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CAROL TONG

FW 2026



The collection explores power imbalance and discomfort in the workplace by translating women's experiences of discrimination and gendered scrutiny into sculptural, deconstructed, and distorted garments. Through contrasting proportions, layered structures, and manipulated silhouettes, the designs make invisible social pressures tangible, visually expressing the tension between constraint and empowerment.





The design initially explored distortion through elements of cut-outs, crossover panels, and subtle strap details. At first, the fit was intentionally tight and closely aligned to the body to express restriction; however, this approach proved visually rigid and limiting.

In response, additional volume was introduced into the sleeves and the lower part of the trousers to create a more dynamic silhouette and to enhance the sense of spatial distortion around the body.

Nice
Pleat
&
Drape

Smaller

More
Volume

More
Volume
All in one Jumpsuit.

Cut
out
Too
Tight

Too
Short

Keep
Pleat?



Following the adjustment, the look evolved into a halter-neck jumpsuit with a crossover top, allowing the distortion concept to be expressed through movement and cutout. Ultimately, the top was further refined and reduced to a cropped form consisting only of the collar and sleeves, paired with a halter-neck jumpsuit. This final iteration preserved the conceptual focus on distortion while achieving a more balanced, contemporary, and wearable expression of the concept.





During fittings, the dress was also too fitted and lacked cohesion with the rest of the collection. To address this, I shifted from a literal representation to a more abstract approach.



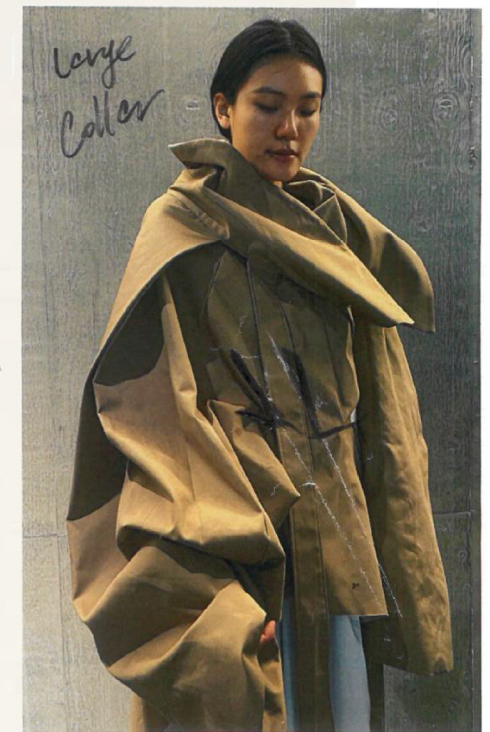
fit inner
loose outer



Too
oversize
↓
ADD
CUT
OUT



To
show
skin.



Large
Collar

pleat at
waist.
to shape

Shirtless



Fig. 37-38. Toile photographs taken by Xu (Xu, F Q, 2025).

The volume of the initial shirtdress proved unmanageable, so I redesigned it as an oversized shirt paired with a skirt. This combination visually expresses power imbalance and bodily distortion while maintaining contemporary relevance and conceptual integrity.



Show More Skin.

A mini shirt detail skirt underneath references the discrimination women face for wearing short skirts in the workplace, and draping was incorporated to introduce a sense of movement and to reflect the dynamic negotiation of power in professional environments.



Make the Hole Bigger

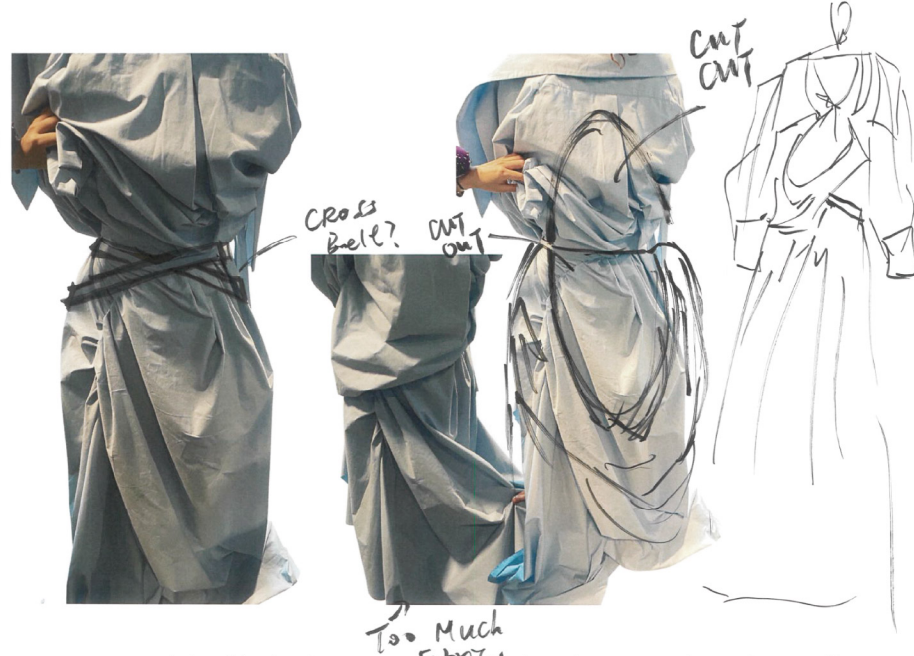
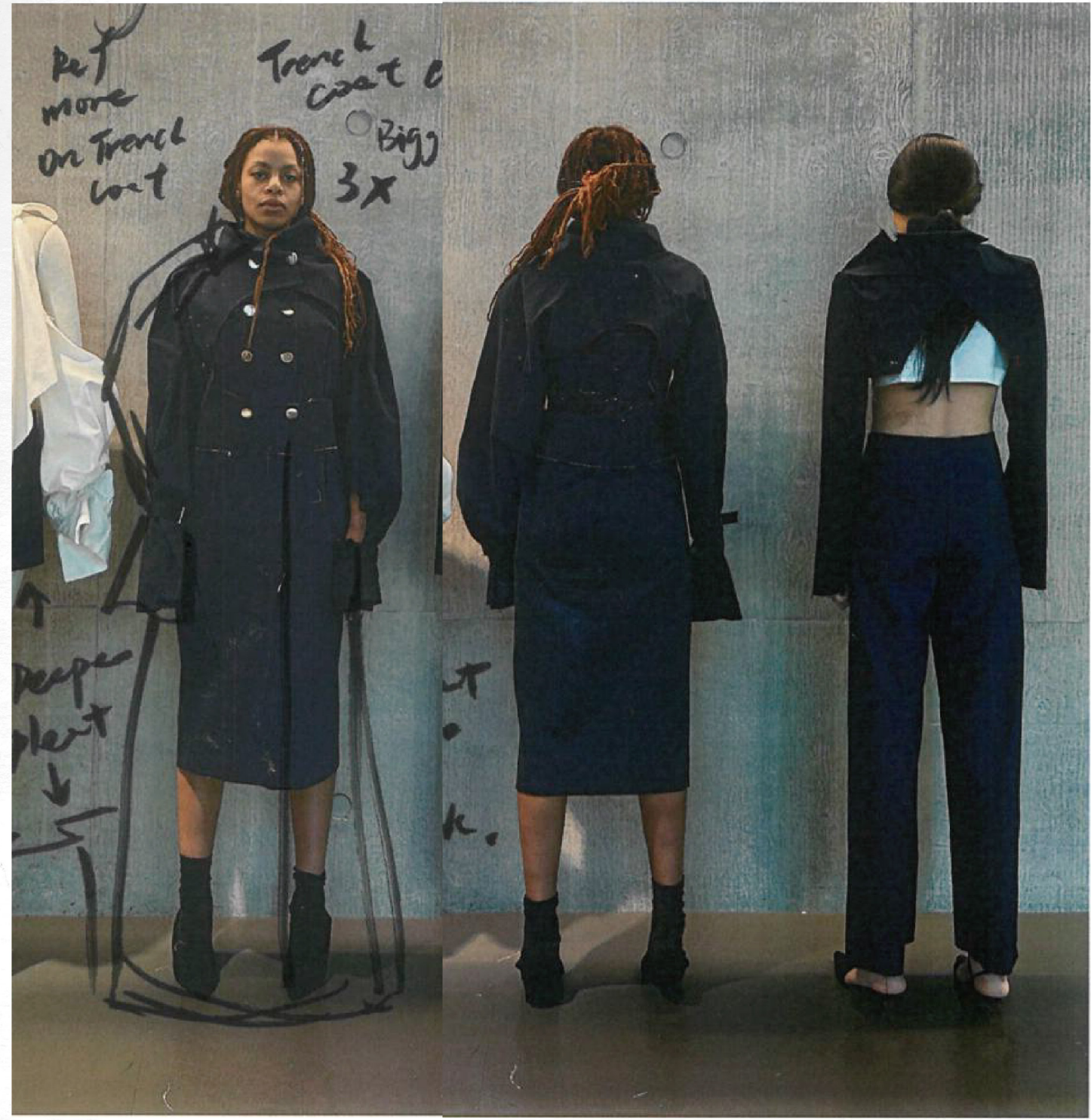
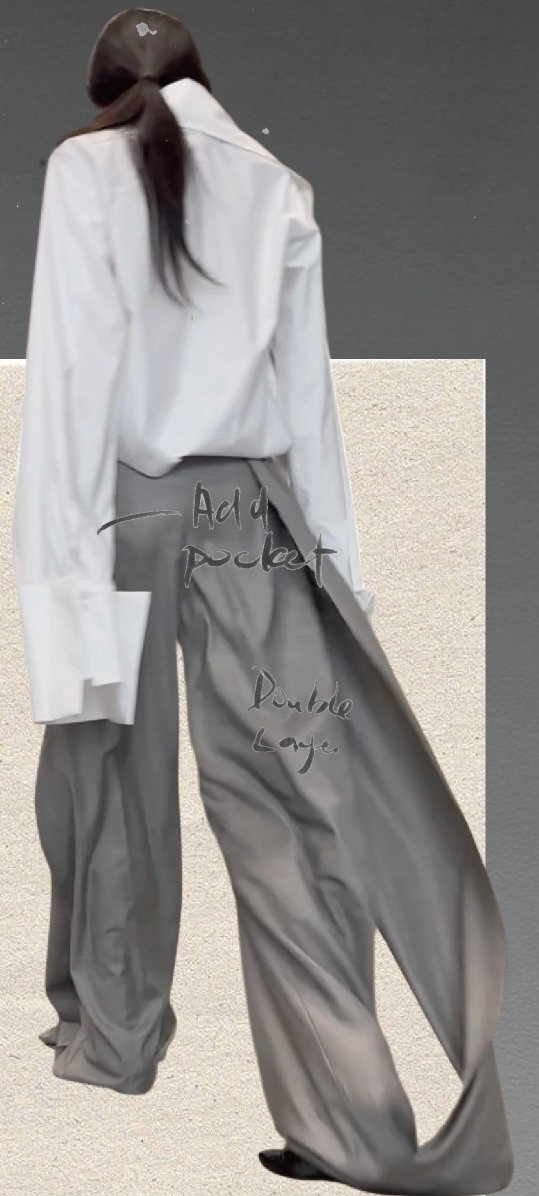
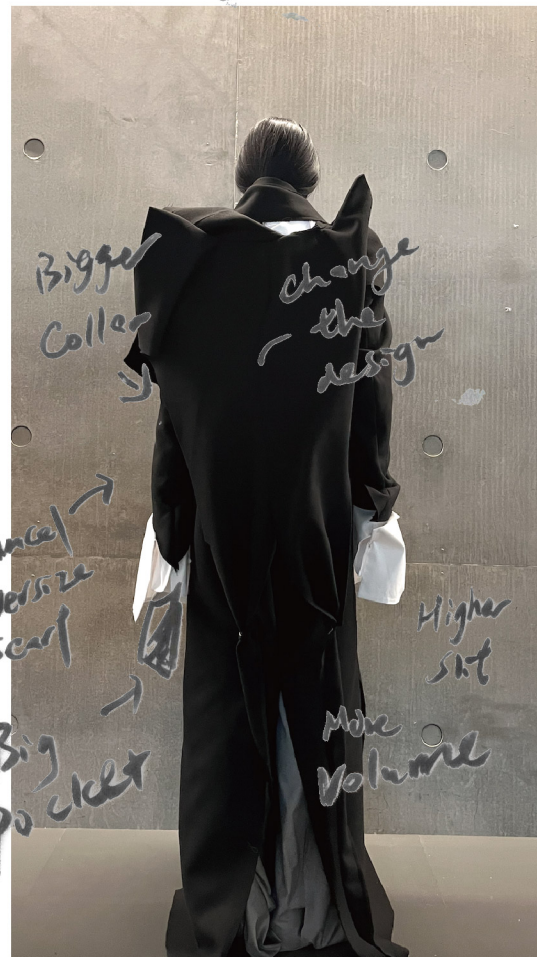


Fig. 39-40. Comments and fitting sketches (Tong, C., 2025).









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