

“The Rope”

“The mind loves the unknown. It loves images whose meaning is unknown, since the meaning of the mind itself is unknown”
René Magritte

The idea for my collection is based on the two paintings: “The Treachery of Images” (1929) and “The son of man” (1946) by the surrealist painter René Magritte and his artistic method. Repetition was an important strategy for Magritte, as well as the misnaming of objects, doubling, mirroring and concealment. Breton’s description of Magritte’s method as “putting the visual image on trial” shows insights into the uniqueness of his approach-based on research and thought, not only about the object, but also about painting. “The Treachery of Images” cleverly highlights the gap between language and meaning. It depicts a pipe suspended in mid-air, with the caption “Ceci n’est pas une pipe”, French for “This is not a pipe”. The masterpiece of Surrealism creates a three-way paradox out of the conventional notion that objects correspond to words and images.

“The son of man” (1946) Magritte painted as a self-portrait. The painting shows a man in an overcoat and a bowler hat standing in front of a short wall, before the backdrop of the sea and a cloudy sky. The man’s face is largely obscured by a hovering green apple. However, the man’s eyes can be seen peeking over the edge of the apple. Magritte said about the painting that “at least it hides the face partly. Well, so you have the apparent face, the apple, hiding the visible but hidden, the face of the person. It’s something that happens constantly. Everything we see hides another thing, we always want to see what is hidden by what we see. There is an interest in that which is hidden and which the visible does not show us. This interest can take the form of a quite intense feeling, a sort of conflict, one might say, between the visible that is hidden and the visible that is present.”

This quote perfectly describes the main goal of my collection. I wanted to create a series of outfits that show an actual and recognisable piece of clothes, which is hiding and revealing a part of the same garment. This keeps the tension of perception. I have transferred the idea of “hiding the visible but hidden” in the pattern making. For example trousers and sleeves, where an actual sleeve hides another one. But it is still not a complete garment: it is a doubling of the pattern, the repetition what gives the feeling of duality. I have used the same approach in the design of trousers. I am trying to use a holistic approach while creating the collection. I am thinking about not only the form and silhouette, but also about for whom, why and what am I learning from that.

When I imagine who would wear my collection, I am visualizing a man and a woman, who are not age defined. They are staying on the hill. It’s windy, a bit cold, they want to cover their head and hide hands. I want them to feel safe and protected in my clothes, elegant and comfortable. These garments are corresponding with the power of the surrounding nature. I imagine a long white trench, which looks like a morning mist floating above the moss. It’s a strong rich white, cold, greyish and a bit creamy. Each detail and color of this collection has a story.

As an actual garment inspiration, I’ve looked at mountaineering clothes, modern and vintage. I see it’s aesthetics as a language, which connects different genders. I like how these garments do not emphasize the personal image but rather hide it. I have looked at the pictures of Edmund Hillary, the first person who reached the Everest. He was wearing undefined shoes and big trousers. I would not call them oversize but rather clothes which have space. Every element of his outfit is unique and strong. It has a lot of interesting details like goggles on the bend or a rope on his trousers instead of a belt. I’ve watched documentaries about Everest expeditions, and it’s absolutely incredible how people without proper equipment and oxygen were able to reach 8000 m. Magritte was testing the limits and boundaries of what art could be. Mountaineering clothes are also made for pushing the boundaries of human abilities.

I feel that the whole collection for me is about nature and how people communicate with it. I like that it has a balance between perfection and chaos.