

Module 2

UNIT 2

Garment deconstruction
and product re-design
methodologies

Duration: 13 hours



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M. Pistoletto, La Venere degli stracci, 1967



Overview of the Unit

In this Unit you will learn about garment deconstruction and product redesign, how to transform existing garments/second-hand or vintage clothes into new, innovative, and responsible fashion items exploring the potential of dismantled pieces and components. This process happens through various approaches as disassembly, assemblage or decoration, and aims to address various environmental, economic, and creative goals, contributing to a more sustainable and responsible fashion industry.



Estimated Reading Time
15 minutes

Expected Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Unit, you will be able to:

- 1. Disassembling** giving value to components: you will be able to understand unique features of a garment.
- 2. Drawing** the piece: you will understand how to draw the look.
- 3. Redesign:** you will see practical examples of redesigning

Pre-requisite knowledge

This Unit assumes a basic understanding of clothing pieces and basic drawing and sewing skills.



Learning Objective

The goal of the Unit is to equip learners with imaginative and practical skills in drawing and redesign a piece of clothing from existing garments or second hand/vintage clothing.



Target Audience

This Unit targets:

- **people/learners/entrepreneurs including NEETs**, low skilled adults looking for a job or in reconversion but also looking for a better placement within the artisanal clothing sector, professionals already working in the sector
- **Students graduated by secondary schools within fashion or textile design curricula.** Among the target groups, special regard will be given to **women with economic fragilities**.

Key concepts

Disassembling, Redesign and drawing, reassembling



Necessary equipment

For this Unit's practical part, you will need a seam ripper, fabric scissors, pins, a domestic sewing machine, threads of colours according to the fabric



01

Teacher's Profile

Teacher should be skilled in basic fashion design and machine sewing

02

Methodology

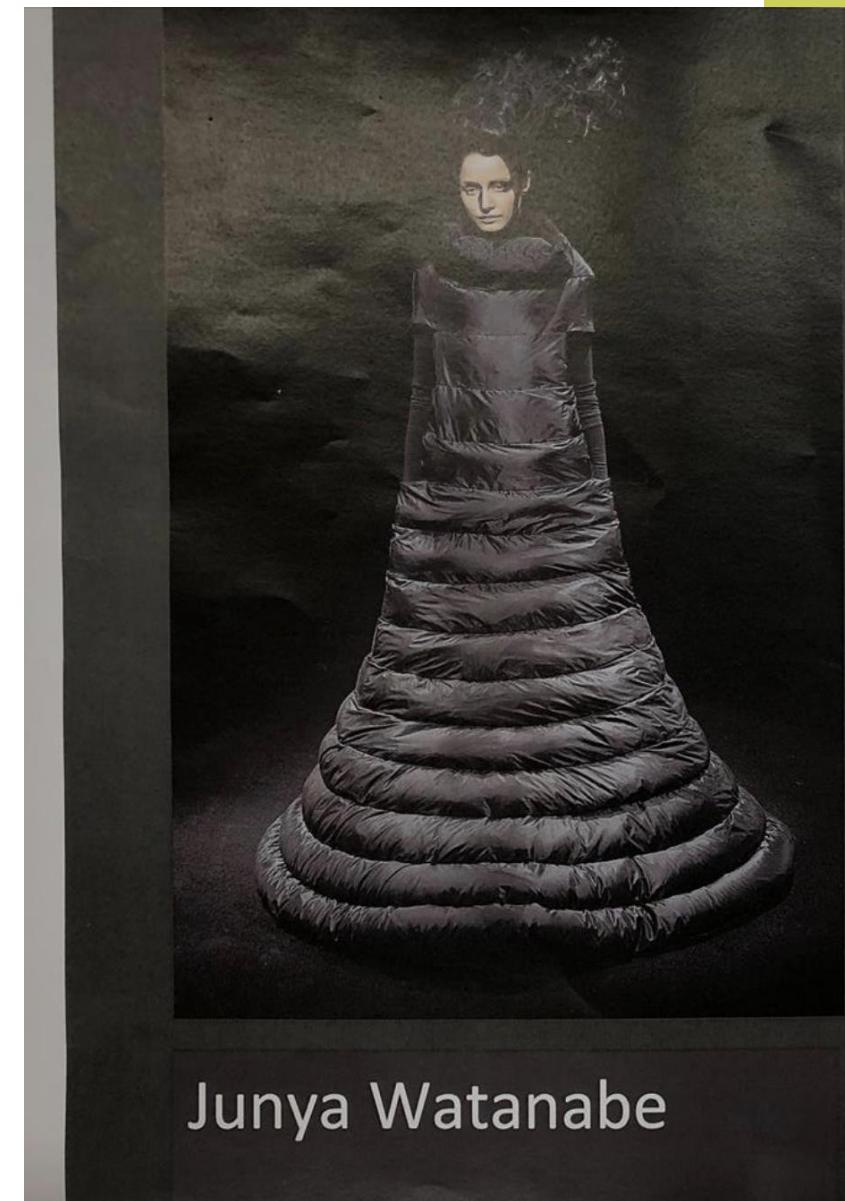
This unit includes a theoretical part for creative insights and a practical part.



RECONSTRUCTION

It's a form of up-cycling and is the process of making new clothes from waste formed of previously worn garments or preformed finished clothing products.

This process involves first deconstructing garments and then reconstructing the waste materials into new designs.



RECONSTRUCTION

This design technique offers limitless possibilities. Deconstructed garments can be repurposed in numerous ways to make the most of textiles— even garments that are imperfect or damaged can be reimagined by pushing creative boundaries. After deconstruction, fabrics can be draped, cut into patterns, or entirely new materials can be created through tearing and shredding. However, achieving a high-quality, well-crafted finish is crucial for the final reconstructed piece, as no one wants their 'new' garment to resemble something worn-out or secondhand.



RECONSTRUCTION

This technique helps extend the life of textiles, cuts down on the need for new fabric production, and alleviates pressure on natural resources and landfills by increasing the demand for secondhand garments.



Marine Serre

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction has the ability to attract a broader audience, as garments created through this method are often seen as fresh and innovative, rather than secondhand.

Additionally, this approach offers greater scalability, as it uses widely available, everyday garments as the foundation for design.



Marine Serre

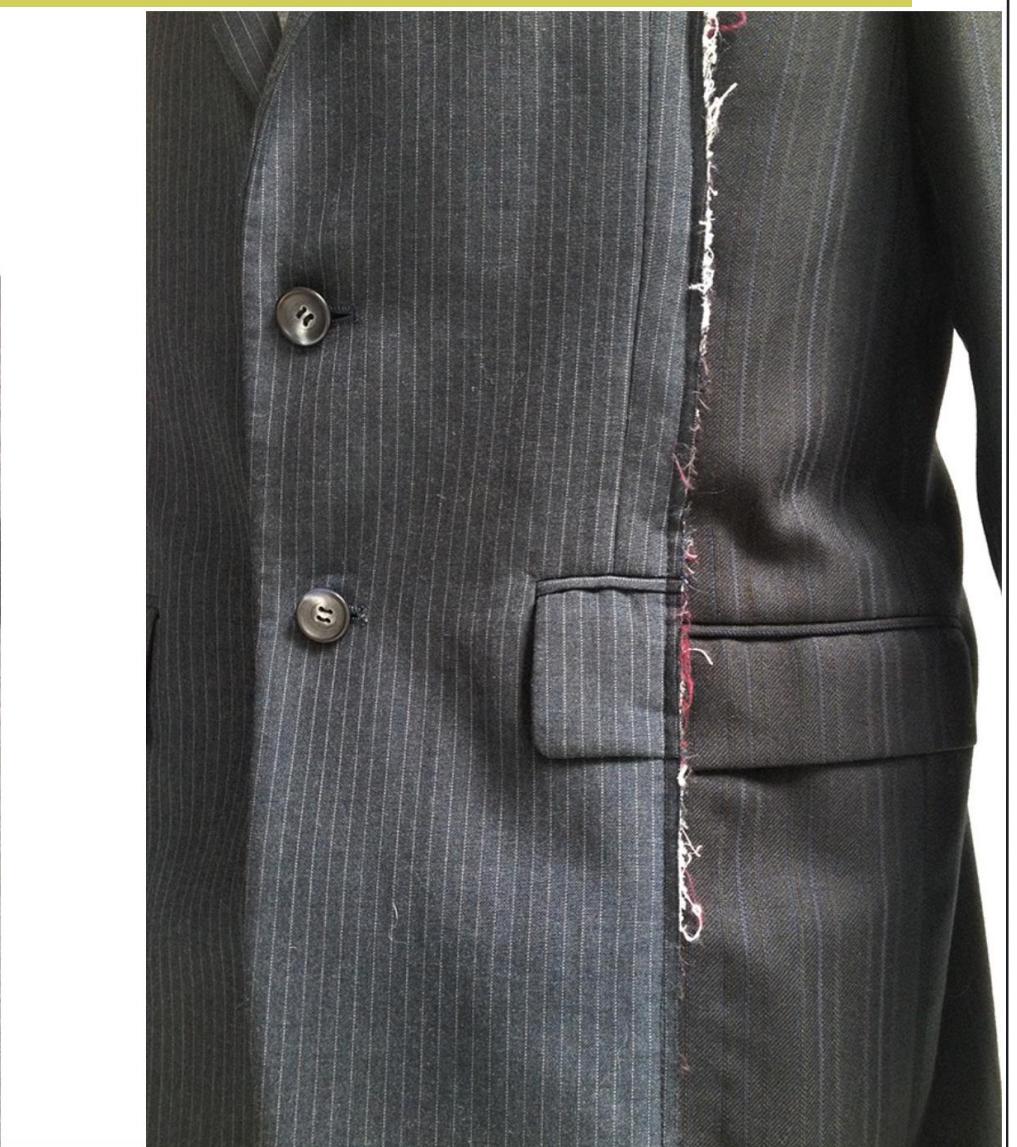


MARTIN MARGIELA

Martin Margiela, a Belgian designer and one of the founders of Maison Martin Margiela (now Maison Margiela), is often regarded as a pioneer of deconstruction in fashion.

His approach to design challenged conventional notions of luxury and craftsmanship, focusing instead on reinterpreting garments in unconventional ways

A great inspiration to think outside the box, turning inside out / upside down as part of the design process.



MARTIN MARGIELA

The focus is on the silhouette and the structure.



LOEWE Trenchcoat

The garment itself can be reworked focusing on the surface and texture, creating unexpected embellishment and decoration.

In this case the fabric has been asymmetrically cut in strips at the bottom, and probably topstitched to avoid fraying.

This technique creates an interesting and dynamic silhouette featuring fringes, where texture contributes to the garment uniqueness.



LOEWE



<https://www.fashionupproject.com/>



Garment Analysis

It's important to analyse the garment first, identifying unique features that we want to preserve and which you can use in a creative way. A very experimental and intuitive approach to redesign an existing garment is to drape it on the mannequin exploring new shapes, proportions, new ways of wearing it.

For example a simple **denim jacket** can be cut and redesigned in a set made of a crop jacket and a skirt. **Three shirts** can be transformed into a dress turning them upside down and reassembled in a creative way.

Before cutting or doing anything on the garment it's important to take picture of it, measuring basic parts such as length, width, sleeves... Once we have these datas we can sketch few ideas and at the same time exploring on the mannequin different possibilities. Sketching helps to widen these possibilities.

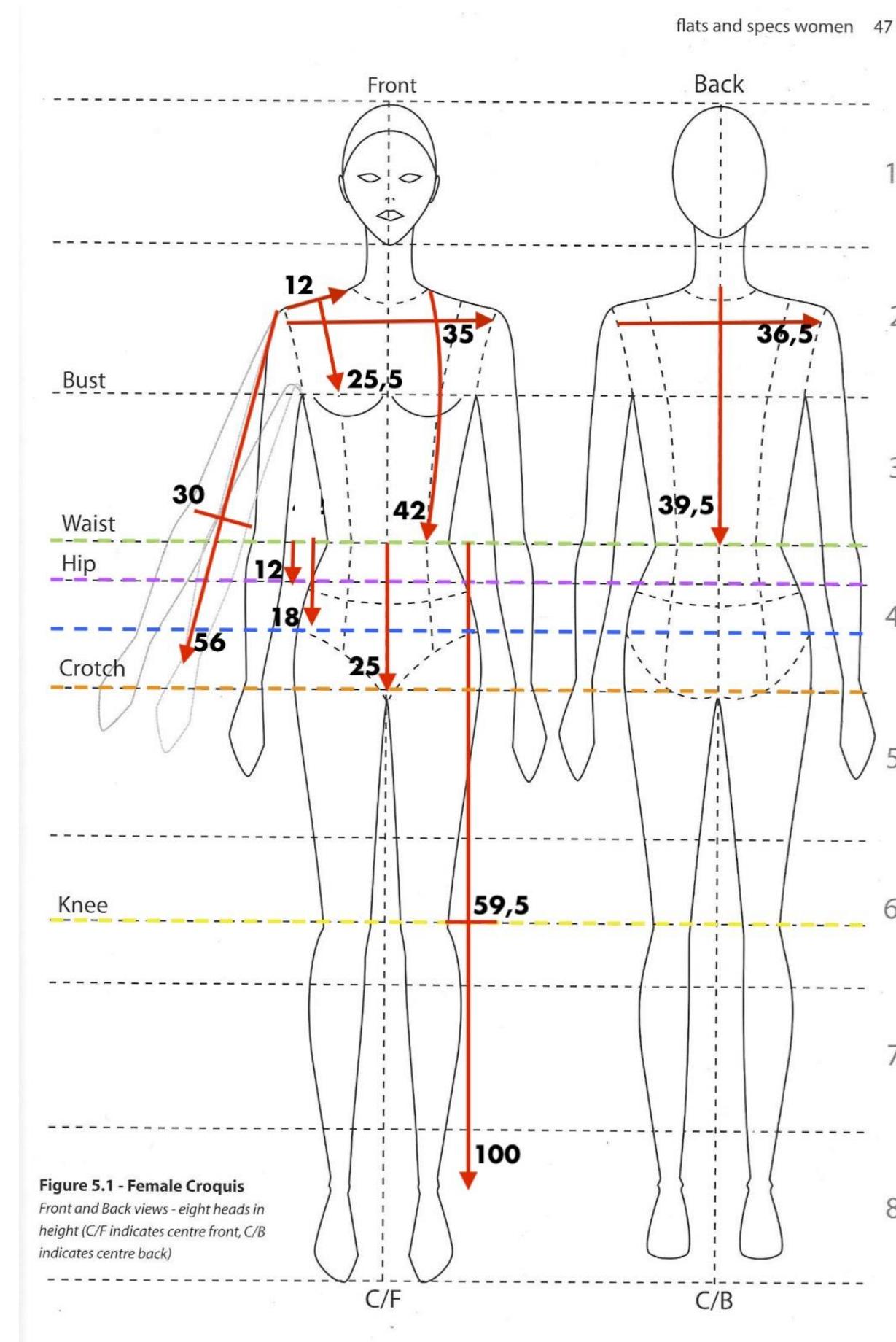
Sketching



Working on the mannequin allows learners to visualise how the fabric behaves, how pleating, folding, pinning and tucking can create a totally different volume.

Sketching helps to record the creative process. It's easier if you use a sketching template so you don't have to think about drawing the body.

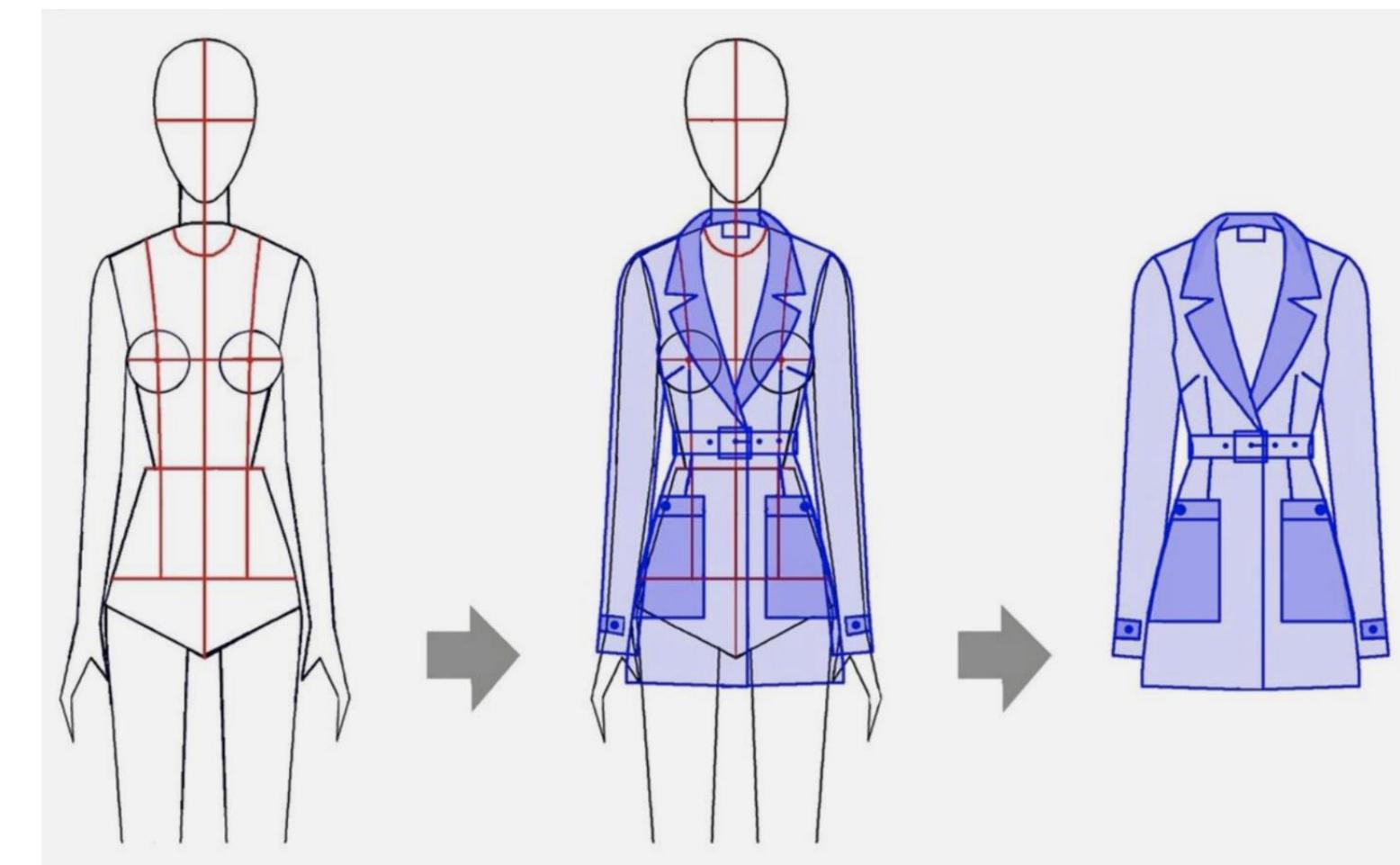




Place this printed template underneath the white paper and start drawing the look tracing only the parts that you need.

Measurements are useful to figure out real proportions.

You can draw flat style (more technical) or keep the body to sketch something more realistic and effective in terms of look.





Inspirational projects

01

Same type of garments

Draping method

02

Garments of different
types

Draping method

03

Denim

Pre-existing pattern +
Draping method

04

Case studies

Christopher Raeburn
Garbage Core



Example 1 / Shirts Garment Analysis

In case you work with tops and shirts basic measurements are :

Length

Width

Sleeve length

Shoulder

In this case the shirts (9 in total) are redesigned into a contemporary wedding dress with a unique silhouette. A very artistic approach.

The shirt is an archetypal garment and has a universal meaning, in this project students changed the function of the original garment keeping its core identity.
No waste.



MISURE CAMICIA

XL
Torace 126 cm
Vita 119 cm
Spalle 51 cm
Maniche 69 cm
Polso 28 cm

L
Torace 124 cm
Vita 117 cm
Spalle 50 cm
Maniche 67 cm
Polso 27 cm



Project by fashion students

Giulia Camiciottoli, Viola Del Re, Brenda Femia

Draping



Moodboard

Example of digital moodboard >>>



flat drawing + fashion drawing on the body



Making



Final look





Example 2 / Denim



Garments of different types / Design + styling

For a new look it's interesting to play with different vintage garments creating layering with different colours and textures.

In this project two different garments have been used:

A **pair of trousers** with pleats and a flared printed dress.

The final garment is a balanced mix between the two, all the material has been used to make the final look.

No waste.

The student draped the **garments** onto the mannequin for a first design approach. Then she went straight to the disassembling and making.



1.
All Flax



2.



*These are the original
looks of two old clothes,
and next I will show
you the process of
transforming old clothes*

Process

Trousers have been cut into two parts.



*1. Cut the
pants into
three pieces*

Process

Cut the legs open

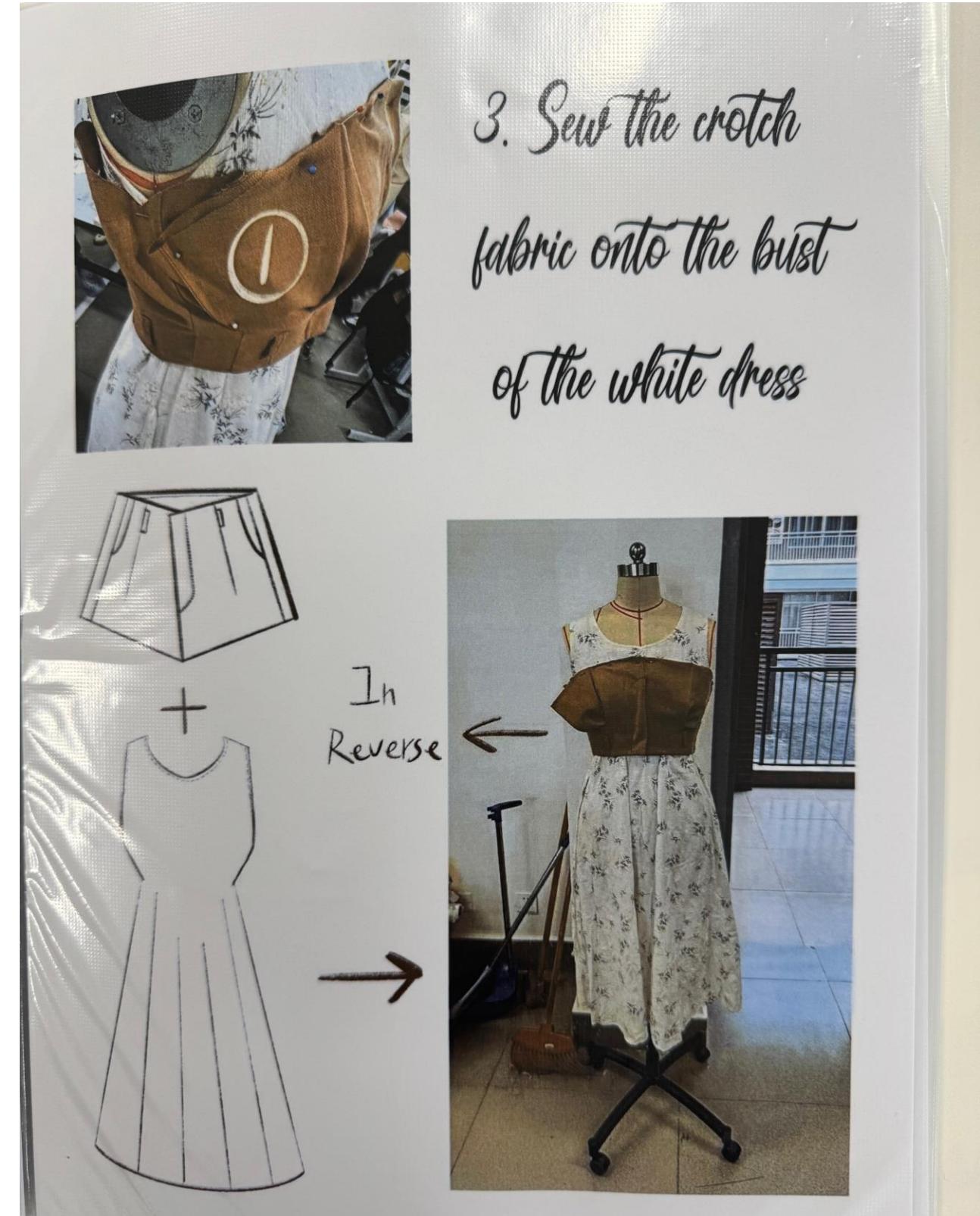


*2. Cut the two pieces
of fabric and sew
them back together*



Process

The function of the main shorts has been changed into a sort of corset style top layered onto the dress. It's used upside down!

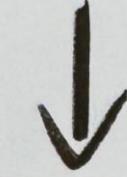
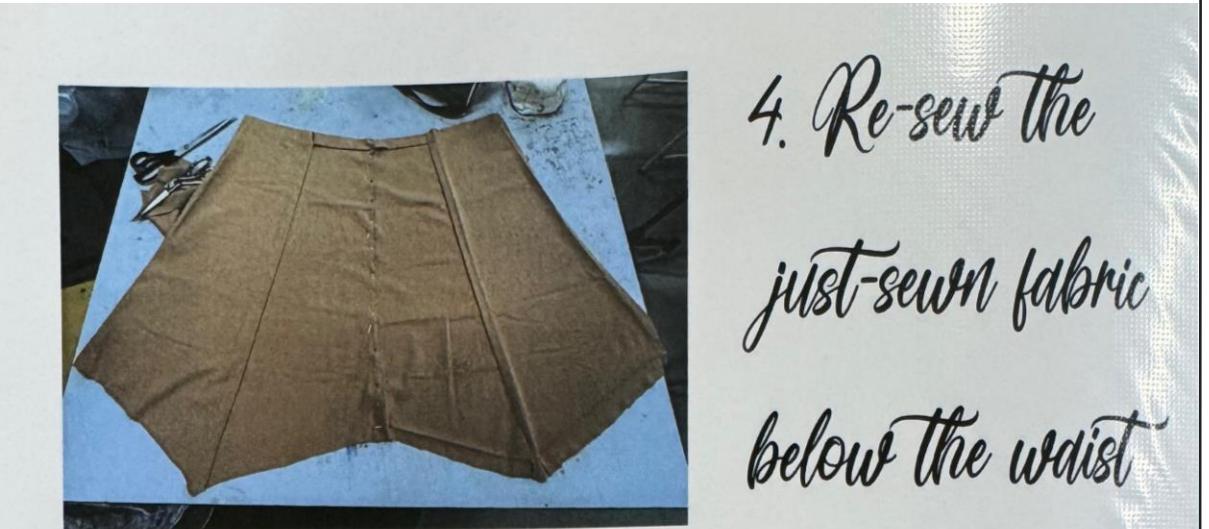


Process

The panel has been added onto the bottom part



<https://www.fashionupproject.com/>



*4. Re-sew the
just-sewn fabric
below the waist
of the white dress*

Final Look



Garments of different types / Mix and match

In this project the starting point was a gabardine trenchcoat and a fishing waistcoat.

Moodboard is a mix of sketches and digital collage

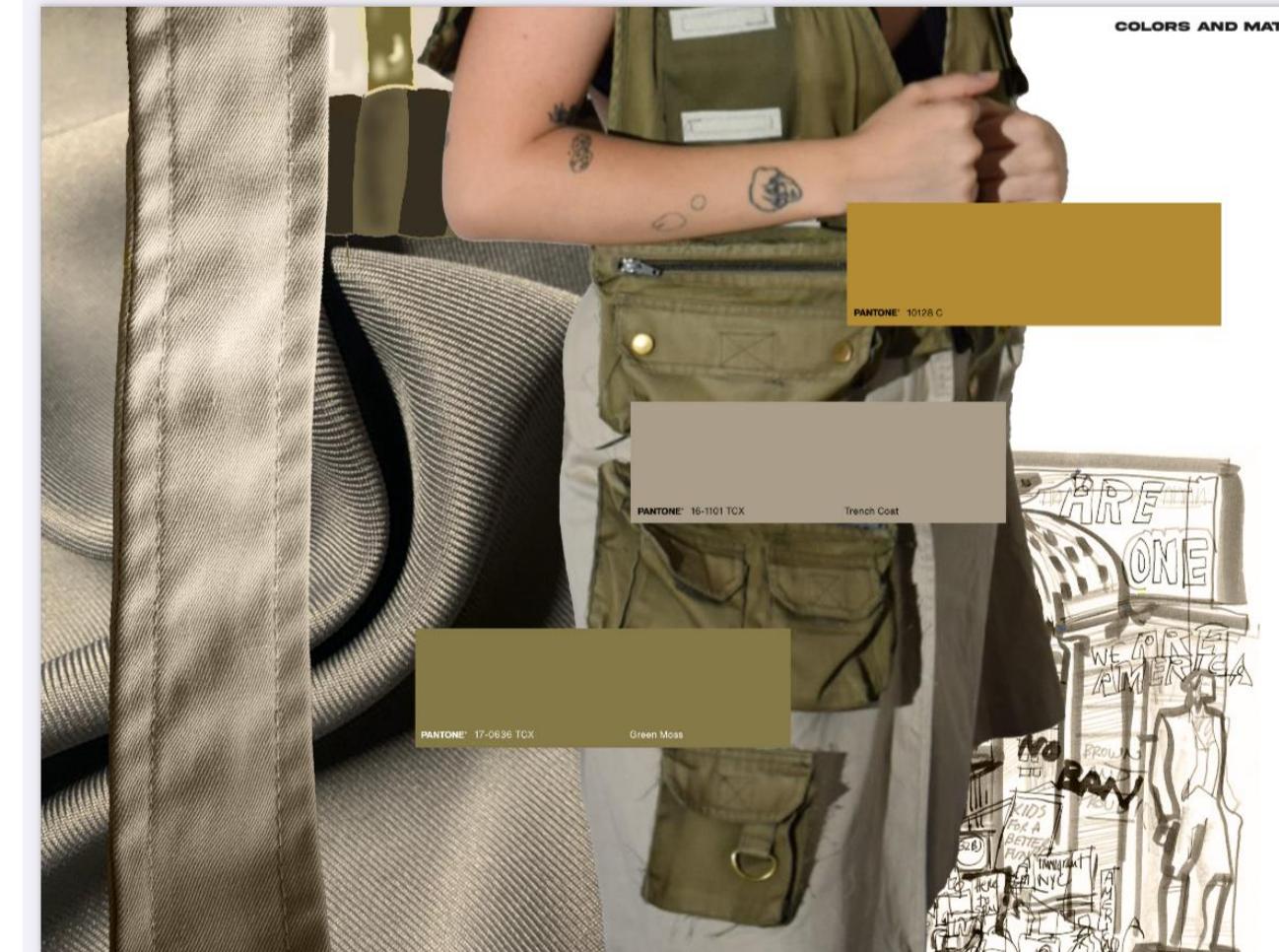


Garments of different types / Mix and match

Research helps to deepen creativity, ask yourself: where is this type of garment from? How has it developed throughout history? Is it a classic style? Does it have a memory connected to the previous wearer or maybe emotionally connected to a specific occasion?

Is it a functional type of garment like workwear or is it a fancy/trendy style? Is there any special feature that I want to keep?

All these questions allow you to analyse the garment and think about the creative process, if you want to keep the essence of the garment or maybe upset its nature and consequentially its meaning.



TARGET GROUP



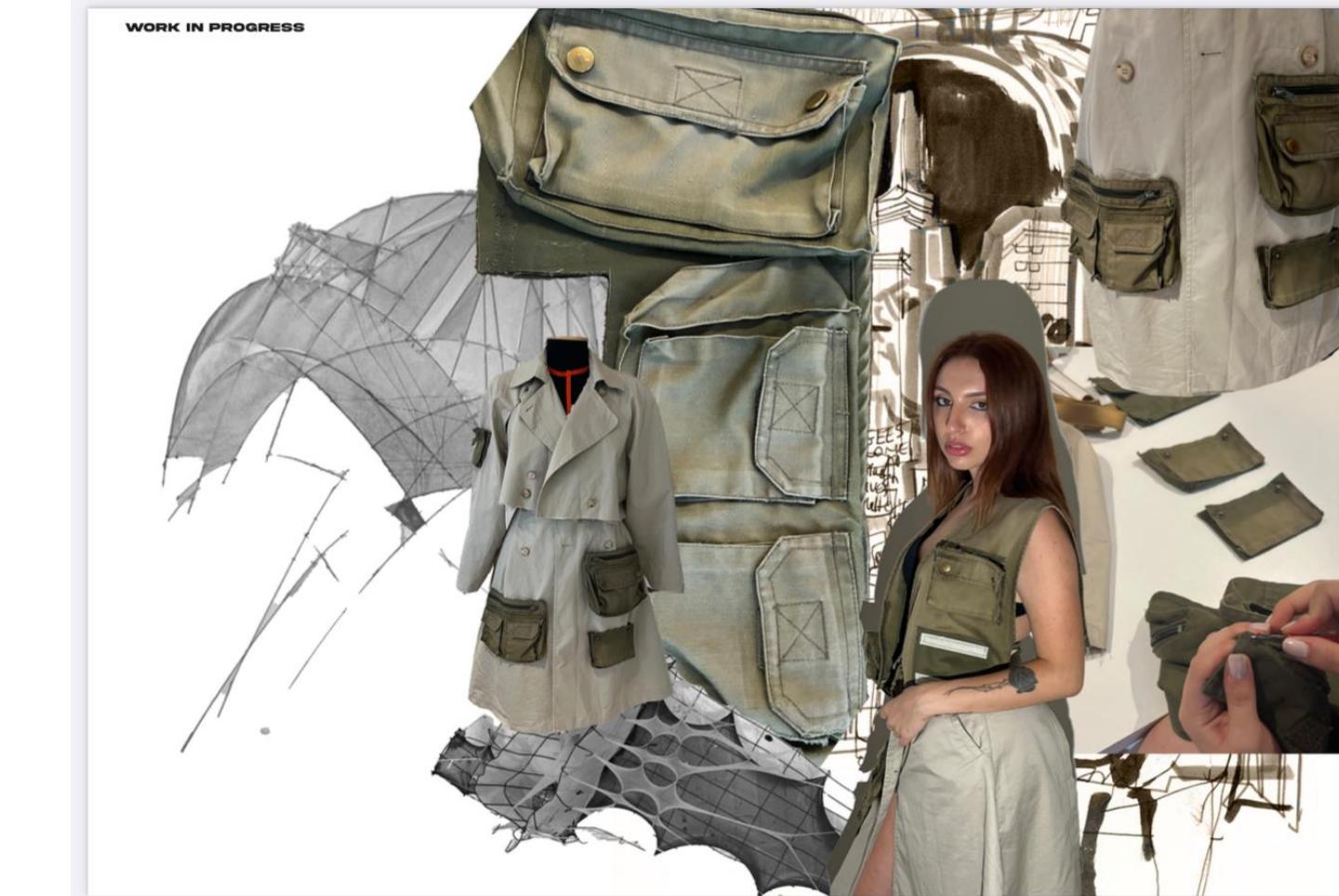
Garments of different types / Mix and match

Designwise the trenchcoat has been split in two parts, becoming a two piece set (crop jacket and skirt).

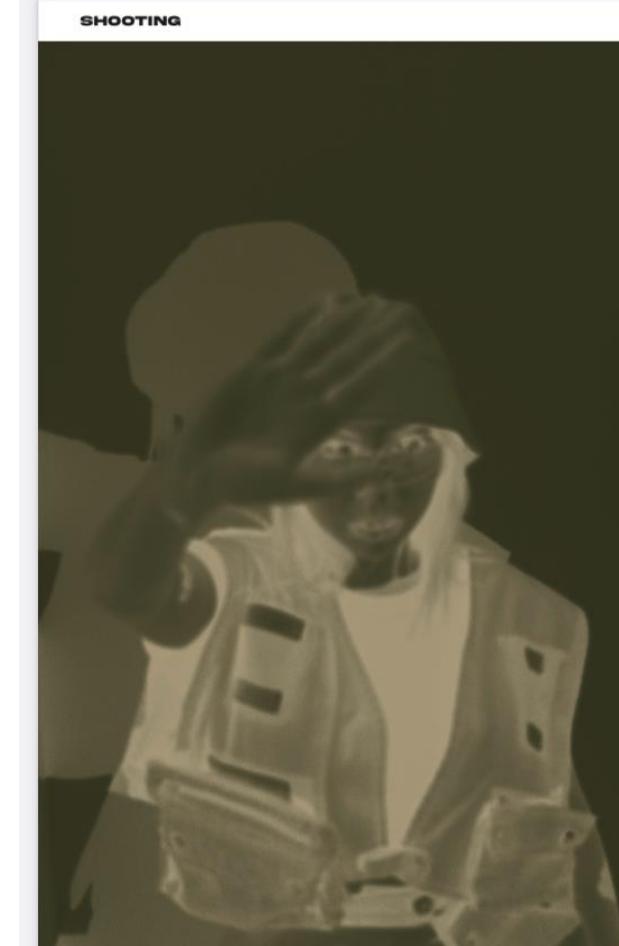
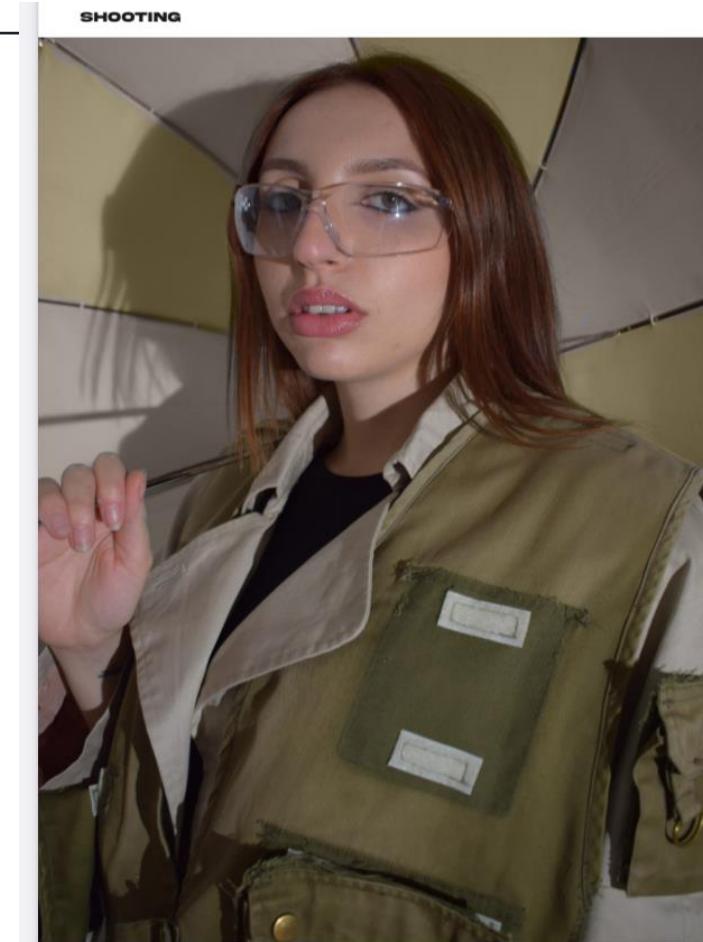


Here the focal point of the creative process is definitely functionality, connected to the origin of the garment.

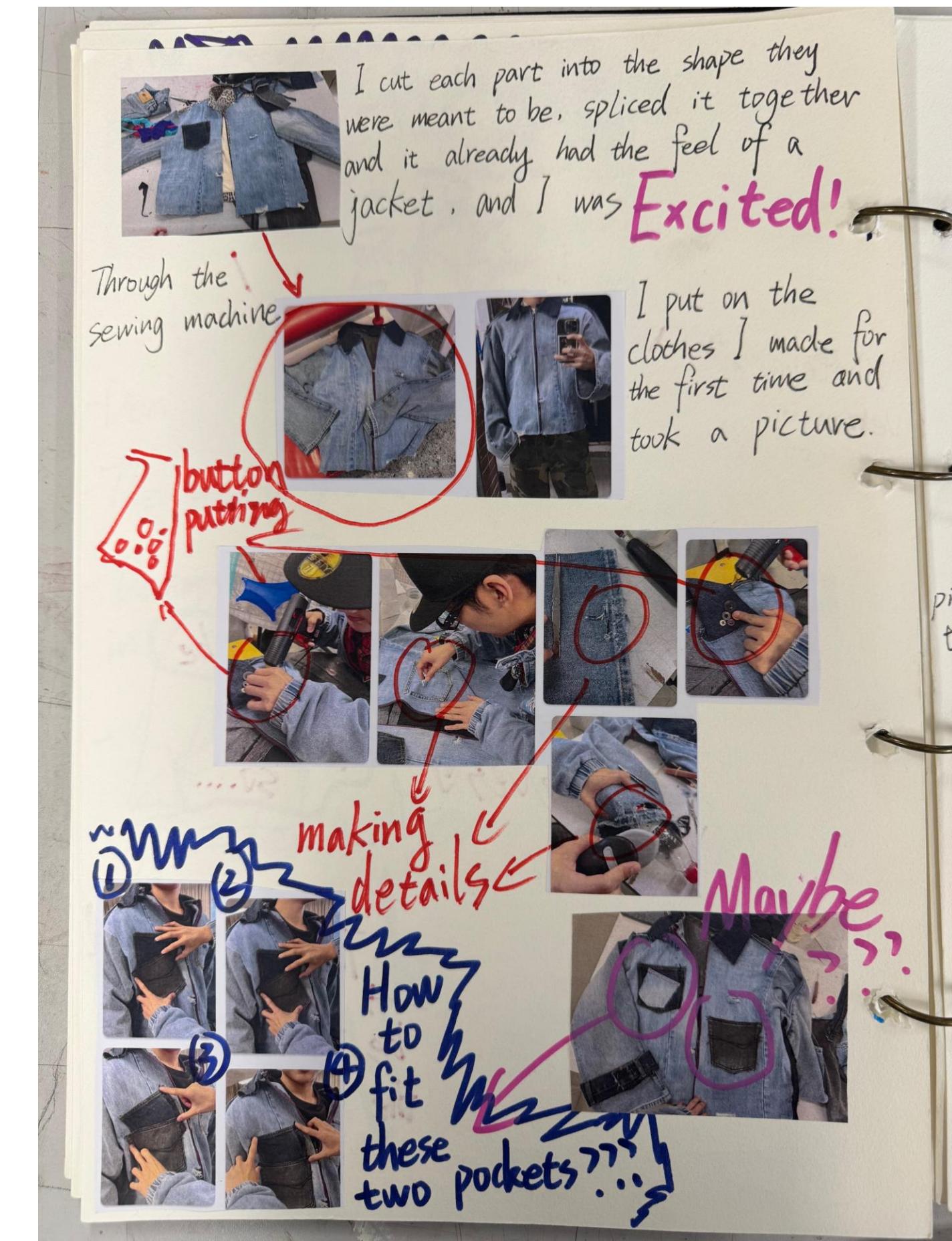
Pockets become a special component in the redesigned garment.



Final Look



Timeless classic: Denim

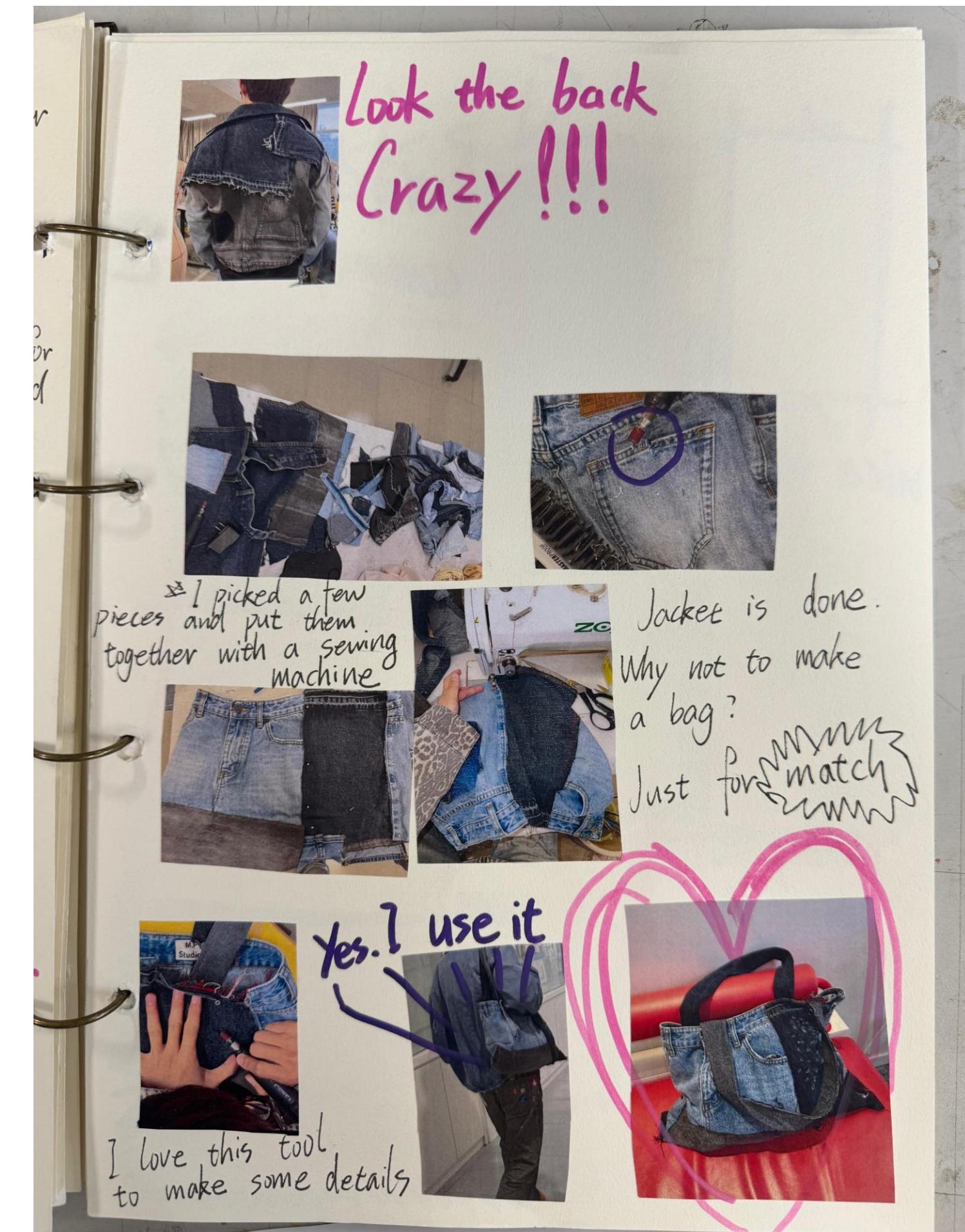


In this case Jeans have been disassembled using a seam ripper and the fabric has been used to cut a jacket and a bag thanks to a paper pattern copied from an old piece.

Legs from a pair of trousers have been turned into the sleeves.

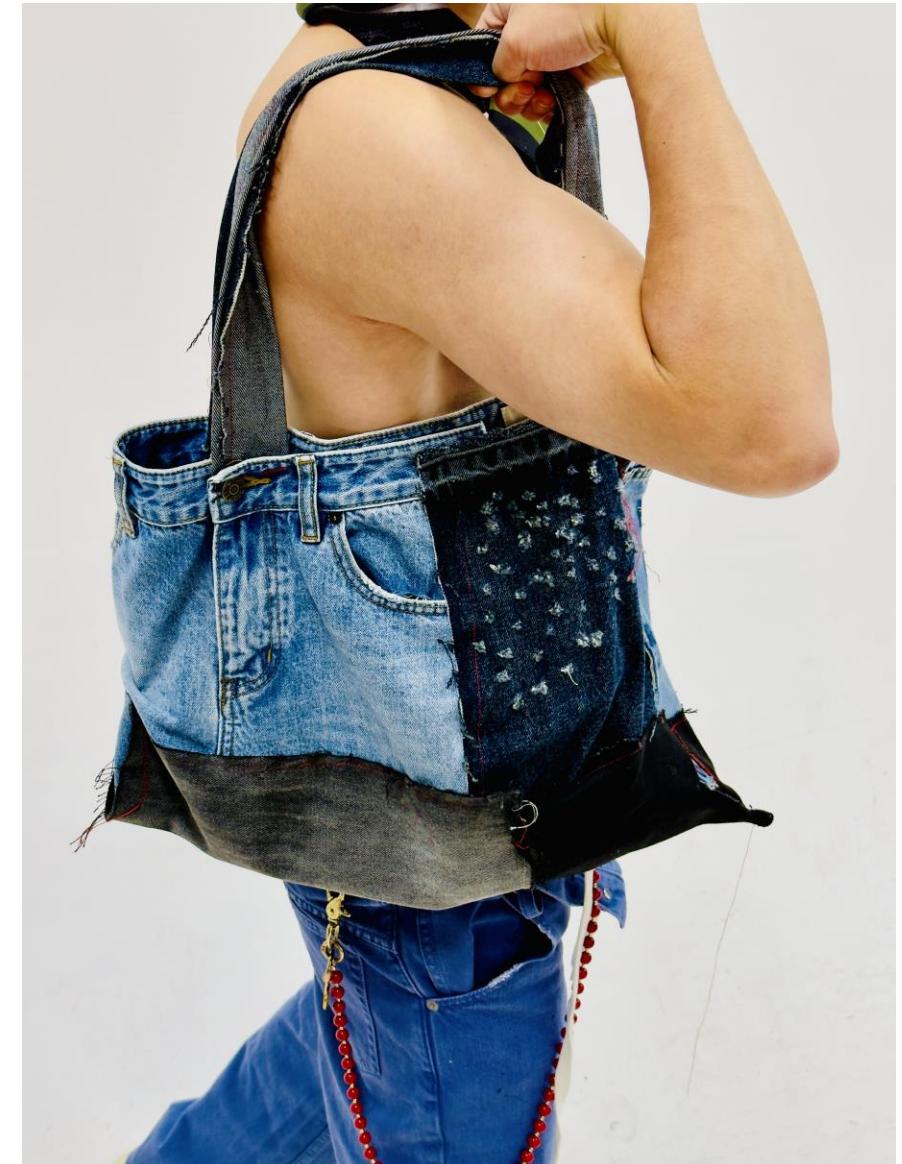
The 3 trousers have been mixed to create an interesting contrast still using the same material.

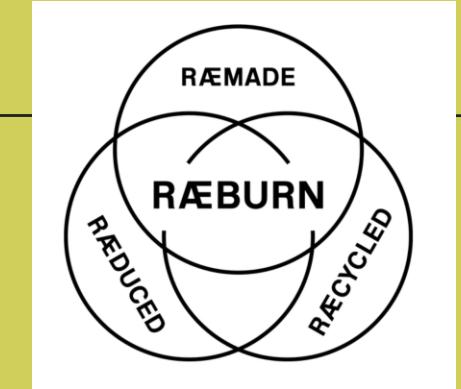
No waste





Project by fashion student Kai





Case study 1 > Christopher Raeburn

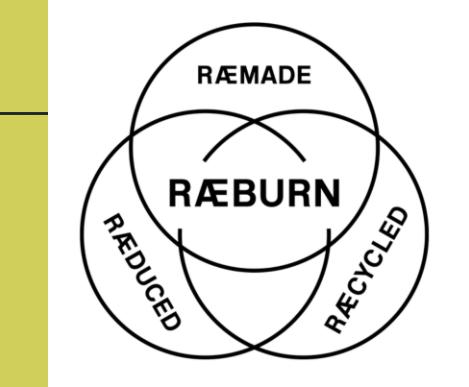
Christopher Raeburn is a British fashion designer known for his innovative approach to sustainable fashion, blending creativity with environmental consciousness. Born in 1981, Raeburn launched his eponymous label in 2008, quickly gaining attention for his unique use of recycled and repurposed materials. His design philosophy centers around reworking military surplus and discarded textiles into stylish, functional, and highly wearable garments.

Raeburn's work often incorporates deconstruction and reconstruction techniques, transforming old materials into new, fashion-forward designs. One of his signature approaches is his use of upcycled fabrics, particularly surplus parachutes, military jackets, and other vintage materials, giving them new life in contemporary collections.

This practice not only promotes sustainability but also highlights the importance of craftsmanship and innovation in fashion.



Case study 1 > Christopher Raeburn

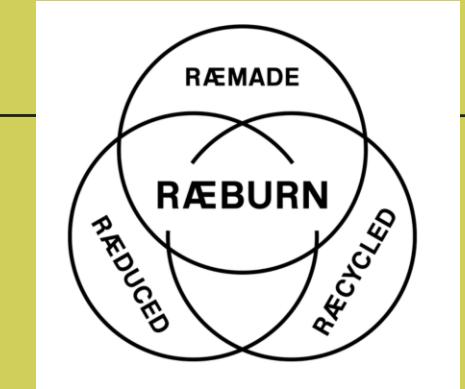


The RÆBURN Men's Parasuit Overshirt has been RÆMADE using original parachutes which have been over-dyed in the UK. These items have been meticulously deconstructed and reconstructed at the RÆBURN Lab in East London.

Read More



<https://www.raeburndesign.co.uk/?srsltid=AfmBOophxx5kOINcbnOOJohRH3TwCQL3q4FokUGtzcOCua3-gFAkfxR4>



Case study 2 > Garbage Core



Garbage Core is Milanese project founded by Giuditta Tanzi in 2019, focusing on handmade, one-of-a-kind and up-cycled pieces.

She believes in the creation of emotional garments that give to old clothes and materials a second life and chance, keeping their souls intact, as well as those of the people that wore or created them.

We see in the flaws as scratches, spots and holes, the traces of precedent life.



All development of the collections takes place in her studio in Milan, starting from the creation of patterns to the development of prototypes, often working with the technique of draping and patchwork.

Her studio is a laboratory where clothes take shape. It's very important for her to actively work on each piece, where it's the little details that make the difference.

Since Garbage Core is an upcycling project, materials are at the center of the process and she studies new techniques and processes to create original fabrics.

Read More



<https://garbage-core.com/>

Case study 2 > Garbage Core





TIPS

- Look for interesting features you want to keep from the garment
- Take any fabric to a different level, redesign an evening piece from casual garments like t-shirts for example
- Is the garment stained in certain areas? Is it threadbare or showing signs of wear? Are there any moth holes? Address these issues by working around them, repairing the damage, or disguising them with design elements such as ruffles or pockets.
- If you don't have enough fabric from the original garment, you can use other fabrics or repurpose material from other



Practical application: 6 hours

It's highly recommend to use the moodboard done in unit1, choosing the garments based on the chosen inspiration and concept.

Does the moodboard suggest you anything regarding shape, texture or use of colour that you can translate onto the garment?



Ideally you use your own garments, something you want to refresh or something damaged.



STEP 1: GARMENT ANALYSIS

Analyse your garment, check if it has stains or hole. Identify parts you want to keep. Start disassembling the garment and play with the different pieces on a stand form.

In case you don't have a stand form, do this in couple, it's easier and more fun!



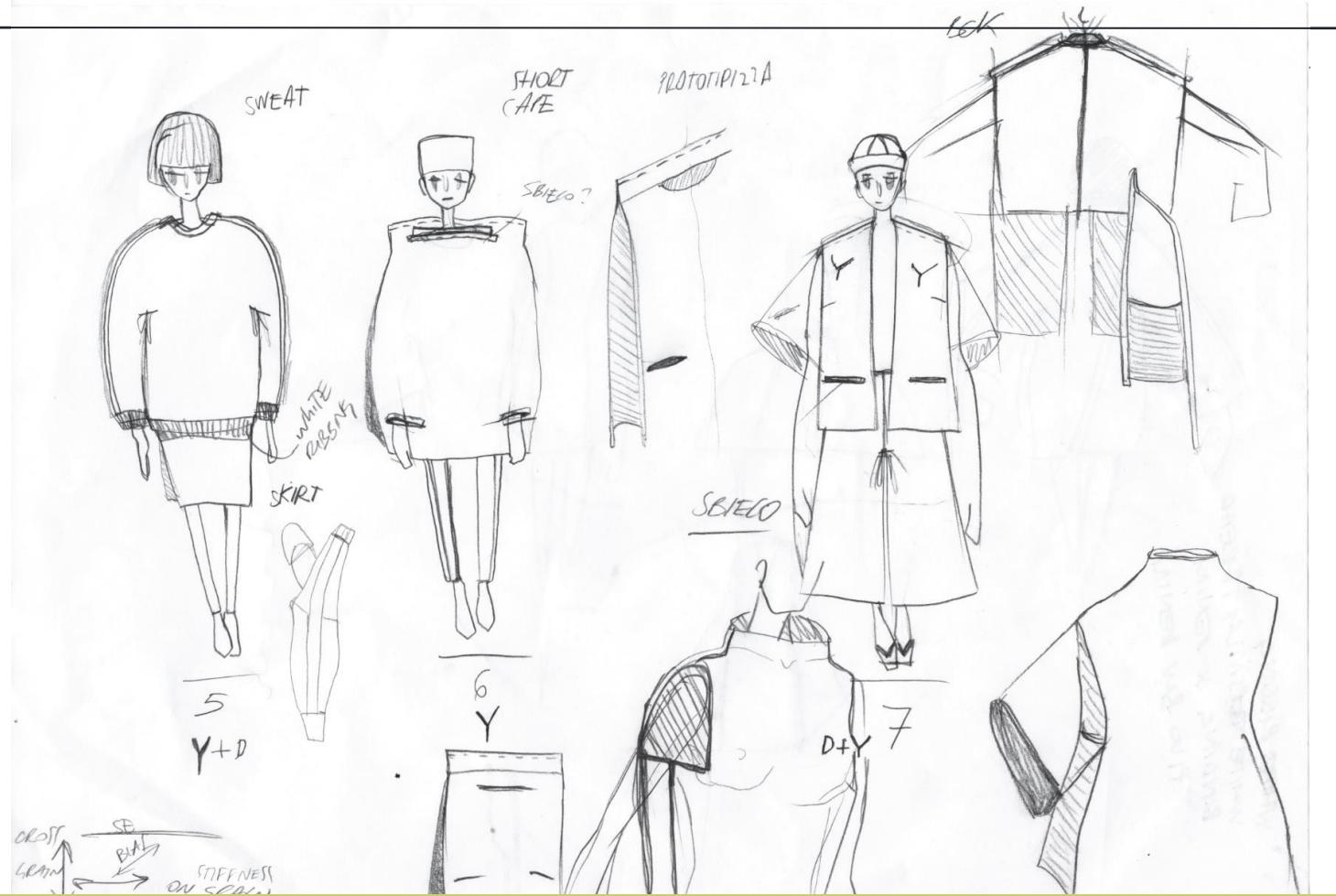


STEP 2: EXPLORE

Use pins to explore different silhouettes and volumes, take picture to record your steps.

Think out of the box: use sleeves as leg warmers or turtlenecks, Use cuffs for waistbands, button plackets as straps for a dress.





STEP 3: RECORD IDEAS

Draw on a sketchbook or on a digital device from the pictures you took and review your ideas. Which do you think enhance the aesthetically and functional value of the original garment?

Print out the given body template to make this step easier.



STEP 4: MAKE

After deciding which idea you want to materialise, with the help of the sewing machine sew on the new garment. Hand finishes might be needed to add value to the garment.

>>> link to module 4?

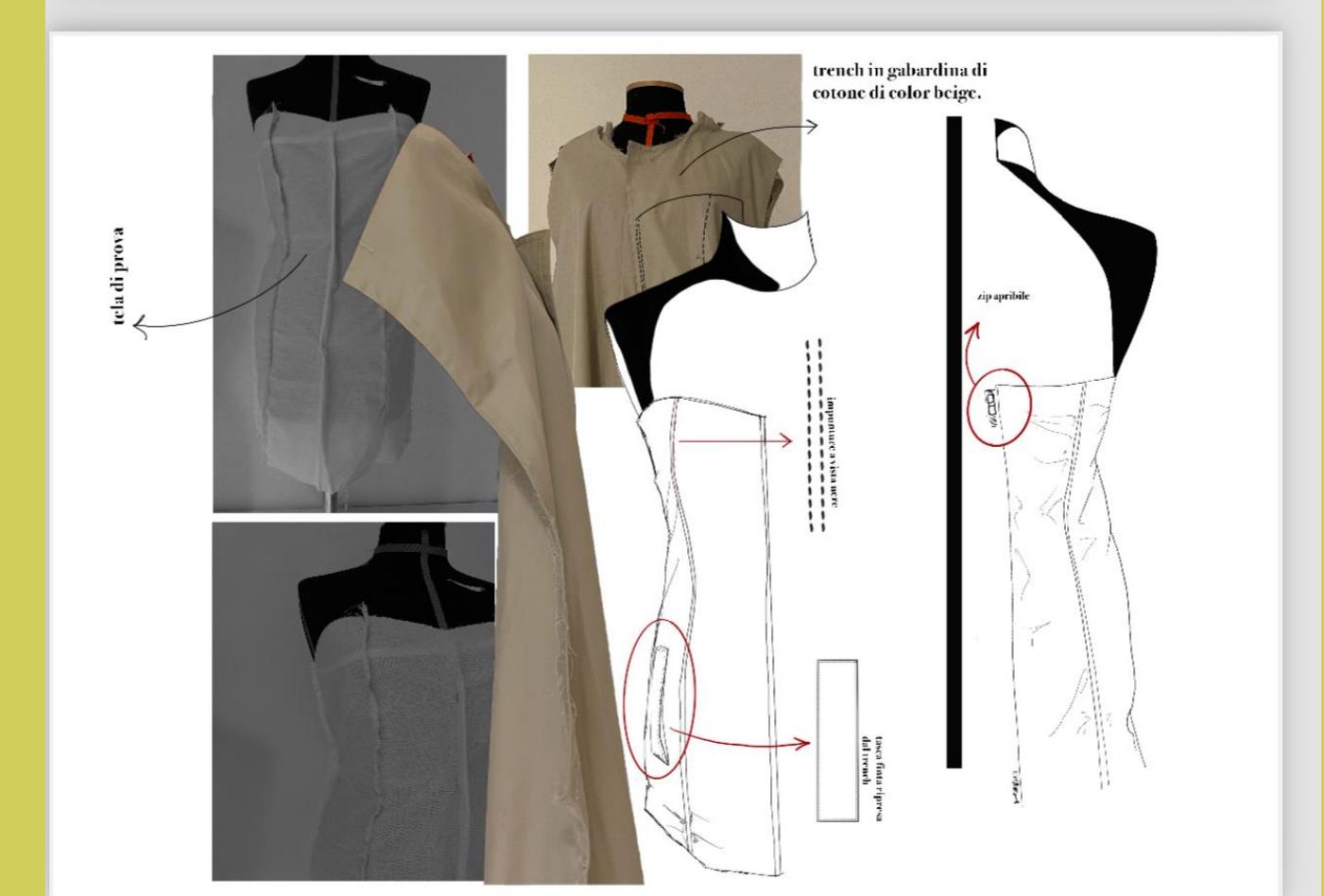


STEP 5: FINAL PIECE

After making, draw and colour the final piece using the given template if that can help.

Try the garment on the stand and check if it needs any adjustments or further work.

When you work on the garment think about functional elements like fastenings and pockets.





Unit Summary



In this Unit you've been going through many examples of redesign from existing garments. One garment can be partially disassembled and reassembled in a new way.



References

- Alexandre Samson, Martin Margiela: The Women's Collections 1989-2009, Rizzoli International, 2018.
- Alessandra Vaccari, Paolo Franzo, What if,, Saggi IUAV 13, luglio 2022
- Personal archive of students projects

ONLINE

- <https://www.raeburndesign.co.uk>
- <https://garbage-core.com/>
- [https://refashion.fr/eco-design/sites/default/files/fichiers/The Ecochic Design Award A Designer's Guide To Reconstruction.pdf](https://refashion.fr/eco-design/sites/default/files/fichiers/The%20Ecochic%20Design%20Award%20A%20Designer's%20Guide%20To%20Reconstruction.pdf)