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Addressing the Lack of Availability in Diverse Skin Tone Options for Performance Fabric

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Addressing the Lack of Availability in Diverse Skin Tone Options for Performance Fabric

By
Jessica Batey

Under the mentorship of Professor Hope Wallace Simpara

Abstract

The following research addresses the lack of availability in diverse skin tone options for performance fabric. The project will discuss the struggles people of color face when finding fabrics that accurately match their skin tone and the difficulties in sourcing the materials needed to successfully design a garment. The research gathered will be used to produce a collection of 4 looks using nude mesh fabrics that are readily available to the average consumer. The garments within the collection will be designed to match the skin color of 4 models. The collection's theme will be based around the 4 cardinal witches from Lyman Frank Baum's *Wizard of Oz*. Each of the 4 witches' characteristics will be portrayed through the corresponding garments within the collection. The design development process for all 4 looks will be documented through illustrations and visual images such as picture reference and inspiration collages. I will be drafting patterns for 2 out of the 4 garments and displaying the muslin-making process. The purpose of this research is to show the difficulties in sourcing nude mesh fabrics for various skin tones, as well as bring attention to an ongoing problem within the dance and performance industry.

Thesis Mentor: _____

Professor Hope Wallace Simpara

Honors Director: _____

Dr. Steven Engel

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Honors College
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Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank Professor Hope Wallace-Simpara for mentoring me even while she had a full plate of her own. She always took the time out to help me with design ideas and construction details. Professor Wallace was my voice of reason when I was struggling with the thesis, she always provided me with a safe space to talk things through. I am sincerely grateful to be under her mentorship and I've learned so many valuable apparel skills from her.

I would like to thank Dr. Trent Maurer for all the help and encouragement he has given me during my time in the Honors College. I have learned so much from him and he is truly a beam of light in the darkness. He was always so positive and enthusiastic about the work and research I shared with him, which gave me the incentive to work harder than ever.

I would like to thank my fit models, Maya Laws, Megan Spears, Kennedy Williams, and Nya Childress for sticking by me after all the changes I had to make to my methodology approach. They were very patient with me and quite reliable especially during the times of COVID-19.

Lastly, I would like to sincerely thank my family for always encouraging and uplifting me when times were stressful. I love my family with all my heart, and I wouldn't be here without their constant support.

Introduction

My project will address the major problems with sourcing diverse skin tone fabrics; there are not enough available fabric options for diverse skin types to choose from in dance and performance apparel. The majority of options available in products such as dance tights or leotards are made for lighter skin tones. The dance products that are available for people of color are few, and usually do not match real skin tones. This project is a feasibility study: I will be designing a collection for diverse skin tones using nude fabrics that are available to me as an educated consumer.

The lack of availability in diverse skin tone fabrics is important topic to discuss because when people refer to nude or nude colors, they typically think of tan or peach-colored flesh tones. “Nude cannot be defined by one color because there are so many different colors of skin tones in the world. Setting a standard for nude color is an example of colorism, which is the discrimination of people based on the color of their skin and is prejudiced against those people who do not fit into that mold.” (Vakani, 2014, p. vi). Nude should refer to all types of flesh tones, not just the tan, peach, and beige colors. Nude is a spectrum, not a single color. There is a clear demand for these particular types of fabrics, but they are not being manufactured or supplied in sufficient quantities to meet demand. Ade Hassan (the designer for the Nubian Skin lingerie line) states that it is very frustrating not to be able to find the fabrics and nude products you’re looking for. “It seemed ludicrous that nude was so narrowly defined.” (Mercer, 2016, para.2). Nude fabrics are readily available to lighter skin tones, so why are they not available for darker-skinned consumers? The standard for flesh tones in the fashion industry needs to be improved to fit diverse skin types. Dancers and performers consist of diverse ethnicities

and various skin complexions; therefore, dance and performance wear should also include a wider selection of skin tone fabric options that's more inclusive.

I will design a collection of garments with skin-tone fabrics that are readily available to the public. I will choose 4 random models and try to match their skin tones with the fabrics I am able to source. Whether I can match the skin tones and how well they match the models will help me determine if the task is achievable. Because I know more than the average consumer about finding certain nude fabrics, finding the materials may be slightly more accessible due to the intense research I have gathered for this project. I will also be using web articles, trade publications, and fashion magazine articles to support my research and findings.

The design portion of the thesis will discuss the garment collection using nude fabrics and it will address the design development, garment construction, and overall execution. The collection's theme will be based around the 4 cardinal witches from L. Frank Baum's Wizard of Oz. Each individual characteristic from each of the 4 witches will be displayed through the garments. Each garment will have nude mesh that is designed to fit the skin tone of my fit models. I will be discussing the limitations of sourcing nude fabrics based on the resources that are available to me as an educated consumer.

Background

Because of Eurocentric body standards in the fashion and dance industry, people of color have always struggled with finding fabrics that match their skin tone. In the dance and theatre industry, the lack of nude performance fabric is very prominent, and it

affects black and brown performers. The tradition of pink tights came from the 1790s when an Austrian ballet dancer named Maria Vigario “shocked Parisian audiences when she and her brother Salvatore performed in sheer white muslin tunics, her legs covered by flesh pink hosiery that gave the appearance of nakedness. At the time, the Paris Opéra banned ‘nude pink’ due to social concerns, but by the end of the 19th century, pink tights were the norm. The intent was to have both the hosiery and shoes disappear, and back then, pink was as tastefully close to nude as they could get” (Howard, 2018, para. 5). The sole purpose of having “nude” dance tights and shoes is to give the dancer a clean, seamless look that accurately matches their complexion. It wasn’t until the 1970s when black American designer, Zelda Wynn Valdes strayed away from the pink traditional tights and dyed them match dancers skin tones (Gabbara, 2018). Valdes is known for designing hip-hugging dresses that extenuated a women’s curves in a sexy but sophisticated way. She designed for various talents such as Josephine Baker, Diahann Carroll, Dorothy Dandridge, Ruby Dee, Eartha Kitt, Marlene Dietrich, and Mae West. Her most notable work was designing the infamous Playboy bunny suit which she was personally commissioned to do by Hugh Hefner. Valdes was approached by Arthur Mitchell, who was the first black principal dancer to perform in the New York City Ballet in the 70s. Mitchell wanted Valdes to design costumes for the Dance Theatre of Harlem and she later created these tights that matched the skin of many dancers. In Harlem, “they celebrated all the different colors of their dancers, which was part of a new aesthetic that championed for diversity” (Gabbara, 2018, para. 10). When the pink nude tradition started, all of the ballet dancers were white so there was no need to manufacture any other colors. “As racial uniformity decreases, should we not reevaluate the relevance of

pink tights and shoes?” (Howard, 2018, para. 6). Because of the increase in people of color in the performance industry, you would think that manufactures would produce a larger variety of nude colors to match the demand, especially today. However, for most companies that is not the case.

As a result of the lack of availability in diverse nude or flesh tone fabrics, people of color (POC) have been forced to conform or put in extra money and time to ensure that their tights or dance shoes matched their skin tone. It's extremely common for dancers to "pancake their shoes, coating them in foundation so that they match their skin color” (Cappello, 2020, para. 2). Recently many companies have acknowledged the lack of diversity and some manufacturers have developed more nude color options for dancewear. However, “Inclusive dancewear continues to be the exception rather than the rule. More and more dancers of color have come forward about their negative experiences shopping for dancewear. Second Skin Costumes came under fire for using homogeneous models, resisting feedback, and refusing to do custom orders for POC dancers” (Cappello, 2020, para. 9). The company decided to launch a scholarship fund to support dancers of color, but only after they received backlash from social media. A lot of companies are becoming more aware of POC problems and changing for the better. However, there are also companies that refuse to update their color selection because they think that there is not a need to produce more options for consumers.

A majority of the companies have made an effort but the color selection they have provided still does not accurately match real skin tones. “In response to a petition that received more than 169,000 signatures (I also signed this petition in 2020), Bloch announced that they would add more satin options to their pointe shoes. Quickly, Russian

Pointe, Capezio, Nikolay, Grishko, and Suffolk followed suit, releasing plans to add inclusive shades to their pointe shoe collections” (Cappello, 2020, para. 4). As we see, most companies like Second Skin only change after harsh criticism and do the bare minimum to keep up their reputation. “Pointe shoes that more closely resemble the skin tones of POC dancers are a more powerful message of not just inclusivity, but of welcome.” “A dancer should never have to worry about finding tights to match their skin tone, or foundation rubbing off of their pointe shoes – they should be able to focus on their performance” (Cappello, 2020 para. 3,10). It is truly a shame that people of color still have to fight for basic dance apparel such as tights or shoes.

Due to the lack of nude fabrics accessible through large corporations, there has been an increase in black and brown-owned businesses who have developed their own line of nude dancewear including tights, mesh, leotards, and pointe shoes. Overall, there has been an influx in all types of businesses founded by women of color. “From 2007 to 2018, the number of Latina and Black women-owned businesses grew faster than the average rate for businesses owned by women of color” (O’Brian, 2020, para. 8). However, despite this large increase in POC-owned businesses, we also recognize that it is extremely hard for these women to start a business, to begin with. “According to a 2016 survey by the Federal Reserve, Black-owned businesses, compared with white-owned firms, are less likely to receive approval for financing. And according to PitchBook, only 2.8% of capital in 2019 went to U.S.-based female-founded businesses. It stands to reason that of the 2.8%, an even smaller percentage is going to women of color” (as cited in O’Brian, 2020, para. 12). Even starting a business that helps benefit a community is a challenge for POC. Companies will not produce inclusive products, so

the solution is to produce them yourself. Yet when people try to create their own business, they are faced with adversity.

Tights, ballet shoes and leotards are basic necessities for many dancers to have but there are problems other than dance apparel when it comes to diversifying products. “Tights are just the beginning when companies are seeking to truly honor diversity. The myriad technical considerations for dancers of color extends to costuming, hair, make-up and lighting” (Howard, 2018, para. 12). There is a multitude of problems that people of color face that you may not pay much attention to. Many products like Band-aids were exclusively marketed to white people because they were originally manufactured in one color. Everyone needs Band-aids, but the richer brown complexions were excluded within the design process of mass-producing band-aids. It was not until 23 years ago when Ebon-Aid was created, which was a band-aid company that offered a wider range of colors for POC. The makeup industry has also faced a lack of diverse foundation colors. However recently, companies have addressed the problem and created a wider range of shades for consumers to purchase. In Penrose’s (2018) web article, she interviewed multiple beauty influencers who have struggled with finding their perfect shade of foundation. One influencer named Ofunne Amaka states:

I think that in the past a lot of the shade ranges, traditionally, haven’t been as expansive and they’re not always accurate or accessible. I’m not sure where the disconnect is happening, but retailers don’t sell deep shades in-store. When brands come out with 30, 40-shade foundation ranges, the customer may not know they exist because it's not in store. So, they’re forced to go online and make guesses, which isn’t a great experience. I don’t think the decision to exclude

darker shades has ever been logical. I think brands try to make it a demographic argument or say that blacks don't buy it but clearly if you do it right, it works.

Although companies may offer a wider array of nude foundations, the colors may not be available in-store making it harder for darker skin or even lighter skin nude foundations accessible to the average person.

In the past few years, more and more fashion brands have been created to close the gap in the nude fabric world. A fashion lingerie line for women of color called Nubian Skin was born out of frustration. The designer of the label, Ade Hassan states, "I was looking for something that I couldn't find in shops, so I decided to create it" (Mercer, 2016, para. 2). Hassan's beautifully designed Nubian Skin collection features four skin tones in a range of 16 sizes from A-E cups. Even famous celebrities like Kanye West have challenged the definition of nude with the debut of Yeezy Season 1 in 2015, displaying head-to-toe skin color outfits on a diverse set of models. "He continued the trend that following fall with bodysuits and knee-highs in varying shades of brown, and his approach has resonated with other fashion insiders of color" (Mercer, 2016, para. 3). It was considered revolutionary when a big brand like Louboutin debuted their nude collection of flats and heels, ranging from deep to pale in 2013 (Dawson, 2016). So many fashion brands are being created to fix a problem that POC people have faced for years and finally their needs are being tended to. Hopefully the conversation of nude fabric accessibility grows louder and progresses as we move forward.

Inspiration

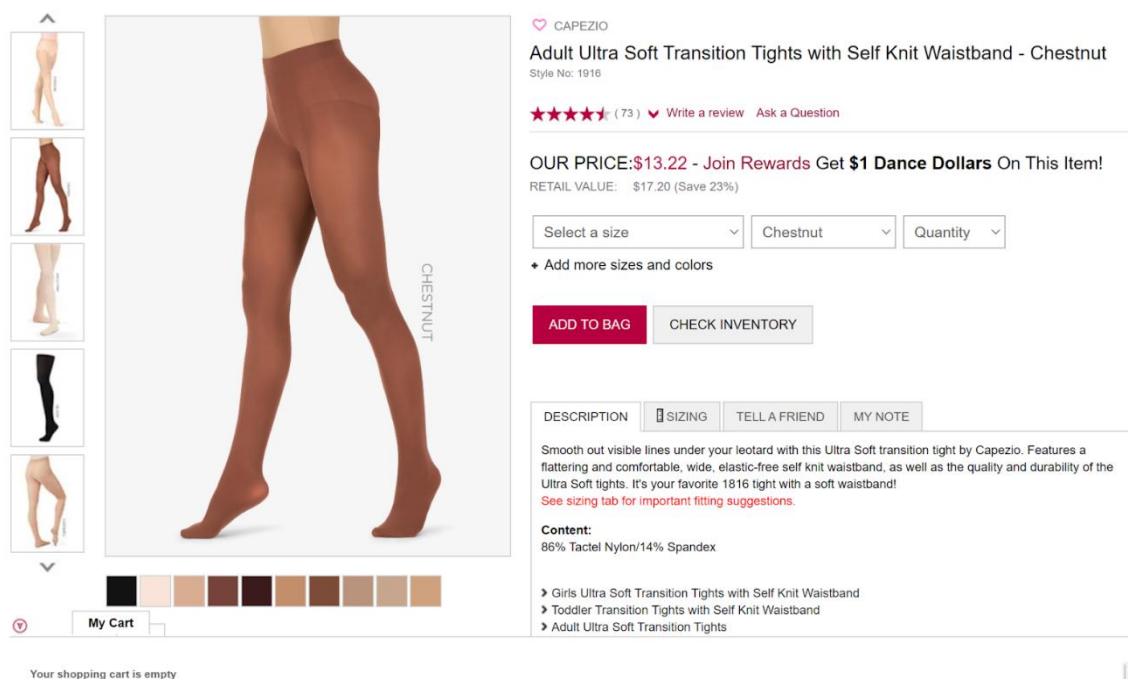
I have personal experience with struggling to find nude tights that match my skin color. Even today, I'm still searching for tights that match my skin the best. All the tights I have purchased are indeed brown, but they don't look good in most of the lights I perform in. Either they look pasty, or they have large amounts of reds and purples in them that make them visually off-putting. When I did ballet as a child, I remember having to paint my ballet shoes brown because they didn't make them that way. I recently bought some jazz shoes for my color guard uniform (Figure 1), and it almost brought me to tears because they were the first pair of dance shoes I've ever owned that actually matched me. It's sad because it's my last year spinning on color guard and I'm just now having the access to nude shoes made for me. This issue is something I'm passionate about, and I have found little academic research that supports a common experience in the black dance community that needs to be talked about.



Figure 1 Brown jazz shoes

Personal Experience

While researching popular dance brands, I came across an article discussing what the New York Rockettes would wear for their performances (Feldman, 2019). They recommended the brand Capezio, so I decided to purchase a pair of tights for myself. I purchased the Transition tights in the color chestnut. Upon first glance, they look like the perfect shade for my skin tone, but unfortunately when I tried them on, they did not match. The tights had an extremely red tint to them especially in the sunlight. Under fluorescent lights they looked a bit browner. This may have been a personal error on my part, but on their website the picture was not an accurate depiction of the product.



CAPEZIO

Adult Ultra Soft Transition Tights with Self Knit Waistband - Chestnut
Style No: 1916

★★★★★ (73) [Write a review](#) [Ask a Question](#)

OUR PRICE: \$13.22 - [Join Rewards](#) Get **\$1 Dance Dollars** On This Item!
RETAIL VALUE: \$17.20 (Save 23%)

Select a size Chestnut Quantity

+ Add more sizes and colors

[ADD TO BAG](#) [CHECK INVENTORY](#)

DESCRIPTION **SIZING** [TELL A FRIEND](#) [MY NOTE](#)

Smooth out visible lines under your leotard with this Ultra Soft transition tight by Capezio. Features a flattering and comfortable, wide, elastic-free self knit waistband, as well as the quality and durability of the Ultra Soft tights. It's your favorite 1816 tight with a soft waistband!
[See sizing tab for important fitting suggestions.](#)

Content:
86% Tactel Nylon/14% Spandex

- Girls Ultra Soft Transition Tights with Self Knit Waistband
- Toddler Transition Tights with Self Knit Waistband
- Adult Ultra Soft Transition Tights

[My Cart](#)

Your shopping cart is empty

Figure 2 Capezio tights

Over the course of conducting research for my thesis, this fall semester I was faced with my own nude fabric discrepancy. During my final season spinning for my university's colorguard, I was given a dance costume that unexpectedly arrived with mesh that favored my white peers. Me and my fellow black members were told that we would have the option of picking nude mesh that matched our skin. However, we were given costumes that were described to have "universal mesh" that fits everyone's skin tones. As of today, there has never been any form of "universal mesh" invented. People come in a multitude of shades, and it is highly unlikely to create one mesh that suits every skin color. It was infuriating that the dance company we bought the costumes from thought it was okay to provide their customers with garments that did not meet our requests. For the first football game of the season, my uniform displayed three different skin tones due to the lack of nude garments that are accessible. As seen in Figure 4, the middle mesh on the uniform and the tights are completely different colors than my skin tone. After the first game, the colorguard captain went out of her way to paint our uniforms for us. The middle mesh in Figure 5 is a closer match to my skin color than the original.



Figure 3 Before pictures of uniform



Figure 4 First game wearing uniform and Capezio tights



Figure 5 After uniform was painted to match skin tone

First Concepts

My initial idea was to create a garment collection that is a modern rendition of the four Cardinal witches from Lyman Frank Baum's *Wizard of Oz*. There are various books and movies about the *Wizard of Oz* and the characters' looks also vary to fit specific storylines. In most stories, the Wicked Witch of the West, and Glinda the Good are the most prominent witches in the Oz series. There are many other witches within the realm of Oz, but I wanted to focus on the four cardinal witches. Their names are Kaylina (witch of the East), Mombi (witch of the West), Locasta (witch of the North), and Glinda (She was originally from the North but later in the book series she became the witch of the South).

I took inspiration from past films and theatrical productions to help with the design process. I am quite familiar with a couple of *Wizard of Oz* films such as the iconic 1939 *Wizard of Oz* starring Judy Garland, *The Wiz* (1978) which had many African American stars such as Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, and Lena Horne, the Muppets version of the *Wizard of Oz* (2005), and the most recent version of the Oz film adaptation made by Disney in 2013 titled *Oz the Great and Powerful*. The Broadway musical *Wicked* (2003), follows the lives of two witches Glinda, and Elphaba (Wicked Witch of the West) as they work through life-changing obstacles in college. The musical is based on the 1995 Gregory Maguire novel "Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West", and references Baum and the 1939 *Wizard Oz* film. Overall, Glinda and the Wicked Witch of the West are portrayed in similar ways throughout story retellings. However, there are no vivid depictions of the other two witches in any of the films. After

researching the book's description of the characters, I was able to identify common or basic traits for each of the four cardinal witches that could be used within my collection.

Iterative Revisions

Originally, I wanted to make all four costumes and present them as a result of the study. Because of time restraints, I decided it was best to show the pattern making process and some of the muslin construction. I will be providing illustrations, patterns, and pictures of the process. I will continue to design and construct the garments until the fall semester ends. If I have any construction updates, I will present them during the Honors symposium.

4 Cardinal Witches for the Wizard of Oz Character and Color Analysis

For each witch I will provide a character description, color analysis, design reference pictures, and fabric ideas.

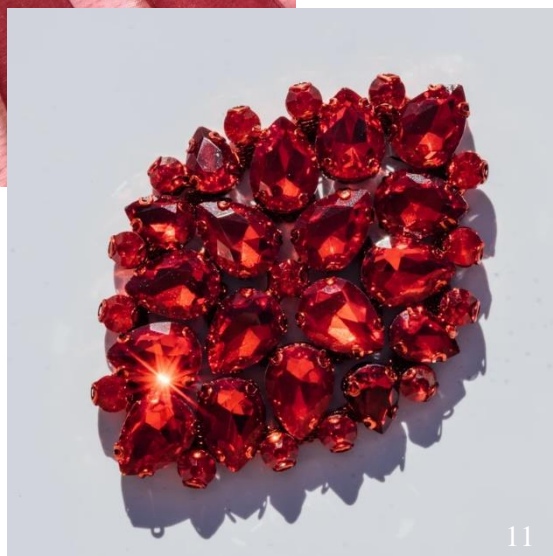
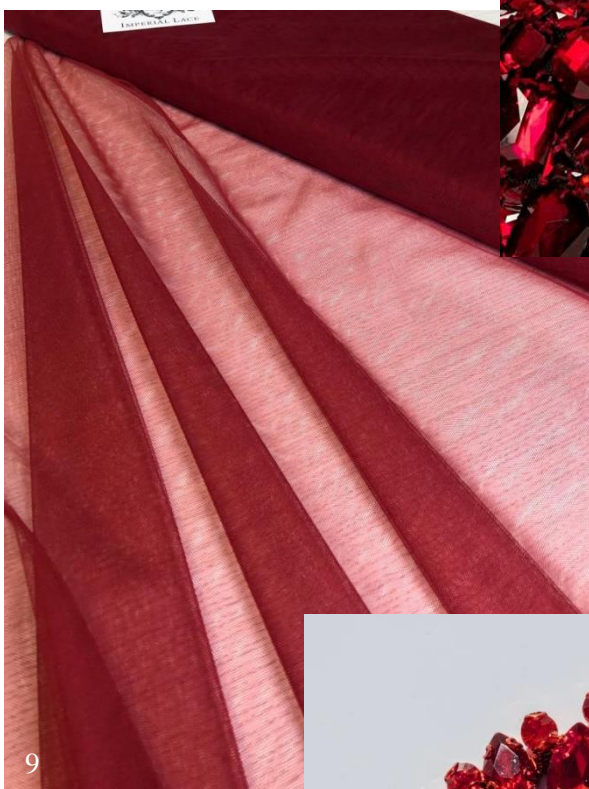
Kalinya - Witch of the East

Kalinya is the ruler of the Munchkins in the East of the Oz realm. She is depicted as cruel and easily irritated. Her magic is telekinesis, and her greatest threat was to throw a person into the sky. She is clever and constantly schemes to gain more power (Telford, 2014). She was the original owner of the Ruby Slippers in the 1939 film, before she was killed by the main protagonist, Dorothy Gale of Kansas. Dorothy traveled to Oz in her house via cyclone, which landed on Kalinya while she was in Munchkin land and killed her. Her greatest opponent is Glinda's mother Gayelette, the Ruby Sorceress.

Her color is red. I chose red because it symbolizes violence, aggression, irritability, and anger. Kalinya's key design elements are that she is powerful, clever, cruel, and doles out very violent punishments to those who disobey her. Because she is the oldest witch, her design is slightly more sophisticated than the other witches. She has a high neckline and long sequin gloves to display conservatism, but a form-fitting knit bodysuit that makes her edgy and agile. The bodysuit and the gloves will be made of the same sequin material. Sparkly ruby beads will fall and cascade from the fingertips of the gloves to display her telekinetic abilities. She also has a side cape to represent her power and a headpiece that has a similar cascading effect as the gloves. The nude skin tone mesh will be incorporated into the sleeves of the garment. The sleeve meets with the bodice and the rhinestones create a gradient effect, making it harder to tell where the sleeve ends and where the skin begins. The entire design has sequin and crystals that will imitate the look of her ruby slippers.

See Appendix A for the collage picture information.



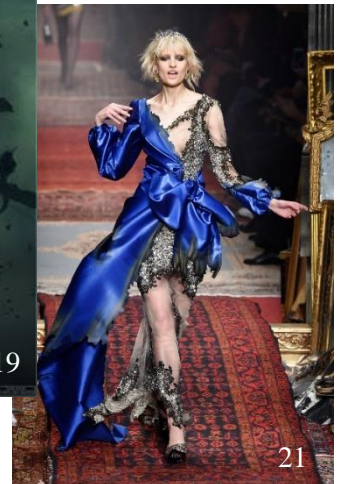
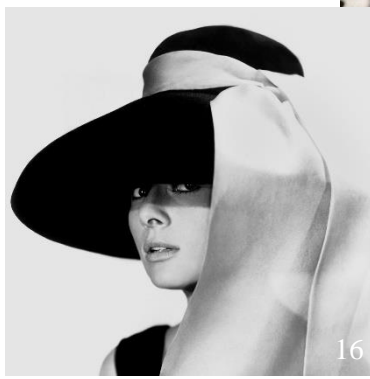


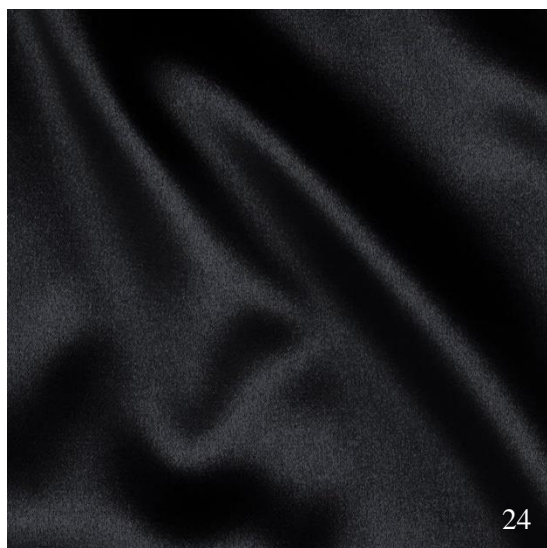
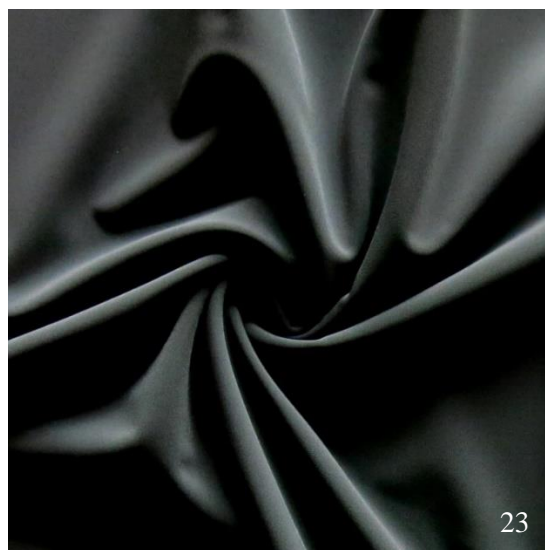
Mombi - Witch of the West

Mombi is seen as the homely and cruel younger sister of Kalinya. She is short and stocky and fond of wearing ornate neckpieces. Her magic is invisibility. She also has a magic eye that can see long distances and can see what normal eyes cannot. She controls magic hourglasses throughout her kingdom and the Sandy Armies. Mombi eventually conquers the Winkies in the West of Oz, giving her the name Wicked Witch of the West (Telford, 2014). Dorothy becomes her enemy after she kills her sister when arriving to Munchkin land.

Her color is black, similar to previous depictions in other Wizard of Oz films. I chose to keep her color black because it represents evil, darkness, strength, power, and authority. Mombi's key design elements focuses on her invisibility, strength, and location in the Sandy Armies and desert areas. I wanted to draw slight inspiration from traditional Western fashion for the Wicked Witch of the West. The Wild West was lawless and dangerous for those who dared to venture through it, and I wanted to play around with that idea. Mombi conquered the West, like a cowboy claiming untamed territories in late 19th century America. The design for the wicked witch has a black flat top hat and fabric that drapes over the face that imitates the look of a traditional desert mask. She has a jacket that will be structured with sharp, pointy shoulders to symbolize her power and authority. To tie in similar design elements with the other witches, she has a flowy sheer skirt and form fitting pants that look burned and weathered from the elements during her conquest of the West. The nude mesh will be incorporated at the bottom of the weathered pants, allowing for it to look like clothes were burned to the skin.

See Appendix B for the collage picture information.



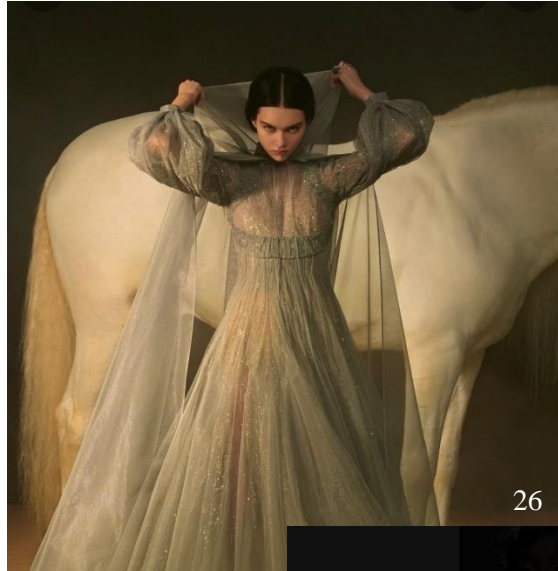


Locasta - Witch of the North

Locasta is a young Munchkin maiden, who was taken in as an apprentice by Kalinya. She is quiet and non-confrontational, always doing what she what was expected of her. She feared her master and their cruel punishments. Her most powerful magic is the ownership of an oracular hat. She was sent to capture Glinda, but instead learned a valuable lesson from the young sorceress and finds the courage to stand on her own. With Glinda building her forces in the South, Locasta became what the Witch of the North (Telford, 2014).

Her color is blue. I chose blue because it represents wisdom, sincerity, intuition, and freedom. Locasta's key design elements will display her as a divine priestess or goddess who is wise with newfound freedom from the wrath of Kalinya. She has a headpiece that mimics the sun, playing into the divine aspect of her character. The design consists of flowy garments, reminiscent of the classical Greek style of an Ionic chiton. It will also have leotard and chiffon dress underneath for the performer to move comfortably in. The entire look has rhinestones and glitter to enhance her magical character. The nude mesh will be incorporated to support the body of the sweetheart neckline leotard.

See Appendix C for the collage picture information.



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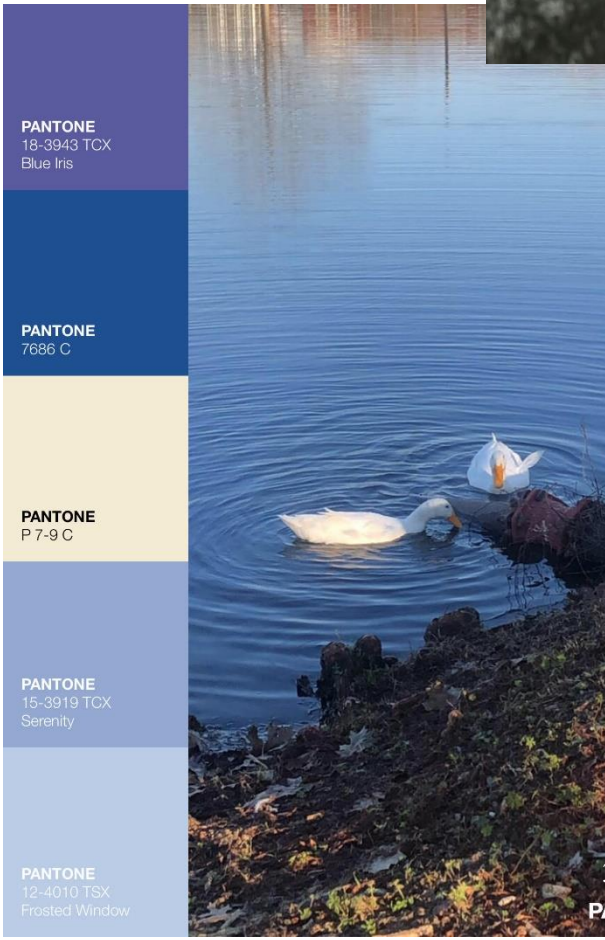
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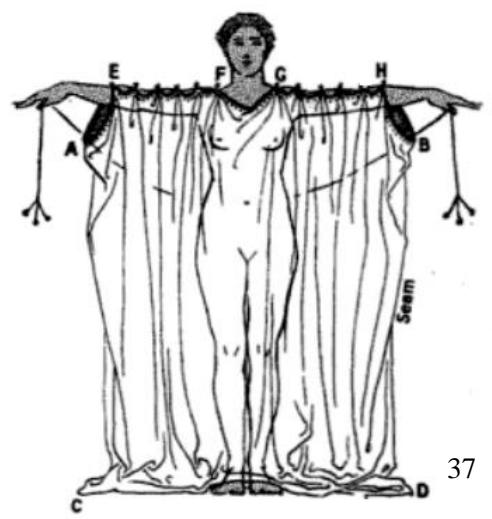
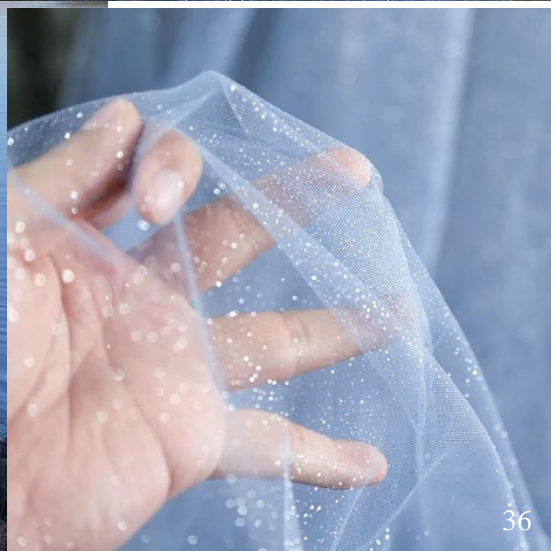
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Serenity

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12-4010 TSX
Frosted Window



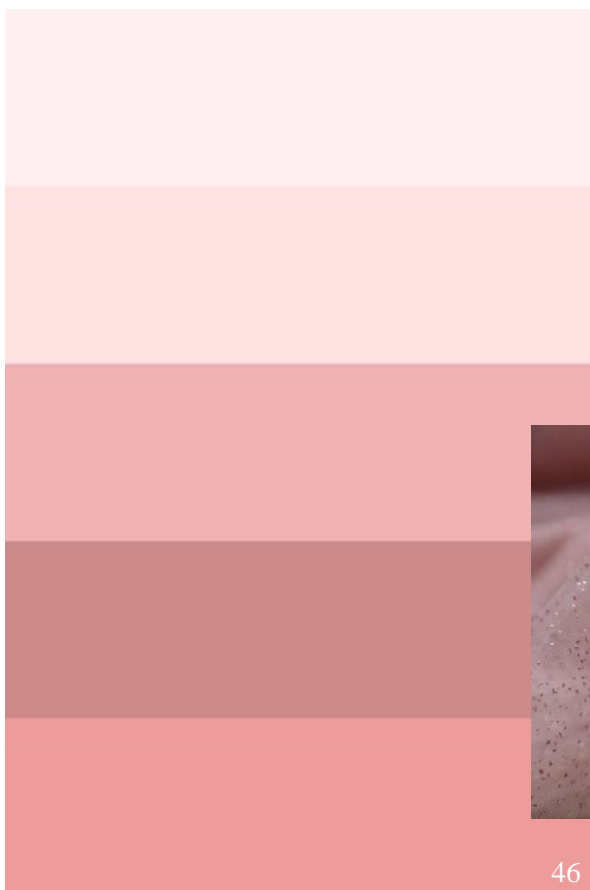
Glinda - Witch of the South

Glinda is the daughter of the Ruby Sorceress, Gayelette, and Quelala, rulers of the North. She was born a princess but imagined a life of adventure and romance for herself outside of her royal duties. When her parents disappear, Glinda finds herself thrown into a wild quest, with the Wicked Witches chasing after her. With a name and fame belonging to her mother, Glinda fights back against the witches of Oz to earn for herself the title of Glinda the Good, makes the South her home (Telford, 2014).

Her color is pink to reference her place as a princess in the Ruby Palace. I decided to reuse the color pink for her character because it is the calming, toned-down version of red mixed, with the purity and innocence of white. Pink represents love, kindness, femininity, youthfulness, and romance. Glinda's key design elements will focus on the romantic, kind, and adventurous aspects of the character that gave her the title "Glinda the Good". The design for the garment features a flowy, bias-cut dress with nude sleeves, and a corset to cinch the waist. Her dress is a similar Grecian style to Locasta's, tying their characters together as the kind, good witches that the people of Oz look up to. The sleeves and white cape will have crystals and starry appliques to give the design that magical feel. The cape will be fastened around straight across the collar bone. The white cape is a symbol of authority as the ruler of the South. She will have a crown to display her royal status.

See Appendix D for the collage picture information.





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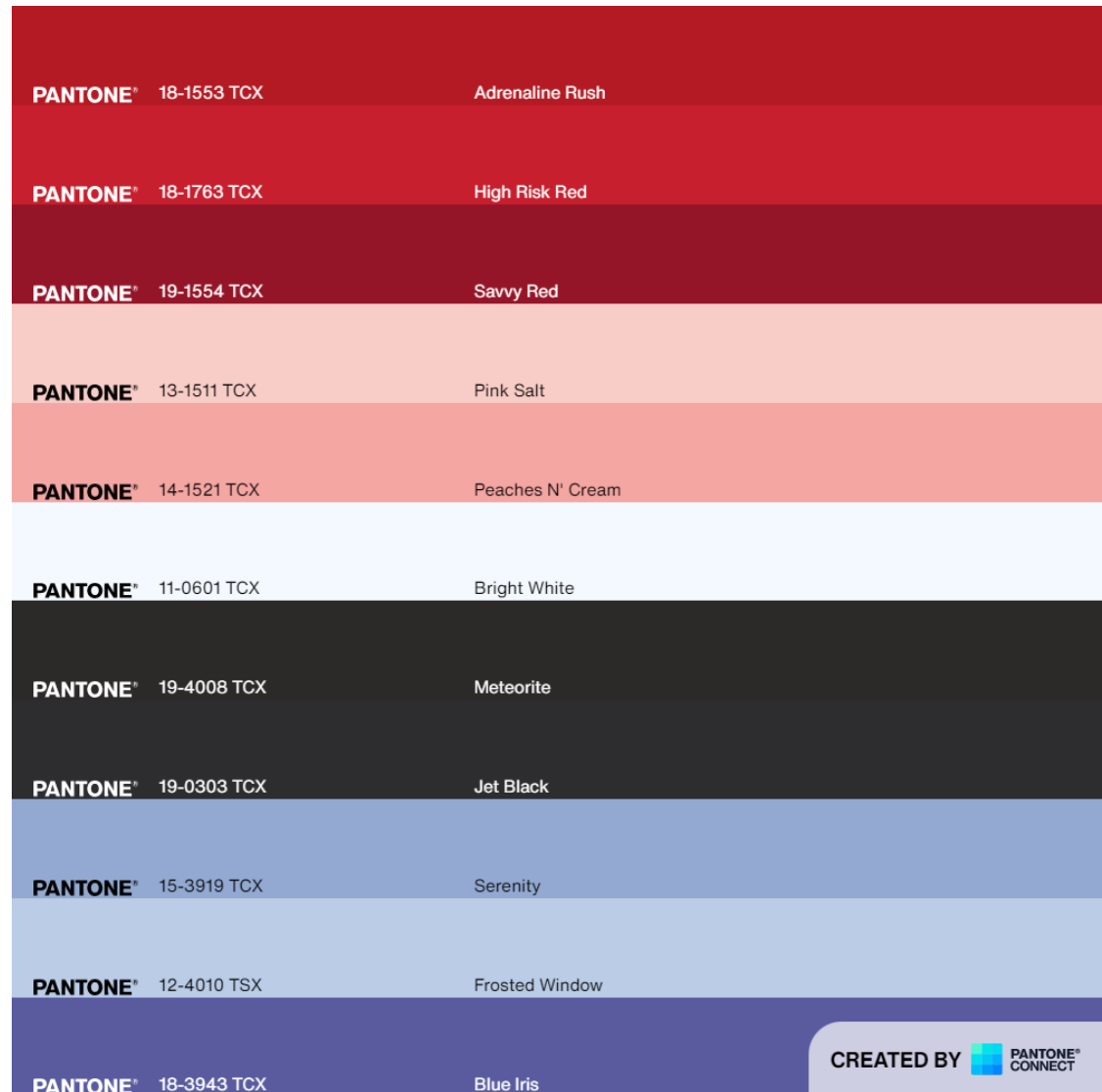


48



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Color Story



Fit Model Profiles

The profile displays each fit model's description and nude mesh options that best matches their skin color. These samples are available on the online fabric website named Blue Moon Fabrics. I purchased nine mesh fabric samples from the website which I will use to compare the online pictures to the in person product.



Maya

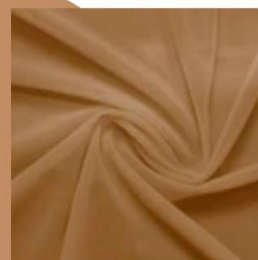
Costume: Kalinya

Ethnicity: African
American/Japanese

Mesh color options

- Mocha
- Sweet Syurp

Fabric sample images
provided by Blue
Moon fabrics



Nya

Costume: Locasta

Ethnicity: African
American

Mesh color options

- Latte
- Dark Nude

Fabric sample images
provided by Blue
Moon fabrics



Megan

Costume: Glinda

Ethnicity: African American

Mesh color options

- Brown
- Mocha

Fabric sample images
provided by Blue
Moon fabrics



Kennedy

Costume: Mombi

Ethnicity: Caucasian

Mesh color options

- Skin Nude
- Naked

Fabric sample images
provided by Blue
Moon fabrics

Fabrication Process

I will be using a nude mesh that creates an illusion that makes it hard to differentiate where the skin meets the fabric. I will be using an array of fabrics from chiffon, tulle, sequin, knits, spandex and a thick woven for Mombi's jacket. Garments will be sewn, and appliques, beads, and/or rhinestones will be added to the garments as embellishments. For the muslins, I will be using standard unbleached muslin along with other fabrics like knits for the leotard and bodysuit to imitate the final fabrics. Closures and notions for the garments include zippers, buttons, hook and eyes, gromets, lacing, thread, E600. All materials will be sourced from local fabric stores or from online fabric producers.

Garment Illustration Description

The design of the costumes starts off with me brainstorming ideas and progressively, the ideas for the final garments start to form. The more I analyzed and researched each witch, the more I began to deepen my ideas. The current sketches take on a different approach to brainstorming due to my current involvement in the Design Analysis II course and furthering my research on the 4 witches. All sketches were hand drawn, no preexisting croquis were used.

Honors thesis collection sketch brainstorm 1/22/2021



• leotards underneath
- knit

• sheer

• Calinda

• Wizard of Oz

• analysis on each character

contact Amy Powell - practicum course

Figure 6 Brainstorm sketch



Figure 7 Brainstorm sketch



Figure 8 Mombi Brainstorm Sketch

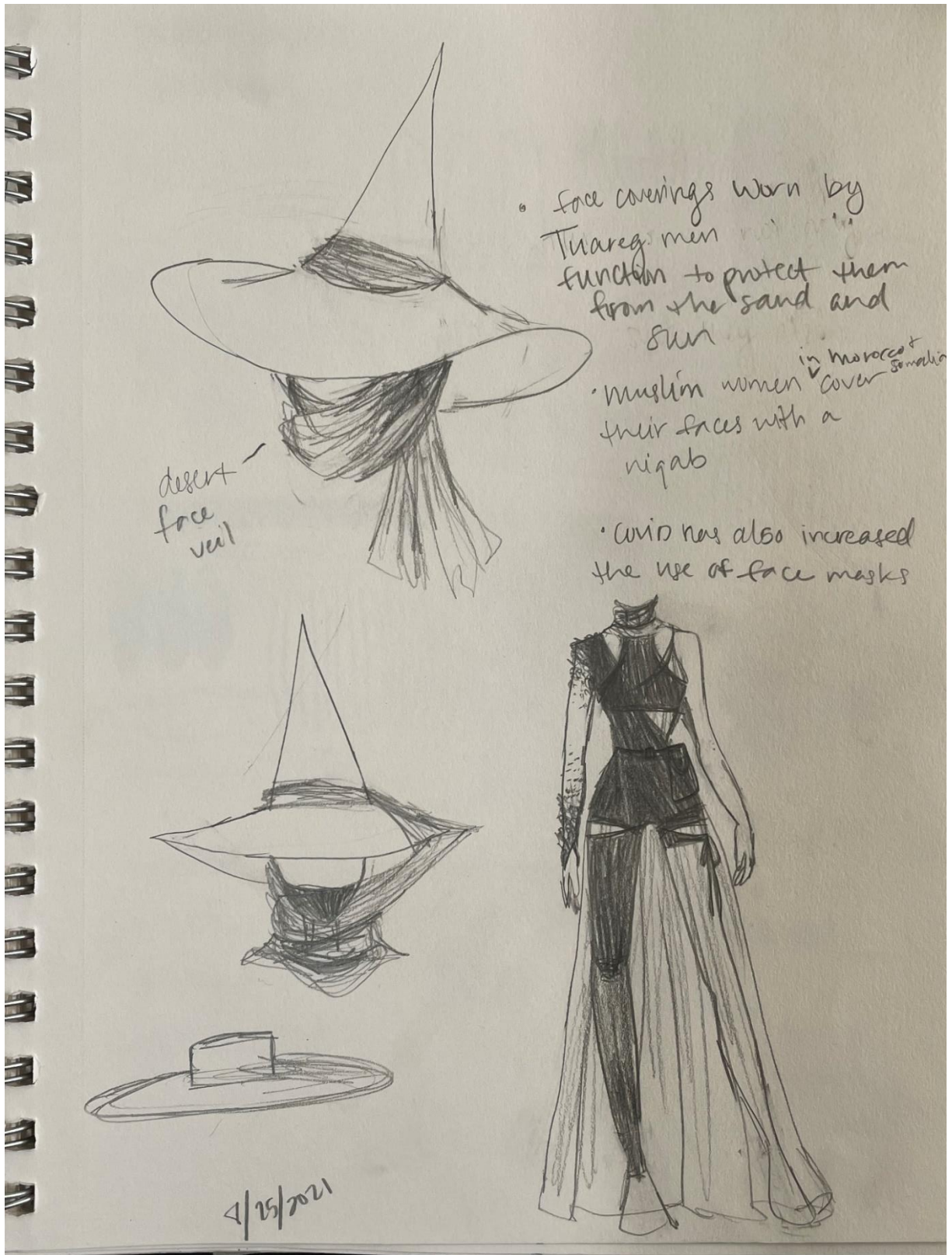


Figure 9 Mombi research sketch

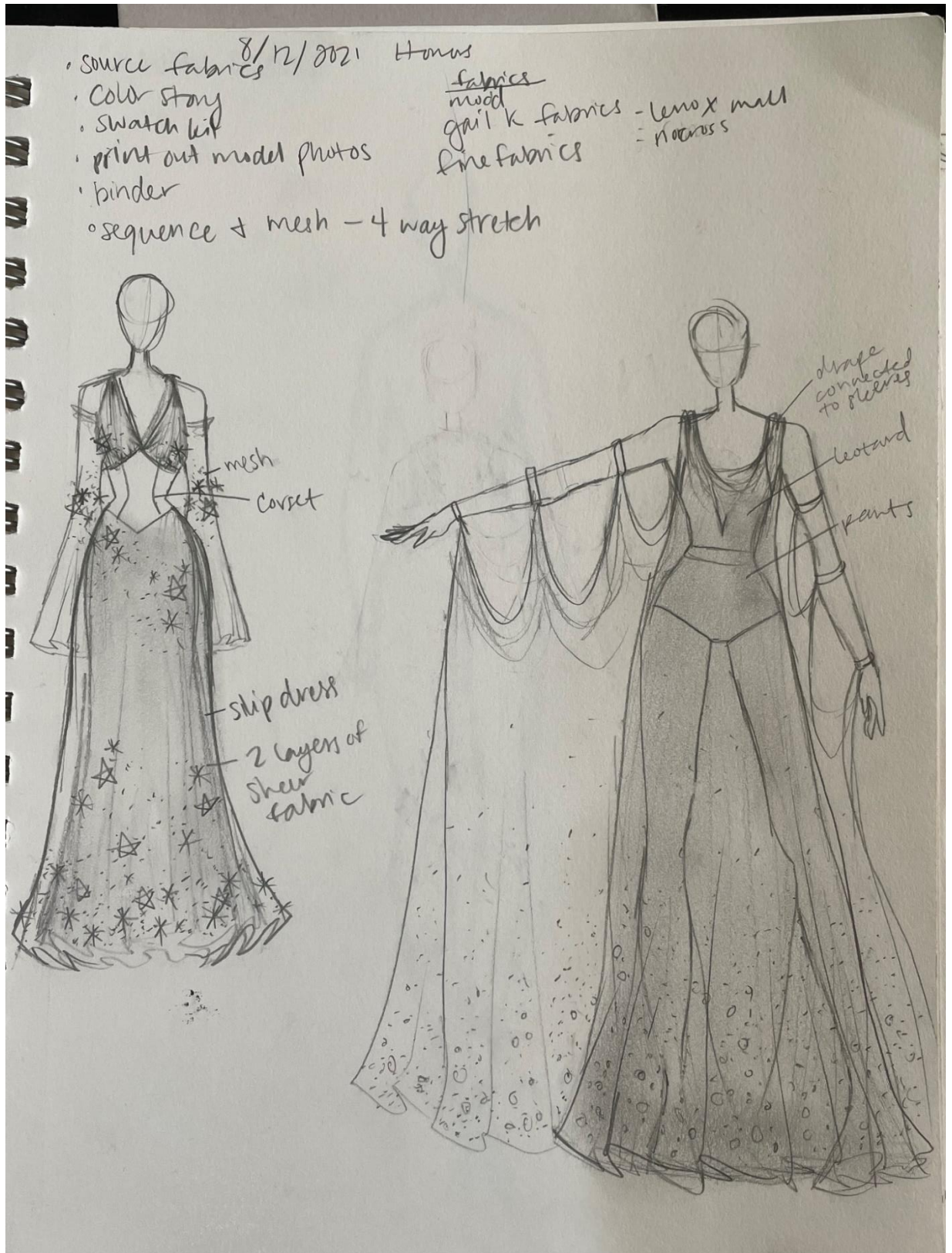


Figure 10 Glinda and Locasta sketch ideas

Here is where the design process started to develop from brainstorming sketches into the final concept designs.



Figure 11 Kaliyna design sketches



Figure 12 Locasta design sketches



Figure 13 Glinda design sketches



Figure 14 Mombi design sketches

I struggled designing Mombi the most out the 4 garments. It was hard for me to come up with something original, until I thought of the Wild West inspired look.



Figure 15 Mombi Sketches

Final Lineup in Color



Figure 16 Witches Illustration Lineup

Fabric Sample Results

I sourced nude mesh from an online company called Blue Moon Fabrics. It took about three and a half weeks to deliver. I ordered 10 samples for \$10 and the color titles were: Dark Brown, Brown, Brown Sugar, Mocha, Latte, Sweet Syrup, Nude, Dark Nude and Naked. After ordering, I received an email from the company stating that the Brown fabric sample was out of stock. I also received two samples of Sweet Syrup and a shade called Carmel Kiss in instead of the Dark Brown sample. So in total I purchased nine samples. Upon first glance, I could tell that these fabrics would not match my models and

I am highly disappointed in the results. I expected that the mesh would not be an exact match to my models, but I also expected them to be on the same color spectrum.

However, that was not the case. More than half of the samples that were meant to be for POC are nowhere near the colors they should be. Most of the color sample names do not describe of the colors I was given. The Mocha sample does not resemble the color mocha, mocha is a rich and vivid brown color (Figure 17, bottom left). The mocha sample provided looks more like hot chocolate that contains more milk than chocolate.

The Brown Sugar has grey undertones that is not appealing to the eye (Figure 18, top left and Figure 19). Sweet Syrup is the worst of all the samples (Figure 18, bottom left). The Sweet Syrup is way too red. I have never seen anyone with a skin tone that red, so why would they offer that color as an option? I went around my Design 2 class to test if the fabric samples matched anyone in the class and I only found one match (Figure 20).

These samples are the prime example of how companies offer various skin tone options to put on the front for diversity. In reality, the colors they offer do not accurately match POC. On a positive note, the fabric itself is very high quality. The feel is smooth and the stretch on the fabric is very nice. It is very stretchy but also maintained its elasticity and structure well. Those fabric characteristics are great to use for performance costumes. If the company developed better dyes for their mesh, it would have been the perfect place to source my fabric for the collection.

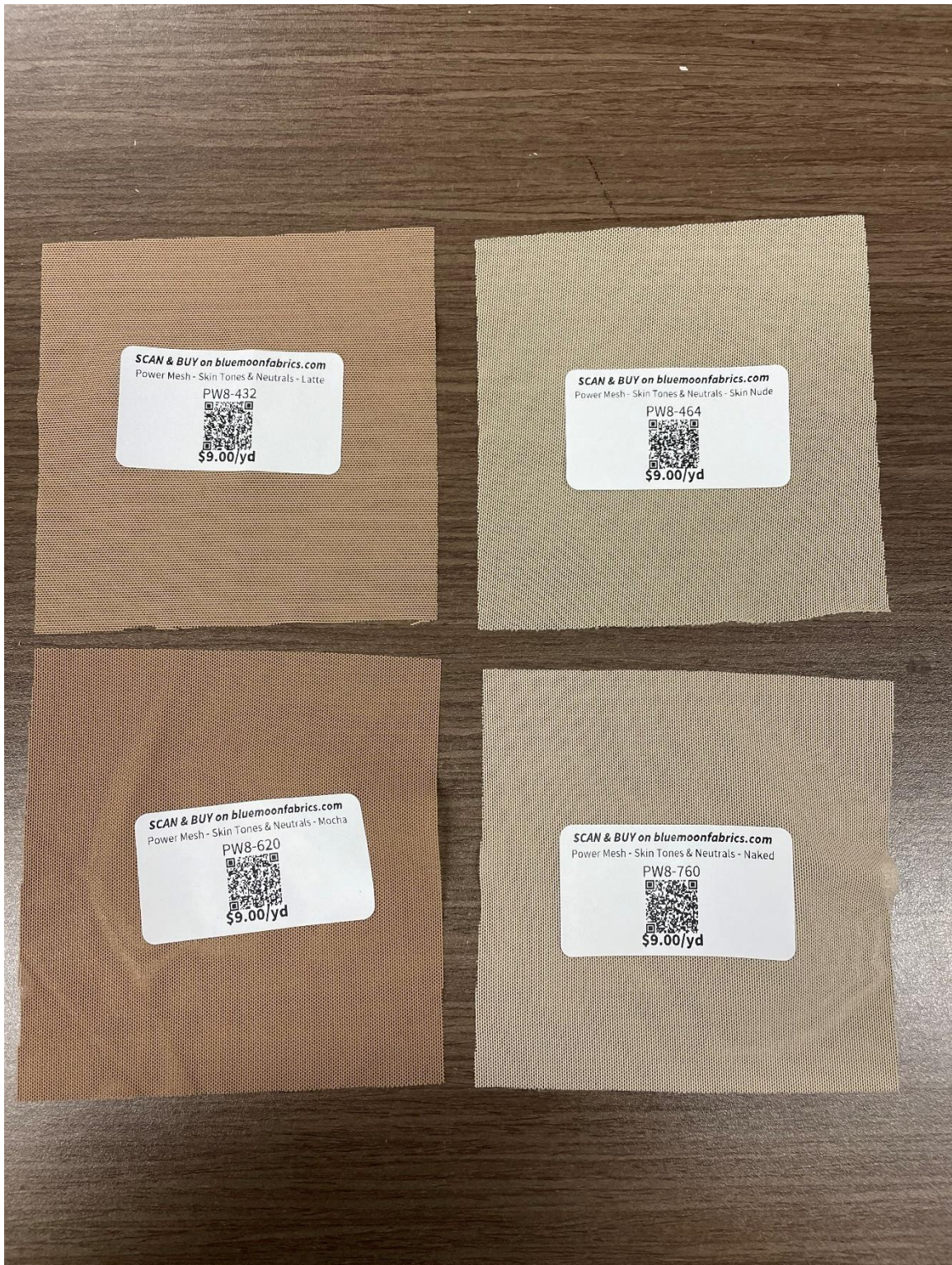


Figure 17 mesh fabric samples



Figure 18 mesh fabric samples



Figure 19 Brown Sugar mesh sample on fit model Megan



Figure 20 Carmel Kiss mesh sample on Design 2 classmate.

Patternmaking, Draping and Muslin Construction

The following images display the patternmaking/draping process and how the muslins are sewn to be prepped for model fitting. I chose to display the patternmaking process for Locasta and Kalinya. There is a lot of trial and error when making patterns for garments. It's important to make muslins, which essentially is a practice fabric you use before you sew the garment in the final fabric. Constructing muslins prevents you from wasting expensive fabric to fix fitting mistakes.

For Kalinya's muslin, I originally wanted to give her a cap sleeve but after having a discussion with my Design Analysis II Professor, I decided to change it to a full nude mesh sleeve. The nude mesh sleeve with the gradient rhinestones was more visually appealing than the cap sleeves. In the images, I show the cap sleeve but changing the sleeve pattern can easily be fixed since I already have the full sleeve paper pattern drafted.

The Locasta's design includes 3 separate pieces to create. I will show the process of making the top of the dress, the chiton, and the leotard. Unlike the Kalinya pattern, I had to drape the costume instead of using the paper pattern drafting method.



Figure 21 Place pattern pieces on fabric. I used a pattern I previously purchased for a different project and modified it.



Figure 22 Close up of sleeve pattern



Figure 23 full picture of bodysuit pattern

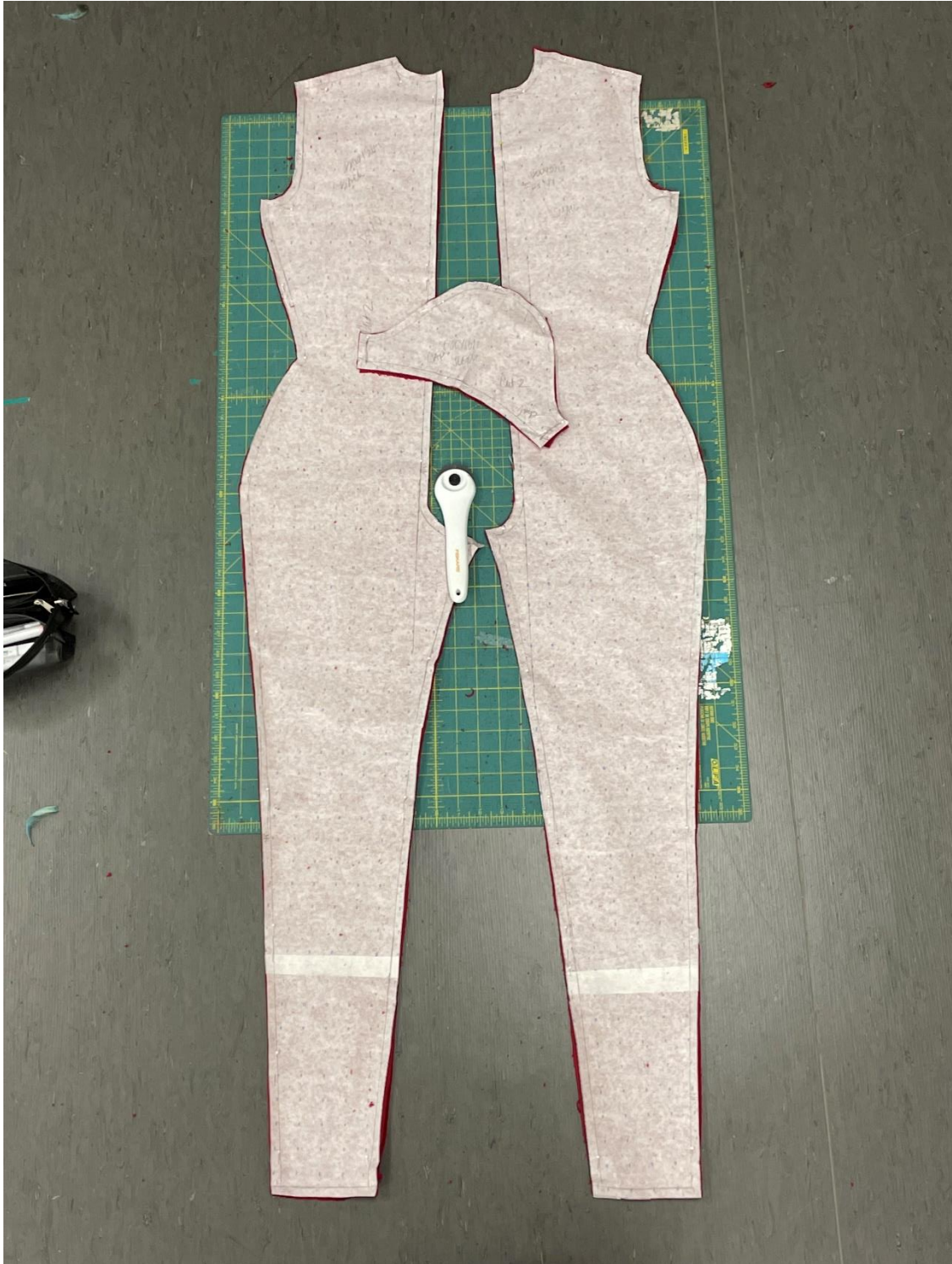


Figure 24 Cut out pattern pieces



Figure 25 When sewing knit fabrics, I used the serging machine instead of a regular straight stitch sewing machine to ensure that the seams do not pop, they stretch with the fabric.

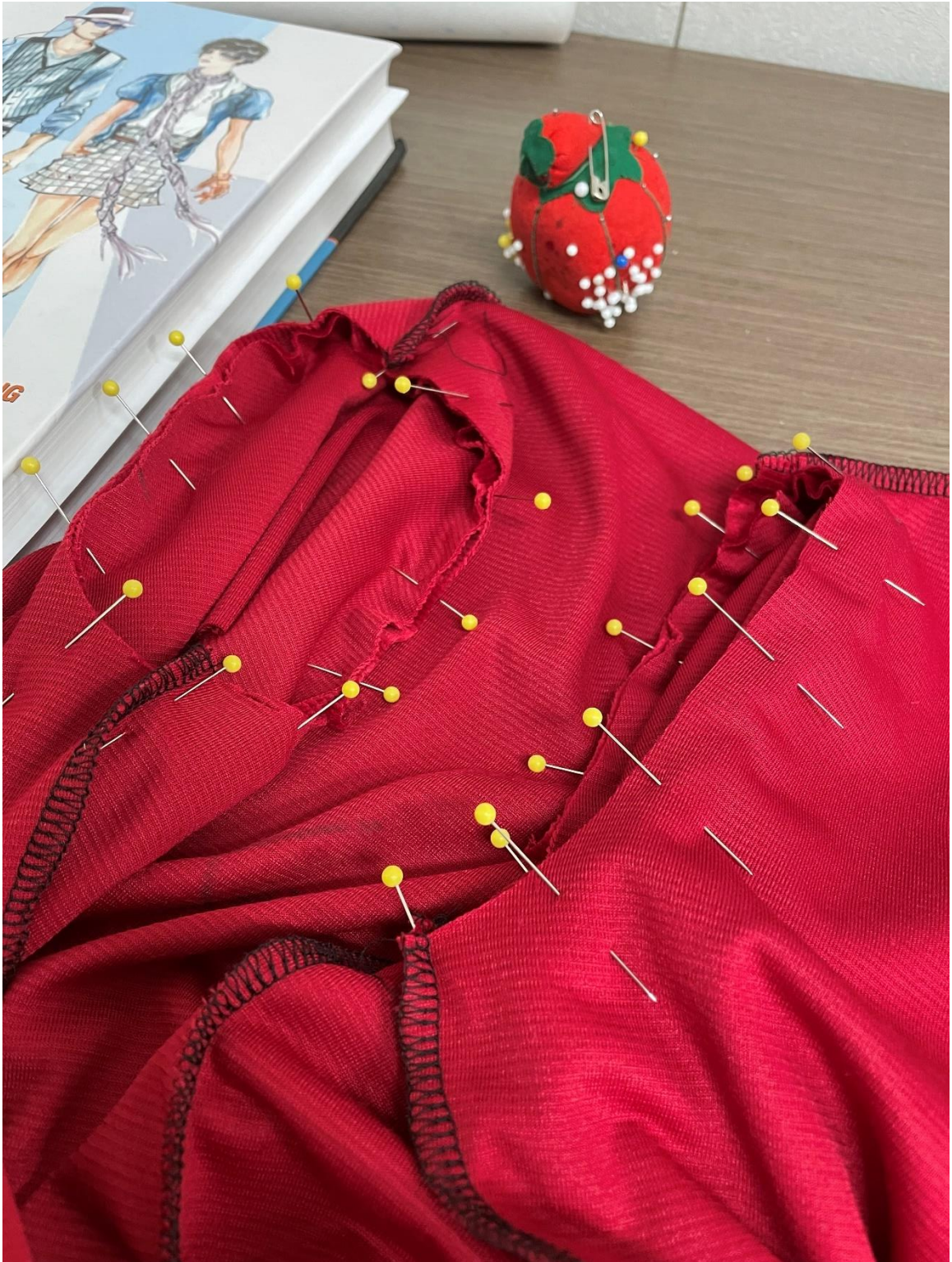


Figure 26 Pin and sew on sleeves



Figure 27 fully sewn Kalinya bodysuit muslin



Figure 28 Drape cowl neck top on the bias to give it more flow and contouring to the body. Mark seams and waistline.



Figure 29 Connect necessary lines and draw armhole with French curve. Add 1/2-inch seam allowance.



Figure 30 Pin proof pieces to make sure all the seams line up and make corrections if necessary.



Figure 31 Back of Locasta muslin



Figure 32 I measured out 5 yards of tulle to create a chiton but 5 yards was not enough to create the drape I intend so I must go back and red-rap the pattern.

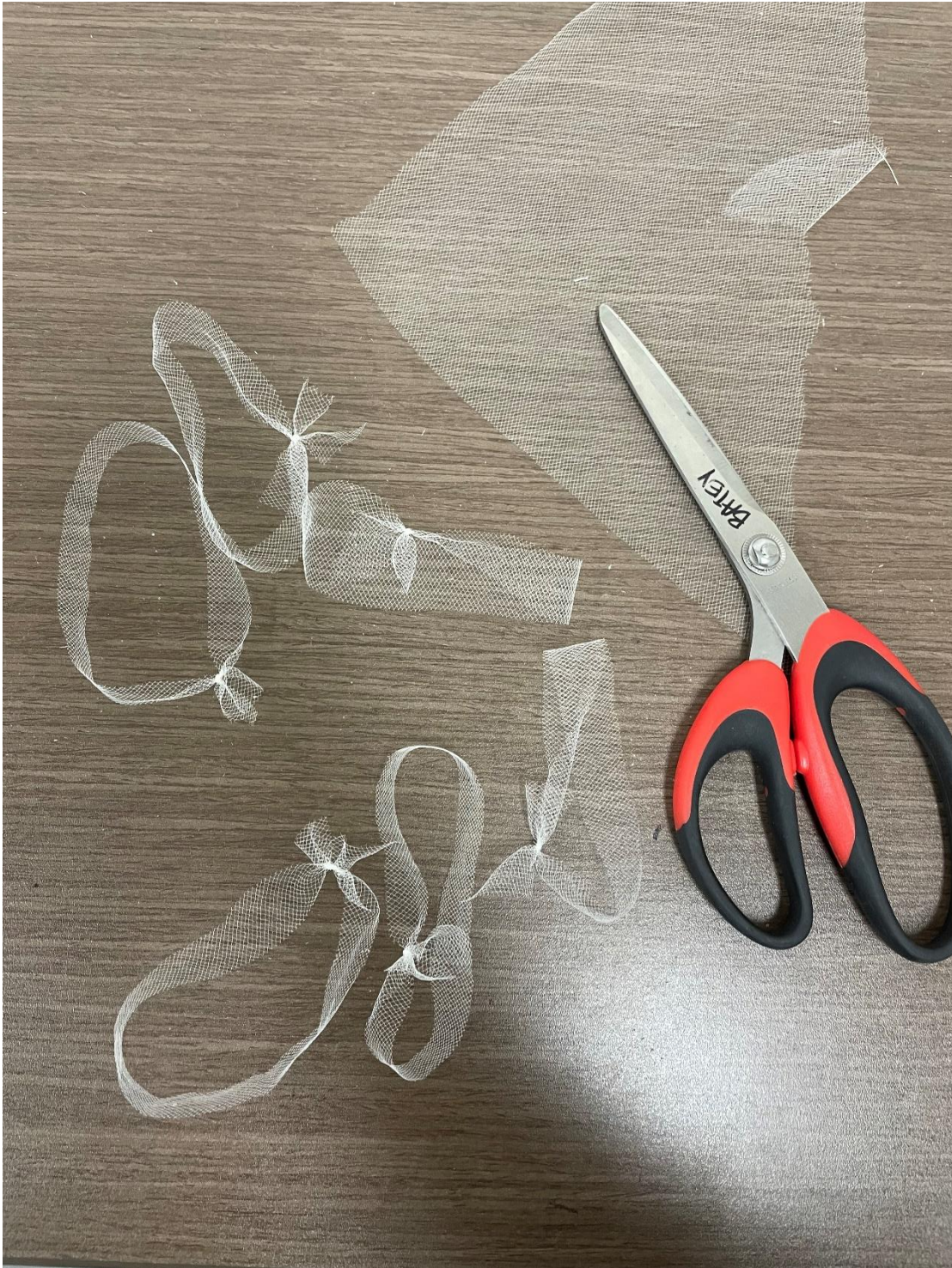


Figure 33 Cut out wrist and arm bands to sew onto drape.



Figure 34 Chiton drape on the form



Figure 35 Chiton drape up close



Figure 36 As you can see, there is not enough fabric for the tulle to fall the way it supposed to on the sleeves. So I must go back and adjust the pattern.



Figure 37 Tape leotard lines to form



Figure 38 side view of taped form



Figure 39 Back view of taped form



Figure 40 Pin prepared knit fabric to the form.

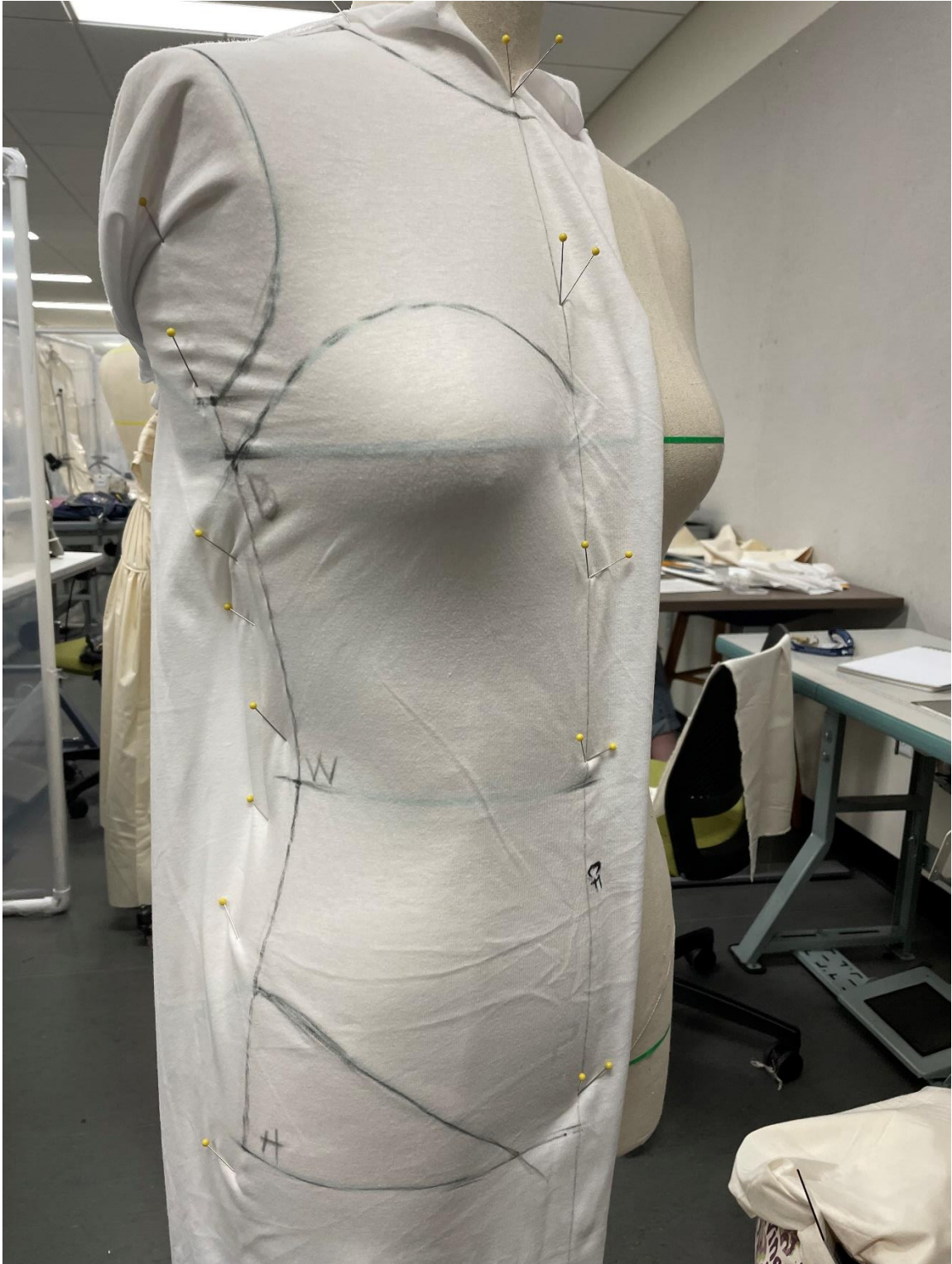


Figure 41 Mark all lines needed to create pattern.



Figure 42 Back of form is marked on the knit fabric

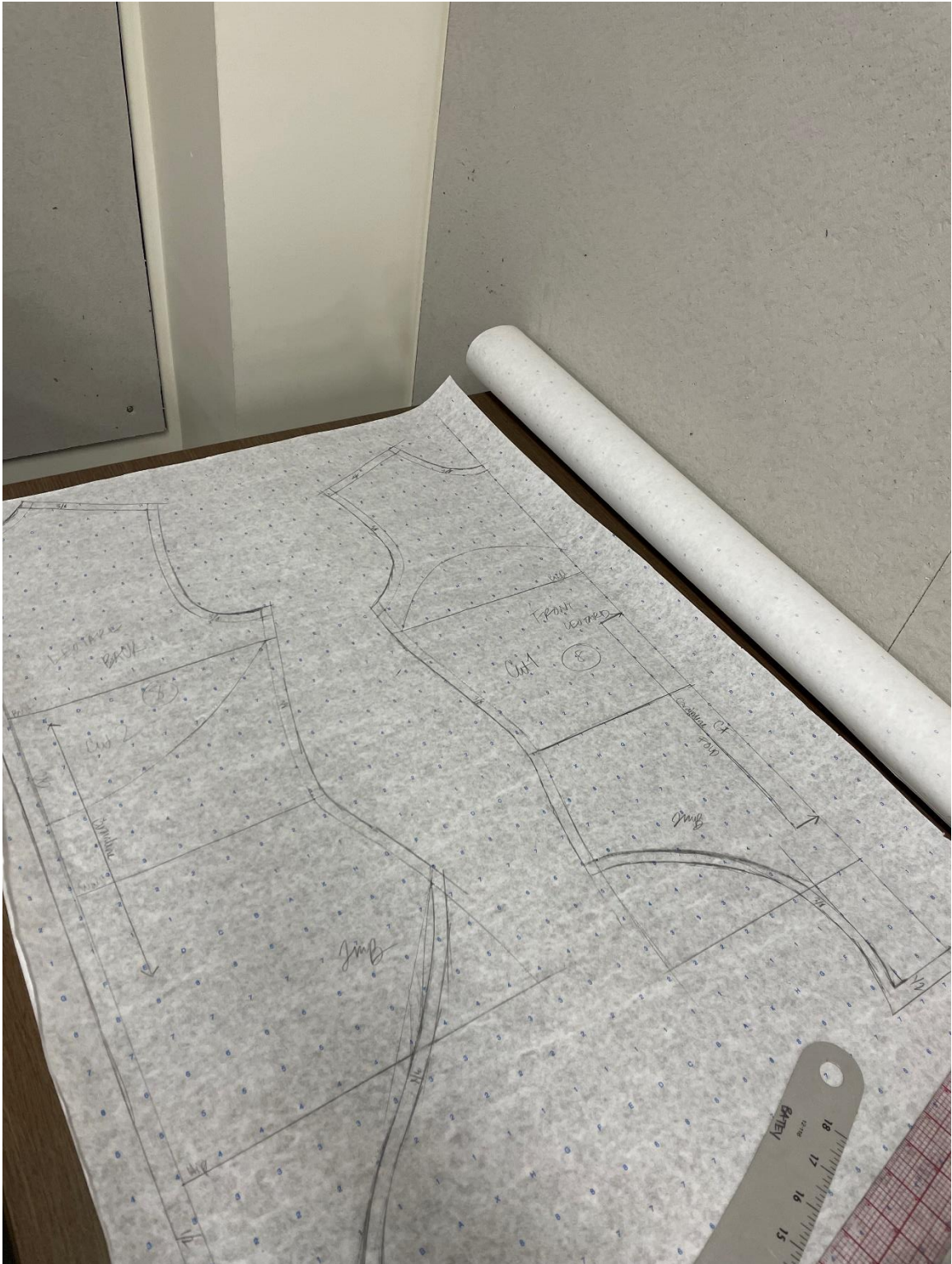


Figure 43 Take knit leotard drape and transfer the information to create a paper pattern.

Reflective Critique

Since the beginning of my capstone journey, I have learned a lot about research and character analysis. I've enhanced my sewing abilities and developed patternmaking and draping skills, which I learned in my Design Analysis classes at Georgia Southern. I learned so much about the design process and different ways of approaching the construction process. I have also learned that I should set more realistic goals for future projects. When I first started planning my capstone, I thought that I would be able to make all 4 garments in time for the Honors symposium. However, as time began to pass, I realized that I was in way over my head with those expectations. I concluded that designing and illustrating the collection would be the best solution for me. With the pressure of taking other classes along with developing my thesis, the stress of physically making a garment by the end of October was becoming unbearable. I decided that it would be best for my mental health to lower my expectations and set a more achievable goal.

I was planning on buying mesh fabric samples from an online company called Taosh Nudes because they are a fabric company that specializes in nude fabrics for various skin tones. Taosh offers 125 different shades and it seemed like the perfect place to source my fabric. After doing more research I realized that they only offer sample sets by specific color or color groupings. Each set had one or two colors that included a wide array of shades and tints in that particular grouping. I am using 4 models with different skin tones so in order for me to find the correct shade for all of them, I would have to buy a full set of samples. Buying a complete set would cost \$100 and it takes 3 to 4 weeks for shipping. I did not plan far ahead enough to buy the samples within that time frame, nor

do I have the funds to purchase a complete set. Instead, I purchased some fabric samples from an online company called Blue Moon fabrics that had a fairly nice range of colors to choose from. Blue Moon fabrics notified me that one of my brown samples was out of stock. This goes to show how inaccessible nude fabrics truly are when trying to source the materials as an average consumer. I'm fairly educated in finding nude fabrics due to my research and it was hard for me to get fabrics with the knowledge that I have from conducting this study.

I underestimated the time it would take for my fabric samples to deliver, and I learned the importance of planning extremely far ahead. I ordered the fabric samples on October 3rd hoping it would only take a week or two to ship. However, that was not the case, and I was getting nervous that the samples would not arrive in time. The fabrics finally arrived the week before November first, the day I submit the paper to Honors. From now on I know that when I order fabric online, I should order at least three months ahead of time to ensure I get the fabric I need especially if it's important to have.

I decided that I wanted to make my capstone authentic by using my own money instead of asking for funding from the Honors College. My task for this project is to see how accessible nude fabrics are to the average consumer and asking for funding would give me more of an advantage than the average person. Doing this much research on the topic already placed me ahead of a typical consumer. Therefore, funding would take away from the budgeting aspect of the research.

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Appendix A

Pictures from Kalinya collage

Picture 1: Red catsuit from The Blonds fall 2013 Runway during fashion week.

Picture 2: Diana Ross performing at a concert in Central Park (1983).

Picture 3: Mabel King as Evillene from *The Wiz* (1978).

Picture 4: Supremes in beaded fringe dresses (1967).

Picture 5: Witches from *Emerald City* the NBC Tv series (2017).

Picture 6: Red sequin fabric swatch.

Picture 7: Red rhinestones.

Picture 8: Givenchy haute couture mesh glove with hand applied rhinestones.

Picture 9: Red tulle fabric.

Picture 10: Red rhinestone trim applique.

Picture 11: Red Rhinestones.

Appendix B

Pictures from Wicked Witch collage

Picture 12: 1940s black veiled vintage hat.

Picture 13: Jennifer Lopez wearing a western inspired look at the Met Gala designed by Ralph Lauren (2021).

Picture 14: Full-body catsuit layered beneath a pinstriped tailored coat and paired with lace-up boots, Moschino Fall/Winter collection 2018.

Picture 15: Tuareg man wearing a veil to cover his face from the elements in the desert.

Picture 16: Audrey Hepburn wearing a Chapeu du Martin in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961)

Picture 17: Dorothy and The Wicked Witch of the West in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).

Picture 18: Wicked witch costume closeup in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).

Picture 19: Wicked Witch from *Oz the Great and Powerful* (2013).

Picture 20: Red dress and long sleeve coat with burned fabric, Moschino Fall ready-to-wear collection 2016.

Picture 21: Blue and silver singed clothes, Moschino Fall ready-to-wear collection 2016.

Picture 22: Jet Black Pantone color swatch.

Picture 23: Black spandex fabric swatch.

Picture 24: Black satin fabric swatch.

Picture 25: Black tulle fabric swatch.

Appendix C

Pictures from Locasta collage

Picture 26: Sheer grey dress with organza cape, Christian Dior haute couture collection Spring/Summer 2021.

Picture 27: George Balanchine's Ballet *The Seven Deadly Sins* (1933).

Picture 28: Calliope the Muse from Disney's *Hercules* (1997).

Picture 29: Heavenly Bodies Met Gala themed Halloween look.

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Picture 30: Lena Horne as Glinda in *The Wiz* (1978).

Picture 31: White Grecian dress, Christian Dior haute couture collection Spring 2020.

Picture 32: Glinda closeup in *The Wiz* (1978).

Picture 33: Blue, iridescent glitter tulle fabric.

Picture 34: Dark blue glitter tulle fabric draped on a form.

Picture 35: Picture I took of a duck in a pond with a Pantone color story attached.

Picture 36: Light blue glitter tulle fabric.

Picture 37: Ancient Greek Ionian Chiton diagram.

Appendix D

Pictures from Glinda collage

Picture 38: Red gown, Ellie Saab Spring/Summer couture collection 2020.

Picture 39: Emily Blunt wearing a look inspired by the fashion film *Ziegfeld Girl* (2021).

Picture 40: Hedy Lamar in *Ziegfeld Girl* wearing a dress designed by the designer Adrian Gilbert (1941). Arian also designed for the 1939 *Wizard of Oz*.

Picture 41: Lana Condor at the Met Gala wearing a fluffy tulle blush dress designed by Giambattista Valli Couture (2019).

Picture 42: Billie Burke as Glinda in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939).

Picture 43: Audrey Hepburn in a pink ensemble from *My Fair Lady* (1964).

Picture 44: Michelle Williams as Glinda in *Oz the Great and Powerful* (2013).

Picture 45: Diahann Carroll presenting at the 41st Academy Awards (1969).

Picture 46: Various pink, shades and tints color story.

Picture 47: Pink glitter tulle fabric swatch.

Picture 48: Pink chiffon fabric swatch.

Picture 49: blush sequin gown, Ellie Saab Spring/Summer couture collection 2020.