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**Author** Vanessa Valero

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**Title of thesis** Landscape Dialogues

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**Department** Department of Design

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**Degree programme** Textile and Design

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**Year** 2015

**Number of pages** 80

**Language** English

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**Abstract**

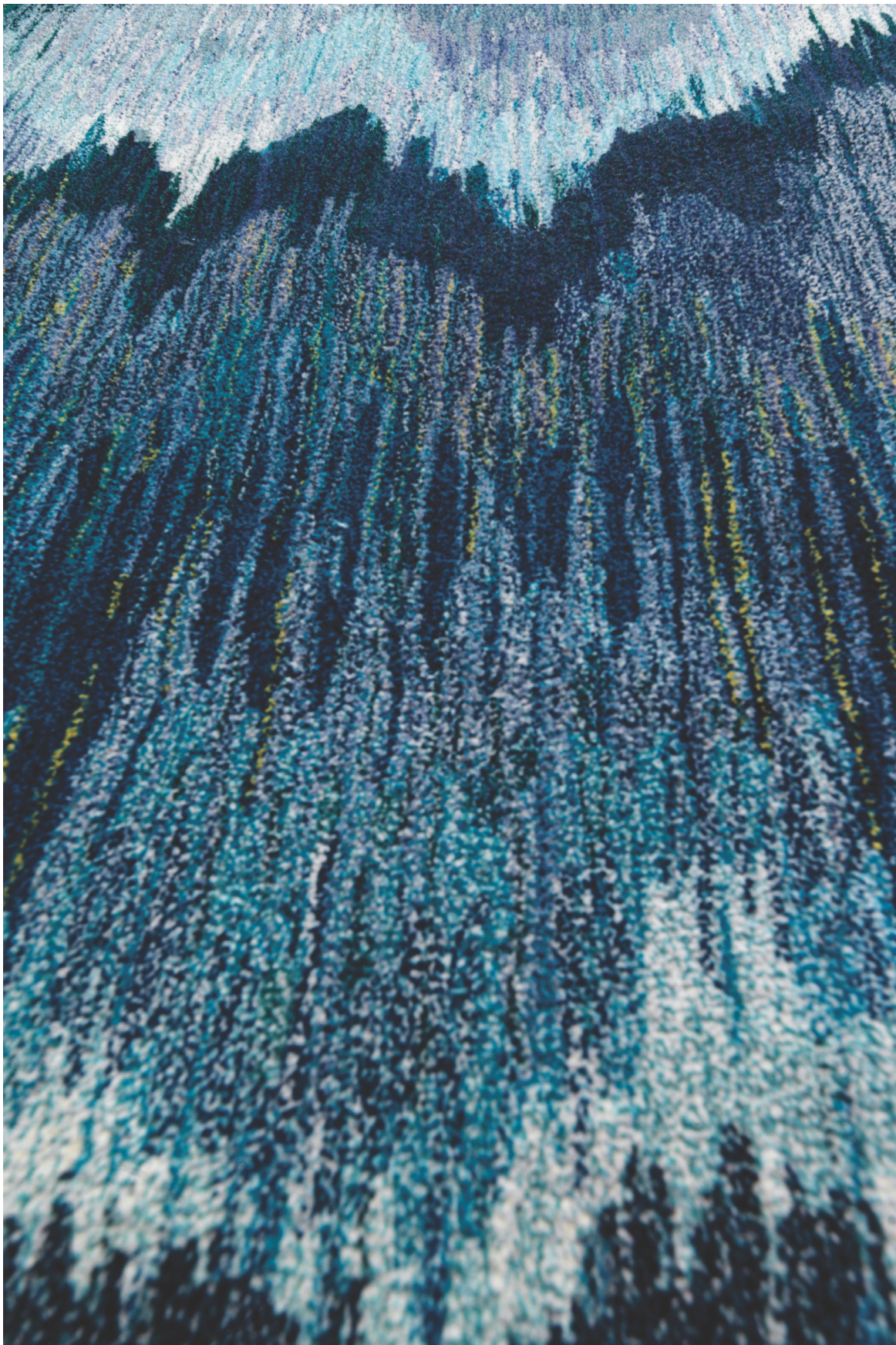
“Landscape Dialogues” is my examination of textile expression as a dialogue between rug design and high latitude landscapes. The inspiration arises from my encounters with both Finnish as well as Icelandic landscapes and therefore, entails making sense of my own perception as an outsider. The purpose of this examination is to create an aesthetic representation that expresses my encounter with these distinctive landscapes. Using the technique of hand tufting as my means of expression, I translate my perception of these landscapes into carpets. My challenge is to use hand tufting as a medium where upon my experience can be illustrated.

The focus of my examinations lays in the historical and phenomenological development of landscape perception. Also, a review of hand-tufted carpets and their artistic significance is included. The practical outcome is a hand-tufted rug illustrating my explorations. The hand-tufted carpet was made in Iceland through experimentation with Icelandic wool.

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**Keywords** Landscape, perception , tufting, carpets, rugs.

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# LANDSCAPES DIALOGUES

Vanessa Valero/2015





LANDSCAPE DIALOGUES

*Vanessa Valero* Master's thesis 2015

Textile and Design

Department of Design

Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture

Supervisors:

*Pirjo Kääriäinen*

*Kaarina Kalkkonen*

August 2015

<b>CONTENTS</b>		
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>7</b>	
/ABSTRACT	7	
/STARTING POINT	8	
<b>THESIS FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>11</b>	
/THESIS OBJECTIVES	11	
/THESIS STRUCTURE	11	
<b>RELATED LITERATURE</b>	<b>12</b>	
/LANDSCAPE DIALOGUES	12	
Landscape aesthetic	12	
Dwelling Landscape	17	
/PERCEPTION REVIEW	21	
Introduction	21	
Light and color	22	
/PERCEPTION REVIEW	22	
The visual representation	24	
Visual perception in Gestalt psychology	28	
The visual elements on representation	30	
<b>HAND-TUFTING RUGS</b>	<b>35</b>	
/INTRODUCTION	35	
/TUFTING ORIGINS	36	
/HAND-TUFTING TECHNIQUE	39	
/HAND-TUFTING ART	41	
<b>DESIGN PROCESS</b>	<b>46</b>	
/INTRODUCTION	46	
/SKETCHING PROCESS	47	
/TUFTING PROCESS	49	
/THE CARPET	53	
<b>AFTER THE CARPET</b>	<b>67</b>	
/COLLECTION DESIGN	67	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>74</b>	
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>76</b>	
/BOOK EBOOKS	76	
WEBSITES	77	
/IMAGES REFERENECES	78	
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>79</b>	





## **INTRODUCTION**

/ABSTRACT

“Landscape Dialogues” is my examination of textile expression as a dialogue between rug design and high latitude landscapes. The inspiration arises from my encounters with both Finnish as well as Icelandic landscapes and therefore, entails making sense of my own perception as an outsider. The purpose of this examination is to create an aesthetic representation that expresses my encounter with these distinctive landscapes. Using the technique of hand tufting as my means of expression, I translate my perception of these landscapes into carpets. My challenge is to use hand tufting as a medium where upon my experience can be illustrated.

The focus of my examinations lays in the historical and phenomenological development of landscape perception. Also, a review of hand-tufted carpets and their artistic significance is included. The practical outcome is a hand-tufted rug illustrating my explorations. The hand-tufted carpet was made in Iceland through experimentation with Icelandic wool.

# INTRODUCTION

## /STARTING POINT

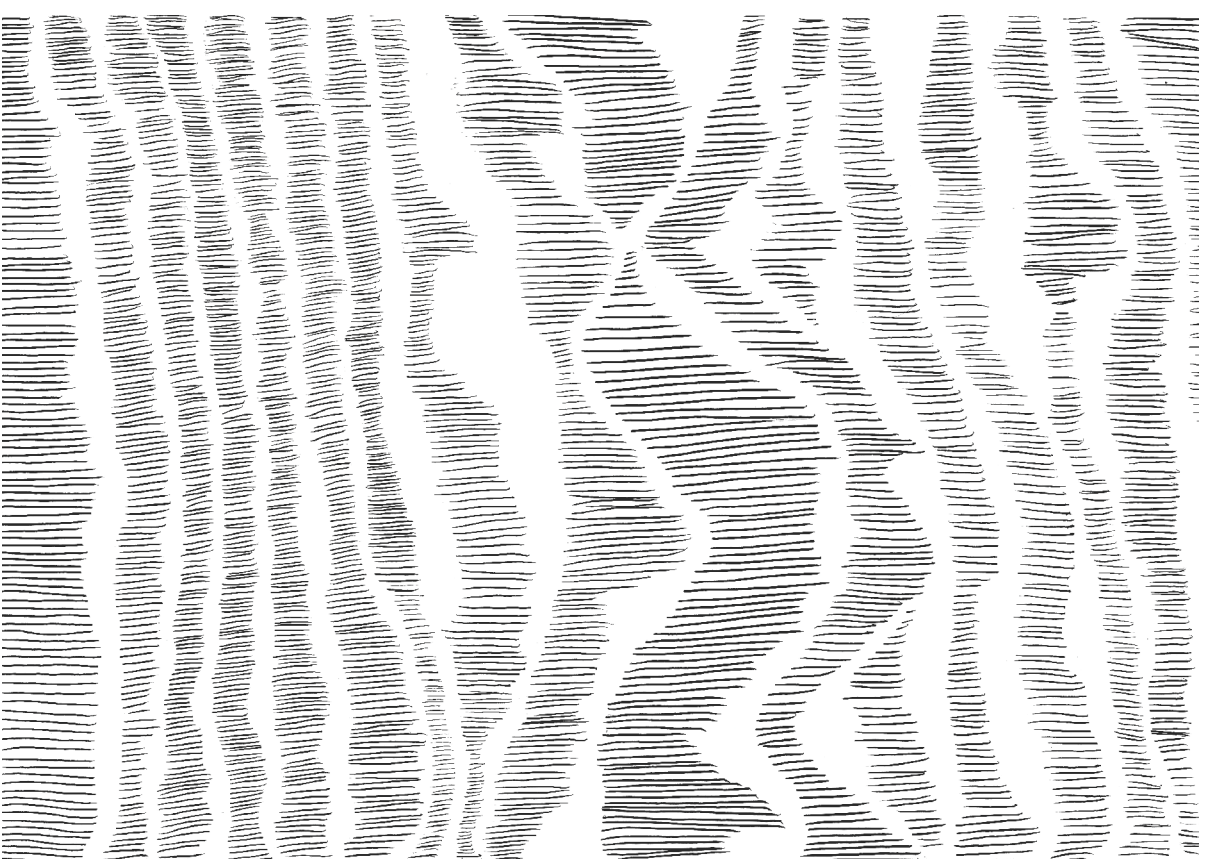
My roots are in the South, more precisely Colombia. I began this journey away from home more than a year ago, in search for an experience completely different from what I am used to in Colombia where there are no seasons and twelve hours of daylight all year around. Therefore, Finland and Iceland has introduced me to a different relationship with nature. The ubiquitous Finnish forest and the sharp presence of winter, both of which bring a different rhythm to the daily life. This experience has awakened my curiosity and initiated my search for even more diverse landscapes. My journey has being a continuous inner dialogue with landscape.

For a long time I have been fascinated by the closeness of the effervescent nature in Iceland in all its conscience grandeur, realizing that my experience of landscape is very different.

Coming to Aalto University I had the opportunity to apply for an internship with the Icelandic artist, Sigrun Lara Shanko, designing and hand tufting rugs. This was an exceptional professional experience and inspiring regarding my design. After my internship in Iceland I decided to continue this learning process and incorporate the experience and the results into my thesis. Hand tufting gave me an excellent opportunity to use my background as a graphic designer.

Certainly, landscape doesn't restrict our point of appreciation and attractive natural scenes can be expressed in different mediums, including tufted rugs. Furthermore, I believe that rugs can carry a conversation that scrutinizes the boundaries of nature, where it begins and where it ends, in our daily life. My purpose is to establish a relationship with nature, and transcend it toward an inclusive awareness with our personal space. More specifically, by awaking an intimate sense of the landscape.

As an outsider, I cannot escape my roots. This tentative appreciation of the Nordic landscapes clashes with my background. My reference as a designer arises from a different understanding and encounter with nature as my life in Colombia has shaped my relationship with landscape. Where I come from is the opening of this dialogue. This collection of rugs represents the aesthetic point of my inner dialogue throughout this journey.





# THESIS FRAMEWORK

## /THESIS OBJECTIVES

In the context of my landscape experience, I have challenged myself to find different meanings in my perception. The aim is to question my assumptions regarding landscape; highlighting the ways relate to the landscape and how my perception has evolved since I came to Finland and then to Iceland. This landscape representation is not literally an interpretation of specific sceneries, but rather a sketch to capture a sense of a place.

The thesis is intended to answer the following three questions: How can I gain control of my own visual perception with some assurance to share the meaning in the final results? How to shape and form an environmental experience? How to recreate a sense of a place?

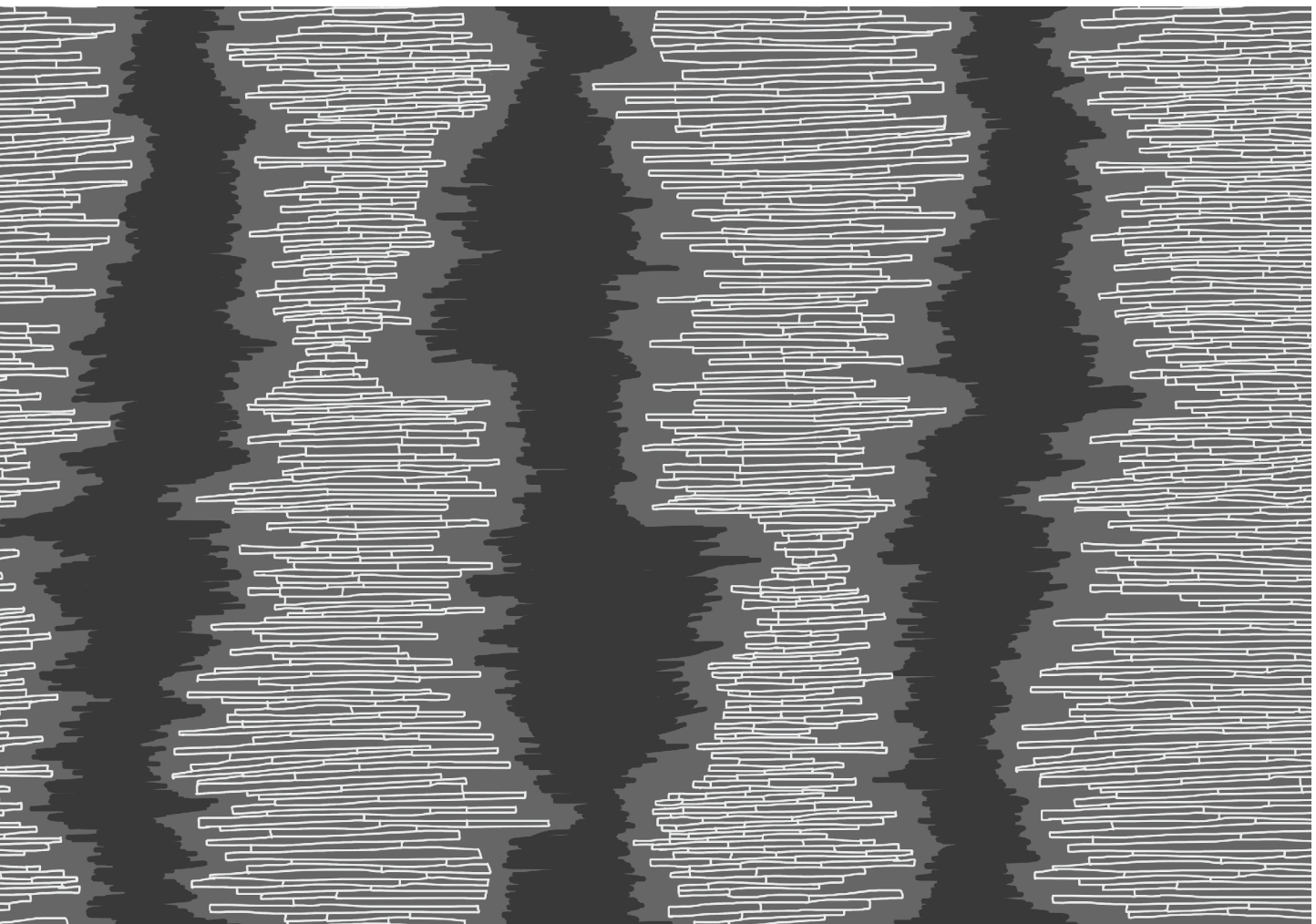
The goal of my thesis is to create a visual language that captures a small series of carpet designs that were inspired by the Nordic landscapes; and subsequently used to produce a hand-tufted carpet.

## /THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is divided in two parts: theoretical research and rug design. The theoretical research is oriented towards an understanding of landscape perception and representation. The theoretical review is an endeavour to rationalize my artistic expression. The first theoretical section scrutinizes the concept of landscape as an aesthetic phenomenon. The second section deals with a perceptual analysis in an effort to understand how creative minds works. Finally, as tufting was the selected technique, the third section gives an overview of its origins and evolution.

The second part of the thesis will contain a description of the tufting process and explain the decisions made regarding design and procedure. The choices concerning the final piece will be discussed and explained.

The thesis conclusion is a valuation of the result and significance as a learning process for others and me.



## RELATED LITERATURE

### /LANDSCAPE DIALOGUES

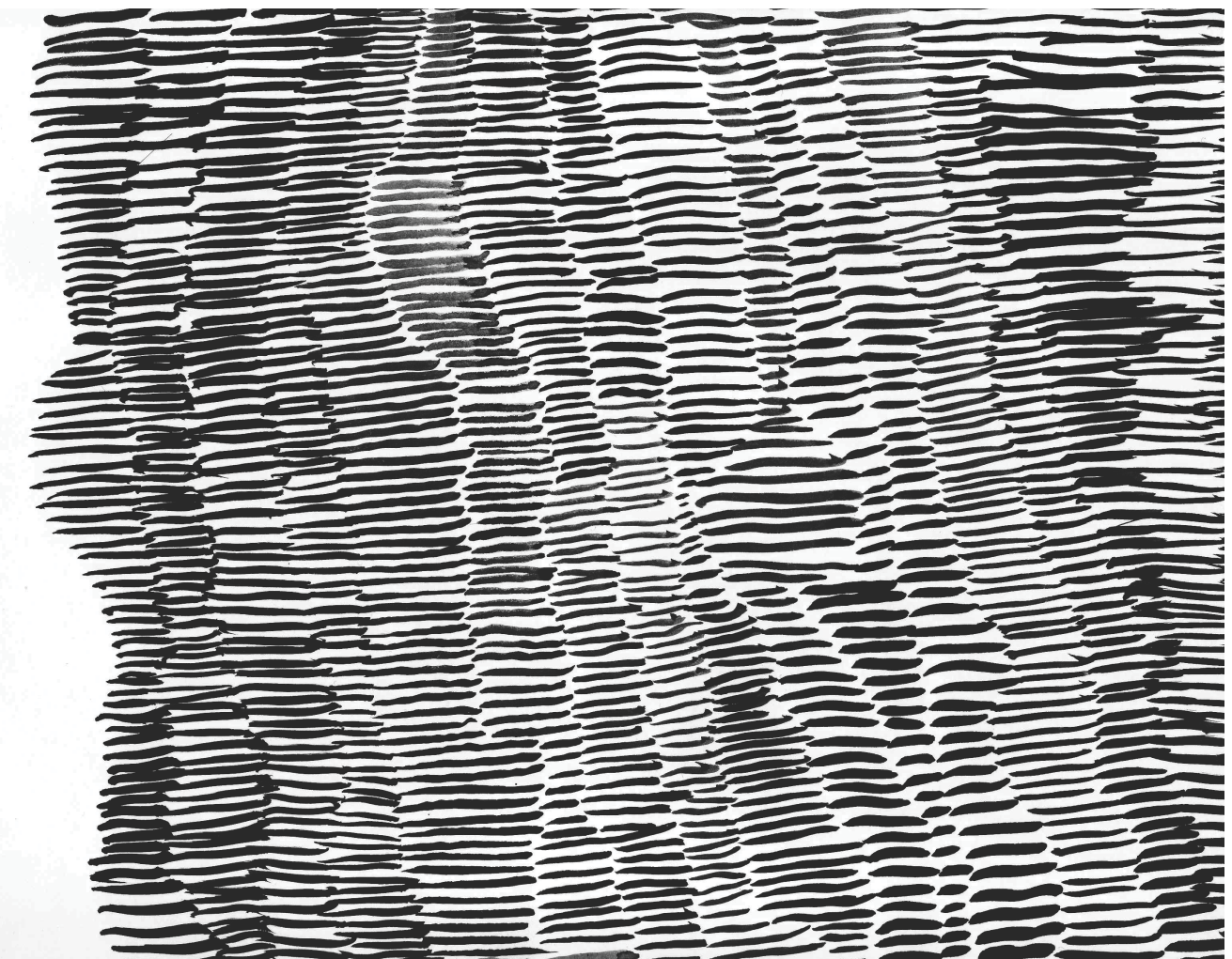
#### Landscape aesthetic

In an attempt to comprehend landscape as an aesthetic experience, this research will underline the basic theoretical concepts with a contemporary point of view. This research does not claim to be a complete history review, but rather a landscape analysis of nature's aesthetic and artistic appreciation. This questions the idea of landscape as an everyday experience.

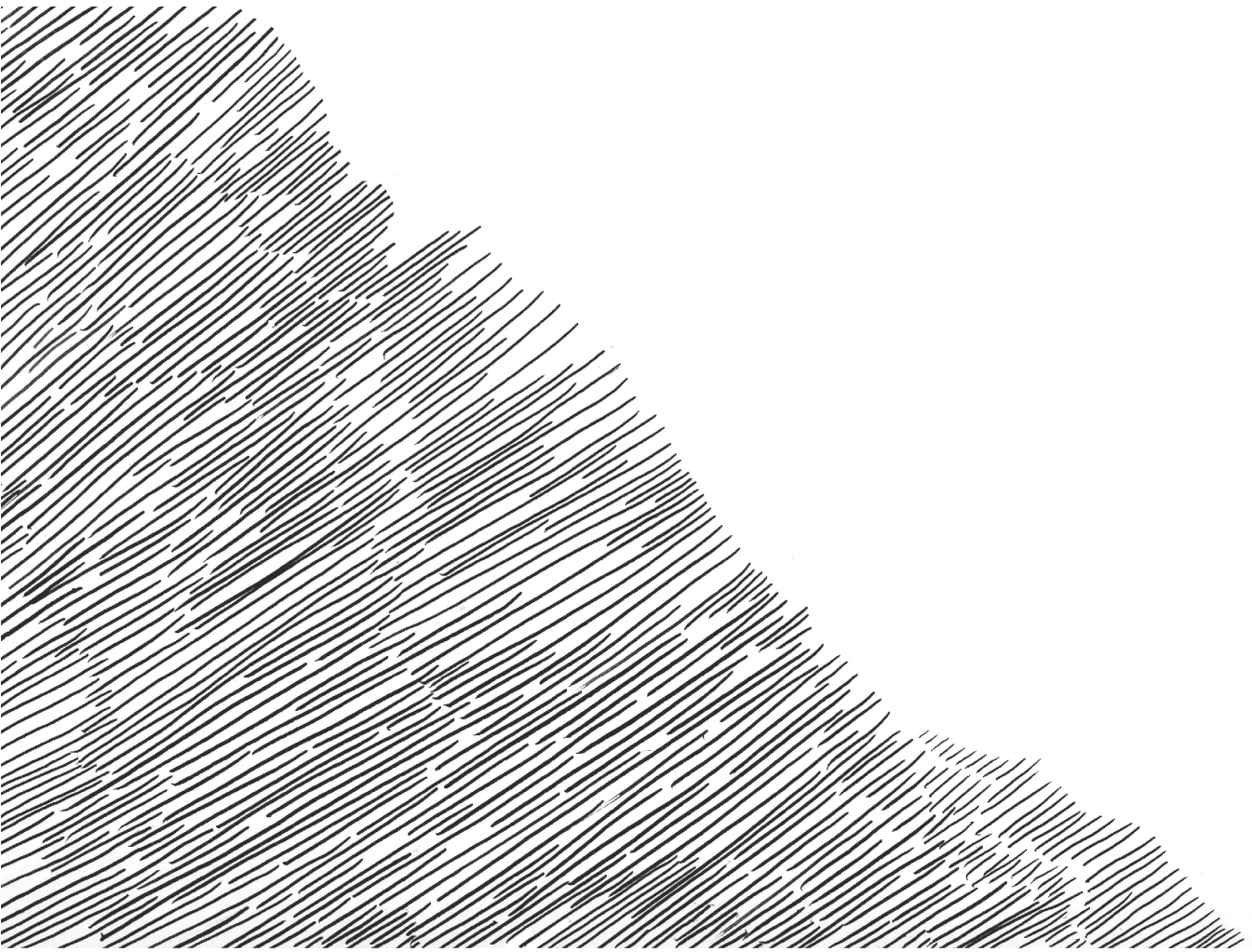
Aesthetic appreciation has a particular association when it comes to the environment. Beauty has a long-standing history in human inquiry, but the environment has comparatively recently been related to artistic appreciation. As Arnold Berleant states, it is less than half century since philosophers began to focus on aesthetic appreciation of the environment. Since the times of ancient civilizations it was only nature's beauty that got full recognition for aesthetic appreciation. Later, around the seventeenth century, a growing interest in nature's aesthetic for its own sake is noted and in the eighteenth century aesthetics achieves a disciplinary identity. Through Immanuel Kant, natural beauty became an aesthetic inquiry as he put forward a theory of aesthetic, but back then it was

only reference to nature. In the nineteenth and twentieth century aesthetics became an independent discipline and began to be associated with art and philosophy (Berleant, 2012, p. 67). More recently, aesthetic theory has associated with everyday life assessment as the range of environmental aesthetic continues evolving. Currently, the scope of the discipline includes wider range of aspects than just nature; i.e. fields like politics, sociology, and law, among others. It has even entered our everyday life.

Human relationship with nature has changed over the years. This broader context has challenged all aesthetic theories regarding the environment. Accordingly to Simon Bell, there are two contemporary schools that approach aesthetic experience from the perceptual point of view. On one side, the 'integrationalist' philosophers such as Mary Carmen Rose, Allan Carlson and Diane Willard from USA and Canada, who believe that perception is both integral and interdependent processes that occur simultaneously with people. This means that aesthetic experience is affected by factors such as cultural conditions, scientific knowledge or pre-ordained conceptual patterns.







On the other hand, 'the perceptual view', supported by philosophers such as F. E. Sparholt and May Warnock who believe that the pleasure or displeasure arise from the object in question. This means that a positive or negative experience is based solely on how the object looks, sounds or feels. Preconceive ideas or judgements before knowing the object are useless (Bell, 1999, p. 67).

Separate revisions of both studies have pointed at certain theoretical weaknesses. As Bell explains, the interdependency view (or 'integrationist') states that the aesthetic response is conditioned by factors such as previous knowledge and familiarity; therefore an exposure to new landscape will have a negative response. However, this not the how it works; it is possible to find new scenes appealing and aesthetically stimulating. On the other hand, 'the perceptual view' weakness is to underestimate human's aesthetic awareness. If there is a deliberate attention to landscape, there is a perceptual engagement. This means that the predisposition to perceive is as important as how attractive is the object (Bell, 1999, p. 68). In other words, the environment is a perceptual system that requires a constant thinking.

This controversy around landscape aesthetic questions the value of aesthetic appreciation to human life. Is a dwelling experience that echoes personal research? Landscape as an aesthetic concept is more than visual information; it is a holistic experience and a relationship with the surroundings. It is conditioned to: what, when, where and by whom. The particular circumstances that occur in a landscape appreciation shape the aesthetic recognition.

Experiencing landscape is not an isolate event that occurs only at special occasions; as in tourism for example. It can be part of our daily life, as an aesthetic awareness. "The landscape is truly captured in the every moment we delve deeply within ourselves, reaching beyond objective representation, where we discover the order of the visible in a complete dissolution of the self" (Milani, 2009, p. 4). By giving relevance to landscape appreciation it becomes a state of mind.

Understanding the connotation of a landscape shouldn't be a separate acknowledge from humans. It is true that nowadays the human relationship with nature is growing more distant. But that is why, landscape appreciation it's so important in order to re-establish that bond. We should seek beauty in our daily surroundings; not only in touristic trips. In my opinion, landscape should have a personal meaning in everyone's daily life.



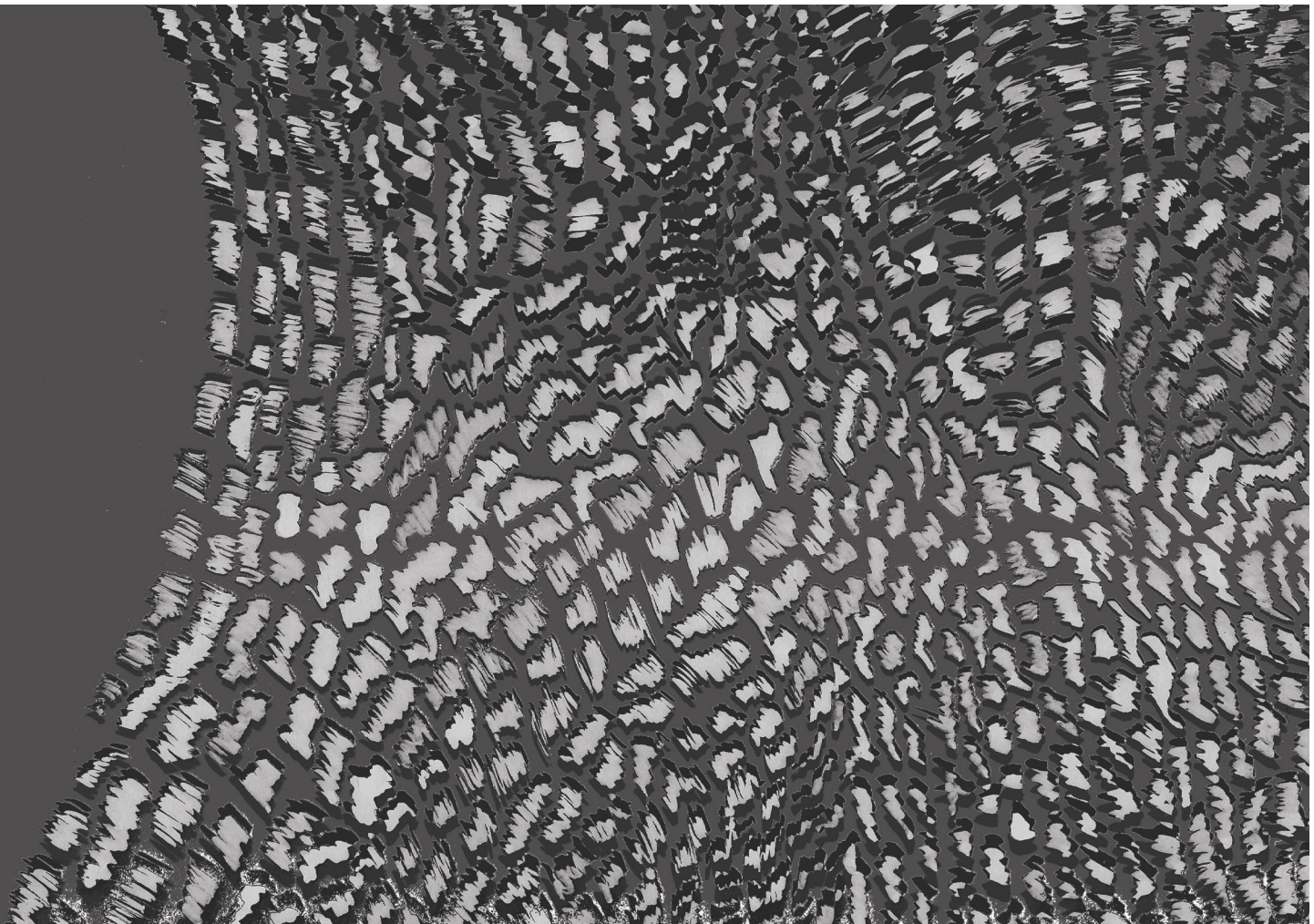
## Dwelling Landscape

Landscape is a broad and evolving concept. My intention in this chapter is to explore landscape experience as a cognitive process that can lead to an artistic representation. Individual perception is the key element for aesthetic appreciation and consequent representation. When it comes to creativity, perception plays a major role. It is through perception and environmental awareness, that landscape visual representation is created.

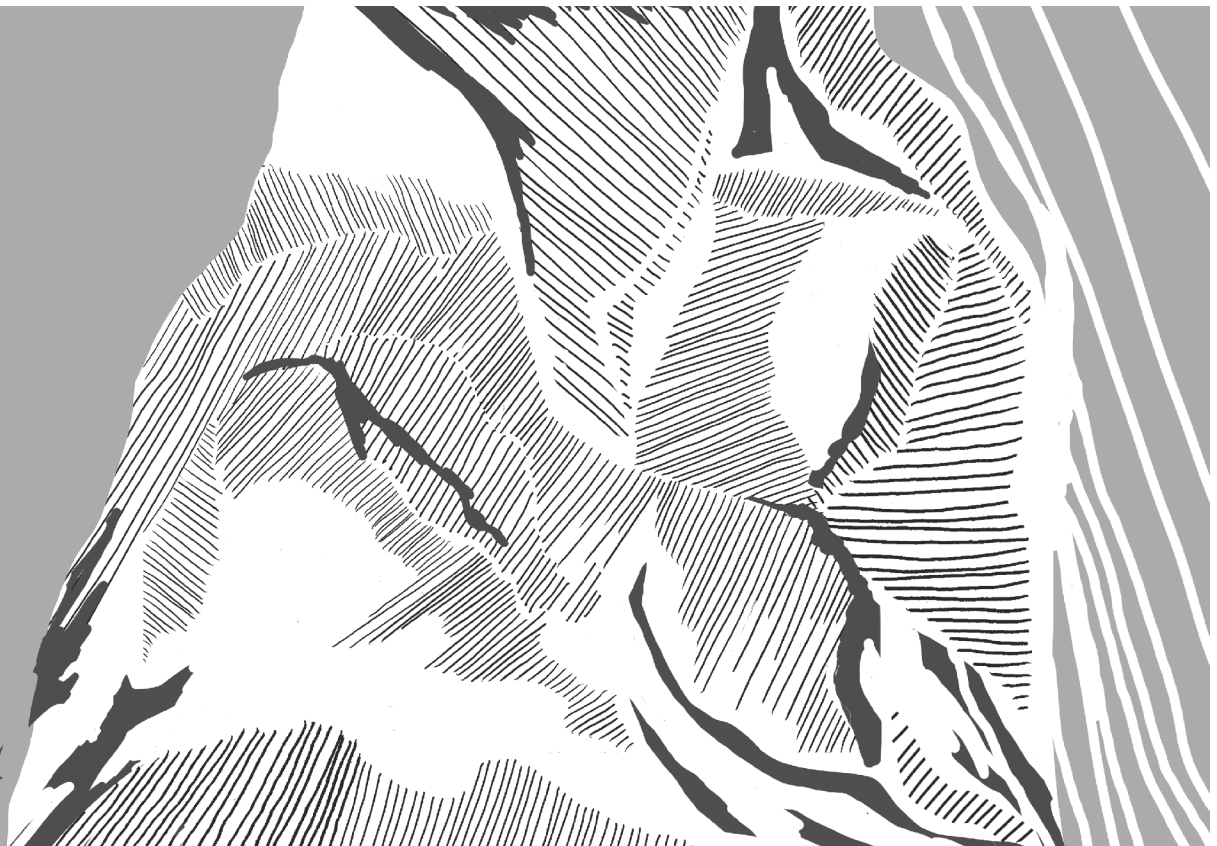
Landscape is more than a visible location; it is a personal experience that involves interaction with the space. This interaction requires an understanding of the place characteristics. "From the first sensory interaction with a new environment we engage the formal aesthetic response and, as part of this, we seek to make sense of its structure and composition. We therefore seek comprehensible patterns in the world around us and to some degree find aesthetic pleasure in particularly coherent examples" (Bell, 2005, p.30). In other words, place recognition creates a cognitive representation that relates with the surrounding. In order to understand a place and how to relate to it the mind

creates cognitive patterns. These patterns create a sense of place that provides to humans not only the information to survive but also aesthetic recognition. As John A. Jackle states: "The mind lingers at given levels to organize a sense of place" (Jackle, 1987, p. 79).

Perception in general gives humans the basic information to orient our behaviour depending on the environment conditions. According to John Jackle, perception as part of the cognitive process is built up from consecutive images over a period of time. Conscious landscape visualization involves two practices. First, space surveying or space scanning, that gives cues for behavioural predisposition. Second, place-organizing search is a more detailed analysis of expected patterns that validates already established cues. This visual process decodes the landscape to understand the elements within it and direct behaviour (Jackle, 1987, p. 34). In a strict sense, perception is part of our survival instinct, but what is interesting is how perception evolves when it comes to art and design.







Perception that leads to representation is a problem solving process. The mind has to reach for a solution to communicate the perceived landscape with visual elements. This kind of analysis is subjective and linked to experience. In creative individuals, "... regardless of whether the conditions in which they find themselves are luxurious or miserable, they manage to give their surrounding a personal pattern that echoes the rhythm of their thoughts and habits of action" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 127,128). Finding this rhythm is making sense of the whole impressions given by a place.

As the interaction with the landscape increases a sense of place expands; and new meanings emerge. "In the surrounding world we perceive visual qualities that are spatially logical patterns of color, light, form, and movements. Patterns of such qualities always belong to functional situations in life, each one with its own characteristic emotional content" (Arnkl, Anter, & Klarén, 2012, p. 26). Personal experience creates a starting point for interpretation.

Designers analyse the information and decode it into elements of representation. Once the elements are chosen the composition starts. The possible combinations are endless, but when rhythm is added to the composition patterns begin to form. In other words, the artist creates its own patterns and with a good understanding of rhythm a visual identity is created.

Creating a visual expression requires more than a contemplative attitude. It is more than just sight seeing that makes a personal interpretation of landscape. As Jackle points

out, cognitive mapping of the place grows through augmentation. It builds through successive layer of knowing and living (Jackle, 1987, p. 157). Layers of experience create a sense of place.

Landscape is not just an object of appreciation but also an environmental experience. A combination of particular circumstances creates the experience. It is true that certain environments (more than others) can make a huge impression that accentuates a sense of place; making the representation easier. "Certain environment have a greater density of interaction and provide more excitement and a greater effervescence of ideas: therefore, they prompt the person who is already inclined to break away from conventions to experiment with novelty more readily than if he or she had stayed in more conservative, more repressive setting" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 129).

However, as inspiring a place can be, creativity is more complex than that. It is ultimately a question of what the individual wants to express or what he or she is seeking in that place. This means that a place is most inspiring when the person comes with a previous formed reflection of what idea he or she wants to communicate.

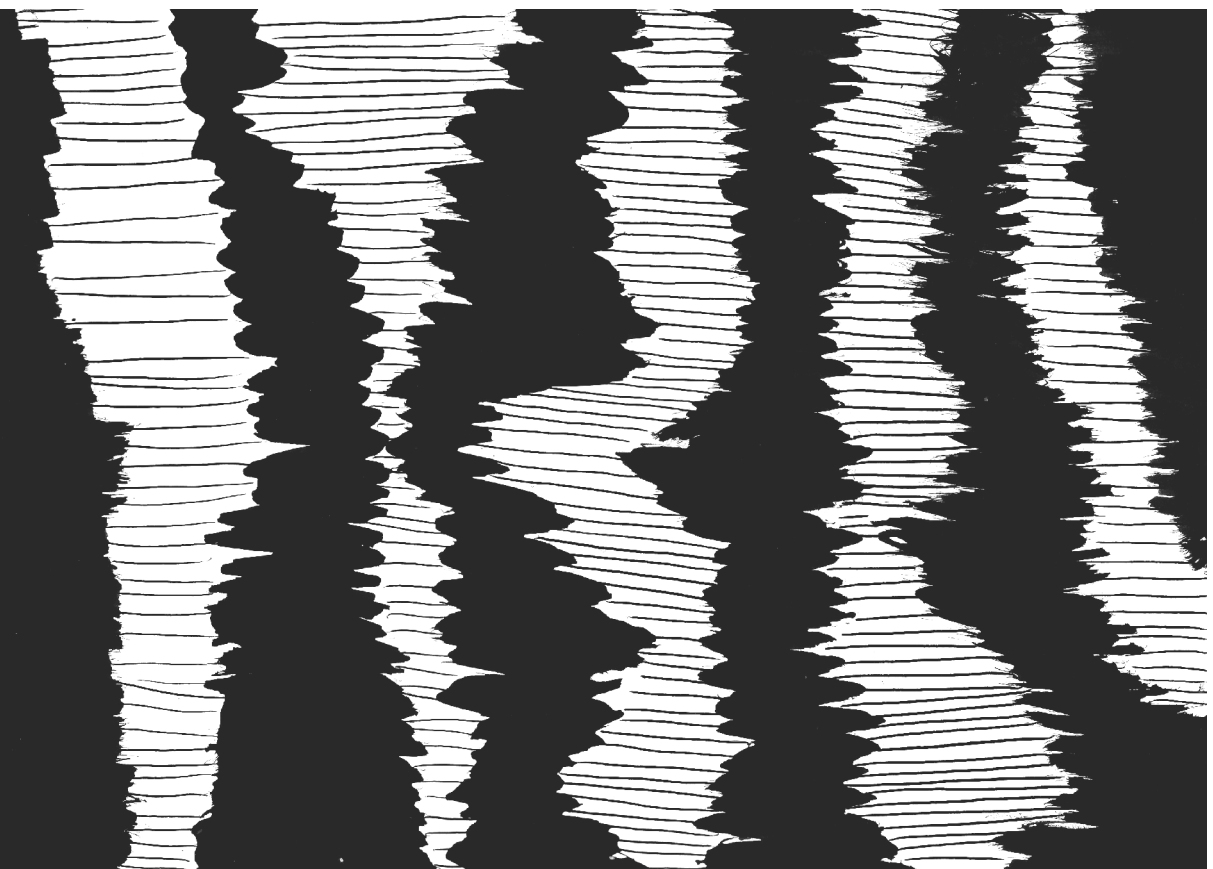
## Introduction

In this journey reflecting on self-conscious creativity, I contemplate how the human perception functions from a visual point of view. I intend to comprehend the idea of perception as part of the analytical thinking. Furthermore, how does pattern recognition begin in the visual perception process? To understand the creative process of visual representation it is important to clarify how the artist perceives the image as it is being sketched. My purpose is to gain understanding of the basic concepts directing perception in the designing process.

Human senses play the most important role in appraising the environment, and it is the mind that processes the information that forms creative ideas. Although, all the environment information is given by a combination of sensory inputs, it is sight that plays a mayor role in the perception process.

In order for the sight to work, there has to be light. The stimulation of the eye depends on the quantity of light. However, the quantity and quality of light depends on the position and location of the observer; this is what is called optical array. Light is correlated with the person's space circumstances. It is through light and it's different shades that the eye perceives objects dimensions and location that consequently provides the information to relate with the space. "The amount of information and knowledge we obtain depends on the variety and degree of contrast of the sensory data that we receive and the extent to which we can differentiate them: that is, detect patterns" (Bell, 1999, p. 41). The ability to organize visual data into perception patterns such as: shapes; colours; textures; movements; and light, among others, is called Visual Thinking.

Despite changes in the stimulation of the eye, either from changes in the location or shape, the information has to be accurately represented in the mind. Perception takes place in a word in motion; what is being looked at changes constantly; practically nothing remains the same. It is pattern recognition that allows us to identify an object even though changes may occur. This recognition takes place thanks to perceptual constancies. In other words, some perceptual information has to be processed prior to visual recognition in order to fill the gaps of ambiguity. Understanding perception is essential to comprehend how people conceptualize landscape. That is, how the mind processes visual information to comprehend the configurations of a place.



## /PERCEPTION REVIEW

### Light and color

Light is a visual experience. Light is perceived by the mind as colours. Therefore, light and colour are correlated concepts that cannot be studied separately. As part of the visual phenomena it can't be limited only as an optical display. Light and colour has the power to influence our mind and emotions. The following research focuses on colour and light perception in the landscape experience. How light is a changing visual phenomenon with the power to affect human behaviour. My attempt is not to focus in the physical nature, but to understand it's experiential relationship with the landscape.

In the attempt to disentangle the variety of visual patterns, it is necessary to comprehend how light works. Firstly, there is the biological process as a sensory input. Secondly, is the influence on the human behaviour:

The human brain perceives light in colours. If there is no light, there are no colours. Light is absorbed and reflected by surfaces through it travels. The wavelength of light determines colour hues. The eye receives the stimulus of light and identifies different wavelengths (i.e. colours) and brightness (i.e. intensity). However, the amount of light captured by the eye is determined by its position, which will determine the particular combination of light. How colours are experienced is affected by changes in light since it is a dynamic energy.

Colour impressions are determined to everyday relationship with light. Light is the cause of colour and colour experience is affected by different kinds of lighting. Light quality is connected to factors such as: "Latitude, season, angle of sun climate, humidity level, weather and quality of air are all parameters that influence conditions of light" (Hånteman, 2007, p. 17). This means, that light is a different experience for each individual, because it depends on changing conditions within a specific frame of time.

According to Arnkil, light is affected by the weather, changes in the atmospheric conditions and the angle of sunlight and its elevation. The angle of incidental sunlight has a distinctive impact, both in the morning and in the evening. They produce completely different experience around the world. In latitudes above 60 degrees north (i.e. Iceland and Finland), clear skies during sunrise and sunset, the landscape is covered with light of solely shifting colours. The gentle rhythm in the light results in a slow transition of colour. In general, in the far north the light is bright and the shadows are distinctively deep and long, resulting in a landscape that is marked by contrast (Arnkil, 2013, p. 182-183). This relationship with colours in the north is completely different than experienced by people living close to the equator:

"Light is the primary medium through which most people perceive and experience the world" (Jackle, 1987, p. 103). In fact, light is perceived differently around the world. Each place it is partly identified by a regional light condition and atmospheric characteristics. The atmospheric condition affects the degree of clarity and therefore

the legibility of the landscape (Jackle, 1987, p. 106). The light of each space becomes the key factor for understanding its singularity. In other words, the particularities of a place and its society are directly related to the quality and quantity of sunlight.

Light is physical event that creates a particular background. As light stimuli are different in each place; the perception of colour is also different experience around the world. Therefore, the human relationship with light and colour changes from place to place. Colour becomes contextual.



## /PERCEPTION REVIEW

### The visual representation

Representation becomes a rational expression of the visual thinking. It's the outcome of a perceptual thinking. Landscape representation is the artist deliberate attention to the surroundings.

The artist's representation is a post-visual analysis that involves a perceptual awareness of the surrounding. The artist perceives and compares the image to previous experiences of similar images. As the artist compares, he/she begins the process of reproduction, through the use of accumulated memory. With the use of memory and an analysis of light the artist begin to found the elements of representation. According to Jonathan Miller, there are different systems of drawing; but all use perception to analyse the objects in space and in relationship to each other. The brain needs to interpret the pattern of light intensities in order to extract features such as edges. It's a matter of interpreting the array of light as it falls on the retina (Miller, 1990, p. 244).

The artist interprets the perceptual information into visual elements. According to Donis A. Dondis the visual elements are: line; colour; shape; direction; texture; scale; dimension; and motion. Which of this elements will dominant the visual statement is defined by the functionality of the object considered. But the variations of the visual statement depend on the artist expression (Dondis, 1973, p. 113). Each of these basic elements can be combined and recombined into new patterns or to recreate the ones found in the nature.

Although, pattern recognition is inherent to the process of seeing, visual expression is more than just looking and copying the surroundings. It requires an active visual thinking. Accordingly to Jonathan Miller, expression is the crowing aspiration of all perceptual categories. It is the statement to which all the arousing visual tension is expressed. In our more limited perceptual sense, expression is based on tension alone (Miller, 1990, p. 245). In other words, visual expression, as part of the cognitive thinking, is the ability to communicate by adding tension in the composition

In order to communicate meaning a composition has to take place. As Dondis would state, compositional decisions proclaims the purpose and meaning of visual statement and how the viewer receives it. The process of composition is part of visual problem solving. Therefore, composition requires the orderly arrangement of all the parts. There are no absolute rules, but the possible combinations will have different visual meanings (Dondis, 1973, p. 112). In other words, composition is the structure of visual communications. Composition is the result of organizing visual elements in order to communicate an idea.

Communication starts as visual representation is added to a product. This can change how a product is perceived. It means that visual representation can permeate a product and thereby adding narrative and new meanings. "Visual products are mediated expression and communication" (Lazzari & Lec, 1990, p. 132). On the other hand, the representation qualities are also transformed by the surface.

Once the product starts communicating, the audience will begin their own perception process. The audience possesses accumulated knowledge from other sources, so consequently their background will affects how they react to a creation. There are both internal and external response to the work, the product communicates into different levels, depending in how the piece relates to the audience. The bigger the interest of the observer with the image, the greater the connection with piece.





## /PERCEPTION REVIEW

### Visual perception in Gestalt psychology

In my opinion, the cornerstone of the visual representation is the composition; the composition is the structure that holds the representation together. This chapter will review the Gestalt psychology principles that can be used as compositional guidance. These principles can help to organize the visual elements according to how the perception works.

In the 1920's, Dr. Max Wertheimer founded the school of Gestalt, in Germany, with a group of psychologists that tried to understand how the mind works regarding complex images. They established a comprehensive system to explain how the brain organizes visual elements. Accordingly to Gestalt theory: 'the whole' is a more transcendent experience than the sum of its parts. This means that 'the whole' is more relevant than its parts.

One of Gestalt psychologist, Rudolf Arnheim, focuses was the perceptual analysis to art and aesthetics. He believed, "Gestalt is a field whose forces are organized in a self-contained, balanced whole" (Zakia, 2013, p. 28). To understand the balance as a whole, Gestalt laws were developed to configure the relationships of the parts. These space cues are: proximity; similarity; continuity; and closure. I will briefly explain these space configurations using some of my sketches during the carpet design process as examples:

**Proximity:** The smaller the gap is between visual elements that are similar, the easier is to associate them as a group or a pattern.

**Similarity:** Visual elements that are similar in shape; colour; texture; movement; symmetry; and asymmetry; among others, can be seen as patterns as they related to each other.

**Continuity:** The fluently position of the elements suggest a shape. The brain will recognize a pattern from uninterrupted position elements by generating a line or a shape.

**Closure:** Incomplete lines or shapes where the gap is small are still perceived as a whole.

A single image can be perceived by grouping different elements. The context in which an object exists determines how it is grouped or not grouped with other elements. The interaction between elements can change each of their nature by adding new meanings.

What Gestalt clear entities is the human need to organize visual elements in order to give it meaning. Perceptual organization principles provide the keys to arranging elements in relation to each other. This relationship can create either tension or harmony.

However, depending on the degree of organization, the brain will have a more or less an active role. The Gestalt laws cannot be applied literally to organize all elements. According to Richard Zakia, although order is needed to cope with both the inner and outer world, the experience cannot be reduced to a network of neatly predictable connections without losing the stimulating richness, some complexity has to be incorporated (Zakia, 2013, p. 61).

The experience would be rather monotonous if there were little to add. More precisely the key is to balance those principles, in order to create a pattern that allows the viewer to participate in the discovery: "Man derives satisfaction from being able to form a closure that allows him to become an active participant in the visual experience" (Zakia, 2013, p. 56). In other words, the visual experience that encourages the viewer to find structure and organization becomes a more gratifying experience.

My intention with the designs was not to give the viewer a literal landscape, but an abstract reinterpretation. Moreover, giving the viewer the freedom to participate and become involved with the landscape and discover a sense of a place. The door is opened for landscape appreciation and interpretation.



## /PERCEPTION REVIEW

### The visual elements on representation

Part of the composition is to understand the elements selected to communicate an idea. In this chapter I will review some visual communications theories of Donis A. Dondis from her book "A Primer of Visual Literacy" (1973). There she defines the visual elements that can be used in the composition.

According to Dondis, a composition is a visual statement with both purpose and a meaning. It is a vital stage in the process of a visual representation. In this stage, the communicator has the opportunity to express the work that he or she is intending to convey.

Visual mode has no defined structure. Although there isn't absolute rules how to make a composition, different arrangements can suggest different visual meanings (as it was explained in the Gestalt psychology chapter). Therefore, visual literacy is the orderly arrangement of the visual elements.

Structure is how the visual elements are presented and emphasised. Part of the composition is to choose the appropriate elements for the medium to be dealing with. Those elements are the substance of the composition. The visual elements are: the dot, the line, shape, direction, tone, colour, texture, dimension, scale and movement.

As part of the sketching process it is important to understand the meaning of the visual elements.

#### **The Dot**

The dot is the basic unit of a visual communication. It is the minimum visual force that the eye responds to. Two dots, in any visual plan, serve to measure the space. The more complex the measurement is, the more dots are needed. When several dots are connected or very close to each other the eye recognizes shapes. When dots connect in great profusion and juxtaposition, they create the illusion of tone colour.

#### **The Line**

When dots are so close to each other that they cannot be distinguished as individual elements, a line is formed. Line can give a sense of direction and it can be said that a line is really a dot in motion. Line is never static; it has always a purpose and a direction. This nature gives it an enormous energy.

This dynamic element is essential for the pre-visualization and brings to real form to something that only exists in the imagination. It can be used for different visual purposes; from pragmatic, tight and technical use; to freely, organic and expressive use.

#### **Shape**

A line articulates shape. The three basic shapes are: the square; the circle; and the equilateral triangle. The square relates to qualities such as dullness, honesty, straightness and workmanlike characteristics. The triangle conveys conflict and tension. The circle characterizes endlessness, warmth and protection. From the countless diverse combination of these basic shapes all kind of forms can be created.

#### **Direction**

The three basic shapes; the square; the triangle; and the circle incorporate directions: horizontal; vertical; diagonal; and a curve. Direction is a powerful tool for constructing visual messages. The horizontal-vertical plan is man's primary reference to the environment and those two directions serve to balance visual subjects. On the contrary, the diagonal direction has the power to create tension; and as a result, is the most provoking visual formulation. Curved direction is associated with encompassment, repetition and warmth.

#### **Tone**

As light is not uniformly dispersed over the environment, we can optically distinguish different tone to enrich the visual information. It is defined as the intensity of darkness or lightness of anything visualised and is the key element in expressing dimensions. Tone is the way we describe light.

#### **Colour**

While tone has bases in human survival, colour is strongly connected to human emotions. There is a shared meaning of different colours throughout the environment as we associate colour with the sky, trees, grass and so on. However, colour can also have subjective meanings; people can choose their own colour preference and how they use them.

We associate colour with symbolic meaning and each colour can have various connotations. Since colour perception is the strongest emotional factor of the visual process, it has a great power in reinforcing the meaning of visual information.



Colour can be measured and defined in; hue; saturation; and brightness. Hue is the colour itself. Saturation denotes the purest form of any hue and brightness is the tonal gradations from light to dark. Colours are organized in a colour wheel. It contains the primary and secondary colours, but the wheel can express a huge combination of hues.

### **Texture**

Textures, is the element that is commonly evaluated by the sense of touch, although it can also be appreciated and recognize by sight. Typically the combinations of both senses are used. The judgment of the eye is followed by a touch.

Texture becomes the substance of the composition that adds another quality to the surface. Besides the visual qualities of the texture, it serves as a sensitive experience.

### **Scale**

Scale is not only the relative size of the visual cues, it has also the capacity to modify and define each of the visual elements. Scale is about the relationship of visual elements to each other. In other words, no element can be considered big or small without relating it to it's surrounding. For this reason juxtaposition is a crucial part of the composition.

When size has a purpose and a meaning it is proportioned. The most vital factor for human composition is proportion.

### **Dimension**

The representation of dimension is an illusion. Although dimensions exist in the real world, it is only implied in a representation. The technical convention for this practice is referred to as a perspective. Perspective has defined rules and its intention is to reproduce the feeling of reality. It is the visual solution for representing dimensions.

### **Movement**

Suggestion of motion in static visual statements is commonly achieved by distorting reality. This movement is not real and exists only in the eye of the beholder. In other words, it is an interpretation of the observer. This is a physiological phenomenon called "persistence of vision". A static and fixed image can imply movement through tension and rhythm.

All these visual elements have the dramatic potential to carry a message that can be understood by anyone. With these visual means the image syntax is created (Dondis, 1973, p. 39-66).



## HAND-TUFTING RUGS / INTRODUCTION

Rugs and wall hangings have a rich and extensive history. Tufted carpets originated recently in comparison to the carpet history. It is important to review tufting history and its origins to fully understand how this technique has evolved over time and how a whole industry was created from an embroidery idea. The technique has evolved into different branches and one of them is the hand-tufting machine.

Currently, there are a variety of techniques available for creative minds. Hand tufting has become one of them. This technique continues to evolve as artists have modified and experimented with the tufting practice. As new concepts are added, the tufting technique has found a firm place within the arts. Hand-tufting is part of the carpet industry, but is also accepted as an art form and a way of expression. Creative minds have elevated the product from being a carpet to art pieces. Artists have found in tufting a tool to communicate both visually and tactile. Used as a 'drawing tool' new visual effects have come alive.

The following chapter will review the history of tufting. In my present-day evaluation, I will introduce several contemporary artists that have taken this technique on another level; as a medium of artistic expression.





## /TUFTING ORIGINS

The beginning of the carpet tufting technique can be traced to Dalton, Georgia, in the United States. In the late 1890's, a simple farm girl, called Catherine Evans Whitener, was the entrepreneur behind this idea. She wanted to reproduce a bedcover design she had seen before. For that purpose, she ran up loose loops of thick yarn into muslin, creating a chenille effect. In the process she tightens the ends to keep the yarn from coming loose and to lock the threads on place during the finishing process; she washed the muslin several times with hot water to shrink it.

One of her first creations was a wedding gift for her brother. Catherine Evans' sister valued greatly this bedspread and offered to buy one piece. The design became popular beyond her circle of friends and family creating a market for her bedspreads. As the business continue to grow, she taught the new technique to her family and friends, to keep up with demand. "She would stamp patterns on the muslin sheeting- initially using can lids or pie tins and grease from meat skins, and later dye coloured wax markers and then distribute the material to local women who would employ their new skills to finish the work" (Tamasy, 2010, p. 5).

This new sewing process, called "turfin" in the beginning, became the mayor industry of the city. Around 1900's the bedspreads were sold in department stores in different states. The demand just kept growing. With a thriving business, after the World War I, farmers realize the potential in the tufting business. Besides the farming, bedspread production became a supplement income.

Many home tufters were established along the mountain roads of southeastern United States. Consequently, Dalton became the Bedspread Capital of the World and later the Carpet Capital of the World.

As the business became popular, new spread houses emerge and price competition pushed the industry farther. An operational system was established. Most of the spread house purchased the fabrics and stamped the designs on it. Also, this material was given to countryside workers who tufted the sheeting at their houses. This was called "cabin crafts". But with the growing competence and new manufacture challenges, the first tufting machine was created. The machines creator's name is unknown; it has being claimed by different competing mills.

The hand-stitching method was too slow for the escalating demand and around 1922 the first tufting machine was created. The mass production offered, established the localization of mills. Basically, the machine emerged from experimenting with a Singer sewing machine. It incorporated a cutting knife that cut the yarn loops. The needle-punch tufting continues developing and the machine evolved into a "chenille" machine that used several needles, but the machines principles stayed the same. This innovation in the manufacturing process initiated new products such a rugs and carpets. By 1950's the rug production became the main focus of the industry. This became possible thanks to continuing refinement of the tufting machine and with the innovation of dying and printing techniques. Finally, with the incorporation of synthetic yarns and supportive backing, tufting carpets became cheaper than woven carpets.

"The woven plants shipped 82.6 million square yards of carpets in 1958, achieving a productivity level of about 1.7 square yards per man-hour of labour. For this work, they paid more than \$55 million in total wages that year. In contrast, eighty-eight companies operated ninety-two tufting mills, where fewer than 10,000 production workers managed to turn out more than 113 million square yards of tufted carpets and rugs" (Scranton, 2001, p. 97).

By 1950's people became more and more familiar with man-made yarns. The new synthetic fibres, such as nylon, simplified the process because it didn't need any carding or blending to get long filaments. Although, this strand was more durable, it didn't have the heavy body of natural fibres that

was needed for carpeting. Consequently, manufacturers continue working to discover a bulking process for synthetic yarns. This persisting enthusiasms of the industry, lead to continuing innovation with nylon, turning the industry to synthetic fibres.

After the World War II, a housing boom launched a trend for cheap floor covering. Carpets that once were only found in wealthiest houses became affordable for everyone with the new tufting technology. People could pick from a broad-spectrum carpets. As the industry mature carpet sales continued to grow through the 1950's and 60's. During the 1970's there was a slightly decreased on sales, but it wasn't until 1981-82 that recession took place. During the following years the industry faced two major challenges. First, the water suffered a major contamination problem placing the water supplies of the region in danger and secondly, in 1998 the floor-covering trend turned to tiles or wood. Because the carpet manufacturing was mainly concentrated in Georgia the "very reliance on carpet manufacturers and lack of economic diversification made the region particularly vulnerable to recession" (Scranton, 2001, p. 107).

## /HAND-TUFTING TECHNIQUE

Since the beginning of hand tufting, tools and machines have been developed, to facilitate graphic possibilities. The Hofmann hand-tufting machine has become the world the most popular chose for hand tufting. It is driven by compressed air that basically pierces the backing fabric with yarn.

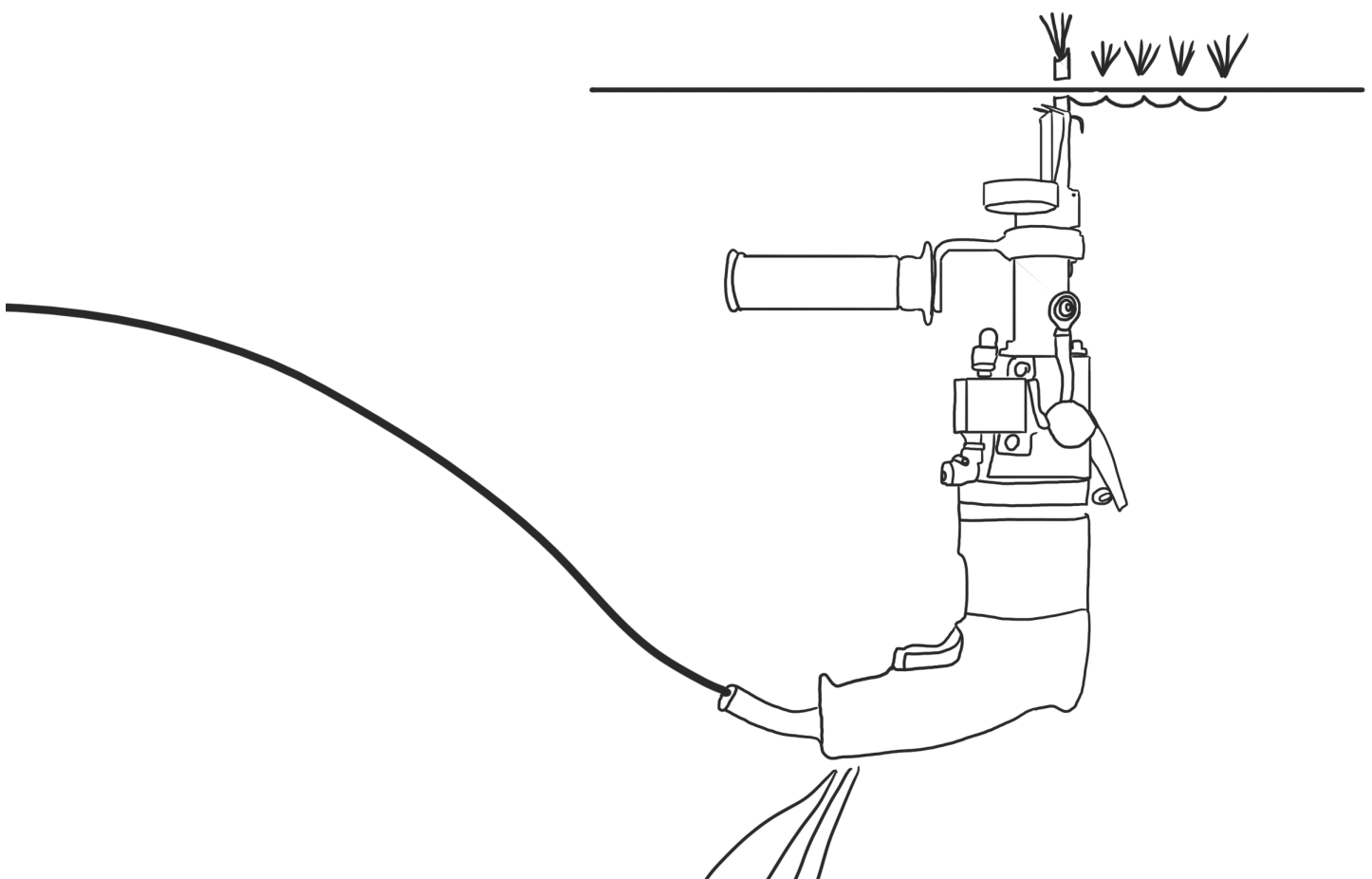
To hand tuft a rug you only need the machine; the yarn; the backing canvas; and the frame on which to stretch the backing material. To secure the threads in the backing material you need latex and you have the optional of a shearing machine to even the surface.

Basically, the primary backing is stretched and secured by carpet grippers on the wooden frame. Rows of yarn loops are punched into the backing material by the combined action of the tufting needle and the cutting knife. Numerous stitches can be tufted in a row; the number of stitches varies with the speed the tufting gun is used. The machine can be set from 50 to 1,400 stitches/min, but basically the hand and the touch of the finger control the speed. The distance between each row determines the density of the carpet and the length of the feeding needle determines the length of the yarn pile.

The tufting needle is adjustable to determine different pile size that range from a very flat to a very long pile. Different textures may be achieved by using various thickness and types of yarn. You can mix colours by feeding different coloured strands of yarn simultaneously through the machine. Each stitch is connected to the next, so if you pull one thread, one line will come out. You can easily correct mistakes by pulling out the unwanted line. That is why the latex is so important to secure the yarn.

After the rug is completed, a layer of latex fixing coating has to be applied to the backside in order to secure the stitches in their place. Then a secondary backing is glued with the latex on top of the stitches. After it is cut out down from the frame, the surface of the carpet is levelled and refined by shearing it.

In Iceland I learned the hand-tufting technique, which enables me, as a designer, to express vast array of new graphical elements. Coming from a graphic design background and currently studying textile as a master project, I found in this technique a close connection between illustration and textile. Although the tufting gun is tough and heavy, once you master the speed and while maintaining uniform stitches, any pattern can be made. I have already learned a lot, but there still much more to learn to be able narrow the gap between the idea expressed in my sketch and the final result.



## /HAND-TUFTING ART

It is inspiring to find persons that advanced this technique from commercial manufacturing into the level of fine art. Tufting has become a new alternative for visual expression. This new approach questions the conventional use of rugs and redefines it's meaning. Rugs are taken into another level by adding a visual narrative. Carpets are lifted from the floor as another object of appreciation.

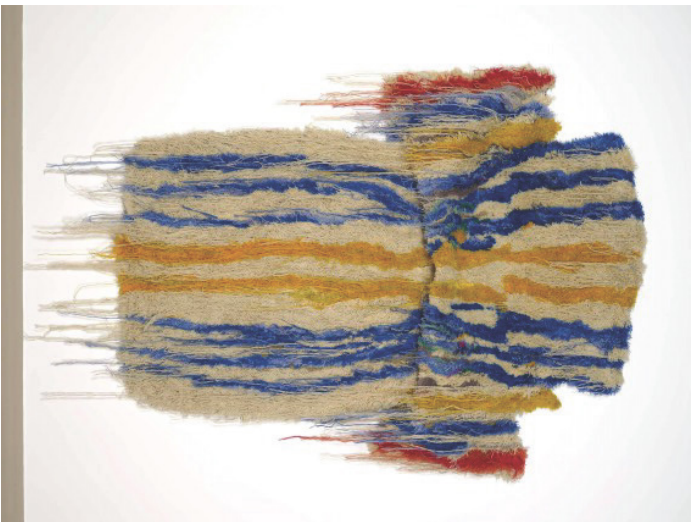
To find my individual voice as a designer, I began to search for artist using similar designing process. I encountered the Swedish artist Jonathan Josefsson (born 1978). His path as an artist makes me believe that he found similar challenges as I did, with alternative ways of visual communication.

He started off in graffiti and later earned his masters degree in crafts at Gothenburg School of Design and Crafts. At some point in his career he began to combine hand tufting and aesthetics of graffiti; bringing street art to inner space objects. The combination of these two techniques reconfigures both carpet making and graffiti. His graffiti are now fury wall-hanging carpets. Each technique is being reinforced by the others characteristics. Tufting technique retains the free-flowing playfulness of graffiti.



Rug #45, Jonathan Josefsson, (2015).





Astra Y. Caroline Achaintre, (2014).

The French artist Caroline Achaintre (born 1969) found that by tufting an object was a way to create something three-dimensional from her drawings. She believes that this technique is like 'painting with wool'. "The length, texture and colour of each thread take on the qualities of expressionist painting. Achaintre uses wool because of its physicality, its attractive but sometimes also repulsive attributes. Its natural fabric suggests something primitive, but also the technological precision and connoisseurship of 'post-industrial craft' (Saatchi Gallery, 2013). Tufting allowed her to express freely, so that the creative process was spontaneous and intuitive. She describes her work as tufted wool paintings. In her words: "I am a sculptor preliminary working with hand tufted wool and clay. My process utilizes methods associated with the applied arts. I make those choices not because of my interest in craft, but for their intense, subjective quality" (Achaintre, 2014).

Argentinean artist Alexandra Kehayoglou, found in tufting a way to distort reality. Her background in painting and photography has given her the elements for creating her designs. She pushes the boundaries of functionality when she imitates nature in her carpet design. Alexandra approaches landscape in a more literal way, as she shapes wool to look like natural elements such as grass, rock or moss. As she describes her work: "... an abstraction of landscapes from my country, the territories that I inhabit and I wish to save. In this piece, as in the rest of my production, I have established a link between the tradition of carpet weaving in my family and my interest and consciousness about the environment - full of endangered species, and our cultural heritage" (Rapport, 2015).

The similitude of the material to elements of nature accentuates her approach. Piles of yarn create the carpet; it is not a flat surface. The three-dimensionality of the carpet creates settings that resemble parts of nature; adding context to the usability. She also has hanging wall carpets, which are literal representations of landscape elements. When she combines the wall hangings and the floor carpets, she creates theatrical scenarios.



Refugios para un Recuerdo, Alexandra Kehayoglou, (2014).

Last but not least, the Icelandic artist Sigrun Lara Shanko, the artist that took me on as her apprentice and thought me the hand-tufting process. More than that, she gave me the opportunity to come to Iceland and has supported me through all the process. It has being very inspiring to witness her art pieces in process, from the sketch to the last finishing details.

Sigrun's work is a tribute to the rugged Icelandic landscape. Her first introduction to tufting was when she was about 14 years old, she and her mother used to teach embroidery with the manual carpet needle Danella. Later, she rediscovers tufting using the Hofmann Hand-tufting machine. She founds in tufting an opportunity to communicate her appreciation for Icelandic landscape.

She translates aerial views of Iceland into the carpet; from rivers, volcanoes, glaciers; and other examples of Iceland's singularities. Sigrun starts her process by sketching in watercolours. She believes these two techniques have very similar visual impact. Hence, Sigrun has being able to reproduce watercolour gradients into her carpets. By a patient combination of colour shades of wool, she accomplishes these watercolour effects. Her carpets are a loyal translation of her sketches.

In addition, she plays with the shape of the rug to create more playful pieces. It's either a river that continues flowing out of the carpet or is the curvy silhouette that follows a glacier. Movement characterizes these organic and flowing visual representations. Her carpets condense the dynamism of Icelandic landscape.





*(A selection of sketches were distributed throughout this document)*

Landscape concept is not only about sublime places. It's about the experience of dwelling within the environment. There is a tendency to romanticize our encounter with nature, and to think of landscape only as positive experiences. "Yet the rich experience of beauty in environment tends to blind us to other values more characteristic of everyday human situations" (Berleant, 2012, p. 198).

It is easy to create romantic sentiment about nature; and Icelandic nature can easily create those expectations. Emblematic landscapes are often thought as the major source of inspiration. Indeed, with the opportunity to travel in Iceland is easy to encounter some outstanding landscapes, but it was the overall experience of living in Iceland that brought on the creative inspiration. The concept of landscape has evolved, is a conscious awareness of the places that reconcile the concept. A thoughtful understanding of landscape comes from everyday moments. "What ones sees at any single moment not only reflects the reality of landscape as material environment, but one's ability to internalize what is seen" (Jackle, 1987, p. 140).

Experiencing the landscape as a whole creates a 'sense of place'. The landscape experience is connected to all of the surrounding circumstances; like the society that inhabits the place. "Different cultural traditions, different philosophical cultures, different conditions of life influence the way we understand experience, environment, aesthetics, and ecology, and their place in life experience. The result of processing the landscape imagery is the need to communicate and share the experience" (Berleant, 2012, p. 117).

The concept of landscape appreciation is not solely academic or theoretical; it is also experiential. Part of the concept development was created from particular environmental situations. The interaction with the environment and the people that live in it add meaning to the concept. The intention of the carpet representation is to communicate a specific appreciation for a place.

The whole process of this thesis has been an attempt to understand how visual thinking works. With the theoretical research I have been able to gain some understanding of the creative process. Justifying the creative process with theoretical research validates an intuitive visual representation of a landscape experience. Designing process raises the question of how to reconcile theoretical understandings and perceptual experiences in an aesthetic representation that will promote our relationship with the environment.

The process started by sketching an idea of landscape. The challenge was to give a 'sense of place' without creating a literal representation of a landscape. By using few elements as lines and dots, abstract scenery was composed. The function of abstraction was to reduce the elements in order to communicate a broader message.

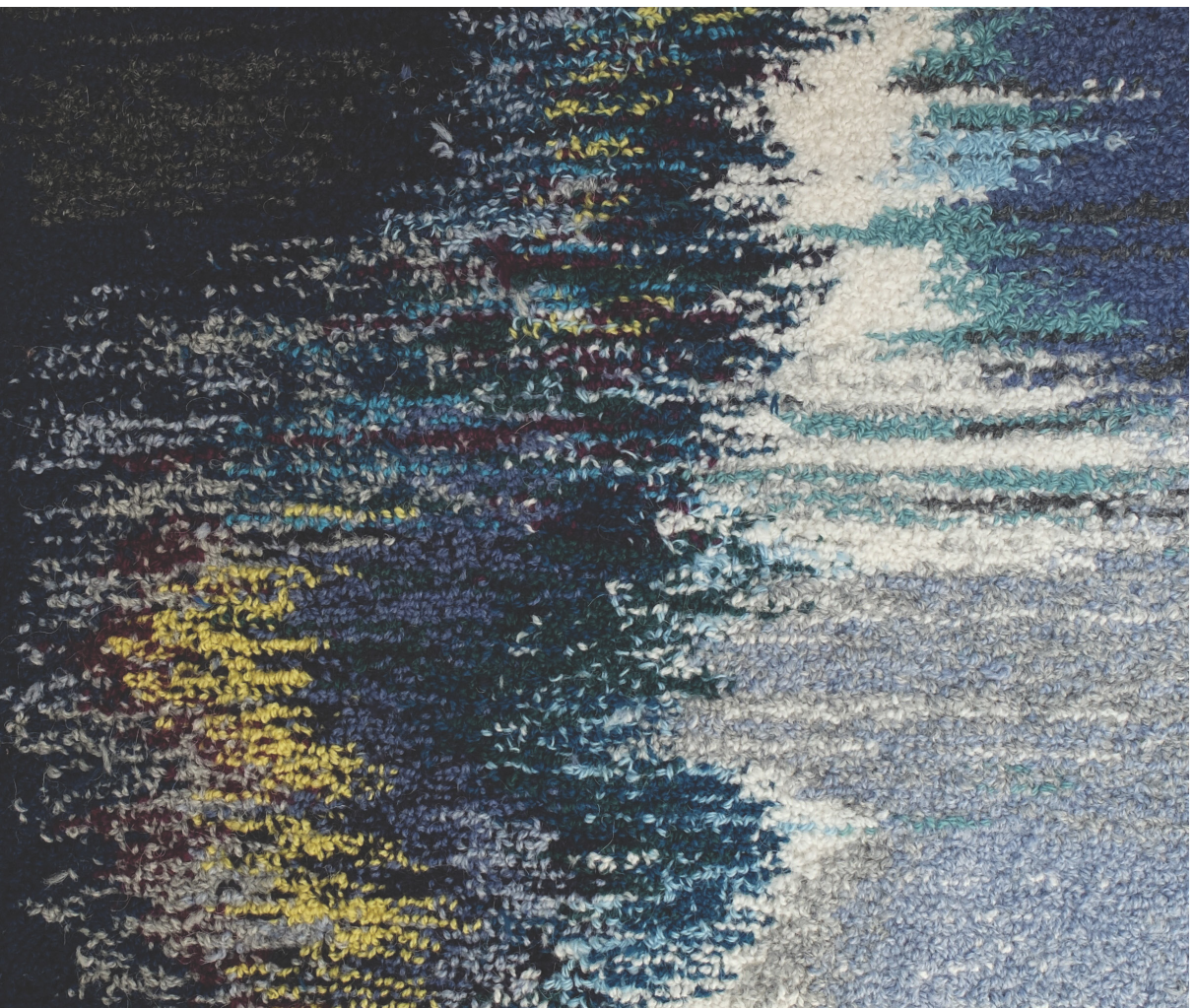
Abstract representation can communicate a more general visual message that can relate to a wider range of landscapes. "The more representational the visual information, the more specific its reference; the more abstract, the more general and all-encompassing it is. Abstraction visually is simplification toward a more intense and distilled meaning" (Dondis 1973, p. 74).

Looking to real scenery while sketching, I didn't achieve the abstraction intended. It was in the imaginary left by the perception where the mind found the elements for representation. "The afterimage- the presence of sensation in the absence of a stimulus- and its subsequent modulations posed a theoretical and empirical demonstration of autonomous vision, of an optical experience that was produced by and within the subject" (Chary 1992, p. 98). Memories became the needed stimuli for representation.

Inspiration came from trying to remember perceived impressions of crisp textures from everyday life and the tension in the composition was given by the experience of every day life. The creative process started by rationalizing the perceived imaginary; then expressing it visually. The sketches are not intended to match reality; they are minimal prototypes meant to match my sentiment of Northern landscapes. The result is an empirical application of landscape aesthetic. Patterns were created by the use of rhythm and repetition by trying to evoke the rhythm of the tuffing machine. What sketches reflect is the content of my perception.



## /TUFTING PROCESS



The tufting process reflects the decisions that took place to achieve the final result. Those judgements were based in how to achieve a sense of a place. Consequently, this stage of the process brought the following representation challenges: How can the landscape's representative 'Nordic' value be recognized? How a carpet can still be interpreted as a landscape representation? How can the movement of the lines be read as a landscape?

To tackle these problem hand tufting can be used as a mean for expression. Mastering the technique is important, but the key is to personalize the tufting process.

Tufting is highly flexible enabling different creation process. The production can be schematic and planned, or spontaneous and free. In my opinion, this has some similarities with the process of painting; as the composition can be thought over during the process.

On the other hand, making visual representation through a craft needs to take into consideration technique and material challenges. Accordingly to Glenn Adamson, "when a craft purpose is an optical effect, the process is oriented around material experience. Craft is directly affected by the properties of a specific material. Consequently, the process involves direct engagement with the properties of the material" (Adamson 2007, pp. 40-45). Crafts demand an honest use of the material and an awareness of its natural visual effect.

The technical and material considerations were address through experimentation. The goal of experimenting with wool was to match the sketches with the technique. The sketched drawings defined the structure used in the tufting samples. The composition was influenced from my previous drawings. In addition, colour was incorporated in order to grasp the relationship of hues and wool visual effect.

Back to Iceland the tufting practice continued through projects with Sigrun Lara Shanko. During that time, Sigrun introduced me the manual tufting punch needle. As mention earlier, when Sigrun was young she used to teach carpeting and embroidery with this tool.





This technique, in the practical sense, has basically very similar results as the Hofmann machines. The punch needle does not incorporate a cutting knife, so the thread piles are formed by loops. It works as a manual drilling, but only one thread can be used at a time; contrary to the Homan machine where several threads can be used at the same time. This tool has a strong connection to the tufting origins; it connects the embroidery tufting origins and the later machines development of the technique.

Because it is manual, it requires more time than the Hoffman machine. Since the speed is slower, there is more time to reflect on the composition process. It is like 'drawing with wool'; the tool can be used to create sketches. The 'needle' sketching samples take into consideration the texture dimension. It can also be observed how the consistency of the wool creates fuzziness to the line. At the same time, it exemplifies the opalescent effects of colours in piles of wool. Although, the samples of the punch needle technique are different from the effect created by the hand-tufting machine, these experiments are great tool for visualizing the intended outcome; as well as for planning the composition steps.

The drawn sketches were mostly in black and white; but the 'needle' samples were partly an exploration with colours. The use of colour can evoke a feeling. "Since perception of colour is the single most strongly emotional part of the visual process, it has great force and can be utilized to express and reinforce visual information to great advantage." (Dondis 1973, p. 55) Using colour is a strategy to communicate a message.

As stated in the chapter on colour, a location can have a strong impact through colour associations. My intention with use of colour was to match that feeling of a location.

The colour palette used for the samples and the final piece was selected from the range of colours offered by the company Istex. The palette consists of 15 hues of wool. The colours were mostly in the range of blue and green, along with three accent colours: yellow, purple and pink. The palette could be described as cold and delicate. There isn't a strong contrast between the colours. The colour family is smooth and sober and it is a cold palette, but not in a negative way. Rather, it depicts freshness. The accent colours are intended to bring a splash of brightness and sparkle to the watery palette.



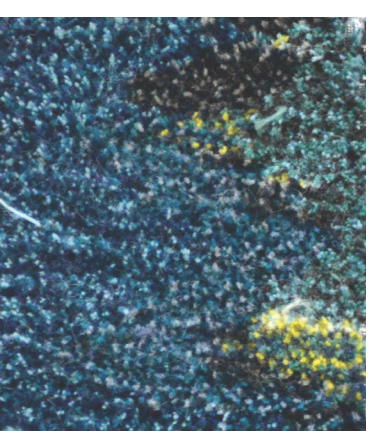


## /THE CARPET

Once the punch needle samples were ready, the preparations for the final piece started. The first step was to recreate the 'punch needle' process with the tufting machine. The process started with sketched samples of colour scales. The samples shown how the colour relations were perceived. As the tufting gun could use several colour threads at the same time, the overall effect was somewhat singular; force me to change the colour tactics. The colour needed to be used with a different strategy;

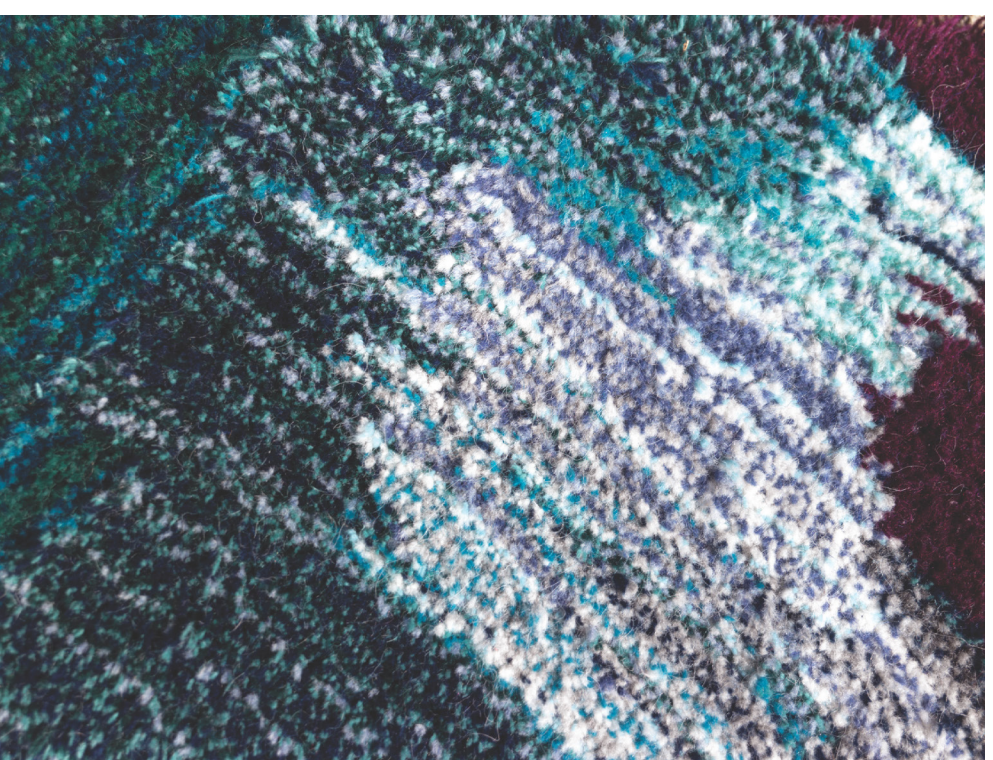
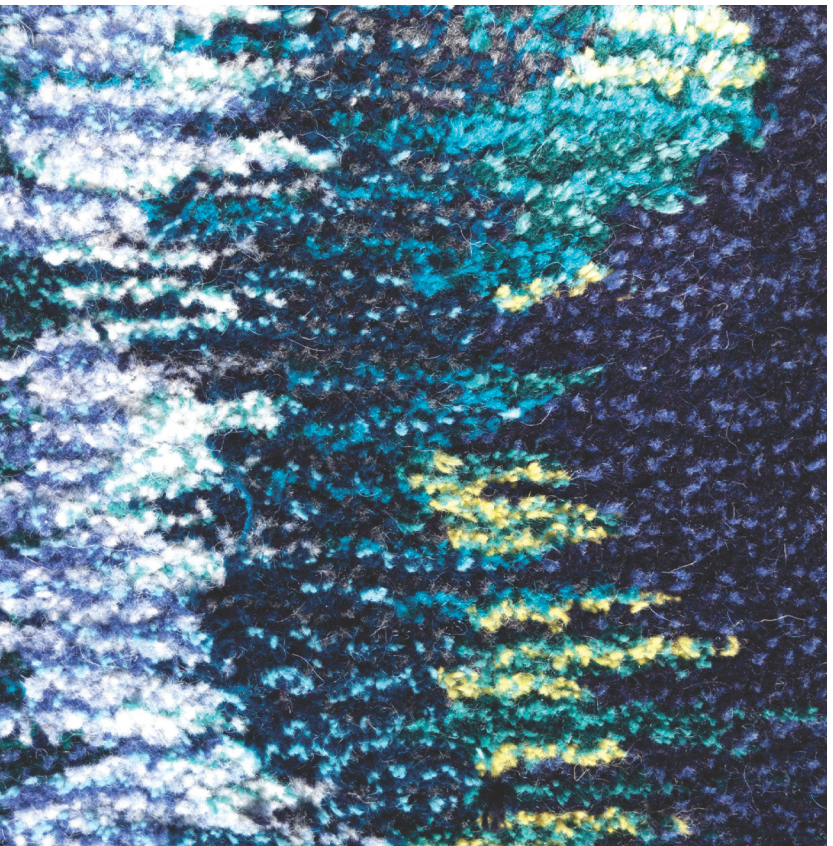
In the first sample I explore the juxtaposition of colour contrast. The sample was created by a sequence of contrasting coloured lines. These abrupt colour differences between each stroke created distorted lines. Therefore, the eyes attention is concentrated on the irregular shape of the stripes. The composition was only an arrangement of lines with the parts more evident than the whole; the structure of the images was too striking. This unwanted result indicates that a combination of similar colour hues should give a more delicate effect by hiding the structure of the composition. Opposite colours shouldn't be experienced separately from the image, they most play a neutral roll as being part of a whole. Although straight lines are the element that the image is composition of, their purpose is to create shapes, but not to be perceived as single lines.

The second sample was constructed with a combination of three colour-threads in the same row. In every row three different colours were used, but of the same tone, giving the composition a leaden effect. This piece had the opposite effect of the first sample; there was no colour-engaging stimulus. The lack of contrast faded all shapes. By using contrast in the composition ambiguity is avoid.





The intention with the third sample was to create contrast, but in a subtle and engaging way. This effect was accomplished by putting tree different colours in every row, two of them in the same hue and one contrasting. The result is a landscape represented by a scale of colour. The consistency of the piece is loose due to the use of only three threads.



The fourth sample, was a personal challenge in tufting skills, creating diagonal lines with the tufting gun. Even though the surface of the piece was not as even as in the horizontal structures, the diagonal direction created a tension in the composition; consequently, a more dynamic experience for the eye. The piece could be appreciated from more angles than the previous compositions; it could be read from different angles.





By the end of the sketching process a carpet of 90 x 150 cm was created. This was the moment to embrace the line and create my interpretation of a 'Nordic' landscape. Based on my work with the samples I came to the conclusion that by using four threads in the same row, broader range of colour effects could be achieved; also the surface of the carpet would be more dense and with greater consistency. The threads colour combinations varied from A-B-C-D, A-A-B-B, A-A-A-B, A-A-A-A. With a yarn pallet of 15 colours there were 48 colour combinations possible.

For the final piece no particular sketch was used. The carpet was created through a spontaneous process, i.e. the compositional decisions were taken during the creation process. The colour relations demanded some structural changes during the composition to balance the rhythm of colours. The juxtaposition of the colours created the narrative. Taking into account that it's through coloured that the viewer becomes aware of the representation.

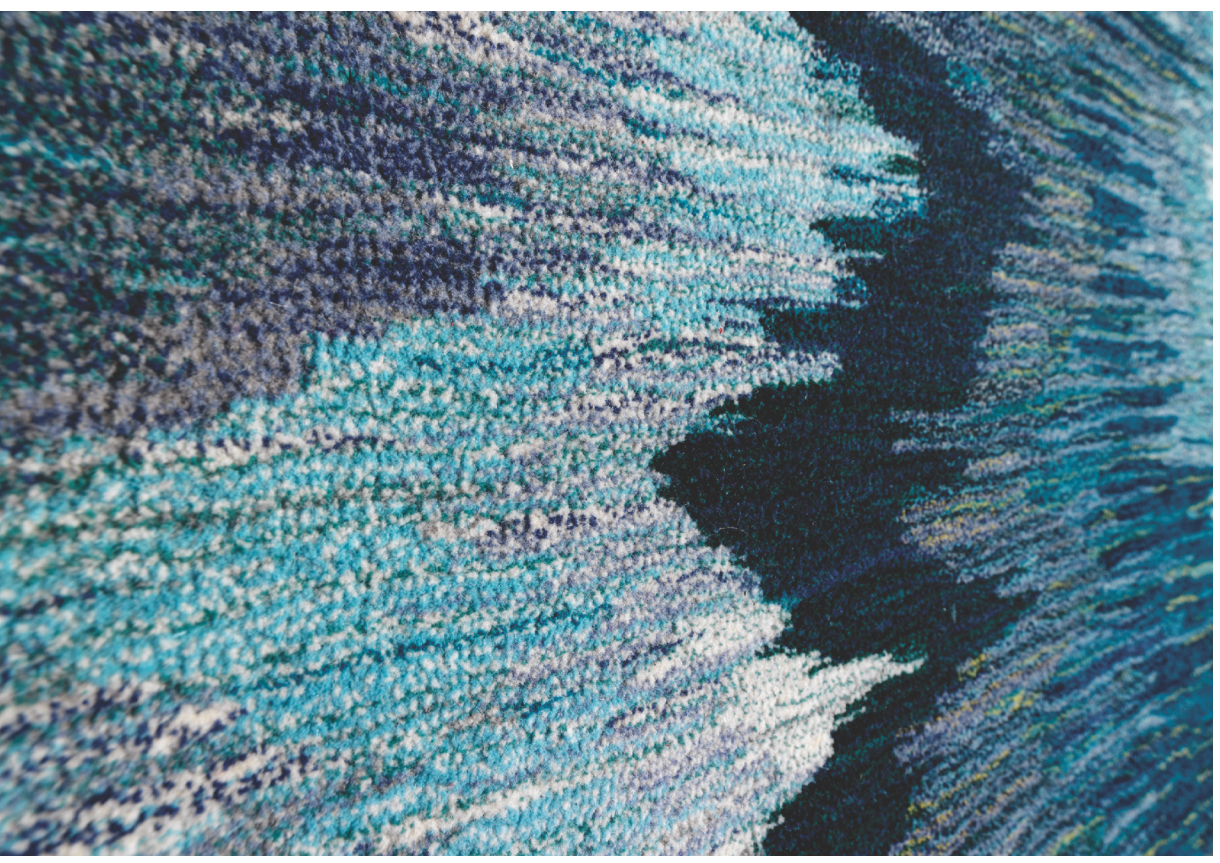
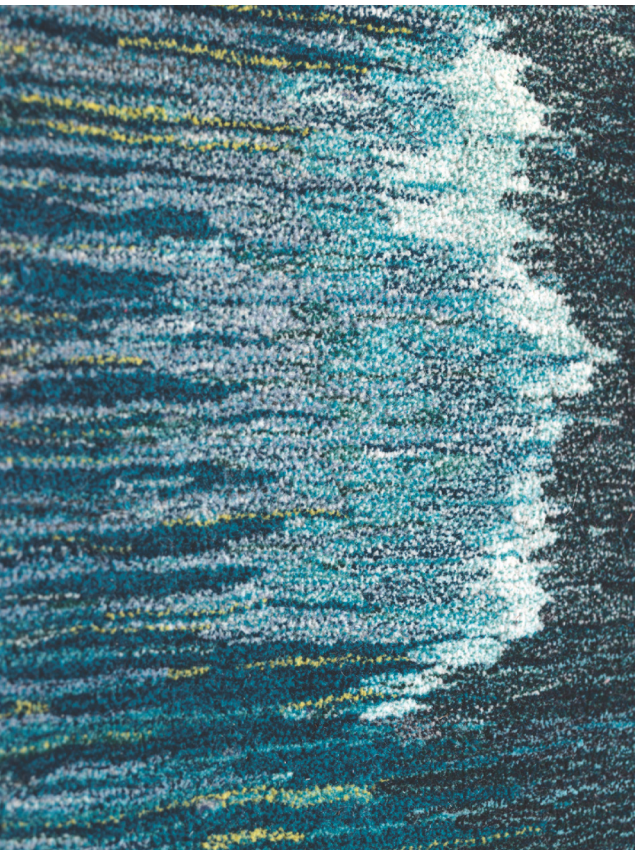
The carpets are made up of a structure composed of straight lines. Each stroke is drawn on the back of the carpet that forms on the front side of the carpet lines created by a cluster of dots. Each line position and relation to the other lines is what composes the structure. What confers a sense of movement to the lines is their direction and irregular placement. The rhythm forces the eye to move around the image; it provokes an active reading. The eye doesn't perceive the image as just lines, but as a whole representation. "They appear as such in the perception itself. Look through an album of sketches and you will not necessarily grasp at a glance the meaning of each line, but you will know what each represents, that it stands for something, which is the very justification of its existence" (Sartre 1940, p. 39). The lines are the foundation of the landscape.



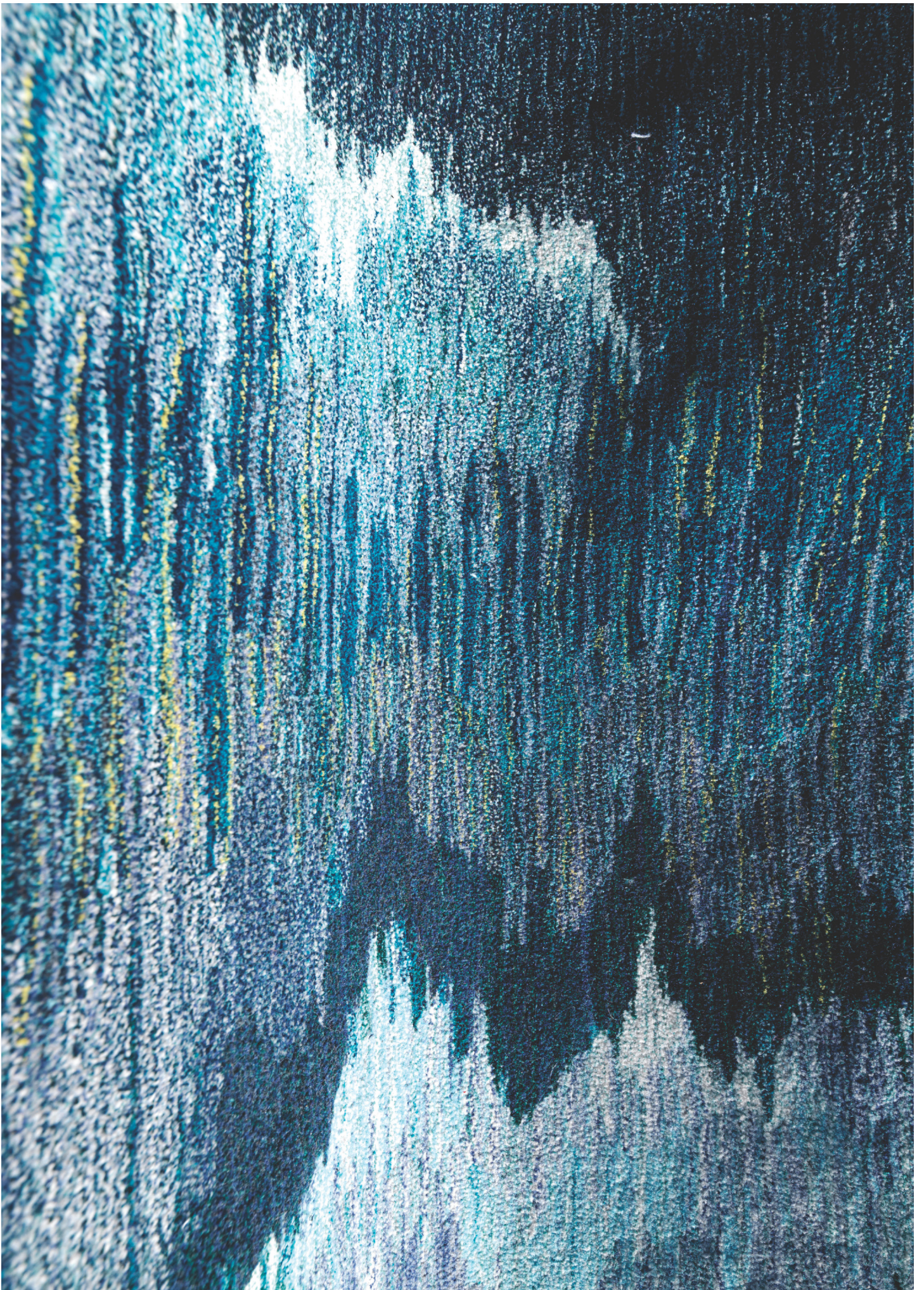
It is important that the composition can be read from different angles. The carpet cannot have a single viewing direction and can have different readings. From a closer look you can grasp the richness of the colours, the detail in the composition and from further away can be seen as a real landscape. There are both a literal reading of the carpet and the possibility of an interpretation based on the landscapes background.

After cutting the piece out of the frame and doing the finishing procedure to the carpet, I realized that this piece could gain more without shearing the surface. Although, levelling the surface by cutting brings out clearer and more defined shapes, the uncut surface brings fuzziness and texture that reinforces the energy contained within the piece. In my opinion, the sheared surface resembles commercial carpets and an uncut surface has unique craft value.

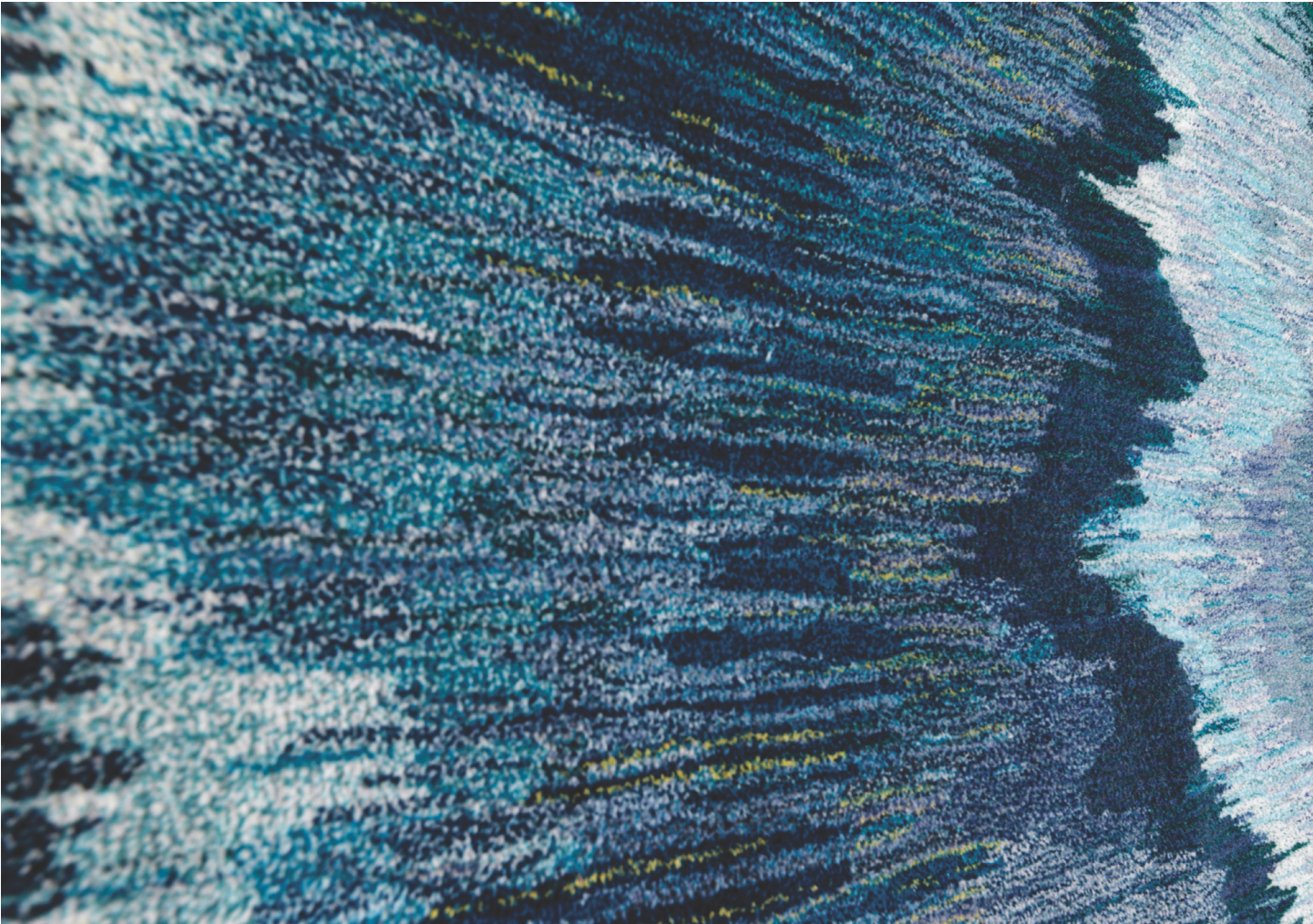
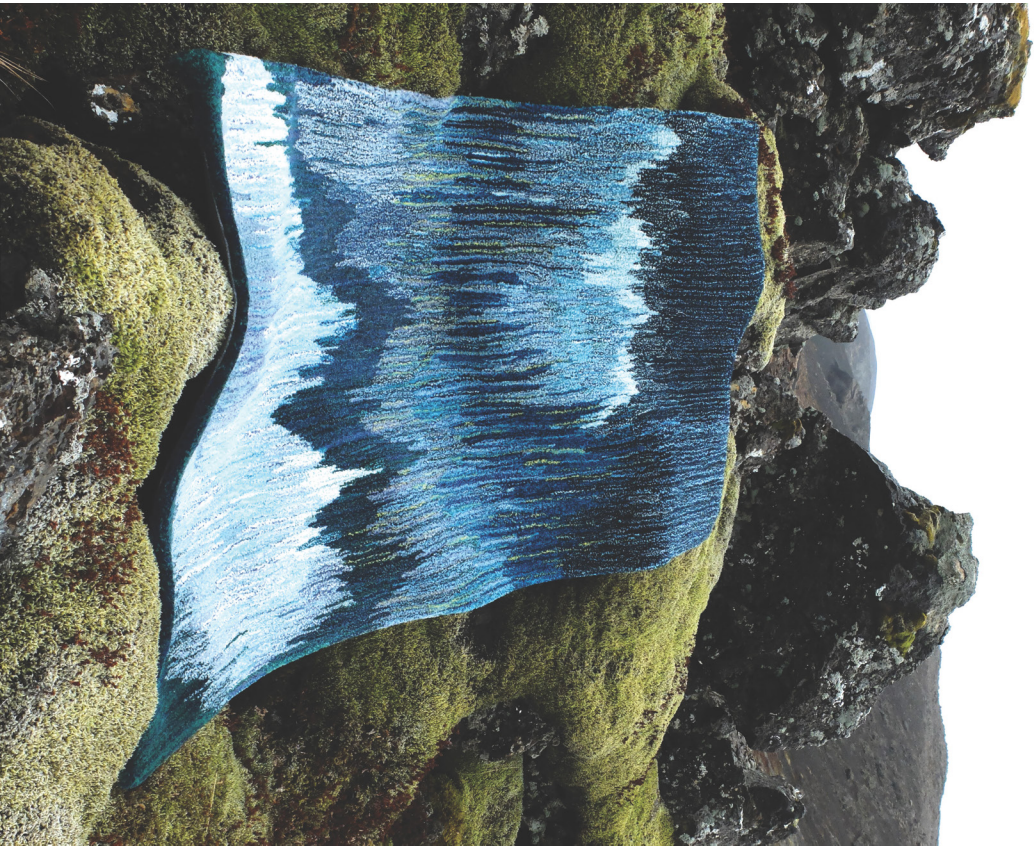
Taking in consideration the tactile quality of the carpet, it fosters an engagement between the medium and the viewer: "Even when we simply *look* we are already shaping and interpreting" (Andrews 1999, p. 1). The viewer is asked to become part of the landscape.









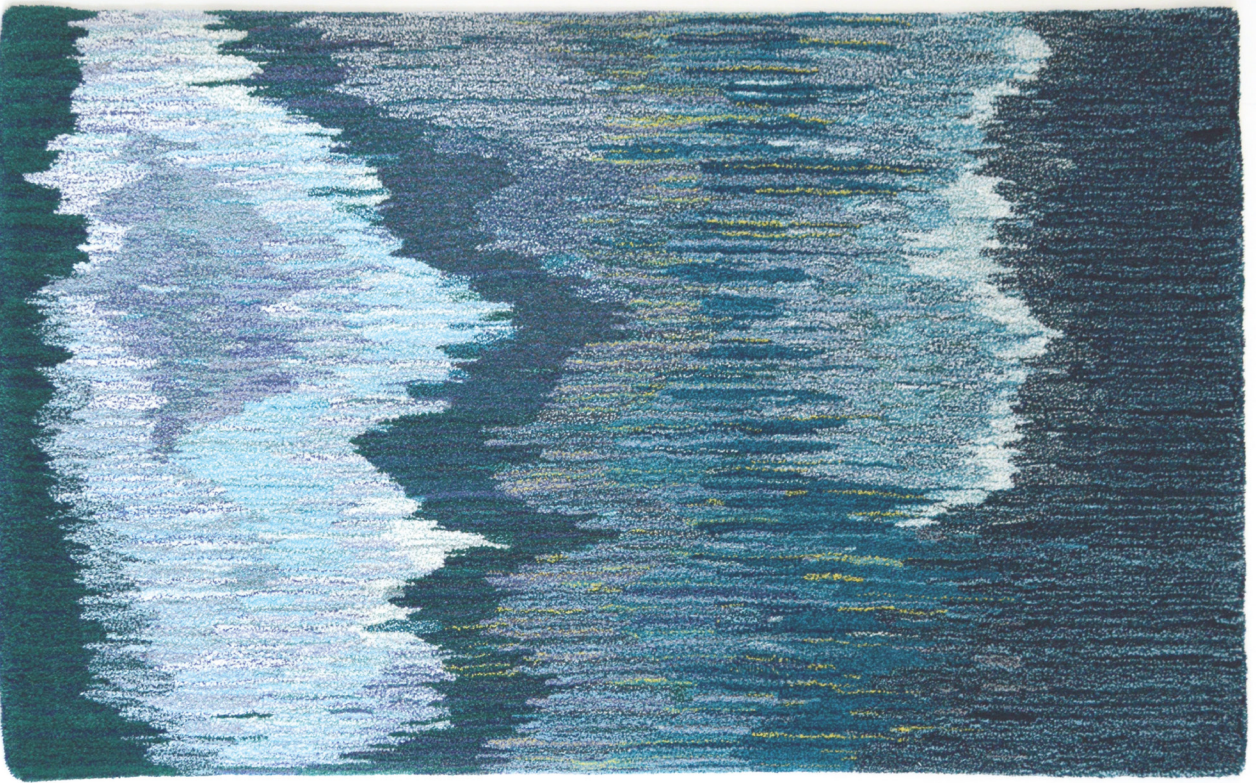








## AFTER THE CARPET /COLLECTION DESIGN



After finishing the carpet, the creative process had to continue. My chance of making another carpet was limited, but it was possible to continue to create designs by drawing and computer, in order to visualize more accurately a possible carpet collection. If the future brings the possibilities to create more pieces, this sketching approach will facilitate planning the colour combinations or possible silhouettes. The process of creating the carpet spontaneously, gave me the insights of how to create a more accurate sketch. The previous sketches were important as a way to create the narrative, but this new sketching approach could give me the keys to pre-visualize the result and plan the carpet making. In addition, the collection of sketched carpet has the strength to reinforce the message by adding more opportunities to express the wonders of landscape sceneries.

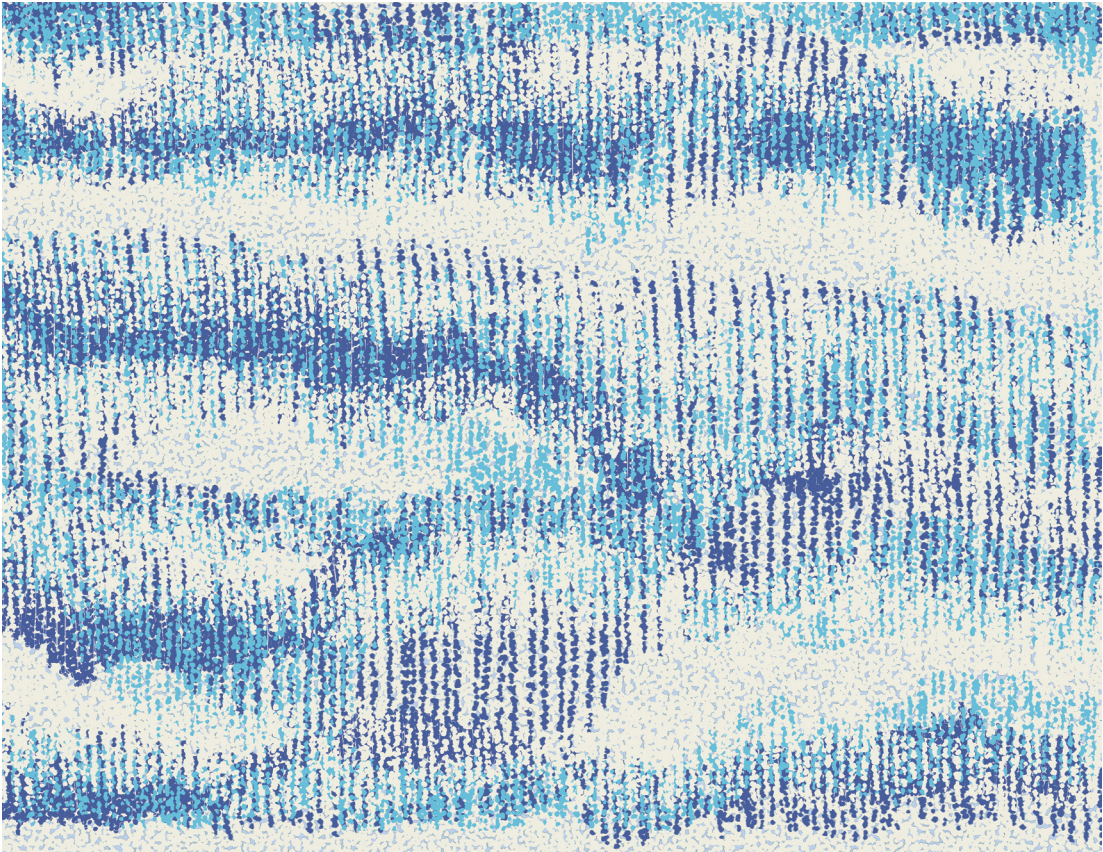
The main challenge was to figure out how to simulate tufted carpets through sketching. The other challenge was to design a collection of carpets; each design had to stand by itself and communicate with other designs. With the use of the computer, a similar colour palette was recreated in order to achieve a familiarity between the collections. Also new sizes and frames were incorporated in order to try different visual effect; a horizontal landscapes for example.

The illustrations still include the line as a compositional element, but the line is broken into spots in an attempt to give the same appearance as the front side of the carpet. In other words, the structure is still the same but it incorporates the texture of the dots to resemble the detail of the carpet.

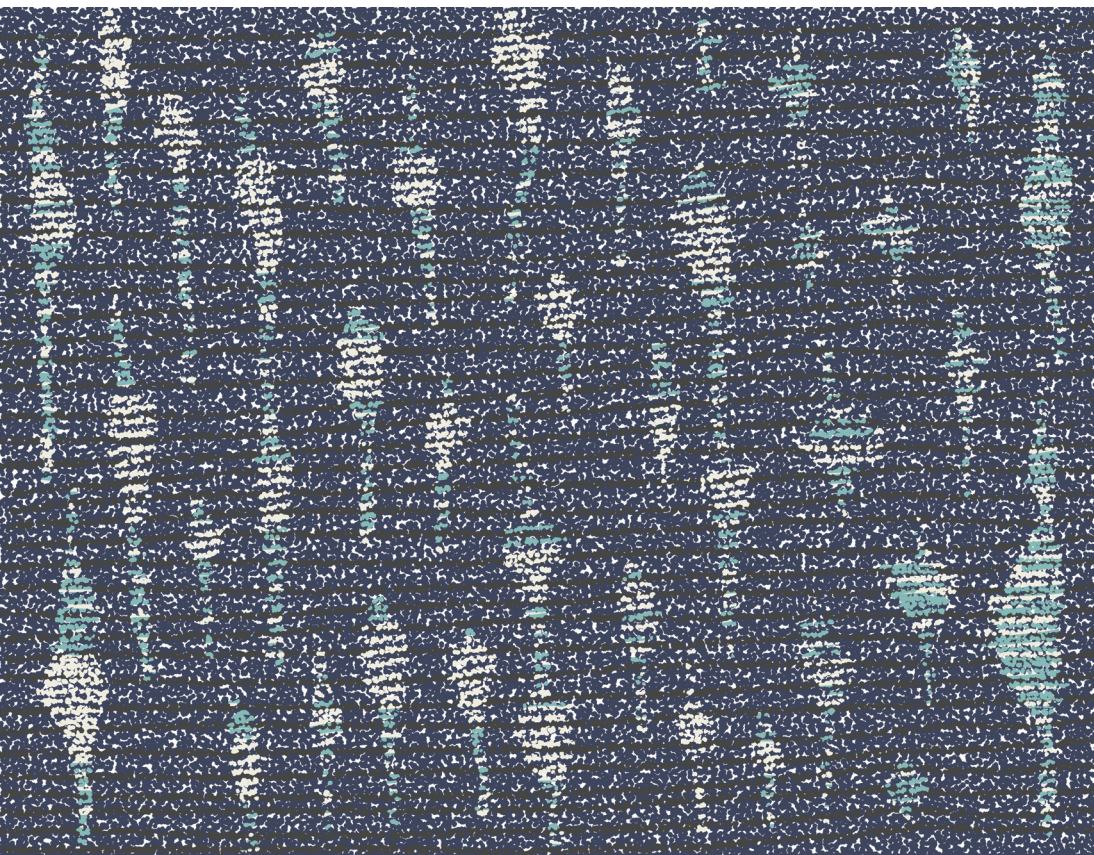
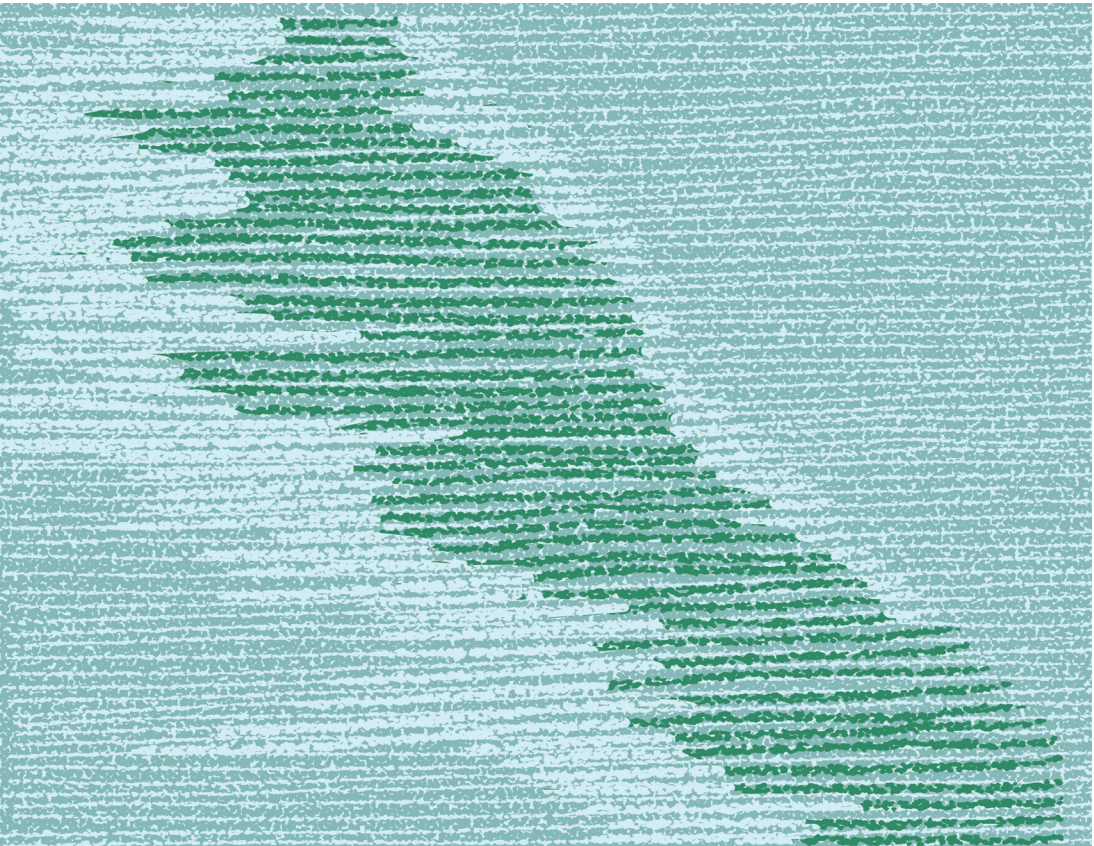
In the future, this sketch visualization could be used to create personalized carpets. It is suitable process to pre-visualize customized carpets and makes the changes the client want depending on their demands and space requirements. Changing the colour and the shape is easy in Photoshop; and doing it this way instead of during the tufting process will prevent wasting wool.

To compose the image while tufting the carpet is still a fascinating process to explore. However, for commercial purpose the visualization method is very useful, not only to plan the process but also to 'sell the idea'.

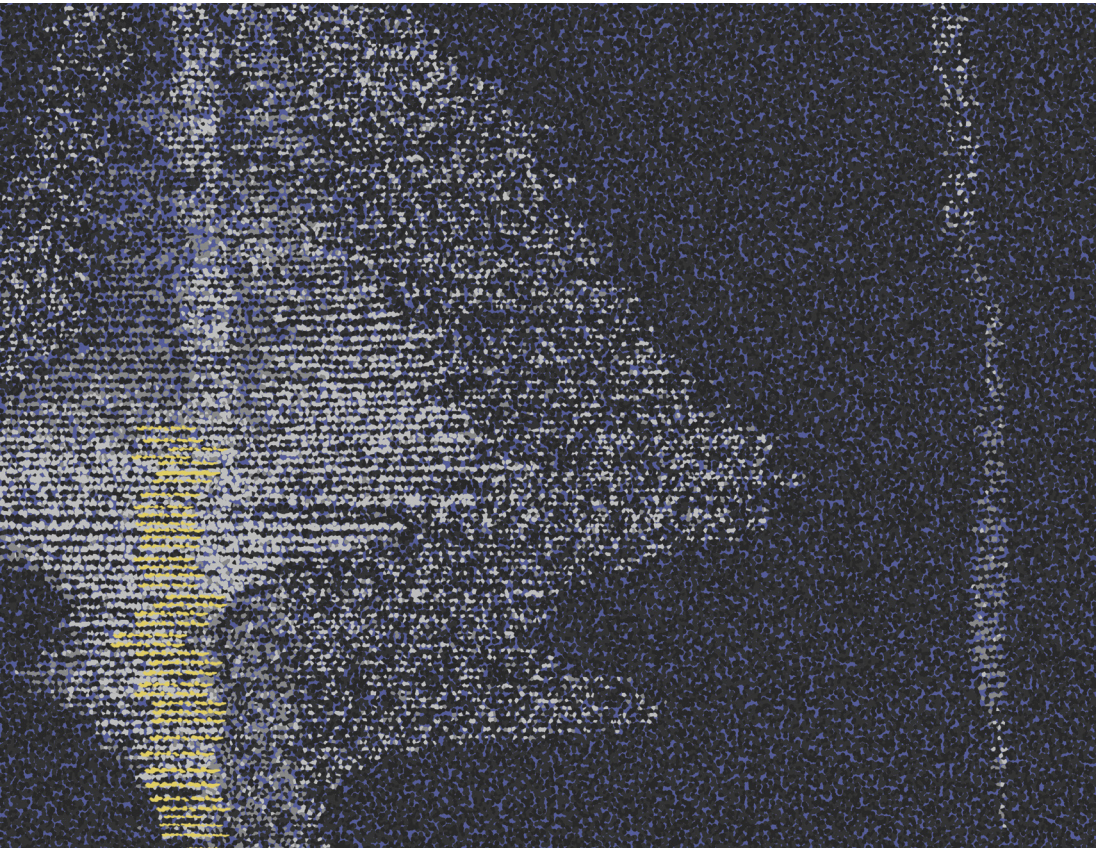














## CONCLUSION

The topic for the thesis derived from my great urge to rationalize a holistic experience. As a way to conclude master program and my personal journey, my impulse was to recreate my own idea of Nordic landscape. Trying to communicate this verbally and visually was the main challenge of this thesis.

In order to create a carpet and a collection of designs, I tested a design method based on a self-awareness of my own perception. During this introspective process I discovered a new concept that I called the 'designer-self'; the unique essence of a designer. In my opinion, throughout rationalizing perception the designer can comprehend what makes her or she unique. Over the centuries many artists have tried to make the mental conversion of perception; anyhow I had to experience it myself in order to find my own voice.

I'm satisfied with the final carpet outcome and I enjoyed the process of making it, even though I only had the opportunity to produce one carpet. I believe the depth of the composition condense the whole experience. I would have liked to make a bigger piece, but the transportation of the carpet was something to take into account. If I choose to continue in this path, I need to reconsider the inherent qualities and limitations of the product, like transportation issues. I also realize how the direction of the tufting frame, from horizontal to vertical can change the whole composition, so it's important to have the possibility to change the frame easily and not be constrained to only one position. Another thing to take in consideration is the wool waste; a large quantity of short threads of wool ends up in the floor and could be use for other purpose. For a sustainable future, it would be ideal to find some solution to recycle that wool.

The process of creating a carpet has become a medium of expression where I can use wool and texture as a drawing tool. These 'drawings' have become a synthesis of a moment

in time, which is an apprehension of an experience; this quality is so strong that the traditional use of the carpet is compromised. My aim was to add the significance of a landscape to rugs that could give a sense of intimacy with the environment; because I believe that rugs can be a bridge between outer and inner landscape. Consequently, the carpet carries a narrative in its composition that adds new meaning to the relationship with the object. How people's imagination starts to functions when they perceive the carpet I made has made me realize how the representation can change the usability of a product. I have had some feed back from people, telling me that they would rather hang the carpet on the wall, instead of putting it on the floor. That makes me realize how usability could changes if the products holds deeper meaning.

Because the outcome became a reflective description of a personal interpretation, I can't help but wonder if my perception is related to the Scandinavian audience's perception. Is the landscape I created under certain constrains Nordic enough? Will audience from other latitudes perceive the images as Nordic landscape? However, as my designs are abstract to some extent and not literal representations, the audience is free to wonder and interpret them according to their own intentions and experiences.

In the future I will like to continue on this path. I found in tufting a natural way to express myself as an artist and both graphic and textile designer. Now returning back to Colombia my purpose is to re-evaluate my relationship with my surroundings. What had become so natural for me, living there almost all my life, now this experience makes me question my consciousness about the place I inhabit. It might seem obvious for me to understand what my home country landscape is about, but the truth is that I will have to go again through all this self-awareness process to create a visual language to communicate the perception of my country. I know the information is there, 'in the back of my head', but I believe the next step is to rationalize and represent the meaning of Colombia's landscape. The 'Landscape Dialogues' is an on going communication with the environment on the path to finding my own voice as a designer.



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## /IMAGES REFERENCES

- Fig. 1 John de Silva, 2015. Close up Carpet 1.  
Fig. 2 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 1.  
Fig. 3 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 2.  
Fig. 4 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 3.  
Fig. 5 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 4.  
Fig. 6 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 5.  
Fig. 7 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 6.  
Fig. 8 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 7.  
Fig. 9 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 8.  
Fig. 10 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 9.  
Fig. 11 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 10.  
Fig. 12 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 11 Gestalt Examples.  
Fig. 13 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Sketch 12.  
Fig. 14 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 1.  
Fig. 15 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Illustration tufting gun.  
Fig. 16 Jonathan Josefsson, (2015), Rug #45 [online]. Available at:<http://ollio.tumblr.com/post/113375312370/rug-45> [Accessed 23 July 15].  
Fig. 17 Caroline Achaintre, (2014), Astra Y [online]. Available at: <http://carolineachaintre.com/> [Accessed 23 July 15].  
Fig. 18 Fig. 1 Alexandra Kehayoglou, (2014), Refugios para un Recuerdo [online]. Available at: <http://alexkeha.com/index.php?refugios/refugio-para-un-recuerdo/> [Accessed 23 July 15].  
Fig. 19 Sigrun Lara Shanko, (2015). Lava sketches  
Fig. 20 Sigrun Lara Shanko, (2015) Hraun.  
Fig. 21 Sigrun Lara Shanko, (2015). Hraun.  
Fig. 22 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 2: Danella needle sample 1.  
Fig. 23 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 3: Danella needle sample 2.  
Fig. 24 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 4: Pallet color 1.  
Fig. 25 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 5: Pallet color 2.  
Fig. 26 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 6: Carpet making.  
Fig. 27 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 7: tufting samples 1.  
Fig. 28 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 8: tufting samples 2.  
Fig. 29 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 9: tufting samples 3.  
Fig. 30 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 10: tufting samples 4.  
Fig. 31 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 11: Carpet making.  
Fig. 32 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 12: Carpet making.  
Fig. 33 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Picture process 13: Carpet making.  
Fig. 34 John de Silva, 2015. Close up Carpet 2.  
Fig. 35 John de Silva, 2015. Close up Carpet 1.  
Fig. 36 John de Silva, 2015. Close up Carpet 1.  
Fig. 37 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues 1.  
Fig. 38 John de Silva, 2015. Close up Carpet 1.  
Fig. 39 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues 2.  
Fig. 40 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues 3.  
Fig. 41 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues Sketch collection 1.  
Fig. 42 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues Sketch collection 2.  
Fig. 43 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues Sketch collection 3.  
Fig. 44 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues Sketch collection 4.  
Fig. 45 Vanessa Valero, 2015. Landscape Dialogues Sketch collection 5.  
Fig. 46 John de Silva, 2015. .

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to

my family in Iceland: **Sigrun Lara shanko and**

**Finnbogi Thormodsson.**

To my supervisors: **Pirjo Kääriäinen,**

**Kaarina Kaikkonen.**

My friend in Helsinki, **John Cesar Sanchez.**

**To my friends and family.**



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