

My Room

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Abstract

My work is about the private space, it's expression and what makes it private.

This place carry fragments that indicates passing time and also traces of a life going on in the present. An unmade bed, a suspended shirt, a tossed off blanket etc. What inspires me with these objects is that they have a fixed form but spontaneously been left in their relaxed positions for a longer or shorter time. I have been working with the idea of a central position that occurs when something is collapsing to get a silhouette that's is somewhat casual and effortless in it's expression.

I have also been working with the room as a free-zone, a self-isolating place that creates a distance to others and the present. It's a tension between what is private and public. I used that tension in my design decisions by bringing in details and garments that are showing on the intimate/private side. A side that usually are not exposed for others.

The result of my work is a collection of seven outfits. There are two elements in the collection where one part stands for the basic and private in undergarments. The other stands for a more impulsive act with garments that are exchangeable with each other and a part of a wardrobe where you can pick and change clothes after mood.

I have used a sketch method where I made collage work on paper to find forms, details and structures. To get an actual feeling of the volume in the silhouettes I also draped with fabrics and garments on walls. I wanted a silhouette that were relaxed in it's expression and had weight. I also used different patten pieces in my draping to find a sense of collapse of the fixed form.

In both taking design decisions, when sketching and draping, I have been using contrasts like fixed/collapsed, the past/present and private/public.

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Vision

My intention during this project has been to create an experimental women's wear collection of seven outfits, built from a strong concept that I can continue to develop and use later on in my future work. In my process I wanted to communicate my concept with my collection, to find a silhouette that were relaxed and effortless in it's expression. I wished to work with a draping technique with fixed forms and letting them collapse to their relaxed position.

My vision was to find a gradual alternation in the collection both in weight, colour scale and material.

To make it easier for me in my design process, I wanted to bring myself closer to my concept. My method would be developed with myself as a person to a greater extent and I would dare to turn inwards my vision when having problems and in decision-taking. I hoped to achieve self-certainty in the design process and to find a flow between research and execution of the silhouette by starting to work early in 3D scale, combined with collage sketching on paper.

Design process



My work began with a picture of a woman, posing, completely covered in her clothes. On her head she wears a hat with a veil covering her face to. For me this picture expressed an idea of freedom from control and influence of others. A free person in the sense that she is not so affected by other people and their opinions in her actions/behaviour.

This reminded me of an exhibition I had seen earlier by the French artist Henri Toulouse-Lautrec (*see reference list number 1-4*).



Henri Toulouse-Lautrec

It was the expression of emancipation in his paintings that caught my attention. What fascinated me most was the way he open-mindedly re-created the bohemian culture and the people of that time in his works. He collected fragments of moments and moods of daily life that exposed on the person's true identity. There could be details like a back, a movement, a glance mm. On this basis, he created his own world that he perfected in his paintings. He showed a world that was not considered right by others and the bohemian living a self-chosen life of unconstraint, follow their own will and take the day as it comes.



Collage sketches

With inspiration from Toulouse I found an interesting and useful sketch method. I gathered my own fragments by copying textile materials and looking in magazines for the right structures, which I then worked in the copier and computer to get a feeling of the used and worn as I found in the artist's works. Then I used this material to sketch with, in collage form on paper to look for interesting details, silhouettes and structures. At this point I did not have a clear vision of how I wanted my collection to look like so it was more of a search for ideas.

I noticed after a while that all the silhouettes had the thing in common that they were covered in layers off clothes.



"The Toilet", Ilya Kabakov.

Another work that had caught my interest was an installation from the Russian artist Ilya Kabakov (*see reference list number 5*). It's called *The Toilet* and it's a reproduction of his childhood memory. It's a Russian bathroom from the Soviet era which Kabakov have decorated as an apartment. His work is clearly influenced by his life and upbringing in the Soviet Union in the mid-1900s and are full of fragments from the nostalgia and memories of past times.

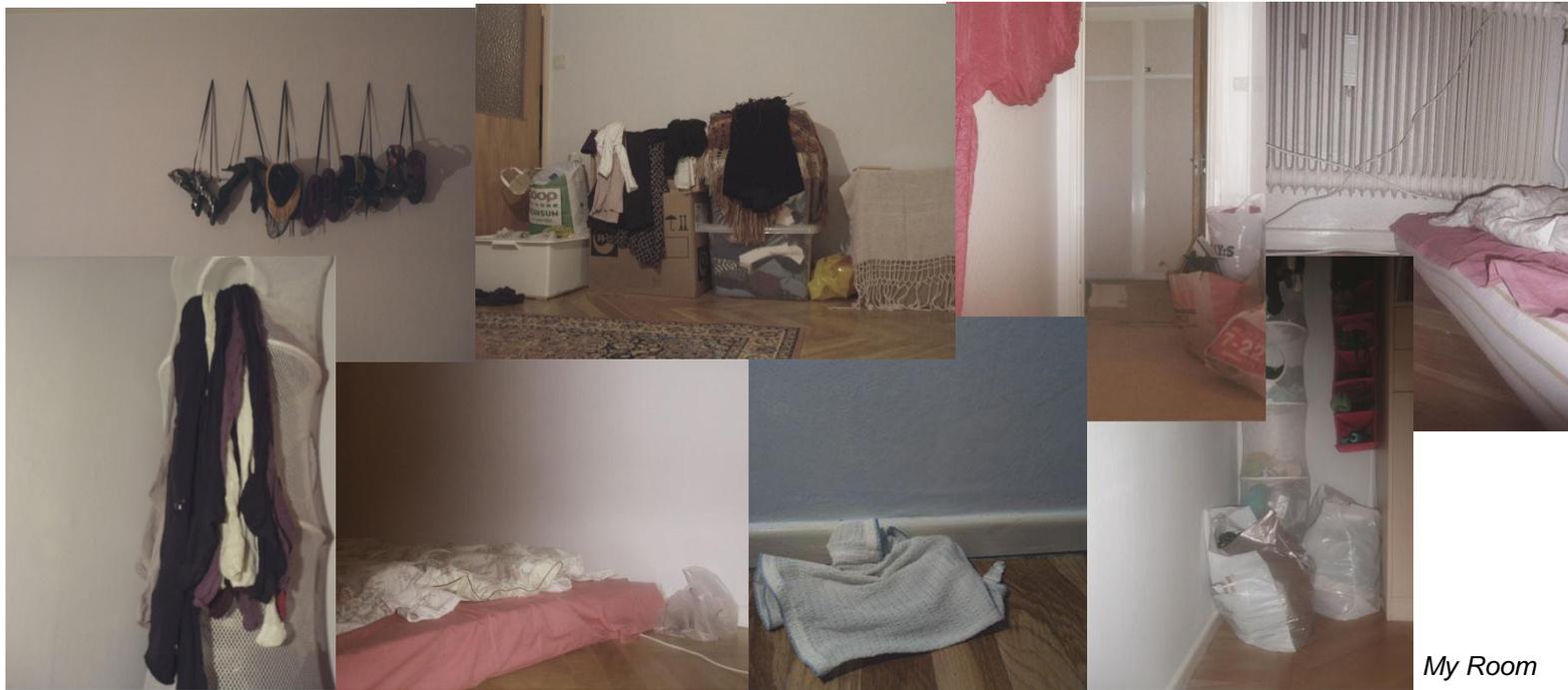
What interested me in this distorted room were the expression of distance and unconstraint. What I feel when I look at Kabakovs installation is a sense of time standing still and at the same time traces of a life that is still ongoing in the room. Things that spontaneously have been left in a position for a longer or shorter time. It can be an unmade bed, a suspended shirt, a tossed off blanket etc.

It's like stepping into someone's home and this person will at any time return through the door.

It's a tension between the private and public space and Kabakov takes the public place and makes it his own.

It's an intimate thing to step into someone's home without their permission and maybe you see things that was not meant for you to see. Usually when you have someone visiting, you clean up and put things away. You make it look tidy and proper for others, but it also gets very impersonal. I see a charm in the individual and imperfect expression in things that are not arranged. In your own private space you decide how to look like, what to do and how you want to live. The space is like a free zone. It creates a distance to the present and It's a kind of self-isolation.

The similarities between Kabakov and Toulouse-Lautrec is that they both have a tendency to make the perverse and temporary to feel like something genuine and lasting.



My Room

The work of Kabakov inspired me to go deeper in my concept and make my own interpretation of the private space. I documented my own space to see what it was that made it private to me. I photographed everything as it was when I had left home that morning to catch it in its real and exposed position.

I saw clear similarities in expression and decoration between my place and Kabakov's installation and my own room became an extension of *The Toilet*. What caught my attention was objects that had a fixed form but left in their relaxed positions for a longer or shorter time. It could be a bag, a garment, a cover etc. , but in its collapsed position (see pictures above).

I saw a person living in harmony with the abnormal and temporary as something natural and genuine. Someone I can deeply relate to, but not me.

I have built my collection around this person and her life in this room. I see my collection being made in the room, by the things that are already there. Clothes like dresses, trousers and sweaters are lying in the same bunch as the sleep wears and as she dress she puts on whatever is within reach. It's an impulsive act and it's a picking amongst under- and over garments.

I started to see two sides of my collection. One elementary part that consists of the basic and private undergarments, as in linen, under dress, details from underwear etc. The other part of the collection consists of both everyday clothes and a more dressy part that gives you the possibility to mix and change the clothes between each other, as pull on and off garments. The undergarments indicate the intimate side, with the intention of showing what you usually don't wear visible for others, as if you've taken a personal piece of the room outside, into the present



Developed collage sketches



Older collage sketches

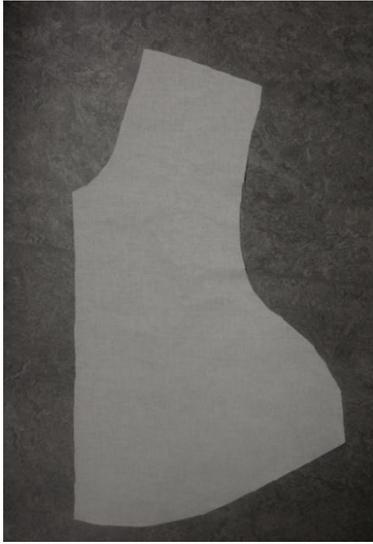
During the time when I was draping a lot, I forgot my collage sketches and they were left behind in the process. I noticed that they were all very covered and had a lot of layers, but in my work I had moved on to a barer silhouette. I wanted a mixture of both of them so I had to go back to my sketches and develop them further. After that I put together the new sketches with favourites from the old ones. I got a clearer vision of how I wanted my collection to look like. The collage have been a steady point that I have returned to from time to time and also made it easier for me to focus on the right things.



Brideshead Revisited (2008)

I got an advice to check out a movie called *Brideshead Revisited (2008)* (see reference list number 6) for inspiration. The story is about struggle of mixing young-adult life, to meet expectations and forbidden love. It's a movie that romanticise the everyday life with a constant everyday drinking and daydreaming, witch in a way also leads to a decay.

This movie made me think of a longing of being someone- or somewhere else for a while. I like the idea of daydreaming when you're walking around at home all day, dressing in a way that satisfies your mood. It could be a mix of the sleep wears and more dressy garments just to feel more decent or just dressing up in something you felt like without caring about being judged by someone else. I would like to take this private way of dressing outside the private space and make it to something ordinary.

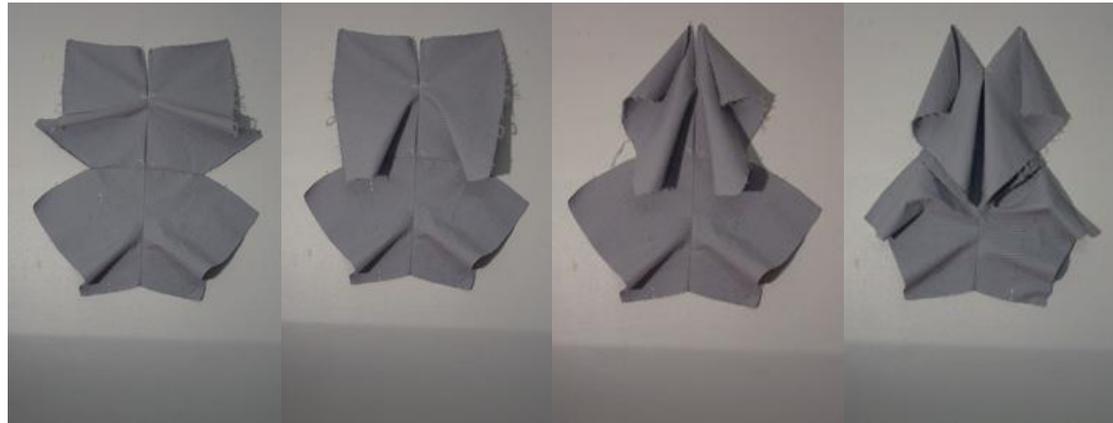


To find silhouettes I developed a technique that was based on the fragments in the room. I started draping with different kind of pattern pieces, merging them and letting them fall on specific points to find a sense of collapse of the fixed form. It was a searching to find the right central position, not to firm and not to collapsed. I also used strings that I attached pieces on. They make the garment look heavy and unstable, like it's falling apart when you move in it.



Another technique I used was draping with fabrics and garments on walls to study the position that occurred between the firm and collapsed material. It was a good and revealing method for me as I wanted a loose and quite heavy expression. New silhouettes appeared for me to work with.

Garment development



Fringe dress

This dress is one of the first garments I made as a result of my draping method. The main purpose was using pattern pieces to drape with, that had a given form and letting it fall on specific points. I added the fringes to give more texture to the garment and to enhance the feeling of collapse. This outfit has an idea of being a part of the rooms interior, like a bedspread or something like it.



Garment development

Short dress in collapse

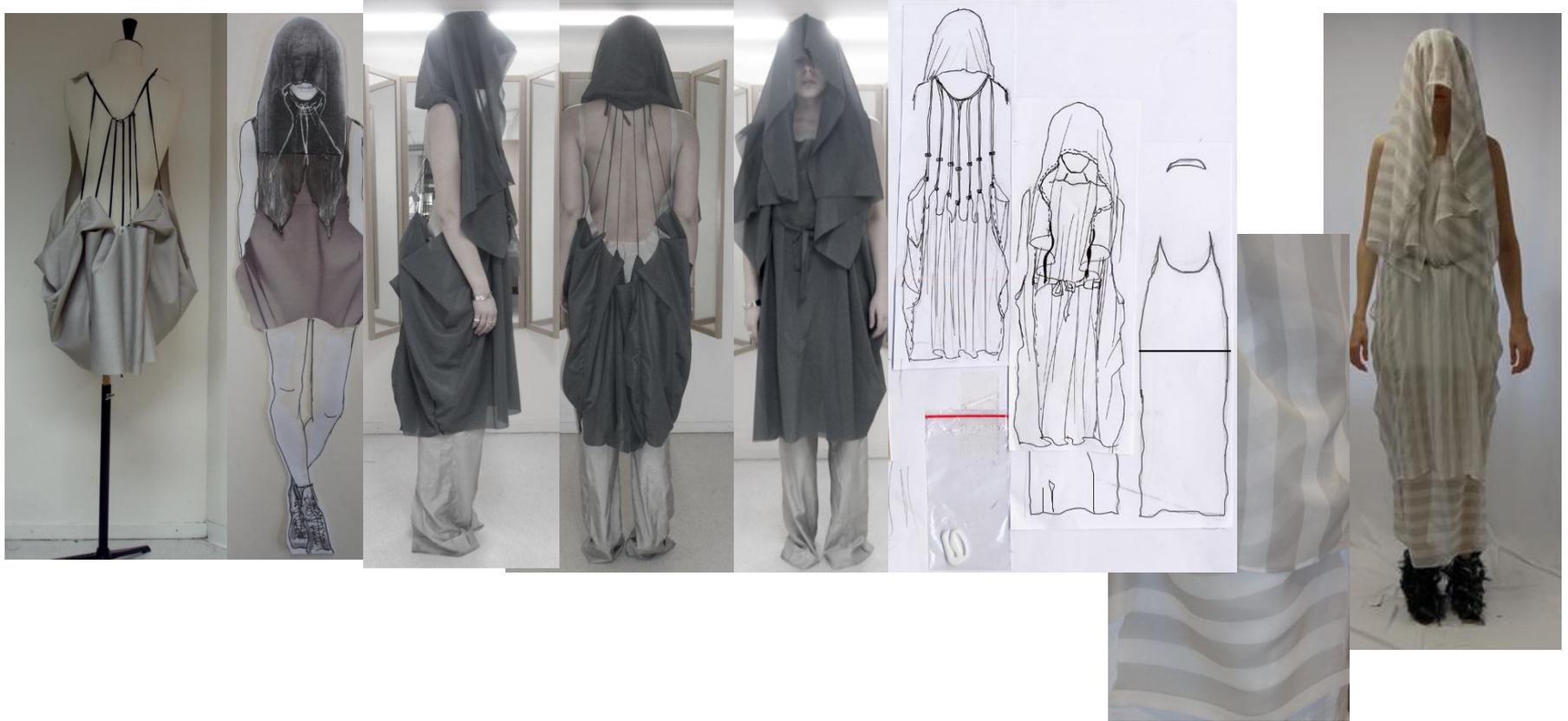
This outfit I made with inspiration from my room and I liked the idea of something suspended. I used a technique where I draped with different pattern pieces on mannequin. I started by hanging the pieces in strings at the back to get a heavy collapsed feeling. The strings also makes the dress look very delicate and unstable, almost like it's falling apart. The front is clear from details just to enhance the falling at the back. I added details like regulators and hooks on the strings like a reminder of undergarments. I wanted to bring in something that were intimate and private.



Long suit skirt and sweater

My intent was to make the skirt to look like a suit pant. It's when you move in it or watch it more closely that you really can see if it's a skirt or a pant. A tension of intermediate between the two garments.

The sweater is inspired from one of my collage sketches. It's a bigger model with raglan sleeve and it's a bit shorter to get a gap between the waistband and the sweater. The outfit is covering almost the whole body except the belly to show something intimate, without feeling bare or exposed.



Longer dress in collapse with hood

This is a development from the shorter dress in collapse and it also has a hood covering parts of the face. The hood symbolize the self-isolation that I wrote about earlier and the fabric is transparent so it's easier to see from inside than it is to see in. This garment also have the details of the regulators and the hooks but in a white colour. Underneath there is an under dress covering the most intimate parts of the body.



Big carpet dress

This garment evolved from the fringe dress and it's held up by a corset because of its weight and volume. I wanted it to look like something you took from the bed or floor and just wrapped around you. The further down you get on the dress, the more fragmented it becomes in the cuttings. When I made all the pieces at the back I had a system to know where to place every patten piece. I used pieces of tape with letters and numbers on them, from A-Ö and 1-110. Underneath there is a t-shirt, an undergarment that gives the outfit a more casual look.



Collection overview

Result

I have done an experimental women's wear collection of seven outfits, with a variety of garments. They are a part of a wardrobe, with both under- and over garments that gives you a possibility to pick and swop clothes. The collection shows on a silhouette that is somewhat effortless and casual in it's expression.

It's divided into two elements where one stands for the basic, with details and undergarments that are showing on a private/intimate side that are generally not exposed for others. The other is the main part that allows you to dress spontaneously and after mood.



1.



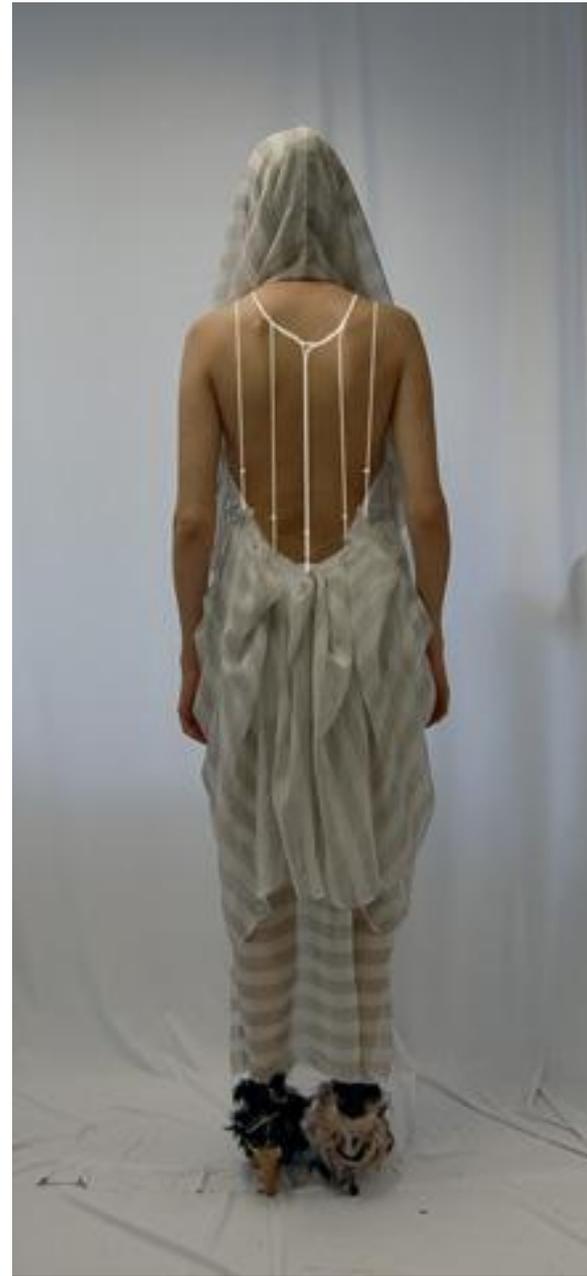
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3.



4.



5.



6.



7.

Materials and colour

Material

I have chosen fabrics with the intent to create a contrast/symbiosis between the rough and delicate, like transparent silk versus a rough and burlled synthetic fabric. The difference between them makes them enhance each other. For the materials that symbolizes the basic and private part I have chosen for example jersey in modal/cotton or a polyester/cotton, in both a thick and a thinner quality. They are softer materials and typical for undergarments.

Other material in the collection is pure wool. It has the expression of being a thicker fabric but I've chosen a thin quality that has a soft grip and it gives the garment a nice loose expression.

In the collection I also have a rough upholstery fabric, as being picked from the room. That is also why I chose to bring in a thicker woven material in cotton. They both holds a bit of resistance witch makes them easier to drape with and they keep the shape without collapsing to much.

Colour

My scale of colours are pretty toned down in a both warm-cold and dark-light scale. The colours go from black to white in a gray and beige scale. Most of them are metameric and changes tone depending on witch colour they assembles with.

The scale is chosen with inspiration from the changing light from both my own room and Kabakov's *The Toilet*. It symbolizes the state of central position that exists in the room as a free-zone, also in the state of daydreaming and in the self-isolation, to be there but not really show.

Discussion

I have found a method that really works for me and by draping a lot I found that my strength was developing forms and building the silhouette. I enjoyed working in 3D scale because the steps between research and execution of the silhouette became shorter and I could quickly see my work in the context of my concept and find a flow in my process. Many times I have difficulties taking decisions without testing the ideas in real scale. It can take several tests before I reach a result and in the beginning I thought that it was something of a failure. This have been a struggle for me and It's only now that I have realised that it's a part of my own way of working. Sometimes it can be frustrating and time consuming, but I believe that by accepting this I will adapt to my method and it will not be a struggle next time.

During the project I have had problems staying on track and focusing on the right things.

One issue have been taking decisions concerning smaller things like details on the garment. This made me put all my attention on a few specific garments and all the others suffered in the process. At this point my collage sketches were very important. They functioned as a temporary lineup with ideas and reminded me of my expression when I came to far outside my concept.

These side-tracks aren't always something bad. It's important to try them out just to see what I don't want in the collection and this makes me stronger in my choices.

In the process of finding the right type of collapse, it was often difficult to find a good balance in the garments.

It's a fine line when working with balance. It was also extra important for me as I wanted a collection with a style that were relaxed and a bit random, but without looking temporary and to provisional.

It was very important to me in my process to bring in the private pictures of my own room, to be able to relate to my work in a more real and deeper level. This made me more secure with my working method and my intuitive feelings and I progressed in line with my work.

I believe that the private space is something that each and every person creates on their own by adding objects that are chosen by them, for a reason. If it's not the things in the room that creates the expression, then what is? Maybe the light, the size of the room, the smell etc. This is something I find interesting and it's a good focus if I would have taken my process further.

Efter att ha studerat och reflekterat över mitt resultat såg jag att min färdiga kollektion visade på något som inte riktigt stämde överrens med det uttryck jag talat om. Många av plaggen var för uppstyrda/fina och på vägen hade jag förlorat det avslappnade, provisoriska, lite slitnare och lekfulla uttrycket. Det som talade för mitt koncept och känsla i rummen. Jag fokuserade för mycket med att få ihop ngn sorts struktur i hur jag skulle bygga upp min kollektion istället för gå efter min känsla och inspiration. Jag var rädd att det skulle glida mig ur händerna och att resultatet skulle se för provisoriskt och spretigt ut.

Jag tycker om att de båda delarna har sin roll i kollektionen, som kontraster men ändå att de samspelar med varandra. Den finare delen förstärker den andra samt att båda delarna blir mer befogade. De båda delarna behövs för att stärka varandra och skapa olika känslor.

Mitt slutresultat är nu mer interagerat i rummen och min inspiration, något som inte var så tydligt tidigare.

Ordet kollaps är något jag använt som nyckelord i min process, men kanske inte varit helt tydlig med vad jag menat med det. Jag har inte varit ute efter något som känns totalt kollapsat utan mer något som är på väg ned, startar att kollapsa, tappar formen och även känns avslappnat i den meningen att det är väl använt eller lite för stort. Ordet avslappnad/relaxed är mer beskrivande. Ett mellanläge mellan kollaps och något som är fast.

Det som ska visa på det mer slitna och "smutsigare" i plaggen är något jag plockat upp från både Kabakov´s rum och mitt eget. I bilderna finns ett spel i ljuset vilket får rummen att kännas både harmoniska samtidigt som det ligger ngt dovt i luften, de mörka skuggorna får det att verka lite skumt. Provisoriska lösningar som en dyna på golvet, skabbigt gammalt täcke, avslängda lortiga underkläder på golvet, en golvlampa utan skärm etc. Det skulle kunna vara ett skumt tillhåll för t ex prostitution och det är också okej att det ser ut så. Rummen går att tolka på olika sätt.

Jag har varit tvungen att komplettera min kollektion för att styra den åt det resultat som jag från början var mer inriktad mot. Jag har arbetat lite försiktigt och varit osäker i mina beslut, vilket gör att min kollektion inte var riktigt fokuserad och bestämd gentemot mitt koncept. Jag skalade bort för mycket och var tvungen att tänka mer på detaljer och plagg för att visa starkare på mitt koncept och vad jag ville säga med kollektionen. Underkläderna hade fått för stor fokus. De var bara en del i att förstärka uttrycket. Jag fann att jag även hade andra influenser som visade på den avslappnade och nonchalanta approachen, men på ett mycket tydligare sätt. Jag började arbeta mer med känslan av något som var ärvt, för stort, gammalt och slitet etc.

Idén med just underkläderna som fokus kom in i processen väldigt sent så jag hann inte reflektera över deras roll och hur jag kunde utveckla och ta det vidare.

Det jag skrivit tidigare i rapporten är att jag delat in kollektionen i två delar, där ena delen stod för basen och det privata i underkläder/sovkläder. Den andra delen bestod mer av över plagg/dra-på-plagg där man kunde byta kläder emellan och som fungerade som den lekfullare delen.

Jag har insett att det inte gjorde det lättare för mig att få ihop den helhet jag var ute efter. Det kändes bättre att interagera de två delarna för att förstärka känslan och moodet i varje outfit. Det var mer intressant att arbeta fokuserat med varje outfit och dess specifika uttryck och hur de samspelade med varandra.

Vissa av plaggen i kollektionen är spår från besökare som befunnit sig i rummet och lämnat kvar eller glömt saker, som t ex vänner, pojkvänner, familj mm. En gammal ärvd kostym från farfar, en pojkväns kvarglömda jacka och kalsonger etc. Kollektionen ingår i en garderob för en och samma person även om vissa av plaggen kan ha tillhört någon annan tidigare. Plaggen talar om en historia och uttrycker därför också olika känslor som den här personen klär sig i.

Context

At first I thought my collection was just suited for an exhibition or installation but as work progressed, I saw the advantage of a catwalk. I usually think of a catwalk as a place with fast walking models and clothes that are rather easy to move in. I want to put my collection in that context and see what happens. I believe that this common idea of what a catwalk is will enhance the feeling of my collection and concept. I want my models to walk in their own tempo, almost a bit draggy, as if they were walking around at home, daydreaming. It will be an interesting contrast to the arranged and fast catwalk.

It is only now, when the collection is completed, that I can see my work in the context of other designers. I was looking at the latest collection (2009-2010) of Ann Demeulemeester (*see reference list number 8*) and she has a way of putting together her outfits that I like. In her silhouettes she has a combination between something strict and the relaxed. It made me think of my own work and the importance of balancing and mixing the two elements.

My collection is not really commercial even if some of the garments could be, but I see a possibility to develop the collection further to make it more sellable and commercial.

As the result looks right now it's more of a one piece collection where people could order a specific garment. Something that I find important is that the garment should reflect this person and mood so the garment becomes a part of her personality. It's about wearing a bit of your personality and feelings.

To enhance my concept and make it more understandable to others I think an exhibition/installation also is important for me. One idea is to have an installation in a shopping window, where my collection is put in a suitable environment, that shows on my inspiration and concept. A private room built from my own inspiration.

I can see that this way of showing it makes it more of an exhibition project than fashion. I still want it to be fashion so I have a dilemma there. Another idea could be to put my collection in the window with an environment that doesn't interact with the collection and focus just on the clothes. Maybe in a really neat and perfect IKEA home!

It's hard to imagine what would happen before I see it. Things almost never turn out to be like you've planned.

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