

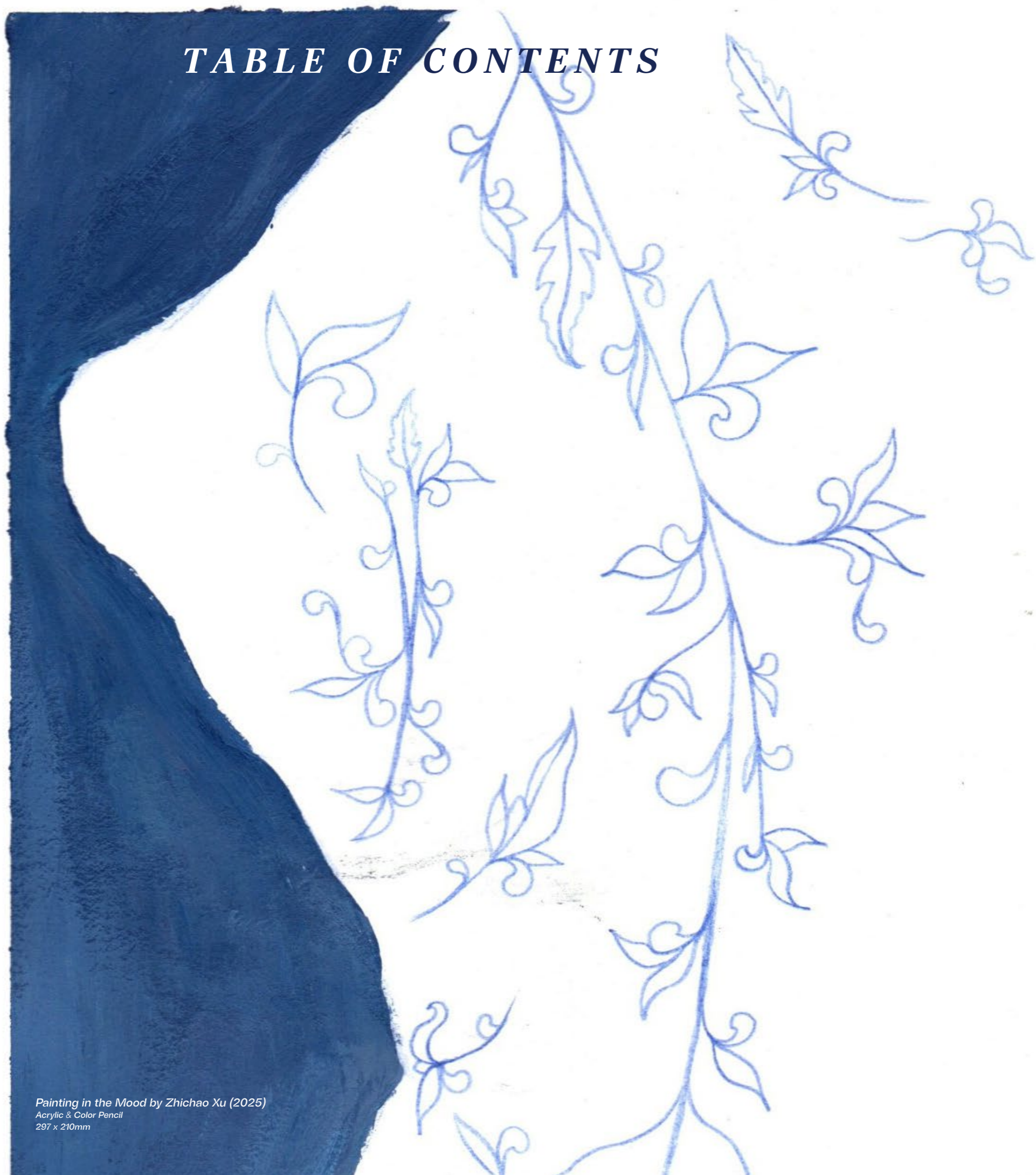
FRAGILITY

BY ZHICHAO XU

ISSUE 6



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EDITOR'S LETTER (MISSION STATEMENT)

*Masculinity,
not as armour,
but as porcelain:
fired, flawed,
and full of grace.¹*

This project reimagines contemporary masculinity through the poetic lens of ceramic aesthetics. Inspired by the duality of ceramics—its fragility and strength—I explore a new masculine ideal that is elegant, introspective, and resilient. Just as ceramics can be shattered and reassembled into something even more beautiful, I propose a masculinity that finds power in vulnerability and grace.

The concept took root during my time in Jingdezhen, where I was moved by the overlooked beauty of ceramic fragments: broken edges, fading glazes, and imperfect forms scattered on the streets. These remnants became metaphors for a softer, reconstructed masculinity—embodied in my muse, John Lone—one that transcends rigid binaries and embraces contradiction.

This philosophy informs both fabric and form. I translate ceramic textures and patterns into textiles and deconstruct the military uniform—an icon of traditional masculinity—using tailoring techniques to soften its rigidity. Through this, I aim to challenge the conventional language of menswear and propose a new tailoring narrative.

Ultimately, this collection is a personal and cultural reflection. It advocates for a masculinity that values complexity over perfection, tenderness over dominance, and individuality over conformity—responding to the evolving values of both fashion and society.

ZHICHAO XU



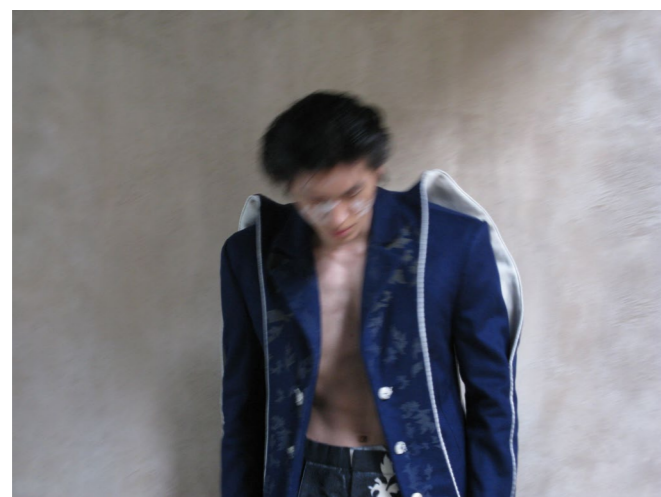
TEXTILE CUTOUT PATTERN & BUTTON by Zhichao Xu & Miao Li (2025)



01.



06.



02.



03.



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08.



09.

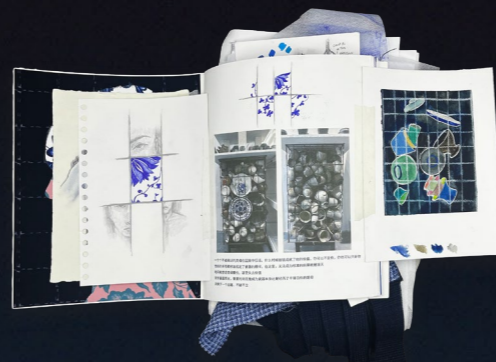
- 01. Garments Still Life Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
- 02. Behind the Scenes Record by Ashley Wen (2025)
- 03. Zhichao Xu Working in the Set by Lily Li (2025)
- 04. Camera Capture by Lily Li (2025)
- 05. Makeup Film Camera Record by Lily Li (2025)
- 06. Garments Film Camera Record by Lily Li (2025)
- 07. Trousers Details & Set Record by Ashley Wen (2025)
- 08. Behind the Scenes Record by Ashley Wen (2025)
- 09. Polaroid Photo by Lily Li (2025)



CHAPTER 1
ALONG THE JOURNEY

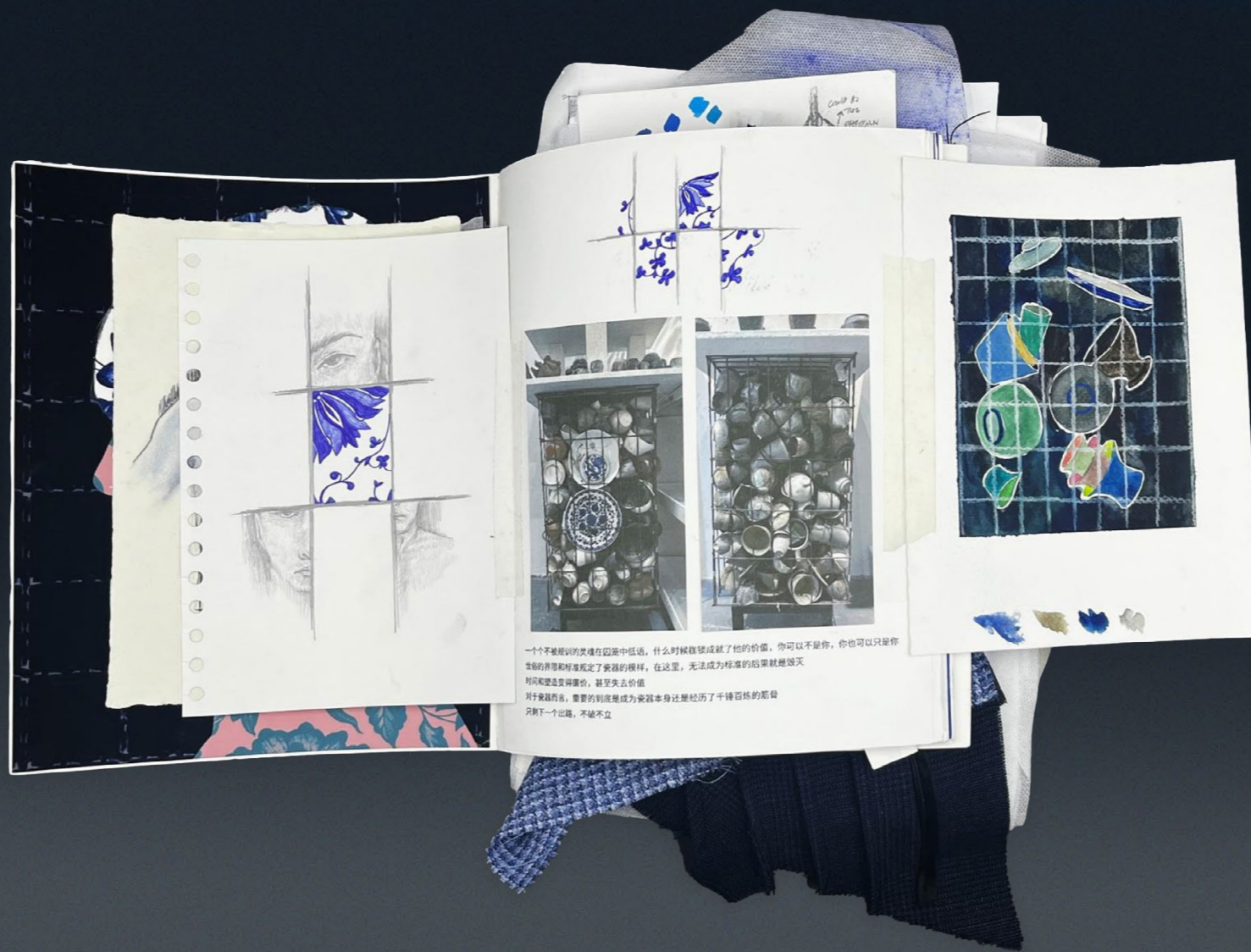
I. VISUAL DIARY

CERAMIC BREATHES
IN SILENCE AND ASH,
ITS SURFACE CALM,
ITS CORE FIERCE —
A REFLECTION OF HIM,
AND PERHAPS, OF ME.²



The inspiration for the project came from the trip about ceramics, a visit to Jingdezhen, the porcelain capital in China, and what I saw and felt during the journey was recorded in a diary as a starting point for my final year design project.

The journey was very rich in feelings, among which the fragility of ceramic aesthetics deeply attracted me. A soft yet hard energy with a texture that is both fragile and strong at the same time. It reminded me of the masculinity I have been exploring, this soft yet hard non-traditional masculinity and image.



一个个不被规则的束缚在囚笼中低语，什么时候你成就了你的价值，你可以不是你，你也可以只是你
 曾经的开明和标准规定了瓷器的模样，在这里，无法成为标准的后果就是毁灭
 对可塑性和变通性，甚至失去价值
 对于瓷器而言，重要的到底是谁成为瓷器本身还是经历了千锤百炼的那只
 只剩下一个出路，不触不立

A scene I discovered during my journey impressed me and became the starting point for this project. I saw a large number of ceramic fragments and abandoned ceramic objects casually thrown away and ignored, probably only because of supposed imperfections.

It was the large number of ceramic pieces imprisoned in cages that drew the most attention and reminded me of the predicament of soft masculinity in contemporary patriarchal society and hegemonic masculinity, where those fragile, vulnerable masculine forces are suppressed and imprisoned by a standardised masculine society.



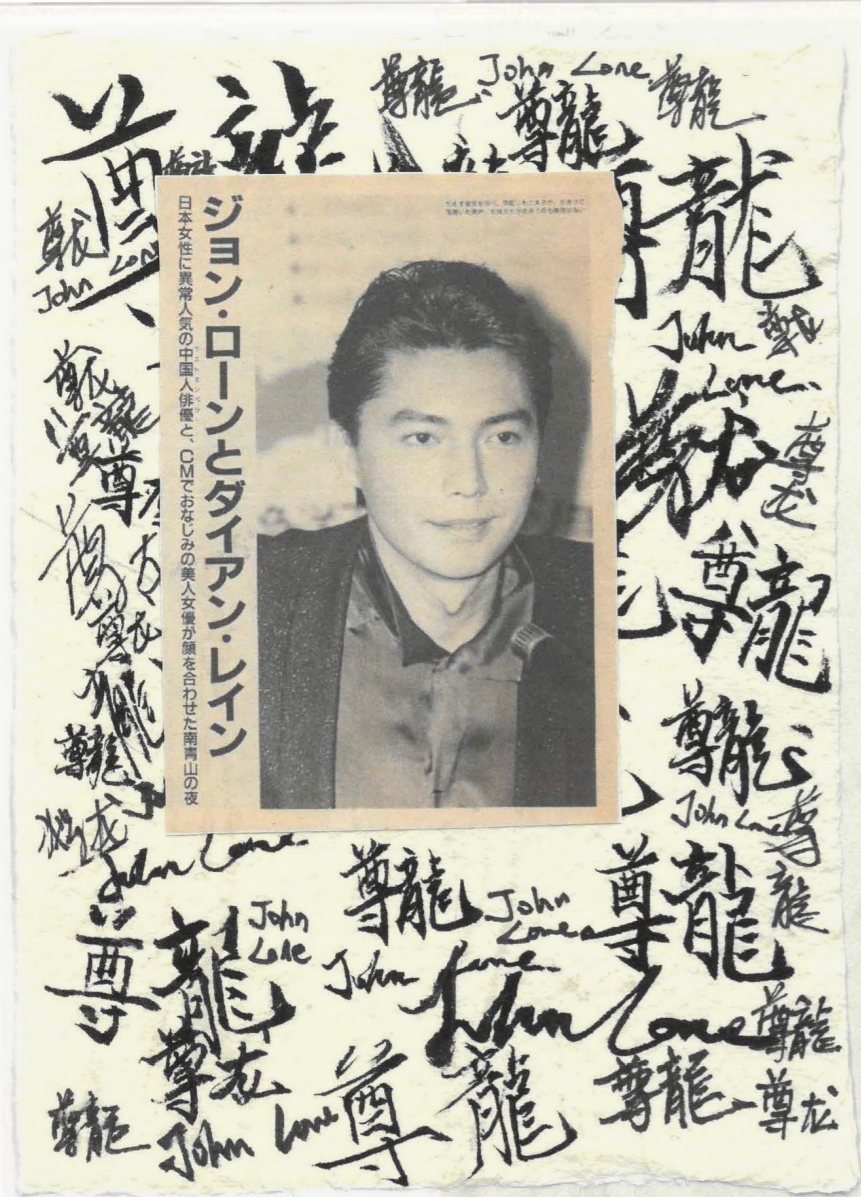


Cage by Zhichao Xu (2024)
Soft Pastel, Pencil, Bullet Pen
250 x 160mm

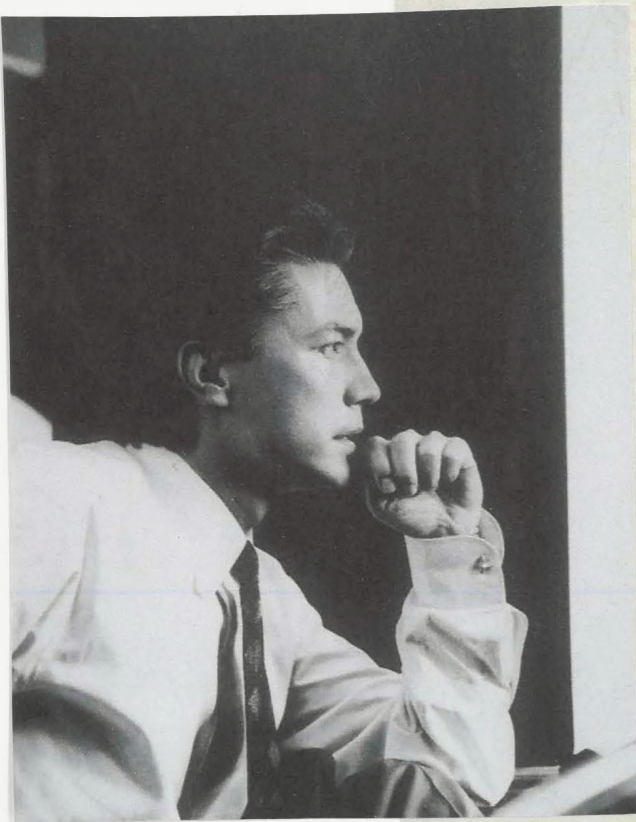
WHERE BLUE AND WHITE FADE,
A NEW PALETTE BEGINS —
ONE WHERE TENDERNESS LEADS.

PRIMARY INVESTIGATION PHOTO TAKEN ON JINGDEZHEN by Zhichao Xu (2024)





Client Profile by Zhichao Xu (2024)
Sketchbook
297 x 210mm



CHAPTER 2

FOR THE SOUL

I. CLIENT PROFILE

HE IS NOT SCULPTED BY STEEL,
BUT BY STORIES AND TOUCH—
FRAGILE, YES,
BUT FEARLESS.³



Client Profile Moodboard by Zhichao Xu (2024)
Sketchbook
297 x 210mm





Client Moodboard Collage by Zhichao Xu (2024)
 Sketchbook
 297 x 210mm



Client Moodboard Collage by Zhichao Xu (2024)
 Sketchbook
 210 x 210mm

John Lone, as the target client and the ideal male image, his character glory conveyed in the low-key connotation, elegant and intellectual, knowledgeable and so on the atmosphere of deep attraction to me. Generous and decent, gentle and delicate without losing the colour of masculinity. As the first beautiful man in Asia, his temperament and bloodline are mixed with the contemporary culture and aesthetics of the East and West, rooted in traditional Chinese culture, which is the cornerstone of the diversified aesthetics, and establishes a multidimensional three-dimensional and ideal, which is the most important thing for me.

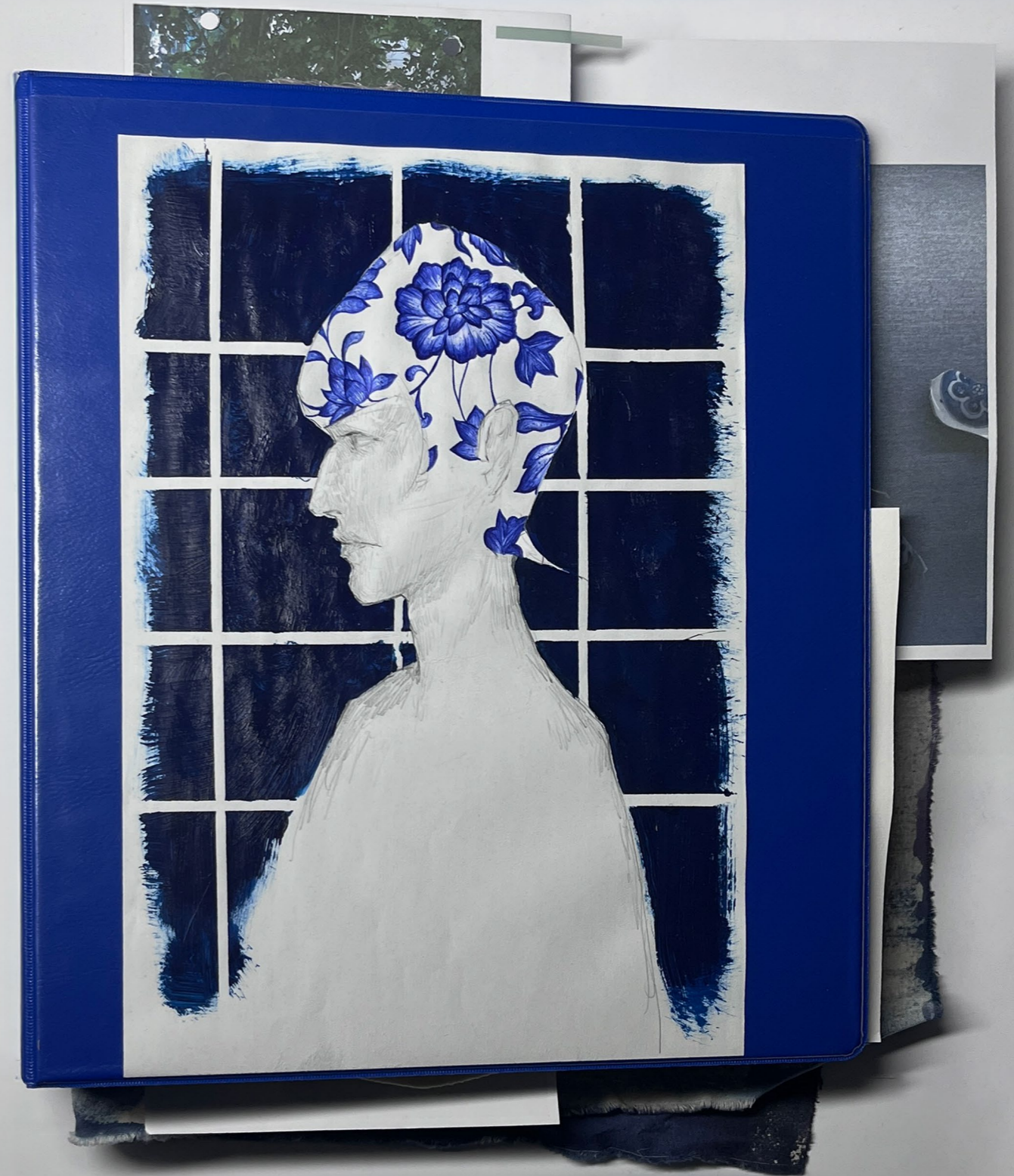
This is also true for the image of the client I have in mind and the masculinity I wish to create. Similar contemporary men in my opinion include Tony Leung, Leon Lai, Leslie Cheung, Yu Shi, Daniel Wu, Liu Ye, Takeshi Kaneshiro, Takuya Kimura, Jiang Qiming, Xu Guanghan, Yan Yikuan, and so on. They all share a similar commonality, a kind of upright and three-dimensional, yet gentle and elegant masculinity.

It's hard to describe this kind of atmosphere and image in one word, it's neutral and should be said that it's built on the basis of masculinity (taking the best and removing the dregs), integrating the female point of view, non-genderised or de-genderised masculinity.

CHAPTER 3
WITHIN THE NARRATIVE

- I. TEXTILE & COLOUR*
- II. SILHOUETTE & DETAILS*
- III. INITIAL PATTERN & FITTING*

IN EVERY CRACK,
A STORY WHISPERED.
NOT OF LOSS,
BUT OF BECOMING.⁴



Collaborative Fabric Development Folder by Zhichao Xu (2025)
Mixed Media
210 x 210mm

I. TEXTILE & COLOUR

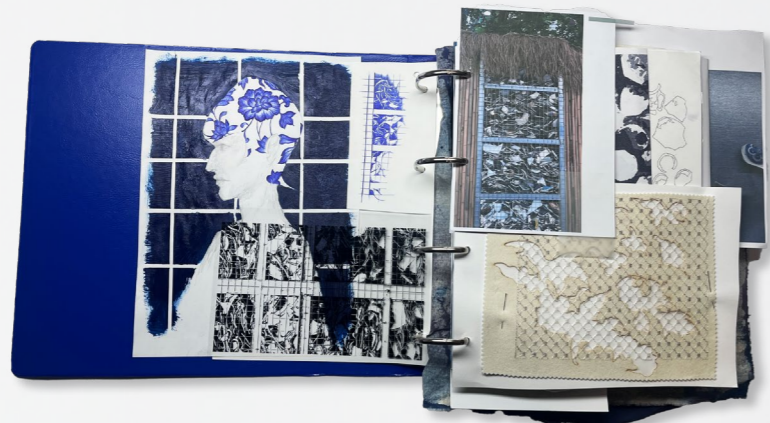
*COLLABORATED WITH RUILIN SONG
SPONSORED BY HAINSWORTH
SUPERVISED BY ALEX HALL*



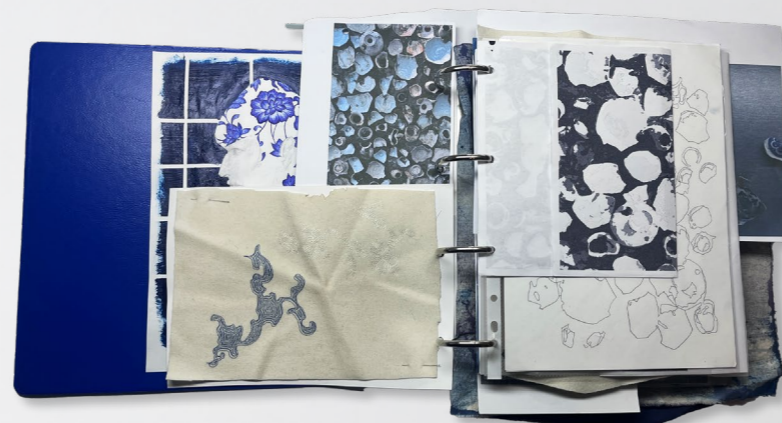
*Cage by Zhichao Xu (2025)
Acrylic, Ball Pen, Pencil
297 x 210mm*



07.



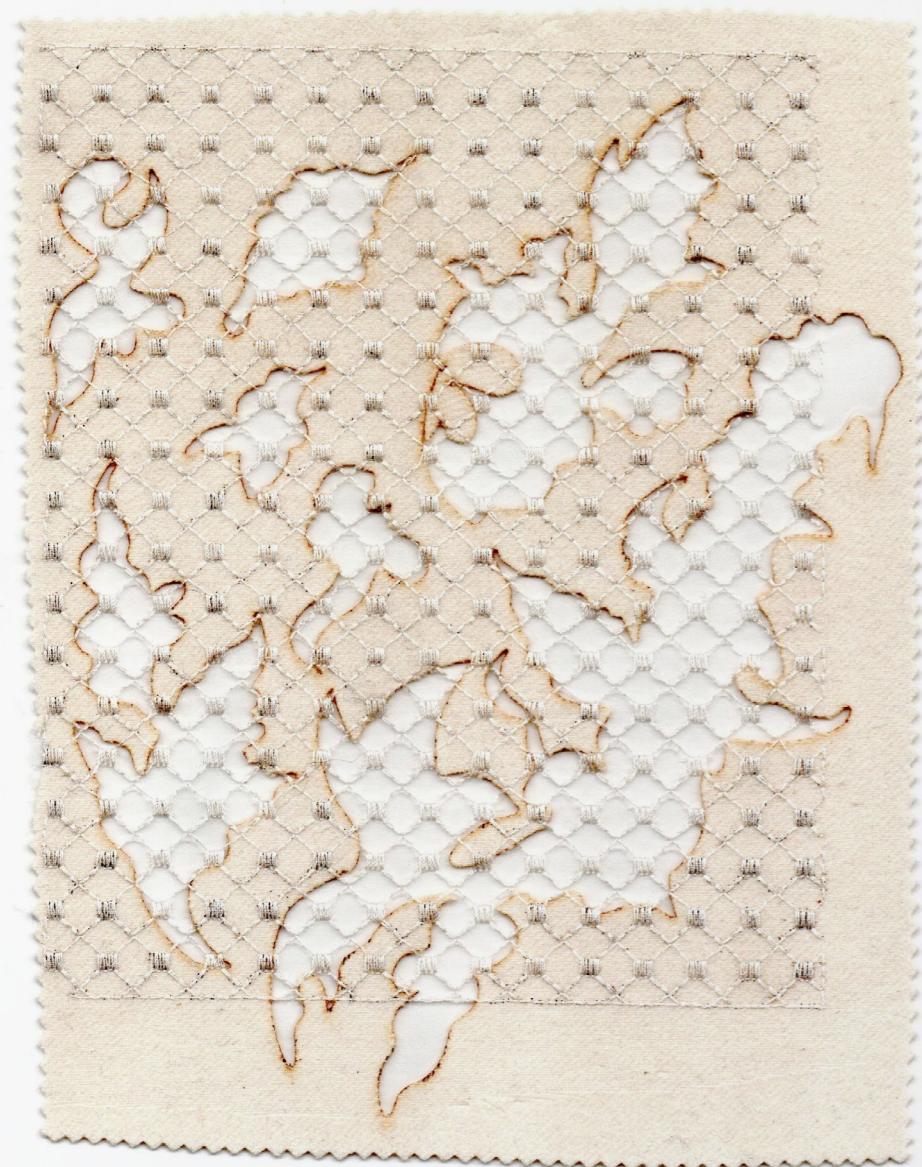
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09.



10.



11.

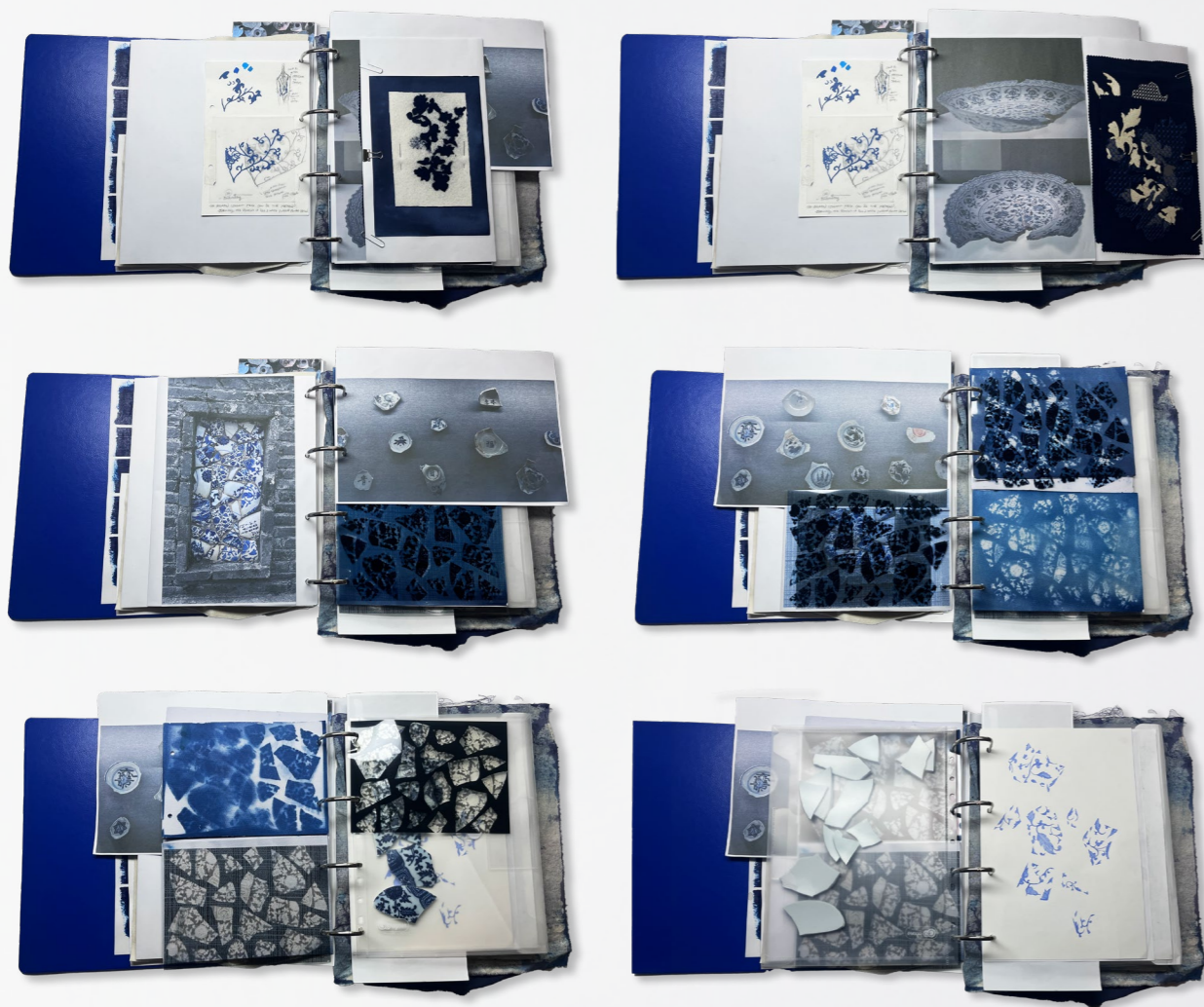


12.

This body of textile development began with two important collaborations that shaped both the creative process and the material outcomes. I worked closely with Ruilin Song from embroidery specialist , whose sensitive, restrained stitchwork responded directly to the narrative of emotional fragility, using techniques that subtly referenced cracks, repairs, and quiet tension. Her contribution enriched the surface language of the textiles, adding a delicacy that speaks to hidden vulnerability.

This development was also supported by a fabric sponsorship from Hainsworth, a heritage British textile mill known for producing ceremonial and military-grade wool. Their high-quality materials provided a structured and historically masculine base—allowing me to explore a strong contrast between toughness and softness.

- 07. Painting - *Fragile Body* by Zhichao Xu (2024)
- 08. Primary Research Picture on the Journey about the Framed Fragment by Zhichao Xu (2024)
- 09. Decorative Ceramic Fragments Wall by Zhichao Xu (2024)
- 10. Laser Cutting Experiment Inspired by Primary Research Ceramic by Zhichao Xu & Ruilin Song (2025)
- 11. Fabric Development - Laser Cutting Wool & Embroidery Silk Organza by Zhichao Xu & Ruilin Song (2025)
- 12. Inspiring Sence Captured on the Journey by Zhichao Xu (2024)



13. *Fabric & Pattern Development with the Broken Ceramic Pieces* by Zhichao Xu (2024)

The visual and emotional direction was shaped by an ongoing process of reflection and selection from my visual diary. Among the recurring symbols, broken ceramics, porcelain fragments trapped in cages, and objects photographed during personal journeys became the central motifs. These references embody a tension between beauty and damage, vulnerability and containment—reflecting a broader exploration of contemporary masculinity as something tender, fractured, and often concealed beneath restraint.

Rather than depicting this theme literally, I sought ways to abstract it into mood, texture, and form, letting the materials speak through suggestion and layering.

To translate these ideas into material form, I developed a series of textile and surface experiments that evoke the tactile tension of cracked porcelain and fragile structures. The goal was to create surfaces that appear delicate yet maintain integrity—balancing softness with structure, disruption with quiet control.

The addition of embroidery, in collaboration with Ruilin Song, served as both wound and repair. Each stitched line became a subtle act of mending, echoing the emotional fractures within the concept. Layered over dense military wool from A.W. Hainsworth, the embroidery softened its rigidity while amplifying its symbolic weight. Together, they form a textile language that articulates the project's central dualities: strength and fragility, tradition and redefinition.



14. *Embroidery Collaborative Fabric Sample* by Ruilin Song (2025)

15.



16.



17.



18.



15. Colour Palette by Zhichao Xu (2024)
16. Colour Blend Experiment by Zhichao Xu (2024)
17. Fabric Experiment by Ruilin Song (2025)
18. Gradient Colour Change by Spray by Miao Li (2025)

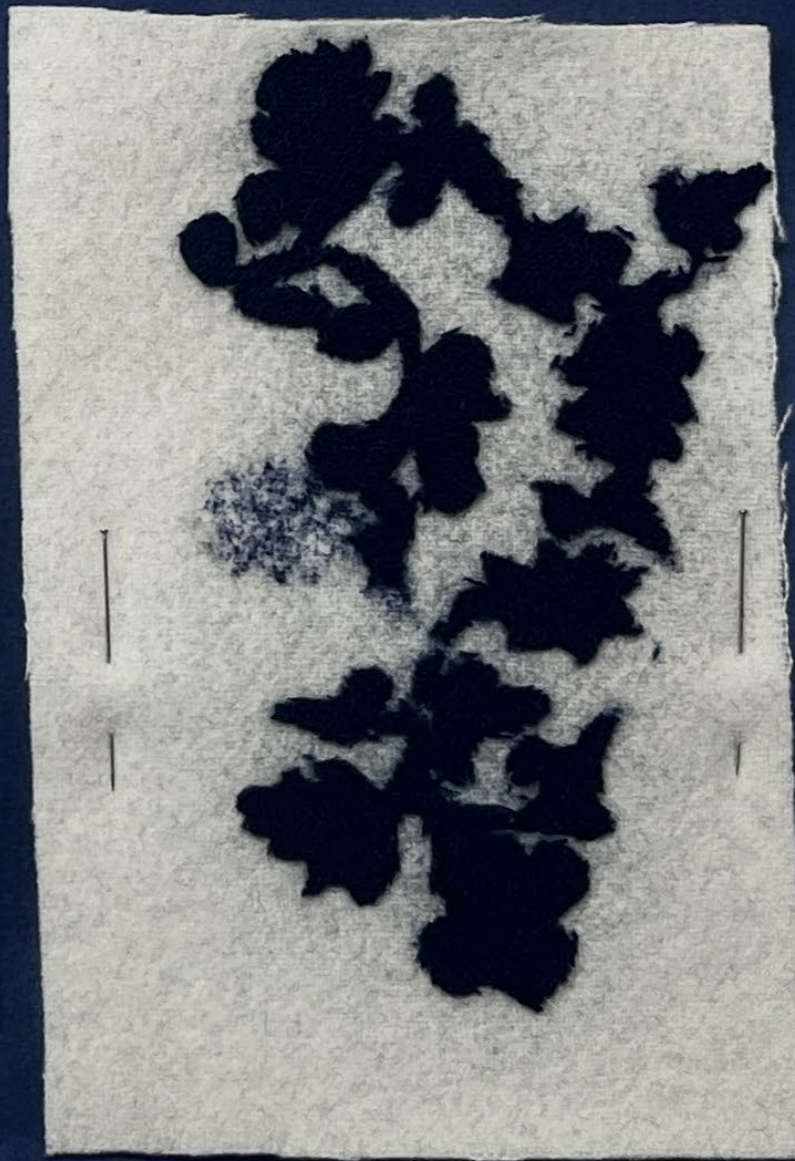


Floral Ceramic by Zhichao Xu (2025)
Acrylic, Color Pencil
297 x 210mm



OR
- Embroidery
- with traditional blue patterns with black pure color

THE BROKEN CERAMIC PILES CAN BE THE PATTERN,
- ESPECIALLY THE DESIGN OF BLUE & WHITE PORCELAIN FLOWER PATTERN



II. SILHOUETTE & DETAILS

*BUTTONS COLLABORATED WITH MIAO LI
SUPERVISED BY ALEX HALL*



*Masculinity by Zhichao Xu (2025)
Acrylic, Color Pencil
297 x 210mm*



21.

During my research trip to Jingdezhen, I conducted primary observation of broken ceramic forms, museum archives, and workshop waste fragments. These encounters deepened my understanding of structural fragility—not only as a visual motif but as an emotional and spatial quality. This informed the way I approached silhouette development, where imbalance, distortion, and asymmetry became tools to express internal vulnerability.



23.



22.



24.

- 21. Silhouette & Details Folder by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 22. Drapping Experiment by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 23. Development of the Binding Detail by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 24. Sketches by Zhichao Xu (2025)



25.

I translated key visual and conceptual elements from broken ceramic—such as collapse, displacement, and containment—into a series of draping experiments. The process focused on building volumes that appear unstable or held in tension, mimicking forms that seem on the verge of falling apart, yet still retain their presence and dignity.



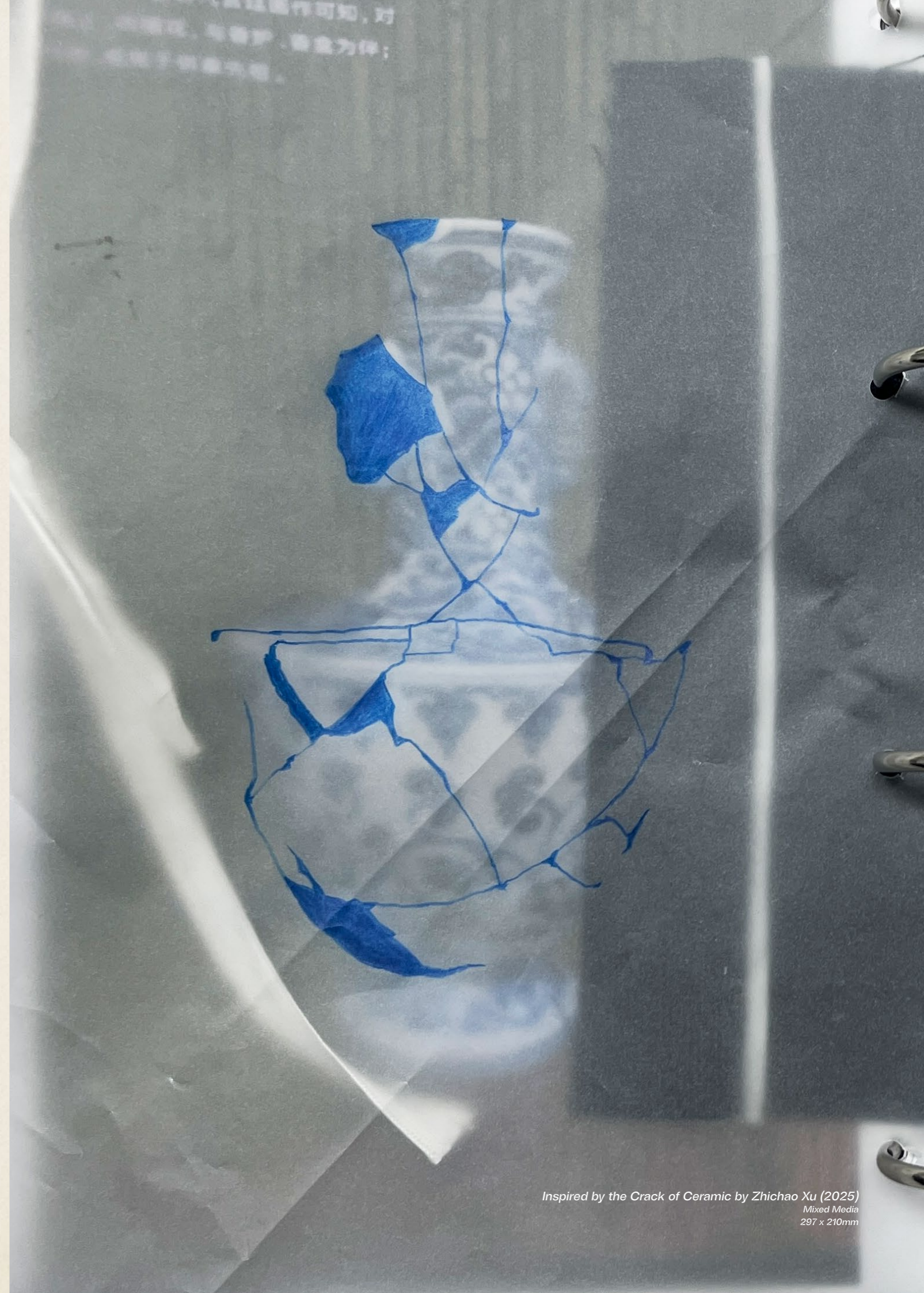
26.



25. Draping Experiment by Zhichao Xu (2025)
26. Draping Experiment by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Details Development & Sample Making by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Inspired by the Crack of Ceramic by Zhichao Xu (2025)
Mixed Media
297 x 210mm

*Porcelain holds its wound
like a secret.
The fracture does not weaken it—
it defines it.⁵*

WHERE STRENGTH CRACKS SOFTLY

The journey to Jingdezhen offered more than material references—it uncovered a quiet emotional weight within the visual language of broken ceramics. Fragments of porcelain, once smooth and pristine, now bore sharp edges and subtle shifts in form. These physical qualities evoked a masculinity that is not heroic or exaggerated, but restrained, fractured, and quietly enduring.

This idea gradually extended into early explorations of silhouette and garment construction. Draping experiments focused on imbalance, restriction, and gentle collapse, aiming to reflect the tension between vulnerability and control. Details such as held volume, restrained curves, or binding seams suggested an internal state—where stability is maintained, but never without strain.

These early studies laid the groundwork for a more focused inquiry into how clothing constructs the appearance of ideal masculinity. The path naturally led to research into uniform systems, where structure, authority, and identity are closely linked. In this way, the fragile strength seen in ceramics became a conceptual thread, guiding the next phase of development.

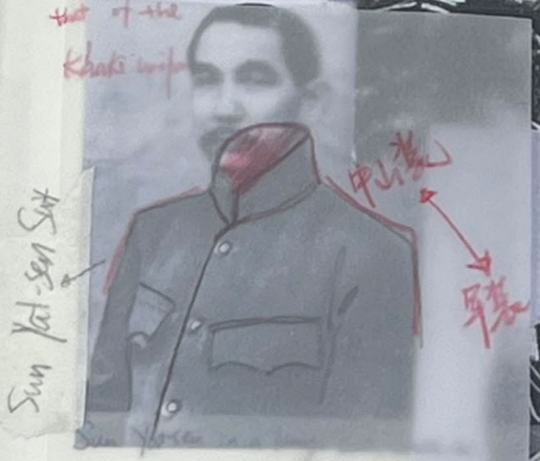


and reflecting on
development of the
elements of the primary

to find a way for
this story about
ceramics and

As researching the Chinese men near to
the representative of that government suit,
found that the Sun Yat-sen suit was
inspired & developed by the military uniform
dress. In deep, the British military uniform
impact the revolution of Chinese men near
and Chinese masculinity.

* The Sun Yat-sen Suit
was modeled on military dress
the jacket looking much
that of the
khaki uniform



as revolutionary - in - 1912
Qing/ in khaki, which he donned as provisional
President of the Republic in 1912 and in full
military dress as head of the provisional
military government in Canton in 1917.



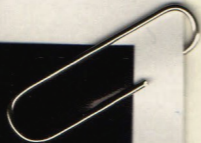
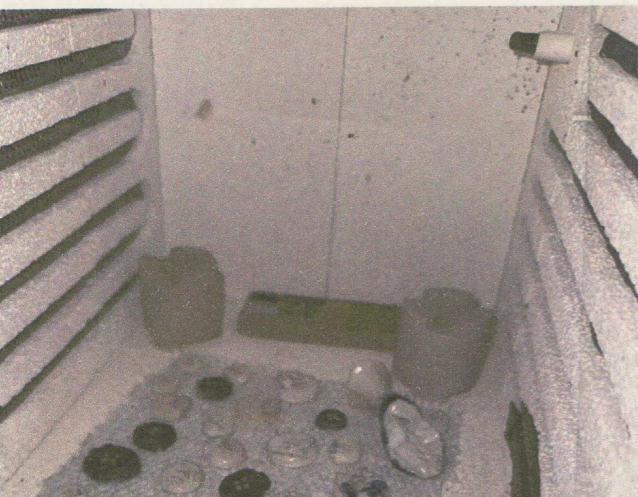
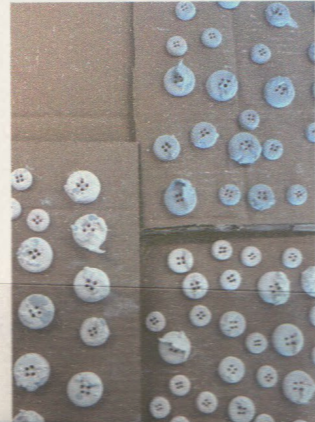
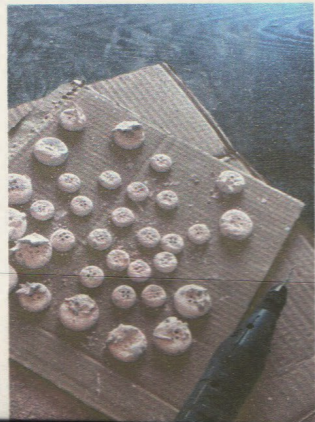
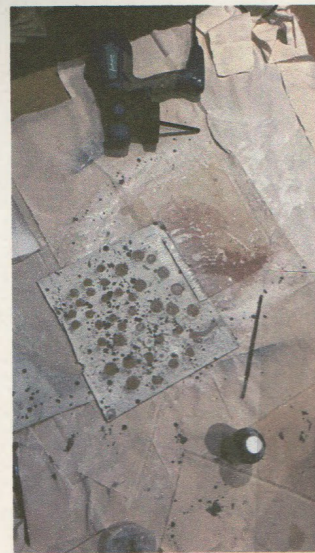
Sun Yat-sen in Qing ceremonial dress
as Provisional General of Zhong and high
commander of military and foreign affairs
in north China, and in dress uniform
as President of the Republic



The research began with the Zhongshan suit—a garment often associated with modern Chinese masculinity and national identity. Its formal symmetry, standing collar, and structured front are deeply rooted in Western military tailoring, particularly late 19th to early 20th century European uniforms. This convergence of East and West revealed how power and discipline are encoded through form: how clothing becomes both cultural expression and ideological construct, which illustrated by my first essay in 2022.

Building on this, I turned to British military garments, examining their silhouette logic, internal canvassing, and symbolic detailing. From wool greatcoats to officer tunics, these garments reflect not only physical structure but also a kind of emotional restraint. Their rigid outlines, concealed closures, and functional symmetry reinforced a masculinity that is composed, durable, and quiet—mirroring the emotional codes I sought to unravel in this project.





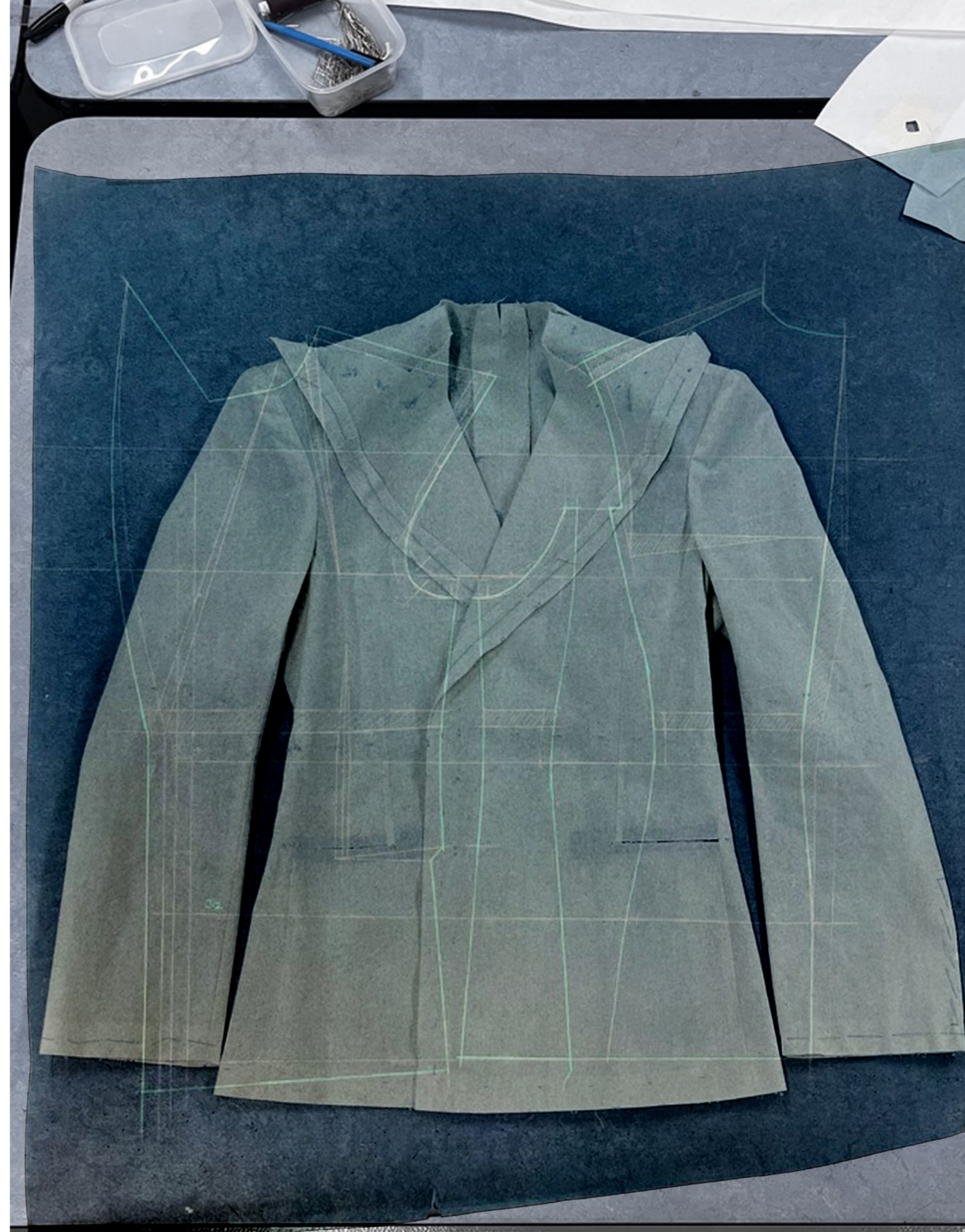
Ceramic Button Making by Zhichao Xu & Miao Li (2025)

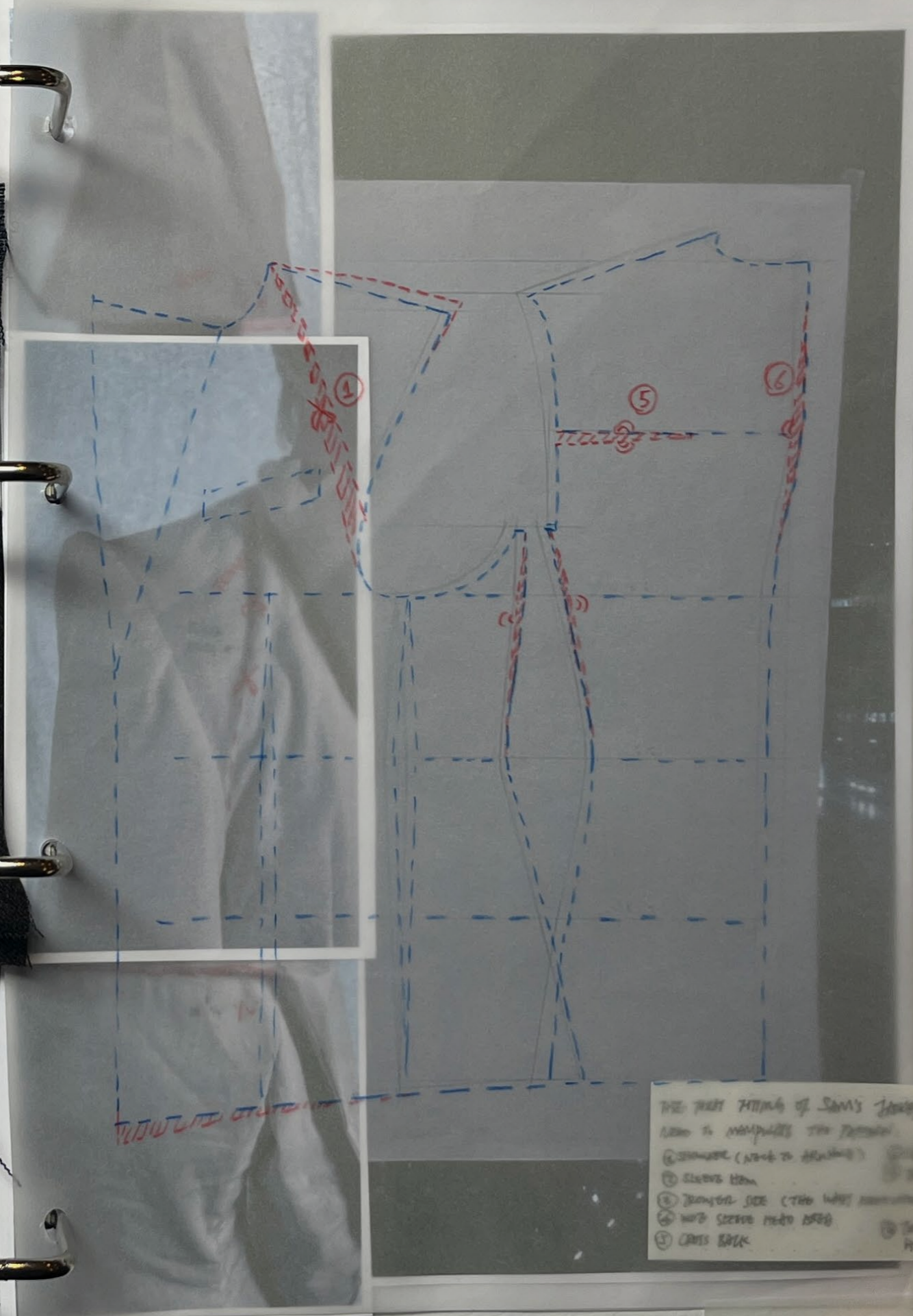
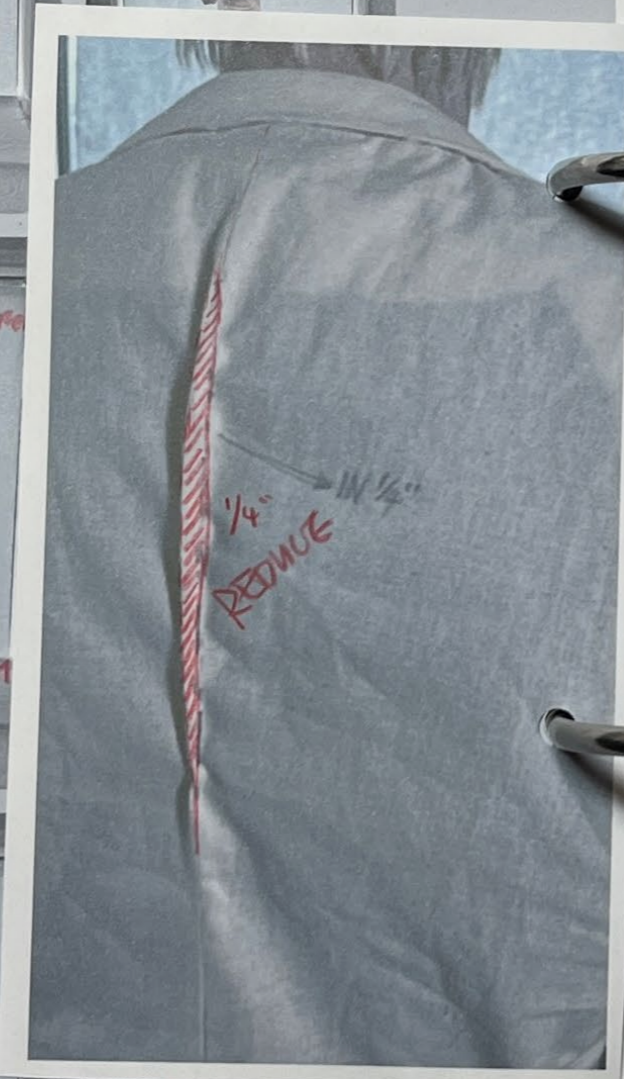
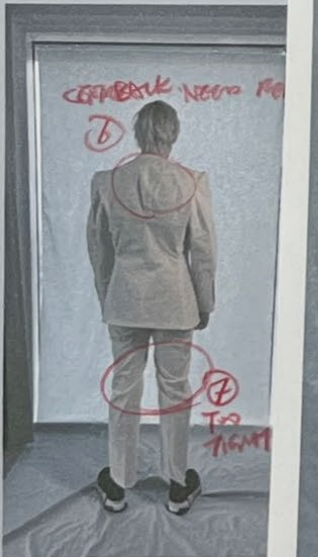


The Buttons are made by the waste of laser cutting patterns — the waste patterns. By mixing the waste cut out pieces with the slurry, & combining with the buttons made from clay. Creating the ceramic buttons with strong relation to the project & kind of zero waste idea by using the waste plastic piece. This experimentation was taken together with artist Miao Li, from CSN. We are creating different size button, and by accident, the smooth, sculpture-like buttons came out on the process, which represents a site of formal beauty, & the possibility of buttons connected to my concept. The fragility of materiality in contemporary Mandarin.

III. INITIAL PATTERN & FITTING

*MODEL COLLABORATED WITH JIANG, LUO, SAM
SUPERVISED BY MAGDALENA HANDWERKER*





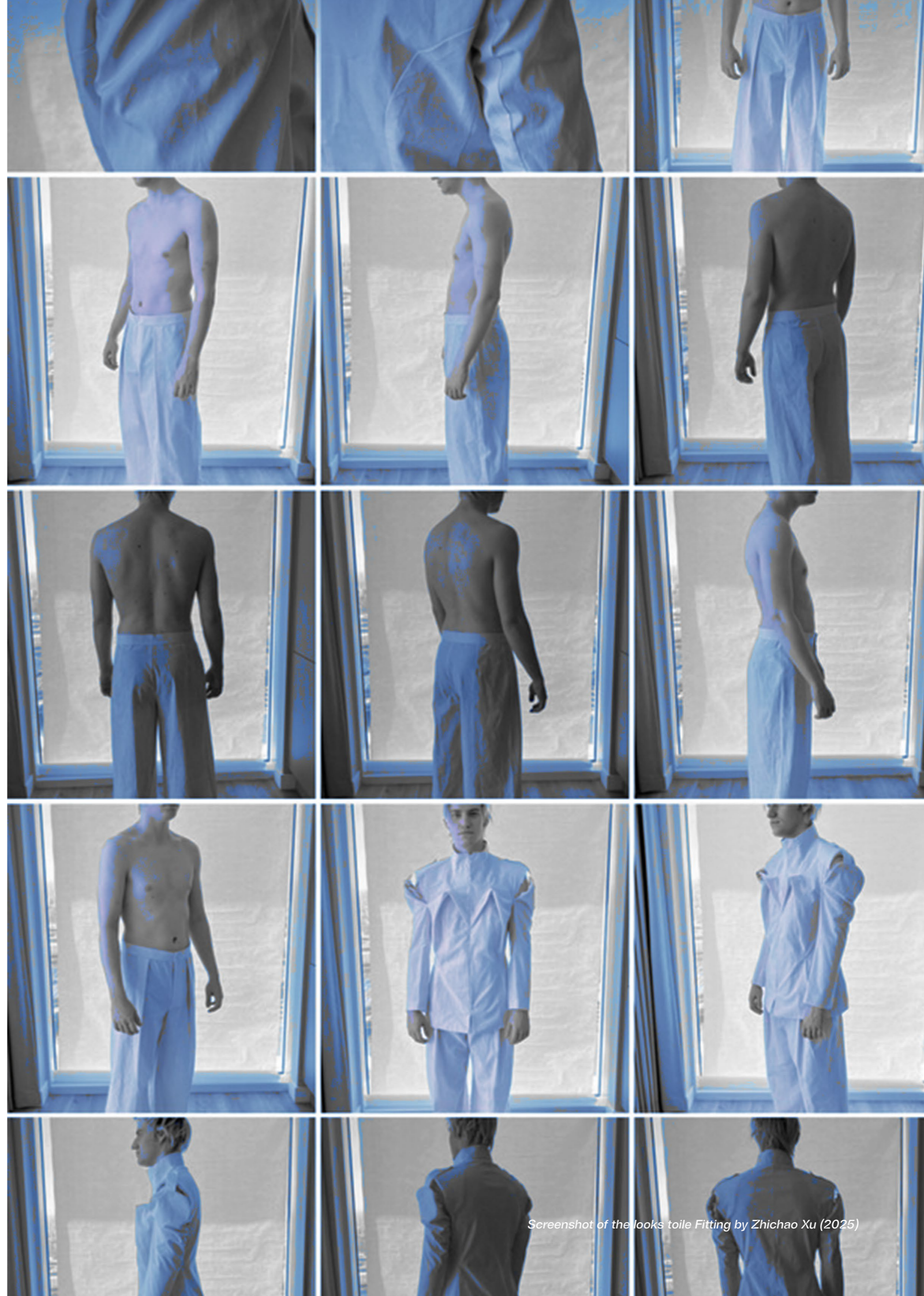
THE BEST FITTING OF SAM'S JACKET & TROUSERS
 ALSO TO MANIPULATE THE PATTERN

- ① SHOULDER (NOT TO BEING) SPACE
- ② SLEAVE LEN. AFTER COU
- ③ SHOULDER SIDE (THE WAY MANIPULATE) *
- ④ WAIST SIZE (NOT TO BE)
- ⑤ COPS SIDE

CHAPTER 4
THROUGH THE SEAMS

- I. LOOK 1
- II. LOOK 2
- III. LOOK 3
- IV. FINAL LINEUP

MY HANDS KNOW NOW
WHAT WORDS ONCE FAILED TO SAY—
THAT STRUCTURE CAN BE GENTLE,
AND SOFTNESS CAN BE STRONG.⁶



Screenshot of the looks toile Fitting by Zhichao Xu (2025)

I. LOOK 1

***SUPERVISED BY MAGDALENA HANDWERKER
BUTTONS COLLABORATED WITH MIAO LI
SPONSORED BY HAINSWORTH***

'Cracks That Hold the Light'

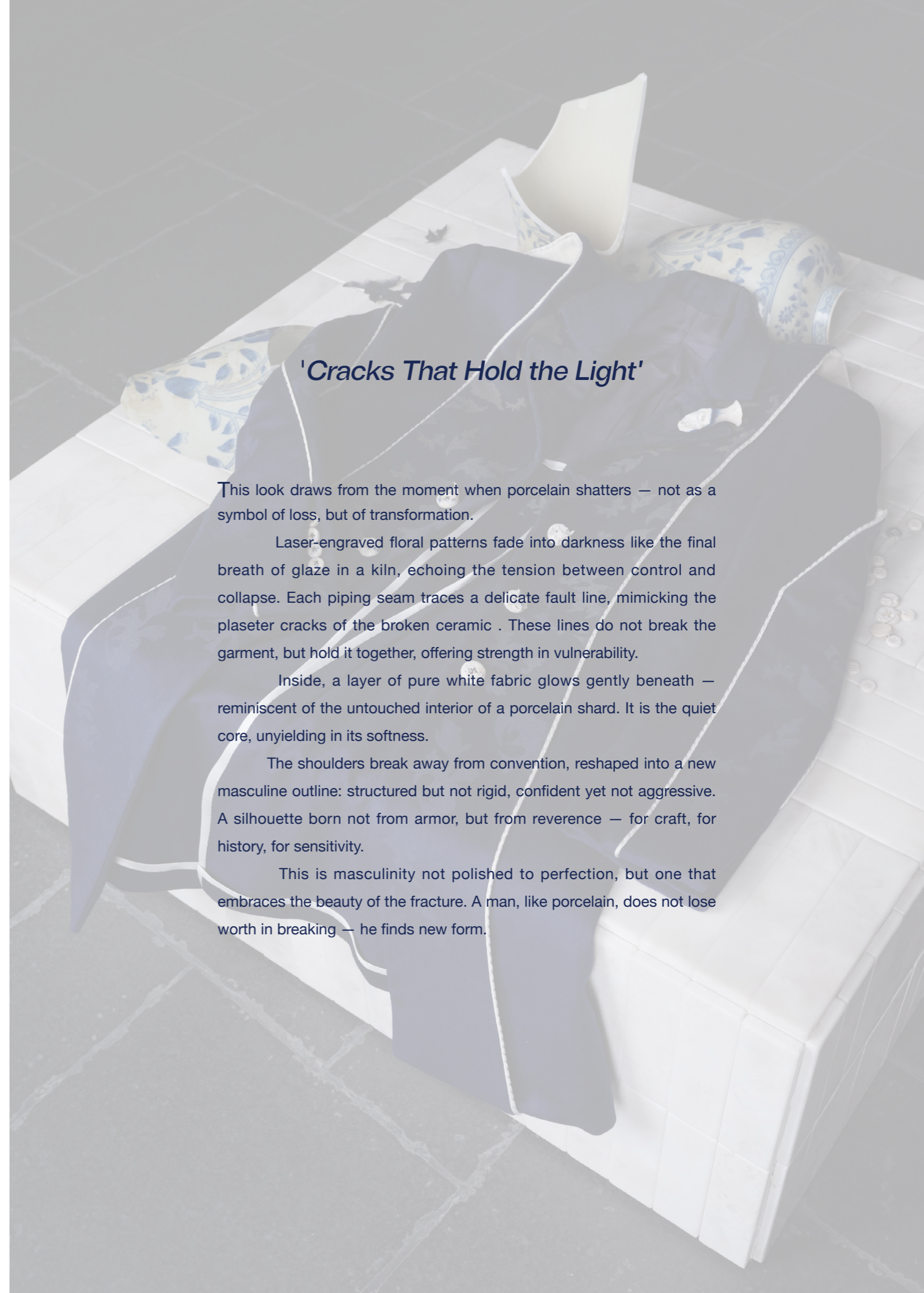
This look draws from the moment when porcelain shatters — not as a symbol of loss, but of transformation.

Laser-engraved floral patterns fade into darkness like the final breath of glaze in a kiln, echoing the tension between control and collapse. Each piping seam traces a delicate fault line, mimicking the plaster cracks of the broken ceramic. These lines do not break the garment, but hold it together, offering strength in vulnerability.

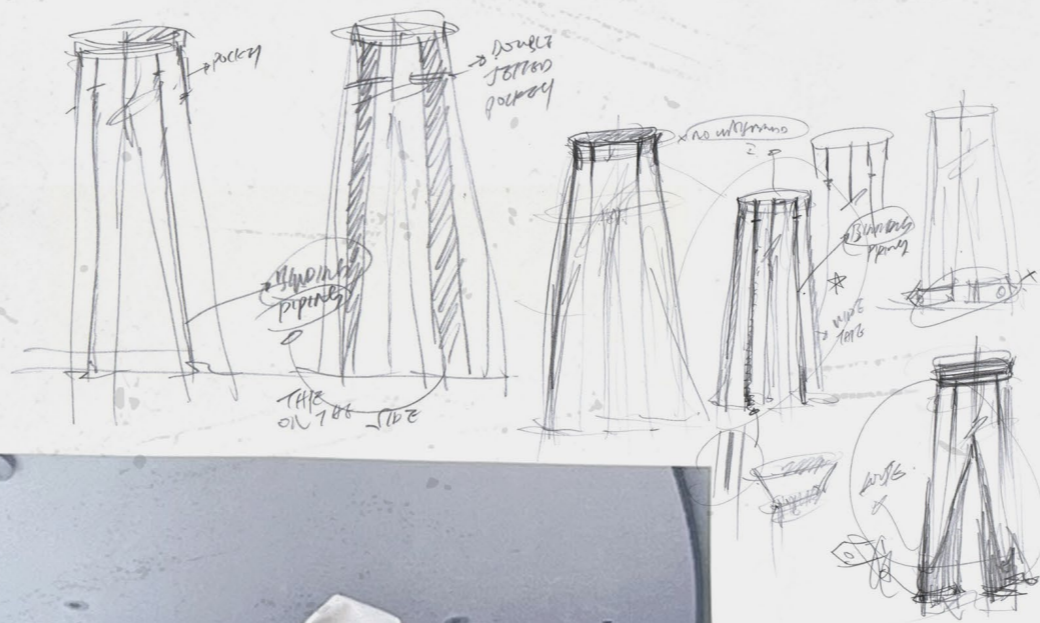
Inside, a layer of pure white fabric glows gently beneath — reminiscent of the untouched interior of a porcelain shard. It is the quiet core, unyielding in its softness.

The shoulders break away from convention, reshaped into a new masculine outline: structured but not rigid, confident yet not aggressive. A silhouette born not from armor, but from reverence — for craft, for history, for sensitivity.

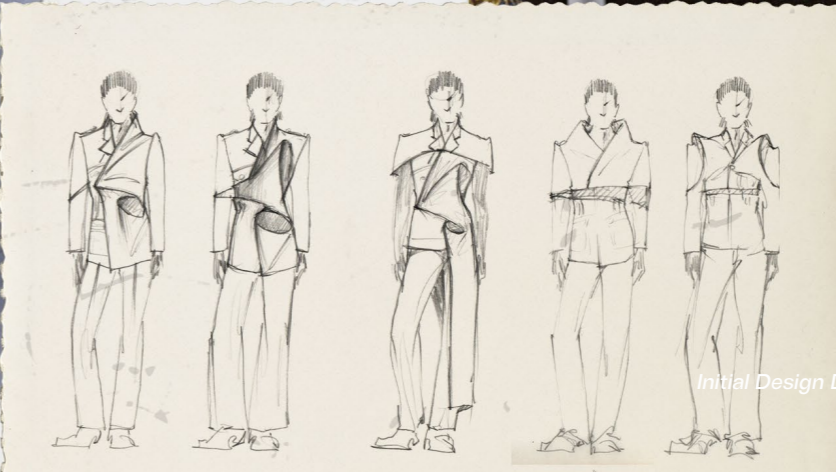
This is masculinity not polished to perfection, but one that embraces the beauty of the fracture. A man, like porcelain, does not lose worth in breaking — he finds new form.



THE INITIAL IDEA OF THE FIRST & SECOND LOOK BASED ON THE DROPPING STRUCTURES FROM THE IMAGES. IT WOULD BE DEVELOP FURTHER AND COMBINE THE ELEMENT FROM THE MILITARY UNIFORM.



* THE DRAPEING BASED ON THE PRIMARY REFERENCE IMAGES, WHICH USES THE CURVE & VOLUME FORM.
 SKETCHES INITIAL IDEA:



Sergeant Santosh Gurung (2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles)





Lieutenant-Colonel Gaselee Commanding Officer (Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment)

27.

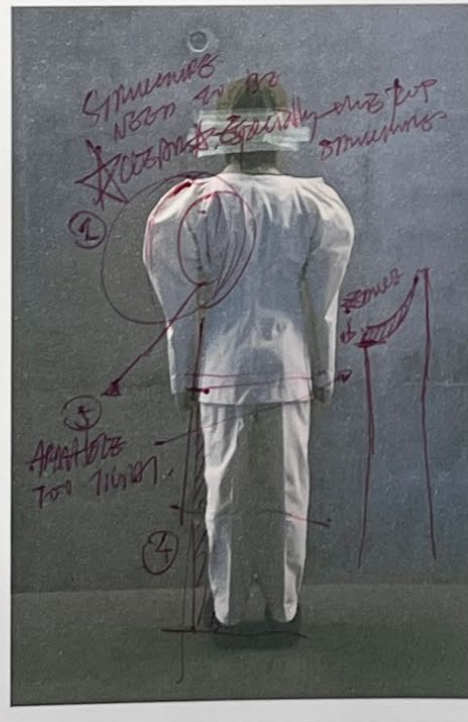
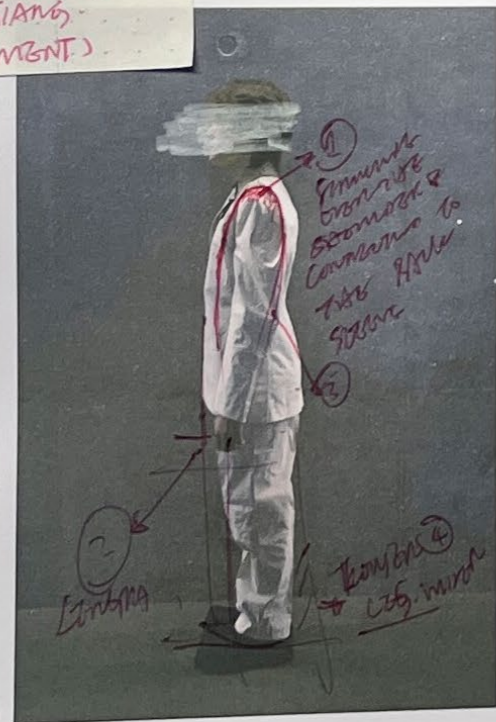
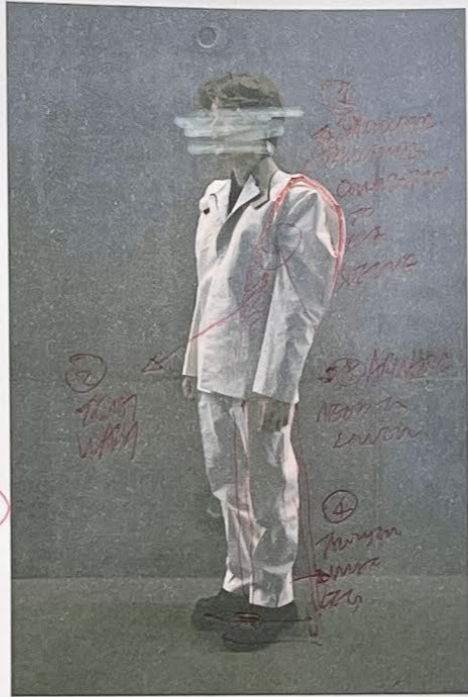
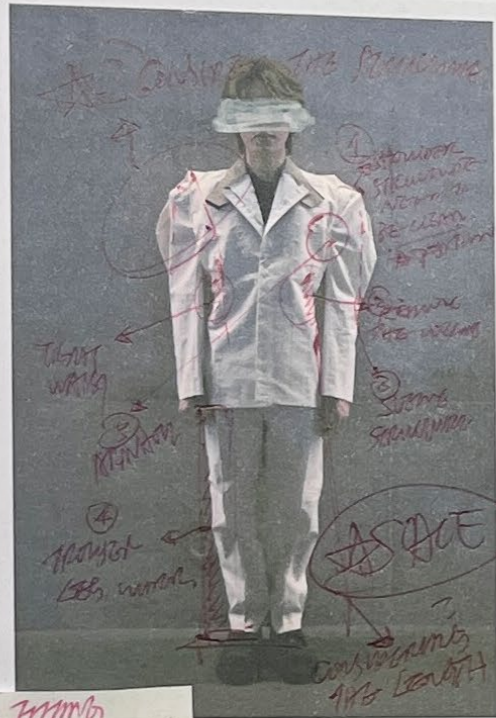


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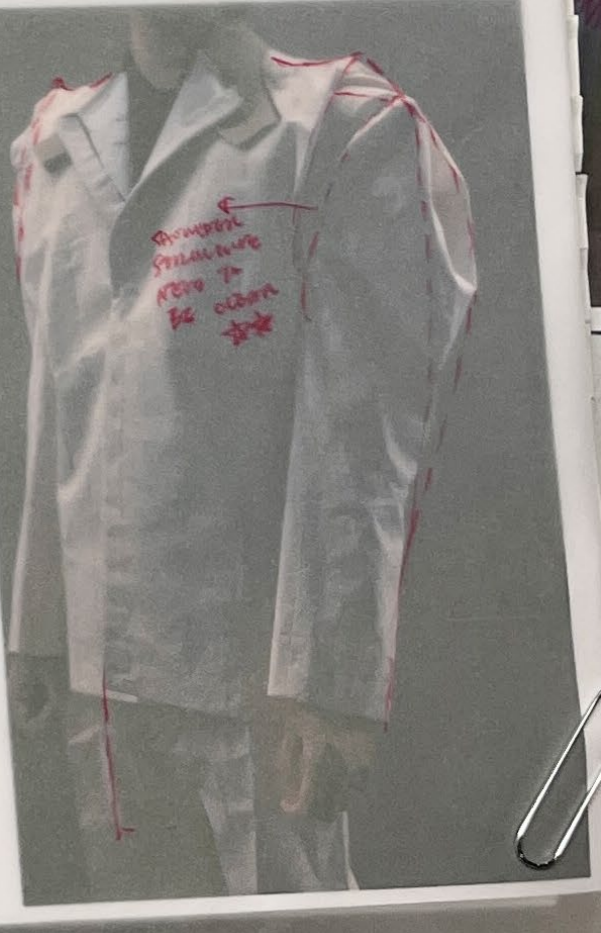
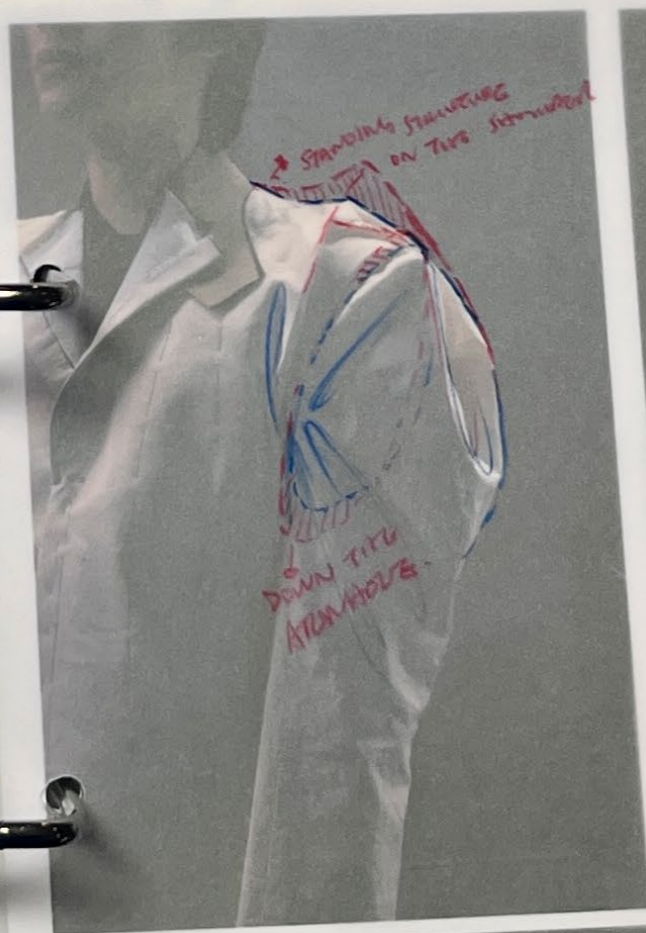
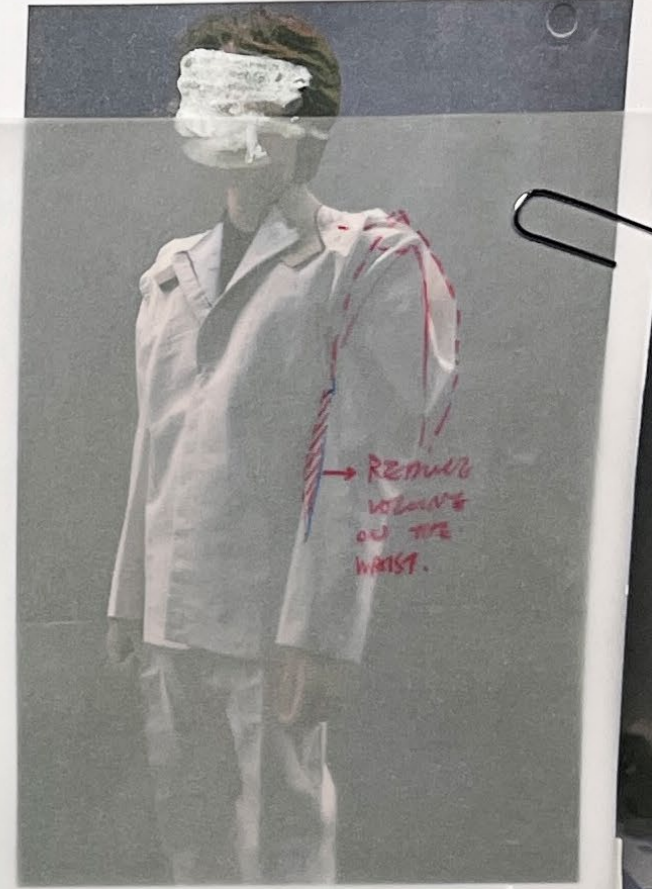
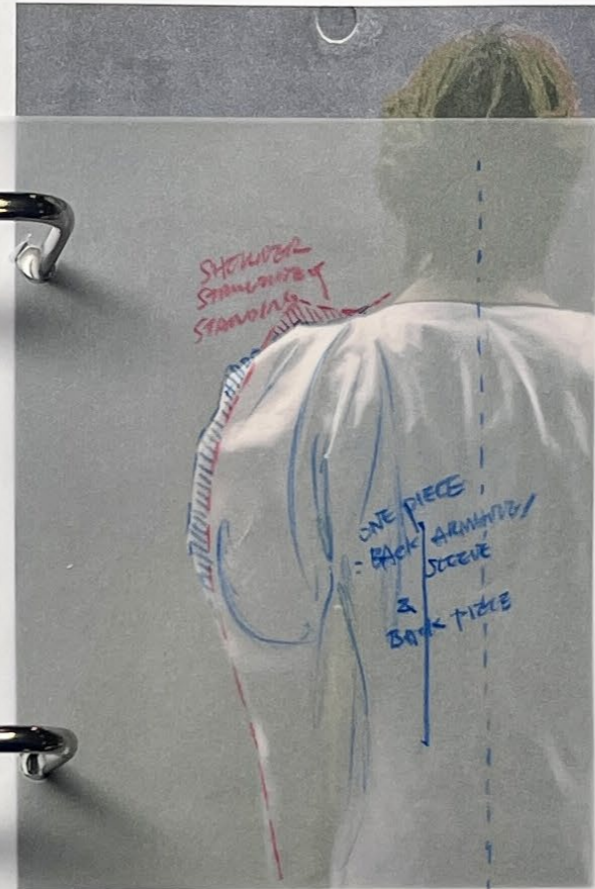


29.

27. Research of the Military Uniform for Look 1 by Zhichao Xu (2024).
 28. Structure & Pattern Experiment by Zhichao Xu (2024)
 29. Initial Structure Jacket Draping by Zhichao Xu (2024)



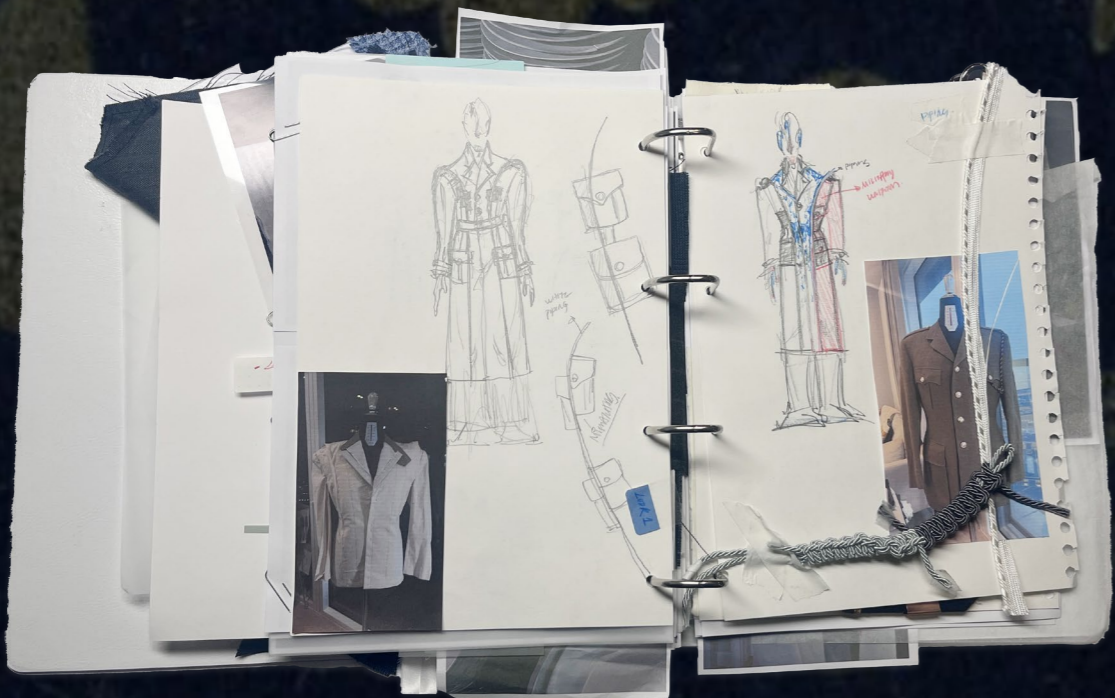
Look 1. INTERIOR. PANTS WITH JIANG (EXPERIMENT)





30.

Following the first fitting, I realized the garment's presence on the body lacked the visual and emotional tension I had envisioned. The silhouette felt too restrained, and the balance between structure and fragility was not yet fully articulated. This prompted a return to sketching—a phase of reflection and experimentation, where I began rethinking the garment's form, proportions, and seam details. I explored how the piping could more dynamically echo the logic of ceramic cracks, and how the shoulder construction could better embody a sense of tension and quiet strength. Through this iterative process, Look 1 evolved from a static shell into a sculptural composition—one that more truthfully captures the delicate resilience at the heart of the concept.



31.

30. Look1 Sketches & Structure Development by Zhichao Xu (2025)
31. Look1 Sketches of the Details Development by Zhichao Xu (2025)

The development of Look 1 began with the exploration of ceramic aesthetics—its smooth surface, fragile core, and quiet resilience. After the first fitting, it became clear that the garment lacked the sculptural impact and emotional nuance I intended. The silhouette felt too static, and the tension between structure and softness was not fully realized on the body.

This led to a renewed phase of sketching and experimentation, particularly around shoulder construction and seam placement. I reworked the piping details to echo the irregular lines of ceramic cracks and introduced a stronger shoulder shape to evoke quiet strength. The contrast between the laser-engraved surface and the pure white inner layer was refined to better reflect the inner purity of porcelain.

The final look presents a rebalanced form—elegant yet firm, minimal yet emotionally charged. It captures the project's core theme: masculinity redefined through fragility, shaped not by dominance, but by the beauty of being breakable and remade.



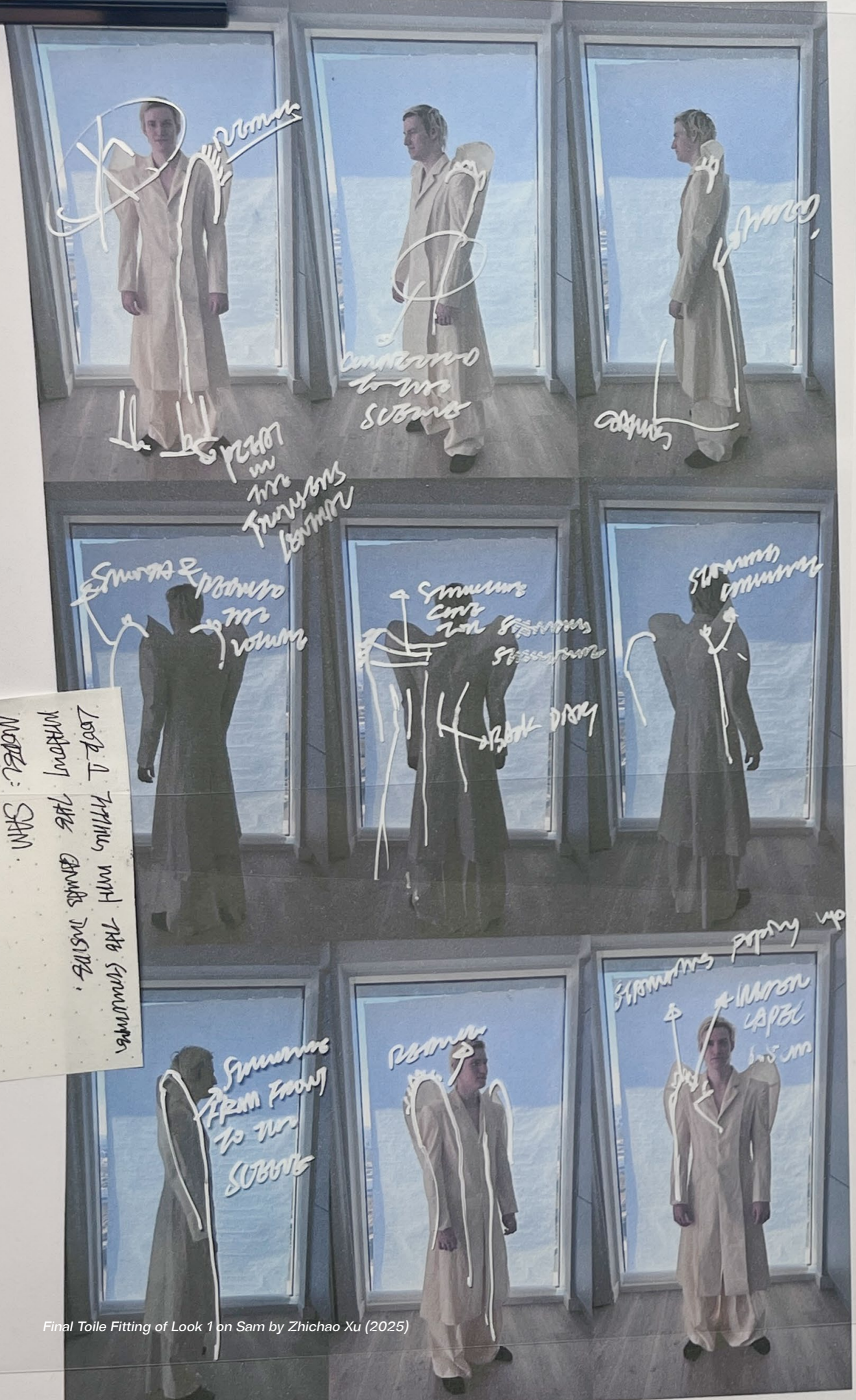
32.



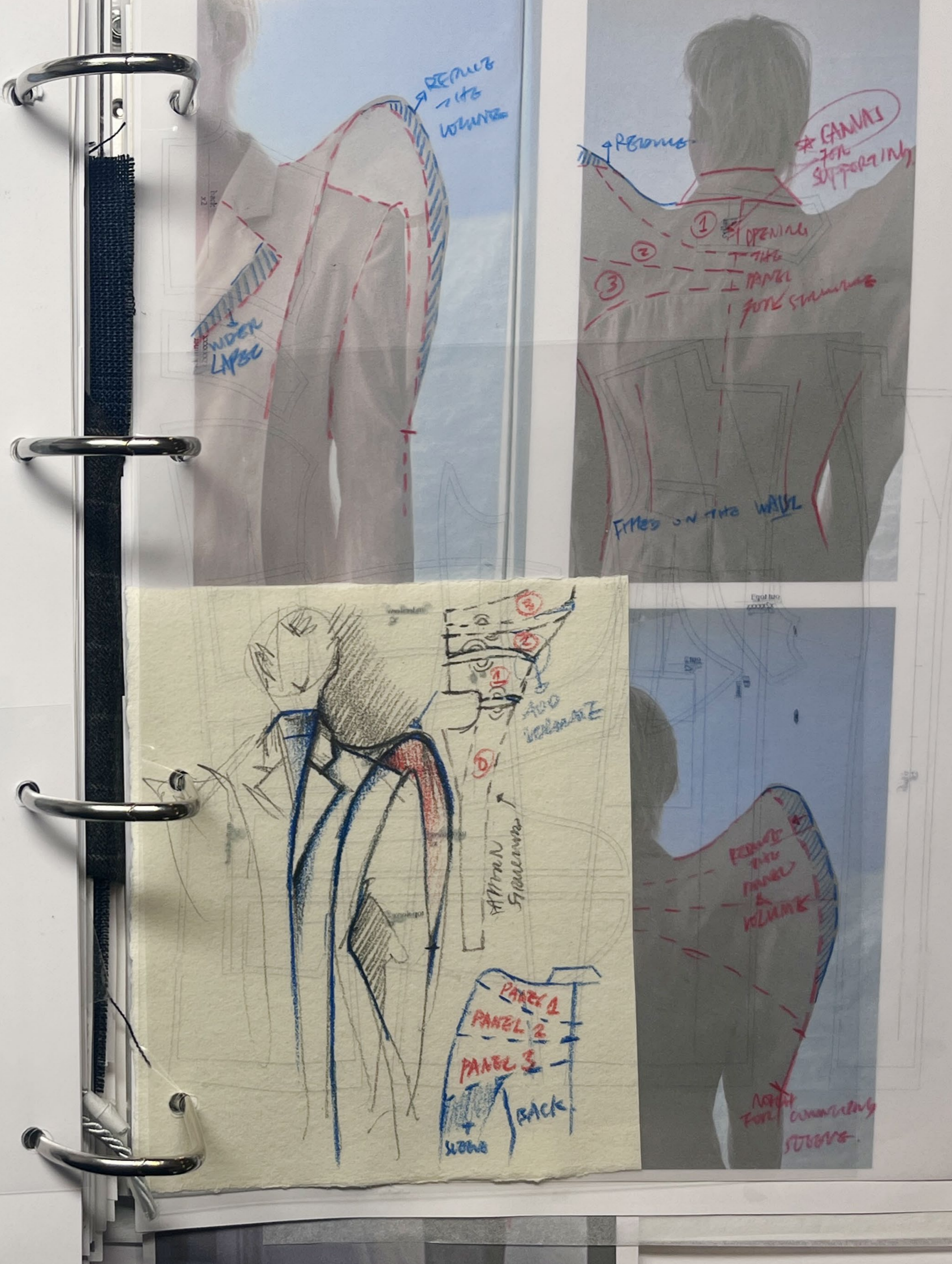
33.



34.



Loop 1. Trying with the shoulder markings the canvas inside.
 MODEL: SAM.



REMOVE THE WAISTE

WIDER LAPSE

CANVAS FOR SUPPORTING

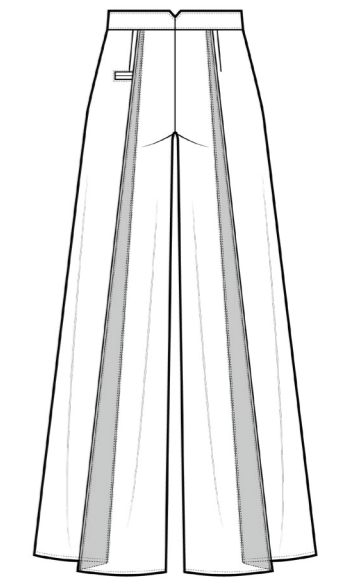
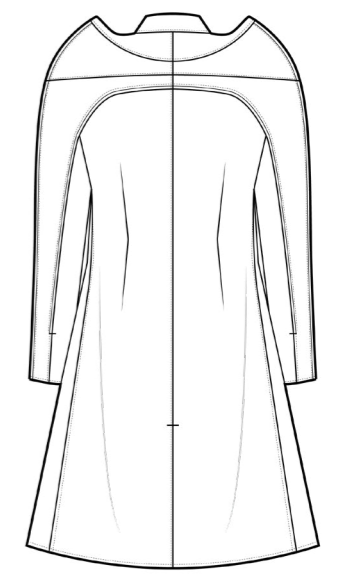
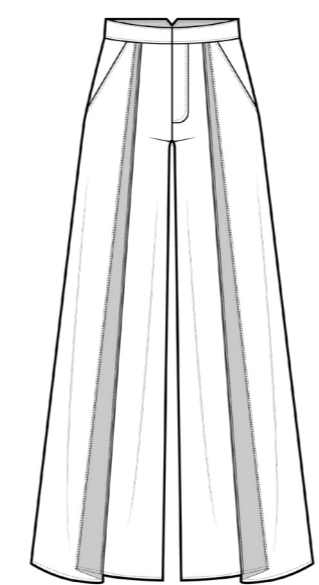
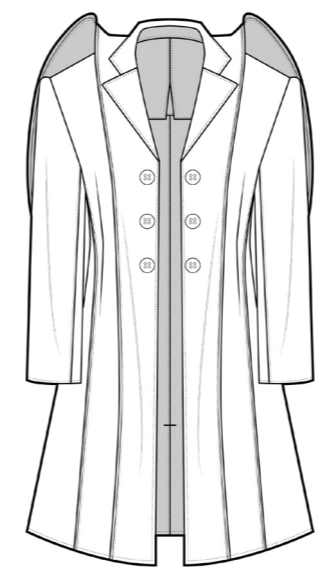
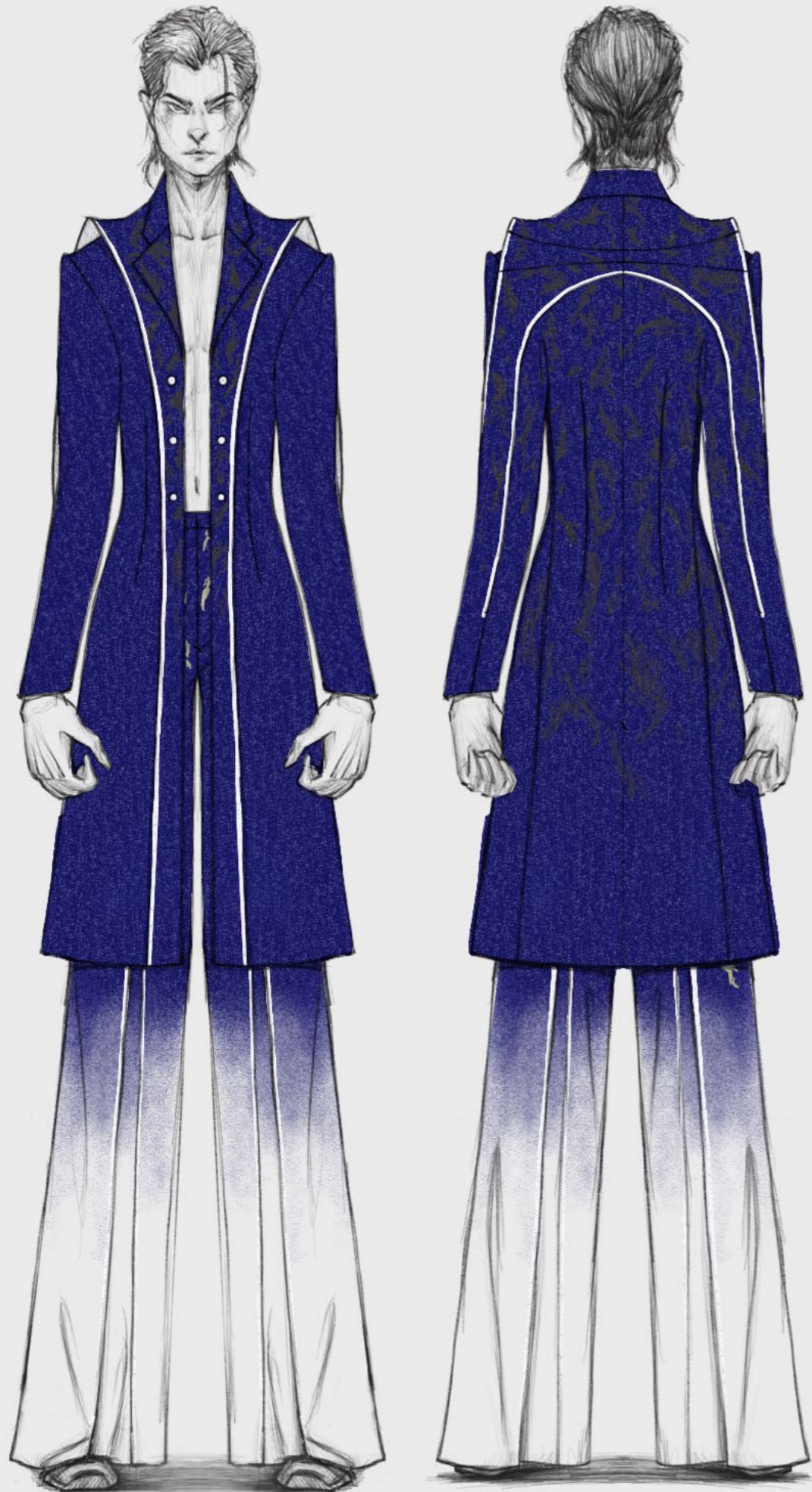
FITS ON THE WAIST

- PANEL 1
- PANEL 2
- PANEL 3
- BACK

REMOVE THE PANEL & WAISTE

NOT FOR CANNING STOPS

Final Toile Fitting of Look 1 on Sam by Zhichao Xu (2025)



INTERNALS & TRIMMING:

- White Body Canvas
- White Chest Canvas
- White Collar Canvas
- Firm Domette
- Navy & White Silesia
- Shoulder Pad
- Sleeve head Roll
- Bottonhole Gimp
- White Binding
- Ceramic Button
- Piping
- Zipper

LINING:

- Bemberg Navy Lining
- Bemberg Dark Sleeve Lining

CLOTH:

- Hainsworth Doeskin 100% Merino Wool (390gsm) : Mild Blue
- Hainsworth Lightweight Melton 100% Wool (270 gsm): White







35.



36.



37.



38.



39.

- 35. Padding the Lapel of the Look 1 by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 36. Canvassing Up the Back Structure Back by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 37. Canvassing Up the Back Structure Front by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 38. Back Structure Back by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 39. Back Structure Front by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Cross Stitch the Seam Allowance of Back Structure by Zhichao Xu (2025)



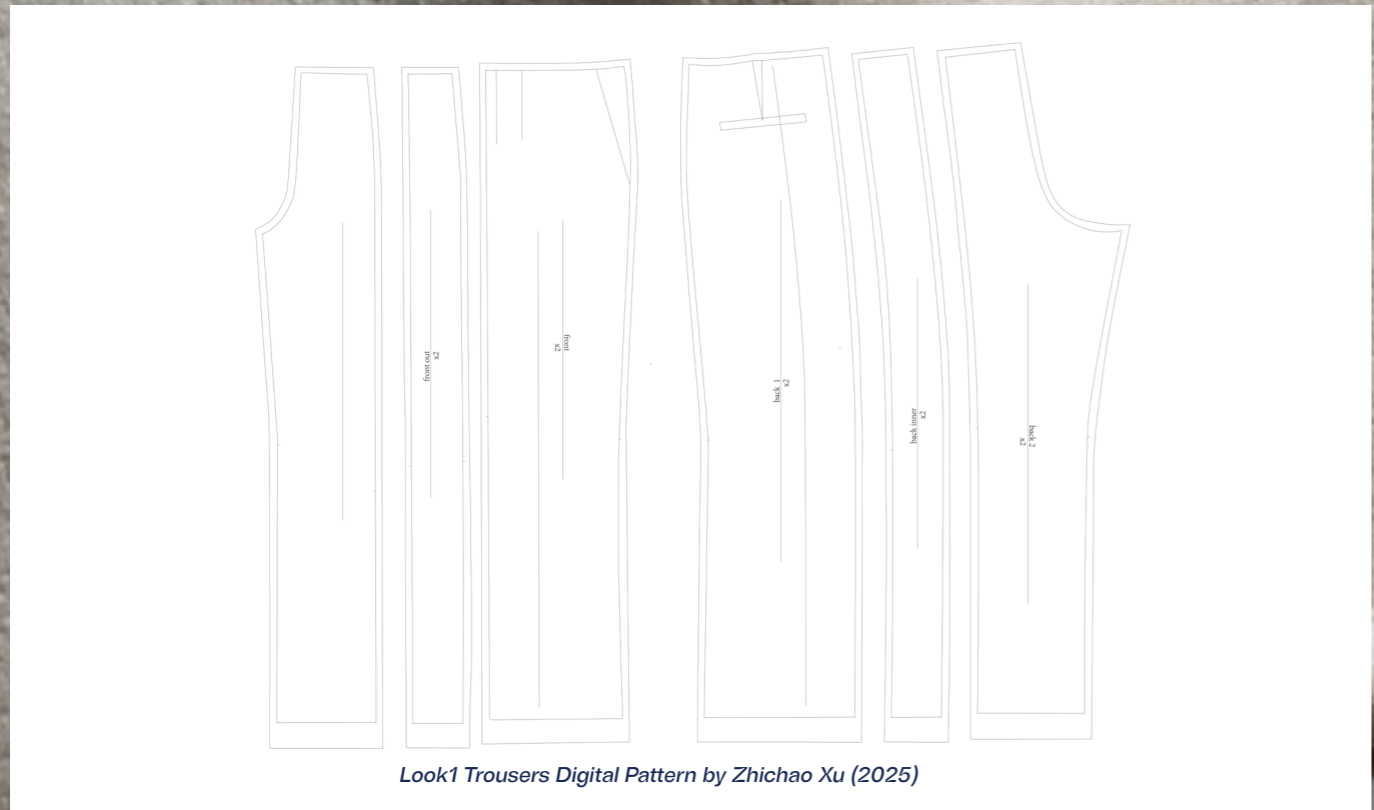
40.

41.

40. Ready for Attaching the Facing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
41. Attaching the Sleeve & Back structure by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Attaching the Sleeve by Zhichao Xu (2025)



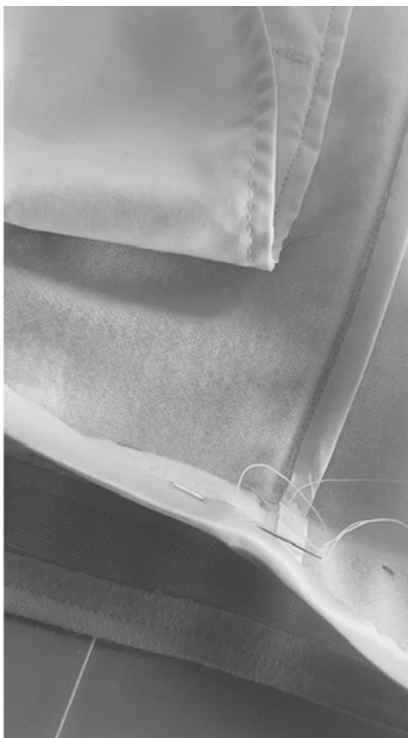
Look1 Trousers Digital Pattern by Zhichao Xu (2025)



42.



43.



44.

42. Handfinishing the Binding of the Trousers by Zhichao Xu (2025)
 43. Handfinishing the Binding of the Trousers Hem by Zhichao Xu (2025)
 44. Handfinishing the Binding of the Trousers Back Seam Allowance by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Trousers After Leather Spraying by Zhichao Xu (2025)

45.



46.



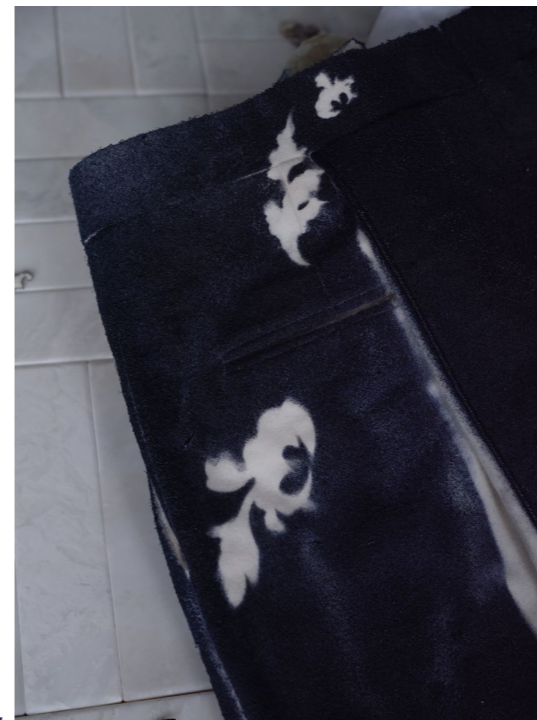
47.



48.



49.



50.



- 45. Basting the Floral Pattern on the Trousers for Spraying by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 46. Ready for Leather Effect Spraying by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 47. Finished Effect After Spraying by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 48. Taking off the Floral Pattern Basted on the Trousers by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 49. Detail Lookbook by Scarpa Gu (2025)
- 50. Trousers Still Live Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)

LOOKBOOK



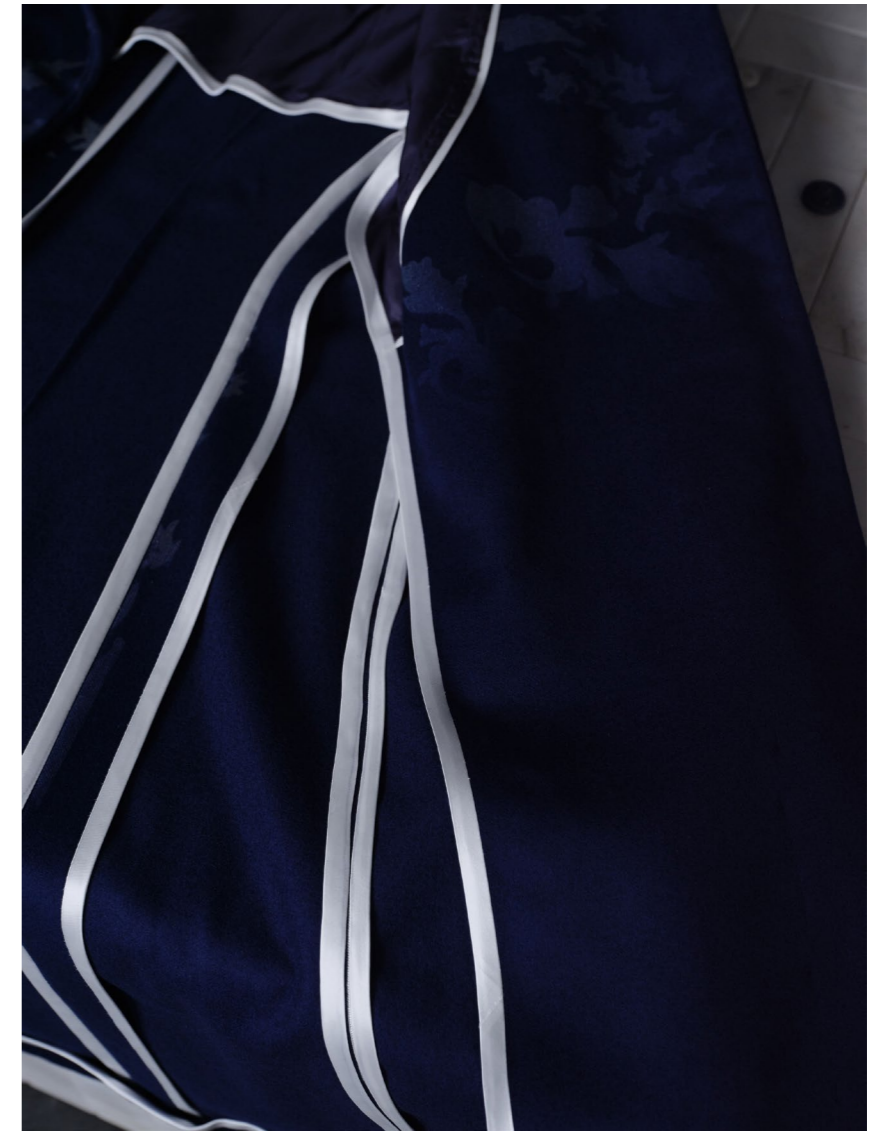
Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



51.



52.



53.



54.



55.

51. Back Still Live Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
52. Detail Photo: White Binding Half Lining by Scarpa Gu (2025)
53. Detail Photo: Brooch Accessories by Zhichao Xu & Miao Li (2025)
54. Detail Photo: Back Structure by Scarpa Gu (2025)
55. Detail Photo: Inner Structure by Scarpa Gu (2025)



*Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li*



Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



II. LOOK 2

*SUPERVISED BY MAGDALENA HANDWERKER
BUTTONS COLLABORATED WITH MIAO LI
COLLABORATED WITH RUILIN SONG
SPONSORED BY HAINSWORTH*

'A Silence Between Shards'

This look evokes the quiet aftermath of rupture — not the moment of breaking, but the breath that follows. Constructed from pure white doeskin and canvas, the silhouette captures the porcelain's delicate stillness. Laser-cut openings disrupt the surface like fine cracks in aged glaze, while layered organza embroidery beneath suggests something tender, fragile, surviving beneath the scars.

The seams, trimmed in soft piping, mimic the chalky veins of ceramic kintsugi — not gold, but plaster — quiet and humble. A high collar and sleeveless form amplify the tension between exposure and defense. The chest structure is sharp and dimensional, inspired by shattered porcelain shards, frozen mid-fall. Inside, a contrast of deep navy binding glimmers discreetly: strength concealed within.

The shoulders break away from convention, reshaped into a new masculine outline: structured but not rigid, confident yet not aggressive. A silhouette born not from armor, but from reverence — for craft, for history, for sensitivity.

It does not seek perfection, but holds quiet strength in its fracture — gentle, enduring, and whole in its own way.





THE INITIAL IDEA OF THE FIRST & SECOND LOOK BASED ON THE DROPPING STRUCTURE FROM THE IMAGES. IT WOULD BE DEVELOPED FURTHER AND COMBINE THE ELEMENT FROM THE MILITARY UNIFORM.



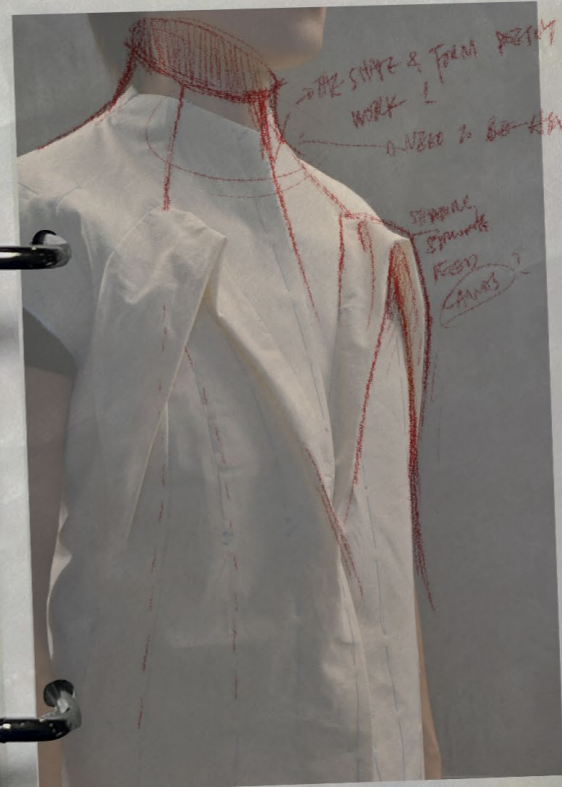
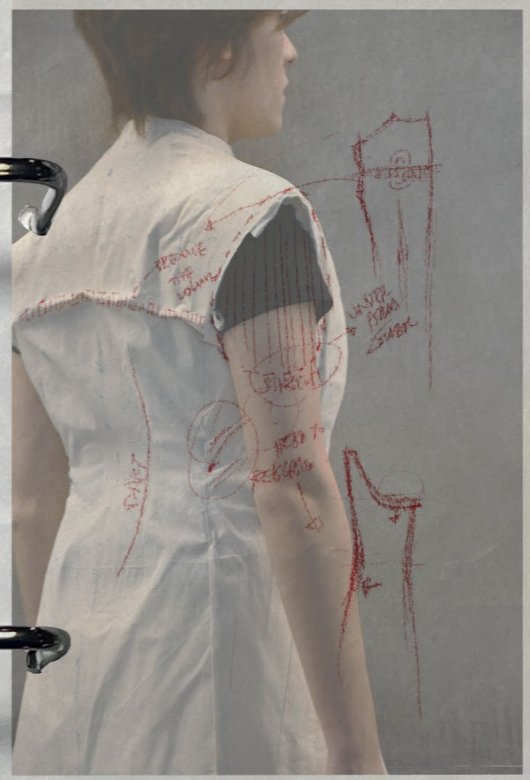
Initial Design Development of Look 2 by Zhichao Xu (2024)



Initial Design Drapping & Toiling Making of Look 2 by Zhichao Xu (2024)



- Look 2. INTEREST FORMS WITH JIANG. (EXPERIMENT)





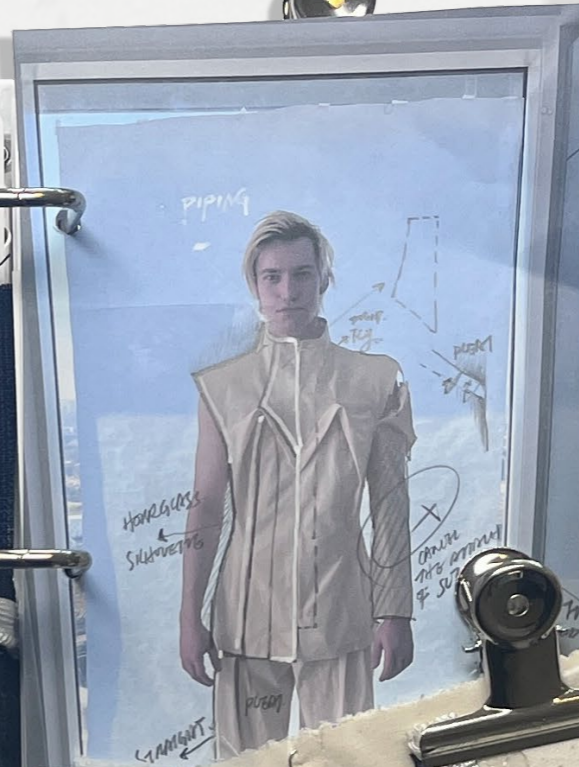
56.



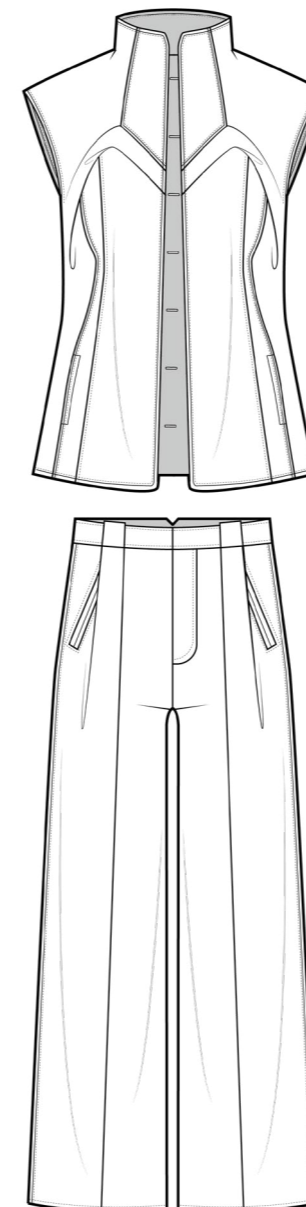
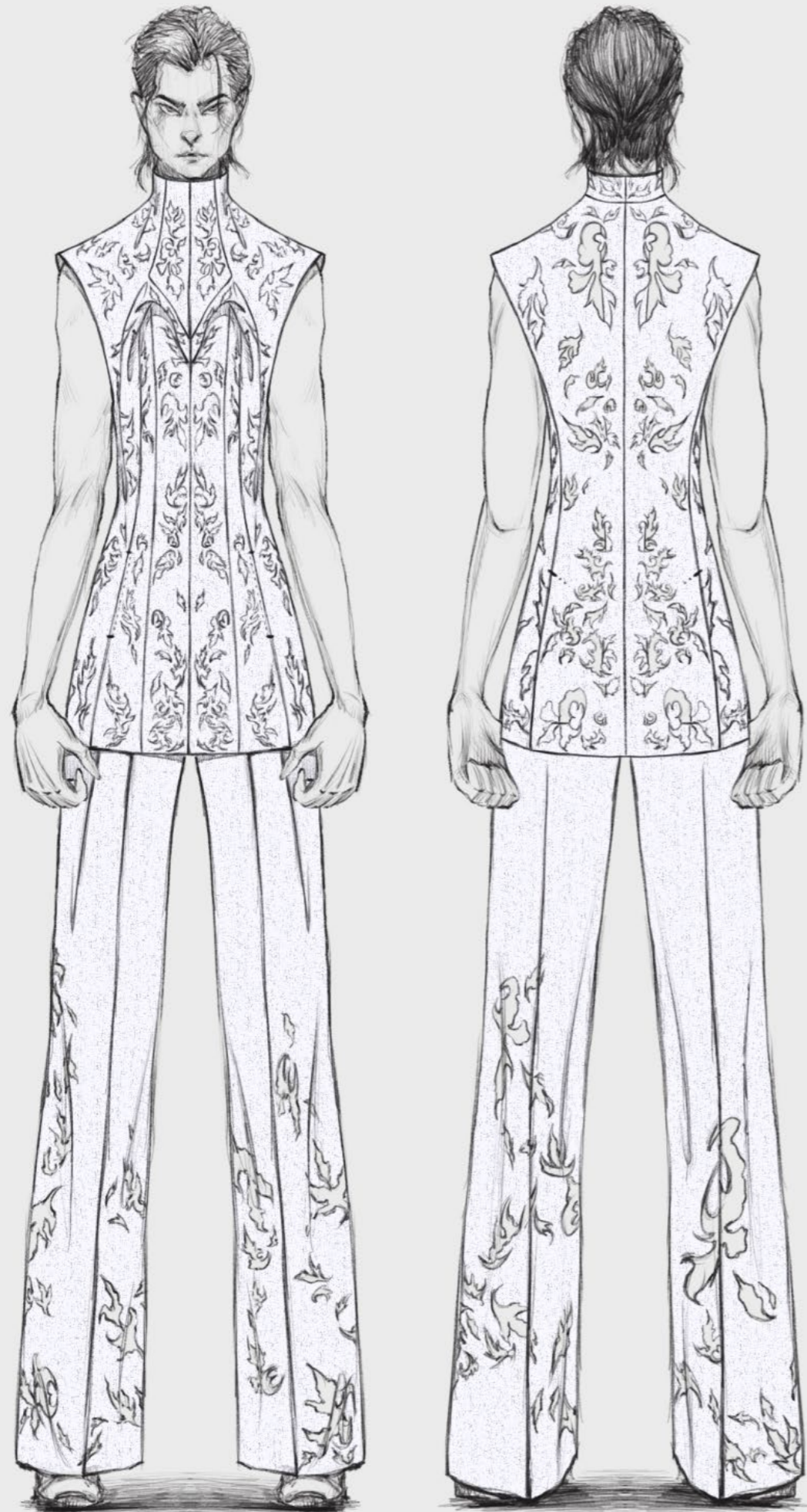
57.

After the first fitting, I identified the need to rebalance the silhouette of Look 2—the original proportions appeared too static and lacked the sense of tension I intended. Drawing again from my research into military tailoring and the visual language of broken ceramics, I began a second phase of development. This involved re-sketching and fabric testing to introduce layered volumes, and cut-away elements. These refinements allowed the look to evolve with more nuance and emotional resonance, aligning it more closely with the concept of fragile strength.

56. Look 2 Design Development After First Fitting by Zhichao Xu (2025)
57. Look 2 Final Sketches by Zhichao Xu (2025)



- INVISIBLE SIDE PIPING IN THE SEAM - SAMPLE



INTERNALS & TRIMMING:

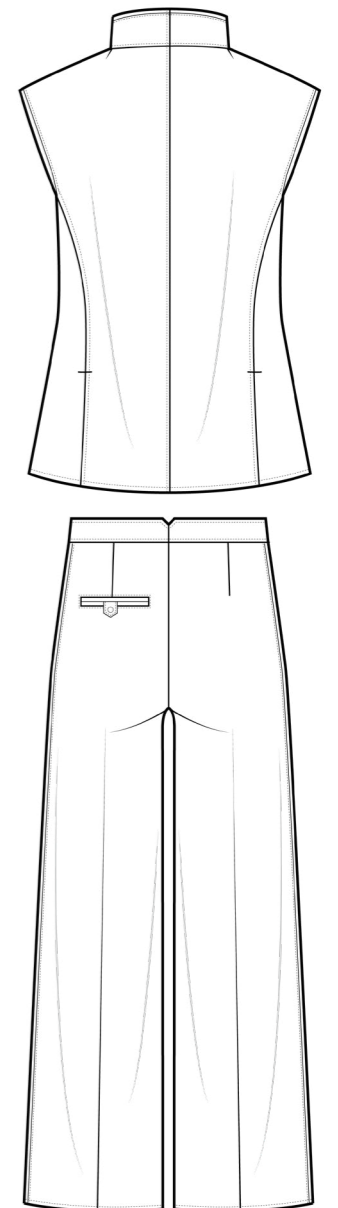
- White Body Canvas
- White Chest Canvas
- White Collar Canvas
 - Firm Domette
- Navy & White Silesia
 - Shoulder Pad
 - Sleeve head Roll
 - Bottonhole Gimp
 - Navy Binding
- Ceramic Button
 - Piping
 - Zipper

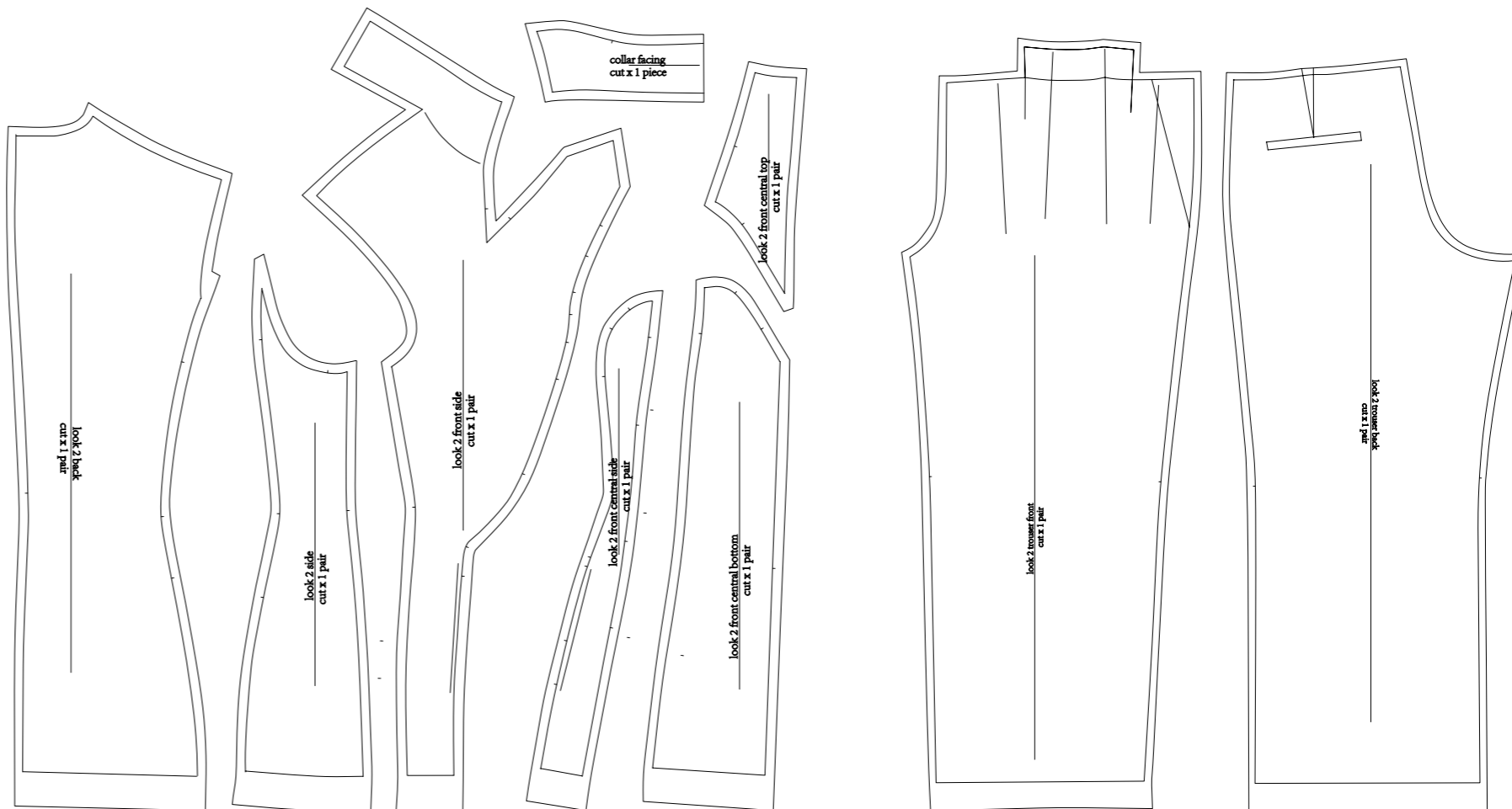
LINING:

- Bemberg Navy Lining (Trousers)

CLOTH:

- Hainsworth Doeskin 100% Merino Wool (390gsm) : Mild Blue
- Hainsworth Doeskin 100% Merino Wool (390gsm) : White
- 100% Silk Organza (25gsm): White







Laser Cutting Digital Pattern Placement of Look 2 by Zhichao Xu (2025)

Cutting Pattern of Look 2 by Zhichao Xu (2025)



58.



59.



60.



61.

- 58. Look 2 Jacket Left Front Making by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 59. Look 2 Jacket Right Front Making by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 60. Look 2 Jacket Back Making by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 61. Look 2 Jacket Back Inside Making by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Look 2 Making Process by Zhichao Xu (2025)



62.



63.



64.



65.

62. Handfinishing the Look 2 Trousler Binding by Zhichao Xu (2025)

63. Attaching the Canvas to the Standing Structure on the Breast by Zhichao Xu (2025)

64. Stabing Stitch the Canvas with Cloth in the Seam by Zhichao Xu (2025)

65. Finished Look with Canvasing up the Standing Structure on the Breast by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Canvas Constructing for the High Collar by Zhichao Xu (2025)



66.



67.



68.

66. Canvassing up the Collar Canvas by Zhichao Xu (2025)
67. Attaching the Edge Tape Around the Collar by Zhichao Xu (2025)
68. Attaching the Collar Canvas as the Extra Layer for the High Collar by Zhichao Xu (2025)

- 69. None Lining Back Shoulder Facing Construction by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 70. Look 2 Jacket Front View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 71. Look 2 Jacket Back View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 72. Look 2 Jacket Back View on Stand by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 73. Look 2 Trousers Front View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 74. Look 2 Trousers Back View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 75. Look 2 Jacket Front View on Stand by Zhichao Xu (2025)



69.



70.



71.



72.



73.



74.



75.

LOOKBOOK



Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li





Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



Look 2 Still Live Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)

Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li

76.



77.



76. Look 2 Inner Look by Scarpa Gu (2025)
77. Look 2 Facing and Buttons Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)

Look 2 Buttonhole & Binding Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)



78.

Photographer : Scarpa Gu
 Makeup & Hair : Miro
 Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
 Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
 Ceramic Button : Miao Li



80.



81.



79.



82.

78. Look 2 Trousers Still Live Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
 79. Look 2 Fabric Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
 80. Look 2 Pleat & Pocket Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
 81. Look 2 Back Double Jetted Pocket with Flap Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
 82. Look 2 Trousers Hem Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)

III. LOOK 3

*SUPERVISED BY MAGDALENA HANDWERKER
BUTTONS COLLABORATED WITH MIAO LI
COLLABORATED WITH RUILIN SONG
SPONSORED BY HAINSWORTH*

'The Vessel of Authority'

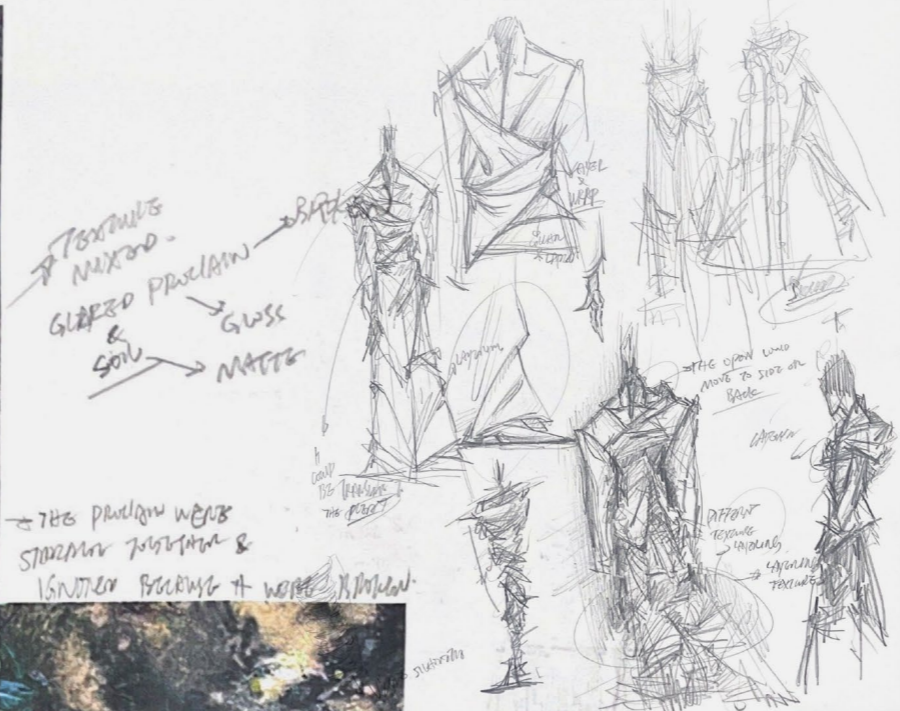
A deep navy doeskin forms the foundation of this look—sharp, restrained, composed. Upon it, fragments of white doeskin, salvaged from Look 2, reappear not as waste, but as memory. Through layered embroidery, these once-dismissed pieces are re-anchored in new positions, mimicking the rhythm of porcelain shards reassembled into a new vessel.

This is a deconstructed military jacket: high collar, epaulets, and a clean button front evoke command, while one side collapses into asymmetry—cut away, exposed. The piping in crisp white becomes a visual seam of healing, echoing the fault lines of broken ceramic.

Beneath its composed silhouette lies a quiet tension: the contradiction between exterior discipline and interior fragility. The garment reflects a masculinity that is not unyielding, but fractured and tender—worn with grace, not force.

A vessel of strength, cracked open to reveal the vulnerability it once concealed.





TEXTURES MIXED -
GLAZED PORCELAIN -
GLASS
& SOIL - MATTE

THE PORCELAIN WERE
STAMPED WITH
LARGER BRICKS & WERE

THE CAPS
TOP
THESE
COLLARS
CONTOUR
R2
DEVELOP
R3
THE STIMULUS
SILHOUETTE

THEY BECAME A SOURCE
IN JIANKEZHUO

PIZZONERI
SIZES OF
THE JACKET
OVERLAP &
CHANGE
THEY SCALD



THE RANDOM CREASES CREATED
PARTIAL MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE

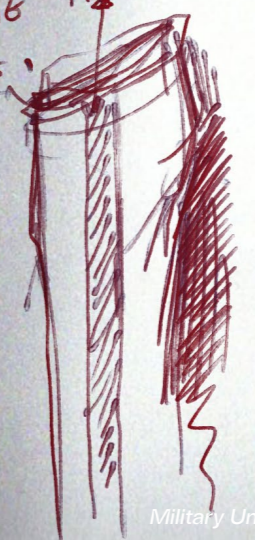


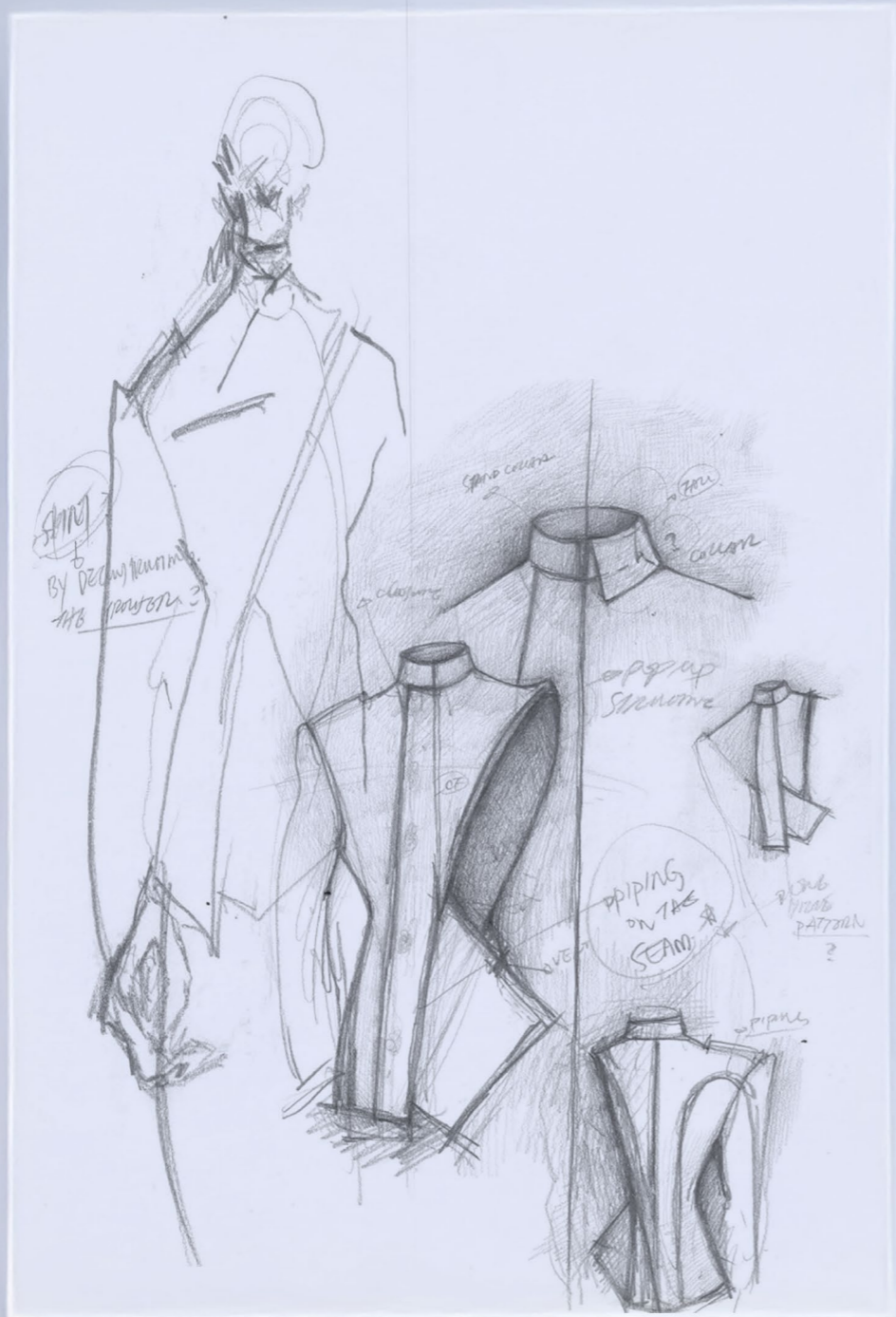
STAND
OUTLINE
OF THE
UNIFORM

IT MUST
BE REVISED
AS THE
ORIGINALS.

THE STRAPS
ON THE
BACK SEAM.

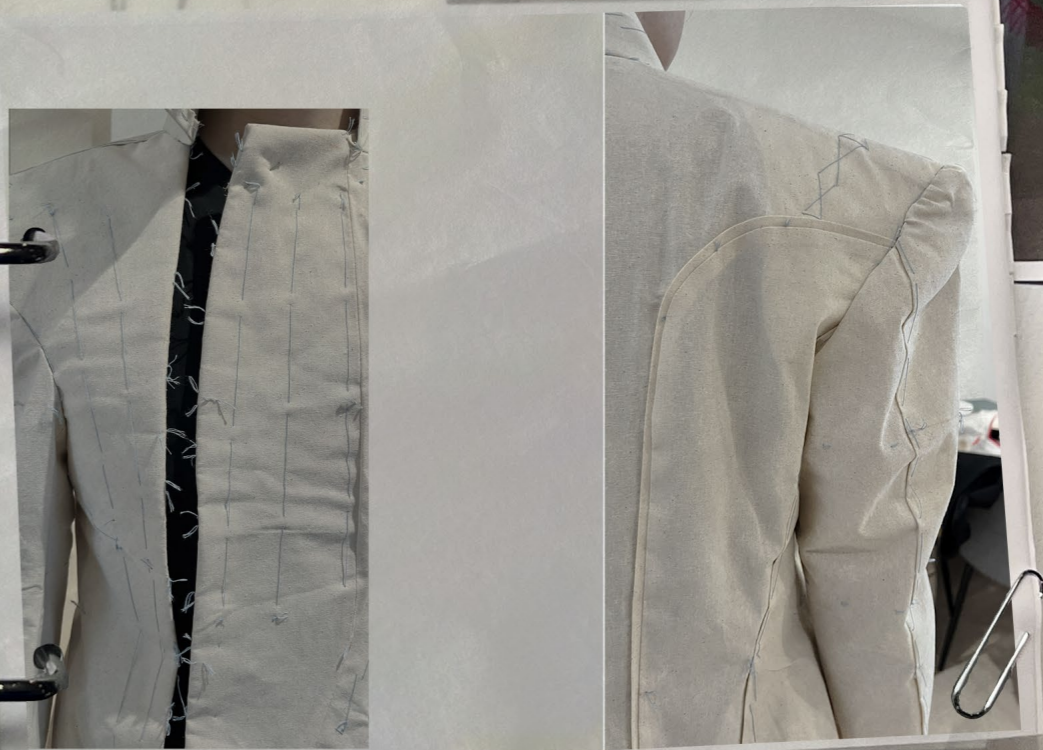
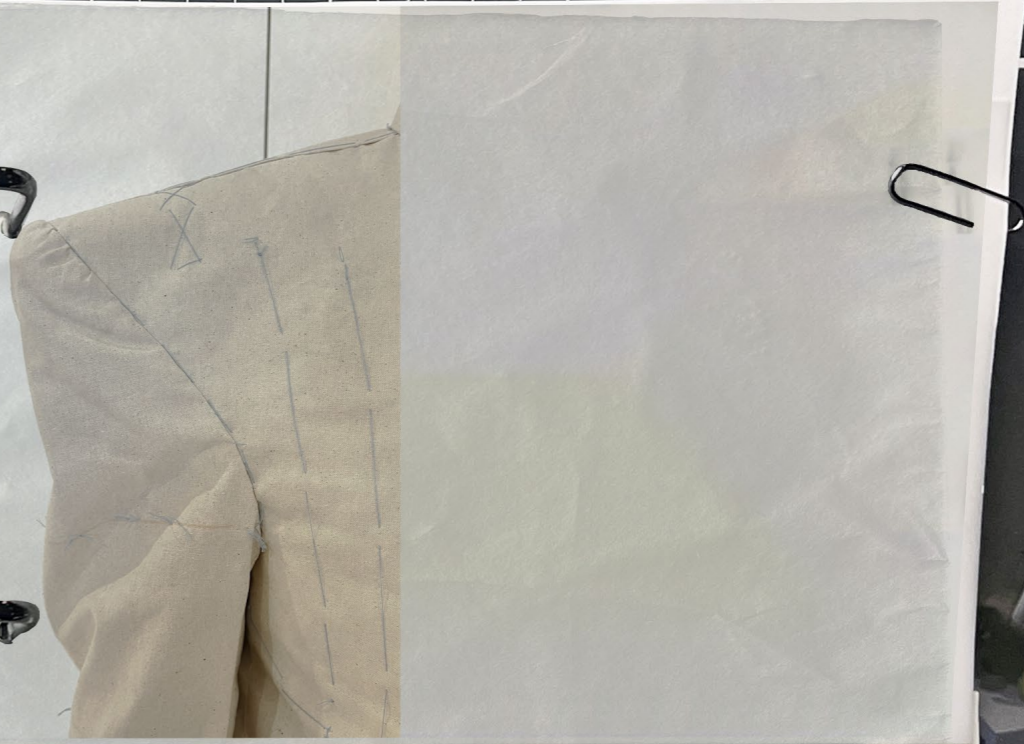
SMALL
PANZA
ON THE
TROUSER
SIDES.







- Look 3. Initial fitting with Jiang. (EXPERIMENT)





Look 3 Embroidery Sample Placement on the Toiling by Zhichao Xu (2025)

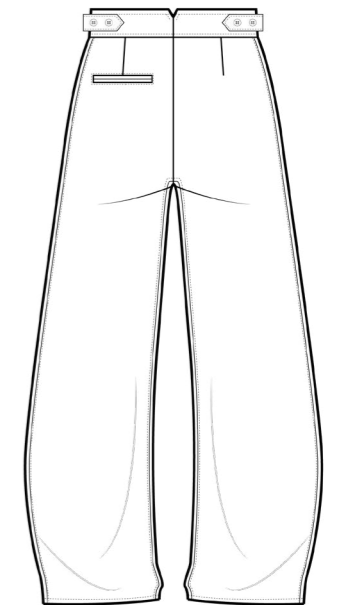
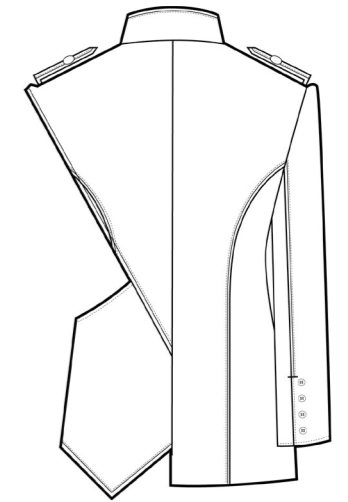
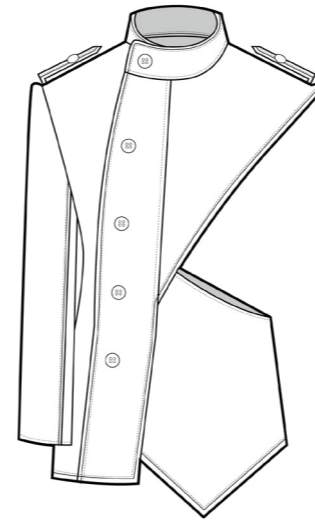


83.



84.

83. Look 3 Final Jacket Toiling & Fitting by Zhichao Xu (2025)
 84. Look 3 Final Trousers Toiling & Fitting by Zhichao Xu (2025)



INTERNALS & TRIMMING:

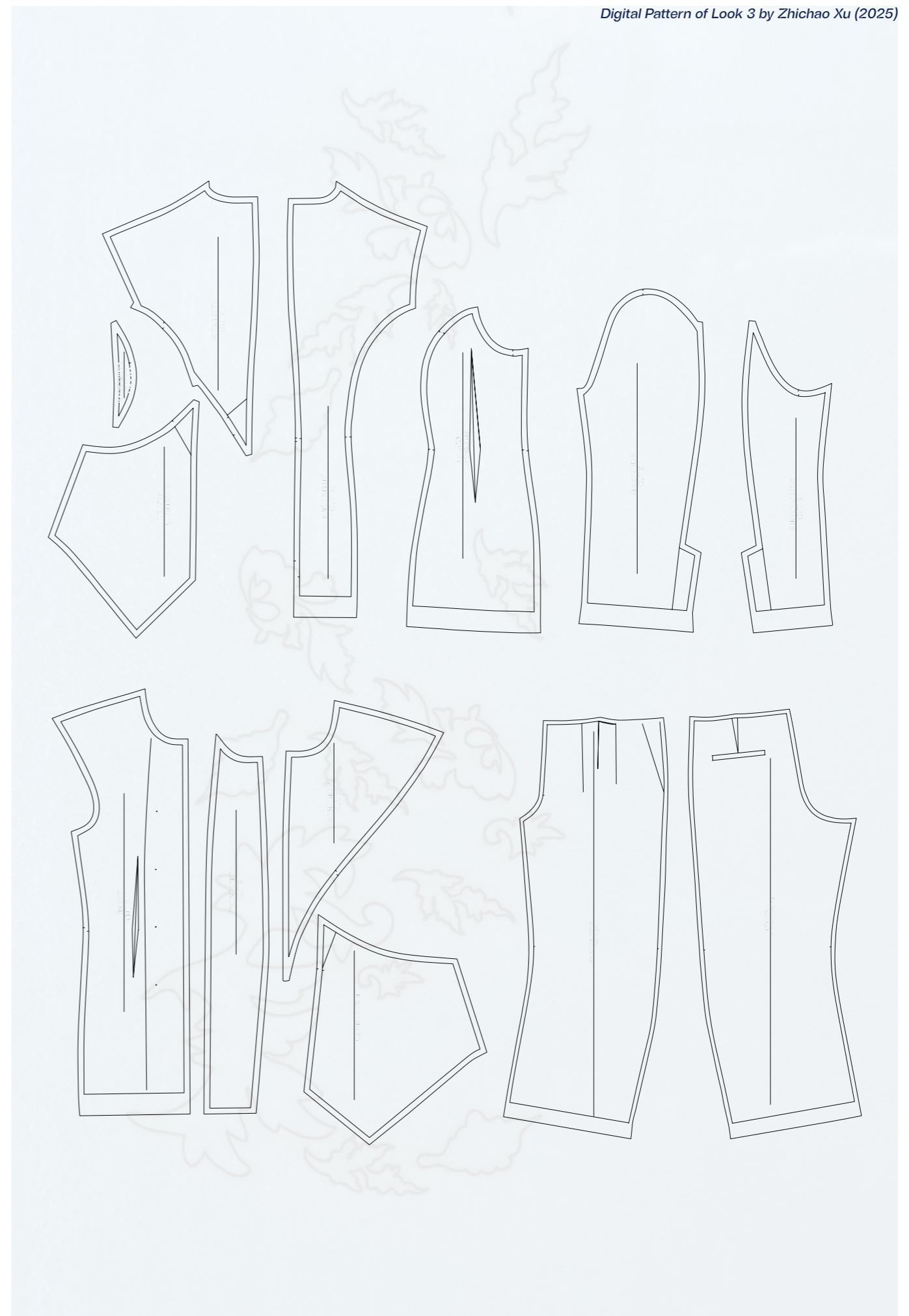
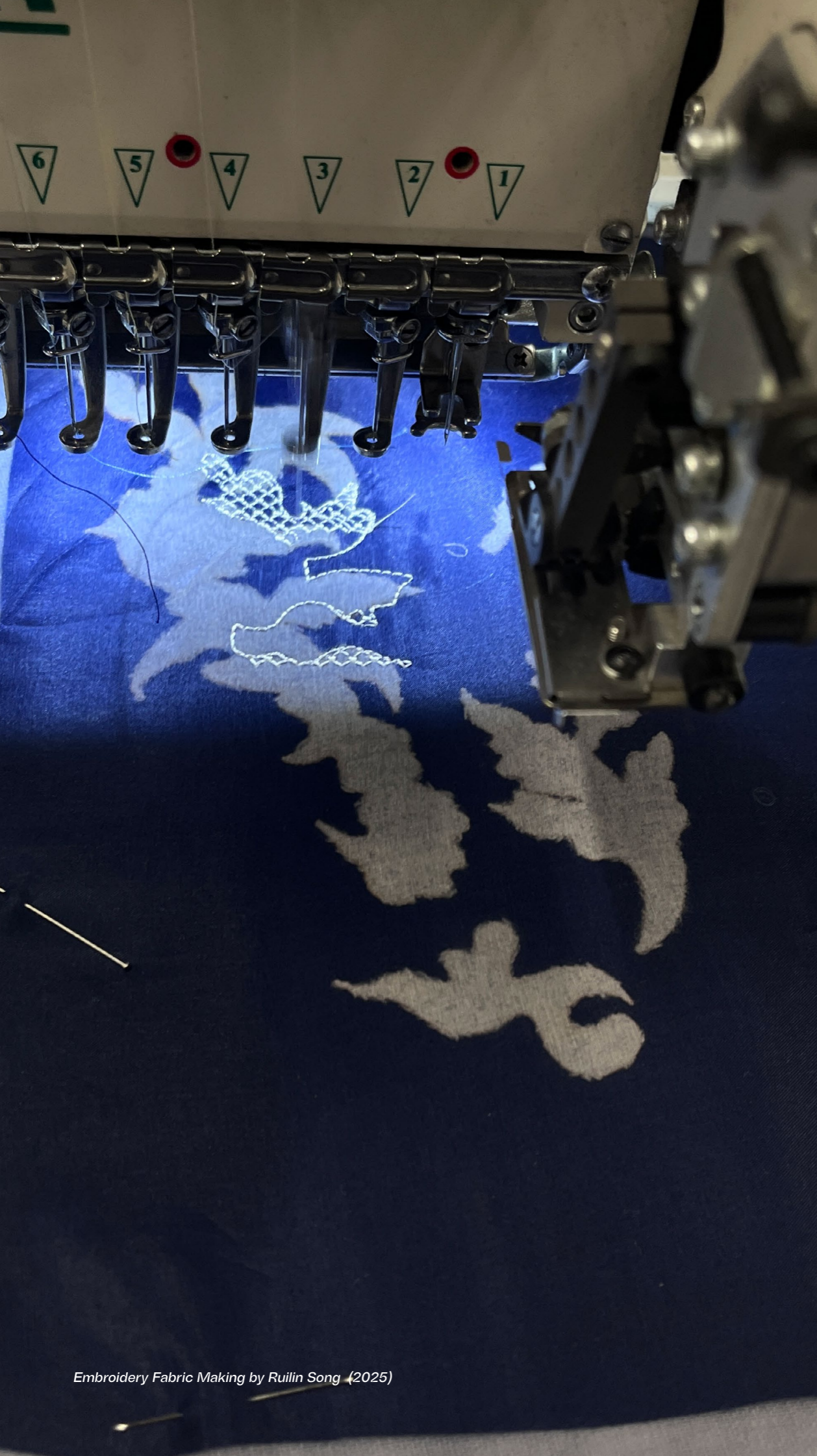
- White Body Canvas
- White Chest Canvas
- White Collar Canvas
 - Firm Domette
- Navy & White Silesia
 - Shoulder Pad
 - Sleeve head Roll
 - Bottonhole Gimp
 - Navy Binding
- Ceramic Button
 - Piping
 - Zipper

LINING:

- Bemberg White Lining
- Bemberg Sleeve Lining

CLOTH:

- Hainsworth Doeskin 100% Merino Wool (390gsm) : Mild Blue
- Hainsworth Doeskin 100% Merino Wool (390gsm) : White
- 100% Silk Organza (25gsm): Navy





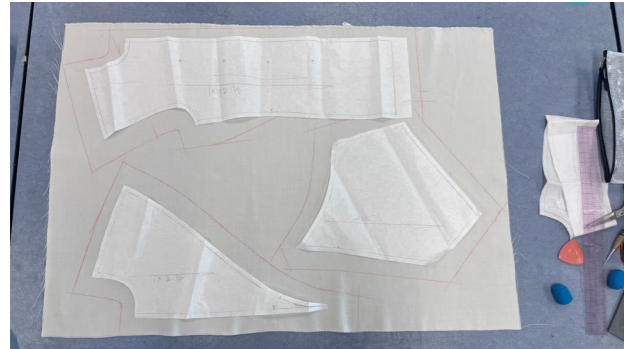
The hand-drawn pattern pieces were digitised and transferred into Adobe Illustrator, where I conducted placement experiments to explore composition and visual balance. This digital process also allowed for precise preparation of the laser cutting files, ensuring that each motif aligned seamlessly with the garment's construction and concept.

Look 3 began with manual pattern drafting, translating the fragmented military silhouette into structured panels. These were later digitised and refined in Adobe Illustrator, where I explored compositional variations and prepared precise files for laser cutting, ensuring each form echoed the tension between order and disruption.

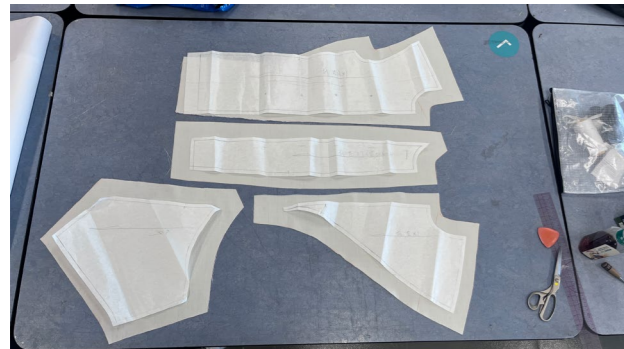
The embroidered motifs were developed in collaboration with Ruilin Song, using different techniques to evoke the sharp yet delicate quality of broken porcelain. Each stitch acted as a method of reassembly—repairing and reconfiguring fragments into a unified visual language.

The final construction was completed through hand-sewing, allowing me to guide the weight and movement of each component with care. This tactile process reinforced the narrative of vulnerability held within structure—where quiet precision becomes a form of strength.





85.



86.



87.



88.

85. Look 3 Canvas Cutting by Zhichao Xu (2025)
86. Look 3 Canvas Cutting by Zhichao Xu (2025)
87. Preparing for the Embellishment of Trouser by Zhichao Xu (2025)
88. Preparing for the Embellishment of Trouser by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Look 3 Jacket Making by Zhichao Xu (2025)



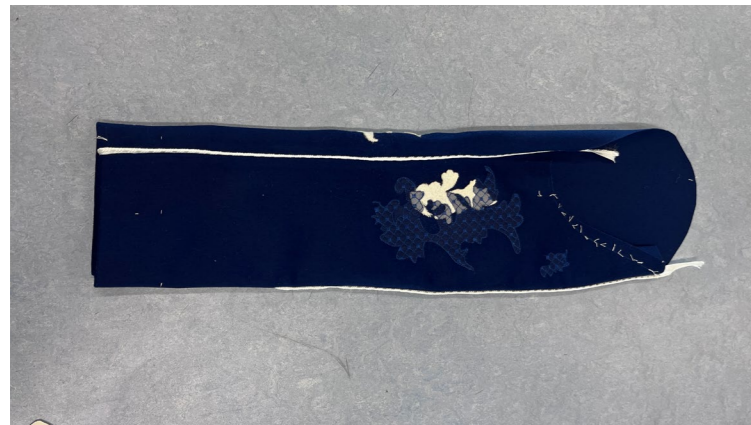
89. Attaching Piping to the Sleeve Seam by Zhichao Xu (2025)

90. Finished Sleeve by Zhichao Xu (2025)

91. Hand Sewing the Epaulets by Zhichao Xu (2025)



89.



90.



91.



Finished Back Pieces by Zhichao Xu (2025)



Ready for Attaching the Stand Collar by Zhichao Xu (2025)



92.



93.



94.



95.

- 92. Look 3 Jacket Front View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 93. Look 3 Jacket Back View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 94. Look 3 Trousers Front View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)
- 95. Look 3 Trousers Front View without Handfinishing by Zhichao Xu (2025)

LOOKBOOK



Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



Look 3 Still Live Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)



96.



97.



98.



Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Ceramic Button : Miao Li

Look 3 Shoulder Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)

96. Look 3 Jacket Left Front Embroidery Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
97. Look 3 Jacket Left Front Buttons Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)
98. Look 3 Jacket Sleeve Details Photo by Scarpa Gu (2025)



99.



100.

Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



101.

IV. FINAL LINEUP



CHAPTER 5
ON THE STAGE

HE DOES NOT STEP FORWARD—
HE IS REVEALED.
GLAZED, CRACKED,
ASSEMBLED BY TENSION,
MADE TO HOLD.⁷

Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li







Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li

Polaroid Photographer : Yanhong Li
Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li





*Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li*

Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



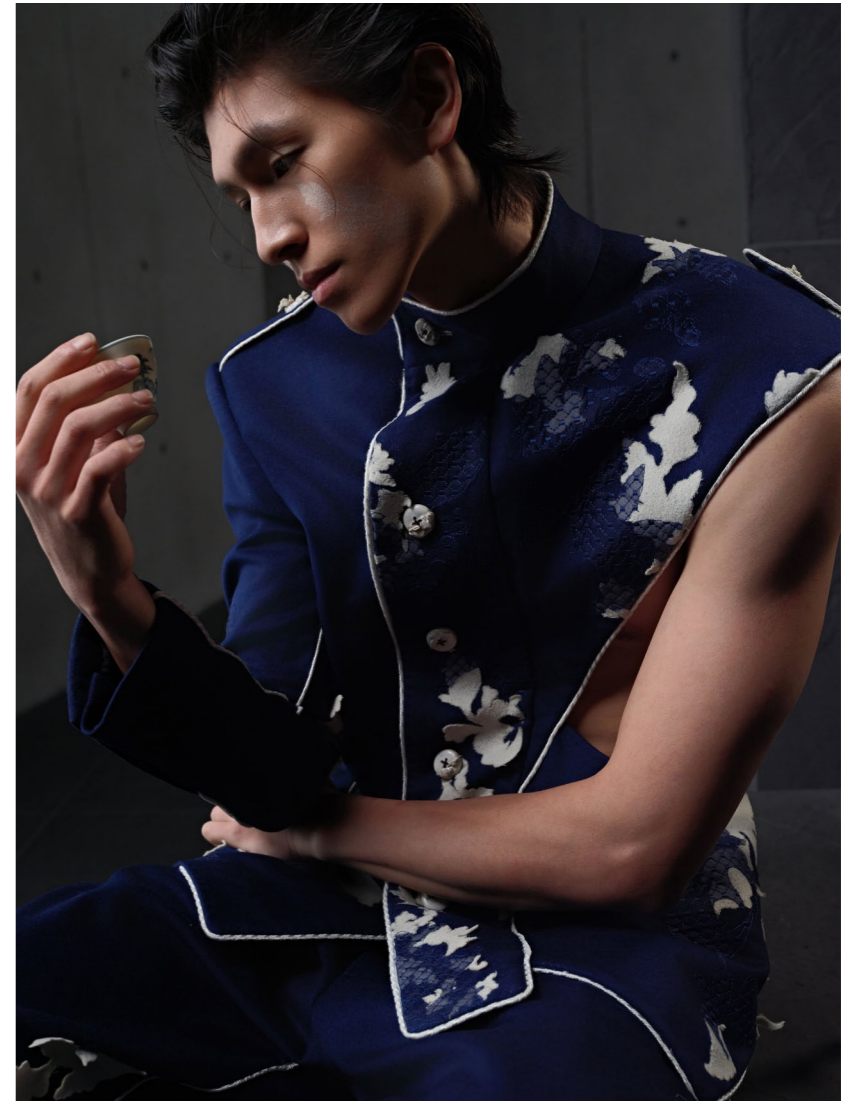


*Polaroid Photographer : Yanhong Li
Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li*

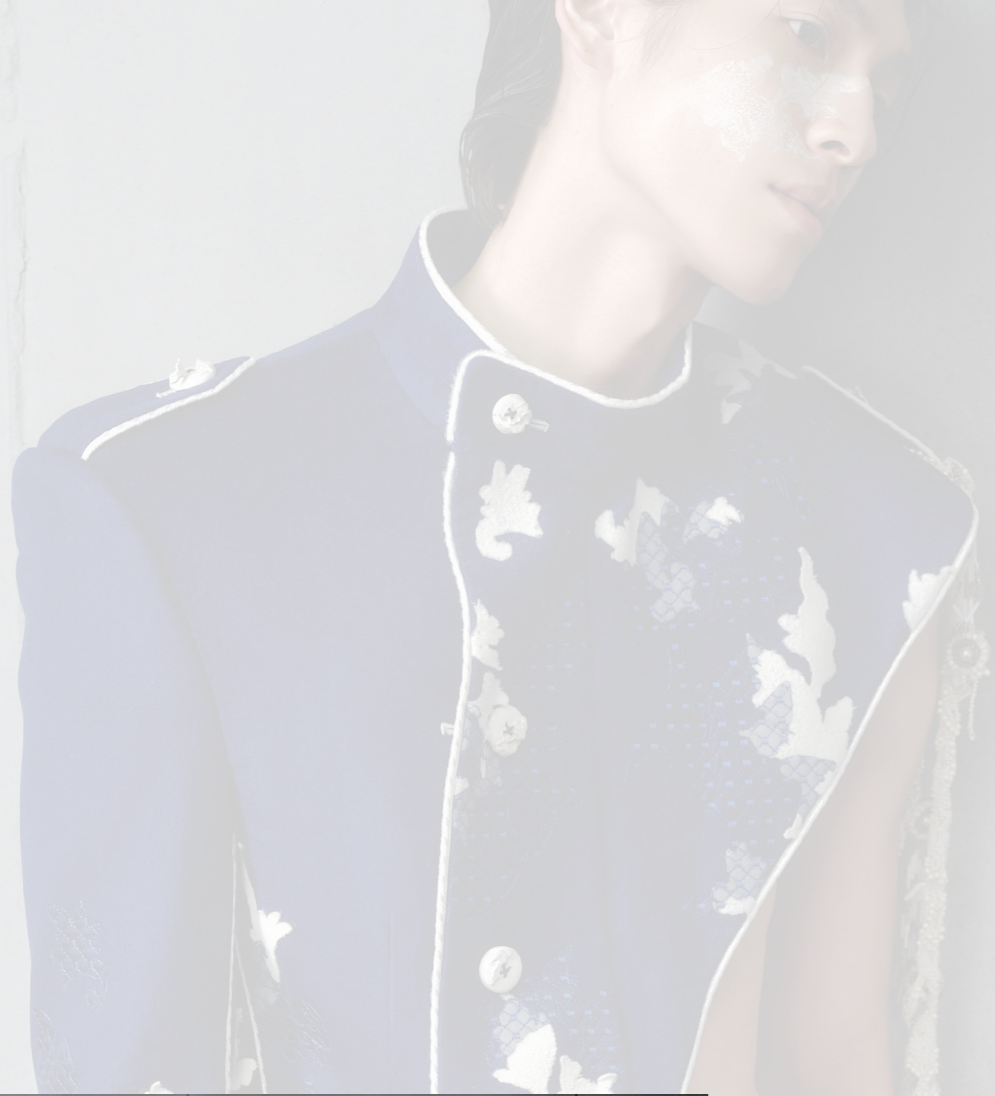


LOOK 3

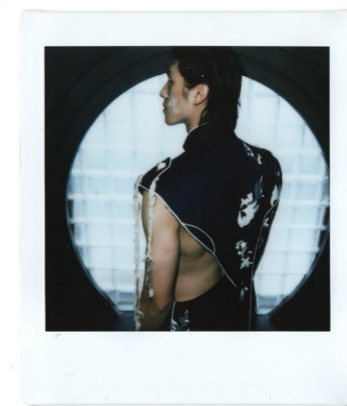
Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li



*Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
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Photographer : Scarpa Gu
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*Polaroid Photographer : Yanhong Li
Photographer : Scarpa Gu
Makeup & Hair : Miro
Model : Sen Lin
Assistant : Yanhong Li & Demaoling Wen
Partially Buttonhole : Xiaoli Liu
Ceramic Button : Miao Li*

CHAPTER 6
TO BE CONTINUED



Virtual Look Lineup by Zhichao Xu (2025)



CLO 3D Virtual Look 1-3 by Zhichao Xu (2025)



[CLICK HERE FOR WATCHING CLO 3D VIRTUAL GARMENTS VIDEO](#)

In this final chapter, I present a digital rendering of my garments using CLO3D, where I imported and assembled my digitalised patterns to simulate the construction and drape of the final pieces. Special attention was given to the representation of textile textures and surface details, aiming to reflect the design and tactile qualities of the physical fabrics as closely as possible.

Looking forward, I intend to further explore the integration of emerging technologies within bespoke tailoring—building on the foundation laid through this project and previous experiments such as the Future Artisan initiative. I am particularly interested in how digital tools, from virtual prototyping to AR-based fittings, can reshape the way tailors work and engage with clients in the years to come.

While time constraints prevented me from incorporating AR try-on functions in this project, I have done my best to demonstrate an informed and active engagement with these technologies. This is just the beginning of a broader journey—one that reimagines what it means to be a tailor in a digital age.

REFLECTION LETTER

This term has been one of the most challenging yet transformative moments of my journey. From reworking designs after the first fitting to navigating a time-consuming but rewarding embroidery collaboration, I often felt stretched thin. When my original model dropped out mid-way, I had to restart fittings and patterns—costing precious time I couldn't afford to lose.

On top of that, I went through a tough period physically and mentally. There were moments I felt completely stuck, unsure if I could continue. But somehow, I always came back to the work. Because I care. Because I love it.

Perfectionism slowed me down more than once—I spent too long on certain details and lost time I needed elsewhere. I'm learning that letting go can be just as powerful as refining. In the end, my garments and portfolio may not be perfect, but they carry the weight of everything I've gone through.

This project reminded me that resilience is just as important as design skill. I kept showing up, even when I was exhausted. And that, to me, is something to be proud of.

ZHICHAO XU

Zhichao Xu



MY DEEPEST THANKS TO

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MAGDALENA HANDWERKER

ALEX HALL

AZLEEN HENRY MASIH

JOSH MASIH

MARIA THELIN

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RUILIN SONG

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YANHONG LI

DEMAOLING WEN

LUOYI ZHANG

XINYU YANG

HONGJI LI

WENZHU LIU

XIAOLI LIU

JIAQI XU

YUE KONG

YUWEN SONG

SHIYOU XU

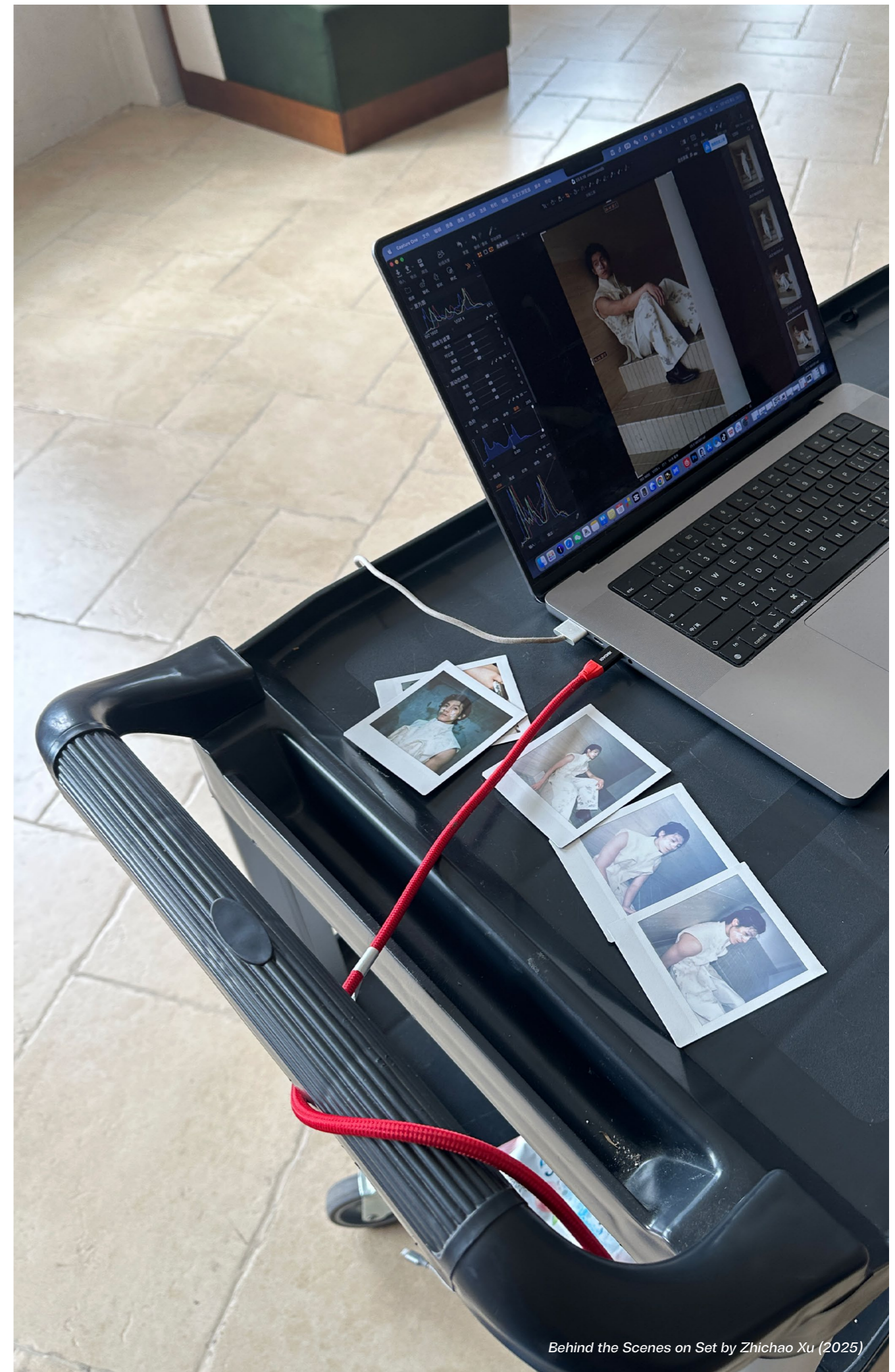
BIAOLAN ZHONG

This project marks not only the culmination of my time at LCF, but also the end of an extraordinary three-year journey in Bespoke Tailoring. I am deeply grateful to all the tutors who have shaped and supported me along the way. Thank you to Daniel Poulson for your openness and for creating a space where I felt truly heard. To Magdalena Handwerker—your belief in my potential, and the way you’ve supported me not only in craft but in spirit, has been a lasting source of strength and encouragement. Alex Hall, thank you for your clear and thoughtful guidance in design.

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Special thanks to Ruilin Song—for your dedication to our textile collaboration, which brought such richness to the final outcome. To Harriet Brown—thank you for your guidance and insight in shaping key aspects of this project. To Hainsworth—for your generous material sponsorship. And to Miao Li—for your support and collaboration on accessories and trims.

Lastly, to my friends and family—thank you for the conversations, the care, and the unwavering belief. Your presence made it possible for me to keep going, even through the hardest moments. And to myself—thank you for staying with it, and not giving up.



Behind the Scenes on Set by Zhichao Xu (2025)