

**In My Head
On My Head**

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Thesis Project
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Academy of Design and Crafts**



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Table of Content

Vision	7
Background	8
Hats in Old Iran	12
Hat & Jewelry	15
Thirst	16
Mystery of the Ordinary	17
Fascination	18
Leave Behind	20
Other Artists	22
Formation of the Hats	27
Results	52
Reflection	56
Bibliography	58

Vision

In this project, my aim has been to recreate scenes which make my heart beat a bit faster. Scenes which bring smiles on my face the moment I cast my eyes on them. Scenes which raise excitement within me, taking me on a ride of longing, curiosity and fantasies. Through this project, I have come to understand the importance of looking within me and empowering the thoughts and interests which grow inspiration and spark fire in me.

I chose to work with hats due to the value they once held amongst men in the olden day Iran and the strong roots of formality entangling them. The combination of such culturally and historically rich objects together with my young romanticized thoughts has been an inspiring journey for me.

This project was followed by the idea of creating large showcase body related objects. I wanted to work in dimensions larger than the usual sizes of jewelry I have experience working with. I wanted them to draw attention and take over a room with their presence through for example their forms, colors, light, sound, dimensions.

Background

Since in my previous works I had often embodied my ideas into the usual jewelry pieces such as necklaces and earrings, this time for the final project of my bachelor degree, I was interested in working beyond those frames I had earlier worked within. I wanted to present my concepts in the form of a new object which I had no or little experience in. Since my field of interest has always been to create pieces that can be worn on the body; I knew I would automatically work within this field.

In a previous project, for the first time, I had embodied an idea in the form of a hat and this had sparked interest in me, bringing me to imagine other ways of incorporating and presenting ideas in the form of hats. Factors I favored in working with the head and in the case of my first project, working above the head, were numerous. One of them is that this part of the body is rarely worked with compared to other parts of the body, especially in the field of jewelry. The other factor is size and how voluminous one can work in, in regard to weight and the possible balanced posture of the creation. The visibility of the hat on the body is another interesting factor to look into. Moreover, due to the negative space around the head, this body part itself it can be thought of as a podium with a 360 degree viewing angle.

Another factor which I came to realize is that in the case of a hat, apart from the fashion and artistic hats and headgears created, hats themselves are followed with stereotypes, occupation and status related theories, etc. They have also had important presence throughout history. The first image which pops into my mind when I think of hats in general is a bowler hat on a British man. I think of women in the movie Titanic and the large lace and ribbon hats they had on, worn during the Edwardian era 1901-1910. Unlike the present day, hats and headgears were greatly used in history; from kings to peasants. They were part of people's dress code and in fact when I look at my home country Iran, they held great importance as well. From kings to religious teachers to children to slaves wore them and over time their appearances and importance changed. In fact, in present day Iran, especially in the industrialized cities, their use has diminished to great extends, .

For a previous school project in 2015, I for the first time worked with the head and carried out my concept in form of a hat. My source of inspiration for the project was the historical black and white photos taken of people in Iran. Amongst all the interesting elements in the photos, such as the clothes, environment and people, I found it remarkable how almost all the people photographed held similar poses. The men's blank facial expressions, upright body posture and the uniform-like clothes they wore created a serious and formal atmosphere throughout the photos.



(The Guardian, 2016)



(Brooklyn Museum, u.å.)

Therefore for the project, I became inspired to make alterations, give suggestions and add what I felt was missing amongst them which were colors, smiles, joy and humor. I thought about an impossible wish of mine; to go back and live in the old days when such photos were taken. I pictured myself having all those beautiful clothes to wear and living in houses with old authentic architecture and being free of mobile screens and “message-typing”. I tried to express this fascination of mine, through my creation. I used the shape of a hat worn during a certain time period in Iran, and embraced it with my artistic language. The embroidered ornament was inspired by the floral motives covering Persian carpets.



Hats in Old Iran

In the past, depending on the era, men in Iran wore hats in various shapes. The form of the first hat I made prior to this project and also the hats I have made for this project resemble those worn in Iran during the Qajar dynasty from 1785 to 1925. Depending on the ruling king, the shape of the hats changed. Throughout time, the more the country's relations grew closer with Western countries, the more the fashion became closer to those of Westerners'. An interesting example of such influence was when Naser al-Din Shah, a Qajar ruler from 1848-1896, was so enchanted with ballet he had seen in his trip to Paris or Saint Petersburg, that returning to Iran, he had the women in his harem wear ballet tutus looking skirts. Another example of such influence is the Pahlavi hat introduced in 1927 by king Reza Pahlavi who aimed to modernizing Iran. The hat he introduced the men to, was based on Kepi, the hat worn by the French military. This was to be worn with Western-style suits, also another change to the robe-like coats men earlier wore.



Qajar women in tutu-inspired skirts. (XUBUX, 2015)



Dress code introduced during the Pahlavi era. (Shahre Farang, u.å.)

Paintings by Sani-ol-molk



(Golestan Palace, 2016)



(Toos Foundation, 2016)

Hat & Jewelry

I have always been interested in making creations which are body related and can be worn or placed on the body. Since my ideas automatically are body related, I have never tried forcing an idea into jewelry. Therefore, through my eyes, whatever ornaments and compliments the body, can be considered jewelry and in today's contemporary sense, jewelry does not have to be made of metal, precious stones and sit on the typical body parts such as the wrist or the ears.

According to The Dictionary of Fashion History (Cumming, Cunnington & Cunnington, 2010), hats, umbrellas, bags, jewelry, shoes, etc. are categorized as being fashion accessories. They function as secondary contribution to an outfit complementing a look, an appearance. There are said to be two categories of accessories, one is worn such as hats, belts, shoes, jewelry, watches, etc. and the second category is carried such as bags, fans, umbrellas, ceremonial swords, etc.

I believe that one alternative way of defining an object is by understanding its function and the intention behind it. One can say that a wool scarf is woven with the aim of keeping the neck warm, however would a scarf woven with fishing thread still be considered a scarf or a bulky necklace? Is it the materials that categorize them? If a turban was made of silver, would it still be considered clothing or would it be jewelry? A typical crown made of precious metal and stones, is considered jewelry but can a turban which can be said to have the same head coverage, be considered jewelry as well? Another example can be gloves which in a typical everyday context are meant to keep the hands warm. However, Michael Jackson's sequined gloves did not intend to keep hands warm other than ornament the artist's appearance. A turban is another example. It is not worn with the purpose of keeping its wearer's head warm. It is worn as a cultural and religious symbol heritage.

Reflecting back on my thesis project, I have come to create two hats. The intention behind them has been to ornament the head and compliment the body. They decorate the head in the same way a necklace decorates the neck or a ring decorates a finger. I reason that it is not possible to draw a line between the different categories of accessories and even clothes and separate them in this sense. I find it considerable to say that free from categories and taking to consideration the creativity that flows in today's world where design, objects, functionality, etc. have greatly merged, one way of understanding something can be through the intention that has been behind it.

Thirst

In my artistic work throughout the years, I have often come to place two opposites next to each other in order to awaken emotions and meaning; in order to dig deep, reach and show a personal message, a deep concept. I have placed vulgar next to beauty, sorrow next to joy, fairytale next to reality and although it is almost always this way of working which sparks creativity in me.

Many times I have attempted to only show beauty and harmony in my work, but the feeling of dullness and boredom were what I would face after a while. I would feel that something was missing. I wanted a kick in my work, a spark, a surprise, a twist, because such thirst would bring excitement in what I did. It would motivate me and also inspire me with ideas for future works.

For this project I began with the idea of creating pendants using photos of beautiful landscapes, buildings, objects, etc. Photos that home décor magazines or travel guide brochures are filled with. I wanted to use images of beautiful places which brought warmth and smiles to my heart. In order to reinforce the concept, I thought of using the element of sound and incorporate hand crank music boxes behind each pendant. However, the feeling of dullness soon caught up with me. Rhinestones, sounds and colors could not help escape this feeling. I needed a story for my work. I needed depth, a twist and a spark that besides the appearances of the pieces, made them interesting. Beauty did not feed my thirst. I wanted more. I wanted size and volume. I wanted the creations to take over a room. I wanted them to steal the spotlight, to be magnets attracting attention. I wanted my work to go beyond sight and appearance and touch hearts and create emotional bonds.

Mystery of the Ordinary

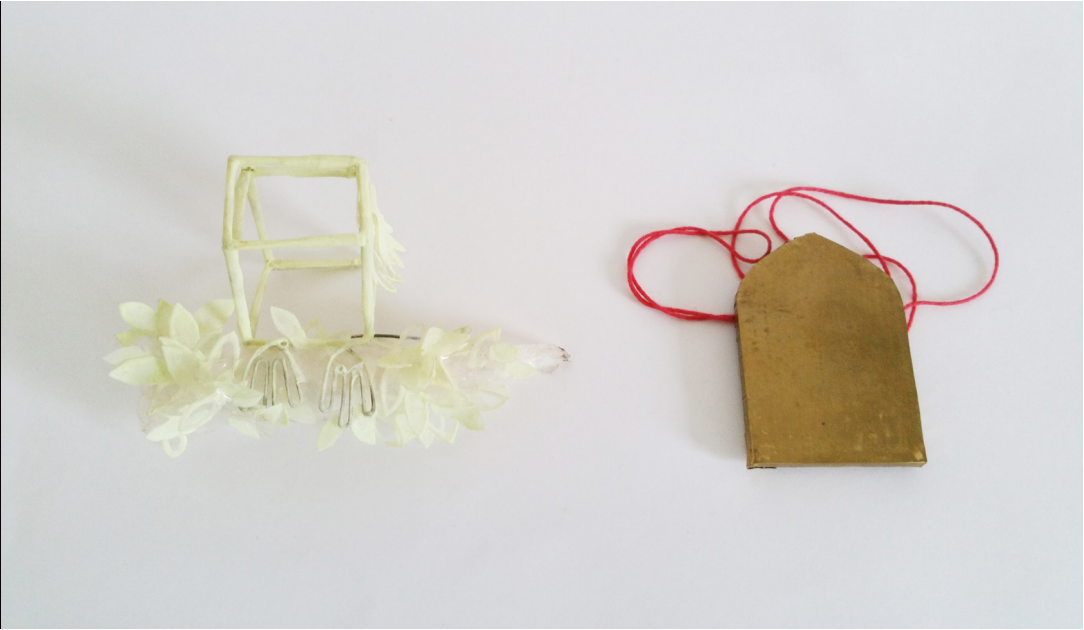
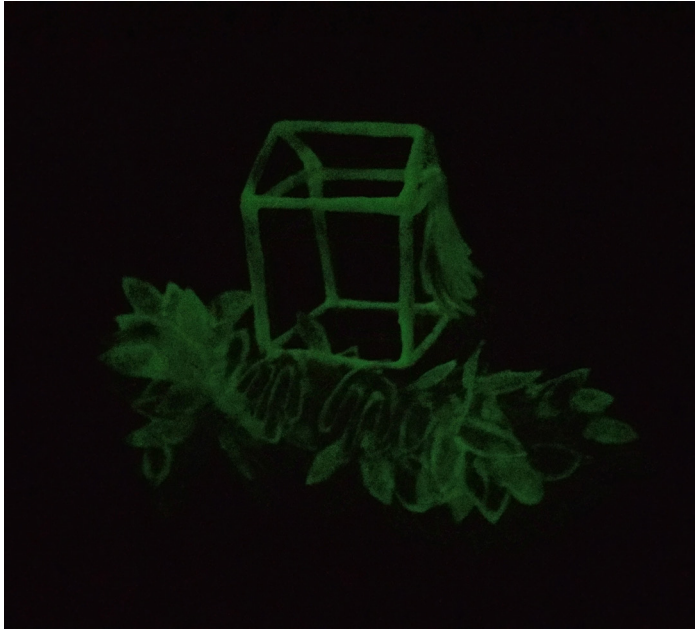
For the first time initiated, I captured a scene of a neighborhood, a community through showing windows at night, some lit and some dark. I began to search within me and question what sparks joy in me. What is it that makes my heart beat a little faster at first sight? In this project, I wanted to capture specific scenes that I personally feel attached towards. Scenes which flourish excitement in me the very second of looking at them.

The view of lit window/s have for long interested me. I feel an explosion of curiosity whenever I encounter such view, either in real life or in pictures. They are interesting to me due to the thoughts and wonders they spark in my mind. However, they also raise troubling emotions in me such as homesickness and lonesomeness. Seeing lit windows from outside in the dark makes me feel like an outsider, a homeless who sees warmth and safety on the other side of the window, something he/she does not have. It makes me wonder what is happening inside. The lit windows give me a feeling of being welcomed ... that there is life on the other side of the windows ... there are people there ... maybe a family ... eating dinner ... watching TV ... standing by the stove preparing tomorrow's lunch. Lit windows make me wonder and my curiosity is set on fire. What are people doing? It is the everyday life that makes me curious.

Fascination

Looking back at my previous creations, the interest in buildings and views of lit windows has for long followed me which can be seen in my previous work. In the next page there are photos of jewelry, a brooch and necklaces, made in 2013 to 2015 with the similar underlying concept.

As seen in my previous work, the element of light has been present in the jewelries. I had for example used anodized aluminum because of its vibrant light-transmitting colors. Fluorescence paint was also used on another piece.



Leave Behind

The second scene I decided to capture on one of the hats was the night sky. Whenever I look up at the night sky with visible stars, the feeling of wanting to leave behind and fly away, rises in me, however not in the sense of death and dying. I think of the stars floating amongst the never ending space and how little we are amongst this eternity. I think of other places on earth which at that moment have the same sky, the same one I am looking up at. At that moment, someone on a highway in Mumbai can be looking up at what I am looking up at. Someone on a rooftop in Tehran can be seeing what I am seeing at that moment. Someone on a beach in Casablanca can be staring at the same night sky I am staring up at. What is fascinating is that every single human being has a sky to look up at, has stars to look at. Not everyone has water to drink or not everyone has forests to walk or deserts to wander in, but the sky is one thing that everyone can look at.

I think of how exciting it would be to switch places with someone at that moment, to be able to leave and change environment and adopt a new life. Life is not the same everywhere. There are people called Tuaregs, who live inside tents in the Sahara desert. They ride camels and cook food on fire. When they step outside their tents, they do not see cars and houses, they see sand and only sand. If charging the battery of our mobile phones is important for us during a day, finding branches to make fire is important for them. If our morning routine is to check our emails, theirs is to feed their camels. There are also people in New York who live in small apartments, take crowded metros to work and face the windows of opposite buildings in front of them, every day. People who due to the lack of time, chose to heat their frozen food in microwaves and those who become irritated by the slow pedestrians in the streets.

Such lifestyles interest me. They make me curious. Similar to my previous thoughts about how people live their daily lives, here I find it interesting how there are so many different kinds of lifestyles and environments on earth and how for those people, such life is ordinary and normal. For someone living in a cave-like house inside a volcanic mountain in Kandovan, life is nothing to awe over while someone living on an island in Åland, sees his/her life as ordinary. What is fascinating in my eyes is that happiness can be found and is without a doubt found anywhere on earth, even around a dinner table in Syria.

However, nights when I feel anxiety and sadness, I wish I could leave this life behind and be amongst the stars. To sit on the clouds, side by side with God, and look down at life on earth and see how pathetic and worthless certain situations and my mindset towards them can be. How I think I know but actually how little I know. How I do not know what the future will bring me, how unaware I am, how I make plan and how life changes all of them. These are what my mind takes me through. How at times my mind becomes my prison making me believe that is no other solution other than the solution I have in mind. That I will not get another chance other than the chance I got and failed at. How I sometimes place myself and my life in front of the most injustice and stone-hearted judges and sentence myself to a black and hopeless destiny ... and this is why moments when I am tired of being in the prison in my mind, I look up and I long out. I long to fly away, look down and bitterly laugh at the pathetic and foolish mind of mine.

Other Artists

Due to the research I had carried out a few years ago for a project, I had become familiar with the works of an artist who shared a similar interest as me. Her name is Anne-Laure Maison and is a French photographer working extensively within the field of people, homes and windows. On the artists' website it is possible to see the various ways she has worked around this interest of hers. In one photo project titled "Behind the door, intimate portrait" carried out from 2007 to 2010, she has photographed residents of different houses standing next to their house door. Besides these photos she has placed a photo of the inside of their homes, a photo of their bedroom, living room or kitchen. For this project, Maison has written:

"Behind the door,
I go into their lives to see what's going on.
It's always fascinating to me.
What do they hide behind their doors?
Is there something amazing? Common?
We want to say we know from the start who is who.
Behind their doors, there are chatty details, unveiled stories."
(Anne-Laure Maison, 2008)

Projects Maison has carried out are numerous each embodied in different ways, some with similar underlying concepts and ideas. For example, a series of photos titled “Devitalisation”, meaning decreasing the vitality and the importance of something, she has photographed the everyday home interiors such as kitchen and its dishes, bathroom with its wash basin, toothbrushes and mirrors. I find this very interesting because of our common interest. I think the title of this series is interesting because in my eyes she is in this way giving importance to everyday scenes which are often not noticed.

In another series of photos by Maison, titled “Sans titre (maisons de rue)” which when translated into English is “Untitled (houses on the street)”, are unlike her other photos of buildings and homes. Here she has photographed houses and shelters which the homeless of Paris have put together for themselves with tents, mattresses, cardboard, etc. I find it interesting how homes can be embodied in different conditions and forms and also their vitality and presence in people’s lives. Also earlier in this report I have written that sometimes seeing lit windows from outside give me the feeling of being a homeless person looking at homes where light, safety and warm exist. The houses seen in this project bring sadness to my heart because of their lack of such factors.

The first project of Maison's which I came across in the past was the series of collages titled "Tableaux d'intimités" which when translated into English is "Pictures of intimacy". In this work she has arranged photos of windows and doors next to each other creating interesting forms as a whole. About these collages, in French Maison has written:

"A la nuit tombée, les fenêtres illuminées prennent le dessus sur l'architecture qu'elles encadrent. Elles deviennent de vrais tableaux vivants. L'intérieur s'affirme par rapport à l'extérieur et des visions fugitives de l'intimité des habitants nous sont offertes. Ce n'est pas leur intimité directe qui m'intéresse mais celle de l'espace. La chaleur d'une lumière, le scintillement d'une guirlande ou de la télévision, le coin d'un tableau... Tous ces éléments sollicitent mon imaginaire. En regardant ces fenêtres, je me raconte des histoires sur les gens qui vivent derrière... Je capture ces moments et reconstruit mes propres architectures. J'empile ces éléments, je les imbrique pour créer mes tableaux d'intimités. Transparence vers la « maison » des autres. Espace du dedans. Visions de l'intime."
(Anne-Laure Maison, 2006)

Which when I translate into English is:

"At night, the illuminated windows take over the architecture. They become real life pictures. The interior is assured with respect to the outside and we are offered glimpses of people's privacy. It is not their privacy which interests me, but the overall space. The heat of a light, flickering with a garland or television, the corner of a table ... All of these seek my imagination. Looking at these windows, I tell myself stories about the people who live behind them ... I capture these moments and rebuilt my own architecture. I pile these elements; overlap them to create my pictures of intimacies. Vividness of the "houses" of others. Inner space. Views of the intimate."

Another artist whom I came across years ago and has stayed with me until now is works of the Swedish painter Lars Lerin. In 2009 I visited a solo exhibition of his at a gallery in Borås and one factor which fascinated me with his work was the feeling of sorrow and loneliness which he had captured in the watercolor paintings, by for example using dark colors and having, what to me were, emotionally charged subjects. In a few of Lerin's works he had painted the night view of neighborhoods and buildings with lit windows and it might have been the first time I felt a connection with those scenes which I saw in the paintings. I believe at that time period I was going through a doubtful and worried phase and therefore I felt a close connection with what I saw.

Formation of the Hats

- Form

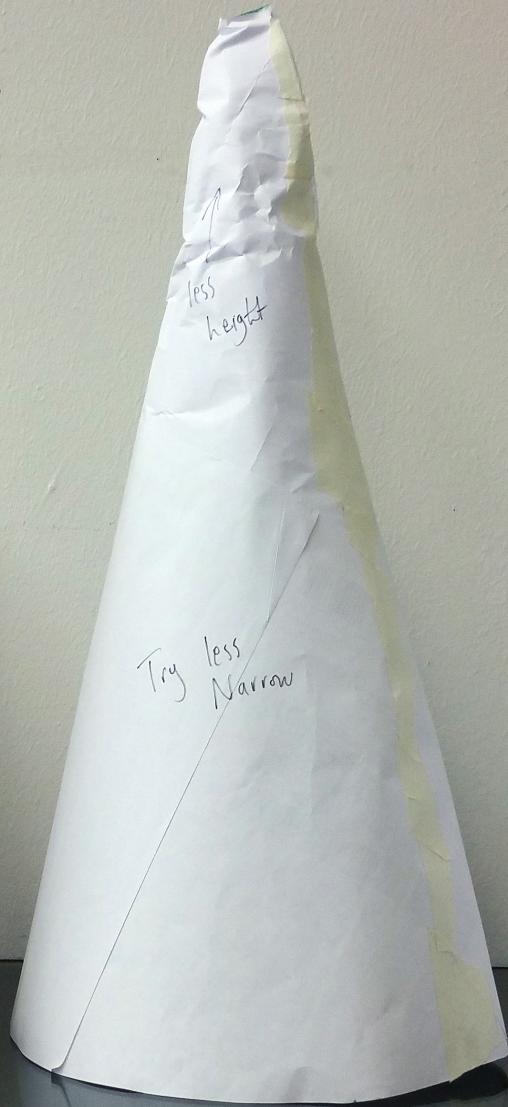
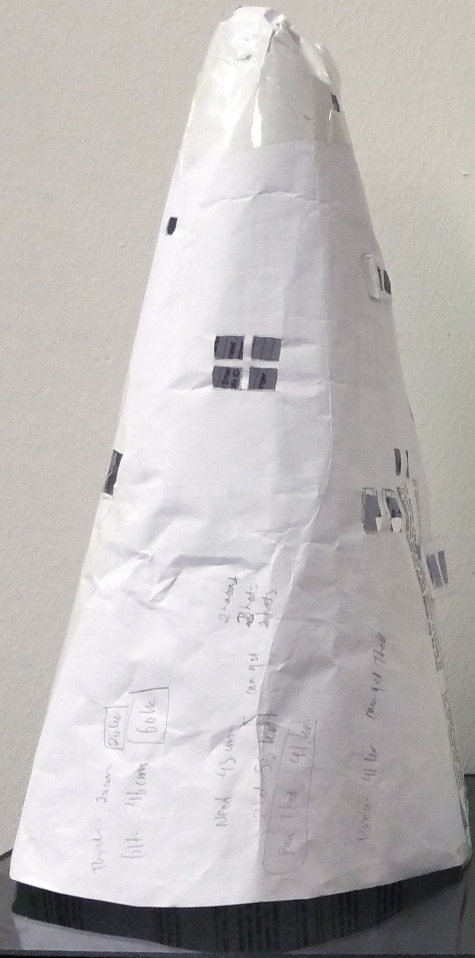
Unlike the first hat I made where I had used it as a podium for the ornament, this time I chose to carry out my concepts on the hats themselves. This choice gave me the opportunity to work with the form of the hats which in a sense, were to be the canvases for the visualization of my concepts. Therefore they held great importance. Since the height of the hat would be the space I presented my ideas, I had the opportunity to extend it to certain degrees. Also, since the range of materials I was to work with were few and light in weight, I thought that the hat itself could have height to it and still maintain its balance while worn.

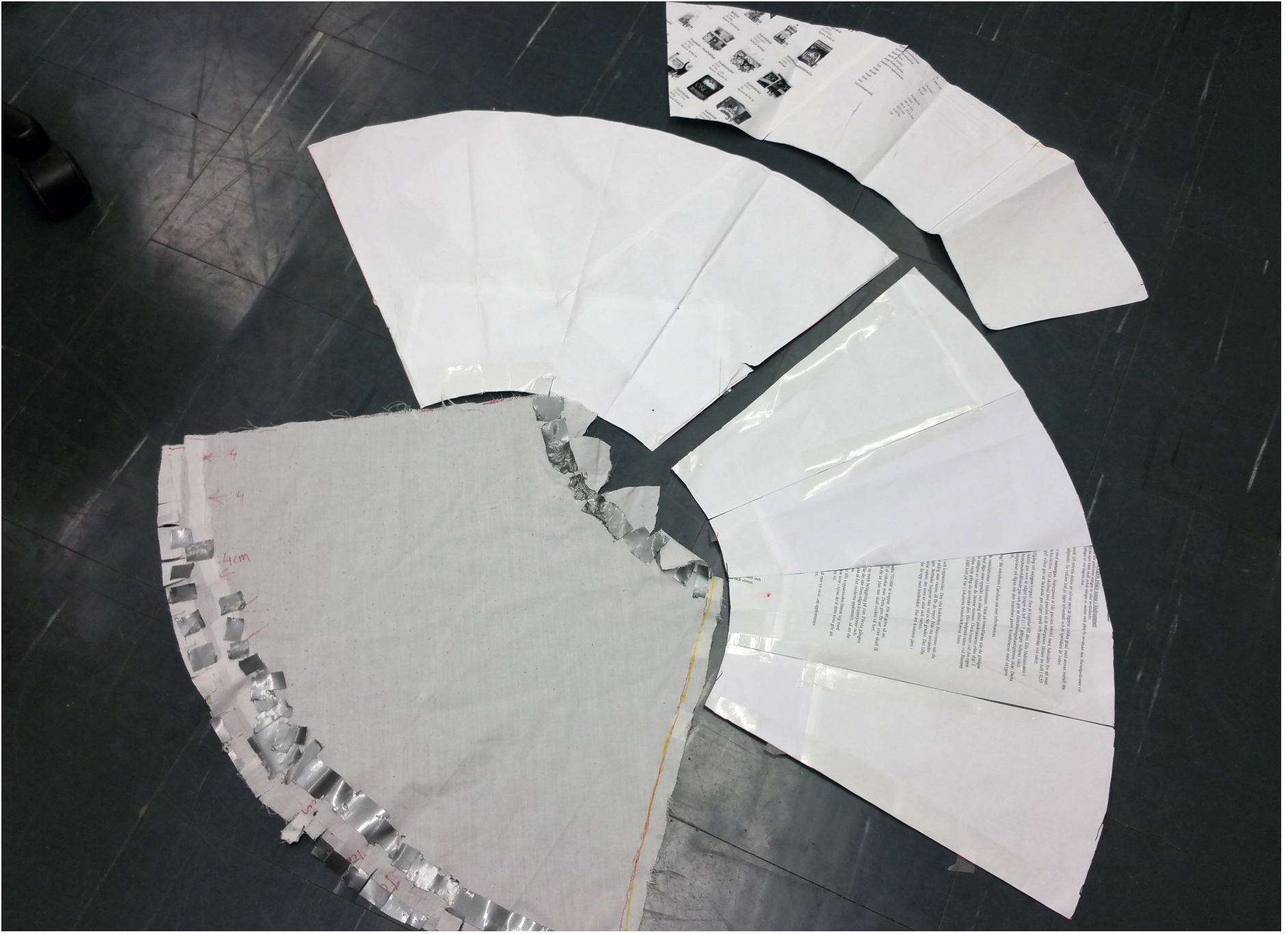
The overall form of the hats I decided upon is inspired by those seen in the old photos I browsed through. Their curved tips are inspired by my attraction towards organic forms with soft curves and also from the variety of hats I had seen in the old photos. I also did not want the hats to have pointed tips and resemble those worn at birthday parties, by witches in Halloween and by starboys in the Lucia train.

It is interesting to add that I later came to realize the shape of the hats is similar to the cone shaped volcanic mountains existing in Cappadocia, Turkey and Kandovan, Iran. Inside these mountains there are cave-like houses where people live in, similar to ones on my hat. Prior to this project, I had looked at landscape photos of the mentioned places and found them fascinating but they were never present while I worked on this project and brainstormed my ideas.

- Sketches & Samples

Making sketches and samples is an important part of my work before I set off to make the actual piece. To for example try the different sizes and forms of hats I had visualized and sketched, I used paper and cardboard to make them and see how they would look on the head with the certain heights and shapes. Throughout the samples of paper hats, I did make some with tips of different forms such as pointed, diagonal and flat. I for example did not choose to work with a hat low in height because since I wanted to place lights inside, I had to place a ceiling and create a chamber where the lamps and their battery pack could be placed in. This would create a division and a short hat would give me little space to carry out my ideas on. The samples I made of short hats, also gave me the feeling of a roof for my head, trapped in a sense and because my concepts are about limitless imagination and curiosity, to me a tall hat, without a harsh sharp-looking tip could help empower and convey my ideas.





Small grid of images or text, possibly a stamp or label, located at the top of the bag.

Handwritten red markings and arrows on the cardboard insert, including '4cm' and '4cm' with arrows pointing to the top edge.

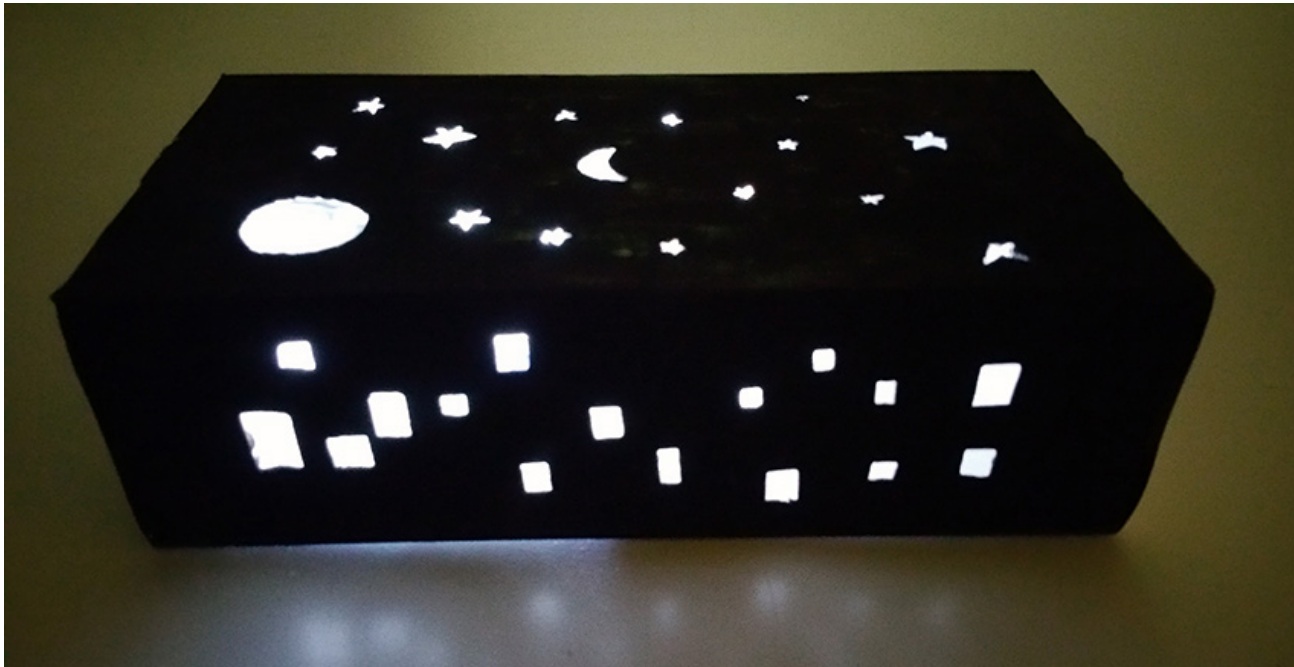
Printed text on the inner lining of the bag, including a section titled 'Wichtige Hinweise' (Important Notes) and 'Bitte beachten' (Please note).

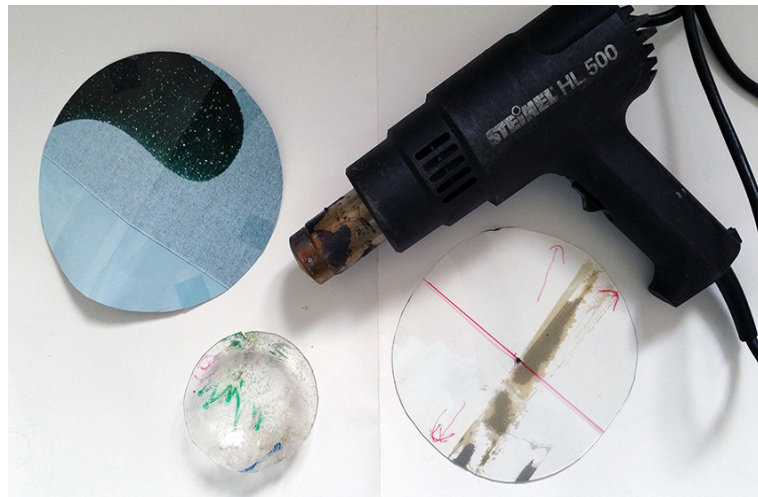


Samples of windows, fabric and colors



Samples of windows and stars when lit





Various tools used

- Fabric

The choice of fabric was important because I wanted the final result to look and feel like a hats I had previously seen in museums in Iran . Therefore, I paid attention to factors such as texture and weight. I came to use black felt fabric for the covering of the hat because of its resemblance to real hats.

While picking fabric, I looked at for example cashmere, cotton and wool, with a variety of thicknesses, textures and weights. I also considered other colors I could use such as beige, brown, grey, etc. The reason why in the end I chose thin felt fabric was because it was thinner than the other types of fabrics I had looked at. Since on the hat with the windows, I was to fold in the fabric over the edges of the windows, I wanted to maintain the defined shapes of the carvings and the angled corners. Through samples, I noticed that thick fabric turned corners into curves. Thick fabrics also gave an extra weight to the hat which I did not find necessary due to the other materials I was to use that would add to the overall weight.

Another reason why I chose to work with black fabric was because of how it drew attention to the stars and especially the windows which have colors such as red, gold and yellow, helping them stand out. In my eyes, the black helped the motifs stand out.

- Plastic

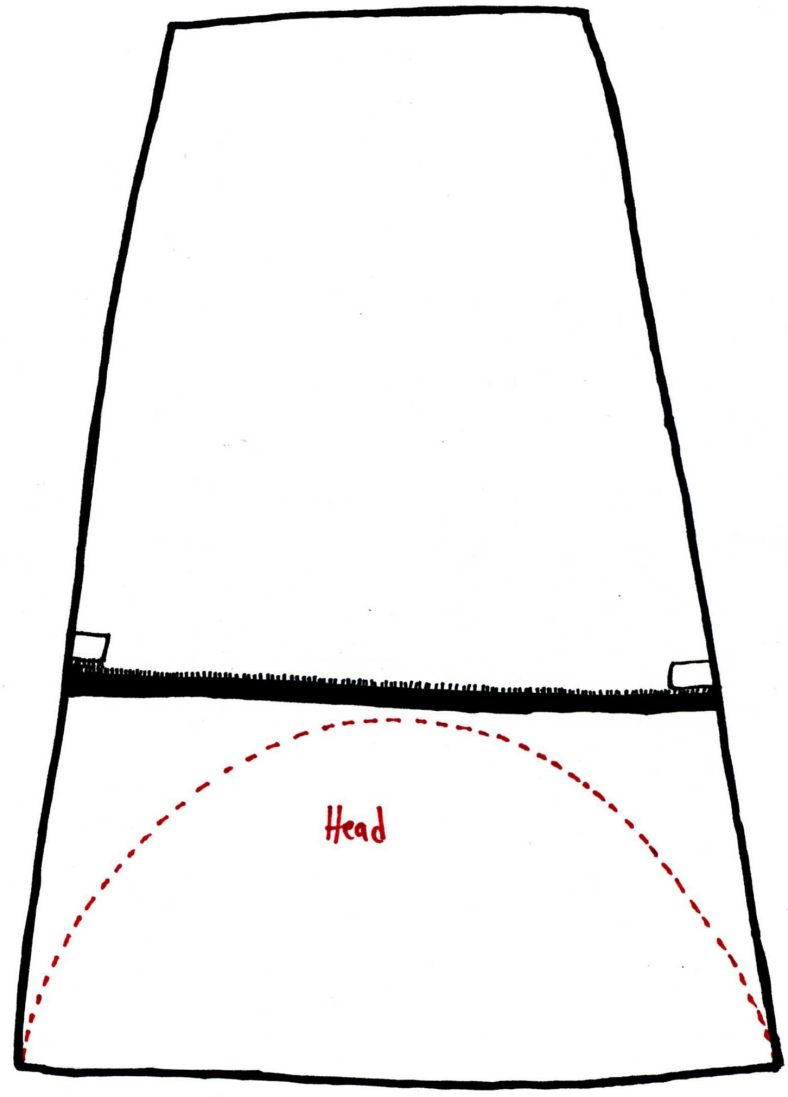
For the form of the hats themselves, I used plastic sheets. Here what I took the time to examine was for example to look at different plastic sheets. I examined their thickness, weight, how their hardness would affect the feeling of the hat itself and also the wearer and his/her head. It might not seem so but the head is a sensitive body part. Upon experience through the samples I made, if a thick and stiff plastic is used for the form and if it sits tightly around the head, due to discomfort, it can give the wearer headache. I also understood that if the hat has a circular form and hardly any flexibility to form itself around the head, it can cause headache.

Another factor which I had to consider with the plastic sheet was how it would be to cut out windows with an X-Acto knife, in it. The hat with the stars would be considerably easier since I would burn holes, in different sizes, into the plastic in order to resemble stars. Since the hat with windows was to have a crowded surface, it was important to see how easy or tough cutting them out in plastic would be. This depended on the thickness and the hardness of the plastic sheet. I for example tested this on a hard plastic sheet used for architectural models, but since the sheet was tough and thick, 1 mm, I could barely cut out a complete square after numerous tries. The other plastic sheet I tested on, which was in fact the one I used in the end, 0.78mm thick, was much softer. Carving was still not easy, since I had to drag my blade over each line 6 times, 3 times on one side and another 3 times on the other side. However, if I wanted to use a thinner sheet, I also had to compromise with the stability and weight that I wanted the hats to have. A thinner plastic would make the hats lighter and also more flexible in shape, two factors which I thought would make the hats feel unstable and “cheap”.

I should add that while carving out the windows, I remembered that I could have used the laser cutter and saved a tremendous amount of time. However, from the beginning I did not have a defined pattern of how and where the windows should be placed, I had decided this throughout the process.

- Ceiling

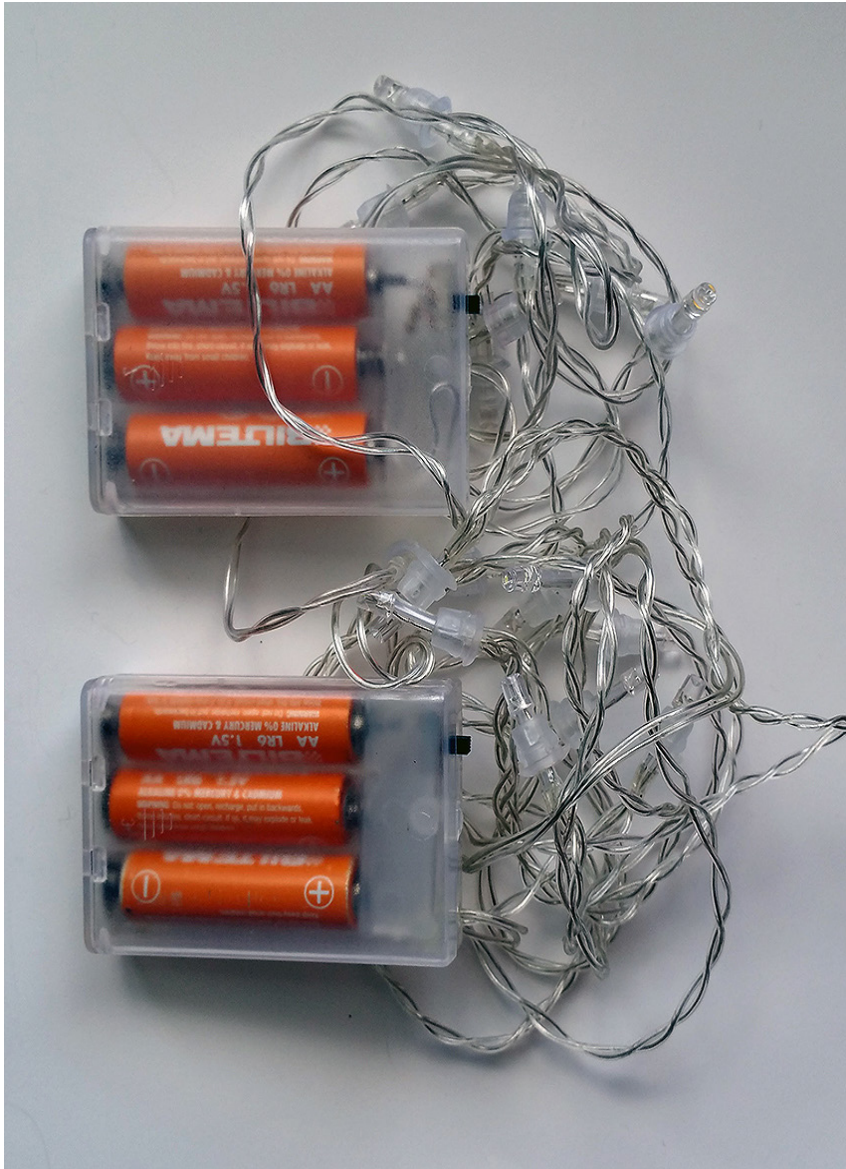
I came across this challenge when I was putting together the ceiling which was to be placed approximately in the first third of the hat for the battery pack of the lamps to sit on. In the beginning, for the ceiling I used the same plastic I had used for the rest of the hat. I cut a circular form and placed it where I had measured for it to sit. However, it gave the hat a fixed and stable form which my head then had to go inside. Due to pressure, this caused headaches. The solution I came upon was to use two different kinds of plastics, a hard one for the center part, for a stability and a thin and a flexible one for the edges.



- Lights

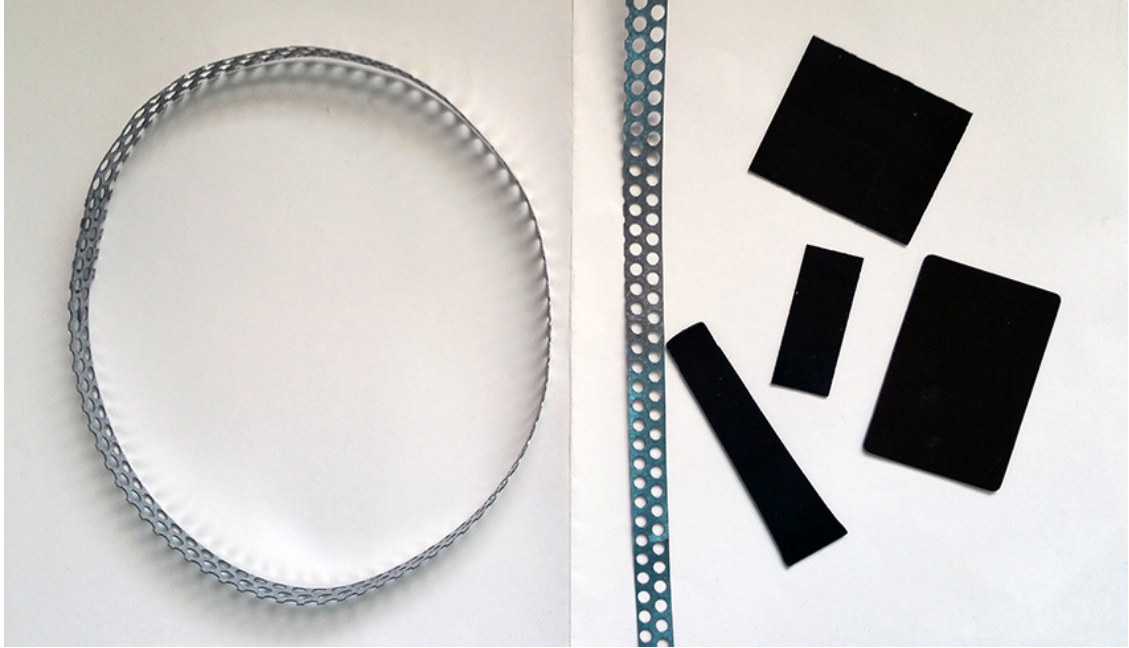
In the beginning, I had thought of placing small short torches in the hats which provided light which was an important part of my concept. However, looking through the range of torches available in the market, I faced certain challenges such as not finding any in the height I wanted or not finding one with power buttons on the end of their handle.

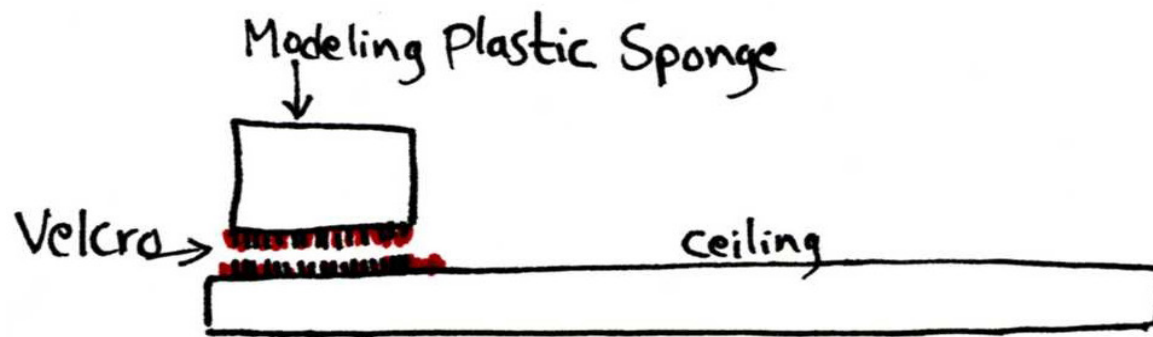
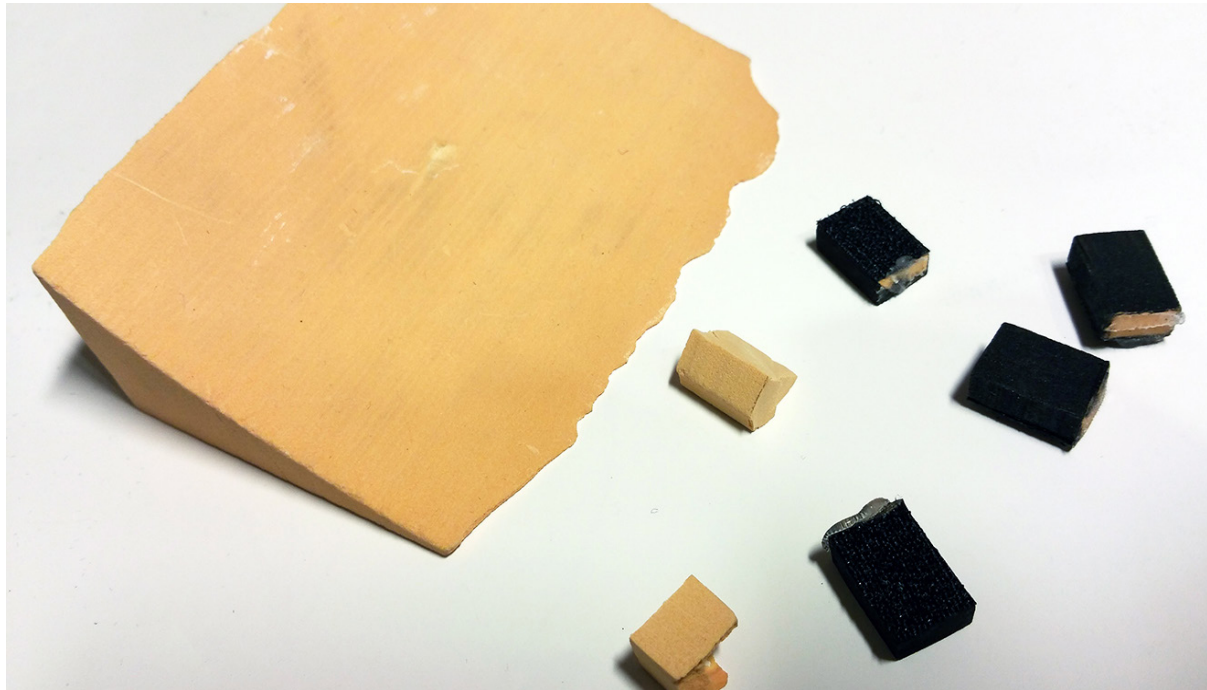
Fairy lights were another source of lighting I took in consider, however the majority of the ones sold are electricity functioned and do not use battery. However, after much searching, I managed to find ones I could use, with the suitable level of light I was after. I should add that the lights I found came in different light tones which gave me the idea of strengthening the concept each hat carried, by using the one with white light inside the star hat, similar to the color of the stars. I then used the fairy lights with yellow light inside the window hat in order to resemble lights lit inside houses and also create a feeling of warmth.

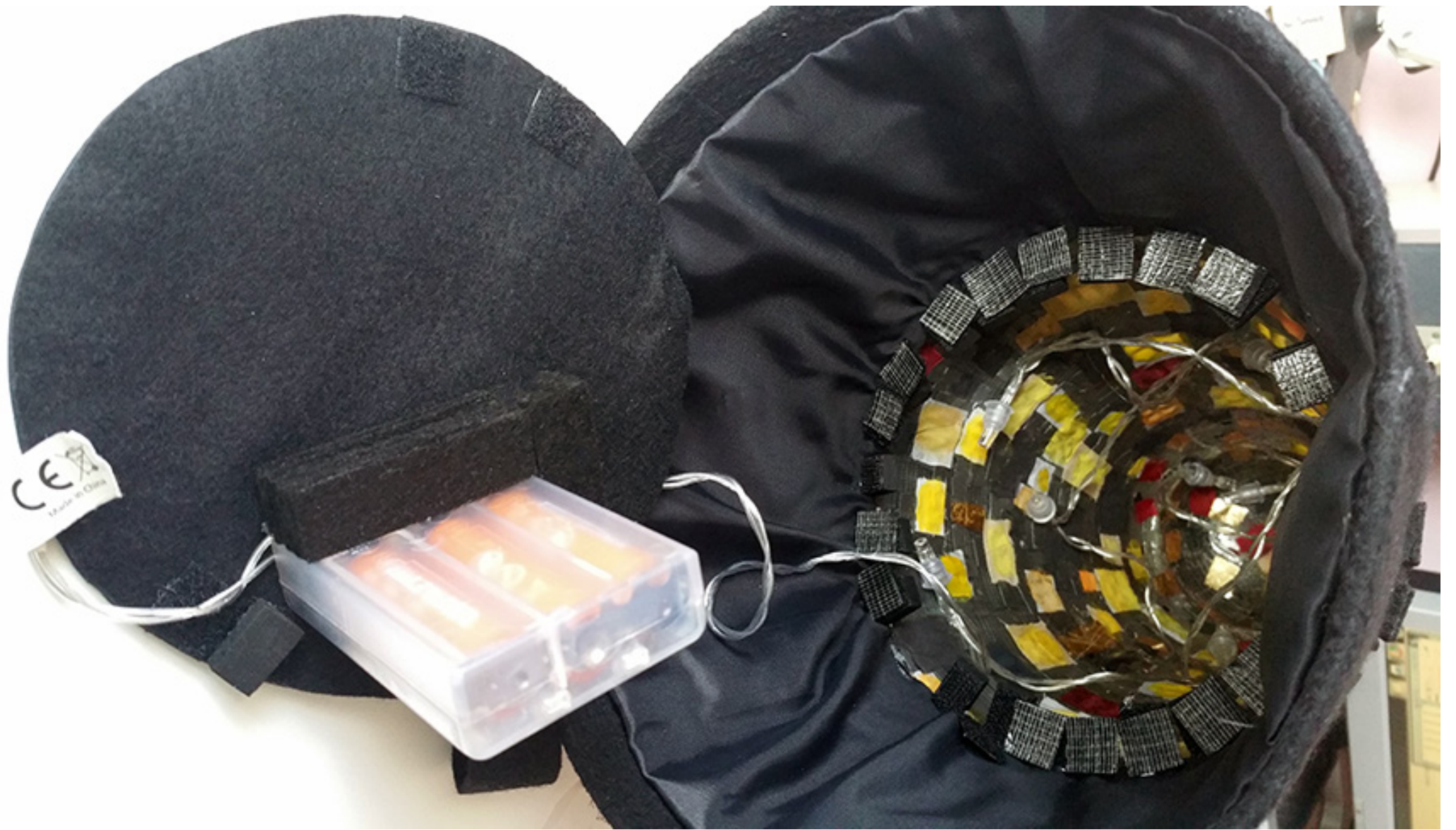


- Velcro

The lights and their battery pack were placed on top of the ceiling, on a separate chamber than where the head came in. Since batteries run out and there are possibilities of lamps to stop working, I wanted the ceilings to be removable in case such might occur. Methods I considered using were, magnets, clips and Velcro. After several sample makings and tryouts, I chose to use black Velcro due to the strength it had, its light weight and also that it could be used in a way which was unseen. A combination and hard plastic sponge and Velcro was used.





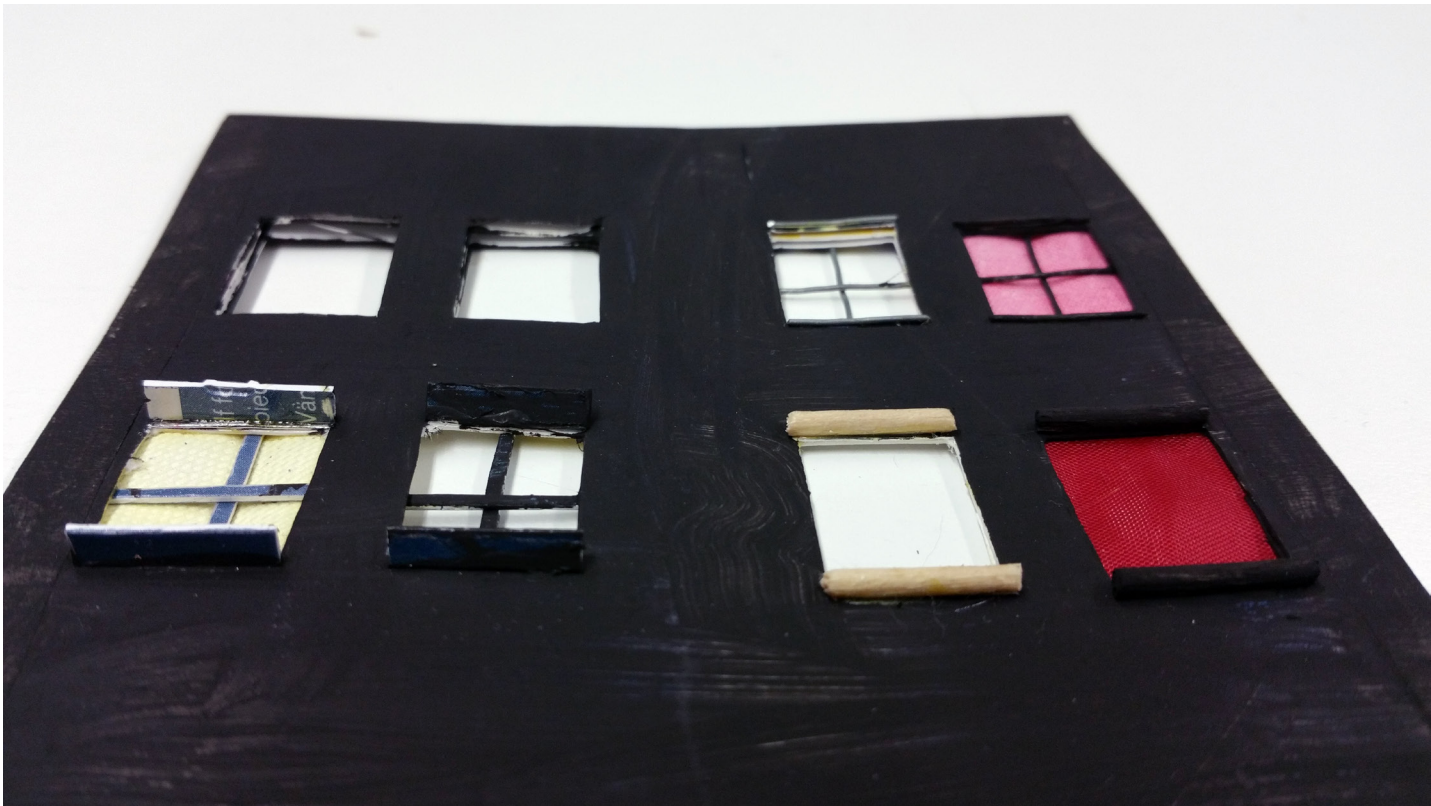
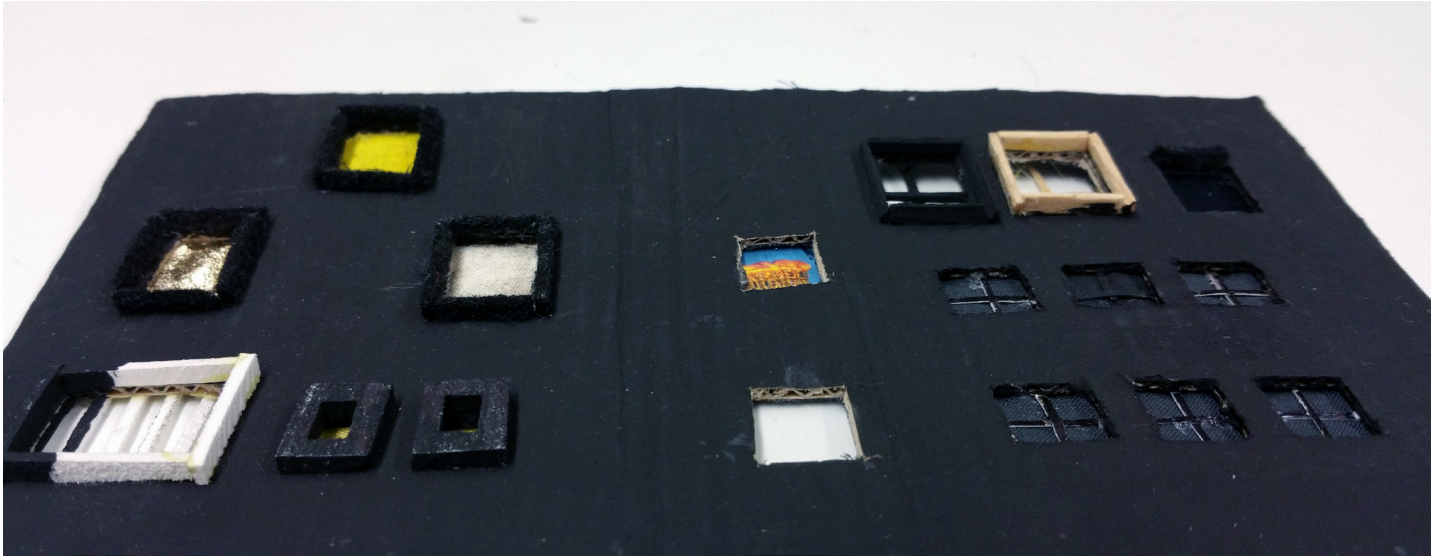


- Windows & Relief

The amount of stars and windows on the hats was a factor I closely reflected upon. A part of my aim has been to create a neighborhood, a community, a togetherness and my way of portraying this was important. A scene of a single house in the middle of a landscape brings me feelings of sadness and lonesomeness. In the case of the night sky and its stars, nights when the sky is cloudy, I do not stare at the sky since I feel that I am looking up at dust; that the clouds will not let my thoughts fly pass them. The clouds themselves also give me a feeling of sadness and being lost, therefore, on such nights, I take a rain check. Due to this, it was important to know how empty or crowded the surfaces of the hats were to be and therefore, through the samples, I manage to reach a decision I could work towards. On the paper hats I made, I carved out windows and punched holes to see how they would look if there were a few or many of them on a hat and also how they would look in the dark with light shone inside them.

For the windows I wanted to create, I also had to figure out their size range, their shapes and also the details they were to have. Since I was to have many windows on the hat, I thought that limiting the variety of materials, shapes and colors would help in preventing the hat from looking messy. I did want to create and maintain a harmony in the overall piece. Therefore, instead of using for example ten different colors, shapes and fabrics, I decided upon less which still set the mood and harmony I was after.

Through the samples, I came to understand that I did not want the hat with windows to have a flat surface. I thought that through detailing the windows, I could create a relief on the hat, both giving details and character to each window and also making the surface of the hat interesting. Materials such as wooden sticks, plastic sheets, foam cardboard, acrylic sheets and cardboard are some which I used in the samples. However, in a tutor session of mine with Mona Wallström, she suggested me to find thick felt which I could use for the detailing. I was unaware of such felt but I managed to find it at a fabric store. After using it in my samples, I saw it as a good choice because it merged and became one with the fabric felt that covered the rest of the hat. Since the thick felt is in the same color, the detailing would also not draw attention from the overall appearance of the hat.

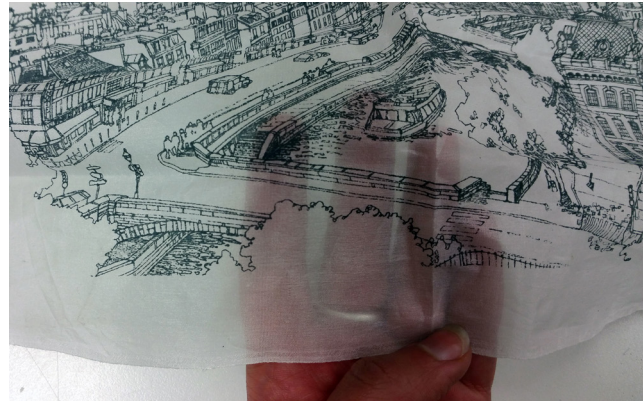
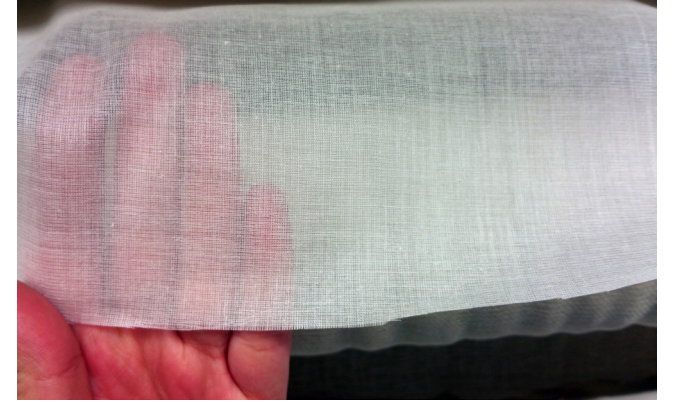
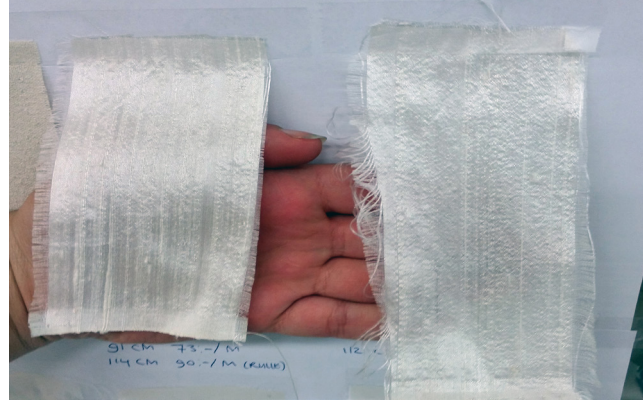
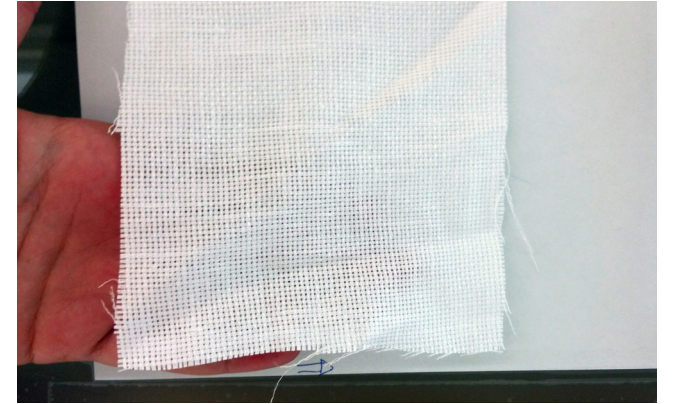
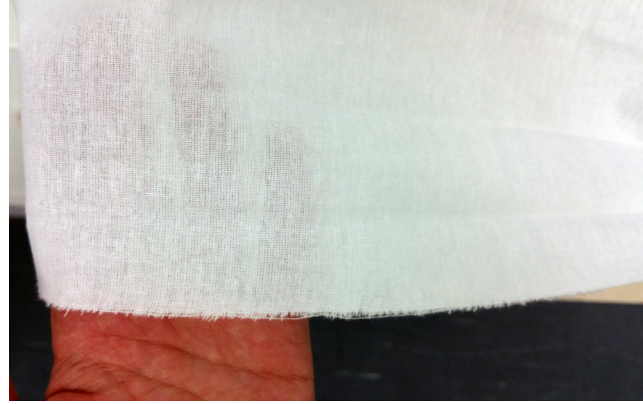
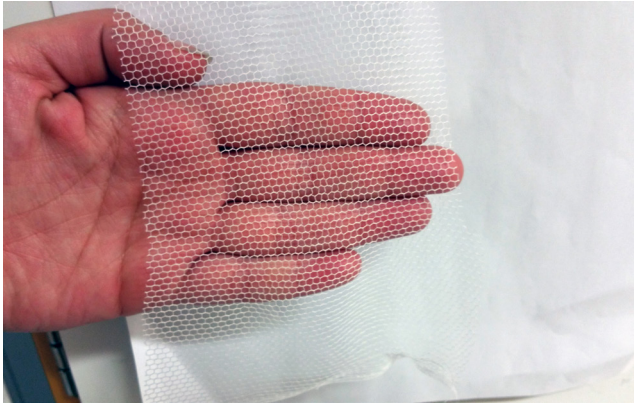


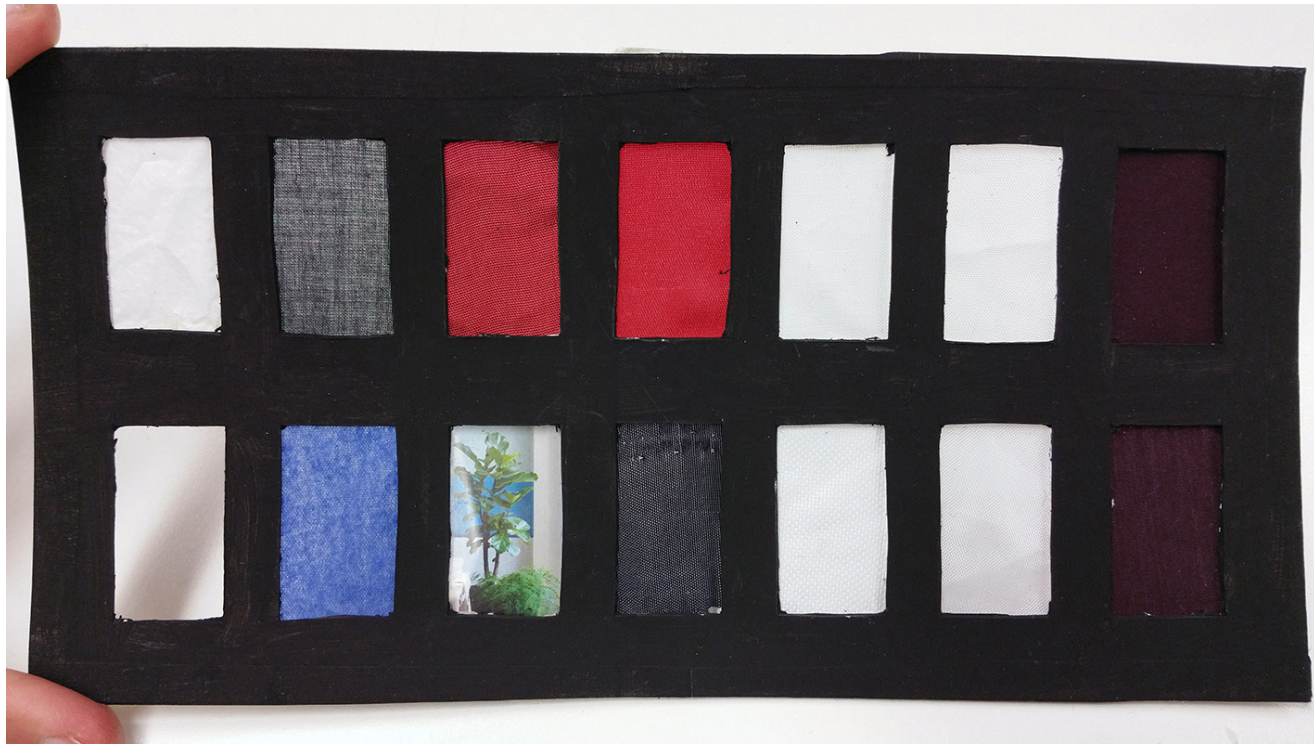
- Light Shone

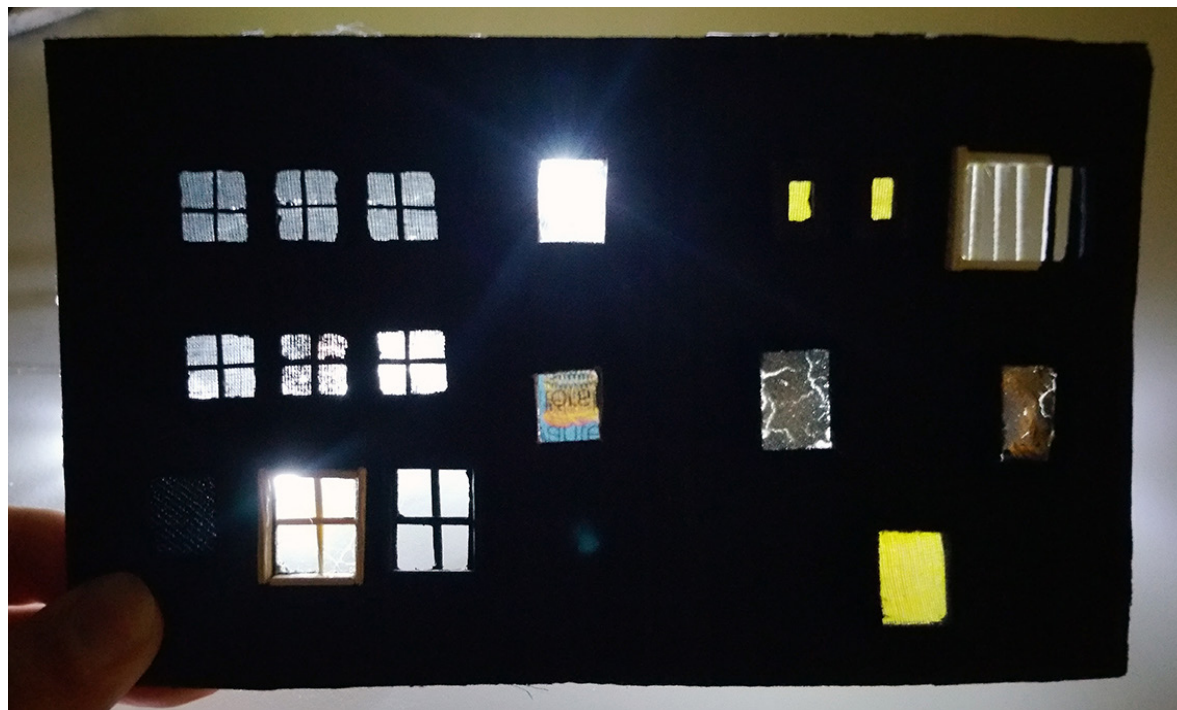
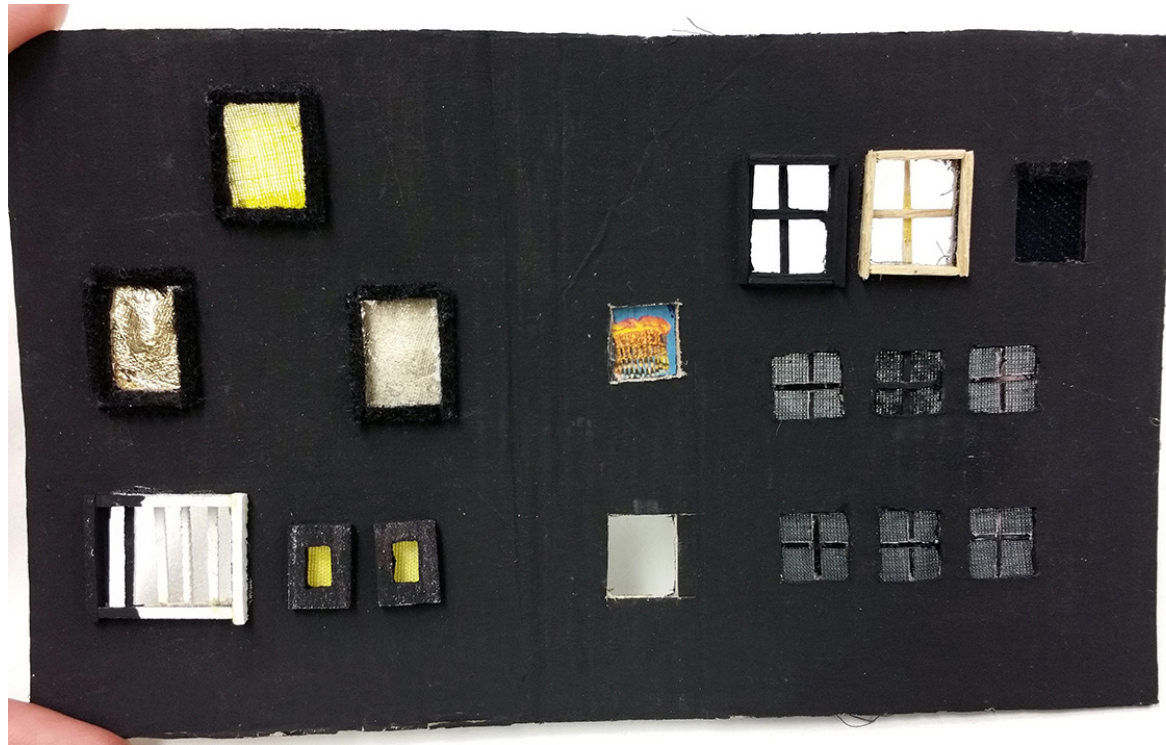
The appearance of the colors and the fabrics over light shone behind them was also a factor I paid attention to. Through tests, I for example realized that for the miniature windows which I carved out, fabrics with thick textures and weaves, are not an appropriate choice due to the harsh appearance they give the small windows. Another decision I made through experimenting was using gold leaf protected by tape. Since I wanted the hat itself to look attractive when it does not have light shone inside it, using gold leaf would give a sense of light and shine to some of the windows and become grey and dark when the hat is lit up.

I carried out such experiments with water color on fabrics as well. Since I wanted some of the windows to resemble those of houses with people inside them with their lights turned on, the tone of the yellow color used, was also meant to give out that warmth and cozy feeling. Another example is the dark blue color mixed with black which was meant to resemble the dark and empty feeling when no lights are lit and no one is home. For a number of windows, I have used ready dyed fabric such as red and grey and for some I have myself colored them with the specific color tones I was after.



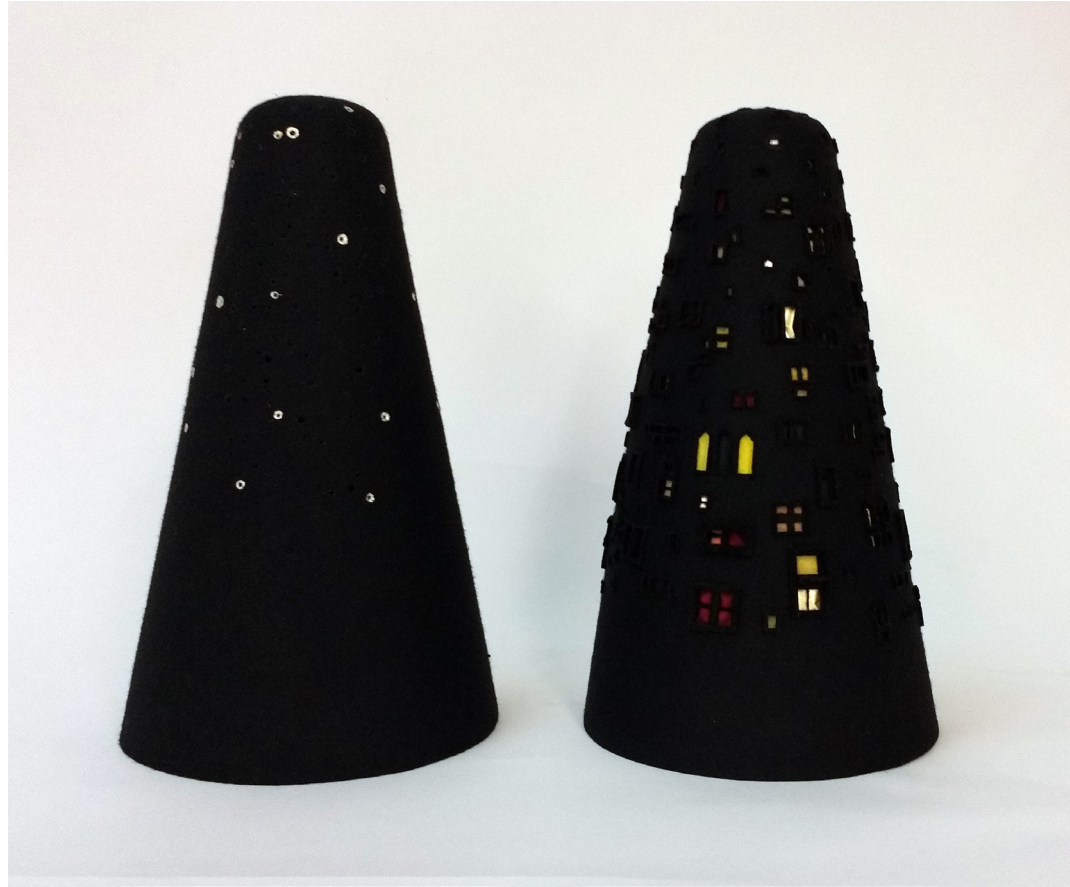














Reflection

In the beginning of February I decided to change the path I had thought of taking for the thesis project. Prior to this, I had thought of incorporating photos in jewelry, however, the more I brainstormed and made sketches for this idea, the more I felt I did not have the appropriate materials to carry out the project with. In the beginning, I had made sketches with photos I had found on the web; however I came to realize that since they were not my photos, they felt impersonal to me. I went through the photos I had taken myself throughout the years such as during my trips, but since I had taken them only with the intention of capturing a scene, I did not see them suitable for the work I intended to carry out. In other words, the objects or the scenes I had taken photos of were not looked at with the intention of being turned into jewelry. I did not want to force myself to use materials which I did not find suitable and also I did not intend to force and create materials to work with. For example, using photos of buildings, sceneries and objects which I do not directly connect to, was not the path I wanted to take. In conclusion, I decided that I was not ready to work with this idea and I felt that I needed time to gather a collection of photos taken by myself with the intention of being later turned into jewelry.

I therefore decided to work with hats I had once done, which I, in fact had found much interesting and seen the potential of continuation and development in. Working with the head, a body part I have rarely worked with was engaging and also merging my concepts with hats was another factor which sparked creativity in me.

My initial idea in this path was to express happiness and joy in the work, similar to what I wanted to show when I had thought of working with photos. In the sketches I drew, combinations of bows, butterflies, birds, balloons, pinwheels, colors, branches, flowers, etc. were put together. However after many of such sketches none of them satisfied me. None of them felt close to my heart although all these combinations in a way or another do bring me smiles and make references to spring, childhood, laughter, colors, etc. Though through my eyes, none of them felt personal and deep. I felt a lack of story in the sketches, a story which for me was meaningful and personal. In fact as much as I remember, it has always been a story which has sparked interest and creativity in me. I should also add that due to all the creations by other artists I would look at during the time of my sketching, I came to look less within myself and more at what others had done. It was in the beginning of March that during a talk with a classmate I came to look within me and ask myself what it was that made me happy. Although there are many things in life that make me happy, my first immediate response was "home". It was then I realized how natural ideas related to "home" came to me, compared to before when I felt uneasy about working creatively with objects I could not connect personally with.

The idea of the night sky and the stars was another immediate thought of mine, due to the personal emotions and imaginations I have towards them. During those weeks where I was searching for ideas which were meaningful to me, I had forgotten to look within myself and trust my own artistic language. For me, besides the making process and the final results which are greatly valuable, what I came to realize is the importance of searching within myself and not focusing so much on what surrounds me and external sources.

Reflecting back now, I think that a reason why I became deaf to my inner voice was because I wanted my final work to be extraordinary. With the mindset I had then, I searched outside myself in order to find that “extraordinary” idea which could spark creativity in my mind. While now after walking this path, I have come to believe that it is possible to turn and transform an idea, with personal connections, into an extraordinary piece. The initial idea might not be as great as expected but with time, work and creativity, it can turn into a satisfying and an amazing work. In my eyes, then, it is not only the final result that is interesting, but the transformation of the initial idea can also be magical.

Looking back now, there are two things I am content and proud of. The first one is the finished pieces and how I managed to create the vision and concept I had in my mind. My goal was never to, for example, create five hats; the quantity was unimportant for me. The aim I worked towards was for the creations to be well made with neat and clean details which have always been important to me. It was for example important for me that the quantity of the windows gave a neighborhood and community feeling. Something else which was important, was the quantity of the stars since I wanted the hat to look like a scene for a clear night sky with stars in various sizes. An interesting realization of mine has been that through the hats I have made, I have come to gain interest in large showcase objects. For example objects worn in carnivals, runways, window displays, photo shoots, editorials, etc. Objects that effect their surroundings, atmosphere and draw attention to themselves. I think of the presence of such objects in for example a photo and the scene, mood and vibe they have the power to create.

The second factor in this project which I am grateful to have learned through experience is trusting my artistic language and understanding that the moment I come to work with something which I can relate to and am familiar with, the better and stronger my passion and creativity will respond.

Questioning myself now, if I had more time I believe that I would have still made the two hats I have currently made because of my interest in them which has stayed with me throughout this project. However, using lamps in this work has made me eager in incorporating them in future works as well. I am thinking that I could use this element in other jewelry pieces such as pendants which can be large in dimension. It would also be interesting to see how a photo of for example a window can merge together with light by using for example fabric on a cropped section of the photo.

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