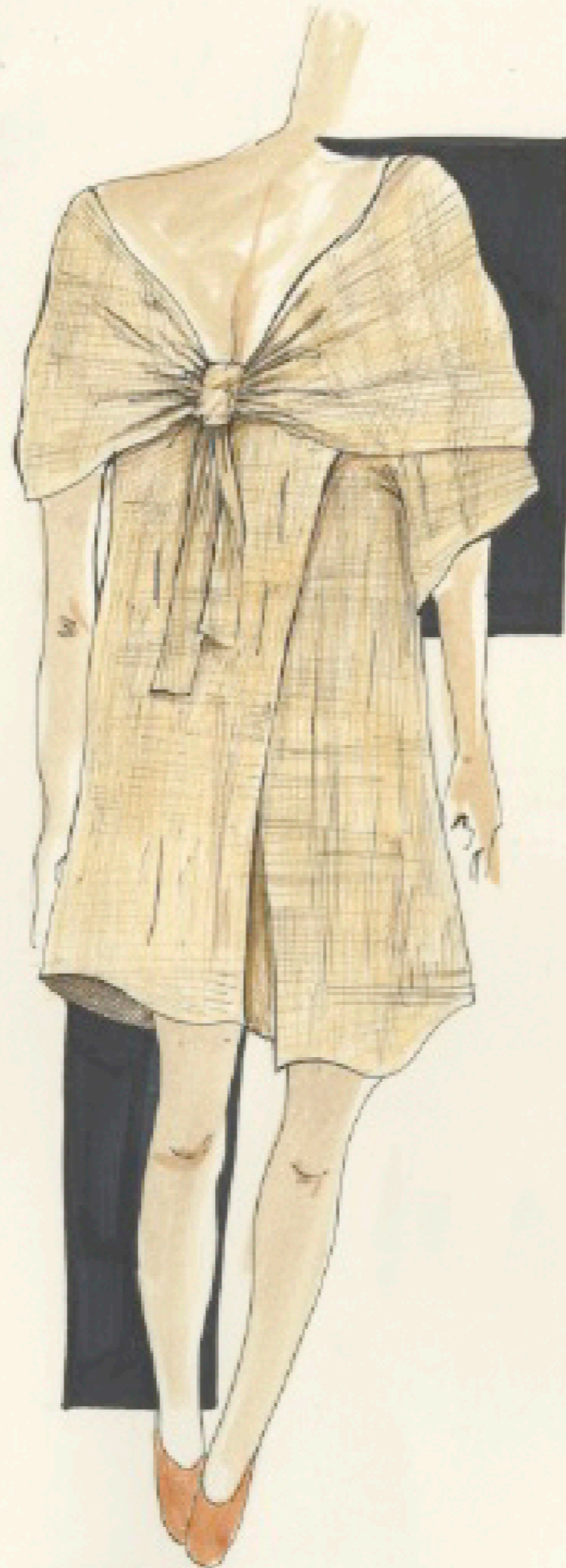
WOOL

preliminary sketches

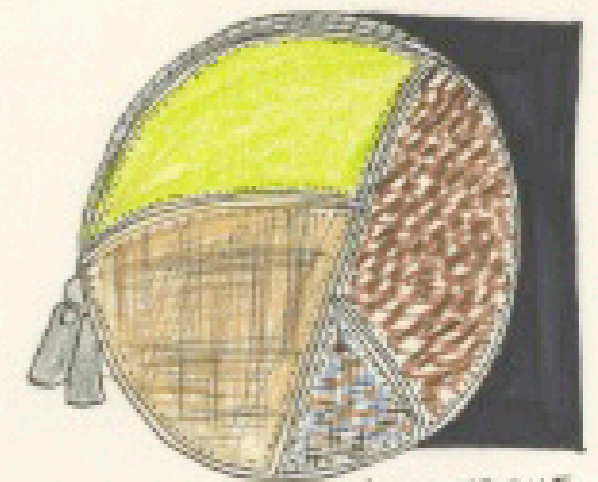








TWEED BAG



MULTI-TEXTILE
COIN POUCH