

ELYTRA

TAKE FLIGHT

Inspired by the natural world I take inspiration from beetles. A universally found insect that is often overlooked and underappreciated. Beetles make up for 25% of all known animal species with over 40,000 different species. Something that seems so common, yet comes in endless varieties of bright colours and patterns.

The beetle's hard exoskeleton which provides protection from predators and conceals their delicate wings is known as elytra. These shields are opened releasing delicate iridescent wings. I wish to use this concept in my graduate collection to create a series dedicated to women. Women are expected to put on a strong front and conceal their inner feelings and emotions. This collection is to encourage women to take flight and reveal their inner femininity and softness; that which has been concealed to the world.

I plan to use a bold colour shell to create the body of a garment then have soft, free and delicate fabric exploding from beneath.

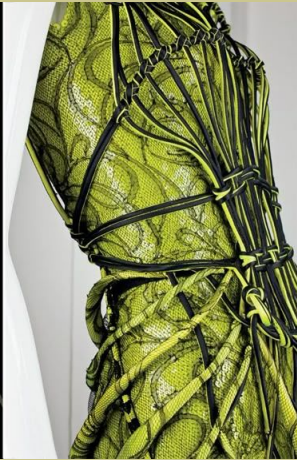
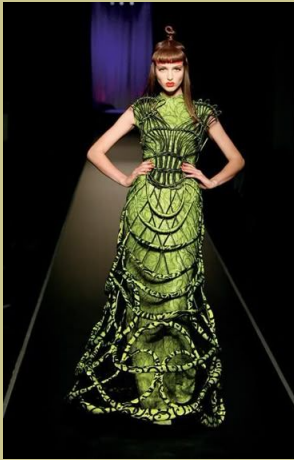
'Taking flight'



ELYTRA



Jean-Paul Gaultier

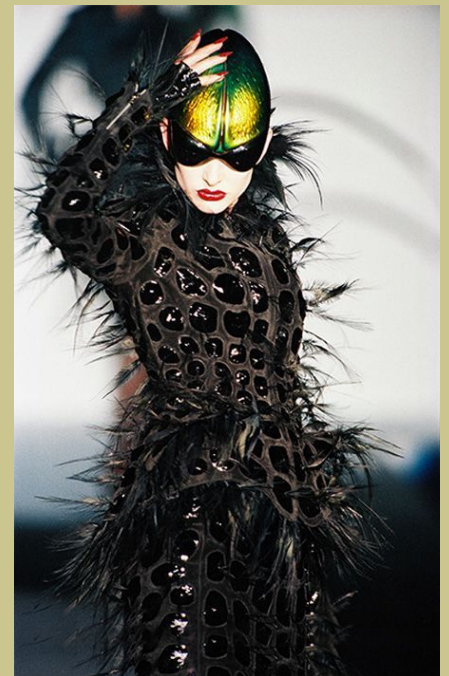


Fall 2008



Thierry Mugler

Spring 1997 'les insectes'

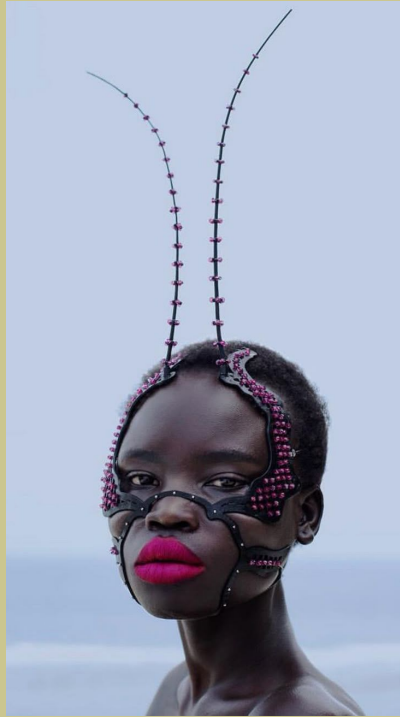




Headdresses / Glasses



Voxelworld 3D printing



House of Malakai



Area Fall 2022



Marina Hoermanseder
fall winter 2015



Iris Van Herpen Fall 2022



Mary Katrantzou



'Cyclone' Wanda Nylon



Rob Curry



Alexander McQueen Fall 2020



Ralph & Russo Spring/Summer 2018



Alexander McQueen Fall 2018



G. V. G. V. Spring 2013



G. V. G. V. Spring 2013



WINDOWSEN spring/summer 2020



Unknown



Givenchy pre-fall 2020



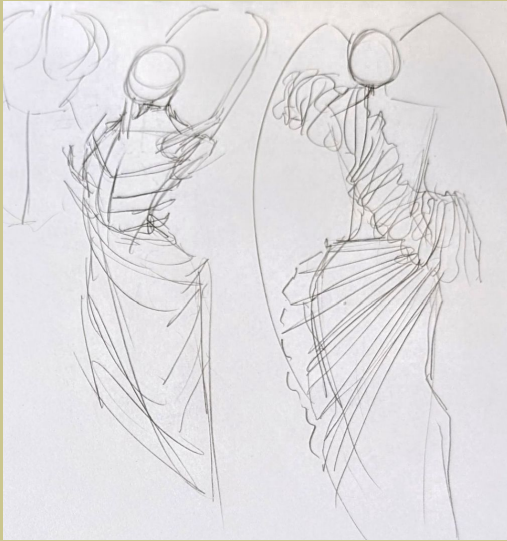
Jean-Paul Gaultier Autumn Winter 2013

Laurent Seroussi Photography

I was really inspired by this series of photographs from Laurent Seroussi. I love how they blended the human form and beetles / insects together to create these stunning portraits. I love the distinct shapes in each critter and the bold and powerful silhouette each design creates. I want to embody similar ideas into my collection.



Initial Ideas



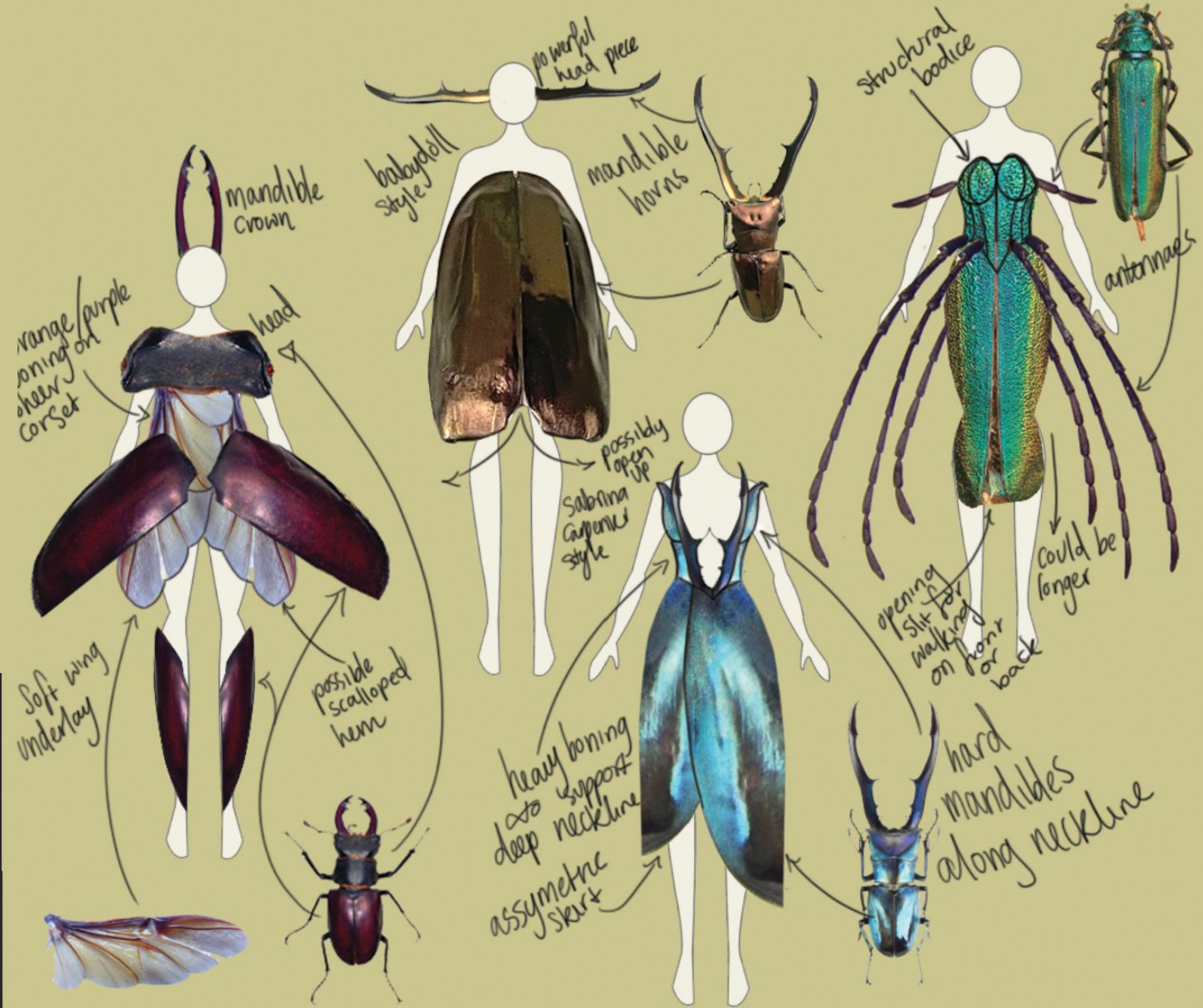
Refining Designs



Refining Designs



Refining Designs



Refining Final Designs



- Green Mikado
- Yellow organza oversized sleeve, front train
- Full face headpiece



- Gold Mikado
- Organza collar and mermaid skirt
- Cheek headpiece



- Red Mikado
- Orange asymmetrical shoulder piece, down to waist.
- Hercules beetle headpiece



- Navy Mikado
- Organza petticoat
- Stag beetle helmet

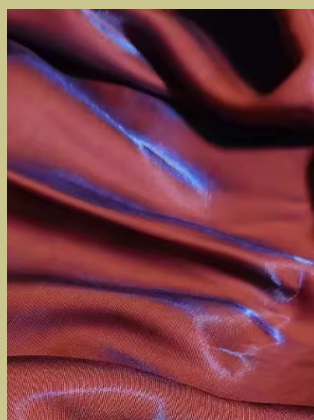
Fabrics

My idea is to use a metallic fabric, ideally two-toned with lots of depth to create a structural garment inspired by beetle shells. I looked at a few options but having worked previously with mikado fabric, I found it to capture light beautifully.

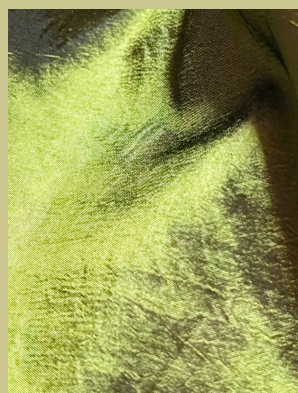
Mikado



Satin



Taffeta



Metallic denim



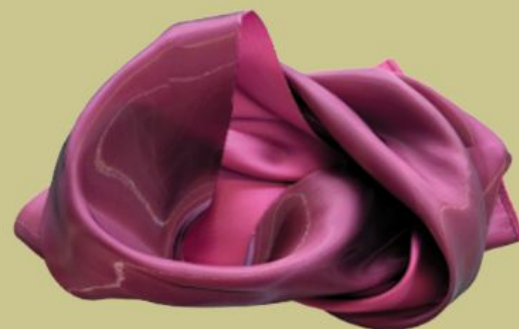
Mikado Fabric

One of the biggest seller's for this collection is the mikado fabric which looks amazing under light. The fabric almost appears wet and metallic, much like beetles. I used this fabric in previous dresses and it has a good structure to build strong shapes and silhouettes in.



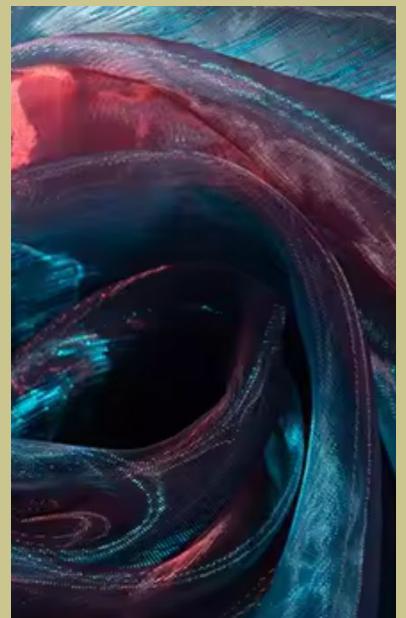
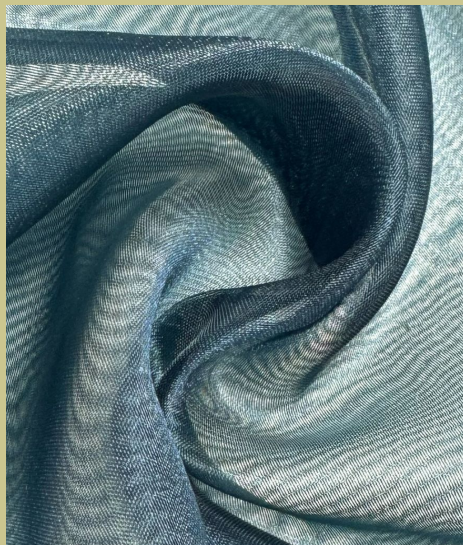
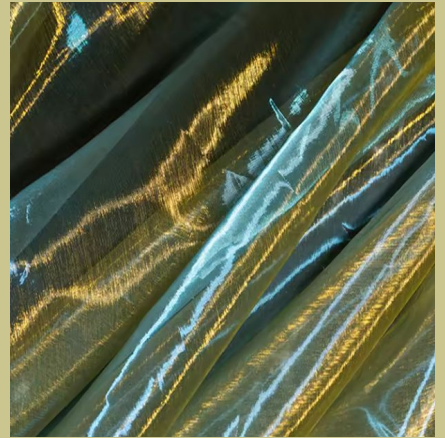
Previous dress made in silver mikado

Each dress is going to be in a different colourway but will remain cohesive because it will all be in the same fabric.



Fabrics (wings)

The second fabric I want to bring into my pieces is an organza to give the iridescence and weightless look of beetle wings. I want to create large ruffles and volume emerging out of the mikado fabric.



3D Printed Headpieces

My plan is to create a matching headpiece for each of my body's. This will involve me learning to digitally model each design to fit a real person's head and then have it 3D printed. I hope to use resin printing as regular 3D printing can be brittle as it uses plastic. Resin printing uses a stronger material and is less prone to breaks.



Merve Oztemel,
headpiece made through 3D printing



Project 842 printable 3D model

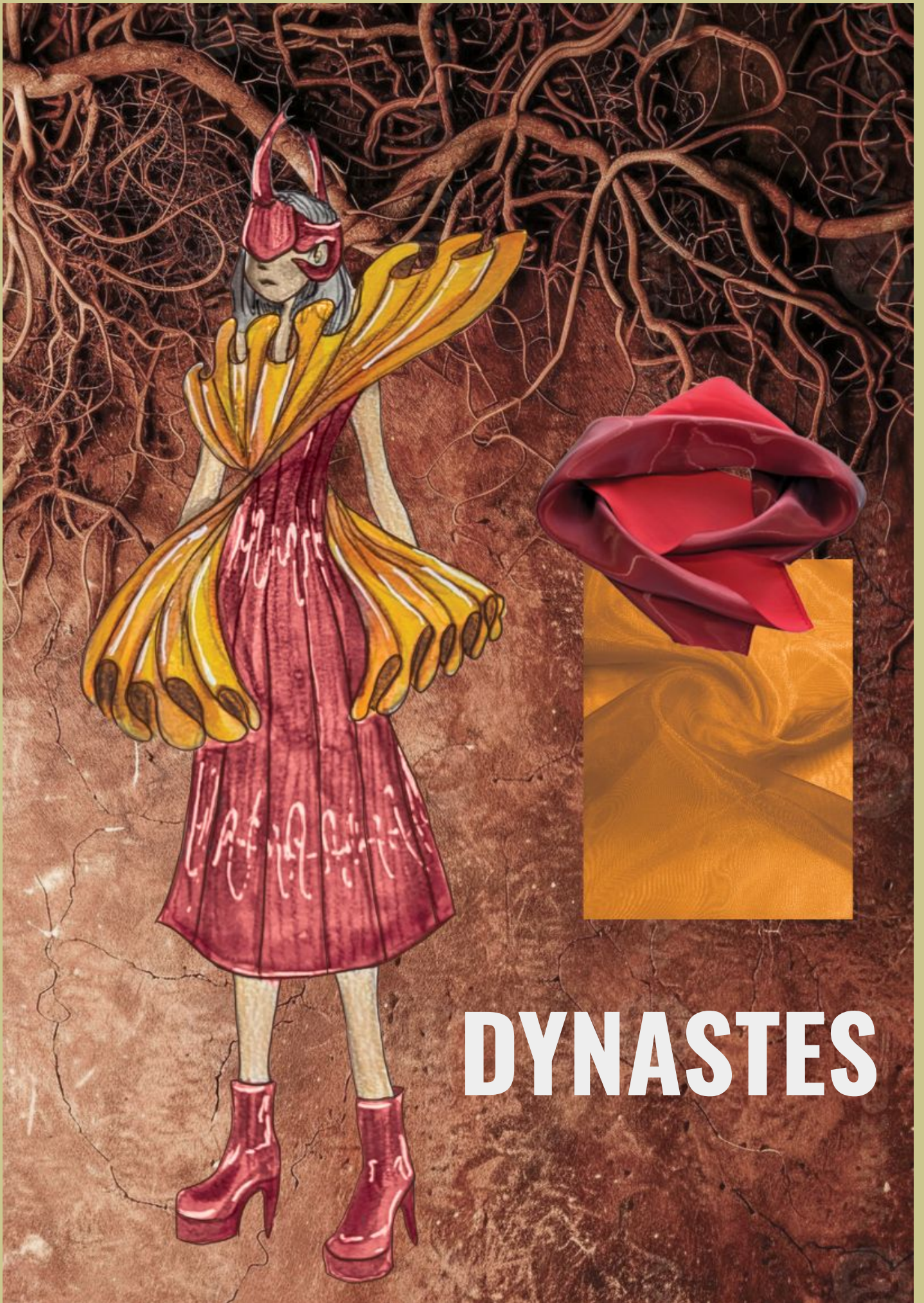


RHINA





CYCLOM

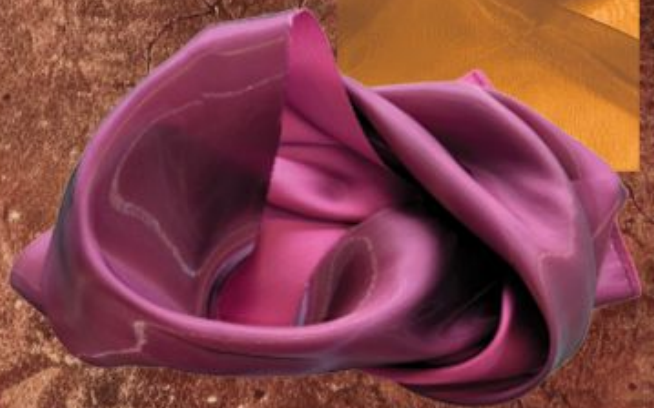


DYNASTES



LUCAN

CERAM



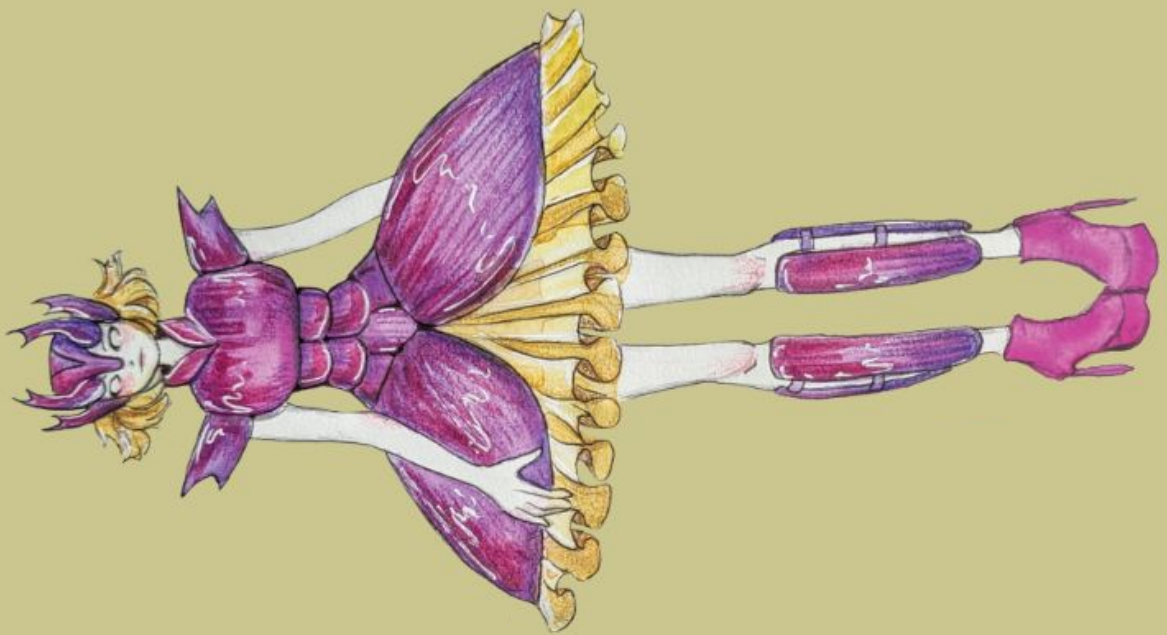
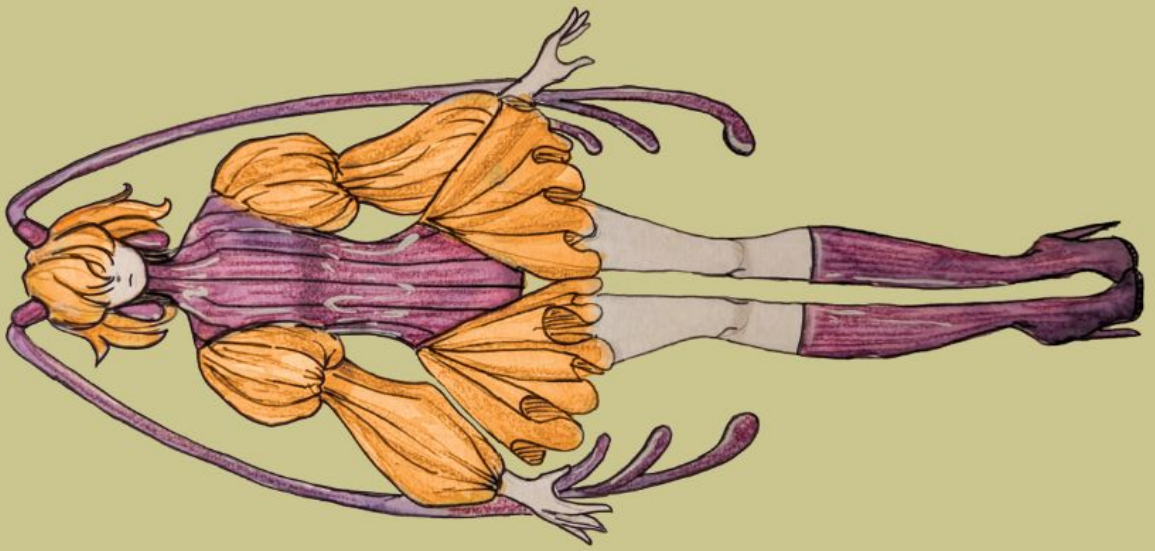
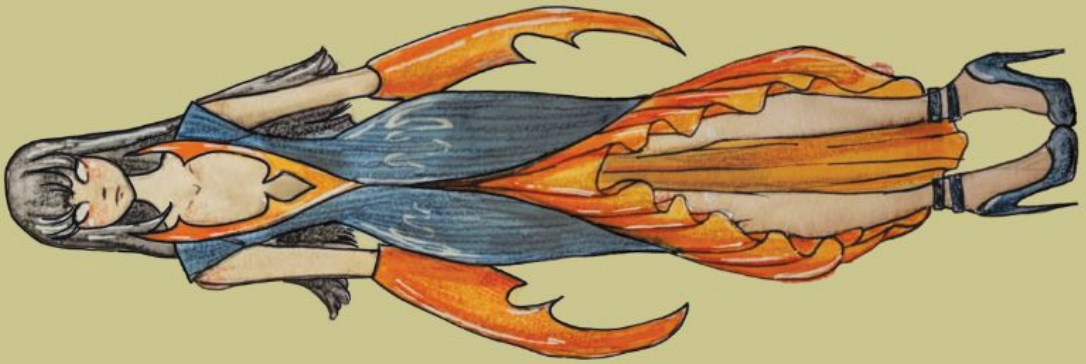
TECTO



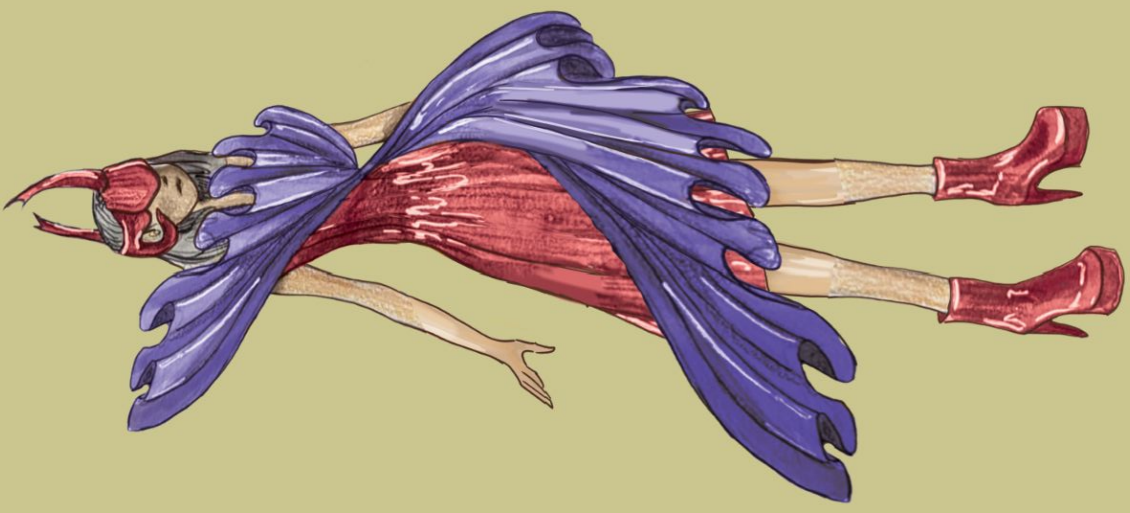
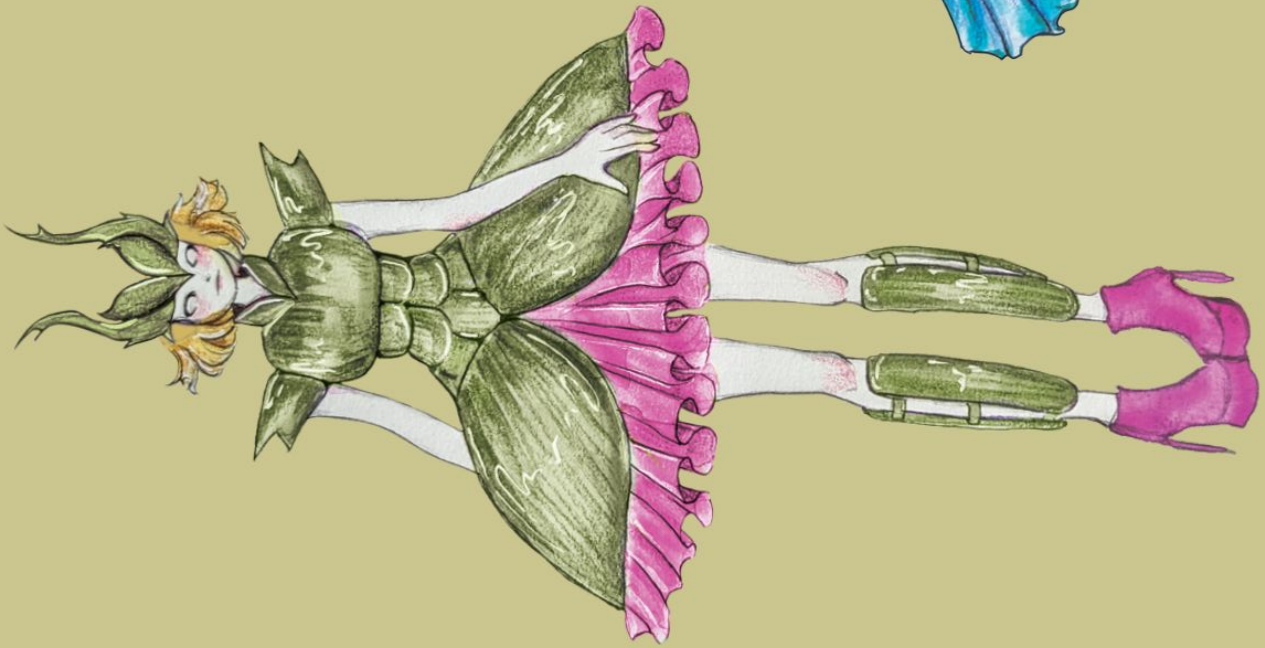
ELYTRA LINEUP



ELYTRA LINEUP



ELYTRA LINEUP



Dynastes

Design amendments:



Originally the hemline of this dress was more simplistic with all of the ruffles around the waist and upper in the dress. Instead the ruffles from the top are going to spiral down the body and continue to the bottom.



Constructed dress block. Frills will be mounted on top and spiral around the body.



Photoshoot inspiration

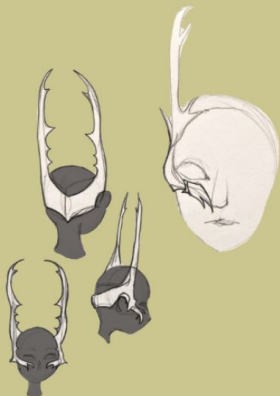
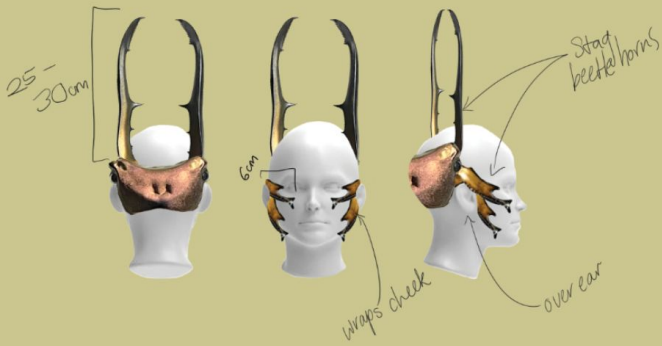
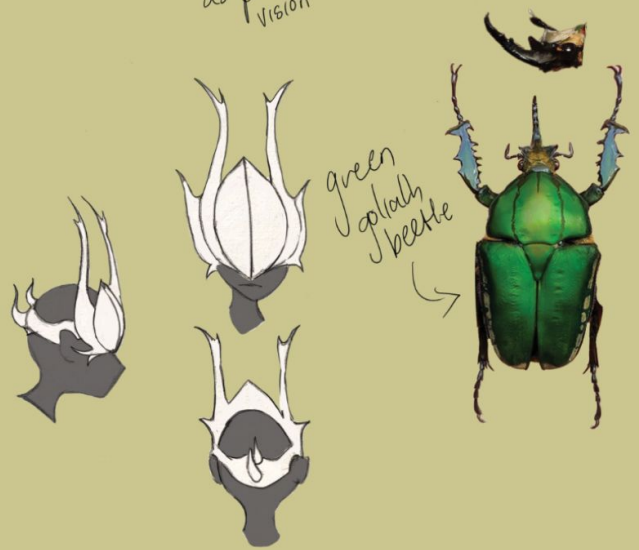
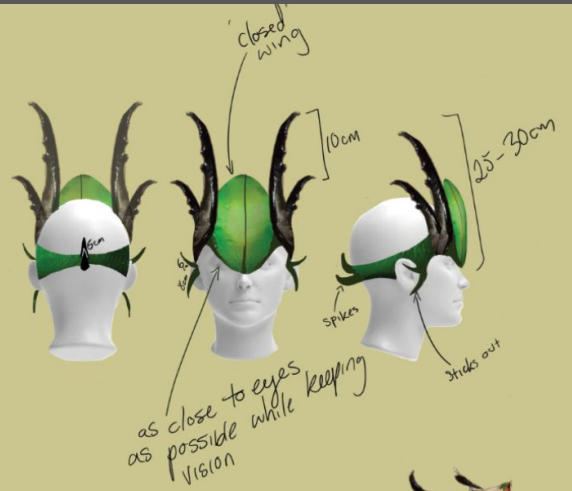


Ideally I want to hold a photoshoot in nature with moody, dramatic lighting and atmosphere.

I would like the models to be posed boldly and powerfully, especially with low angle shots to make them look strong and dominant.



Styling



ELYTRA 2

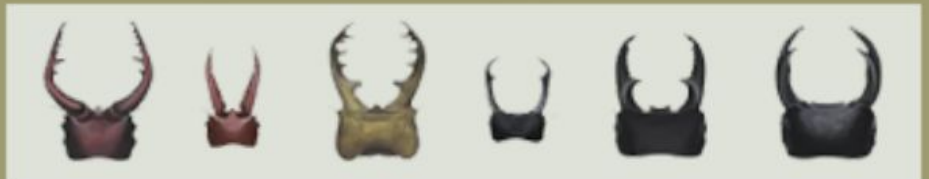
- TAKE FLIGHT -

Elytra was born from the innate anxieties and pain of hiding your true colours. Using beetle motifs as an allegory for the soft vulnerable sides underneath hard exteriors. The hard shells on beetles, called the elytra, provide protection and shield the delicate and fragile wings within. Much like as people, we seal away our own fragilities and vulnerabilities from fear of judgement and pain. Elytra was made to encourage people to brave the uncertainties in life and embrace self acceptance and expression.





ELYTRA



STATEMENT OF INTENT

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The hard shells on beetles, called the elytra, provide protection and shield the delicate and fragile wings within. Much like as people, we seal away our own fragilities and vulnerabilities from fear of judgement and pain. Elytra was made to encourage us to reveal our inner selves to those around us and be empowered with who we are.

I believe both fashion and costume are some of the most rewarding pursuits a person can take. Though people may view them as separate things, they are more similar than we think. I envision a future where people are bold enough to embrace a new direction of fashion, a combination of both high-end designs and costume. I aim to bridge the gap separating these two forms of wearable art and create something new and innovative. I have always derived a lot of inspiration from costume design and wish to bring it to a larger audience, transforming how people think and feel about fashion.

Using a range of techniques I aim to create a series of one-of-a-kind garments.

Through using contrasting bright mikado fabrics and crinoline I am making gravity defying sculptural pieces. Each dress will feature large concertina pleats exploding from the body, much like wings from the elytra. This technique is following on from my previous two dresses in this collection featuring these large statement pleats. Each garment will feature different contrasting colours, so while each piece has its own colour palette, they are still united through the mikado fabric.

3D elements inspired by beetle mandibles and legs will also be featured on custom headpieces and applique. These 3D elements will bring a new element into these designs through using experimental materials and techniques. Similar techniques have been used by large couturiers such as Iris Van Herpen, who uses 3D elements in her designs. This merges traditional techniques while also introducing new technology for a fashion forward approach.

My final three additions to this collection will bring new colours and shapes. Alongside this as well as experimenting with different ways to introduce the beetle motifs.

ETHOS

Fast fashion is a huge problem in our current society. Garments are often only worn a handful of times before being forgotten and discarded in landfill. Often these clothes are made in sweatshops and lack any kind of durability, making their creation and lifespan painful to both people and the planet. In my work it's imperative that each garment is made with care and intention.

Taking the time to ensure my garments are sturdy and built to last is important to ensuring a long lifespan and fighting against the poor quality standards of fast fashion.

My works are made to be pieces of art and are intended to last well into the future with proper care. While they are intended for event wear and not the everyday, I believe they should be worn and loved, by people who resonate with them. For this reason I could not imagine selling them, but rather allowing people to rent these garments. Knowing that these dresses would be used many a times, gives them a long and intentional lifespan, rebelling against the pressure of a wear and discard fast fashion culture.



CONTEMPORARY REFERENCES

IRIS VAN HERPEN

Dutch fashion designer, Iris Van Herpen has become famous for her ability to blend traditional techniques and experimental technology. Iris has been using 3D printing since 2010 with the debut of her Crystallization Collection. She has continued to develop this technology to push the boundaries of what constitutes as fashion.

While these pieces are made with technology, they manage to still embody an organic look and feel. I take great inspiration from her ability to replicate biology and transform it into works of wearable art.

van Herpen, Iris. "The Maison of Iris van Herpen | About." *Iris van Herpen*, 2024, www.irisvanherpen.com/about/the-maison.



GUO PEI

Guo Pei is a Chinese fashion designer known for her embellishments and embroidery techniques. I however, am drawn to her unique and bold silhouettes. Her designs showcase a lot of different structural pieces, each having uniquely different shapes.

I also admire her strong colour palettes with bright saturated colours that demand attention. Her ability to transform fabrics and create wearable works of art is beyond inspiring.

Guo, Pei. "Guo Pei." *Guo Pei*, 2025, www.guopei.com/.





Previous look Cyclom

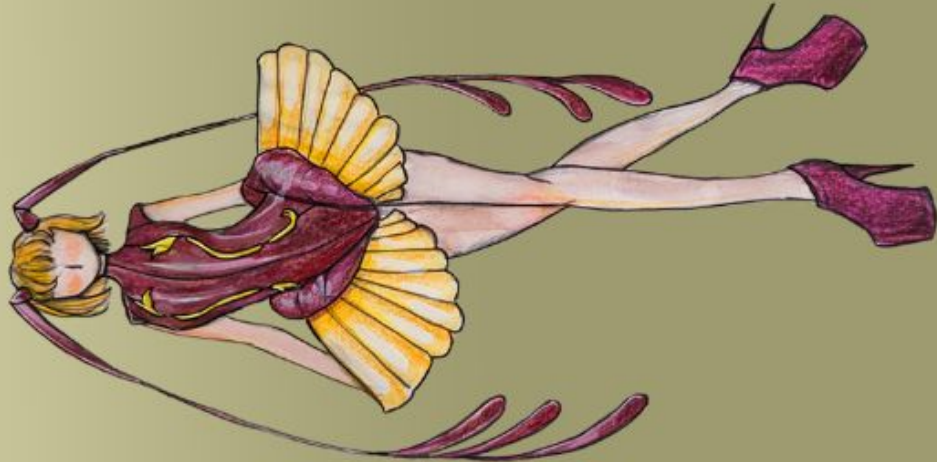
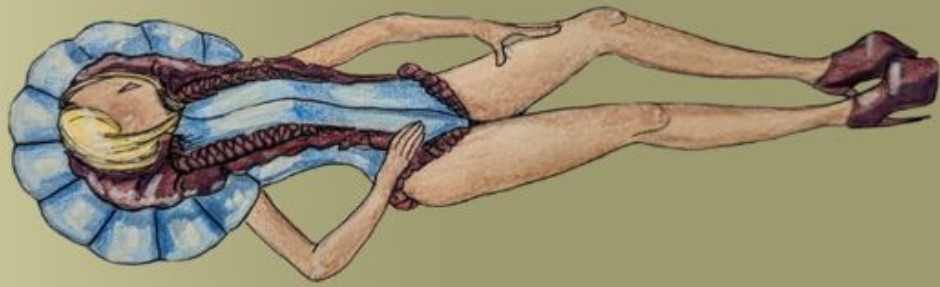
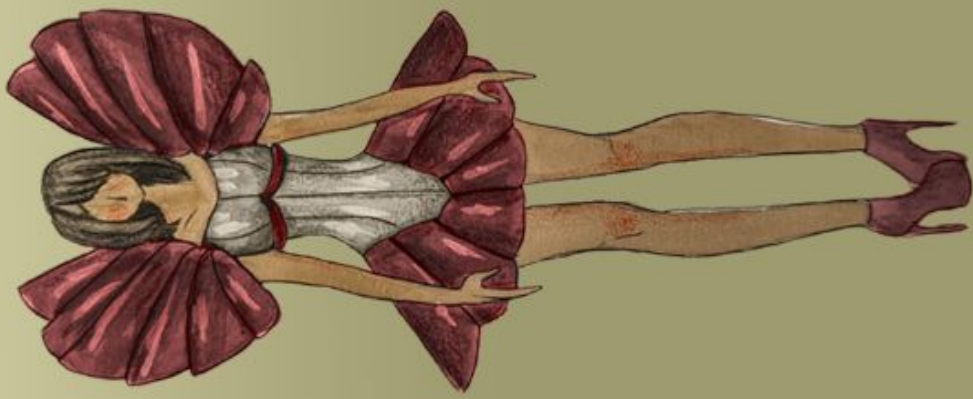


Previous look Dynastes

ELYTRA LINEUP



ELYTRA LINEUP



Cyclommatus metallifer

Inspired by the golden stag beetle
Yellow mikado and blue organza



Dynastes Hercules

Inspired by the hercules beetle
Red and Navy mikado

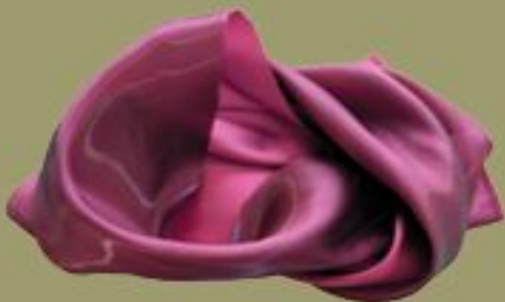


LOOK 3

RHINA

Mecynorrhina torquata

Inspired by the green flower beetle
Green and purple mikado

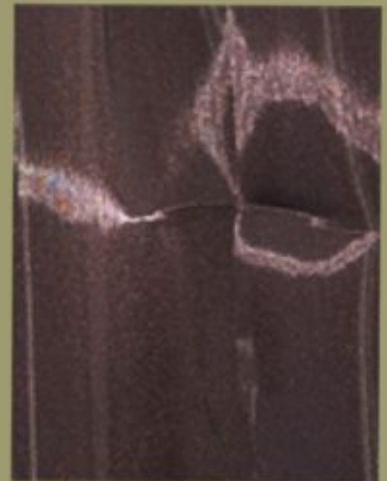


LOOK 4

PSEUDO

Pseudomyagrus waterhousei

Inspired by the blue longhorn beetle
Blue and Burgundy mikado

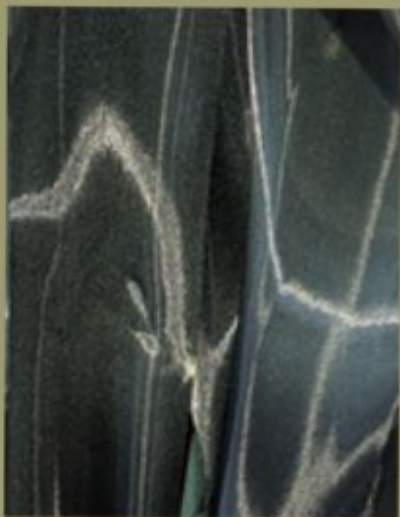


LOOK 5

COTINUS

Cotinus Nitida

Inspired by the green june beetle
Emerald mikado and orange liquid organza

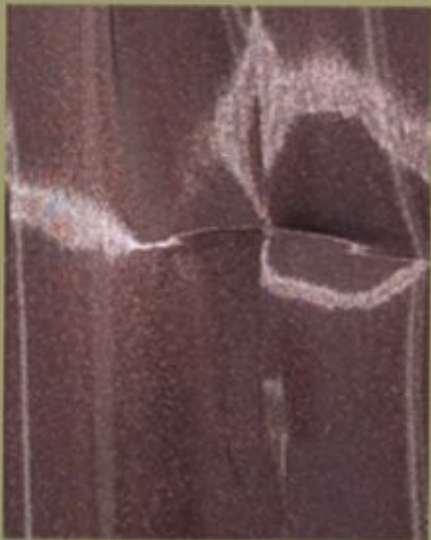


LOOK 6

CERAM

Cerambycidae

Inspired by the longhorn beetle
Burgundy and beige mikado



LOOK 7

HARPA

Harpalus distinguendus

Inspired by the green ground beetle
Emerald mikado and orange liquid organza



LOOK 8

CHRYSINA

Chrysin Limbata

Inspired by the silver chafer beetle
Silver and Red mikado



3D PRINTING

In conjunction with a 3D printing company, ForgeLabs, I worked to create a series of beetle inspired headpieces. The original prototype was underwhelming and not what was initially envisioned. After this realistic replicas were made and printed which will be used to create new headpieces and body applique.

Three pairs of large hercules beetles were printed along with 32 smaller sized ones. These beetles will be painted to match the fabrics corresponding with the outfit - red, yellow, purple.



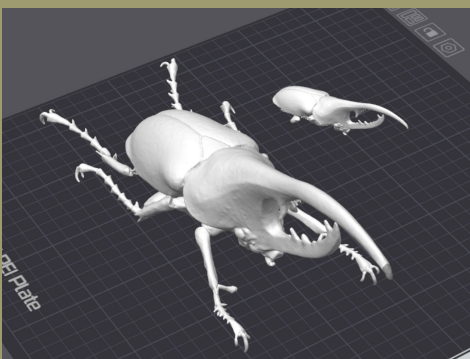
Original headpiece prototype
Fit issues
Not organic
Lacks realism



Reference



3D CAD file



Print file



Final printed beetle

HEADPHONES

After receiving the 3D printed beetles they had to be mounted onto headpieces. Originally I was going to use a headband so it could blend into the hair, but decided to use headphones to hold them away from the head to prevent breakages

The beetles and headphones were then primed and painted and sealed. The paint was colour matched to my fabrics to stay within the same colour palette.





Rhina Finished



PSEUDO Finished



COTINUS Finished

