

EMBRACE

LOVER

THIS SERIES INTERPRETS THE LOVERS' EMBRACE THROUGH REVERSE FOLDING. LAYERS INTERSECT LIKE BODIES IN A QUIET HOLD, WHILE KNITTED SURFACES ECHO THE WARMTH AND SOFTNESS OF SKIN. INTIMACY IS RESTRAINED YET PRESENT — NOT SPOKEN, BUT HELD, PRESSED, AND BREATHED INTO MATERIAL.

EMBRACE

LOVER

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SHANGHAI

25-26 MA FASHION DESIGN TECHNOLOGY MENSWEAR

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UNIVERSITY OF ARTS LONDON

FOREWORD

In everyday life, embracing is the most instinctive and tender way my partner and I comfort each other, ease anxiety, and express love. Quiet yet powerful, an embrace accompanies us through the subtle rhythms of each day. In this project, I seek to translate this intimate gesture into a design language—transforming the emotion, structure, and tactile quality of an embrace into a three-dimensional, wearable form.

Using a reverse folding approach, I reinterpret the skeletal relationships within an embrace: shifting from parallel alignments to interlaced and intertwined structures. This method forms the foundation of my silhouette development. By incorporating a belt system, I create a structural link that echoes the joining of arms, giving spatial form to the act of embracing. The use of knit materials replicates the softness of hair and skin touching during an embrace, bringing a gentle and relaxed tone to the garments.

This project strengthened my skills in silhouette construction, pattern development, and material interpretation, while also helping me discover my personal design voice. Within the realm of quiet luxury, I add an emotional dimension—exploring intimacy, softness, and the sensory quality of an embrace through menswear design.



-Figure 1: Luo, L. (2025) Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 2: Zhu, H. (2025) Lover [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To complete this project, there are some people I need to thank.

First and foremost, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my girlfriend and my family. The origin of this project lies in our simple yet intimate act of embracing, and during every moment when I felt discouraged, my girlfriend supported me with patience, understanding, and unwavering companionship.

Throughout my postgraduate journey, I am especially grateful to my supervisor, Darren Cabon. He taught me how to become a mature designer and helped me understand the values and beliefs that a menswear designer must uphold. He repeatedly guided my project in the right direction and provided a wealth of resources that allowed me to research, explore, and ultimately make this project truly my own.

Special thanks to senior lecturer Jay Kang for pushing me to grow in pattern cutting and for his essential contributions to my Master 's work.

I also appreciate the companies who supported the production of my project: Guangzhou Rainbow Leather Company for custom leather, Jiangsu CKRC Knitting Studio for knit pattern development, and Kunshan Chenfeng Group Co Ltd. for garment manufacture. Thank you to photographer Lawrance Luo for the professional shoot, and to models Freddie Reynolds and Jude Naylor for bringing my designs to life.

Finally, I thank my parents. Your son is doing well—pursuing his dreams with happiness and determination. I love you.

I, Huakun Zhu, affirm that this work is original. All sources have been acknowledged, and this document is free of plagiarism.

EVALUATE COMMENTARY: 4336

CONCLUSION: 919

COST: 10K

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-Figure 3: Luo, L. (2025) Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



PART1 PORTFOLIO

UTILIZING REVERSE-FOLDING TO SIMULATE THE LOVERS' EMBRACES

-Figure 4:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

PART ONE PORTFOLIO
(1.) RESEARCH

An embrace is an ordinary gesture, yet it allows two people to feel each other's warmth—a quiet testament to love. This project is inspired by moments of embracing my partner, where ease and emotional connection sparked the beginning of this work.

Through the artist's analysis of the theme of embracing, I have learned the embracing.



-Figure 6: Goldin, N. (2001) Swan-like embrace. [Photograph].



-Figure 5: Craven, E. (2013) Sofa (from Screen Lovers) [image].

Artists frequently employ photography to document moments of embrace, translating emotional intimacy into visual form. In the 2013 series *Folding*, Eli Craven reconfigures photographic images through collage and layered composition, turning gestures of touch into visual articulations of identity, desire, and connection. These works suggest that an embrace is more than a physical gesture—it is a conduit through which emotional narratives and relational dynamics become visible.



-Figure 7:
Egon Schiele. (1911) Kiss [Illustration].



-Figure 8:
Goldin, N. (2001) Swan-like embrace. [Photograph].

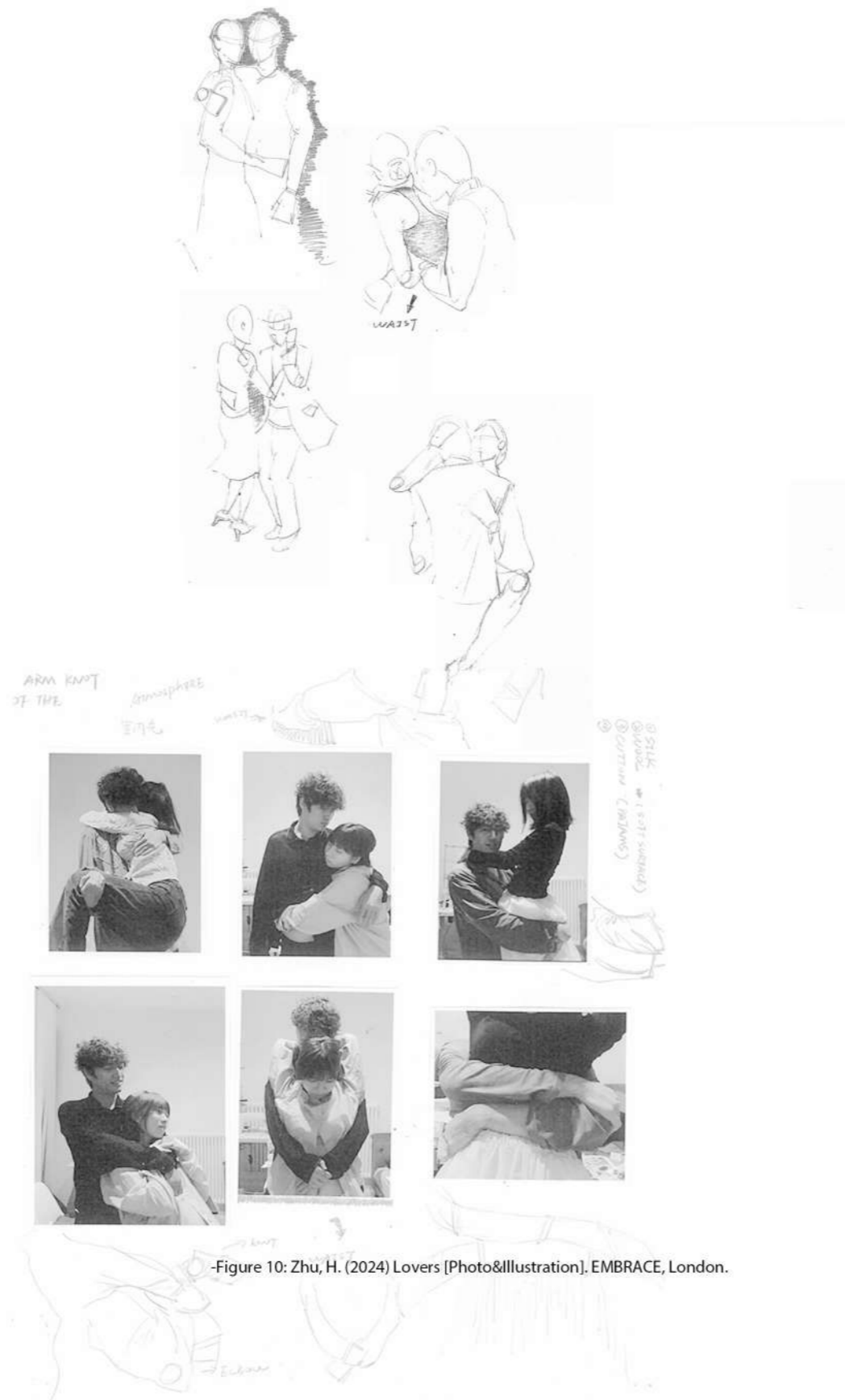
Photographer Nan Goldin depicted intimate relationships and everyday interactions, revealing the vulnerability, dependency, and intertwined emotions found within an embrace. Through her lens, these ordinary gestures became powerful visual narratives.

RESEARCH
LOVER



-Figure 9:
Zhu, H. (2024)
Lovers [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

I documented moments of embracing my partner through painting and photography, fully immersed in the experience together. These embraces strengthened our intimacy, eased emotional tension, and created a space for mutual trust. Through refining these gestures, I realized that an embrace is not merely physical contact, but a symbolic interaction carrying emotional exchange. My visual analysis revealed that the arms are central to forming this connection, defining proximity and bodily interaction. Their intertwined movements create a layered structure—an unspoken pathway of connection where closeness becomes tangible through touch.



-Figure 10: Zhu, H. (2024) Lovers [Photo&Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

Through analysing the gesture of embracing, I observed the folds and distortions formed on garments due to tension and pressure. I found that the arms naturally undergo subtle rotations, revealing both physical dynamics and the emotional intention of drawing another body closer. These traces record changes in space and force, and by translating them into structural lines and pattern seams, I used the gesture of embrace as a key reference for pattern development.



-Figure 11:
Zhu, H. (2024)
Embracing Experiment [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 12: Zhu, H. (2024) Twisting [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

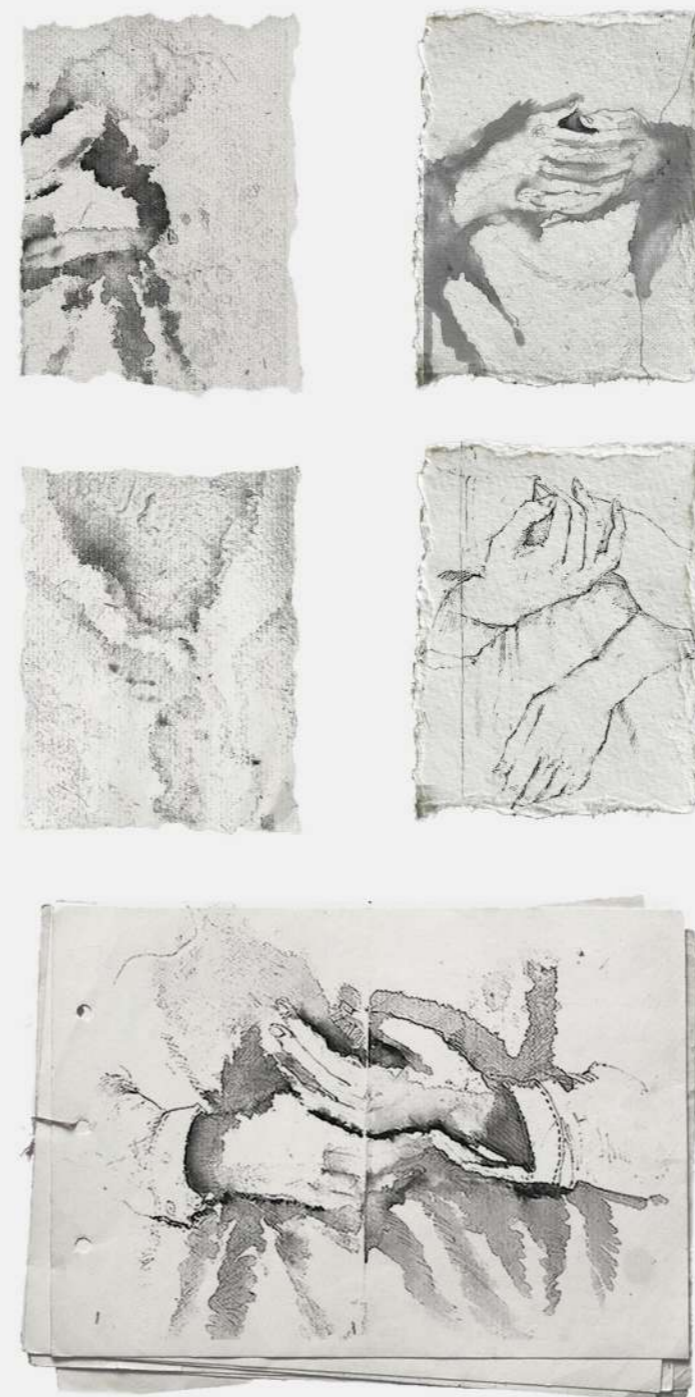
ILLUSTRATION

EGON SCHIELE



-Figure 13:
Egon Schiele. (1911) [Illustration].

The works of Egon Schiele played a significant role in inspiring this project. Through minimal yet expressive lines, he captured intimate and delicate moments of embrace, resonating strongly with the emotions I aim to convey. Building on this connection, I created my own drawings to express the energy and sensations experienced during moments of embrace, allowing these visual explorations to inform the development of my project.



-Figure 14:
Zhu. H. (2025)
Embrace [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

PART ONE PORTFOLIO
(2.) COLOUR



-Figure 15:

Zhu, H. (2025)
 Colour Methodology [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

Giorgio Armani's concept of "Greige" forms the core foundation of the colour methodology in this project. Positioned between grey and beige, Greige introduces a restrained and intimate tone that softens the formality and distance often associated with traditional menswear tailoring. Its subtle warmth resonates with natural skin tones, creating a quiet balance that is neither abrupt nor decorative. The gentle transition between Greige and the body produces a relaxed, tranquil atmosphere within the overall silhouette, further articulating the project's intention to express intimacy through a sense of ease.

PART ONE PORTFOLIO
(3.) FABRIC & TRIMMING



-Figure 16:
 Stubbs (1993)
 Tantric Massage [Illustration].

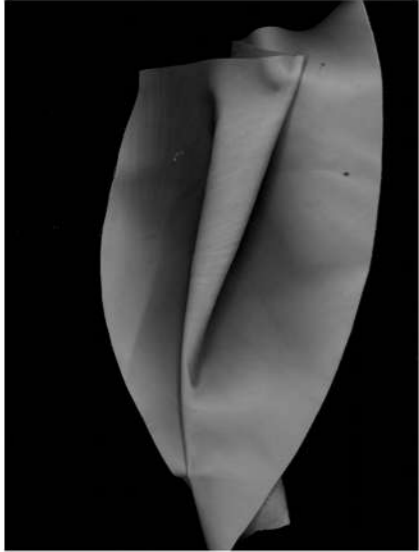
This project's fabric strategy is grounded in my research on tantric massage, which emphasises sliding contact, gentle friction, and full-hand coverage as a means of building emotional connection. In this practice, intimacy is not generated through force, but through subtle transitions as material moves across the skin—moments of lingering pressure, enveloping touch, and gradual release. Physical contact therefore functions as an emotional medium, transmitting trust, closeness, and energy between bodies.

Drawing from this understanding, the fabric selection prioritises softness, warmth, and tactile proximity to the body rather than structural rigidity. The collection employs natural materials such as cashmere, silk, wool, and Napa leather, chosen for their organic textures and sensitivity to movement and applied pressure. These fabrics simulate the sensation of being gently touched or held, allowing the garments to act as carriers of emotional experience rather than merely surfaces that cover the body.



-Figure 17:
 Luo, L. (2025)
 Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

FABRIC



-Figure 18:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Fabric Experiment[Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

During fabric testing, I focused not only on tactile comfort but also on the structural requirements different garments place on thickness and rigidity. Certain pieces rely on the fabric itself to support their silhouette, so outerwear requires greater weight and firmness compared to tops or trousers. Softer fabrics remain close to the body, while more structured materials provide shape and support, creating a balance between wearability and form.



-Figure 19: Zhu, H. (2025) Fabric [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

TRIMMINGS



-Figure 20:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Trimmings [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 21: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

-Figure 22:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 23:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Queer [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.



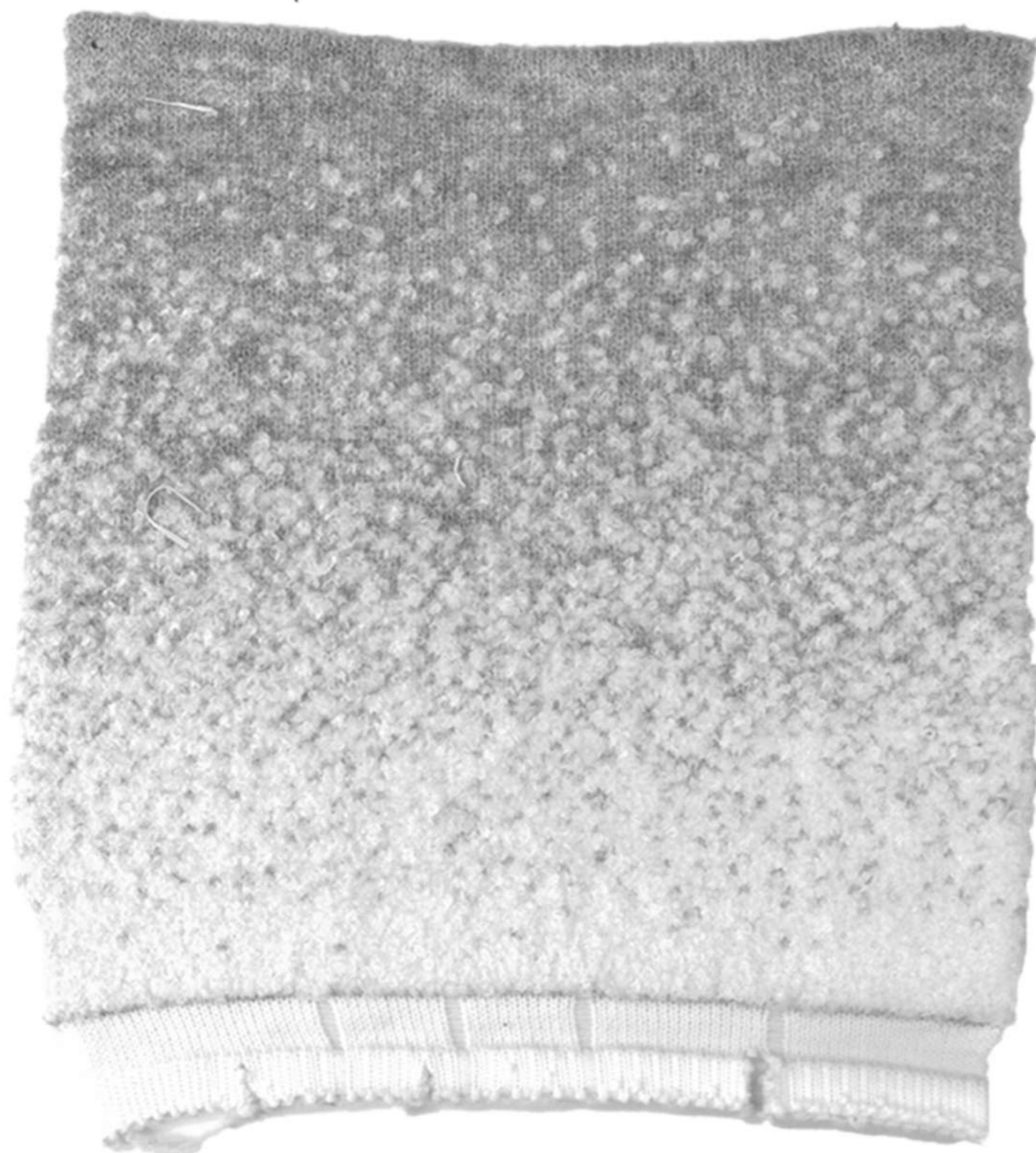
PART ONE PORTFOLIO (4.) KNITWEAR

In the development of knitwear, the jungle scene in Queer provided a significant source of visual and emotional reference. The scene's close, blurred bodily contact suggests that intimacy does not arise solely from the act of embracing, but from subtle interactions between skin and body hair.

Based on this observation, I shifted my focus toward the tactile qualities and surface textures of yarn. I studied how different skin textures and hair directions create distinct sensations during bodily contact and sought to translate these experiences through yarn. Throughout the experimentation process, I tested fibres such as mohair, cashmere, wool, and alpaca, establishing tactile variations that range from soft, enveloping warmth to gentle friction, allowing knitwear to convey diverse forms of intimacy.

-Figure 24:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Yarn Sourcing [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 25: Zhu, H. (2025) Knitwear Sample [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 26:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Knitwear Sample [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

In developing the knit patterns, I used a dot jacquard structure to create controlled variations in density across the surface. Compared to large-scale motifs, dot-based patterns allow more precise adjustment of tactile and visual layers. I experimented with multiple yarn combinations, including gradients in thickness, texture, and colour, to produce transitions from sparse to concentrated areas and from smooth to more textured surfaces. This approach maintains a clean overall appearance while adding subtle depth and tactile interest to the knit surface.



-Figure 27:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 28: Luo, L. (2025) Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 29: Luo, L. (2025) Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 30:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 31:

Zhu. H. (2025)
Lover [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

PART ONE PORTFOLIO
(5.) DESIGN METHODOLOGY



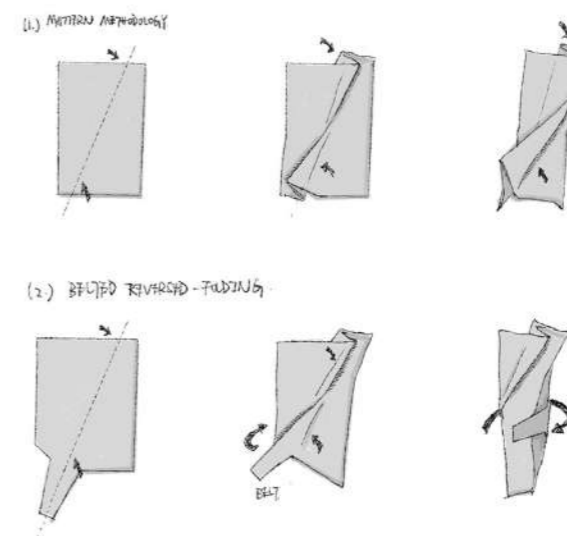
-Figure 32:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

DESIGN METHODOLOGY

REVERSE FOLDING

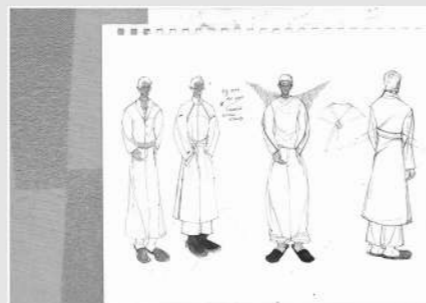
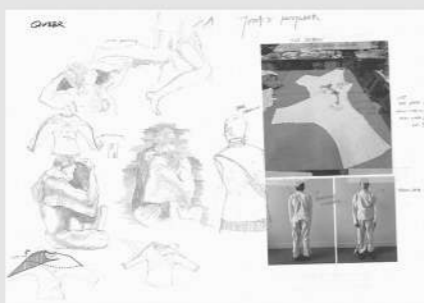
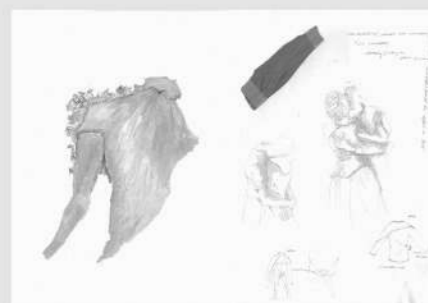
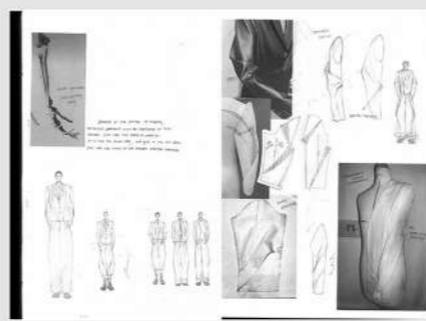
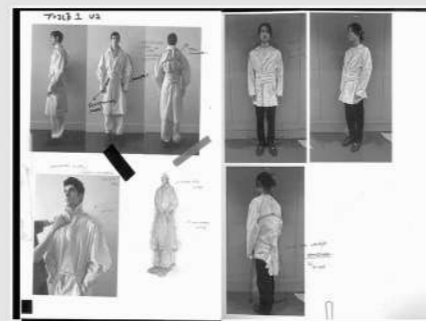
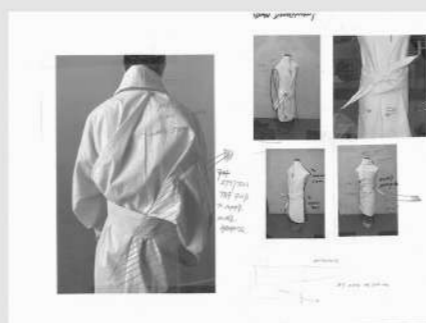
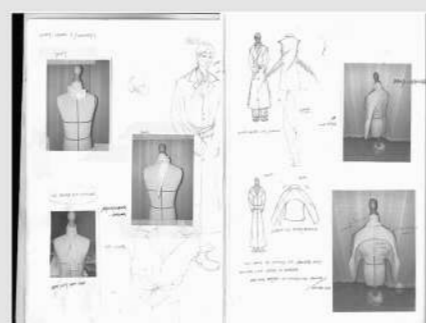
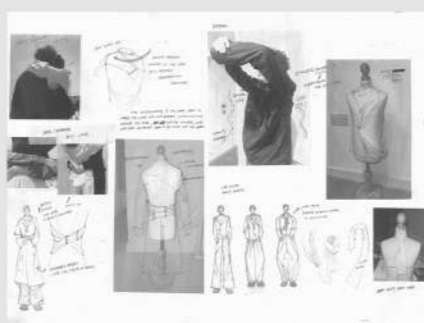
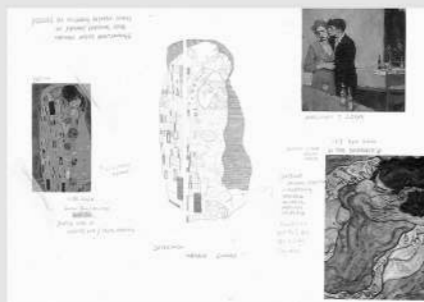
UTILIZING REVERSE FOLDING TO SIMULATE THE LOVERS' EMBRACES



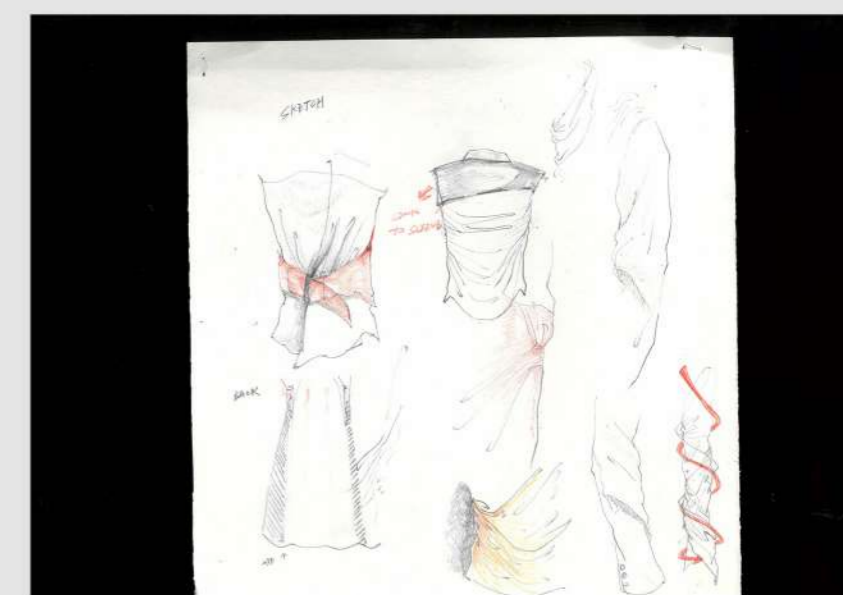
-Figure 33: Zhu, H. (2025) Pattern Methodology [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

I used the skeletal movement of the arms during an embrace as the starting point of my design. Through reverse folding of pattern panels, I constructed silhouettes that simulate the physical form of holding. In Unit 2, I introduced a belt that connects the "skeletal structure" to the position of the hands, allowing the gesture of two lovers embracing to manifest structurally on the garment. This approach transforms emotional connection into a visible silhouette and design language.

SKETCHBOOK 2024-2025



PART ONE PORTFOLIO
(6.) DESIGN DEVELOPMENT



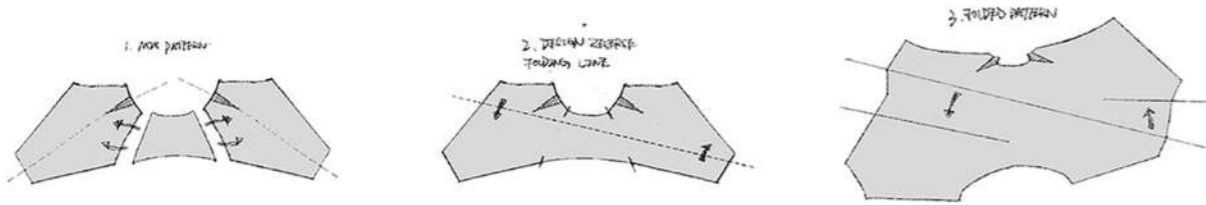
-Figure 34:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Sketchbook [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

DESIGN PROCESS



-Figure 35: Zhu, H. (2025) Pattern Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



This is the most direct approach within my reverse folding design series. During an embrace, lovers often hold each other close, with both arms functioning like a single continuous form. To translate this movement into structure, I connected the two armholes to the back panel and integrated reverse folding as a key design element. This allows the gesture of embracing to be visualised through construction, enabling the physical act of holding to directly influence the garment's silhouette and spatial formation at the pattern level.



-Figure 38: Zhu, H. (2025) Pattern Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 36:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Unit2 Edition (Photo). EMBRACE, London



-Figure 37:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Toile [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

One of the main technical challenges in this design was that the reverse-folding structure elongated along the back under torsional tension, causing distortion and loss of shape. To stabilise the silhouette, I added a parallel stabilising underlayer behind the main panels and secured it through sectional anchoring. This reinforcement redistributed strain and constrained secondary deformation, ensuring that the rotational displacement followed a controlled pathway. As a result, the three-dimensional folding maintains its intended volume and contour during wear.



-Figure 39:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Belting Experiment (Photo). EMBRACE, London



-Figure 40:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Strap Experiment (Photo). EMBRACE, London



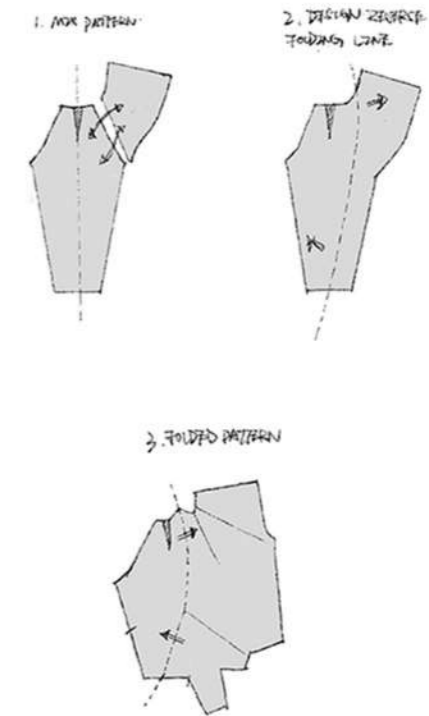
-Figure 41:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Cutting Process [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

In this approach, I also conducted extensive tests on how to connect and adjust the belt at the waist in order to achieve the most effective visual representation of an embrace. Ultimately, I incorporated bound holes into the pattern, allowing the two belts to interlace and wrap around each other to create a clearer sense of enclosure. In the experiment shown in the upper-right image, I further explored different directions and placements for extending the arm structure into the belt, determining the configuration that best conveys the desired embracing silhouette.

DESIGN PROCESS

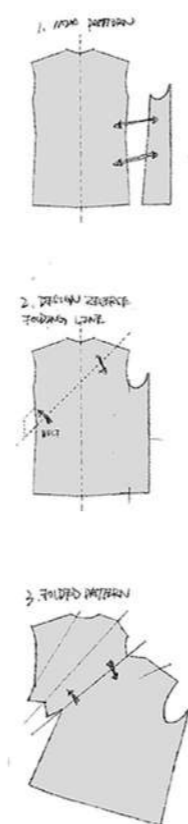


-Figure 42: Zhu, H. (2025) Pattern Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



This method forms one of the core structural approaches in my overall design. I integrated the reverse folding construction with a belt system, using the belt's tension to enhance the three-dimensional twisting effect. To increase the rotational range, I linked the sleeve panels to the trench-coat storm flap, extending the movement path of the arms. The structural seamlines were then designed not only as visual elements but also as functional mechanisms that allow adjustability around the wrist. Additional volume was inserted along these seamlines to achieve the desired sculptural silhouette.

DESIGN PROCESS



-Figure 43:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Cutting Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

This version represents the third application of my reverse folding methodology. In this iteration, a single belt functions as the rotational axis, generating a full-body torsion that results in a spiralling silhouette. The pattern was first expanded laterally by increasing the waist circumference by 40 cm and redistributing panel divisions to create sufficient structural excess for torsional tension during the belt-wrapping process.

To control the directional distortion, I drafted reverse-folding seamlines across the back panel, establishing rotational continuity along the spine. Additional fold allowance and volume were inserted at key torsion points, enabling the garment to twist while maintaining mobility. These structural interventions established the foundational pattern framework of the piece.



-Figure 44:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Belt Experiment (Photo). EMBRACE, London

During the experimental process, the main challenge was controlling the volume to achieve the desired torsional effect and ensuring structural stability using only a single belt. I ultimately incorporated a buckle as the primary fixation mechanism, and added an internal patch pocket within the side seam pocket to fulfil both daily functionality and the garment's sculptural requirements.



-Figure 45:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Cutting Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

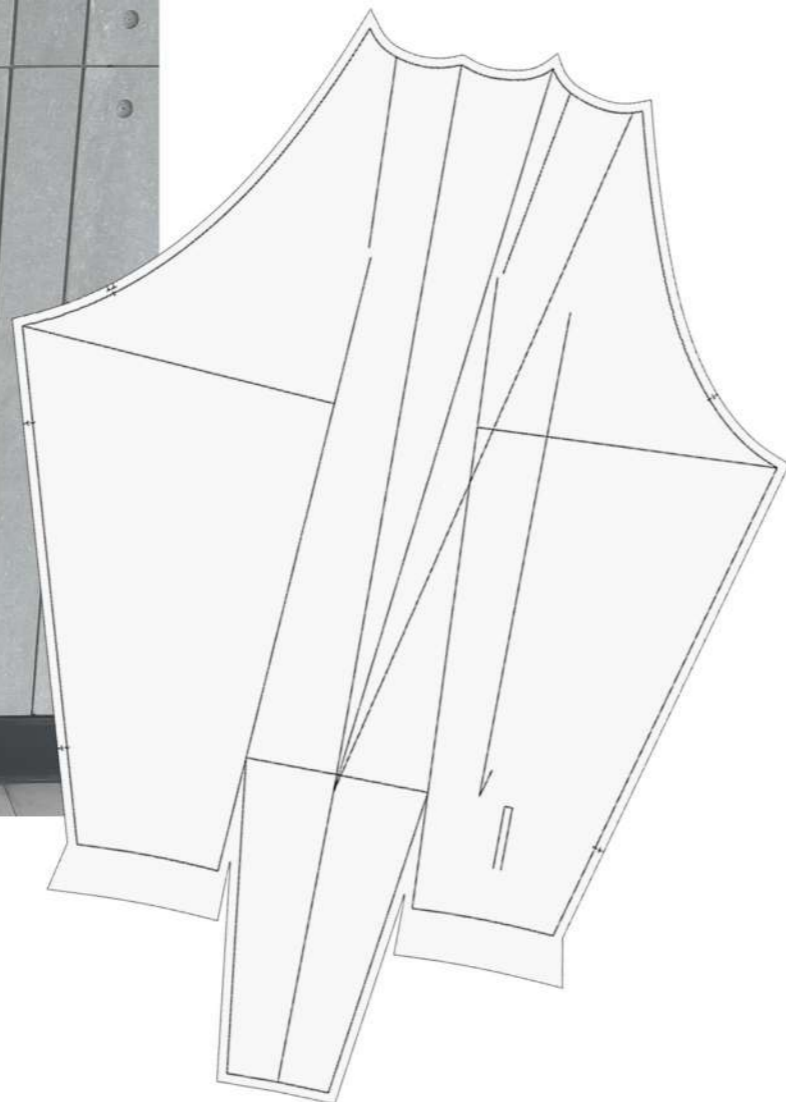


-Figure 46:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Belt Experiment (Photo). EMBRACE, London

PATTERN PROCESS



This design applies a reverse folding structure that extends from the front shoulder to the back shoulder. During the toile stage, I adjusted the distribution of fold volume to stabilise the overall folding effect and experimented with the use of fastenings to ensure the structure could be properly secured in its final form.



-Figure 47:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Toile (Photo). EMBRACE, London



-Figure 48:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Toile (Photo). EMBRACE, London



-Figure 49:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Toile (Photo). EMBRACE, London

PATTERN PROCESS



-Figure 50: Zhu, H. (2025) Toile [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

The left image visually demonstrates how the bound hole structure influences the overall silhouette. The back waist is constrained and pulled inward, creating a visual effect that resembles a pair of arms tightening around the body, reinforcing the sense of enclosure and tension associated with an embrace.

PATTERN PROCESS



-Figure 51: Zhu, H. (2025) Pattern Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

The design process for this piece is shown in the images above. I repeatedly adjusted the fold volume along the back to better demonstrate how the method influences the garment silhouette. However, during the toile stage, I found that the overall allowance at the waist was still insufficient and needs to be increased in the next iteration to achieve the desired effect.



-Figure 52: Zhu, H. (2025) Toile [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

PATTERN PROCESS



During the toile stage, I explored whether the overall folding volume could generate functional impact around the wrist; however, this requires further testing in the final garment. Additionally, the back structure did not perform as intended—the wave-like folds were too pronounced, making the silhouette less clean and direct, and creating a visual inconsistency with the rest of the design language. Further refinement will be required in the next iteration.

-Figure 53:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Pattern Process (Photo). EMBRACE, London



-Figure 54: Zhu, H. (2025) Pattern Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

TOILE LINEUP



-Figure 55:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Toile Lineup (Photo). EMBRACE, London

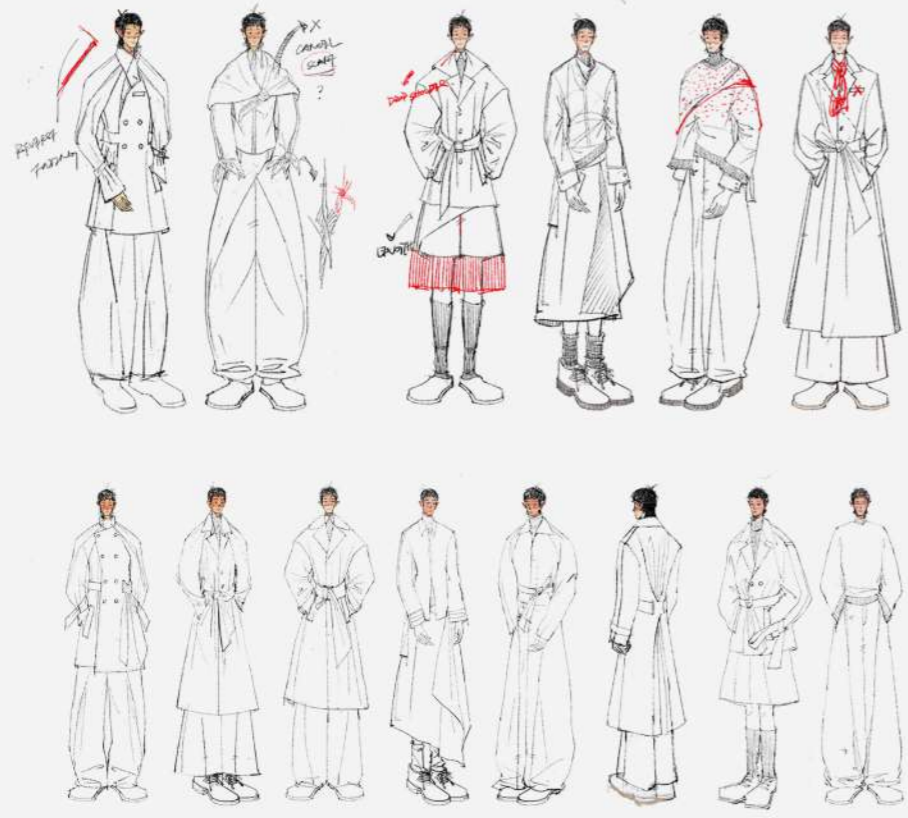


-Figure 56: Zhu, H. (2025) Lover [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

SKETCH



FINAL SKETCH



COLOURED LINEUP 1



COLOURED LINEUP 2



COLOURED LINEUP 3



-Figure 57: Zhu, H. (2025) Sketch [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

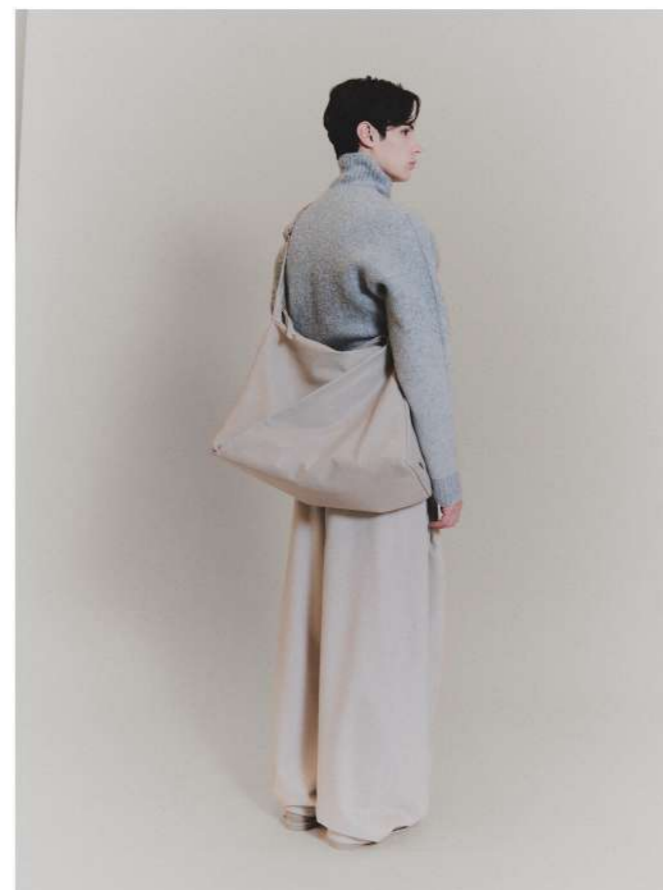
-Figure 58: Zhu, H. (2025) Coloured Line-up [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.



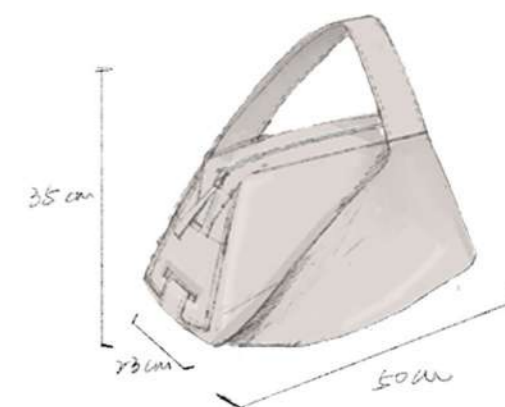
-Figure 59:
Luo, L. (2025)
Bag [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

PART ONE PORTFOLIO
(7.) ACCESSORY

BAG



-Figure 60: Luo, L. (2025) Bag [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

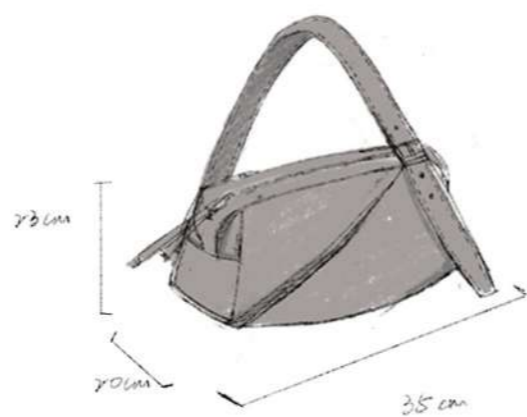


-Figure 61:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Bag [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

In the big bag design, I continued the core design elements developed through my garment pattern work, particularly the bound hole and the belted structure. By applying this structural language to accessories, I developed two different strap configurations, enabling the bag to function across different daily contexts while maintaining consistency with the visual identity of the collection.



-Figure 62: Luo, L. (2025) Bag [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 63:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Bag [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

In the small bag design, I continued the same design methodology, but developed a different strap configuration, giving the collection greater versatility and additional styling possibilities.



-Figure 64:
Luo, L. (2025)
Bag [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

SCARF



-Figure 65: Luo, L. (2025) Scarf [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

I designed six scarves in total, divided into three types: a standard scarf, a triangular scarf, and a silk scarf. Each type varies in volume, material, and styling approach, allowing for different visual outcomes when paired with garments. The standard scarf emphasises wrapping and structural presence; the triangular scarf introduces directional shaping around the shoulders and neckline; and the silk scarf focuses on lightness and skin contact, creating a softer, more intimate visual tone. By designing multiple formats within a consistent language, the six scarves offer versatile layering possibilities across the collection.



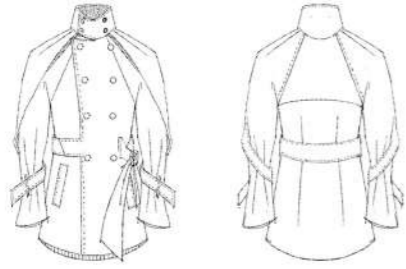
-Figure 66:
Luo, L. (2025)
Scarf [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LINE-UP



-Figure 67: Zhu, H. (2025) Line-up [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

JACKET



Front Reverse-Folding Coat
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%



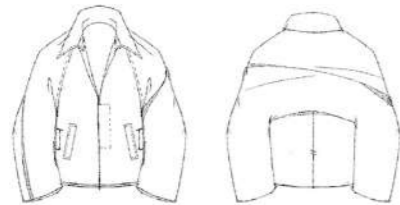
Belted Coat
Material-
Primary: Cutton 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%



Back Coat
Material-
Primary: Cutton 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%



Twisting Coat
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 80% Wool 20%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%

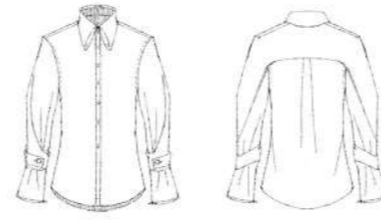


Back Reverse-Folding Jacket
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 80% Wool 20%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%



Front Reverse-Folding Jacket
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%

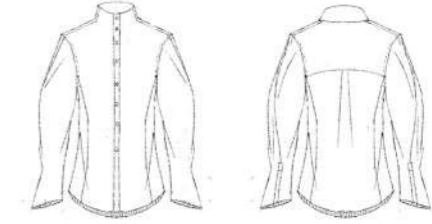
SHIRT



Reverse-Folding Shirt
Material-
Primary: Cutton 100%

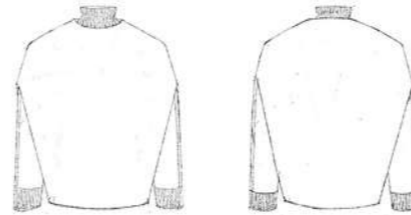


Belted Shirt
Material-
Primary: Wool 90% Polyester 10%

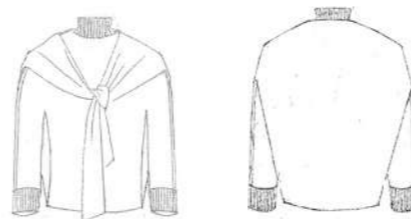


Reverse-Folding High-Neck Shirt
Material-
Primary: Cutton 100%

JERSEY

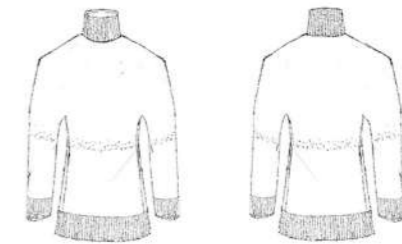


Reverse-Folding Jersey
Material-
Primary: Cutton 100%



Folding Scarf Jersey
Material-
Primary: Cutton 100%

KNITWEAR



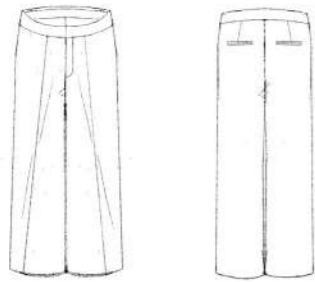
Gradient Knitwear
Material-
Primary: Mohair 70% Wool 30%
Secondary: Wool 100%

Gradient Knitwear
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 90% Silk 10%
Secondary: Cashmere 100%

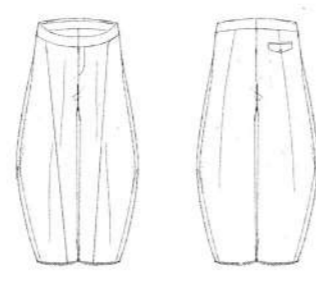
Gradient Knitwear
Material-
Primary: Alpaca 70% Poly 30%
Secondary: Alpaca 70% Poly 30%

-Figure 68: Zhu, H. (2025) Spec Drawings. EMBRACE, London.

TROUSER



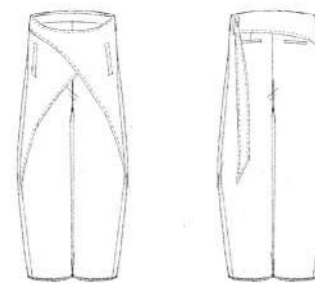
Front Reverse-Folding Trousers 1
Material-
Primary: Cotton 100%



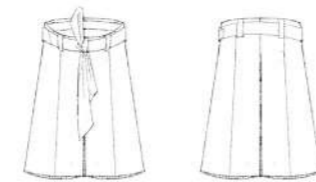
Front Reverse-Folding Trousers 2
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 80% Wool 20%



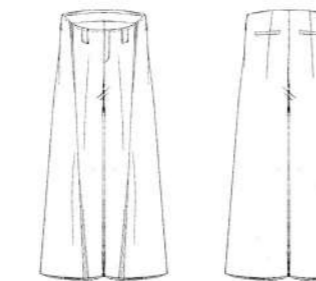
Front Belted Trousers
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%



Embraced Trousers
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%

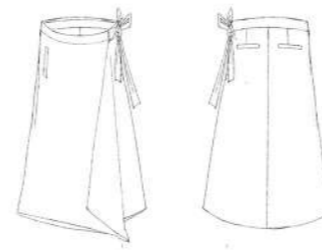


Belted Shorts
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%
Secondary: Bembreg 100%



Front Reverse-Folding Trousers 3
Material-
Primary: Cotton 100%

SKIRT



One-Piece Wrapped Skirt
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 100%

SCARF



Scarf
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 100%

Scarf
Material-
Primary: Cashmere 100%

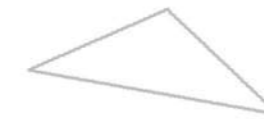
BAG



Belted Bag 1
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%

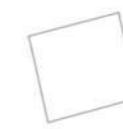


Belted Bag 2
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%



Triangle Scarf
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%

Triangle Scarf
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%



Square Scarf
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%

Square Scarf
Material-
Primary: Cow Leather 100%

-Figure 69: Zhu, H. (2025) Spec Drawings. EMBRACE, London.

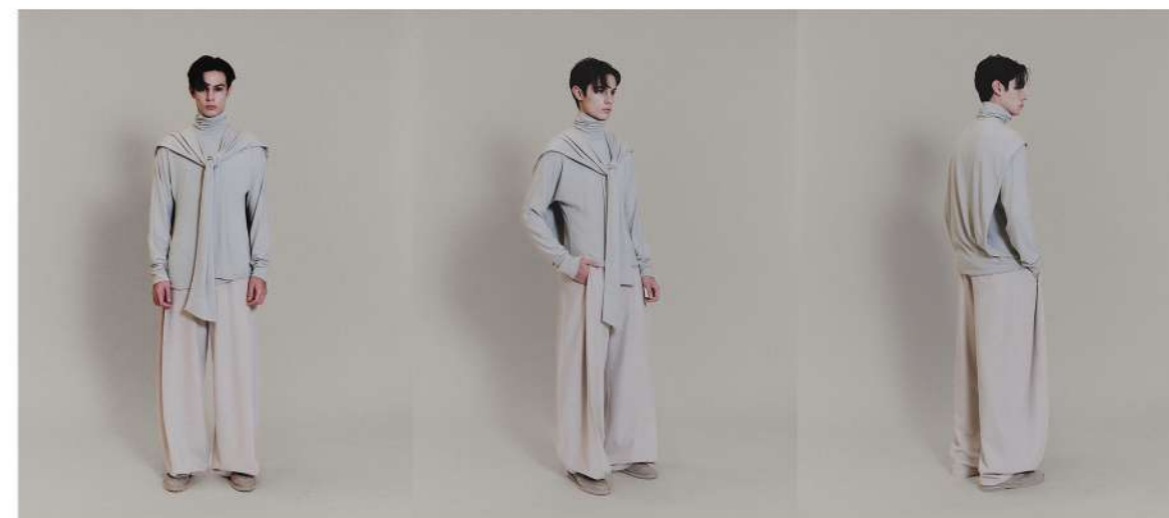


-Figure 70: Zhu, H. (2025) Lineup [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 71:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 1



-Figure 72: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 2



-Figure 73: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 74:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 75:

Luo, L. (2025)

Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 3



-Figure 76: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 4



-Figure 77: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 78:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 79:

Luo, L. (2025)

Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 5



-Figure 80: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 6



-Figure 81: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 82:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 83:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK 7



-Figure 84: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

LOOK8



-Figure 85: Luo, L. (2025) Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 86:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lookbook [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 87:
Luo, L. (2025)
Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 88: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 89: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 90: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 91: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 92: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 93: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 94: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 95:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 96: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 97: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 98: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 99: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 100: Luo, L. (2025) Lover [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 101:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 102: Luo, L. (2025) Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

-Figure 103:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



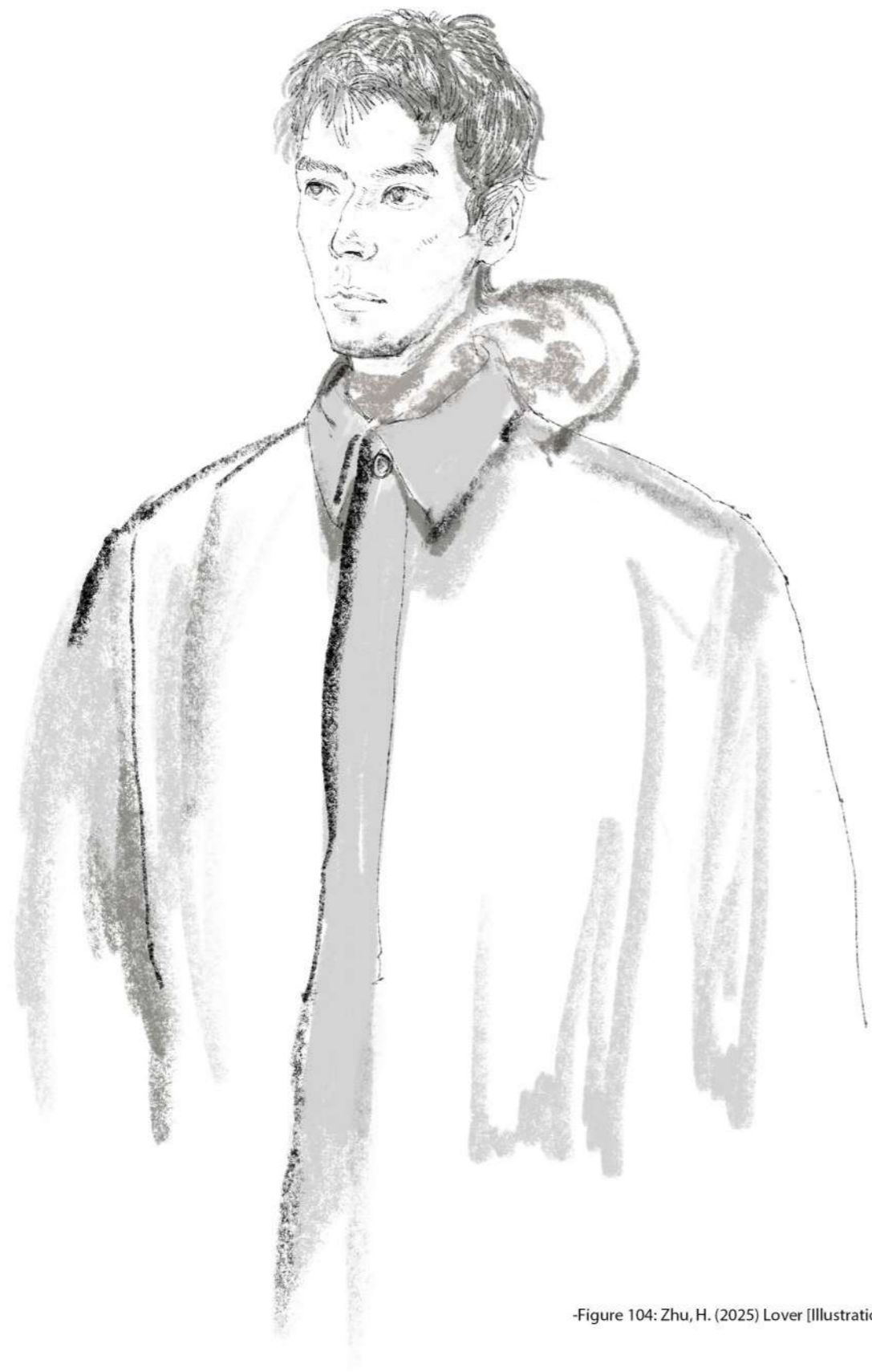
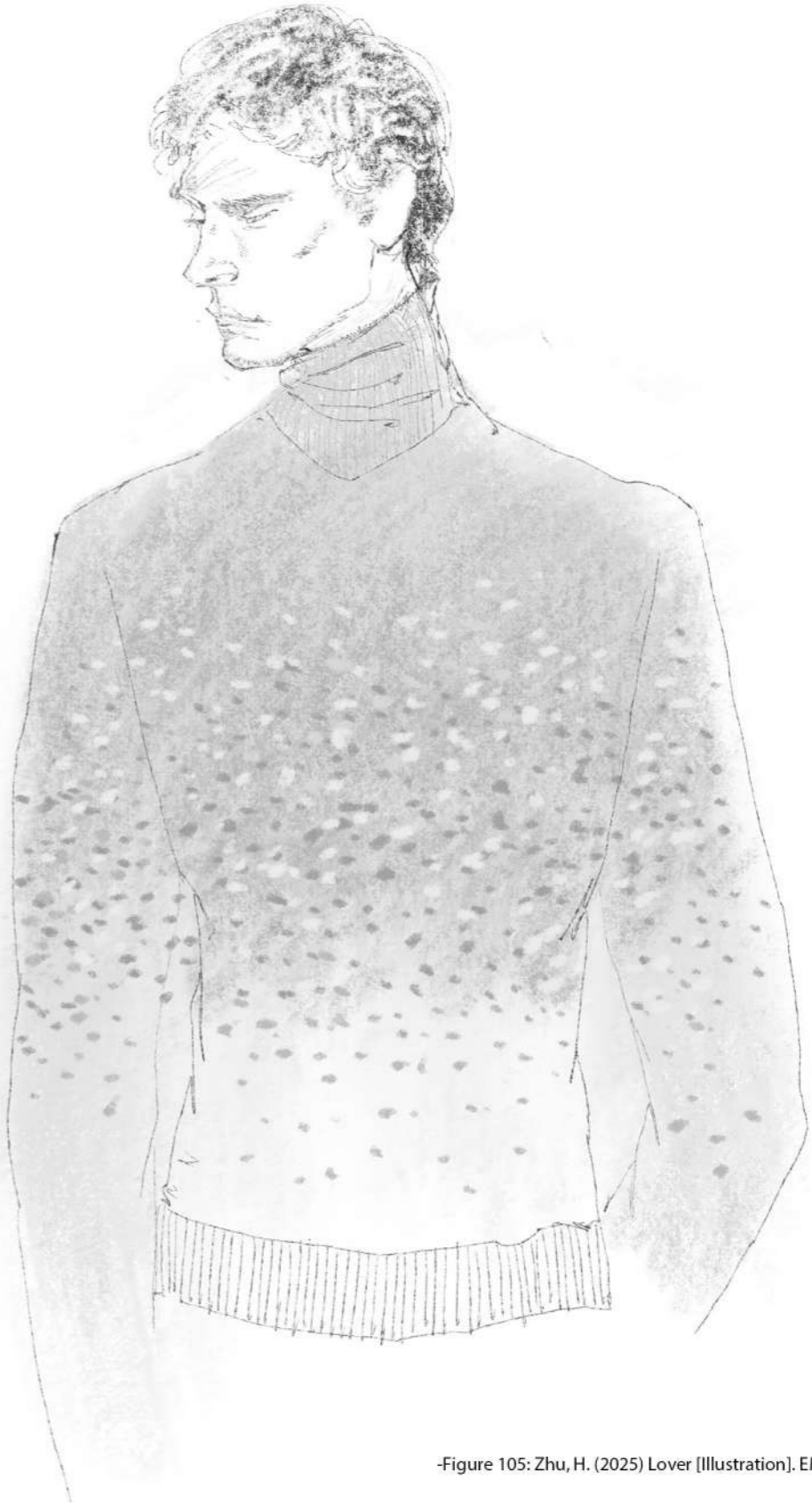


Figure 104: Zhu, H. (2025) Lover [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 105: Zhu, H. (2025) Lover [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

PART1

COMMENTARY

(4336 WORDS)



PART TWO COMMENTARY (1.) INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABSTRACT

The origin of this research stems from daily experiences of embracing with my lover. She exhibits a strong attachment orientation toward physical closeness, while I, due to social and familial pressures, also experience a significant need for intimate contact and derive emotional satisfaction from physical touch. This difference in the motivations behind our touch preferences preferences motivated an exploration of the underlying significance of these supply-demand dynamics.

Jakubiak, Fuentes, and Feeney (2021) indicate that lovers with different attachment styles respond differently to physical contact. Individuals with attachment anxiety often seek touch to gain a sense of security, whereas those with attachment avoidance may reduce their desire for touch but can still accept certain forms of intimacy in a satisfying relationship. Additionally, Floyd (2015) reports that “this erosion of physical intimacy has a direct impact on a couple’s emotional stability and relationship health.”

Building on these secondary research findings, this study aims to express the intimacy experienced during lovers’ embraces through menswear design. Embracing is treated as both a conceptual and emotional entry point. Design media, including garment patterns, color palettes, knit structures, and accessories, are used to represent the sensations of an embrace in a tangible and multi-dimensional manner. This approach explores how menswear can translate the emotional and physical nuances of closeness into visual elements within the clothing.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION

How can the daily embrace between lovers be translated into the development of menswear design?

1.3 AIMS

This project aims to develop an innovative silhouette for menswear by analysing and interpreting the physical and emotional dynamics of daily embraces between lovers. Through research into knitwear pattern construction, fabric structures, and the interplay of different materials, the project seeks to enrich the diversity of garment forms while reflecting the intimacy and romance of the act of embracing within menswear design.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

1. Document physical and emotional moments of embrace through photography and illustrative studies.
2. Analyse cinematic and documentary representations of embrace, exploring their artistic and cultural contexts.
3. Through an analysis of the skeletal state during an embrace, reverse folding techniques and body wrapping were adopted as foundational methods for pattern construction.
4. Develop gradient knitting patterns that simulate the visual and tactile fusion of different skin textures during an embrace, translating the physical sensations of closeness into knitwear form.



-Figure 107:

Luo, L. (2025)
Lovers [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

PART TWO COMMENTARY (2.) RESEARCH

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 THE KISS

Luca Guadagnino's film *Queer* (2024) reinterprets bodily closeness through a contemporary cinematic lens, depicting the embrace as a psychologically intense and near-spiritual form of contact rather than a simple everyday gesture (Fig. 108). Through progressive layers of visual language, the film extends surface-level skin contact into an imagined "skeletal intimacy," implying emotional exposure and vulnerability. The two male protagonists are drawn together by desire yet divided by external social pressures, and this emotional polarity highlights the fragile and paradoxical nature of intimacy—physical proximity does not necessarily guarantee emotional unity. The film thus reveals the hidden tensions and contextual conflicts of intimacy, presenting a state in which closeness and distance coexist.

Within the context of menswear design, this cinematic interpretation of the embrace translates into an exploration of bodily fusion, where skin blends with skin and skeletal structures overlap. Such imagery provides inspiration for developing knitwear patterns and jacquard designs. By observing the filmic effects of skeletal misalignment, I constructed the process of a dual embrace in one-piece knitwear patterns through folding techniques. Furthermore, drawing from the merging of bodily textures such as body hair in intimate contact, I employed dot jacquard and yarns of varied tactile qualities to simulate the intertwined state of bodies and the sensuality inherent in the act of embracing.



Figure 108: Rodin, A. (1898) *The Kiss* (Photo). Musée Rodin, Paris.

2.1.2 TANTRIC MASSAGE

Stubbs (1993), in *Tantric Massage: An Illustrated Manual for Meditative Sexuality*, argues that bodily touch is a form of communication that transcends the physical, capable of awakening energy flow and deepening emotional connection between partners. He emphasizes that gentle sliding, stroking, and full-hand coverage can create a meditative sensory experience, endowing everyday bodily interactions with ritualistic and symbolic significance. The book also suggests the use of light materials such as scarves or feathers to enrich tactile sensations, highlighting the sensitivity and intimacy produced when fabric comes into contact with the skin. In addition, Stubbs presents numerous illustrations depicting the process of tantric massage (Fig. 109 & Fig. 110), including different touch techniques, movements that follow the alignment of muscles and bones, and variations in practice between different genders. These visual materials provide a rich reference for exploring intimacy and physical contact within romantic relationships. In this research, such theoretical and visual support plays a critical role in the fabric component. Stubbs's descriptions of scarves and feathers brushing against the body at the beginning of massage laid the foundation for my fabric choices. I place particular emphasis on natural fibers to maintain a soft, skin-friendly quality, such as cashmere, silk, wool, and Napa leather. These materials simulate the tactile sensation of skin-to-skin contact during an embrace, enabling garments to carry and re-enact the intimacy and emotional warmth of the moment. In this way, the book provides substantial secondary material to support my study.



Figure 109: Stubbs, K.R. (1993) *Tantric Massage* [Illustration].



Figure 110: Stubbs, K.R. (1993) *Tantric Massage* [Illustration].

2.1.4 QUEER

Luca Guadagnino's film *Queer* (2024) reinterprets bodily closeness through a contemporary cinematic lens, depicting the embrace as a psychologically intense and near-spiritual form of contact rather than a simple everyday gesture (Fig. 111 & Fig. 112). Through progressive layers of visual language, the film extends surface-level skin contact into an imagined "skeletal intimacy," implying emotional exposure and vulnerability. The two male protagonists are drawn together by desire yet divided by external social pressures, and this emotional polarity highlights the fragile and paradoxical nature of intimacy—physical proximity does not necessarily guarantee emotional unity. The film thus reveals the hidden tensions and contextual conflicts of intimacy, presenting a state in which closeness and distance coexist.

Within the context of menswear design, this cinematic interpretation of the embrace translates into an exploration of bodily fusion, where skin blends with skin and skeletal structures overlap. Such imagery provides inspiration for developing knitwear patterns and jacquard designs. By observing the filmic effects of skeletal misalignment, I constructed the process of a dual embrace in one-piece knitwear patterns through folding techniques. Furthermore, drawing from the merging of bodily textures such as body hair in intimate contact, I employed dot jacquard and yarns of varied tactile qualities to simulate the intertwined state of bodies and the sensuality inherent in the act of embracing.



-Figure 111:

Guadagnino, L (2024)
Fusion of limbs and skin in *Queer* (Screenshot)



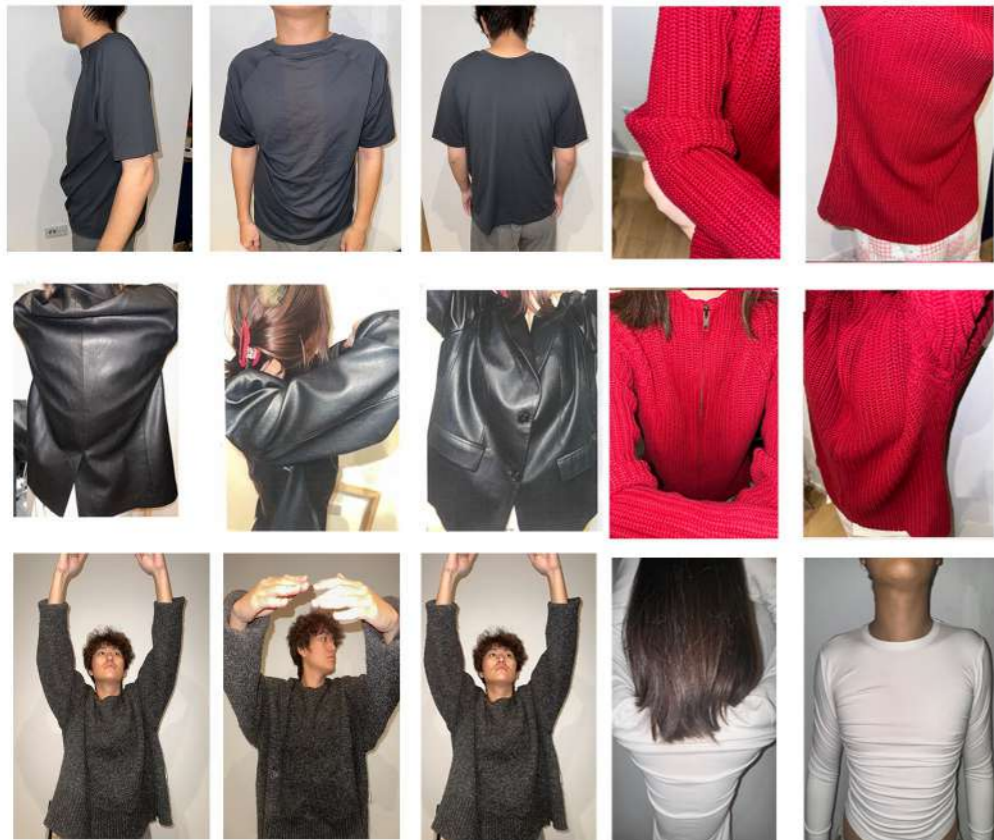
-Figure 112:

Guadagnino, L (2024)
Fusion of limbs and skin in *Queer* (Screenshot)

2.2 PRIMARY RESEARCH

2.2.1 PHOTOGRAPH & ILLUSTRATION

By documenting embraces with my lover and recording them through drawing, I analyzed the potential points and states of skeletal contact that may occur during the act of embracing. This process allowed me to sense not only the tactile qualities of skin-to-skin contact but also to observe how garments deform under the physical pressure of an embrace.



-Figure 113:
Zhu, H. (2024)
Embrace Experiment [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 114:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Lovers [Illustrations]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 115:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Queer [Illustrations]. EMBRACE, London.

From a design methodology perspective, these drawings and observations became an analytical tool for identifying structural points of stress, folds, and overlaps that emerge when two bodies interact. The skeletal points of contact suggested possible anchors or seams in garment construction, while the deformation of fabric revealed opportunities for pleating, and layering strategies. By translating these embodied insights into pattern-making, I was able to expand the possibilities of menswear tailoring beyond conventional forms, grounding new silhouettes in the lived experience of intimacy. In this way, the embrace functioned as both a physical experiment and a conceptual framework, enriching the early development of pattern-making approaches for this project.

2.3 FASHION CONTEXT

2.3.1 CHILTON & HIMATION

ancient Greece, the twisting technique was shown in clothes like the chiton and himation (Fig. 116), which were made by wrapping, knotting, or hanging without cutting (Lee 2015). Chiton makes a spiral pleated shape with shoulder pins and waist straps. Himation, on the other hand, is a large piece of fabric that can be freely draped. It usually twists from one shoulder to the chest and moves and changes with the body. This organic twist not only gives thIn e structure, but it also makes the body and the fabric move against each other. Their ideas about design are still around today, and they are the ones who came up with pleated cuts, zero-waste structures, and clothes that come in different shapes.



-Figure 116: Lee, M.M (2012) Traditional Greece Garments (Illustration). *A companion to women in the ancient world*. Chiceste

2.3.2 A-POC

Issey Miyake's "a Piece of Cloth" philosophy, rooted in Eastern thought and bodily freedom, emphasizes creating garments from a single piece of fabric with minimal cutting and sewing. This concept was realized through the A-POC project (Miyake 1998) (Fig. 117), which used industrial knitting to produce flexible, sustainable, ready-to-wear textiles. The method inspired further exploration of the twisting methods, allowing fabric to wrap and spiral naturally around the body. Rather than forcing form, the garment grows from the body's movement and shape, generating unique silhouettes. This approach redefined spatial expression fashion and creativity strongly.



-Figure 117: Issey Miyake. (1998) [Photography]. Runway.

2.3.3 GREIGE

Giorgio Armani established greige (a grey-beige tone) as one of the core colors of his brand (Fig. 118). Armani explained that he was searching for a shade that was "warm, urban, sober but not obvious," concluding: "For me, greige is all of this: discreet, sophisticated, and natural... natural colors... a foundation on which anything can be built" (GQ, 2021). In addition, during an interview with WWD, he emphasized that greige is "a color filled with nuances and possibilities, an ageless and timeless colour" (WWD, 2019). Thus, greige is not merely a neutral tone but a distilled expression of Armani's design aesthetic: through a restrained chromatic language, it conveys understated elegance and timeless refinement. Greige itself evokes a texture reminiscent of human skin, given its ability to harmonize with diverse skin tones and to create the impression of an intimate, interwoven surface. This quality positions greige not only as a refined and understated color but also as a chromatic expression of intimacy.



-Figure 118:

Armani, G. (1988)
1989 SS Campaign [Photography].

2.4 MARKET RESEARCH

2.4.1 The Row

In recent years, The Row has emerged as one of the most emblematic quiet luxury labels. Founded in New York in 2006 by Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, the brand's name references London's famed Savile Row, a symbol of traditional tailoring and artisanal excellence. With its high price points, logo-free aesthetic, meticulous craftsmanship, and ongoing investment in fabric innovation, The Row has attracted a clientele of high-net-worth consumers, solidifying its status as a defining brand of the quiet luxury movement (BTLJ 2024).



-Figure 119:
The Row. (2025)
2025 Spring Campaign [Photography].



-Figure 120:
Lemaire. (2025)
2025 Fall Winter Runway [Photography].

2.4.2 Lemaire

Founded by Christophe Lemaire and co-directed by Sarah-Lin Tran, Lemaire has been identified by *Série Noire* (2024) as a representative brand of contemporary quiet luxury. The house maintains a long-term commitment to the brand characteristics of this style, emphasizing comfort and understated elegance. Its design philosophy is encapsulated in the expression of "no visible logos, no bright colors," which aligns closely with the values of silent luxury. Furthermore, *Business of Fashion* (2023) highlights Lemaire's strategic positioning in the industry: although situated within the luxury market, its pricing is more accessible compared to The Row, thereby attracting a consumer base that is both affluent and discerning.

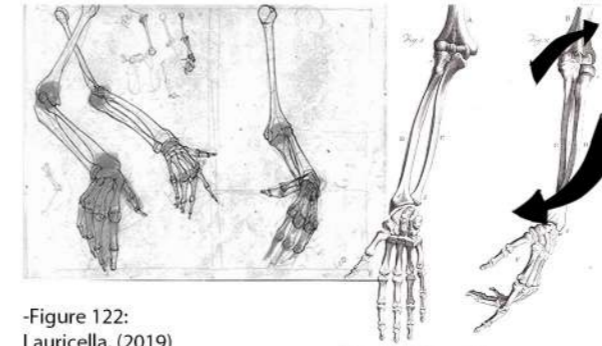
2.5 MARKET POSITIONING

In the contemporary fashion industry, Lemaire and The Row stand as leading representatives of the Quiet Luxury aesthetic. Both brands have established a strong position in the global market through their minimalist design languages and uncompromising craftsmanship. Within such a consolidated stylistic framework, the critical challenge for new entrants lies in how to innovate while remaining aligned with the codes of this style. Compared to these competitors, my design approach emphasizes the integration of creative folding techniques with the Quiet Luxury aesthetic. Building on luxurious fabrics and refined craftsmanship, I focus on pattern innovation to transcend the structural limitations of conventional menswear. In doing so, the construction is not treated as merely decorative, but as a functional and symbolic element, enriching the garments with subtle playfulness while preserving their practicality for everyday wear. In terms of pricing strategy, I aim to leverage supply chain advantages to target clients who appreciate the Quiet Luxury style but operate within more moderate budgets. Whereas The Row positions itself in the ultra-high-end segment and Lemaire situates itself in the upper market, my brand will strategically occupy a more accessible niche. This positioning not only differentiates the brand but also responds to the market demand for attainable Quiet Luxury menswear.

PART TWO COMMENTARY
(3.) DESIGN METHODOLOGY

3.1 Pattern Cutting Methodology

Utilizing reverse folding to simulate the lovers' embraces.



-Figure 122:
 Lauricella. (2019)
 Twisting Limbs [Illustration].

Lauricella (2019, p.21)'s illustration of the radius and ulna crossing during forearm rotation offers a structural analogue for this research. Rather than moving in parallel, the bones interlace and rotate around one another, forming a dynamic wrap. This mechanism directly informs the reverse folding pattern-making method developed in this project, where garment patterns overlap and twist in response to bodily movement. Through this translation, anatomical interlacing becomes a method for constructing silhouettes that embody the interdependent motion of an embrace.

PATTERN CUTTING PROCESS



-Figure 123:
 Zhu, H. (2025)
 Pattern Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 124:
 Zhu, H. (2025)
 Belted Coat [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

BELTIING



-Figure 125: Zhu, H. (2025) Wrapping Experiment [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

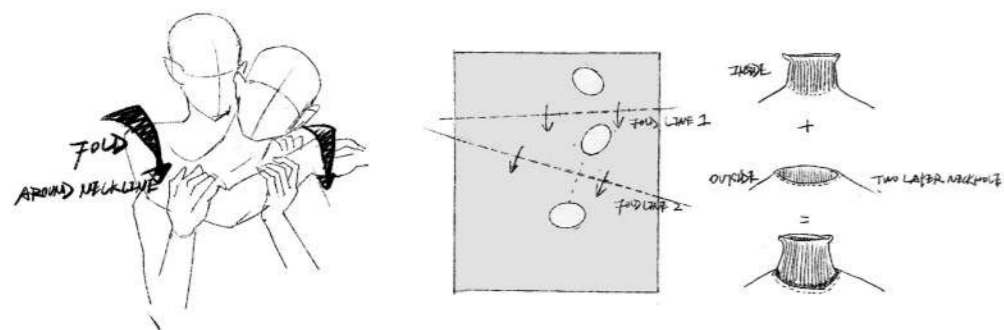
This approach represents a continuation and refinement of the reverse folding technique. In the Unit 2 design development, belt constructions were introduced to reflect the function of arms during an embrace. By folding and interconnecting these belt components, the garment becomes completely wrapped, thereby endowing it with anthropomorphic qualities. In doing so, the design symbolically reflects both the physical movement and the emotional resonance of embracing, enhancing its expressive and conceptual depth.



-Figure 121:
 Zhu, H. (2025)
 Main Look [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.

3.2 KNITWEAR METHODOLOGY

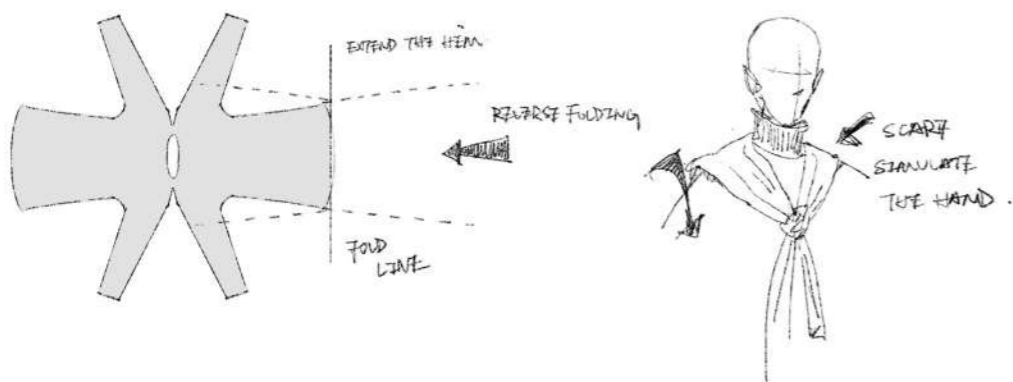
3.2.1 U2 KNITWEAR METHODOLOGY



-Figure 126: Zhu, H. (2025) U2 Knitwear Methodology [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

In the knitwear design process, I drew inspiration from the interwoven gestures of bodies in the film *Queer* (Guadagnino, 2024) and incorporated the fold technique into pattern development. Using a single panel as the base, I experimented with cut-outs and folding as structural approaches to knitwear design. During the Unit 2 stage, I further explored the method of “hole-to-hole interlacing” as a way of constructing knitwear forms that symbolically embodied the gesture of an embrace (Fig. 126).

3.2.2 MASTER PROJECT KNITWEAR METHODOLOGY



-Figure 127: Zhu, H. (2025) MP Knitwear Methodology [Illustration]. EMBRACE, London.

However, due to technical limitations in knitwear width, this direction could not be fully realized. Ultimately, in the Master Project, I reinterpreted and applied this structural approach by extending the hem and connecting it to the neckline (Fig. 127), utilizing the properties of jersey fabric to achieve its integration within the final knitwear collection.



-Figure 128:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Jersey Experiment [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

3.3 COLOUR METHODOLOGY

In the context of contemporary menswear, Giorgio Armani has become synonymous with “Greige.” Since the 1980s, he has redefined the aesthetics of men’s clothing by employing soft neutral tones, replacing the rigidity and authority of traditional tailoring with calmness and sensuality (WWD 2015; GQ 2021). By weakening the contrast between fabric and skin, Armani transformed clothing from being “a surface that covers the body” into “an extension of the body,” thereby establishing a more natural sense of intimacy between garment and wearer.

Within this aesthetic framework, Greige is not merely a colour but a visual language centred on warmth, restraint, and elegance. Situated between grey and beige, it carries a subtle warmth that resonates with the natural tones of human skin. Unlike the rational detachment associated with grey or the decorative softness of beige, Greige maintains a “quiet balance”, reflecting the delicate sense of intimacy present in human relationships.

In this research, Greige serves as the central color strategy of the collection. By combining different shades of Greige with a diversity of fabric textures, the color’s multidimensional tactility is revealed: in leather, it conveys a skin-like sheen and smoothness, while in cashmere and silk, it embodies softness and warmth akin to the sensation of hair brushing against skin. Through this interplay of color and material, the collection not only visualizes the subtle warmth of an embrace but also simulates varied forms of intimate contact at the tactile level, thereby resonating with the overarching theme of the study.



-Figure 129:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Leather Colour [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 130: Zhu, H. (2025) Garments on Rail [Photography]. EMBRACE, London.

PART TWO COMMENTARY
(4.) TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

4.1 LEATHER

4.1.1 SEWING & GLUING

Leather stitching differs from conventional sewing methods because unpicking the seams leaves visible needle holes. This requires greater accuracy and planning during construction. After stitching, glue and hammer-pressing are applied to reinforce the seam, enhancing structural stability and durability during wear. To refine this process, I tested two different stitching methods, applying double-stitch construction at the armhole, center back, and placket, while leaving the side seams unpressed to better suit the properties of leather.

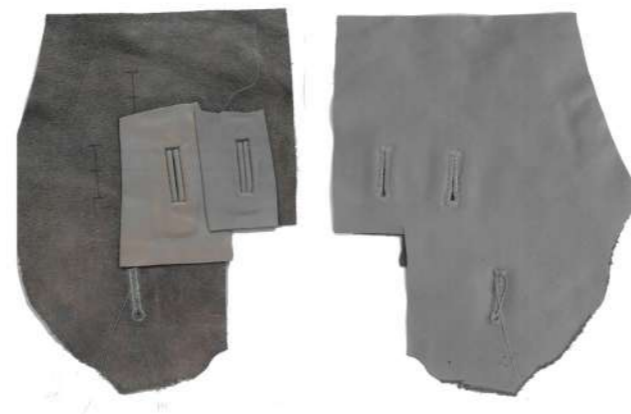


-Figure 131:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Leather Sewing Test [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

4.1.2 LEATHER BOUND HOLE

In the design of the bound hole, I adopted a construction different from traditional leather buttonholes. Typically, both sides are fully bound, but the thickness of leather causes excessive bulk, making it difficult to maintain a flat finish and reducing comfort during wear. Since leather retains perforations and cannot be reworked easily, unnecessary layers and stitching must be minimized.

Therefore, I used a bound buttonhole on the outer face for a clean, refined appearance, while the reverse side employs a keyhole buttonhole to reduce thickness and improve flexibility. This hybrid approach provides sufficient reinforcement under tension while maintaining a smooth finish, balancing visual refinement with practical durability.



-Figure 132:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Leather Bound Hole Test [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

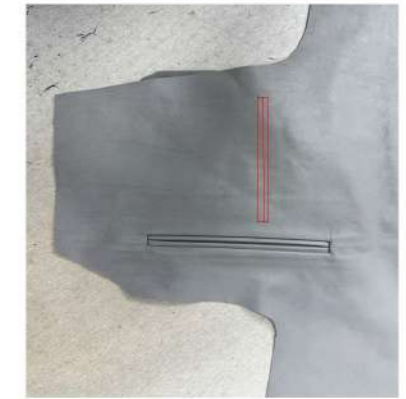


-Figure 133: Zhu, H. (2025) Inner Leather Car Coat [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

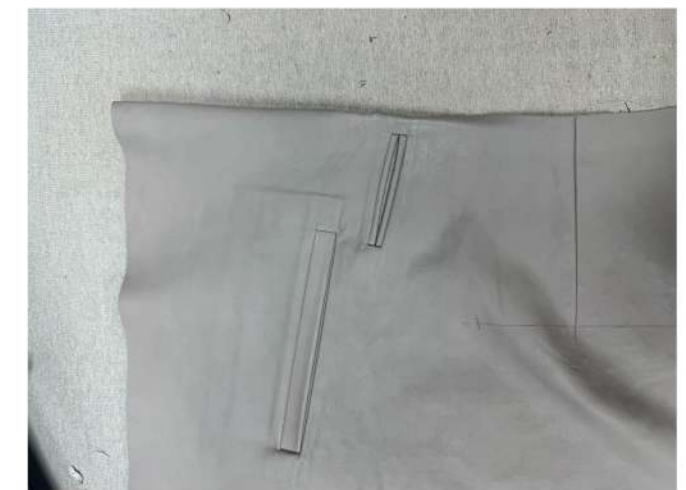
4.1.2 POCKETING & WAIST BOUND HOLE

In the construction of the pocket, I used a double-welt buttonhole to reinforce the opening and achieve a more refined finish. However, for the bound openings along the waist, the length of the slit exceeded what a conventional keyhole buttonhole could accommodate, making this technique unsuitable for the design. Therefore, I returned to the traditional method and applied bound buttonholes on both the front and back surfaces of the waist.

Additionally, because the waist opening is positioned very close to the pocket, precise alignment of panel placement and stitch lines is required to prevent bulk accumulation, seam shifting, or interference with pocket functionality. As a result, this method requires a longer construction time and a higher degree of precision compared to standard buttonhole techniques. The final approach ensures structural strength and durability while maintaining a clean, intentional, and well-resolved aesthetic.



-Figure 134:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Pocket Test [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 135:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Trousers Bound Hole Test [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

4.2 DOUBLE-FACED CASHMERE

4.2.1 SPLITTING AND IRONING

Double-face wool garments are typically constructed without lining or fusing, emphasizing the need for clean and lightweight seam finishes. During the open-seam process, the two fabric layers are separated along the seam allowance and individually pressed open to minimize bulk. Seam allowances are trimmed to balanced widths—usually 0.6-0.8cm—to prevent fraying and ensure visual consistency along the edges.

To enhance seam stability, a narrow fusing tape may be applied to the seam allowance before blind stitching. The fuse is typically wool-compatible, low-temperature adhesive, placed only along internal seam allowances rather than full-panel bonding to preserve the soft handfeel. This reinforcement improves durability, prevents seam stretching, and helps maintain edge sharpness during repeated wear and pressing. The fusing process must use controlled temperature to avoid glue bleed-through or surface shine.



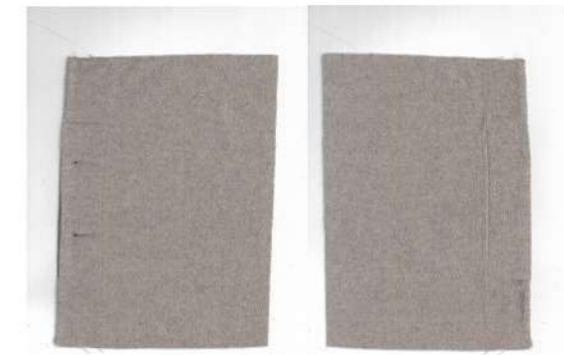
-Figure 136: Zhu, H. (2025) Spilting Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



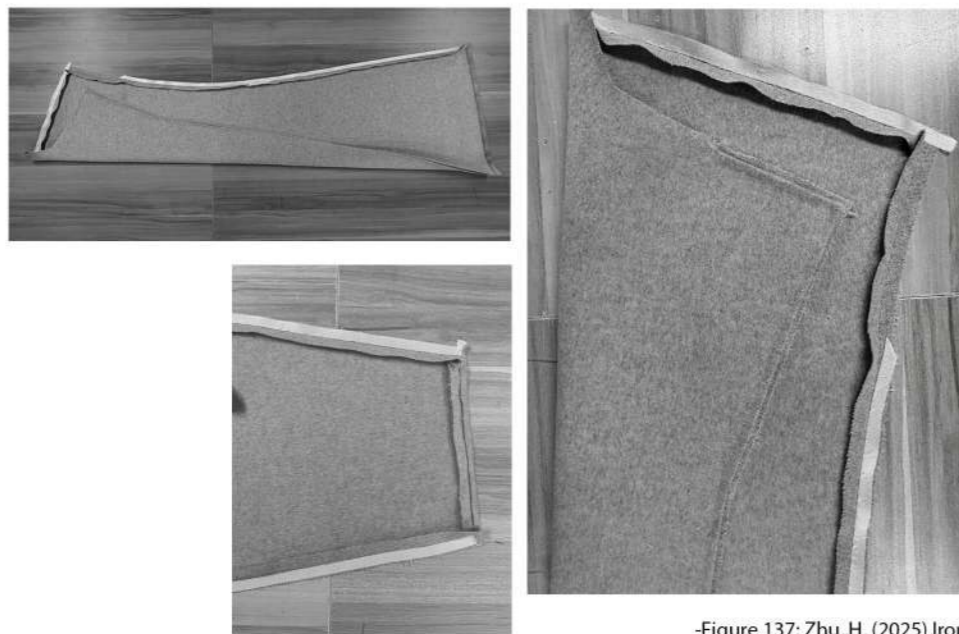
-Figure 138:

Zhu, H. (2025) Concealed Button Fly Test [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

4.2.2 CASHMERE CONCEALED BUTTON



As double-face wool coats are constructed without a full lining, the hidden placket must maintain a lightweight handfeel while ensuring structural stability and crisp shaping. Therefore, the construction process differs from standard hidden plackets.



-Figure 137: Zhu, H. (2025) Ironing Sample [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

To achieve a clean exterior with concealed seams, the placket typically uses localized fusing combined with double-sided hand-sewn bonding, allowing the two fabric layers to remain independent while keeping the seam invisible. The final placket width should be adjusted based on fabric thickness and garment silhouette, generally between 3.0–4.0 cm, ensuring a sharp fold line and smooth, non-flaring edges. During construction, the internal seam allowances of the placket are first separated and opened to reduce bulk, allowing both fabric layers to spread independently. A narrow fusing tape (width 0.8–1.2 cm) is then applied along the fold line to reinforce shaping and stability. A lightweight facing fabric, fused for support, is added to the interior layer to improve structure, provide a smooth touch, and maintain tension during repeated wear and opening/closing.



-Figure 139:

Zhu, H. (2025) Concealed Button Fly [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

4.2.3 POCKETING

This coat's pocket construction differs from traditional double-face wool pocket techniques. Conventional double-face pockets are often anchored directly onto a single fabric layer without sufficient structural support, which can lead to loosening and internal layer shifting after prolonged wear. This design adopts a pocket construction similar to standard ready-to-wear garments, improving durability and enhancing load-bearing performance for more frequent daily use.

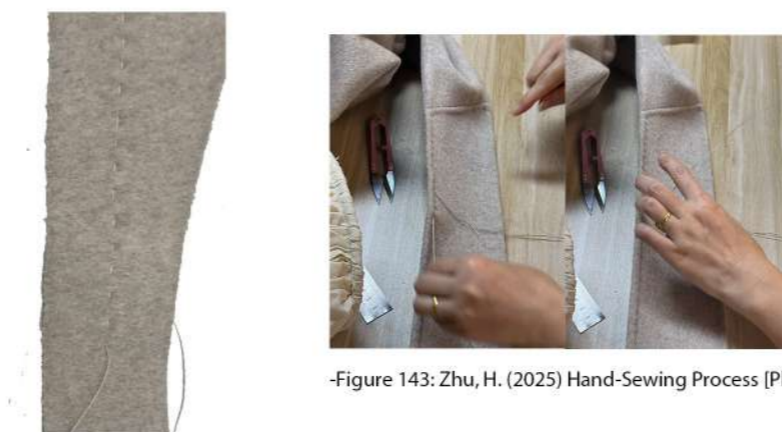
POCKET EXPERIMENT



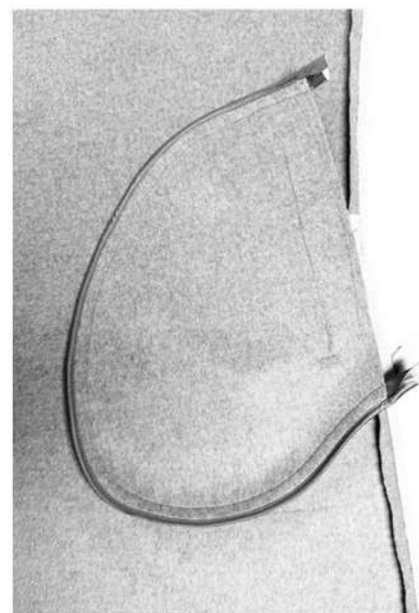
-Figure 140: Zhu, H. (2025) Pocket Experiment [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 142: Zhu, H. (2025) Hand-Sewing Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 143: Zhu, H. (2025) Hand-Sewing Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 141:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Double-Faced Cashmere Pocket [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

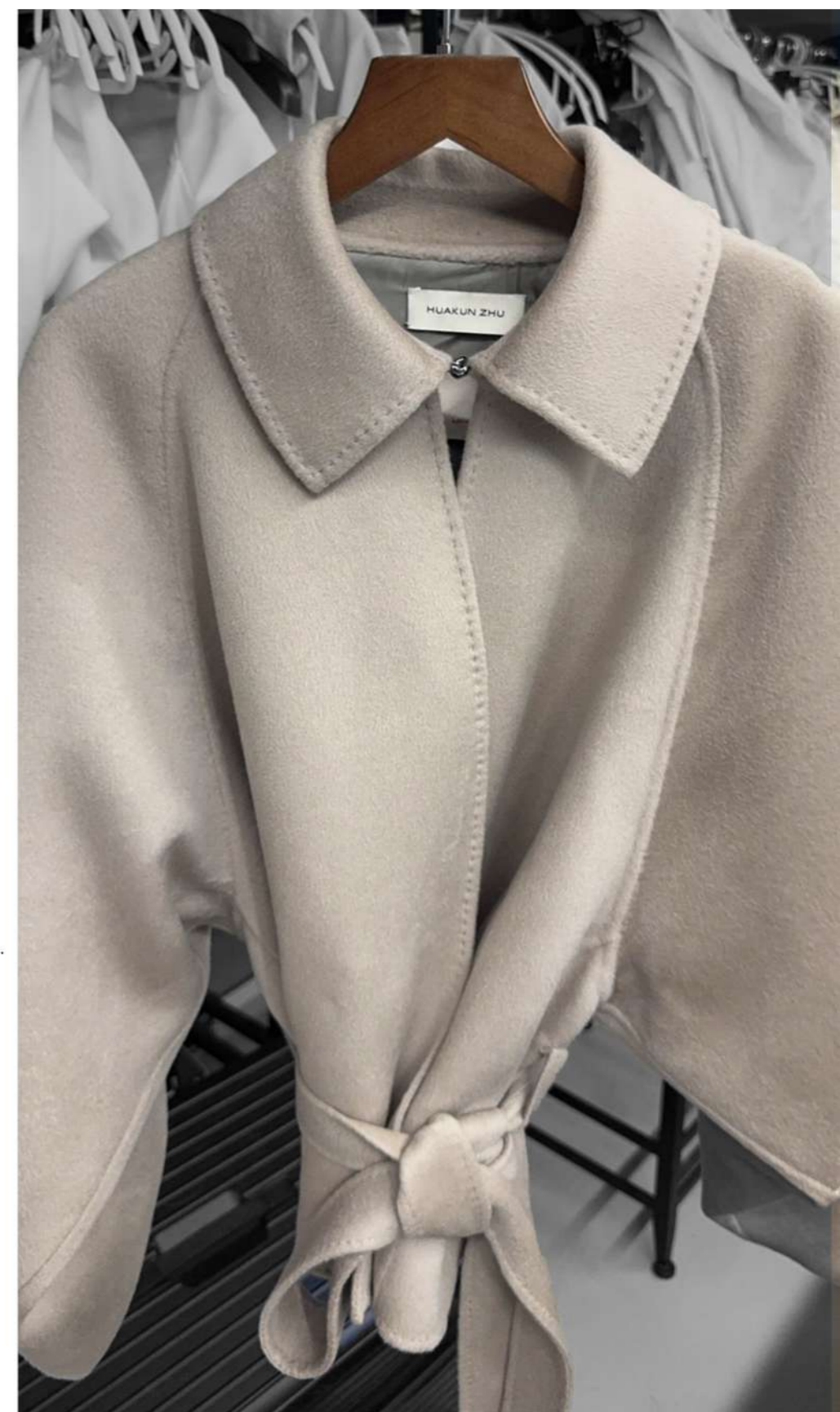
The key design improvement lies in adding an additional 1:1 inner patch pocket on the inside of the pocket bag, equal in size to the main pocket. This functional compartment allows secure storage of a belt or small personal items. The inner pocket remains concealed and invisible from the exterior, maintaining a clean outer appearance while enabling the coat to transition smoothly between fashion styling and daily utility.

The reverse side of the pocket bag is finished with full binding, creating clean edges and improving craftsmanship refinement. This construction also prevents edge distortion or fraying caused by friction over time. The finished pocket maintains the lightweight, refined surface characteristic of double-face wool while delivering enhanced stability and long-term durability.

4.2.4 HAND-SEWING

Because double-face wool is unlined, edges are finished with a hand blind-stitch. The seam allowance is folded inward and secured between the two layers with no visible stitches, keeping the garment lightweight and clean. Seam width and tension are carefully controlled to avoid bulk, shifting, or puckering, allowing both layers to remain independent.

Structural areas such as the placket, cuffs, hem, and pocket openings use hand pick stitching for reinforcement and subtle surface detail. The stitch creates small, evenly spaced dots by lightly penetrating the outer layer. Stitch spacing of 0.8–1.2 cm and balanced tension prevent impressions or distortion while adding refined, restrained craftsmanship.



-Figure 144:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Back Reverse-Folding Jacket [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

4.3 TROUSER



-Figure 145:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Trousers Waistband [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

4.4 TRIMMING

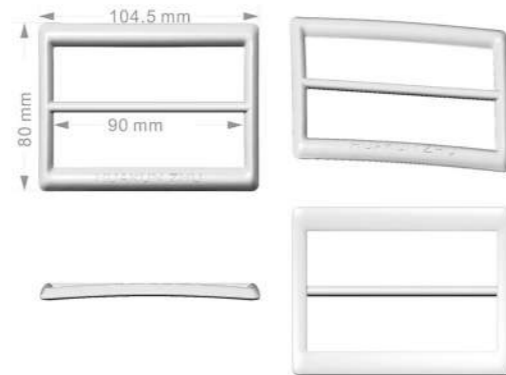
4.4.1 BUCKLE HOLE

Because the twisting coat design requires a buckle hole with a 9cm inner diameter, existing buckles on the market could not meet the size requirements. Therefore, I designed a custom buckle specifically for this garment. Unlike conventional buckles, which often have sharp edges and industrial textures, my design emphasizes rounded corners and a smoother, continuous form in order to align with the tactile softness and fluid silhouette of the garment. The material and finish were selected to avoid the coarse surface textures commonly found in mass-produced buckles, ensuring a refined touch and visual coherence with the coat's overall design language.

4.3.1 TROUSER WAISTBAND

Among the six trousers in this collection, two feature a traditional waistband construction while the remaining four are designed without a waistband. The choice of construction varies according to fabric weight, interior finishing, and the intended styling outcome. For the trousers with waistbands, I used a structured curtain lined with a grey anti-slip grip to enhance stability and refinement, particularly for tailored menswear and formal styling contexts. This construction reinforces the waist, prevents shirts from shifting during movement, and maintains a clean, polished silhouette. Additionally, a 3cm alteration allowance was built into the waistband, allowing size adjustment and improving long-term wearability.

In contrast, the four trousers without waistbands emphasise a more fluid silhouette and a minimal visual line. Instead of a traditional waistband, I finished the edge with binding to reinforce the contour and elevate the decorative quality. This approach transforms the waist from a purely functional structural component into a visible design element, enhancing refinement without adding bulk.



-Figure 146:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Buckle Hole [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

PART TWO COMMENTARY (5.) COLLABORATIONS

5.1 BAG

For the bag design, I collaborated with Guangzhou Rainbow Leather Company to custom-produce a 1.2mm Nappa leather. The material is soft, skin-friendly, and has a refined surface texture, aligning with my intention for the bag to visually integrate with the garments rather than function as a rigid accessory.

The most challenging aspect of the bag construction was the stitching method of the straps. Because the leather is thick and the straps are integrated into the body of the bag, traditional turned-edge construction could not be applied. To resolve this, the leather edges were folded and first secured with adhesive, followed by a 0.1cm top-stitch to reinforce the structure. This method keeps the edges clean and stable while preventing bulk caused by excessive leather thickness, resulting in a more refined and streamlined finish.

In addition, the strap features an adjustable buckle system, enabling multiple wearing configurations such as cross-body, shoulder carry, or hand carry. This system not only accommodates different styling preferences and body proportions but also improves usability in day-to-day scenarios, enhancing the bag's overall versatility.



-Figure 149:
Luo, L. (2025)
Bag [Photograph]. EMBRACE, London.



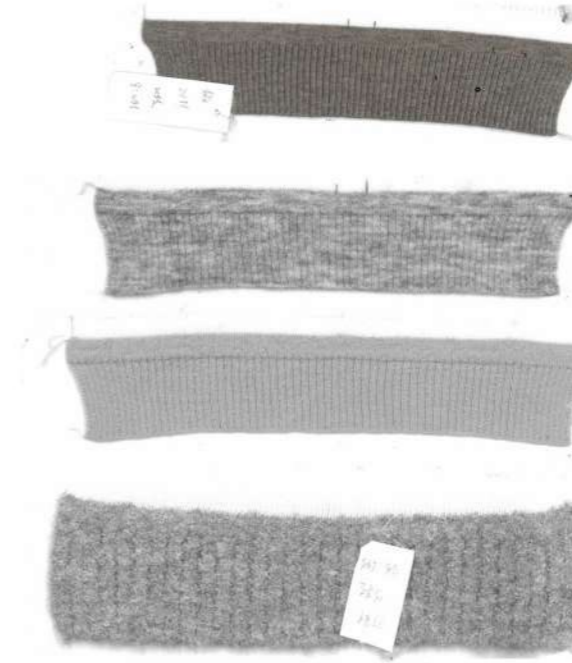
-Figure 148:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Bag Making Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

During the development of the bag, several issues emerged due to this being the initial prototype. For example, the internal pocket was designed too large, making it unsuitable for storing smaller items. In future iterations, this pocket will be divided into two compartments and secured to the lining to provide better organisation and enhanced functionality. Additionally, raw-edge finishing should be upgraded to edge-painting to improve refinement and durability—an aspect that was not fully considered in the first version but will be addressed in the next revision.

-Figure 147:
Zhu, H. (2025)
Bag Making Process [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



-Figure 150: Zhu, H. (2025) CKRC Factory [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.



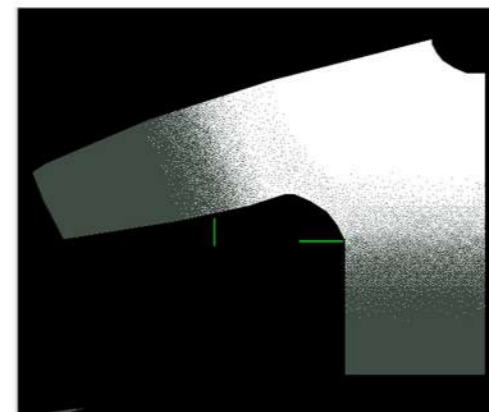
-Figure 151: Zhu, H. (2025) Neckline and Hem [Photo]. EMBRACE,

5.1 KNITWEAR

5.1.1 NECKLINE AND HEM

In the finishing process of the knitwear, a 1x2 rib structure was applied to the neckline and hem areas to enhance structural stability and durability. This technique reinforces the garment's elasticity and resistance to deformation, thereby extending the overall lifespan and wearability of the knitwear.

5.1.2 YARN AND JACQUARD TESTING



-Figure 152: CKRC (2025) Dot Jacquard Pattern[Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

In terms of yarn selection, natural fibers such as wool, cashmere, cotton, mohair, and alpaca were primarily employed. Different yarn textures were deliberately chosen to simulate the variation of body hair and tactile sensation that occurs when human skin comes into intimate contact. To achieve this sensory effect, a dot jacquard structure was developed. By combining yarns of contrasting textures on the upper and lower layers, the design creates differentiated tactile experiences within a single knitted surface, evoking the nuanced transitions of touch and warmth experienced during bodily fusion.



-Figure 153: Zhu, H. (2025) Knitwear Pieces [Photo]. EMBRACE,



-Figure 154:

Zhu, H. (2025)
Branding [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

The hangers in this collection are crafted entirely from wood and feature laser-engraved branding to enhance the series' cohesion and visual identity. The collection includes two hanger types:

Topwear Hanger: Suitable for jackets, shirts, and knitwear, sized 44cm x 6cm (width).

Trouser Clip Hanger: Designed with a 38cm square-bar structure, equipped with an inner silicone layer to prevent fabric abrasion.

The unified materials, construction, and detailing elevate both product quality and overall presentation.

PART TWO COMMENTARY (6.) BRANDING

In the process of brand development, branding plays a crucial role. It not only defines the brand's overall style and core values but also determines how the visual system communicates the brand's identity. The following outlines the main components of branding within this project.

The brand logo is derived from the letters in my name, Huakun Zhu, and my lover's name, Qiaoaiwen Liu. The design is based on the letter H, combined with the shared letters A and N, symbolizing the brand's joint creation and its DNA of recording romantic moments.

7.1 Labeling

The main labels of this collection consist of three elements: the brand name Huakun Zhu, the logo, and the theme Lover. All labels were produced using a loop-wheel machine with 100% cotton composition, reflecting the natural fiber texture of the garments. The label sizes are 2x6 cm, 4x6 cm, and 4x6 cm, designed with a beige base color and accent colors of grey, black,



-Figure 155: Zhu, H. (2025) Hanger [Photo]. EMBRACE, London.

PART TWO COMMENTARY

(7.) CONCLUSION

This project originates from the most ordinary yet emotionally charged gesture shared between my girlfriend and me—our daily embrace. Our mutual attachment to this act became the foundation of my research, and I feel grateful that the final work of my student life has been wrapped up in such warmth and romance. What began as a simple personal experience gradually transformed into a design methodology, shaping the conceptual and emotional core of the collection.

Using the daily embrace as the point of departure, the project examines how intimacy can be structurally expressed in menswear design. By studying the interlocking of bones, the distribution of bodily pressure, and the deformation of garments during physical closeness, I developed the Reverse Folding method. This technique enables clothing to respond to the body through wrapping, overlapping, and twisting rather than merely covering it. It enriched the creative direction of the collection and produced silhouettes that navigate the delicate balance between fashion expression and everyday wearability. Through this approach, intimacy becomes both form and structure—embedded directly into the garments' physical logic.

Determining the colour methodology proved to be one of the most challenging tasks in the early stages of the project. The colours I initially explored felt disconnected from the emotional tone of the collection and from my own design sensibility. This disconnect caused considerable frustration, as colour plays an essential role in communicating atmosphere. Through repeated experimentation, failures, and reflection, I eventually discovered a colour language that sincerely resonated with me: a relaxed, neutral greige. This tone offered a soft yet sophisticated emotional layer to the project, allowing the clothing to echo the quiet tenderness of an embrace. I am especially grateful to the industry reviewer Domingo, whose insightful feedback helped me confidently refine the colour direction.

In terms of fabrication, I drew inspiration from the delicate materials used in tantric massage, which emphasize tactile sensitivity and emotional awareness. This led me to explore luxurious textiles I had never previously encountered, including double-face cashmere and premium Nappa leather. These materials articulate the warmth, softness, and sensuality inherent in physical closeness. However, their construction methods differ significantly from those of woven fabrics, posing a substantial technical challenge. I had to reconstruct my understanding of garment engineering, learn unfamiliar techniques, and select processes aligned with the conceptual framework of the project. Each decision, from seam construction to finishing, required careful consideration and experimentation.

The diversity and scarcity of materials brought additional challenges during the sourcing stage. Many fabrics appeared available during sample-card discussions but became discontinued or required long waiting times when I attempted to place final orders. This forced me to strengthen my decision-making abilities and adapt quickly. For example, the leather supplier I initially collaborated with in Haining, Zhejiang, eventually declined to produce my custom leather due to an unexpected surge in their production schedule. Although I felt overwhelmed at first, I quickly gathered myself, reached out to industry friends, and successfully found another supplier. This timely adjustment ensured the project continued smoothly and reinforced my resilience in the face of pressure.

For the collaboration components, I chose to challenge myself in two new fields: knitwear and bag design. Managing these collaborations while handling the intense development of the main collection required significant effort. Fortunately, I had the privilege of working with two reliable and highly professional partners—CKRC in Changshu for knitwear and Rainbow Leather in Guangzhou for the bag prototype. Although communication became demanding due to my unfamiliarity with certain technical terminologies, both teams guided me patiently and generously. Through these collaborations, I learned not only technical skills but also how to build constructive working relationships under pressure.

Despite the successes, there were moments of regret. The knit pattern concept I developed during Unit 2 could not be realised in the final project due to limitations in knitting machine width and structural issues within my initial design. Although disappointing, this experience taught me that creativity must coexist with manufacturing realities. It also deepened my understanding of how to adjust design intentions within production constraints—an essential lesson for anyone entering the fashion industry.

The final outcome of the project is something I am genuinely proud of. I vividly remember the moment during the photoshoot when the models put on the garments for the first time. All the exhaustion accumulated over the past one and a half years seemed to dissolve instantly. Watching the models move, talk, and interact comfortably in my designs created an atmosphere that perfectly echoed the theme of intimacy. In that moment, I understood more clearly than ever the intertwined relationship between colour, fabric, and pattern, and I appreciated the precision and discipline required in menswear design.

Looking ahead, I hope to begin my career journey in a major Chinese fashion company, where I can learn about brand systems, production processes, and industry operations. My long-term goal is to establish my own label—one that communicates more than just garments, but the stories, dedication, and emotional values behind them. I want to carry forward my passion for menswear design, maintain perseverance, and approach every challenge with sincerity and commitment.

Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my family and friends. Their unconditional support has brought me to where I am today. Their strength helped me overcome the shadow of my father's passing and return to the purest form of my love for design. I will always love them, and I will continue moving forward with the strength they have given me.

Thank you all.

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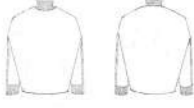

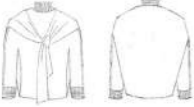













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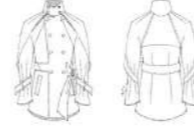









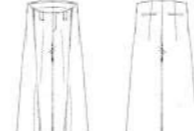





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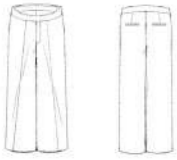















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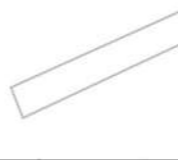

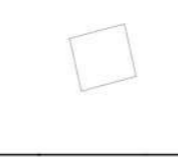

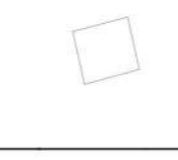





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APPENDIX - COSTING SHEET

GARMENT	GROUP	STYLE NO.	COLOUR	COMPOSITION	FABRIC COST(GBP)	TRIMMINGS COST(GBP)	MANUFACTURE COST(GBP)	TOTAL COST(GBP)	WHOLE SALE(GBP)	RETAIL PRICE(GBP)
	1	AW25JSY01		100% CUTTON	40	0	20	60	120	199
	1	AW25JSY02		100% CUTTON	40	0	20	60	120	199
	2	AW25KN01		60% ALPACA 40% POLY	50	0	20	70	140	249
	2	AW25KN02		60% MOHAIR 30% WOOL 10% POLY	50	0	20	70	140	249
	2	AW25KN03		90% CASH 10% WOOL	70	0	20	90	180	299
	5	AW25CT01		80% CASH 20% WOOL	300	30	100	430	700	1399
	5	AW25CT02		100% CUTTON	70	10	80	160	350	749
	5	AW25CT03		100% COW LE	250	20	110	380	700	1499

GARMENT	GROUP	STYLE NO.	COLOUR	COMPOSITION	FABRIC COST(GBP)	TRIMMINGS COST(GBP)	MANUFACTURE COST(GBP)	TOTAL COST(GBP)	WHOLE SALE(GBP)	RETAIL PRICE(GBP)
	5	AW25CT04		100% COW LE	300	40	150	490	900	1799
	5	AW25CT05		100% CUTTON	90	10	80	180	360	720
	4	AW25JKT01		80% CASH 20% WOOL	200	40	150	390	780	1499
	6	AW25TRS01		80% CASH 20% WOOL	50	10	80	140	250	445
	6	AW25TRS02		100% CASH	80	10	80	170	350	545
	6	AW25TRS03		100% CUTTON	50	10	50	110	200	445
	6	AW25TRS04		100% COW LE	150	10	120	280	550	900
	6	AW25TRS05		100% COW LE	100	10	100	210	400	600

GARMENT	GROUP	STYLE NO.	COLOUR	COMPOSITION	FABRIC COST(GBP)	TRIMMINGS COST(GBP)	MANUFACTURE COST(GBP)	TOTAL COST(GBP)	WHOLE SALE(GBP)	RETAIL PRICE(GBP)
	6	AW25TRS06		100% CUTTON	50	10	50	110	200	379
	7	AW25SK01		80% CASH 20% WOOL	100	10	80	190	350	699
	3	AW25SH01		100% CUTTON	40	10	40	90	180	300
	3	AW25SH02		100% CUTTON	40	10	40	90	180	300
	3	AW25SH03		90% WOOL 10% POLY	80	10	40	130	250	449
	8	AW25BG01		90% WOOL 10% POLY	100	30	80	210	400	799
	8	AW25BG02		100% LEATHER	150	30	120	300	600	1049
	9	AW25SCF01		100% CASH	30	0	20	50	80	150

GARMENT	GROUP	STYLE NO.	COLOUR	COMPOSITION	FABRIC COST(GBP)	TRIMMINGS COST(GBP)	MANUFACTURE COST(GBP)	TOTAL COST(GBP)	WHOLE SALE(GBP)	RETAIL PRICE(GBP)
	9	AW25SCF02		100% MOHAIR	30	0	20	50	80	150
	9	AW25SCF03		100% SILK	5	0	10	15	30	80
	9	AW25SCF04		90% WOOL 10% POLY	10	0	10	20	40	100
	9	AW25SH02		100% CASH	20	0	15	35	70	130
	9	AW25SCF06		80% CASH 20% WOOL	20	0	15	35	70	130

APPENDIX - WORLDWIDE SOURCING

Fabrics,Trimming:

UK, London- Ventile
UK, London- Misan
UK, London- MACCULOCH&WALLIS
FRENCH - Leather
CHINA, Guangzhou- Rainbow Leather Ltd.
CHINA, Guangzhou- Wyoooni
JAPAN- Komon Kobo
JAPAN- SHIBAYA

MANUFACTURING

UK, London- LCF STUDIO
CHINA, Kunshan- Chenfeng Group Co Ltd.

COLLABRATION

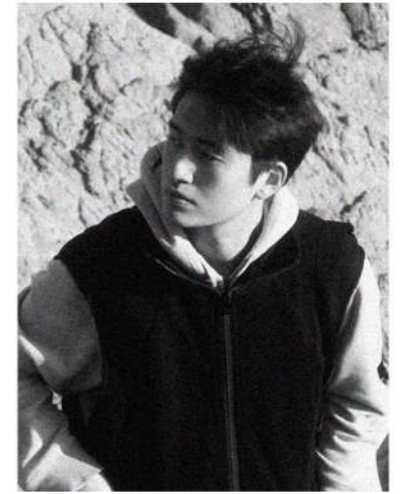
CHINA, Guangzhou- Rainbow Leather Ltd.
CHINA, Changshu- CKRC



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