



# FASHION DESIGN PORTFOLIO

**MARA**

**MENGER**

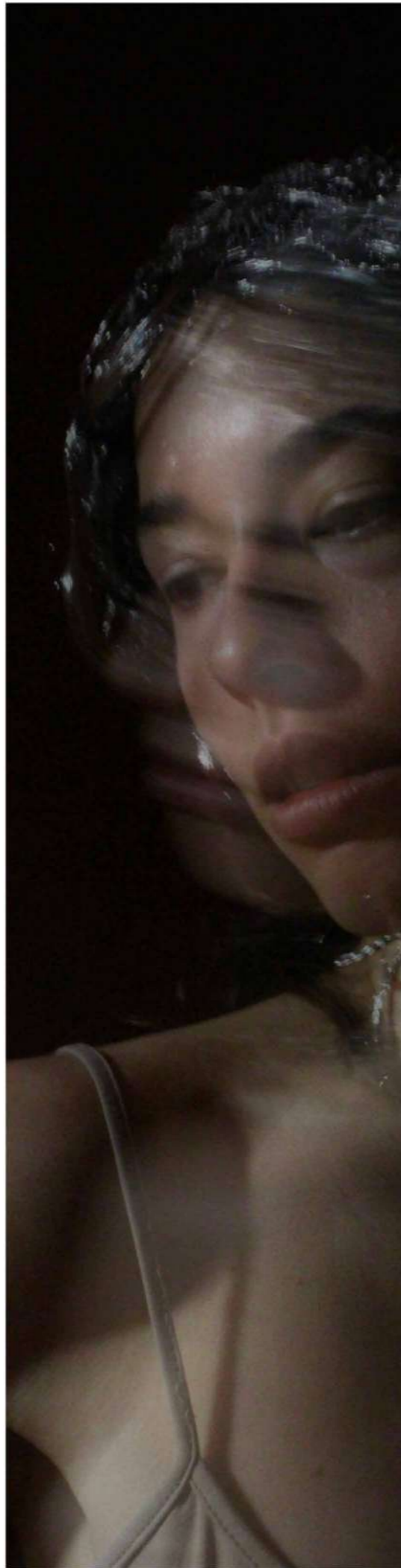
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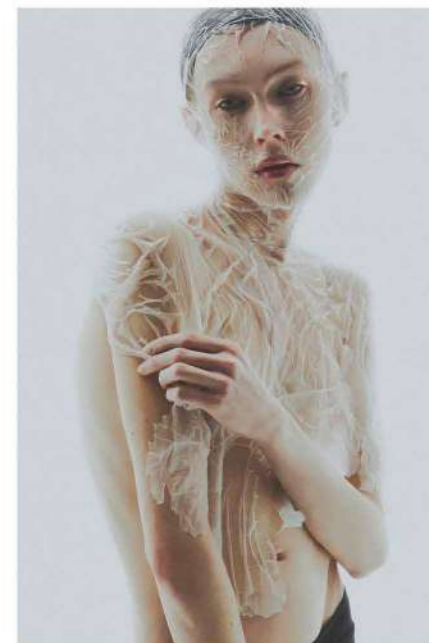
# INNER MEDUSA

ÉCOLE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS, PARIS

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2024

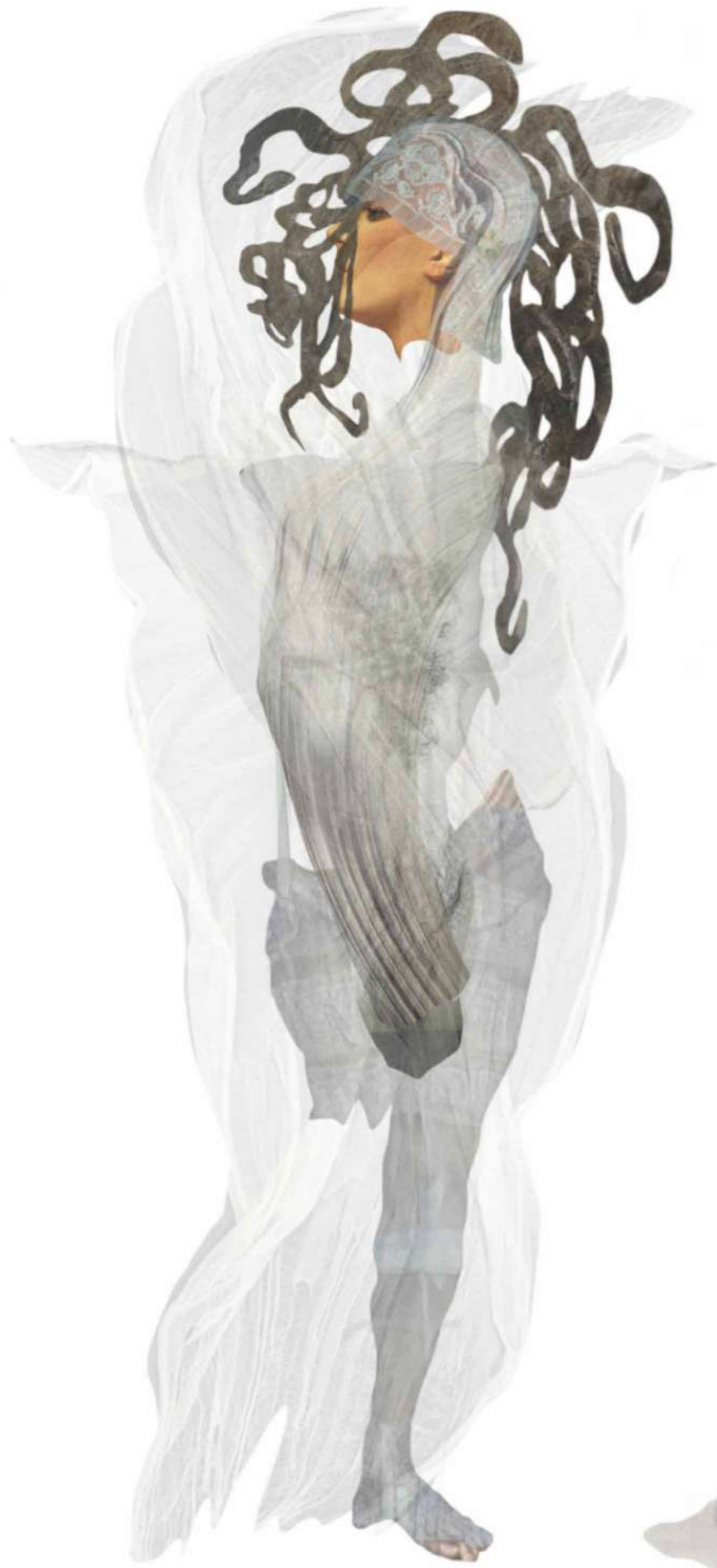
The project draws inspiration from the symbolism of hair, focusing on witch stories and the medusa myth. In both hair is strongly connected to power, magical forces, punishment and female sexuality. We can see a strong system of "Perpetrator Victim Reversal", which is still a huge problem in society. The project discovers the woman behind the monster in these stories, asking the questions of what is behind a mask of so called "ugliness", what is inside a person that we can't see, what is inside the woman who has a certain image projected on herself? It tries to reclaim the female body in an empowered and sensible way. To illustrate this, the collection I developed plays a lot with uncovering the body. It changes from heavier, darker and more concealing looks to really light, open and fragile garments. To get this impression of "looking inside someone" I used unexpected cut outs and transparent layers. The silhouettes and details draw inspiration from the world of lingerie. It's combined with an recreation of hair, made with thin metal strings to symbolise medusas snakes, a print that gives the impression of a shadow or skin and a fabric manipulation playing with wrinkles and pleats. I realized two looks from the collection. The first consists of a wide trouser and a slightly transparent top. Both quote details of dessous and uncover certain parts of the body. The Top covers the head and has a face printed on to it, giving the effect of double exposure in real life and slightly distorting the wearers own face. The second look is a corset turning into a wrapped skirt, consisting of several layers of silk organza. It's combined with a headpiece, a knitted bonnet with hair-like wire structures weaved into it, as a quote of medusas snake hair. Visualising her monstrous parts as something, beautiful, tender and decorative.

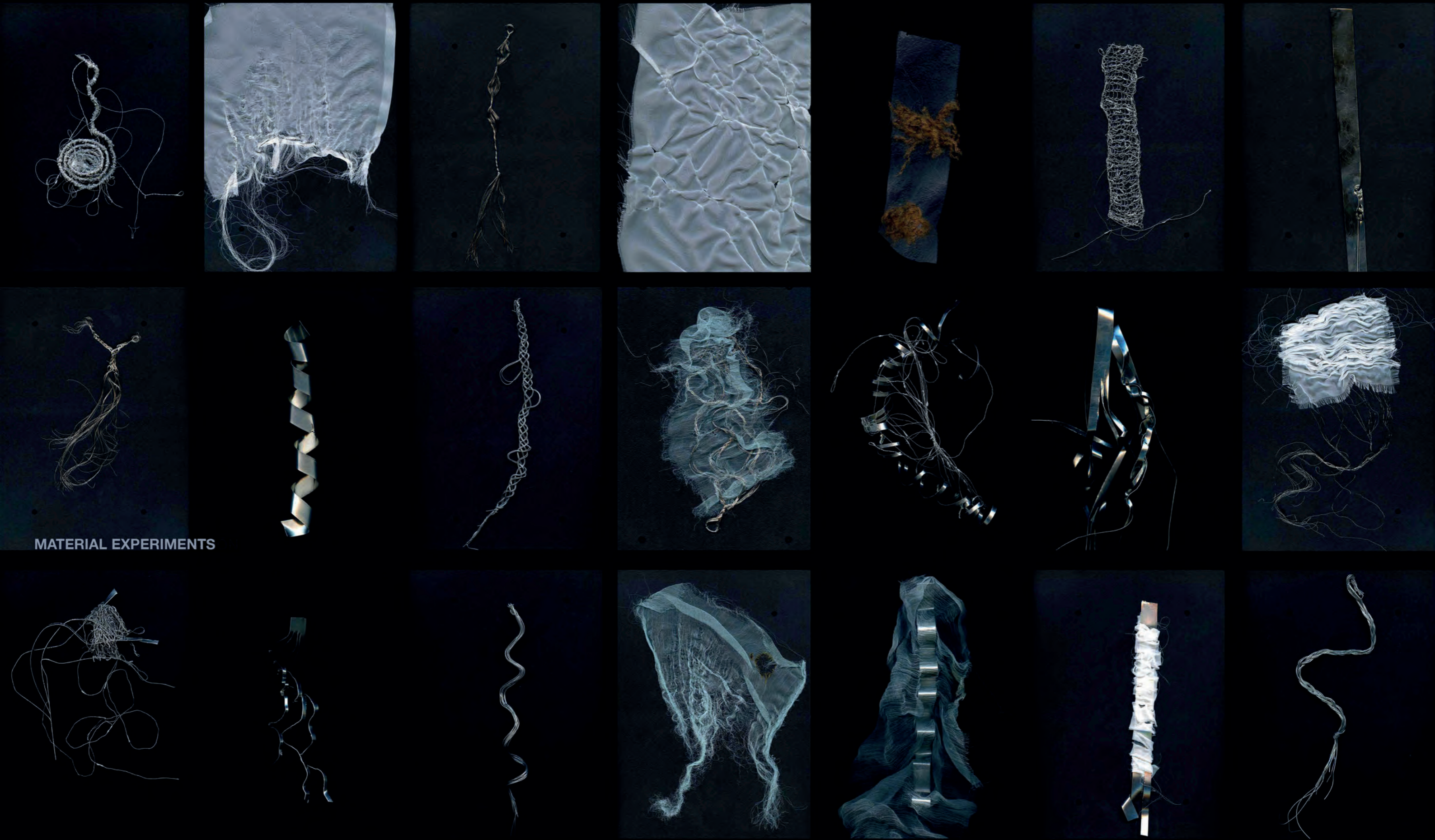




INSPIRATION







MATERIAL EXPERIMENTS

wire, aluminium, transparent polyester, yarn; braided, curled, brushed, bended, smocked, combined, knitted, burned - inspired by techniques used on hair



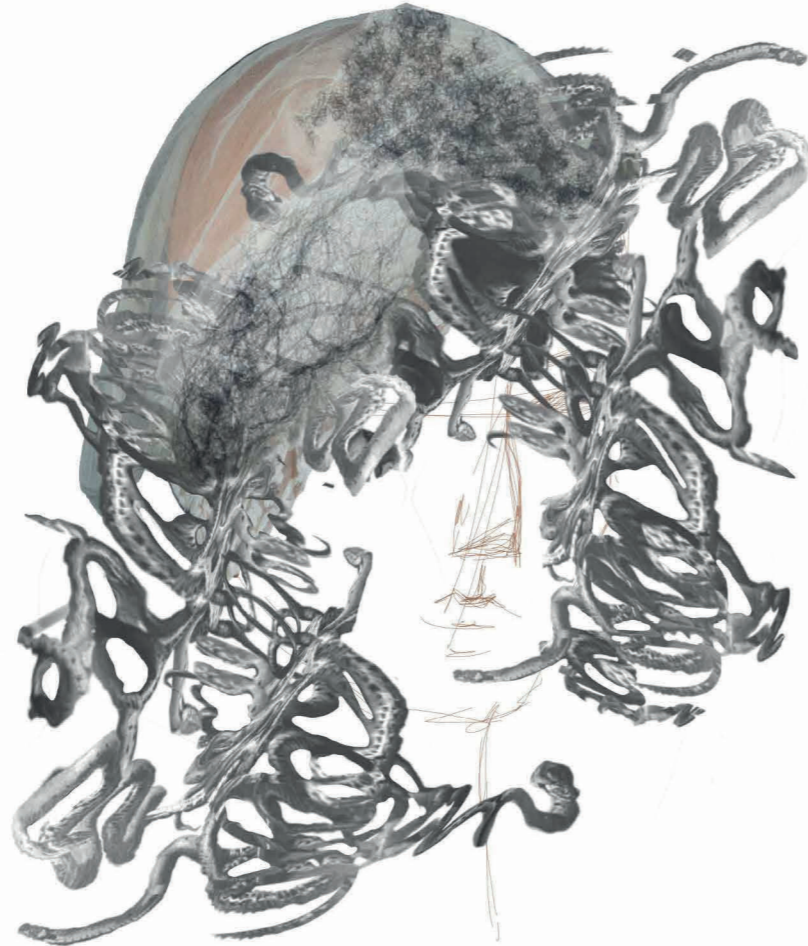
**PRINT DEVELOPMENT &  
FABRIC MANIPULATION**

print: moving shadows on  
skin; blurred face creating  
double exposure effect  
when worn

- sublimation transfer  
fabric manipulation: gath-  
ered fabric with thin wire,  
pressed and printed on







**DRAPING STUDIES**  
silhouettes and headpieces

Headpiece: knitted bonnet with woven wire, resembling hair to represent Medusas snakes in a delicate manner.

Fabric manipulation applied to the head and body in different ways.









# WITNESSES OF TIME

ACADEMY OF ARTS BERLIN WEISSENSEE

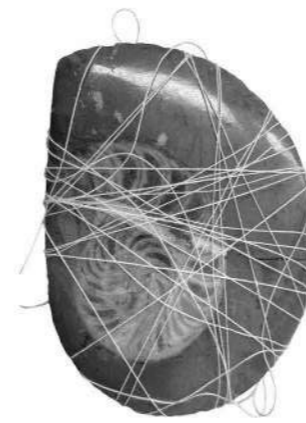
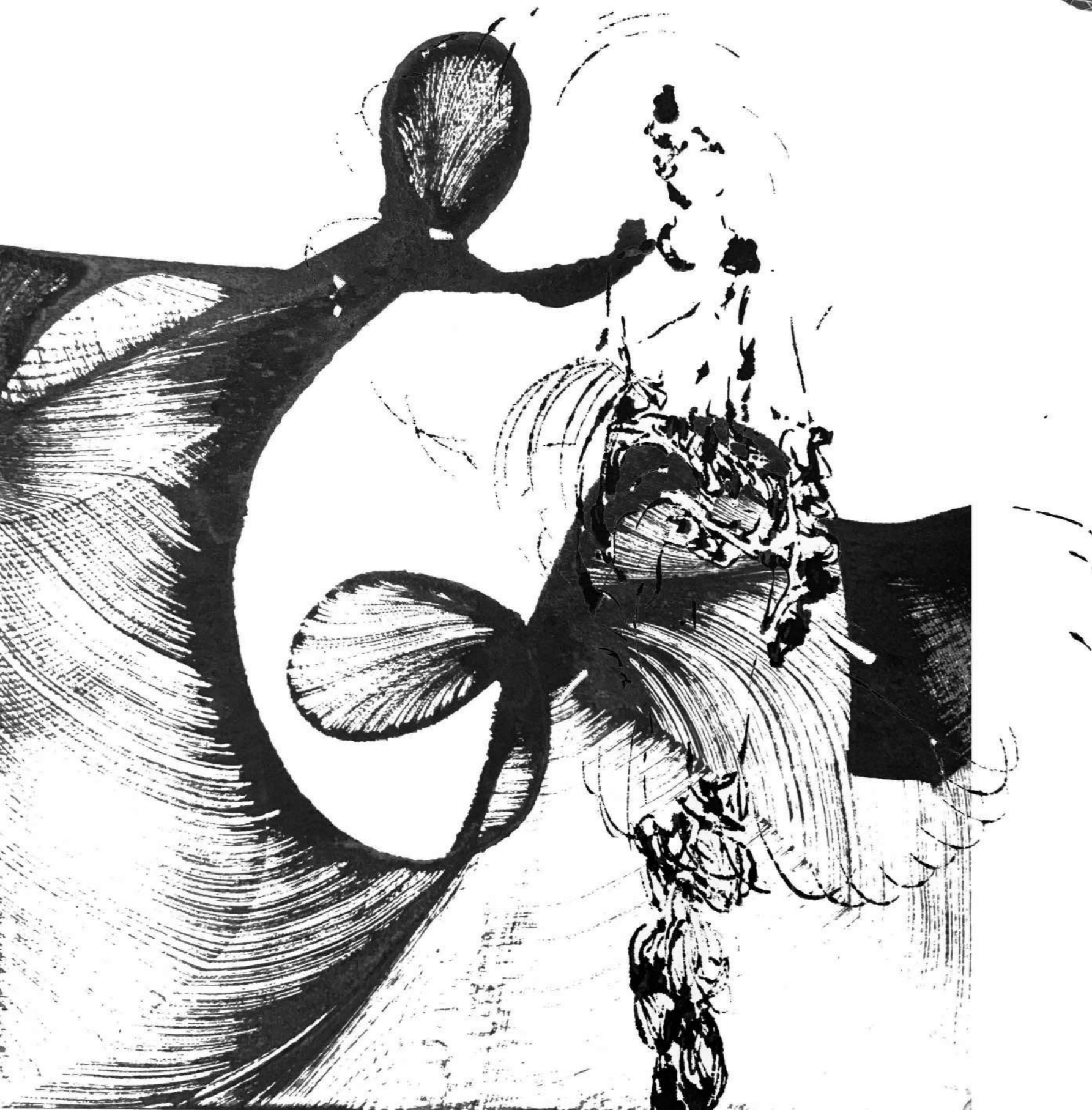
SEP 2022 - JAN 2023

The project deals with fossils and their symbolism. They serve as contemporary witnesses of past living beings. Shells as disembodied objects survive the passage of time. Inspired by this interpretation and the aesthetics of fossils, I developed material samples and a design language within a collection from which one dress was created. It consists of two layers, a dark satin dress which lies organically around the body in a swirling aesthetic that represents the vortex of time in which we move. It plays with flat surfaces, small volumes and structures created through pleats. To stabilize these plisses and keep them in place a binder that's often used for screenprinting is printed on the inner side. Around it lies a draped headpiece made of woven aluminum, which lies around the head like a cocoon and yet allows a certain transparency and fragility so that the body is still visible under this cover.



INSPIRATION





What is left without the body?

Time swirling around us, flooding the world.

Tender strokes on our skin

A storm around ones body, that were living in.

Making moments a part of the past swept away by a new present washed down to a few remnants of ourselves.

Thoughts that other people have left for us.

Like skeletons buried in the depths.

It's the shell that remains a fossil of our days.

A bodyless creature petrified in it's swirling change.

Witness of what once was keeper of future and past.

We're filling it with life giving our cells.

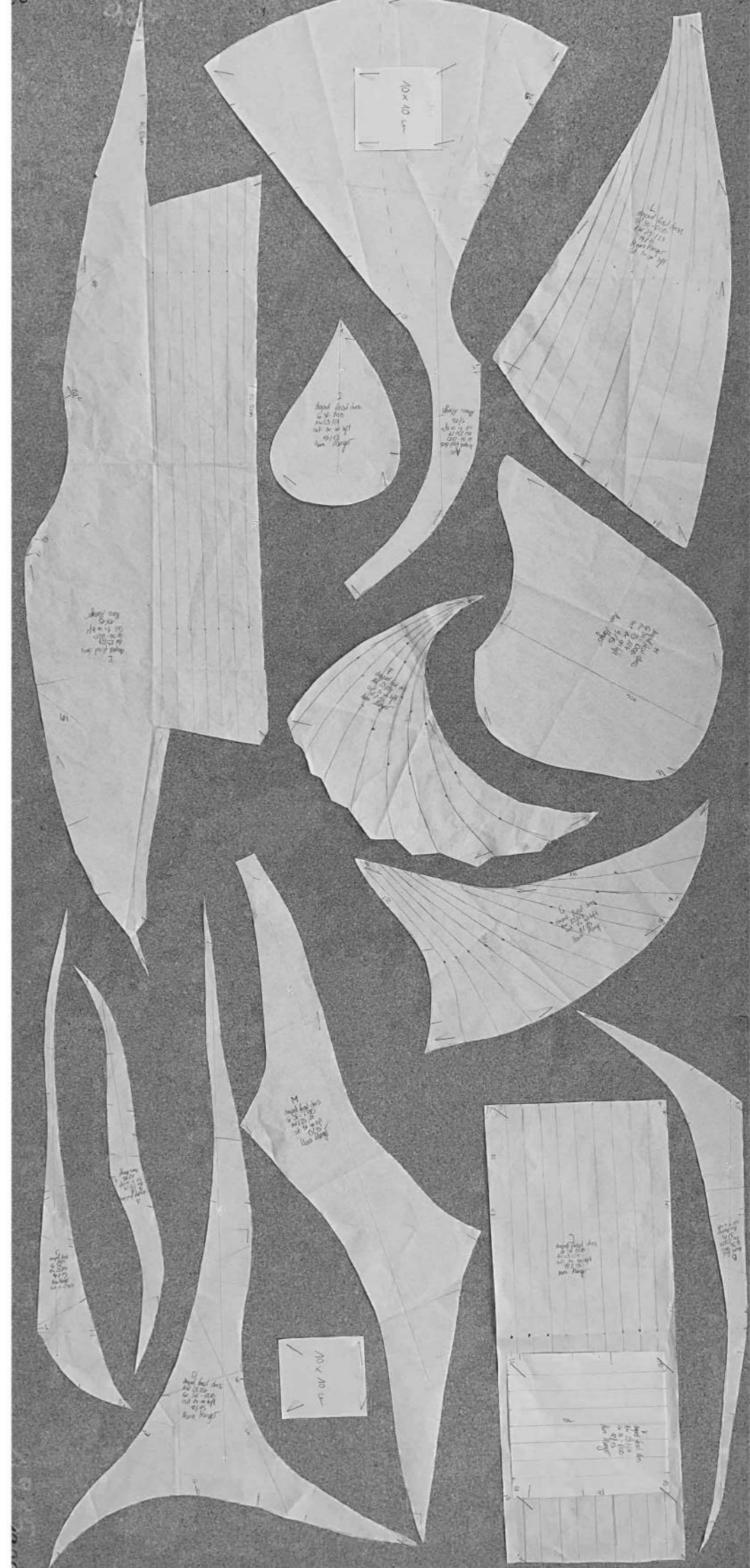
Who are our bodys when time is our shell?







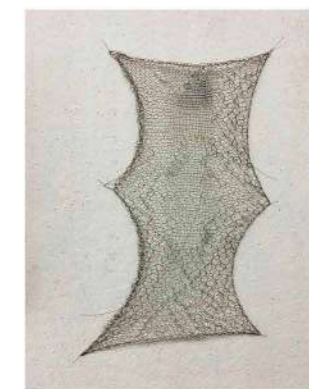
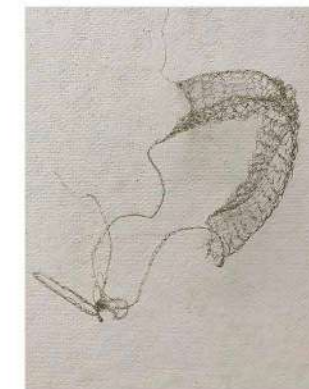
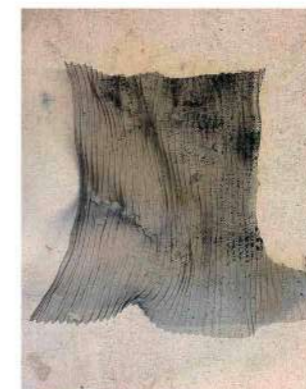
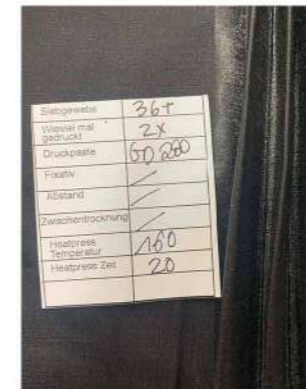
**DRAPED PATTERN**





### MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Textile experiments to find the right material for the shell. Experimenting with knitted wire, knitted wool, fabric stiffener, hat making material, knitted nylon yarn and for the final result weaved wire. Creating a solid draped surface but having still the impression of something, fragile and see through swirling around the body.







3D MODEL IN CLO3D



# DISTORTED BODIES

ACADEMY OF ARTS BERLIN WEISSENSEE

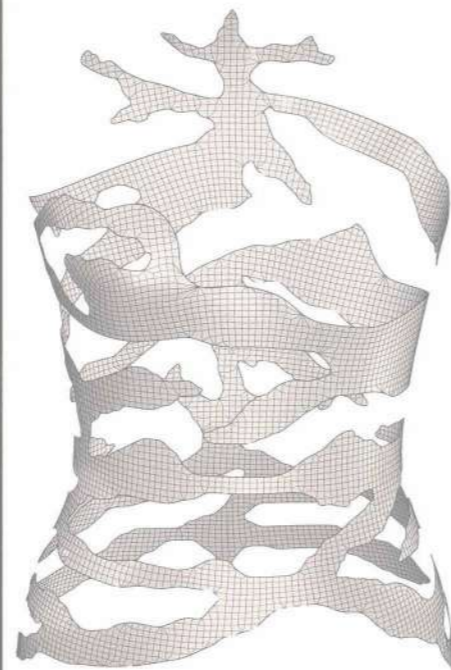
APR - JUN 2023

The project is inspired by the photographs of the artist Francesca Woodman. She works a lot with the female body, its perception and representation, also addressing the problem of body dysmorphia and unnatural standards in our society. I developed one look within this topic, trying to implement Woodman's aesthetics. To realize this I attempted to blur the body and distort the silhouette. The final result consists of three layers. One nude bodysuit with the blurred shape of a body printed on it, one wide translucent dress and a transparent corset made with acrylic glass. To create this corset I built a 3D model in Rhino, flattened it, laser cutted the form out of plexiglass and then shaped it through heat. It has an organic aesthetic, leaving a lot of open parts. By this it allows an interplay of squeezing the body and swelling out fabric from the dress underneath to manipulate the outline of the silhouette.

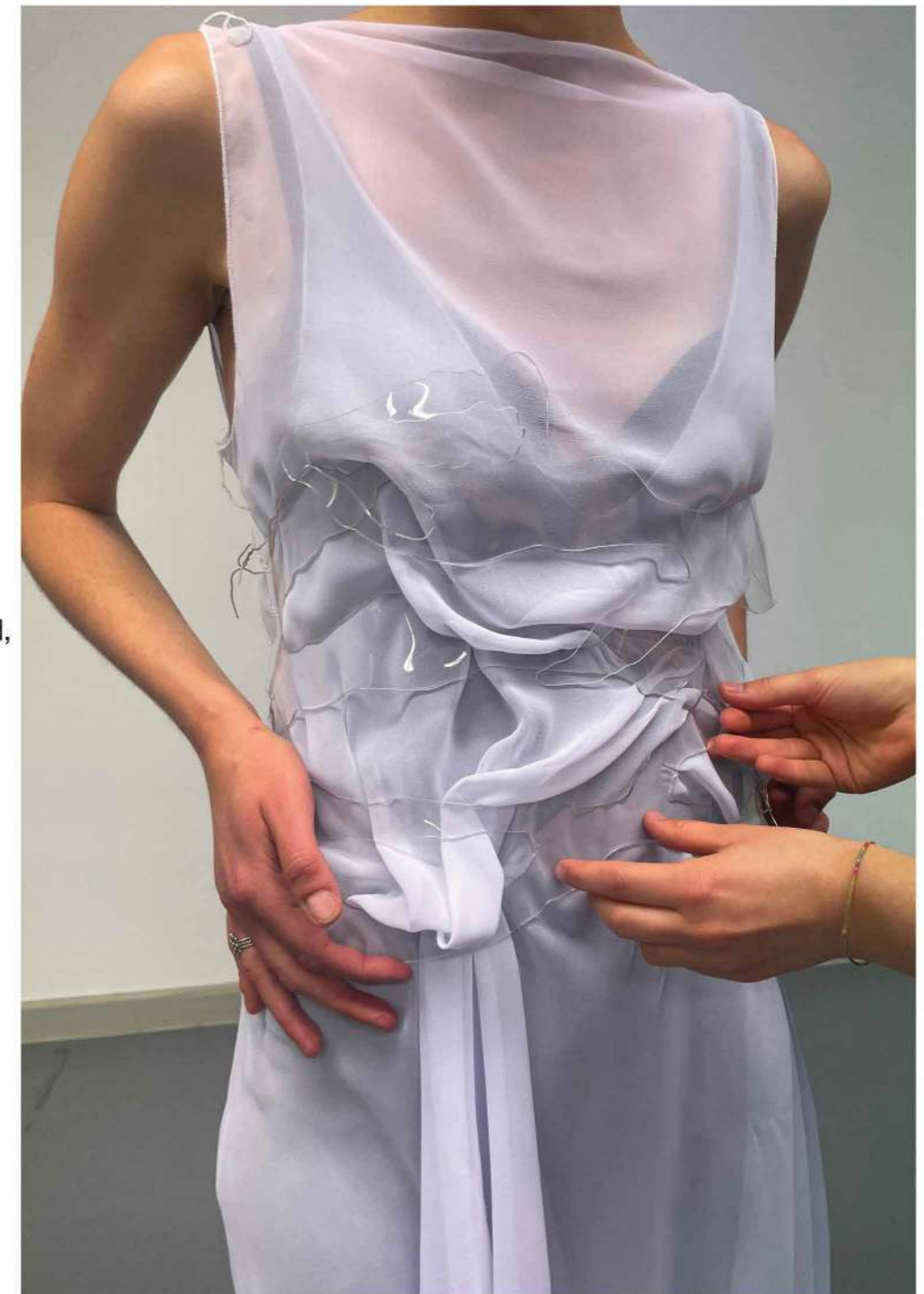


INSPIRATION





**PLEXIGLASS CORSET**  
modelled in Rhino, lasercutted,  
formed with heat











# SKELETON BAG

ÉCOLE DES ARTS DÉCORATIFS, PARIS

FEB - MAR 2024

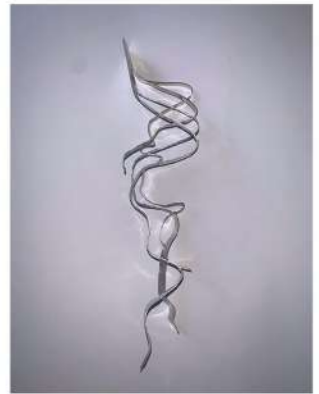
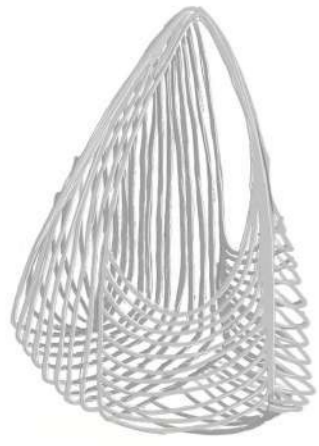
The project began as a group project with Ruben Bousquet and Maëlys Bois. We used existing bags as a starting point. The challenge was to create assemblages and collages to find new interesting volumes and forms by combining three different styles and opinions in one aesthetic. Then everyone proceeded on their own by choosing one of the created combinations and translating their features into a collection of bags within one's own aesthetic. The next step was to experiment with a chosen material and apply this research on one of the designed bags by building a prototype. I worked with Aluminium and tried to form it in a way, which is adaptable to reality without creating a lot of waste. This was achieved by cutting stripes into a sheet of Aluminium, but leaving them attached at the end. This allows one single sheet to create an interesting architectural volume.



**ORIGINAL BAGS**  
cut in parts to create new assemblages







### **MATERIAL EXPERIMENTS & PROTOTYPE**

Experimenting with the material Aluminium - having one sheet of metal which is cut in stripes and mended in a certain volume. Giving stability, form and the possibility of weaving transparent fabric to create a surface, without creating a lot of waste. Applying this material research on one of the bags and developing this architectural skeleton bag.

- Prototype made of Paper



**MARA MENGER**

[mara@maramenger.de](mailto:mara@maramenger.de)

0049 1525 4970563