

# Expected Self vs. Real Self - Fashion Choices under Parental Expectations

Name: Yixuan Lu

Student ID: 21011194

Degree: Personal and Professional Project

Date: 5/15/2025

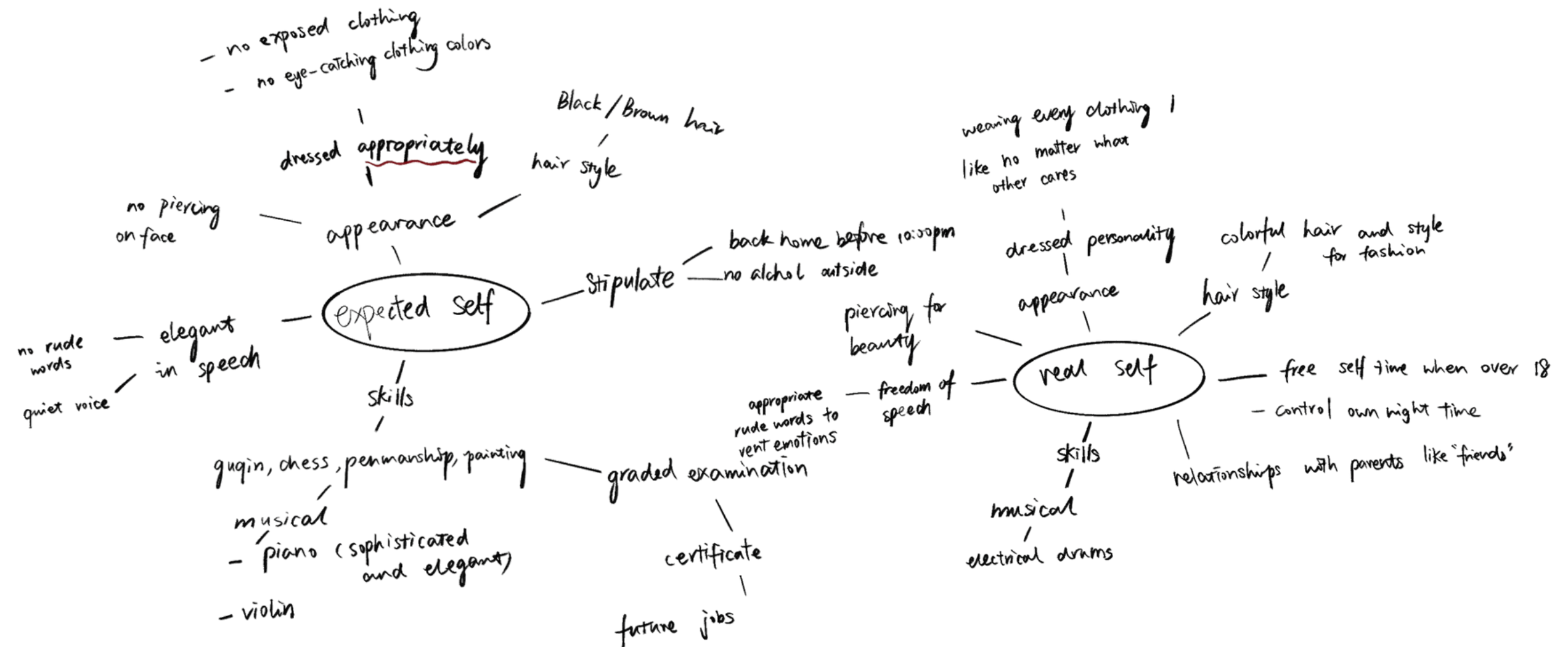
# Initial Idea

People often don't have the chance to fully express who they really are. In many cultures, parents' expectations strongly influence how their children dress, act, and make life decisions. As a result, their true feelings and identity are often hidden. When society, family, and traditions become invisible rules, how can someone's real self break free? This art project looks at the difference between the "expected self" shaped by parental pressure and the "true self" that appears after pushing back. It explores questions about identity, freedom, and the limits set by social norms

# Introduction

Fashion is a way to express identity and personal freedom. Yet for many raised in traditional cultures, clothing choices are shaped more by family expectations than personal desire. Parents may influence how their children dress to reflect cultural norms or family values. This creates a conflict between the "expected self" and the "real self." This project explores that tension through reflection, interviews, and visual work, aiming to show how fashion becomes a space where identity and control collide. This project will be developed based on my own experience.

## What is Expected Self and Real Self?



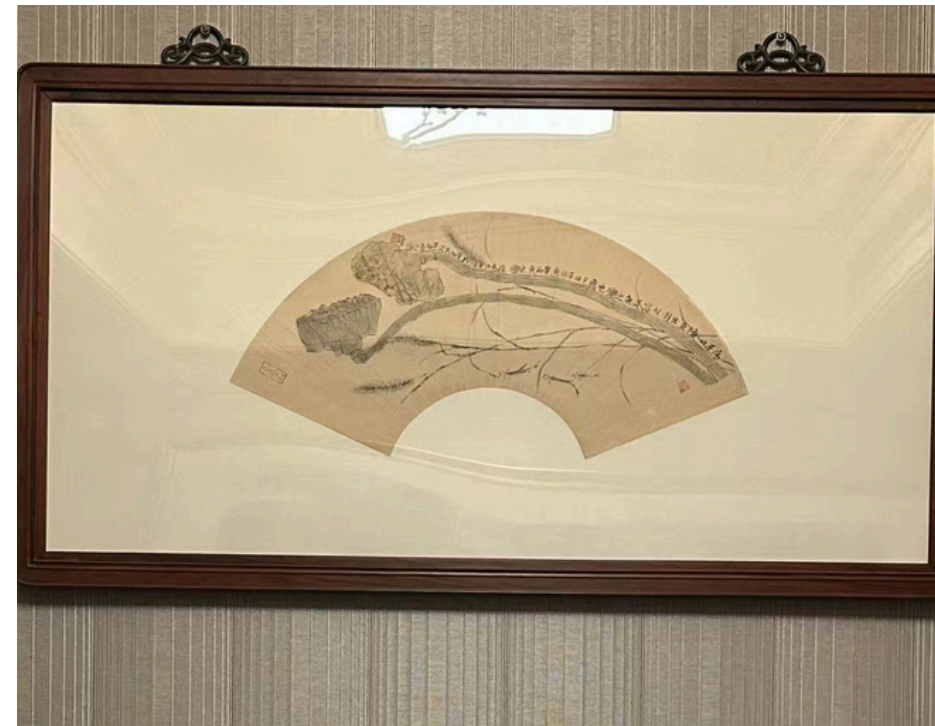
Starting from my own experience, I created two mind maps: one representing the person I truly want to become, and the other reflecting the version of me that my parents expect. By comparing these two maps, I explored the gap between the "expected self" and the "real self." This process helped me gain a clearer understanding of my true desires and personal values, while also providing inspiration and visual elements, such as style preferences, color choices, and behavioral traits. This became the foundation for my later creative work

# Contemporary Issue

## Clothing, Tradition, and Identity

For me, clothing has always been more than just something to wear—it's a way to show who I am. Growing up in a traditional Chinese family, my parents always preferred me to dress modestly and in a way that reflects our culture. But at the same time, I was influenced by the internet and global trends, and I naturally got interested in more expressive, modern styles. So that I want to try different style clothing, maybe it was teenage vanity, maybe I just wanted attention—but more than anything, I was trying to find a style that truly felt like me.

This project is about that inner conflict: the version of me that my parents expect, and the real me that I want to express. Through collage, fashion styling, and illustration, I explore how clothing becomes a space where tradition and individuality meet—and sometimes clash.



## Museum Visit



Collage by me

During my visit to the V&A Museum, I was struck by the beauty of the Chinese porcelain and intricate patterns on display. These artifacts immediately reminded me of similar pieces found in my own home—fine porcelain vases, tea sets, and embroidered fabrics—which have been carefully preserved by my family. This connection is more than just aesthetic; it reflects the deeply traditional values of my family and their appreciation for Chinese cultural heritage. Such details also highlight how tradition subtly shapes daily life and personal identity.

In my project, which explores the tension between parental expectations and personal expression, these familiar objects symbolize the traditional framework within which I grew up. While they represent beauty, history, and cultural pride, they also remind me of the invisible expectations that encourage conformity and respect for tradition, often shaping the way individuals present themselves to the outside world.



## Aim to Approach



This project aims to explore and understand the gap between the image that parents expect from their children and the authentic self that exists within each individual. By examining the differences and tensions between these two identities, the project seeks to reveal how family expectations shape personal choices, especially in fashion and self-expression. Through reflection, interviews, and visual experiments, the work hopes to provide insight into the struggles young people face as they try to balance external demands with their own desires, and to encourage greater acceptance of individuality within the family context.

under parental expectations, there is a deeper attempt to shape and confine me according to their values. Through clothing, my social identity as a woman becomes a site of control—where tradition and expectation seek to define how I should present myself.

My message is that each person is a unique individual with their own character. In a diverse world, we must embrace different styles and identities—even when that person is seen through the lens of being someone's child.

I will create a series of creative illustrations, combining 2D and 3D to show my superficial and Psychological Struggle. I will also collect opinions from people with similar experiences through interviews, so as to create more narrative illustrations.

## AI Development



I use midjourney to create several traditional family portraits. When i type traditional family photo, ai shows me these pictures. People in photos often wear formal clothes and show serious expressions to appear respectful and well-behaved. I believe people often hide their true thoughts because of their social status or identity.

Collage



This collage represents the core idea I had at the early stage of the project. I wanted to express the emotional tension and internal struggle I often feel, so I chose a dual-sided composition. One side symbolizes the version of myself shaped by family expectations and tradition, while the other reflects my true feelings and sense of identity. These two sides oppose each other, yet remain connected—illustrating the ongoing conflict and reflection within me as I navigate my personal growth.

# Research Methodology-Interview

Comparison of the influence of parental expectations on clothing in Eastern and Western cultures

I designed the interview questions from a third-person perspective and directed them separately to my mother and myself. At the same time, I also asked the same set of questions to a friend living in the United States and her mother.

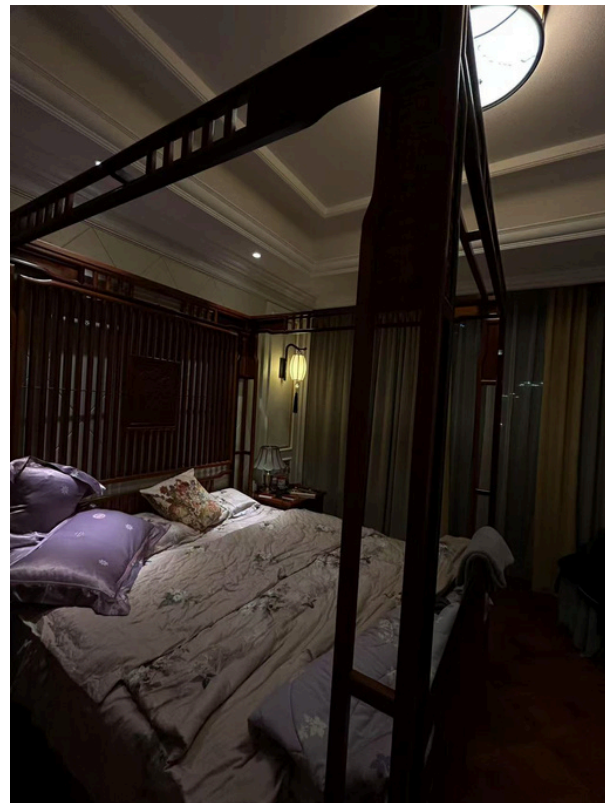
As part of my methodology, I interviewed mothers and daughters from both Eastern (Me) and Western cultural backgrounds. Through this process, I discovered that while there are clear differences in values and expectations—such as the emphasis on modesty and tradition in many Eastern families versus the encouragement of individual expression in Western ones—there are also surprising similarities. In both contexts, parental influence plays a strong role in shaping how young women view their identity through fashion. These interviews provided valuable insights into how culture, family, and generational dynamics interact to influence personal style choices, and helped me build a deeper foundation for the visual direction of my project.

As my mother mentioned in the interview, "Traditional Chinese style reflects inner beauty", different countries have different cultural backgrounds, which naturally leads to differences in mindset. Having grown up with access to the internet, I've been exposed to a wide range of global cultures from an early age. This has made me more open-minded and curious about ideas and aesthetics beyond my own environment.

# Background Research

## Comparison of the influence of parental expectations on clothing in Eastern and Western cultures

In both Eastern and Western societies, parental influence on children's appearance is common. However, the form and degree of this influence vary significantly due to cultural backgrounds. In many Eastern cultures, especially those deeply influenced by Confucian values, clothing is closely tied to ideas of modesty, family honor, and collective identity. My parents are a classic example of this traditional mindset. They usually expect their children to dress conservatively, avoid overly bold expressions, and follow gender-specific clothing norms as a way to show respect and discipline toward the family and elders.



My Parents's Bedroom



### Chinese frame beds means Calm, Comfort, and Peace

The origins of the modern canopy bed can be traced back to ancient China during the Wei, Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties. It developed further through the Tang and Song periods and reached its peak during the Ming and Qing dynasties. Its design combines both practicality and beauty, reflecting the Chinese pursuit of comfort and decoration in living spaces.

Ming dynasty canopy beds hold an important place in the history of Chinese furniture. They are often seen as miniature versions of traditional Chinese architecture. Compared to simpler and more portable beds like the couch-bed or Luohan bed, Ming-style canopy beds are known for their precise structure and orderly design.

My parents' bed is a traditional Chinese frame bed. In my opinion, the square bed frame is like a frame that traps people, it frames people's thoughts and cognition. So I will use the canopy bed as a source of inspiration and make it one of the important elements in my work. This shows that my parents' thoughts are trapped by old ideas, but they are not wrong.

### Timeline of Chinese Frame Bed



Eassern lin -Nü Wen Zang Tu(Book-Hiding Woman)

Wei, Jin, and Northern & Southern Dynasties  
As the nomadic peoples of the north and west entered the Central Plains in the Wei and Jin periods, they brought with them the rise in height of indoor furnishings, a widespread use of elevated furniture increases.



Five Dystias - "Han Xizai Night Banquet"

Tang and Song Dynasties  
The transition from floor elevated beds, ushered Chinese society into a new phase of living. Its elevated beds became common, they provided comfort and beauty while offering more privacy.



Arturach - "Yanxi Tu (Elegant Affection)"

Ming and Qing Dynasties  
The evolution of raised beds, changed not only the seating and sleeping habits but also their way of life. Often a sensation of a space of control, relaxing

# Background research



vibe: 1990s, unclear, low image quality

Zebra pattern



Cowboy bandana



Single color hoodie



Short hair

Silk top

Black skirt

Black leather shoes

I analyzed the fashion styles that were considered trendy during my mother's generation. Through this process, I gained a deeper understanding of the aesthetic standards, cultural values, and social expectations that shaped her views on clothing.

In my opinion, I think my mother's fashion style was more conservative, yet it also carried a sense of modernity and sophistication for her time. Her clothing choices reflected a careful balance between traditional expectations of modesty and the desire to embrace contemporary trends. This combination showed how individuals in her generation sought to appear proper and respectable, while still subtly expressing a sense of progressiveness and personal taste.

In addition, I found the magazine my mother read from the 1990s at home and photographed some of the outfits featured in them. These magazines not only reflected the fashion trends of that era but also gave me a clearer picture of the styles my mother and her peers admired at the time.



《Ray》1995



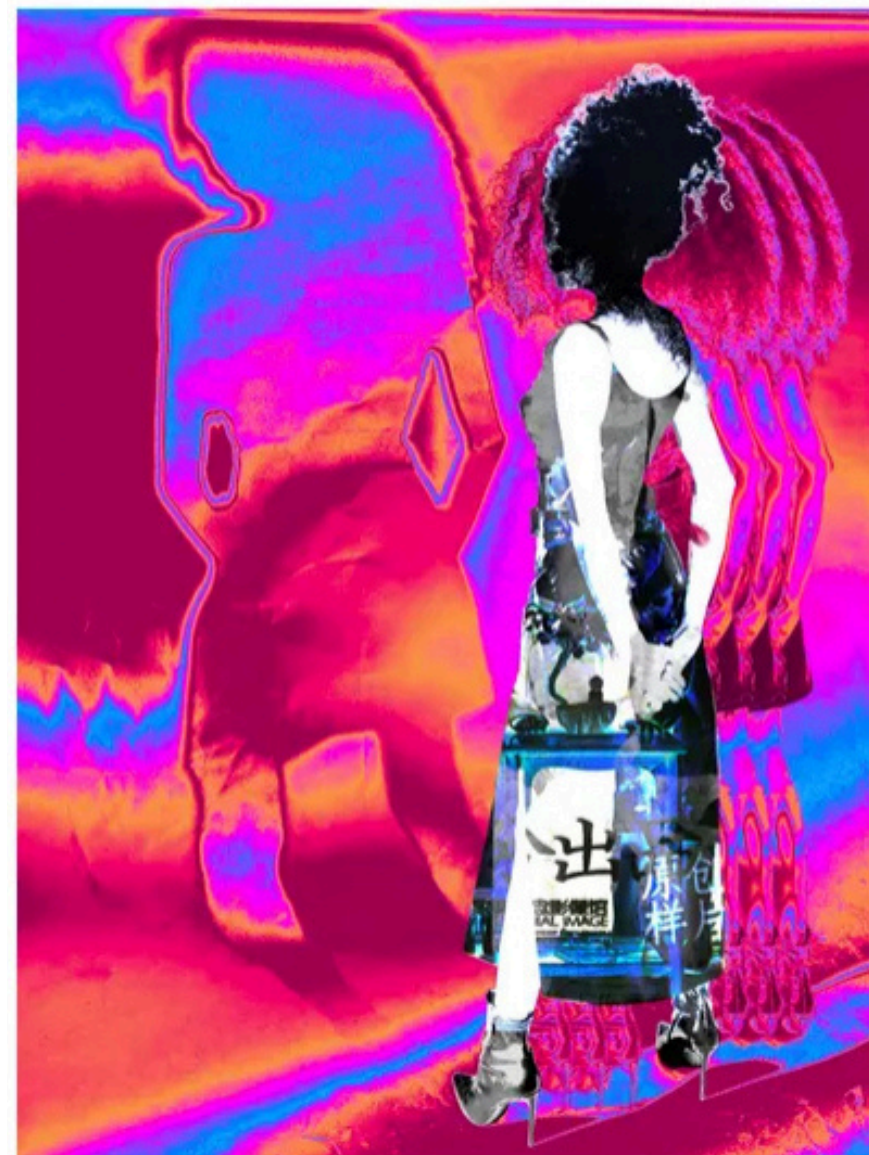
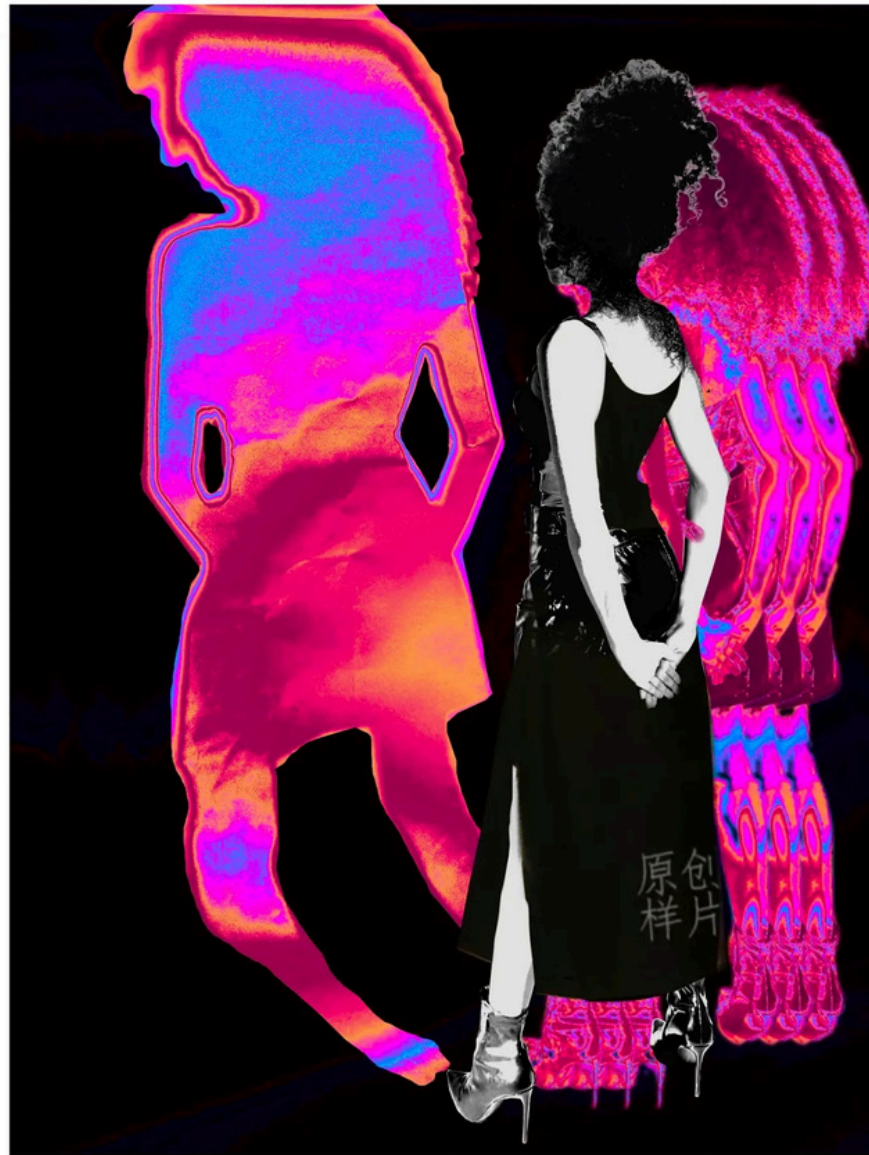
## Workshop in Class Experiment- Shadow



In class, we invited models to help us photograph the outfits we styled. We freely mixed and matched clothes and experimented with lighting. I focused on observing the shadows cast on the white backdrop when the light came from different angles. It's clear to see that even with only one light, it can create two shadows. I think this connects well with the theme I want to express—just like a child's inner world. While they may show one side to others, their true feelings inside are often quite different from what's seen on the surface.

I will develop my work with "shadow" as one of the main elements. Shadow can be the inner thoughts of children, which are obscure and hidden. At the same time, it can also be rich and colorful, and symbolizes multiple possibilities.

## In Class Workshop



Collage by Khdija's work

Kadijah's work according to my topic. She focus on shadow and lighting, Through faintly visible words and multiple shadows, the complex emotions within the character are expressed, and the words on the clothing reflect the constraints imposed by the attire on the character.



Collage by me about Khdija's work

Her theme explores the street fashion and styling art of the 1970s in the West, which closely aligns with my own project's focus. Inspired by the visual references she shared with me, I created a collage using her images as a base. This process not only allowed me to connect my work with hers, but also opened up a dialogue between two different cultural perspectives on fashion and identity. I noticed that Eastern and Western styles are quite different, but there are also surprising similarities—for example, the use of silk headscarves and animal patterns.

# Artist Research

## Kumi Yamashita



*0 to 9* 2011  
H183, W183, D10 cm  
Carved wood, single light source, shadow  
Permanent Collection Le Meridien Shenyang, China



*CITY VIEW (detail)* 2003  
H250, W500, D5 cm  
Aluminum numbers, single light source, shadow  
Permanent Collection Namba Parks Tower, Osaka, Japan.

The two works of Kumi Yamashita, through the shadows cast by the shapes of numbers pieced together, form a half face of a person. It is completely different from what we see. So I'm thinking that the works I create should also be different from what people see on the surface.

"City View" is one of Kumi Yamashita's most well-known shadow artworks. The beauty of this artwork lies in its use of minimal materials to create a complex and detailed scene.

This artwork perfectly illustrates an important idea: reality is not always as simple as it appears on the surface. Beneath what seems ordinary or meaningless, there is often a deeper structure and meaning. In relation to my project theme, City View strongly aligns with the concept of external appearance versus inner reality—the true self is often hidden behind a carefully constructed surface.

# Artist Research

Tim Noble & Sue Webster



DIRTY WHITE TRASH (WITH GULLS), 1998  
6 months' worth of artists' trash, 2 taxidermy seagulls, light projector  
Dimensions variable



MISS UNDERSTOOD & MR MEANOR, 1997  
Trash and personal items, wood, light projector, light sensor  
60 x 70 x 140 cm (23 1/2 x 27 1/2 x 55 in)

Their work *Dirty White Trash (With Gulls)* is a classic example of reinterpreting and reusing waste. In this piece, they spent six months collecting garbage and turned it into an incredible shadow artwork. This work not only challenges our perception of discarded materials but also transforms waste into a symbol of aesthetics.

Tim Noble and Sue Webster's artworks not only challenge our traditional perception of garbage but also demonstrate how discarded objects can be given new life and meaning through creativity.

Through their work, we are reminded of the unexpected connection between art and sustainability. Their pieces suggest that even the most overlooked or unpleasant objects can hold beauty and value when seen from a different perspective. In a similar way, people's outward appearance—no matter how unconventional, aggressive, or unapproachable it may seem—might conceal a kind, thoughtful, and gentle inner self.

This artwork strongly supports my theme: the outside and the inside can be completely different. It shows how what we see on the surface can be misleading, and how light—both literal and symbolic—can reveal deeper truths hidden within.

# Artist Research

## Leigh Bowery



Bowery's work shows the tension between the expected self and the real self. He used extreme costumes and body designs to either hide or reveal who he truly was inside. His art challenges how society defines identity and encourages people to break expectations and express their inner truth.

Exploring the transformation of individual identity in front of the camera, one of Fergus Greer's most iconic series is his collaboration with Leigh Bowery. This body of work captures the legendary performance artist's ever-changing looks and fluid identity. Through an in-depth exploration of personal image combined with abstract and theatrical costumes, Greer's photography achieves a heightened sense of visual storytelling. Additionally, I went to his exhibition at Tate Modern, learned about his crazy and unconventional life, and gained a lot of creative inspiration from the works he left behind.

# Collage



I created a collage using my mother's everyday outfits and extracted the fabric patterns as reference elements for my design. Her clothing style in daily life clearly leans towards traditional Chinese aesthetics, often featuring details like mandarin collars, silk textures, and floral embroidery. This visual research helped me understand how cultural identity can be subtly embedded in daily fashion choices

## Style Reference



Leslie Zhang's use of color is deeply influenced by traditional Chinese color schemes, incorporating shades such as vibrant red, indigo blue, golden yellow, and deep green. Combined with dramatic lighting, his images exude a strong cinematic quality. Additionally, his work often features bold compositions and deliberately crafted poses, where the body language and expressions of the models convey a sense of static theatricality. His approach makes his work highly relevant as a reference for my project, particularly in exploring theatrical expression and visual storytelling.

I will refer to his shooting tones and the combination of post-production and 3D elements to make the entire work look more avant-garde and pioneering while still retaining the essence of traditional Chinese art.

# Character Design

## Look 1



Combining my mother's current fashion style and the type of clothing she hopes I would wear, I styled an outfit that leans towards a more traditional Chinese aesthetic. I chose unfamous Chinese brand and which is not expensive because my mother always taught me that practicality is important. Inspired by my mother's words from the interview, "Traditional Chinese style reflects inner beauty. We are meant to have black hair and yellow skin," I chose to present this idea in an exaggerated and expressive way. Through this styling, I aimed to highlight the strong connection between cultural identity, appearance, and the expectations passed down from one generation to the next.

The hairstyle design was inspired by the floral branches often displayed in my home. These branches, carefully arranged by my family, represent a quiet sense of tradition and aesthetic order.

Through exaggerated styling, I highlight the tension between cultural expectations and personal identity. The bold use of traditional elements reflects the pressure to conform, while questioning the loss of individuality beneath the surface.

Day Dream  
2023



943paradise

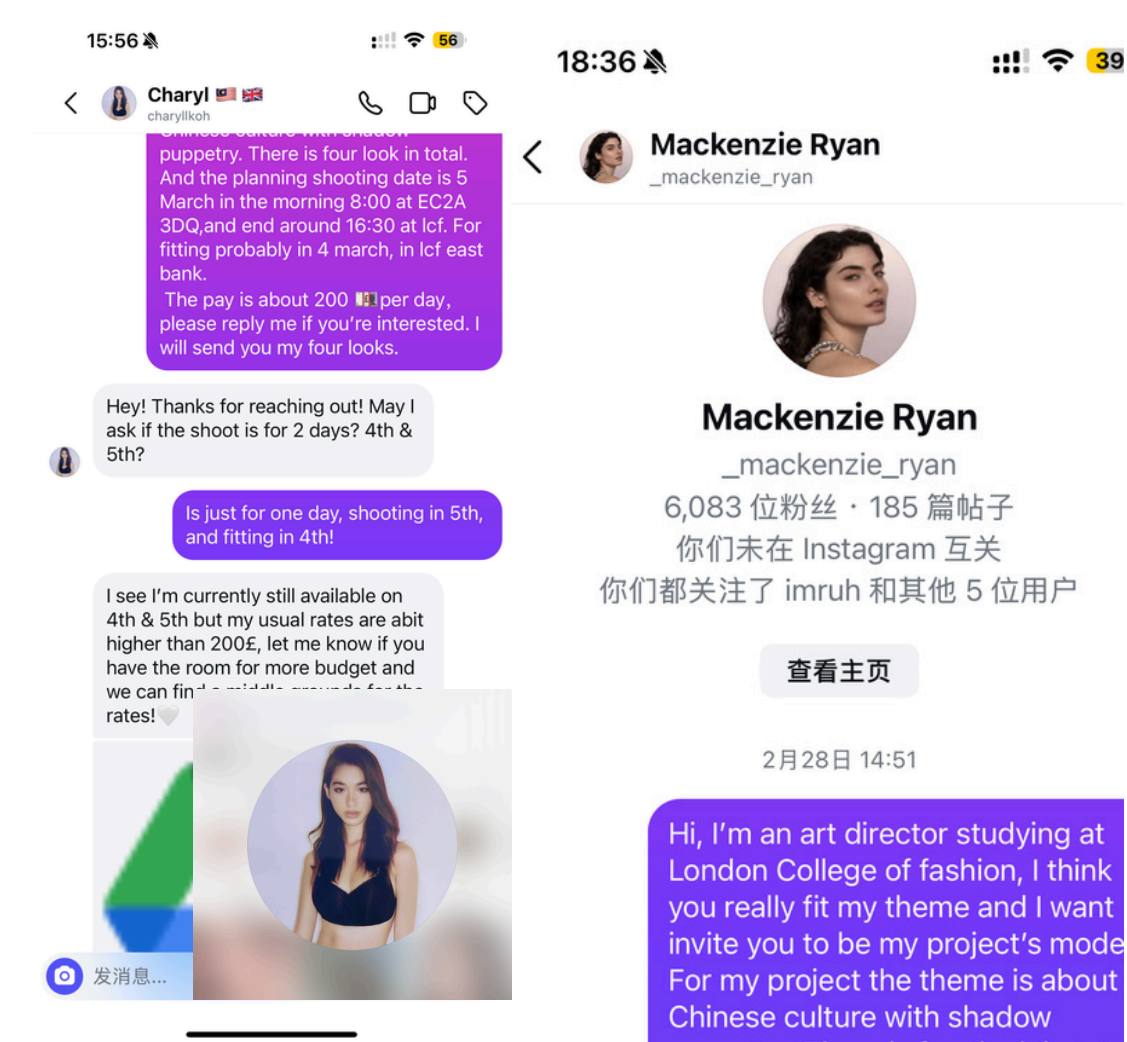
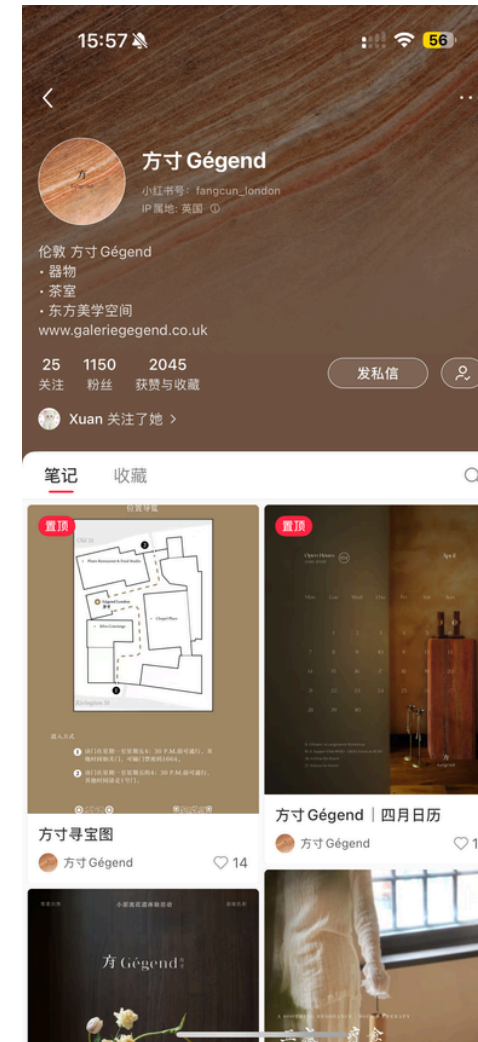
# AI Reference



I generated some scene design references in Midjourney based on the style of my home.

These visuals helped me better imagine and plan the settings for my project. I will also take inspiration from these images in terms of color tone. My work will follow a rich and saturated color palette to reflect the boldness and intensity found in Bowery's visuals. This choice of colors helps to amplify the emotional contrast between appearance and inner self, which is central to my theme.

# Preparation&Set Design



The scene was redesigned and adjusted by me during post-production, giving it a more classical Chinese style while also blending in a touch of modernity. This combination helped create a visual effect that respects tradition but also feels fresh and contemporary.

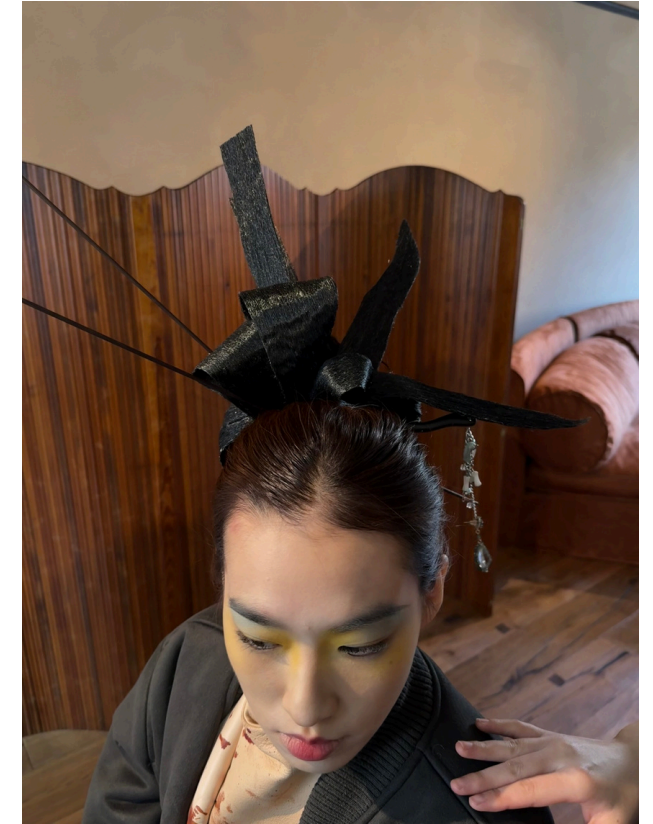
To match this Chinese-style outfit, I specifically rent a traditional Chinese teahouse in London called “方舟” as the shooting location. I also rented some tea sets, porcelain, and jade pieces to use as decorative props, creating a stronger connection to the cultural atmosphere I wanted to present.

I found this teahouse in London through social media and negotiated with the owner to rent the space for my photoshoot. In addition, during the process of contacting models, I went through several rounds of selection before finally finding the one that best suited the concept of my project, which has an Asian appearance, a well-proportioned figure, and gives off a gentle and delicate impression, which matched the aesthetic I was aiming for in this project.

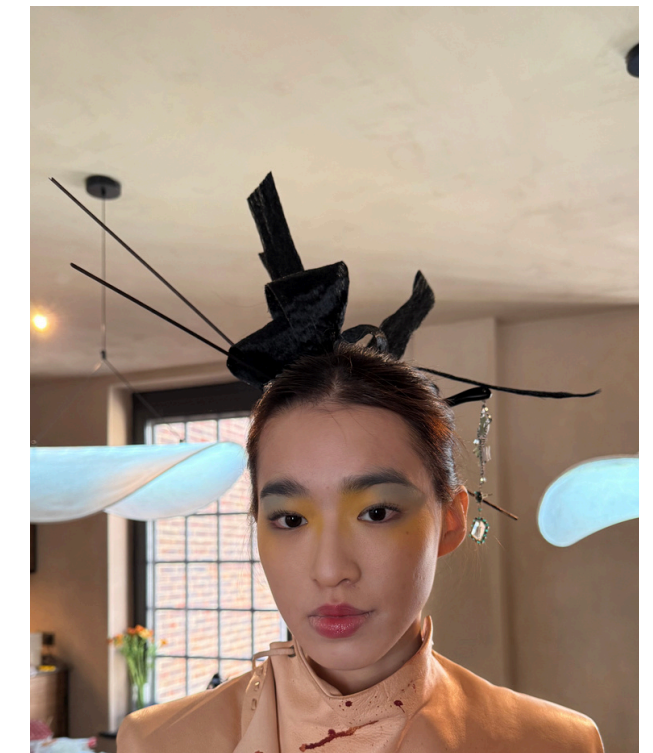
## Hair & Makeup Design



I selected a range of traditional accessories to add highlights to the overall look. By experimenting with different combinations and styling techniques, I aimed to bring a sense of modern fashion to the traditional outfit, making the final look more dynamic and visually engaging.



For the makeup, I mainly chose yellow and green eyeshadow. According to Sichen and Yuejun Chu's research "Yellow is the color of the earth, Chinese civilization originates from this yellow earth. Yellow earth, yellow river and yellow skin are the primary colors of Chinese people's life, symbolizing light and hope, and carrying the Chinese people's deep affection for the Chinese land". By incorporating this color scheme, I aimed to convey a balance between tradition and modernity, as well as to create a striking aesthetic that aligns with the concepts explored in the research.



# Experiment



I used Photoshop to recreate the look and texture of an old-fashioned vintage camera. By doing so, I aimed to create a sense of crossing between different eras, blending traditional aesthetics with contemporary artistic expression

I will also print out these photos to showcase my creative process and place them alongside my final illustrations. This allows the audience to see how the final work developed step by step. Moreover, I believe the photography is worth presenting, as it was my first time trying this.

## Final Shooting

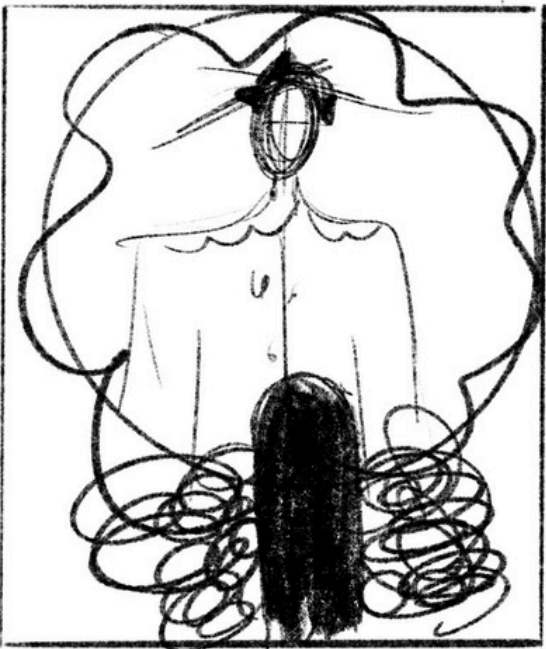
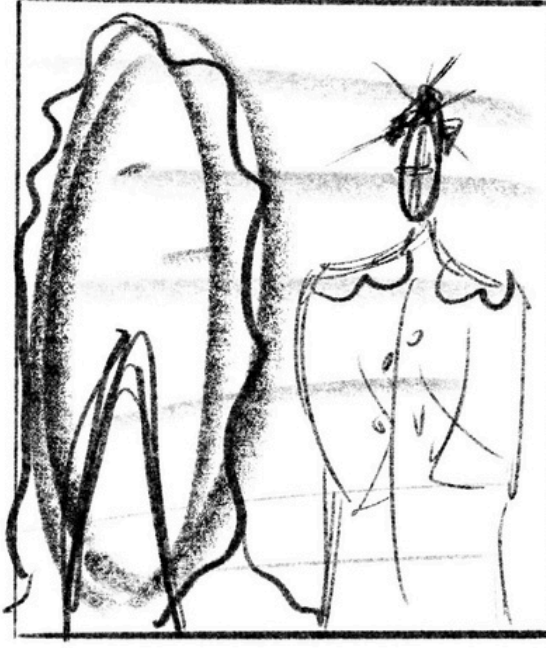
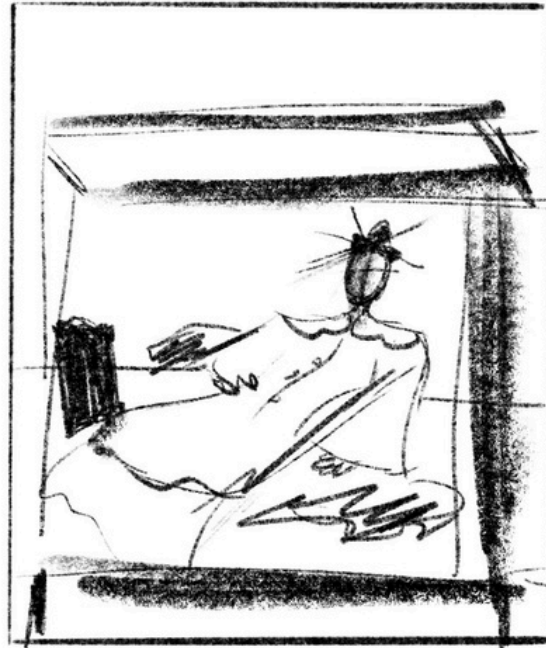
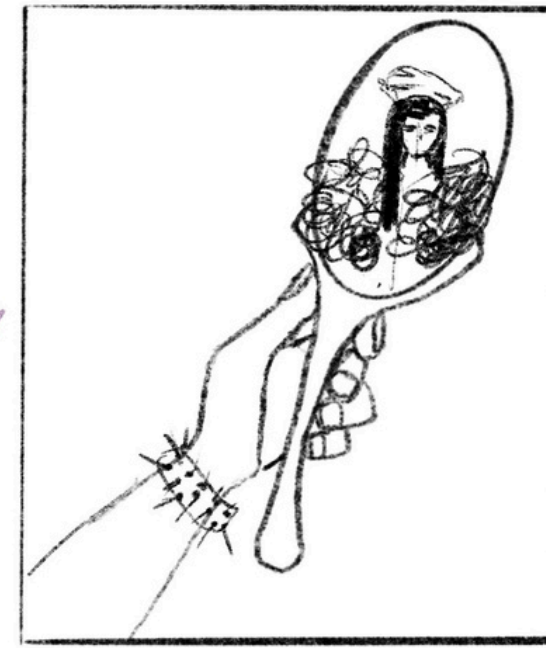
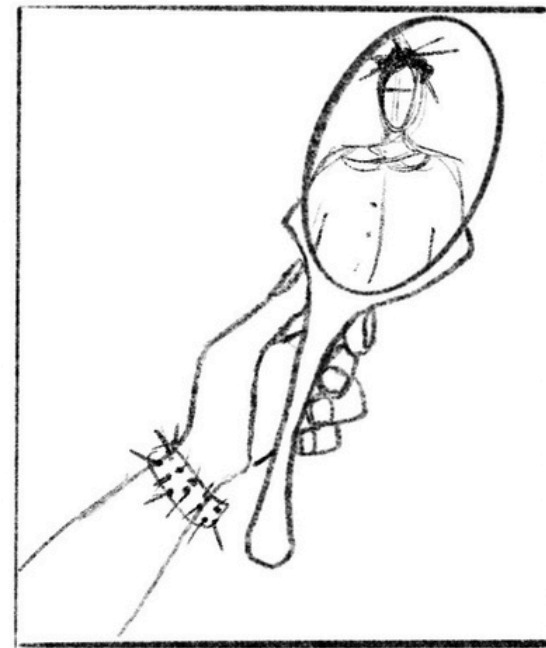


I intentionally darkened the colors in the central photograph, creating a colder, more subdued tone to evoke a sense of emotional heaviness. This visual choice was meant to express the contrast between appearance and emotion—although my outward look may satisfy my parents' expectations, the cold tones reflect an inner sense of discomfort and restraint. It symbolizes the silent tension of hiding one's true self beneath a socially accepted image.

## Few Skeches about final Illustrations



Look 1 illustrations (2 version)



I designed a handheld mirror showing a reflection of myself, symbolizing the inner, true version of who I am. It raises the question of whether the image presented is the expected self shaped by others, or the real self hidden beneath the surface.

The expected version of myself, although dressed in a glamorous and socially accepted way, is actually trapped within a wooden frame—symbolizing the restriction of thought and freedom under external expectations. At the same time, I designed a second figure looking into a mirror, expressing a moment of self-doubt and internal questioning of identity.

The figure standing in front of the mirror looks nothing like the reflection, symbolizing the disconnect between the inner self and the image shaped by expectations

I also designed a traditional-patterned fabric bag that wraps around the inner self. This visual element symbolizes how cultural expectations and traditional values often conceal or suppress one's true identity.

# Fashion Brand Research

## ChopovaLoewna SS25



I chose the skirt on the right for Look 2 because it is one of the most iconic pieces from the brand. It conveys a fusion of tradition and modernity, breaking away from conventional norms. Visually, it presents a bold, punk-inspired, and highly fashionable aesthetic.

By referencing this dress in my styling, I aimed to reflect that same tension between the expected self and the real self.



Chopova Loewna is renowned for its distinctive fusion of traditional Eastern European folk aesthetics with contemporary sportswear elements.

The brand carries a spirit of rebellion. In addition, their runway shows reflect a strong sense of inclusivity. The models are diverse—not only young women, but also people of different races, backgrounds, and even older individuals are featured on the catwalk. This diversity highlights the brand's commitment to breaking traditional beauty standards and embracing all forms of identity.

In the context of exploring themes like "Expected Self vs. Real Self" and the influence of parental expectations on fashion choices, Chopova Loewna serves as a compelling case study. Their work exemplifies how traditional cultural elements can be reinterpreted to express individual identity, challenging societal norms and expectations.

## Fashion Brand Research



**Vivienne Westwood AW 1994 "On  
Liberty,"**

I chose Vivienne Westwood for my brand research because she is widely recognized as the pioneer of rebellious punk fashion. In addition, her Autumn/Winter 1994 collection was titled *On Liberty*, a theme that aligns with my exploration of identity and resistance against traditional expectations.

*On Liberty* collection mainly focused on reviving the 19th-century bustle. This design emphasized exaggerated feminine silhouettes and challenged contemporary fashion norms by juxtaposing historical shapes with modern styling. By incorporating these elements, Westwood explored the tension between tradition and modernity, comfort and aesthetics, and questioned societal perceptions of femininity.

Just as I aim to explore, under parental expectations, there is a deeper attempt to shape and confine me according to their values. Through clothing, my social identity as a woman becomes a site of control—where tradition and expectation seek to define how I should present myself.

# Lsoul

Fashion style i like

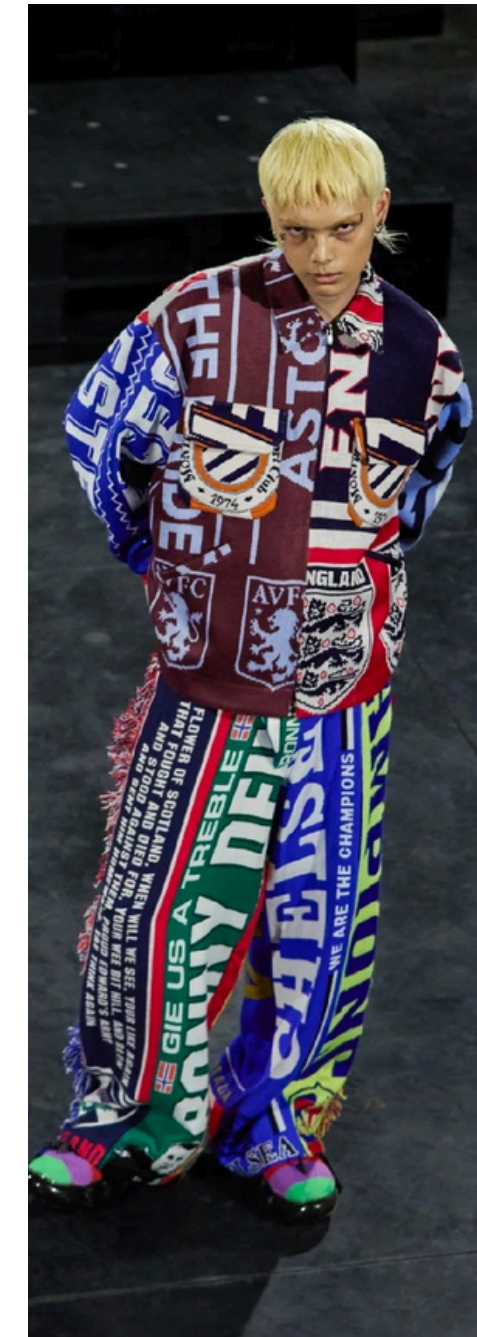
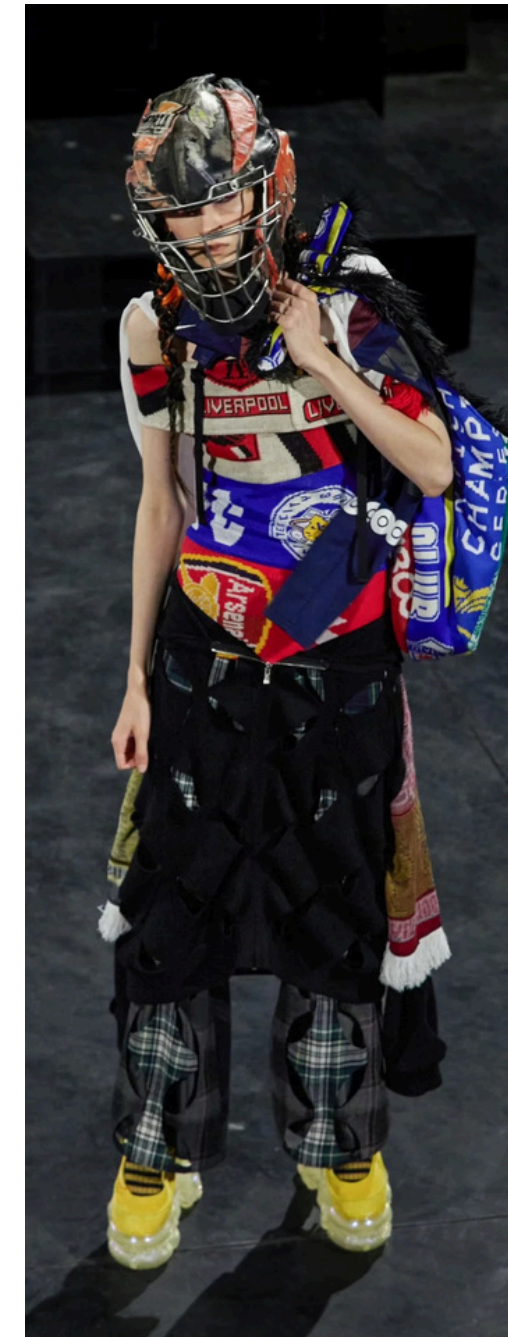
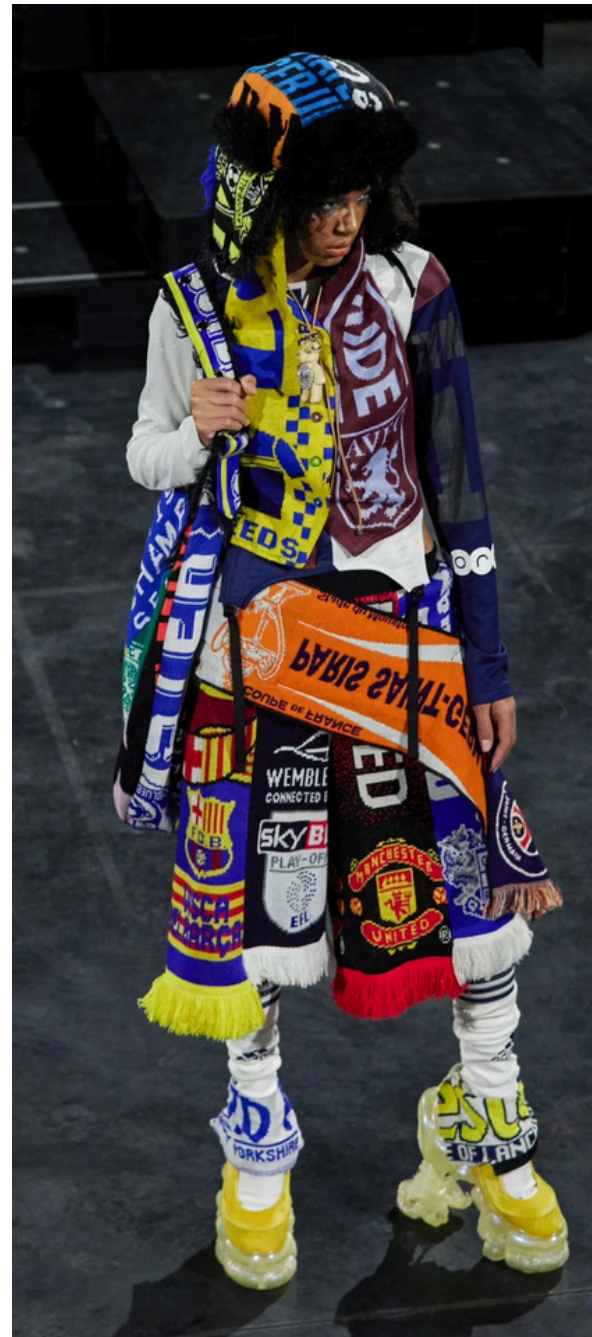


LSOUL is dedicated to creating fashionable clothing for women with a free spirit, distinct personality, and a love for their body curves. The design style is described as "feminine yet distinctive." LSOUL's designs blend modern urban aesthetics with traditional cultural elements.

This is a brand that I really like, but it has always been a topic of controversy between me and my mother. Despite the fact that the clothing style leans towards being feminine and elegant, the uniquely designed pieces are not understood or appreciated by my mother. She finds it difficult to accept the brand's fashion aesthetic, even though I am drawn to its distinct and artistic approach. Because this brand best represents my personal aesthetic style.

# Fashion Brand Research

# Megament 2024



This is a vintage clothing remake team from Beijing with a 15-year history. All of their products are created through the secondary remake of vintage pieces. Their mechanical football series gives off a strong sense of energy and rebellion. Additionally, I used to love playing football during high school, so I feel this collection resonates well with my personal identity and experiences.

# Character Design

## Look 2



Viviennewestwood  
1994 《on Liberty》

ChopovaLowvena  
SS25

Megament  
2024



I created a moodboard based on my personal preferences and style. When I was in high school, I loved playing football and ice hockey, and I was also passionate about playing the drum set. Therefore, I used these elements in my collage to better help the audience understand me.



## Hair and Makeup Reference




Vlada Krukovskaya is a multidisciplinary makeup artist from Russia, renowned for her works that blend high and low cultures and challenge traditional aesthetics. She often combines luxury with street elements, such as applying fake facial tattoos on models or spray-painting brand logos on tanned bodies, creating a visual impact akin to "graffiti in the Louvre". And reflecting her challenge to traditional beauty and pursuit of individual expression.

I was drawn to her works because her style resonated with my inner longing. I find the references which all black hair example because my hair is black, this will be of greater reference value. Growing up in a traditional Chinese family, I was expected to be a gentle and demure lady, dressed appropriately. However, as I grew older, I yearned for a more individualistic and powerful "cool girl" image. Vlada's works showed me that women can break free from traditional constraints through makeup and styling to reveal their true selves. Her creations inspired me to try to combine traditional elements with modern styles in my own projects.

In my works, I also attempt to break the definition of my own image set by my parents through 2D element and visual expression, and search for my own style.

# AI Reference

Today



put on Leigh Bowery's makeup on the girls's face


v 6.1

Rerun Use Hide More

This panel shows four AI-generated images of a woman's face framed in a mirror. The woman has various colorful makeup looks, including blue and red accents around her eyes and lips. The prompt is 'put on Leigh Bowery's makeup on the girls's face'. The interface includes a version number 'v 6.1' and interaction buttons: 'Rerun', 'Use', 'Hide', and 'More'.

I utilized AI to create a series of images, drawing inspiration from my collage as the foundational visual reference. The idea behind this approach was to explore new creative possibilities and reinterpret the original concepts in a more dynamic and innovative way.

Today




Fill in the empty space of the background, with tradition Chinese style,leave the mirror with original look

v 6.1

Rerun Use Hide More

This panel shows four AI-generated images of a woman in a blue qipao sitting in a mirror. The background behind her is filled with traditional Chinese motifs like ink wash paintings, lanterns, and floral patterns. The prompt is 'Fill in the empty space of the background, with tradition Chinese style,leave the mirror with original look'. The interface includes a version number 'v 6.1' and interaction buttons: 'Rerun', 'Use', 'Hide', and 'More'.

Today



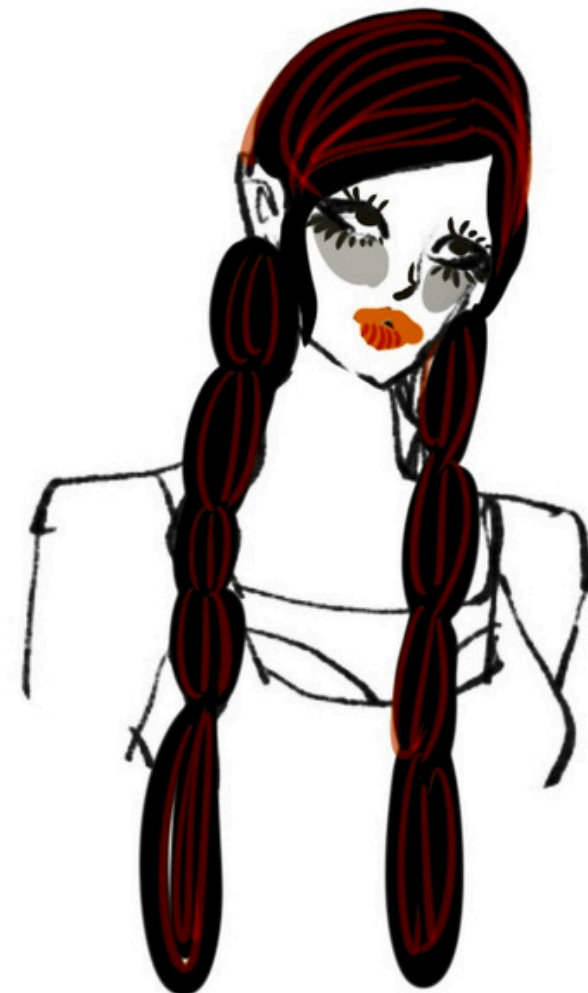
Design a traditional Chinese background , at the back og the mirror

v 6.1

Rerun Use Hide More

This panel shows four AI-generated images of a woman in a blue qipao sitting in a mirror. The background behind her is filled with traditional Chinese motifs like lanterns, floral patterns, and architectural elements. The prompt is 'Design a traditional Chinese background , at the back og the mirror'. The interface includes a version number 'v 6.1' and interaction buttons: 'Rerun', 'Use', 'Hide', and 'More'.

# Hair and Makeup Design



## In Class Mission Composition Workshop



In class, we were asked to perform post-production on existing materials. I created a mix by combining my character illustrations, my photography, and images I found online, blending them together into a new composition. Through this process of mixing different visual elements, I aimed to explore the layered relationship between identity, memory, and cultural expectation—echoing the tension between the "expected self" and the "real self" at the heart of my project.

In this series of mirror experiments, I incorporated both my true self and the expected self into the reflections, aiming to express the duality of identity.

## In Class Mission Composition Workshop



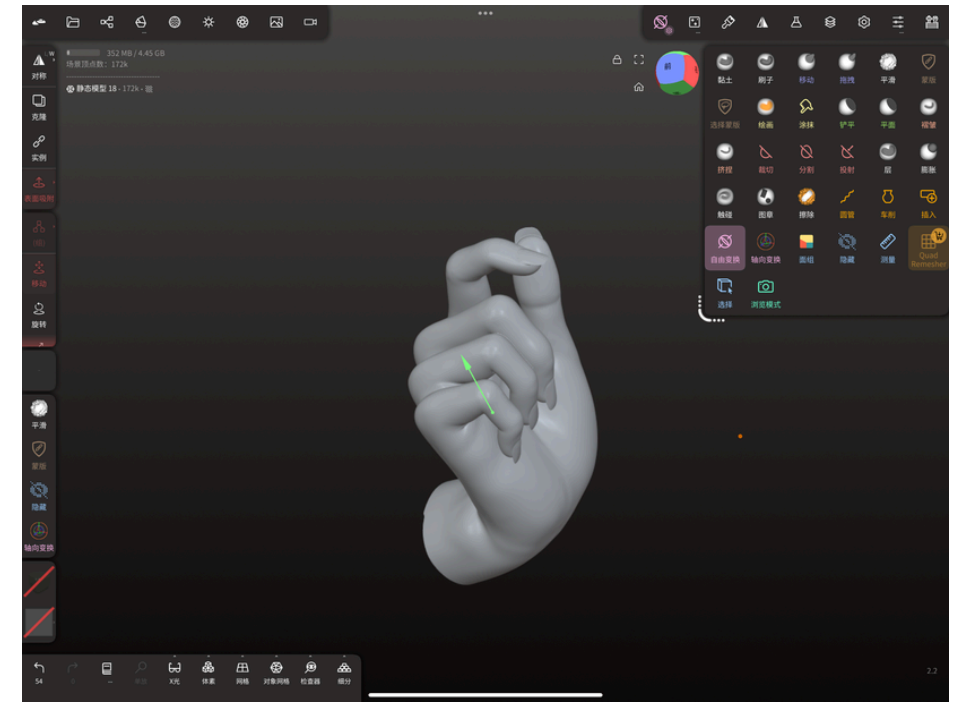
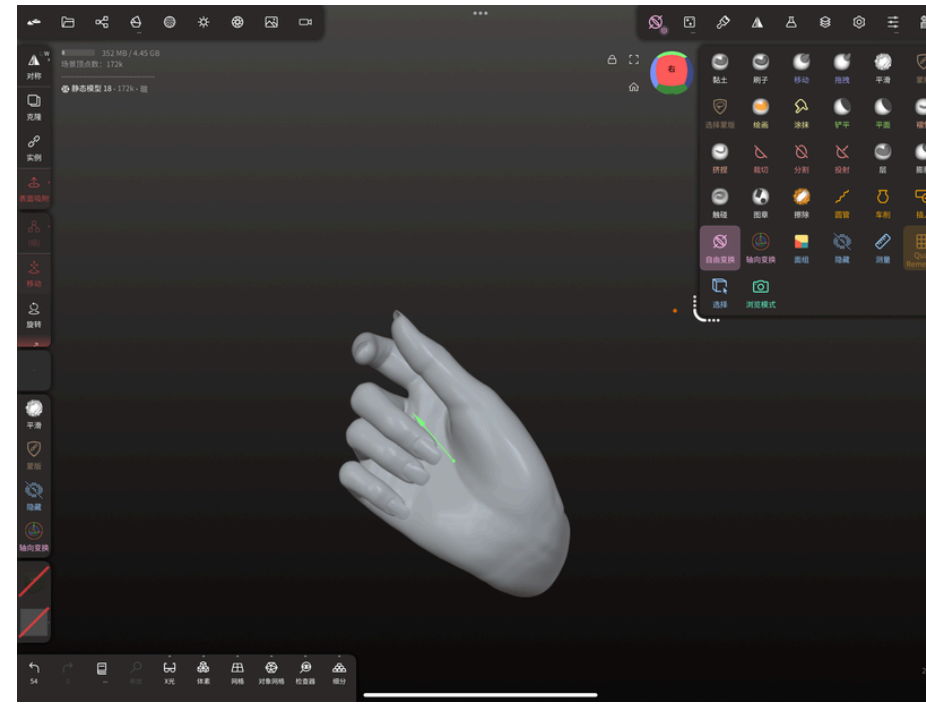
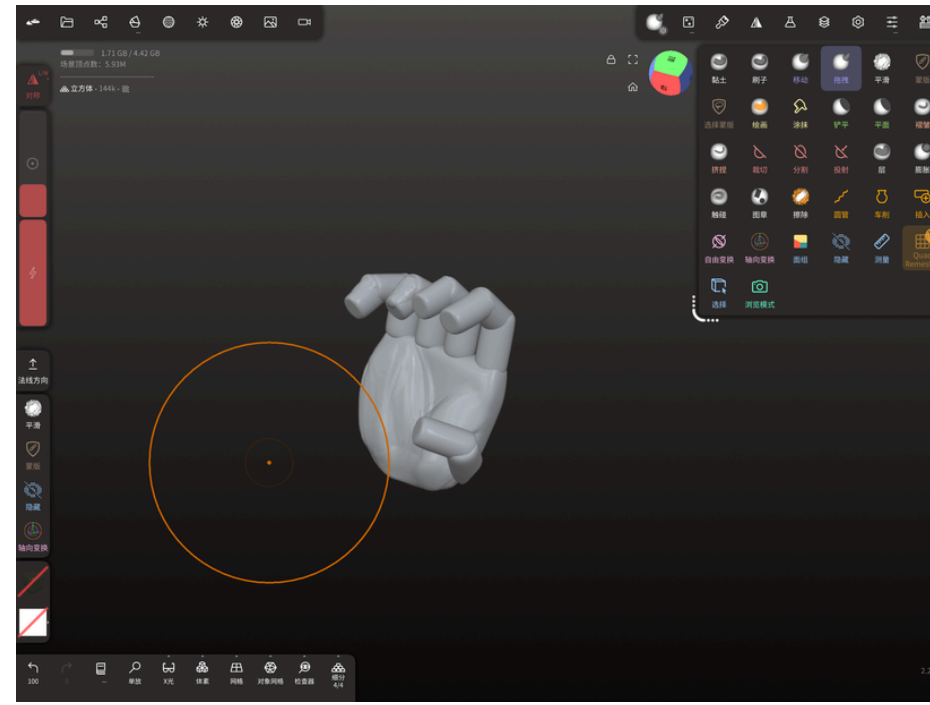
In this series of experiments, I placed my true self against a traditional Chinese background to create a sense of breaking through dimensions. I wanted to explore what kind of visual effect this combination would produce. Additionally, I adjusted the placement of the props and the character to further experiment with the composition. By placing a modern self into a traditional setting, I intended to blur the boundaries between time, space, and identity. The rearrangement of props and figures was not only a visual adjustment but also a symbolic act—challenging the fixed expectations tied to tradition. Through this "dimension-breaking" effect, I aimed to question how much of the real self can exist within a framework shaped by cultural heritage.

# Collage Experiment

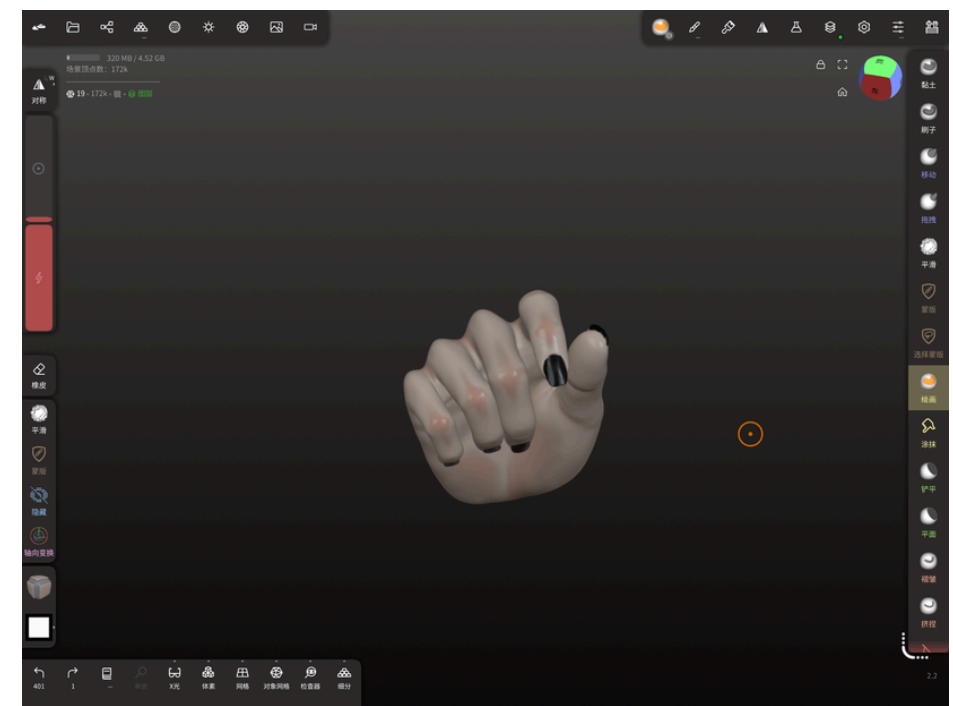
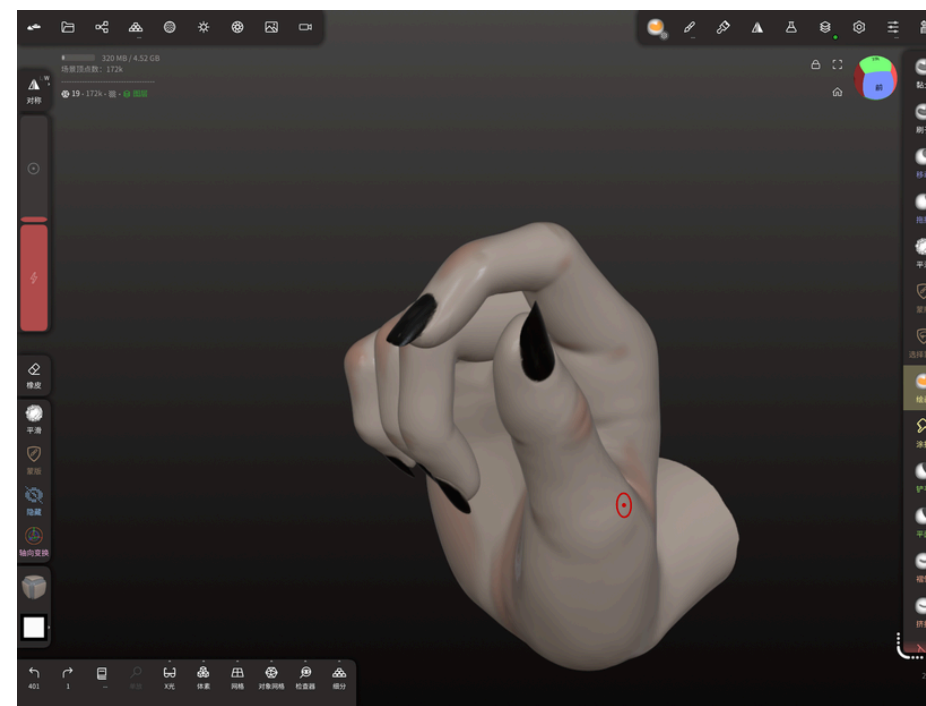
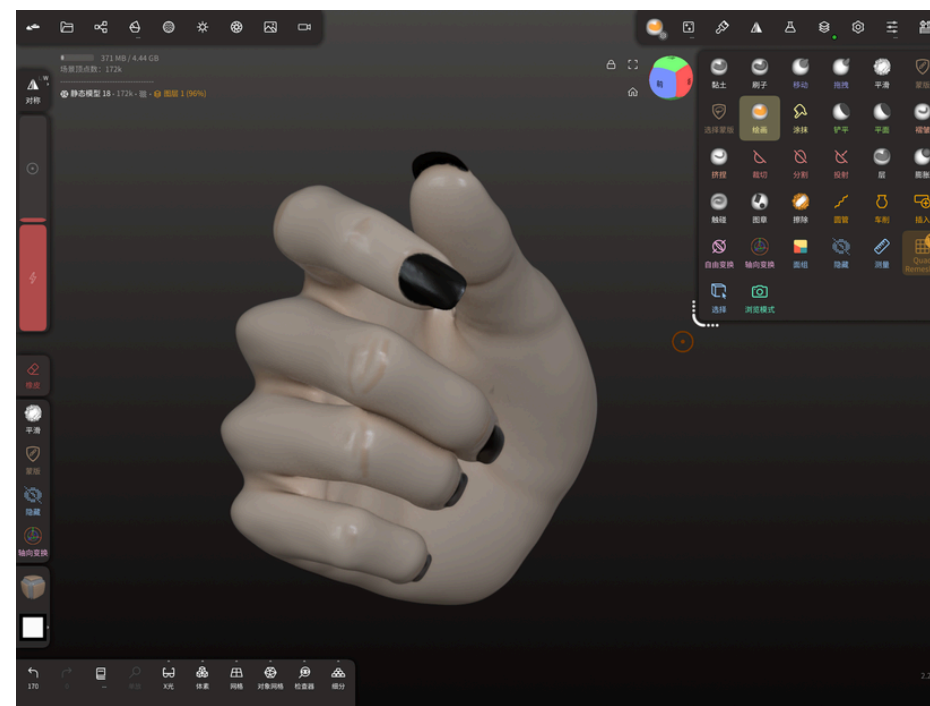
After discussing with my tutor, I realized that my overall work was too random—the use of too many different media risked making the final outcome feel disconnected, rather than like a cohesive series. So, following Kate’s suggestion, I printed my existing pieces in both A3 and A4 sizes and began creating collages to bring them together visually.



# 3D Modeling Experiment

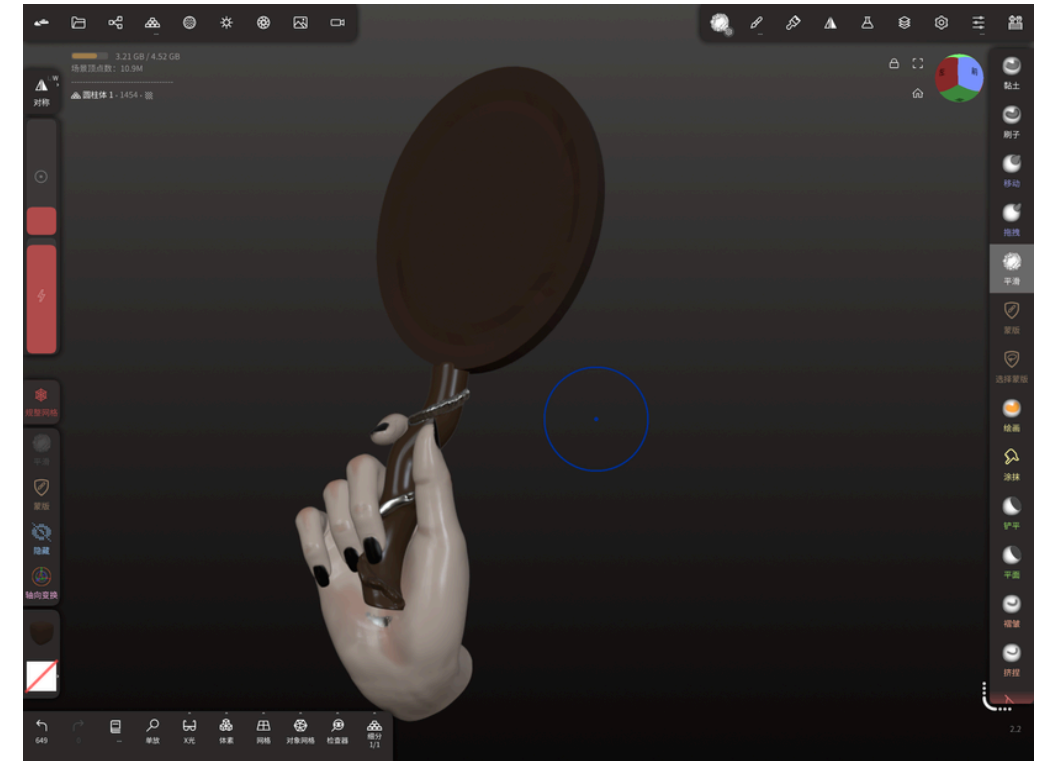
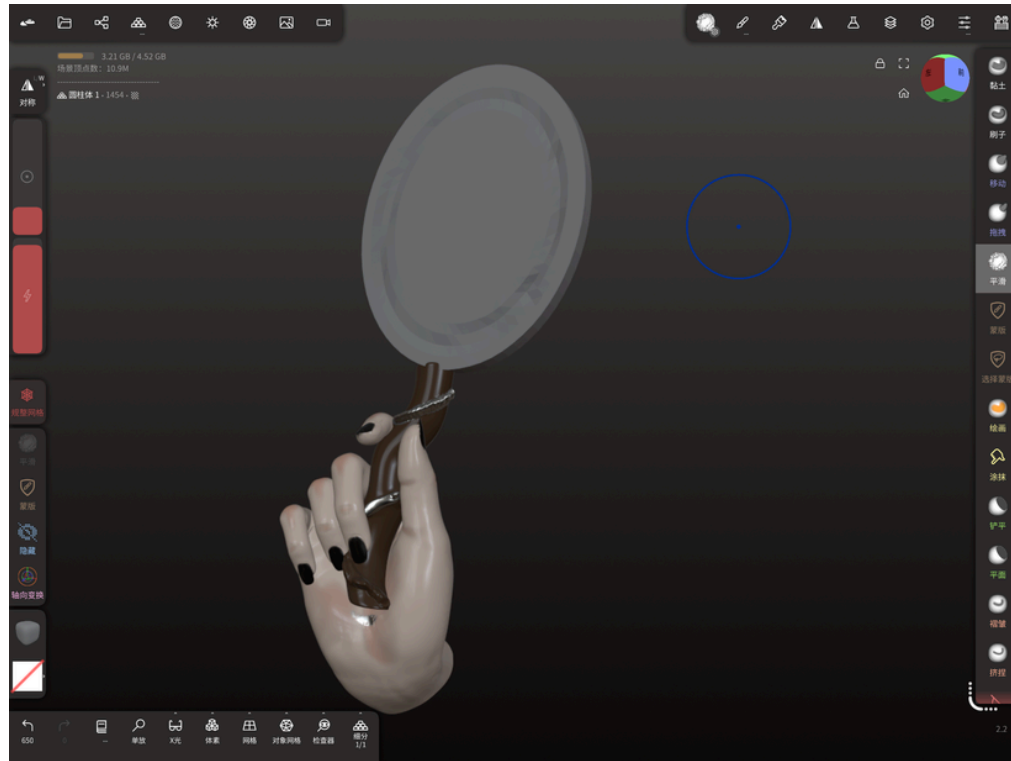


I used Nomad to model a hand.



I gradually added color and refined the knuckle details to make the hand more realistic

## 3D Modeling Experiment- Color

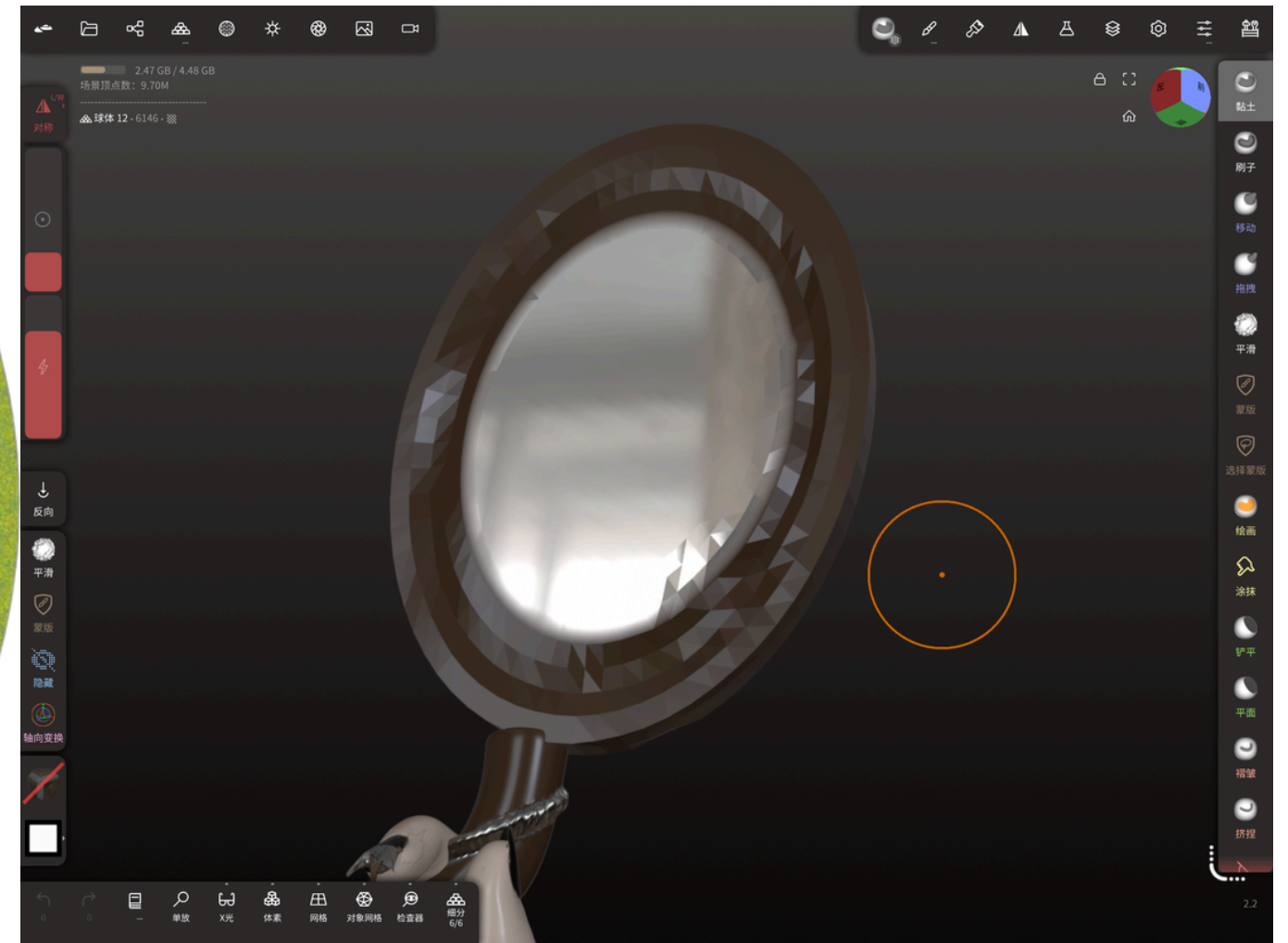
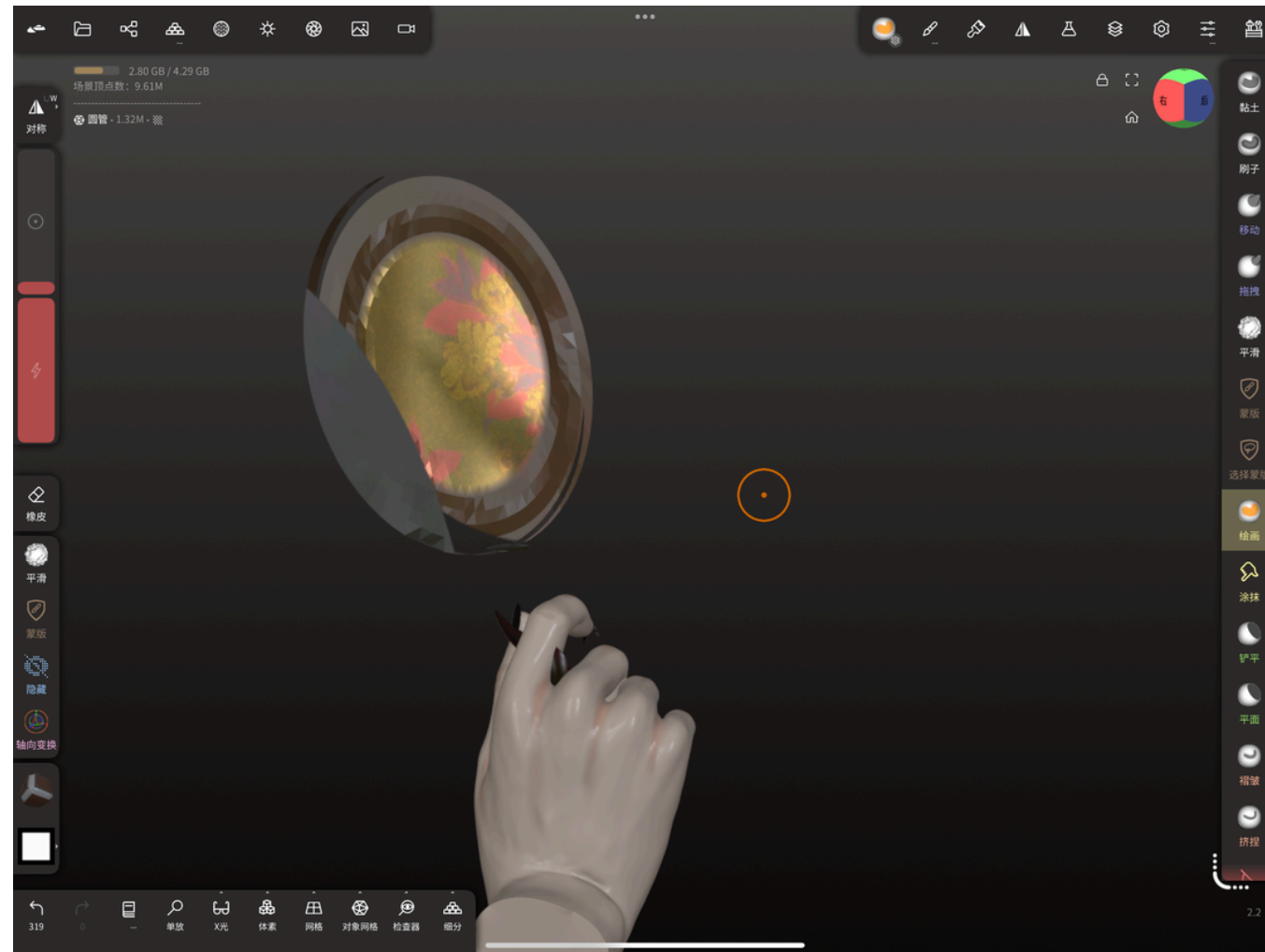


I designed the handheld mirror because mirrors have reflective properties—they can reveal another side of a person, both literally and symbolically. In the context of my project, the mirror serves as a metaphor for dual identity, showing the contrast between the self that is seen by others and the one that remains hidden.

For the color and material, I experimented with both metallic and wooden textures. In the end, I chose the version from the last image, as it conveyed a stronger sense of depth and quality, enhancing the overall mood of the piece.

# 3D Modeling Experiment

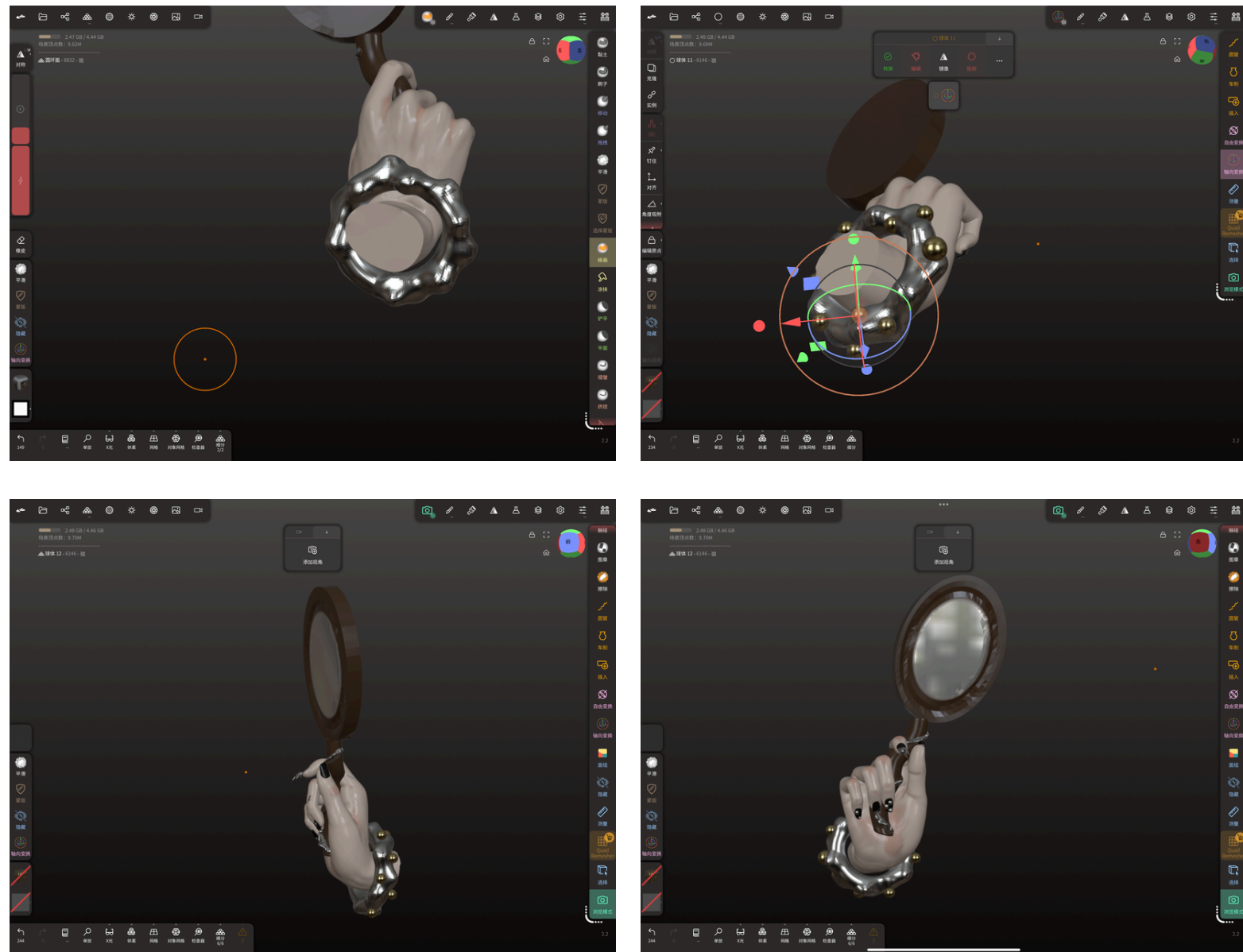
## Failed attempts



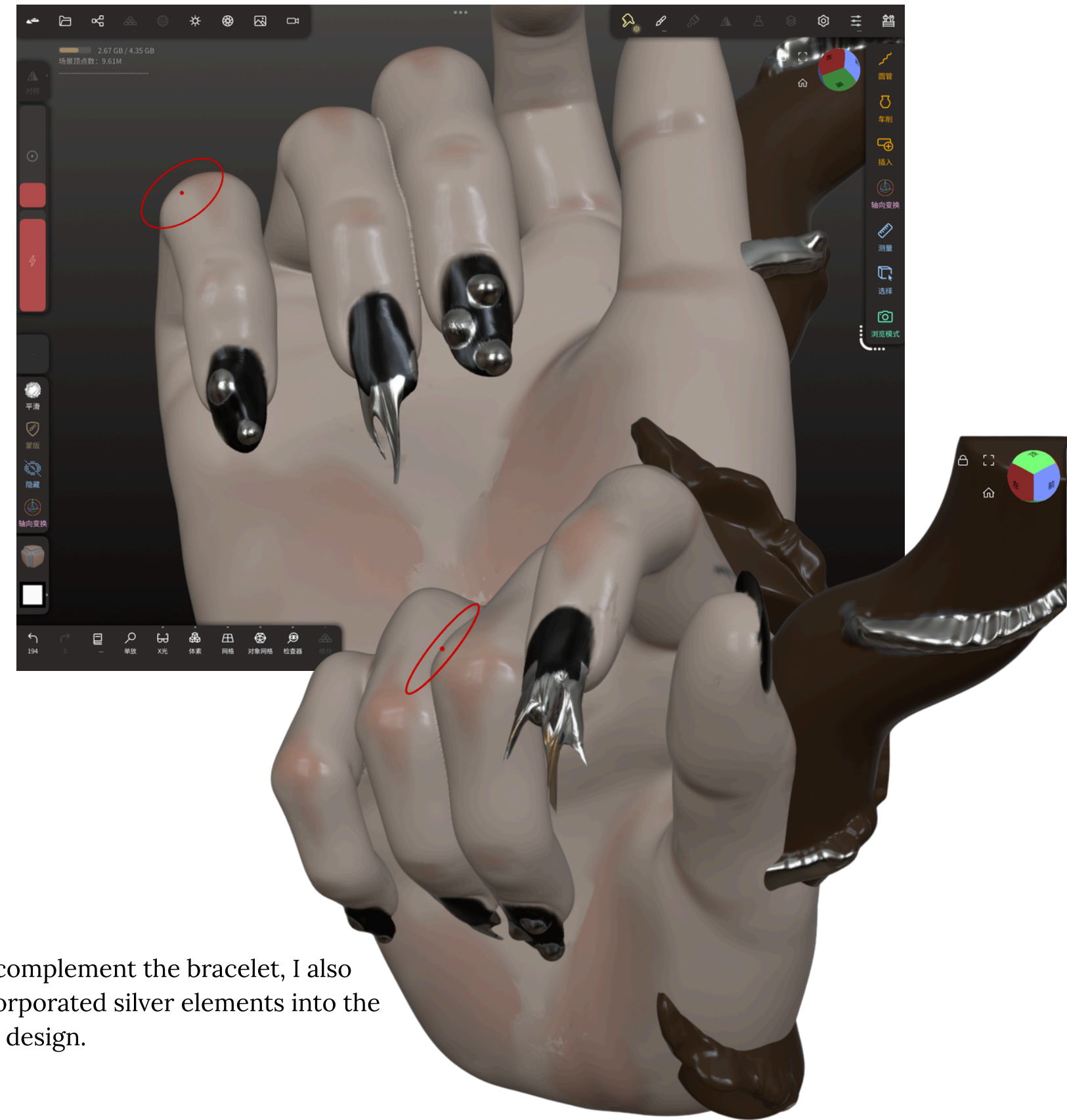
I extracted the wallpaper pattern from my home and recreated it with my own design. I originally planned to apply the pattern onto the mirror surface, but due to clipping issues in the software, I had to give up on this idea.

The detailing on the mirror is not fully refined yet, as adding further subdivisions exceeded the memory limit. As a result, the mirror surface appears slightly rough.

# 3D Modeling Experiment



To reflect the clash between traditional and modern styles, I designed a punk-style bracelet primarily composed of gold and silver tones.

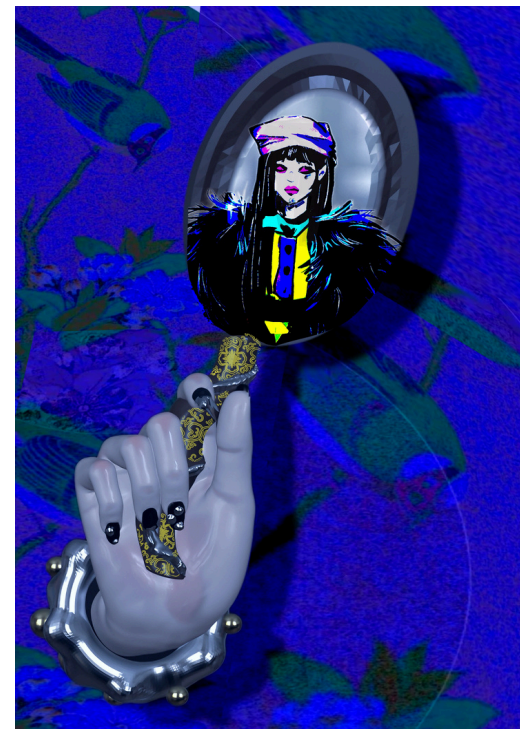


To complement the bracelet, I also incorporated silver elements into the nail design.

# Experiment anout background choosing



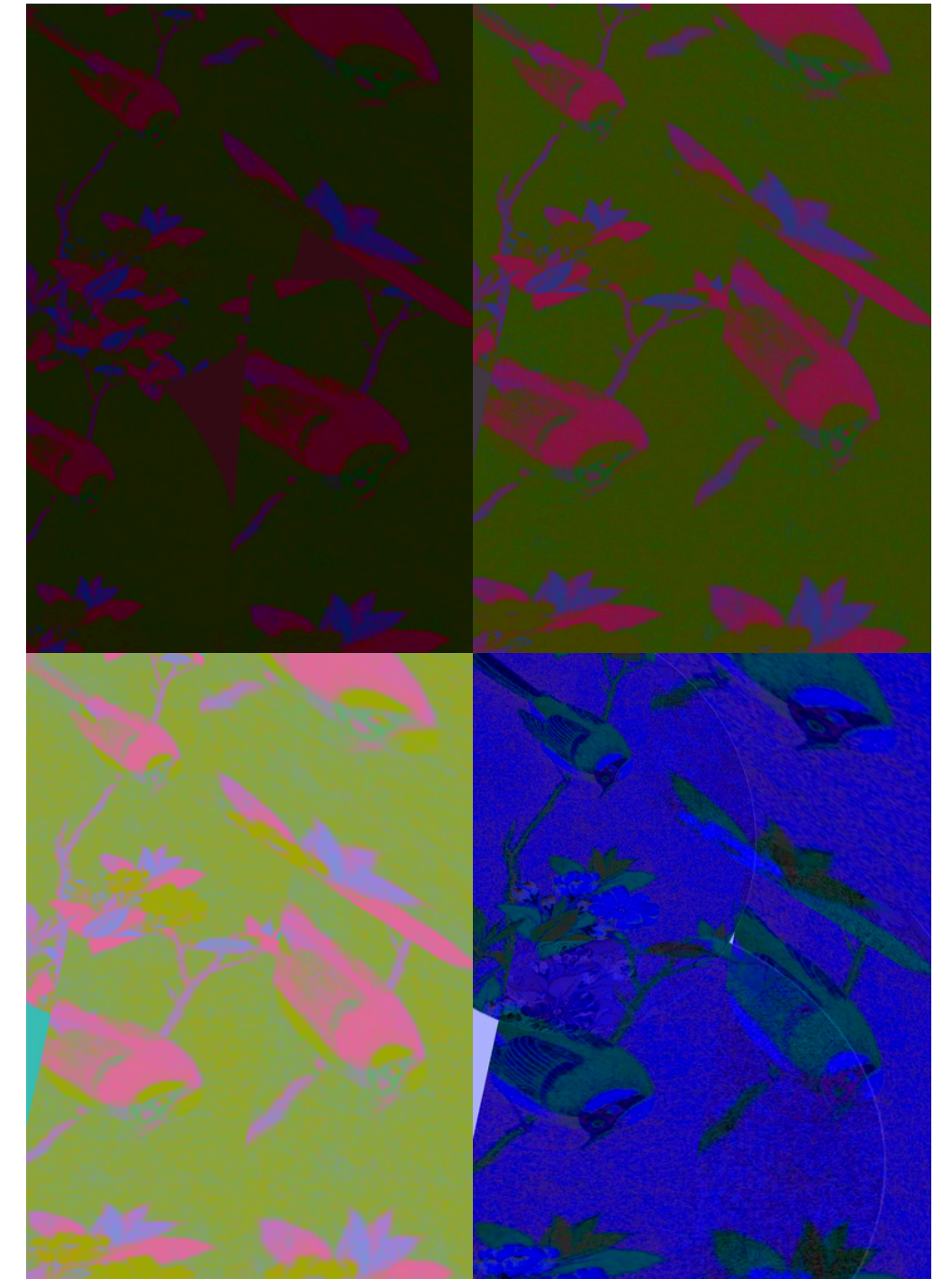
Change the szie of the portrait



i change the background color and the opacity in the mirror to see which one look the best.



# Wallpaper Design



I create four different colors wallpapers and to see which one look the best

## Photoshop Experiment

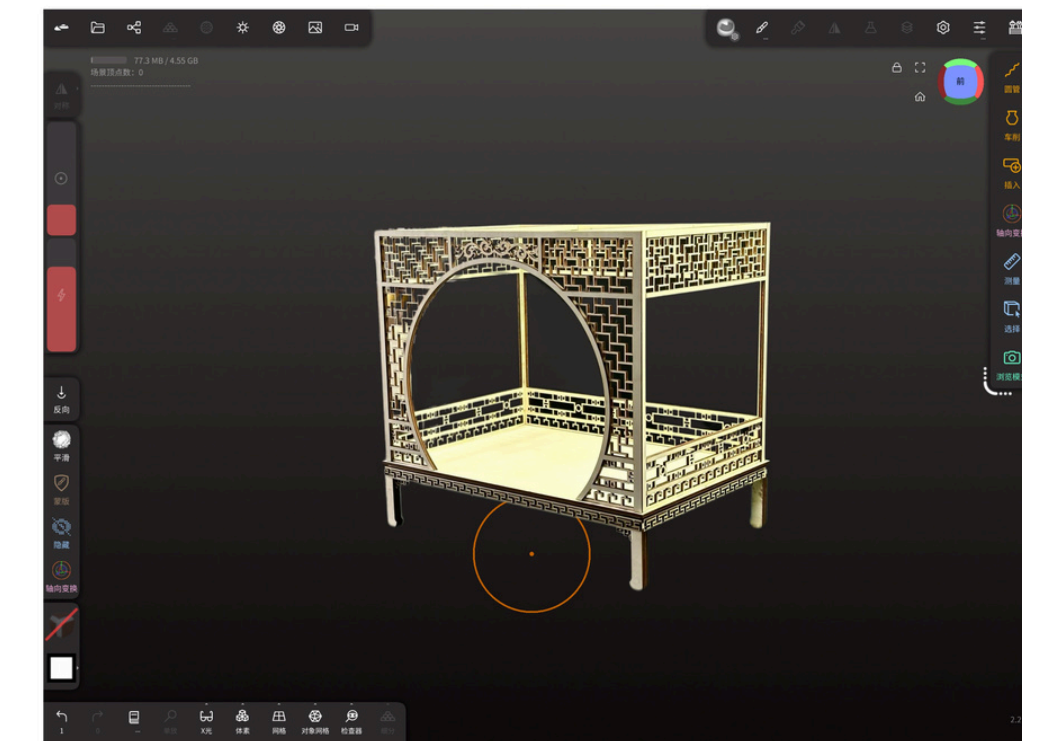
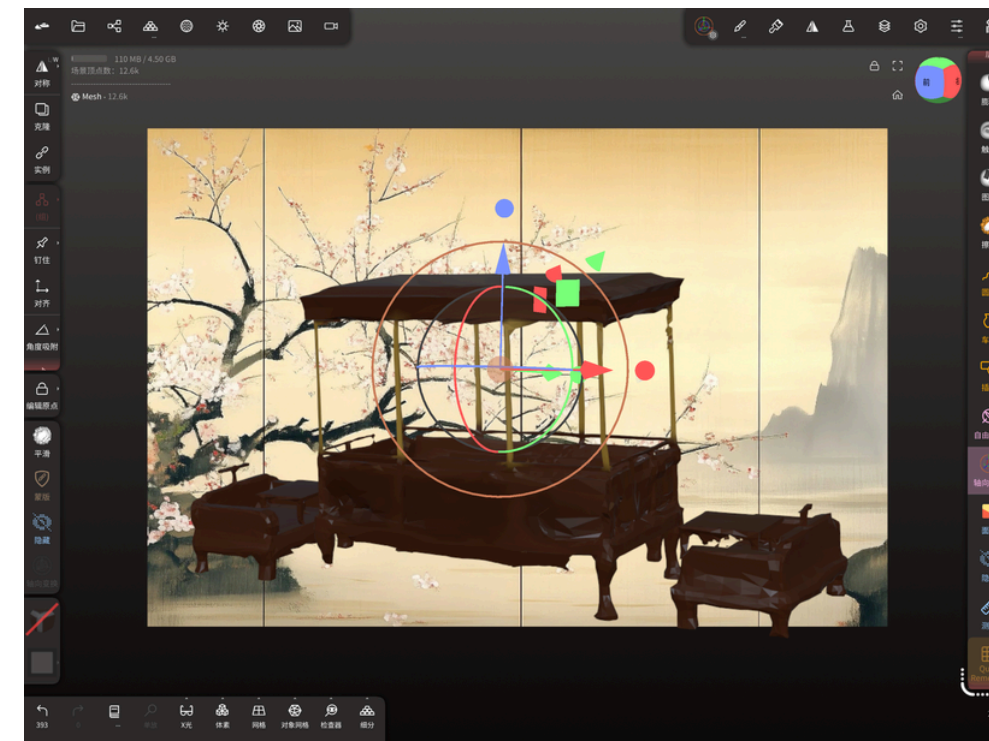


After discussing with Alex, I decided to make this illustration feel more connected to the rest of the series. To do this, I used Photoshop to lower the resolution intentionally, creating a pixelated effect that matches the visual style of my other works.

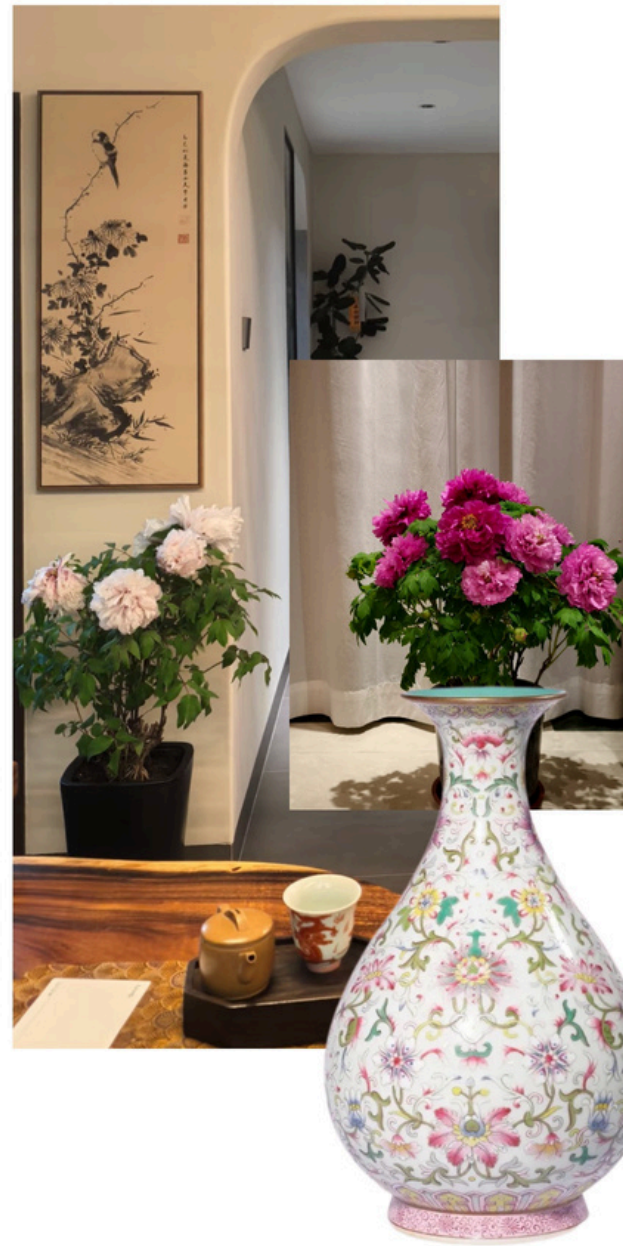
# 3D Modeling Experiment



I used Nomad to model a traditional frame bed. During the modeling process, I encountered several challenges—for example, I attempted to carve out the intricate floral patterns on the bed, but due to my limited technical skills and time constraints, the final result came out a bit rough and unfinished.



## Background Design



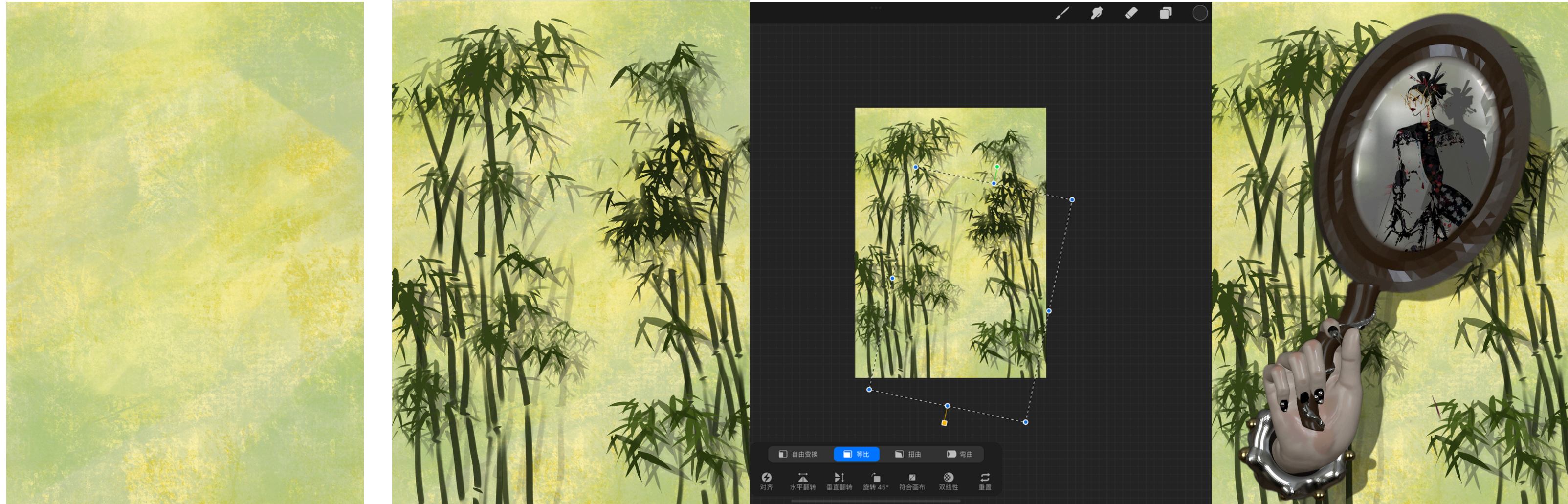
Inspired by decorative elements from my home and traditional Chinese ceramics I observed in the museum, I created a background illustration for my final project. I included several bamboo stalks in the composition—not merely as decoration, but as a metaphor for the protagonist’s situation. Though bamboo often symbolizes resilience, here it reflects how he is trapped between rigid “frames,” alluding to the external expectations and imposed discipline that confine him.

## Collage Display



During the process of collage composition, I paid attention to the production of shadows and the color coordination of the overall composition. In order to reflect that "the expected me" is trapped, I designed myself trapped in a mirror, and the hand holding the mirror represents "the inner me".

## Background Design



After discussing with my tutor, I realized the importance of maintaining a consistent visual style throughout the project. As a result, I incorporated bamboo elements into this background design as well, echoing the imagery used in earlier works. I chose yellow and green as the base colors to enhance the visual harmony and continue exploring themes of nature and confinement.

# Final Work Display



## Final Work Display



I printed out the final outcome to have a tangible version for better analysis. To make the entire work look more cohesive as a series, I deconstructed the existing elements. By breaking them down, I aimed to rearrange and reorganize them in a way that enhances the visual unity and consistency of the overall presentation.

In addition, after taking the teacher's advice into consideration, I recreated the shadows in my work based on the shadow experiments conducted during the workshop. This adjustment makes the overall presentation appear more realistic.

## Bibliography:

SS25 (no date) *Chopova Lowena*. Available at: <https://chopovalowena.com/pages/ss25> (Accessed: 29 April 2025).

Vogue China. (2022). *Vogue China* [online]. Available at: <https://www.vogue.com.cn> [Accessed 3 May 2025].

Feinberg, R.A., Mataro, L. and Burroughs, W.J., 1992. Clothing and social identity. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 11(1), pp.18–23. [Accessed 3 May 2025].

Dazed Digital. (2023). *Meet Vlada Krukovskaya, the artist using makeup to visualise her inner world*. [online] Available at: <https://www.dazeddigital.com/beauty/article/63028/1/vlada-krukovskaya-make-up-artist-interview> [Accessed 3 May 2025].

i-D. (2023). *Leigh Bowery's radical legacy still looms over fashion's outlaws*. [online] Available at: <https://i-d.co/article/leigh-bowery-taboo-style-essay-outlaws-fashion-renegades/> [Accessed 3 May 2025].

LSOUL, 2025. Home. *LSOUL Official Website*. Available at: <https://lsoul.com/en/home/> [Accessed 8 May 2025].

Chen, S. and Chu, Y., 2022. A Study of the Cultural Significance of Traditional Colors in Chinese Movies. *ResearchGate*. Available at:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368492975\\_A\\_Study\\_of\\_the\\_Cultural\\_Significance\\_of\\_Traditional\\_Colors\\_in\\_Chinese\\_Movies#pf6](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368492975_A_Study_of_the_Cultural_Significance_of_Traditional_Colors_in_Chinese_Movies#pf6) [Accessed 8 May 2025].

## Appendix:

Interview transcripts (Chen&Lina, Chengdu, China):

**Interviewer: Mrs. Chen, I saw some photos of your outfits when you were young. Was that the popular way of dressing back then?**

Mrs. Chen (Mother): Yes, to some extent. When I was younger, I liked to dress up too. We didn't have online platforms like today, so I used to cut out pages from magazines like Beauty Weekly and tape them to my closet door. That's how many girls learned about fashion at that time.

**Interviewer: Mrs. Chen, did you ever argue with your mother about clothing?**

Mrs. Chen (Mother): Not really. Back then, we didn't have the habit of arguing with our parents. I just wore simple clothes and didn't ask for too much. My mother would just say: "Don't dress like a movie star, just be neat and clean."

**Interviewer: Mrs. Chen, how do you view the way Lina dresses?**

Mrs. Chen (Mother): I think she likes styles that are too special interest. I prefer something more feminine and graceful and acceptable to the general public. Sometimes she wears oversized clothes or boyish outfits, which I don't understand. I always tell her: "A young lady should show gentleness in her style."

**Interviewer: Lina, how do you feel about your mother's expectations?**

Lina (Daughter): I know she means well, but I feel restricted sometimes. For me, fashion is not just about being pretty—it's about showing who I am. I love experimenting with street style and vintage pieces. I don't do it to upset her; I do it to understand myself better.

**Interviewer: Mrs. Chen, would you accept Lina getting ear piercings or wearing bold makeup?**

Mrs. Chen (Mother): One ear piercing is fine, it's quite common now. But I'm against anything extreme—like nose rings or dark lipstick. I feel it's not suitable for a young girl. I always say, "Keep it natural and fresh—that's beauty in our culture."

**Interviewer: Have you and Lina ever argued over clothing?**

Mrs. Chen (Mother): Yes, more than once. Sometimes I see her post pictures online in outfits I think are too wild. I get worried—what will relatives or teachers think? But I'm trying to understand her world, little by little.

**Interviewer: Lina, how do you feel when your mother disagrees with your style choices?**

Lina (Daughter): I used to feel very frustrated. I felt like she didn't accept who I was becoming and I think she is out of fashion. But now I try to talk to her more and share why I love certain looks. I hope she can see that I'm not rejecting her values—I'm just trying to build my own.

## Appendix:

Interview transcripts (Xie&Yixuan, Shanghai, China):

### **Mrs. Xie, I saw few pics about your dressing when you are young, is that the popular way to wearing like that?**

Mrs. Xie(Mother): Kind of, When I was younger, I cared a lot about looking nice, but I didn't have smartphones back then. So I used to go to the bookstore and read a magazine called \*RAY\*, which was very popular at the time. Many girls learned how to dress from it.

### **Mrs. Xie, have you argue with your mother about dressing?**

Mrs. Xie(Mother): Actually, not much—because when I started buying clothes and exploring my own style, my mother and I were living in different cities. But she would often remind me not to spend too much money on clothes and say that I was wasting money.

### **Mrs. Xie, how do you view the way your daughter dresses?**

Mrs. Xie(Mother):

I've always believed that a girl should dress with grace and modesty. Traditional Chinese style reflects inner beauty—it shows that she is well-raised and educated. I hope Yixuan can wear qipao or elegant outfits. A proper young lady should know calligraphy, guzheng, tea ceremony... not chase flashy trends. By the way, some of the designer's clothes which is not normal and expensive. You are just wearing it for one time after finish take a photo.

### **Yixuan, how do you feel about your mother's expectations?**

Yixuan (Daughter):

I understand her view, and I know it comes from love and care. But I also want to express who I really am. Sometimes I want to try bold styles, bright colors, and modern designs—not to rebel, but to explore my own identity. I respect tradition, but I also want the freedom to define beauty in my own way.

### **Mrs. Xie, would you accept your daughter getting ear piercings or wearing heavy makeup?**

Mrs. Xie (Mother) :

One piercing on each ear is fine—it's quite normal now. But anything beyond that, like multiple piercings even on face or strong makeup, I don't feel comfortable with. I think it's too much. A natural look is always more elegant. We are meant to have black hair and yellow skin

### **Mrs. Xie, have you and Yixuan ever argued because of different ideas about clothing and style?**

Mrs. Xie (Mother):

Sometimes, yes. When I see her wearing something too revealing or too strange in my eyes, I can't help but criticize. I worry that people will judge her or misunderstand her. But afterwards, I also reflect—maybe the world she faces is different from what I knew growing up.

### **Yixuan, how do you feel when your mother's disagreements about your choice on clothing?**

Yixuan(Daughter):

At first, I would feel hurt and misunderstood. But over time, I've realized that her criticism comes from love and protection. Now, instead of arguing back, I try to explain my choices and show her that being different doesn't mean being disrespectful.

# Appendix:

Interview transcripts (Jane&Maagie, LosAngels):

## **Mrs. Jane, how do you view the way your daughter dresses?**

Mrs. Jane(Mother):

I think it's important for Emma to find her own style. Fashion is a way to express her personality. As long as she feels confident and comfortable, I fully support whatever she chooses to wear.

## **Maggie, how do you feel about your mother's views?**

Maggie (Daughter):

I'm really grateful. I feel lucky that my mom encourages me to explore different styles and express who I am. It makes me more confident and willing to take risks with fashion.

## **Mrs. Jane, would you accept your daughter getting multiple piercings or wearing bold makeup?**

Mrs. Jane (Mother) :

Of course. It's part of growing up and discovering her identity. I believe it's just a phase of self-expression, and it helps her understand herself better. But I do find it hard to accept too many piercings, especially on the face.

## **Maggie, do you ever feel limited by family expectations?**

Maggie (Daughter) :

Not really. My family has always given me space to be myself. I feel free to make my own choices

But I still really want to share and discuss fashion with my mother, and I hope that my style can be understood and accepted by them. I get the feeling that, deep down, she may not want to interfere with my choices—even if she doesn't always like the way I dress.

## **Mrs. Jane, have you and Emma ever argued because of different ideas about clothing?**

Mrs. Jane (Mother) :

No, not really. Even if I don't understand her choices sometimes, I see it as part of her journey. It's important for her to make mistakes, learn, and grow.

## **Mrs. Jane, have you and Emma ever argued because of different ideas about clothing?**

Mrs. Jane (Mother) :

No, not really. Even if I don't understand her choices sometimes, I see it as part of her journey. It's important for her to make mistakes, learn, and grow.