

GRETCHEN WEED



DESIGNS

PROCESS OF CREATION

PORTFOLIO

“IT WILL ALL WORK OUT”

GRETCHEN HEIST

NEW YORK

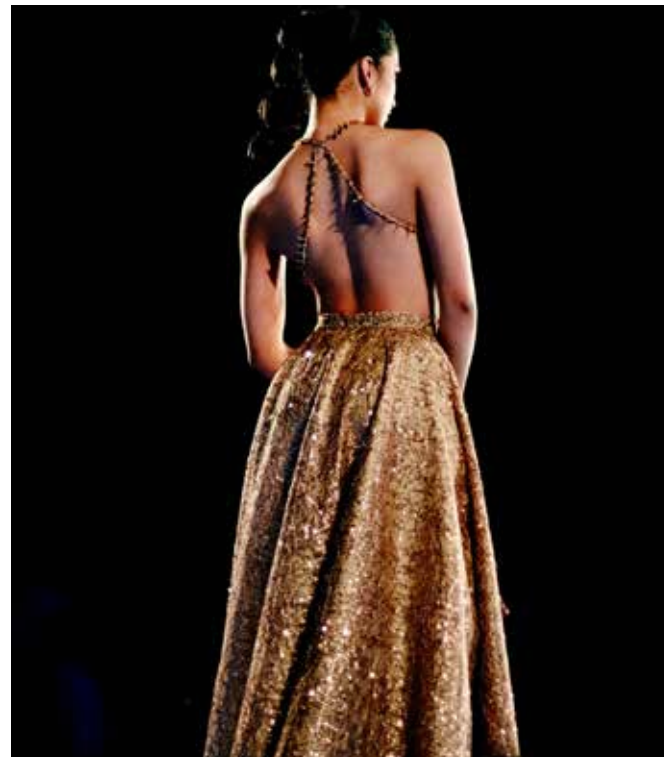
EXPECT THE **UNEXPECTED**

New York luxury fashion haus specializing in made-to-measure couture, outerwear, and leather goods. Gretchen Heist is a label about expecting the unexpected with our aspiration to unify urbanity, wit, art, and fashion. The brand is led by Creative Director, Gretchen Weed. Having grown up in her mother's art studio, Gretchen's practice is heavily influenced by this period in her life. Heist is an anagram of her mother's maiden name.

We celebrate and design for women that are beautifully complex, powerful, and operate outside of societal conventions. Our woman represents the dualities of the feminine archetype and finds strength and pride in all aspects of

herself. She is refined, strategic, and independent, as well as delicate and romantic. She believes in the mystery of being and exploring the emotions of the human condition.

Ultimately, she is a mystery.



Like all great mysteries, each Gretchen Heist design has an exploration process. The viewer can experience the garment from the first impression to discovering hidden details within. Every design is made to order and incorporates themes of psychology, symbology, and Trompe l'oeil details. Texture is essential to the experience of each piece, from textile fabrication to the incorporation of non-traditional notions into the work.

Gretchen Heist blends artistic intention, handcraft technique, and partnerships with contemporary artists to create fashion designs that are expressions of fine art.


CONTACT

gretchenheist.com

Instagram: @gretchen.heist

TikTok: @gretchenheist

BRAND ARCHETYPE & PRODUCTS

Be Beautifully Complex		
Delicate		Fierce
Creative		Refined
Understated		Powerful
Romantic		Independent
Open-Hearted		Mysterious
Dreamer		Strategic
Emotional		Stoic
Well-Educated		Risk Taker
Refined		Avant-Garde
Kind		Ambitious

Product Bases			Product Details – Craft Techniques with Linkage to Handmade Origins but Elevated via Design Vehicle/ Usage within the Product									
Leather Bags	Overcoats	Dresses or Sets	Quilting	Miniatures (Touch of Mythical, Whimsy or Cheeky Element)	Beadwork / Jewelry Embedded into the Products	Minimalist Colors (Black/ White/ Cream) contrasted with Highly Concentrated Colors & Prints	Reversible	Silk / High Quality Materials (All Soft Fabrics for Sensitive Skin)	Painting	Knots, Crochet & Weaving	Code/ Hidden Message to Uncover in the Brand	Hardware related to locks. Pad locks, keys, codex



FULL RUNWAY VIDEO: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/s-projects-basic-1>
COLLECTION TEASER: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/s-projects-basic-1>
PRÊT-À-PORTER: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/category/all-products>
SOUNDTRACK: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/s-projects-basic-1>
LOOKBOOK: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/lookbook>

STOLEN PARADISE

NYFW 2025

GRETCHEN HEIST IS EXCITED TO UNVEIL THE INAUGURAL RUNWAY COLLECTION, “STOLEN PARADISE.” THE COLLECTION IS INSPIRED BY THE STAGES OF GRIEF HUMANS EXPERIENCE FOLLOWING THE END OF A ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP. EACH GARMENT IN THE COLLECTION REPRESENTS THE COMPLEX EMOTIONS INVOLVED, INCLUDING LUST, LOVE, DENIAL, ANGER, DESPAIR, NEGOTIATION, ACCEPTANCE, AND FORGIVENESS.

The culmination of the collection is influenced by the Japanese art of Kintsugi, which repairs broken pottery with the Japanese lacquer (urushi) and then is dusted with powdered gold. The art form is based on the idea that healed imperfections make an object stronger, more valuable, and, ultimately, more beautiful. The art of Kintsugi is reflected in the final looks of the collection as the garments are embellished and veined with a melting gold motif. The color story also reflects this emotional journey, starting with the passionate color of fire red and gradually fading into softer shades of cream with highlights of gold. Despite the fading hues, the pattern remains steadfast, symbolizing memories evolving over time as the impact of the relationship unfolds with each phase. The primary patterns for the collection depict rolling beach waves and a Tuscan landscape (both a representation of paradise for the Creative Director), created by ripping the material and then weaving it back together. This technique represents the heroine regaining control and reestablishing her paradise after the relationship’s ending.

The collection features polished beach stones as the primary textural element to augment traditional sequins or beads, alluding to the rolling wave and beach motif. The use of the stones represents the hardening of the heroine’s heart, as well as the creative technique of elevating stones or non-traditional “sequins” into embellishment material.

The beach stones are intricately woven into the looks to create a full bodice, hand jewelry, and a beaded skirt. The concept of the evolution of the heroine has also been incorporated into the silhouettes. The collection begins with wide shapes and as the heroine moves through her stages, the styles transition into more guarded forms. As the looks take the runway, the sound design enhances the viewer’s emotions.



The musical score represents the stages of grief via techniques of absence or additions with frequent cuts between truncated sounds. As the show concludes, the musical portions culminate into a singular song, resettling the audience’s perception. Ultimately, Gretchen Heist’s “Stolen Paradise” NYFW 2025 collection explores the emotions experienced during lost relationships. It delves into the concepts of Idolization, Value, Fallen Angels, Solitude, and Forgiveness, which shape and change the perspectives of humans as they navigate grief. The collection invites the audience to feel the emotions of Lust, Love, Denial, Anger, Despair, Negotiation, Acceptance, and finally Forgiveness as each look graces the runway.



STOLEN PARADISE NYFW 2025 COLLECTION

Runway Video: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/s-projects-basic-1>

Lookbook: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/lookbook>

CONCEPT



<https://eden-health.com/the-grieving-process/>

PRIMARY PRINT



COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

COLOR PALETTE

<div><div>R 195 G 25 B 10</div><div>R 185 G 23 B 10</div><div>R 165 G 23 B 40</div><div>R 178 G 23 B 7</div><div>R 178 G 25 B 25</div><div>R 178 G 30 B 50</div><div>R 178 G 21 B 75</div><div>R 178 G 100 B 100</div><div>R 176 G 105 B 115</div><div>R 210 G 72 B 117</div><div>R 214 G 213 B 216</div><div>R 215 G 120 B 210</div><div>R 218 G 213 B 215</div><div>R 217 G 212 B 210</div><div>R 218 G 213 B 201</div><div>R 202 G 212 B 191</div><div>R 254 G 254 B 161</div><div>R 251 G 251 B 200</div><div>R 255 G 255 B 102</div><div>R 254 G 254 B 105</div><div>R 254 G 254 B 555</div></div>	<div><div>LUST</div></div>	<div><div>LOVE</div></div>	<div><div>DENIAL</div></div>	<div><div>ANGER</div></div>	<div><div>NEGOTIATION</div></div>	<div><div>DESPAIR</div></div>	<div><div>ACCEPTANCE & FORGIVENESS</div></div>
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ARTIST INSPIRATION & COLLABORATION



Non-Woven Work Original

COLLABORATION

Gretchen Heist collaborated with French contemporary artist Clément Denis, known for his unique technique of woven painting on paper. For the collection, Denis created two paintings of a man and a woman with angel wings that have been torn apart and woven together into a single work of art. The painting was then printed on fabric, and the material was ripped and woven back together again to create a final graphic. The ultimate image & bodice shape emulate the motif of a cracked clay pot that has been repaired with the Kintsugi practice.



Woven Work Original

REINTERPRETATION

Within this look, the reinterpretation of the original painting represents the heroine's journey as the bodice was strategically rewoven to highlight only the heroine's eyes while the back of the garment showcases the complete painting.



Woven Work Altered for Color

REPRESENTATION

This represents that the relationship is behind her as she travels through the stages of grief. Inspired by Denis' techniques, the collection specifically highlights the weaving of intricate beaded designs and fabrics. The woven nature of the work signifies the heroine's emotional journey. The weaving creates a labyrinth like design that serves as a tribute to those who have experienced grief and wandered in new directions to heal.

01 LUST

For the first look, the dress draws inspiration from a luxurious lingerie slip with a voluminous bubble skirt with a high-low silhouette. This skirt mimics the appearance of a comforter wrapped around the body, evoking the sensation of a woman who has just emerged from her lover's embrace. This design powerfully reflects the overarching themes of color evolution and bold silhouette play in the collection. In a captivating fiery red, the dress features a transparent waist that resembles a corset, elegantly containing the vibrant chaos of the skirt below. The dress attempts to capture the intoxicating allure of overwhelming desire.

The dress boasts a v-open back adorned with delicate lace and intriguing side details in a crosshatch pattern, adding an element of sophistication. Crafted from red and transparent white striped textiles, the fabric is layered to create a rich, saturated red. This unique textile and layering allows the side panels to be designed into a basket weave, seamlessly connecting to the collection's theme of transforming paper and textiles into something strikingly new and innovative. This weave also relates to the artist collaboration that centers around woven paintings.



02 LOVE



For the emotion of love, the symbol of the heart served as the inspiration for the base pattern. Underneath, the dress features a heart-shaped slip dress. It consists of approximately 20 layers of ombre tulle hearts, which are cut and sewn down the center of the dress for secure placement. Beyond the center point, the tulle layers are hand-tacked to create a wing-like effect, ensuring the shape remains intact. This design reflects the theme of love, which is powerful, playful, and delicate. The layers are strategically placed to give the model a fuller appearance on top, while her legs maintain a long, A-line silhouette.

In exploring this emotion further, the red heart puff dress was created as a second attempt to embody love. The first attempt featured a pleated red chiffon corset top paired with an A-line skirt. While this design captured a more romantic interpretation of love, it was ultimately discarded because the chiffon lacked the necessary drama and interesting silhouette for the runway.



This look features the Leather Scarf Bag, which is designed to resemble the shape of a scarf tied into a bag, crafted from leather. The bag includes hidden elements such as a Kintsugi heart charm and a branded leather heart. The charm contains a small sand potion nodding to a Love Potion, symbolizing the heart of a fragile woman.

03 DENIAL

In the original sketches for “Denial,” the dress was designed to be shredded to create the hero pattern by layering tulle and then cutting into the layers to form a new textile. However, I ultimately replaced this design because I wanted to enhance the runway experience and surprise the audience with a color change. The emotion of denial is often associated with blindness, so this dress features a bright, fiery red color at the front and a light pink color with the same beaded overlay at the back. This transition serves two purposes: it provides a dramatic reveal for the audience and facilitates the shift to the next garment.

For the beaded overlays, the beaded panels were crushed at the edges and integrated into the overlay pattern. These were sewn together, and the hem was secured at the end to maintain the scalloped edge detail. During fittings, adjustments were made to the hem, allowing for an interesting detail at the bottom of the dress while preserving the scalloped edge. The beaded straps also hold significance, as they cross over in the back to form an “X,” symbolizing the end of a relationship.



This look features the Hand Jewelry, which consists of bags that serve no functional purpose other than to be beautifully intricate. The jewelry is made with crystals and beads that are organically woven together to create the accessory. While it is clever in design, it also carries symbolic meaning for the collection, as it represents the impermanence of relationships and the notion that they cannot be held onto. The beadwork used in these pieces is also a signature technique of Gretchen Heist.



04 ANGER

The emotion of anger can be interpreted in many ways, but for this piece, I envisioned it as a blend of a revenge dress and the chaos of raw emotions. The dress features a highly fitted mermaid skirt paired with a corset top and a pink leather harness. The harness includes intricate details, such as a strap that intentionally crosses over the heart and devil horn studs on the back, serving as a nod to the idea of having a devil on one's shoulder.

Within the dress, the beaded underlay from the denial dress is incorporated once again but subtly hidden within the fabric. This symbolizes that the relationship remains with the woman, even as the dress features a shredded, frayed exterior. The shredding technique involves slicing into the denim with a razor and repeatedly washing the skirt to achieve the desired fraying effect. The corset top is crafted by tearing denim and layering various pink tones to create the hero print. This technique also connects to the later weaving work of the artist's collaboration.

In the original sketches, the corset included an oversized hood that added an element of mystery. However, during the refinement process, the hood was replaced with a semi-transparent scarf, which the model dramatically removed on the runway. The transparency of the scarf beautifully contrasts the heaviness of the outfit. Additionally, an accessory in the form of a scarf purse complements the ensemble. This purse is made from the same leather as the harness, ensuring a cohesive color scheme throughout the look.

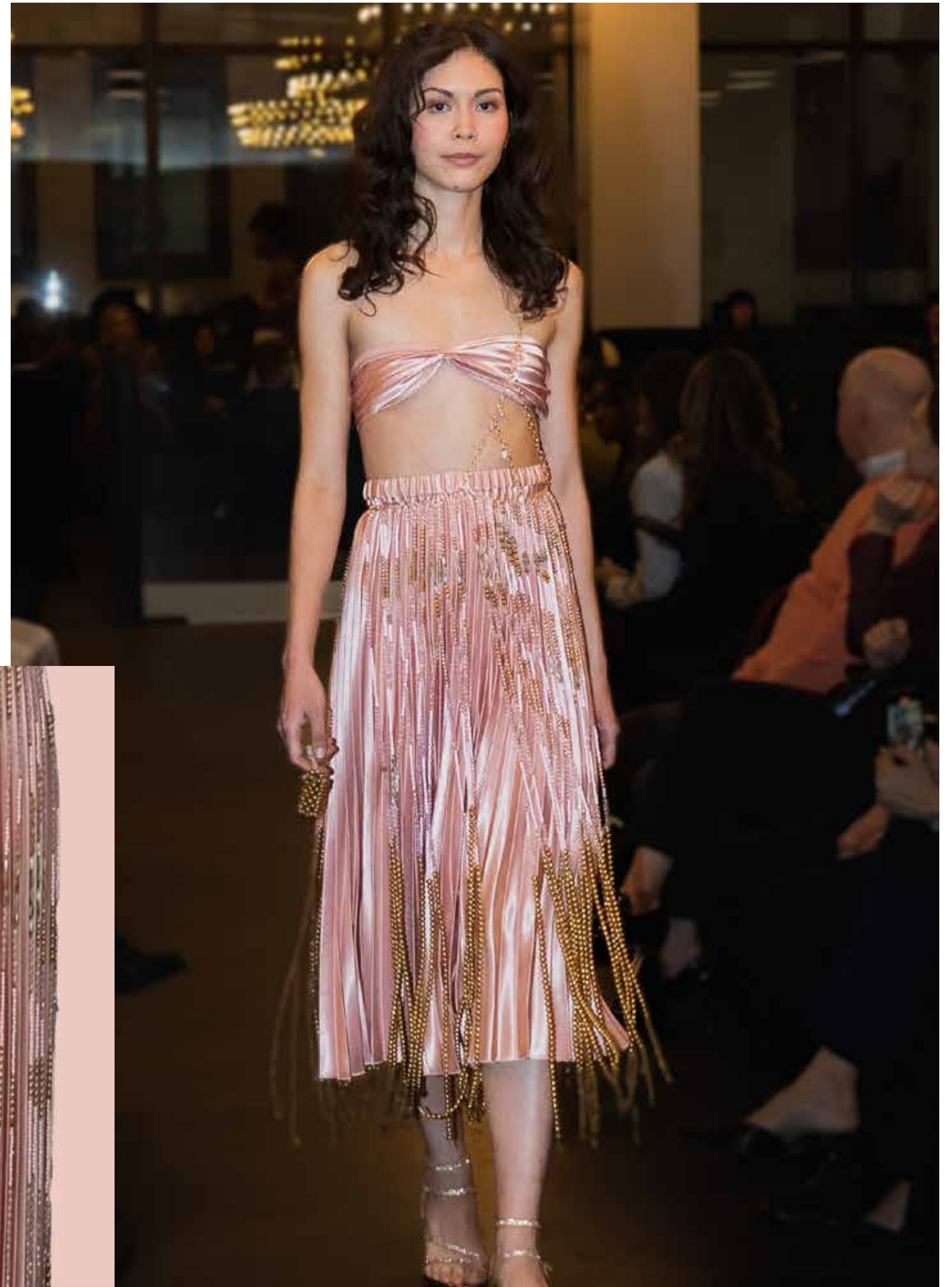
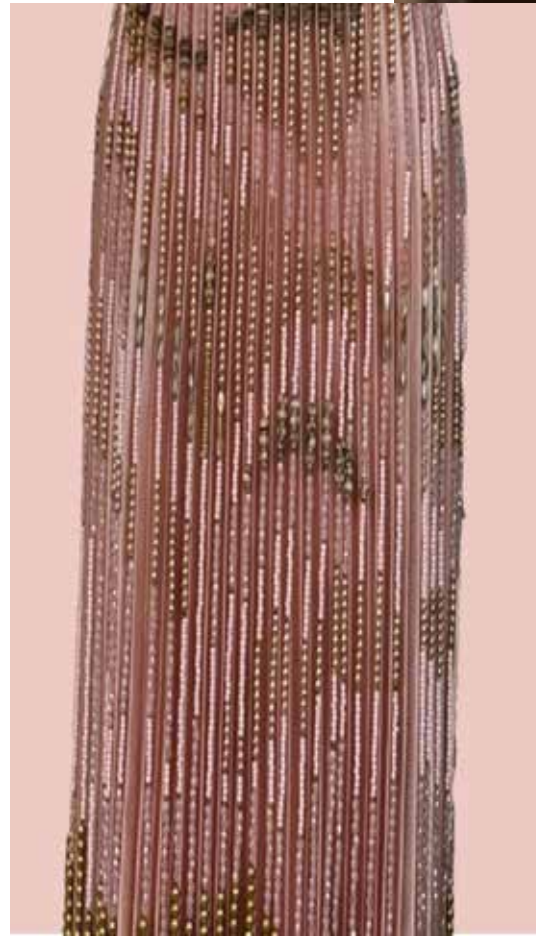


05 NEGOTIATION

For the Negotiation concept, the goal was to create a dress that functions as an optical illusion. I wanted the design elements to appear disparate up close, but when viewed from a distance, they would come together to form a cohesive pattern. In the initial sketches, this effect was planned to be achieved with textiles wrapped around the body. However, during the development process, the idea evolved into creating a “painting” using beads, including beach pebbles.

The highlight of this outfit is the overskirt, which was hand-beaded to depict a pattern reminiscent of rolling hills or waves. This pattern gradually fades into gold, with angel wing charms serving as the finishing touch. The beaded sections are perfectly integrated into the pleats of the underskirt, providing an ideal backdrop to showcase the beadwork technique.

Additionally, this look features beaded mini bags that symbolize what she carries throughout her relationships. Made of beach stones and dark beads, these mini bags appear later in the collection and represent the hardening of her heart.



06 DESPAIR

For the “Despair” concept, the dress was designed to evoke the image of a woman wrapped in her bed sheets or comforter, symbolizing her sadness. The initial design featured four different shades of cream-tone tulle, which were creatively knotted. These knots represent the illusion of her knotted heart. However, during fittings, the dress felt disconnected from the other garments and was ultimately cut from the lineup. The skirt from this design was later repurposed for a ready-to-wear photoshoot, and it is showcased in that section.

Since Gretchen Heist had two runway shows—one with eight looks and another with five—I used the cream, flowy pants to achieve my original vision of chaotic bed sheets wrapped around her body. These wide-leg pants feature a crosshatch godet design and are made from the same fabric as the dress for “Lust,” albeit in a different color palette. This choice reinforces the connection to the original dress, which also depicts a woman stuck in bed. This element continues to advance the storytelling of the woman’s journey through various emotional stages.



Additionally, the look includes a gold ribbon-woven halter top, initially designed to complement another outfit for “Forgiveness.” This top was created using chains for a loom, allowing the ribbon to be woven through the chain links. After the Rise show, this look was written about by Medium Online Magazine. The ribbon top had an alternative of a gold mirror chainmail top; however, this was not used as the look required color.



07 ACCEPTANCE



Blue Gold Dusted Overall with Corset Top

For the look of Acceptance, I chose to reference the painting by Denis. The challenge of matching his technique was significant, as he is a master in his field, and his works are truly one-of-a-kind. In my first attempt, I converted the colors in Photoshop to align with our color palette and then printed the work on canvas. However, when the two canvases returned, they appeared blue and did not fit our color scheme. As part of this initial effort, I used a heavy canvas material to create a loom. I also experimented with horsehair for the loom, but it lacked stability. This project required two canvases, one for the weft and another for the warp. After weaving the canvases together, I overpainted the faces to make them more distinct, but I eventually had to cut the work, as the blue overshadowed the color flow.

Using a color-matching tool, I converted the painting to the desired gold tone and reprinted it on satin. With fusible backing on the satin, I was able to cut the painting into strips and reweave it. This weaving was then fashioned into a corset top that mirrored the V-shaped design of the clay bodice, which was later cut and described in the section “Forgiveness”

For the first show, this corset was presented with gold denim overalls featuring leather string and grommet details. The back overlay of the look depicted two humans embracing, while the front featured the woman’s eyes. This design symbolizes her leaving the relationship behind and embarking on new journeys alone.

In the second show, due to the popularity of the white pants, I combined the corset with the white pants. The overlay, which showcased the two faces representing the past relationship, was removed from the overalls and transformed into a pants attachment.



Blue Woven Painting



Final Corset Weaving



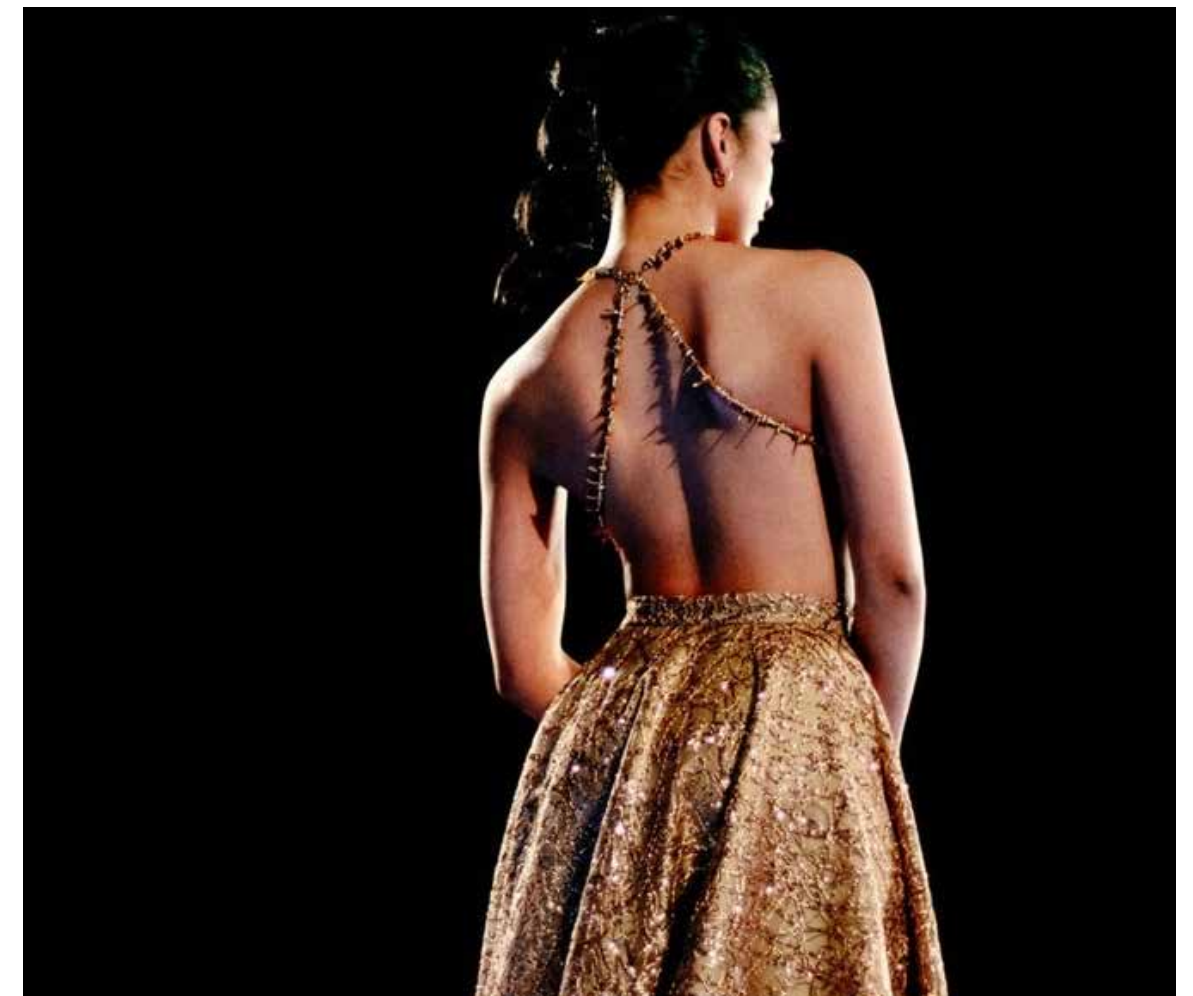
Wide Leg White Pants with Corset Top



08 FORGIVENESS

Finding the right look to convey forgiveness was the most challenging part of the collection, as I needed to personally connect with this concept to design it effectively. Ultimately, this look emerged as the most successful and beautiful of the entire show and photoshoots.

The final look featured beach stones, signature beadwork, and an intricate gold circle skirt that mirrored the organic breaking patterns characteristic of the Kintsugi technique. The beadwork on the top took over twelve hours to create, as I weaved the beads into a halter form while incorporating the GHST letters into the pattern. The back of the top features angel wing charms, creating a stunning wing effect on the model. The skirt was designed to complement the organic nature of the top. While the fabric was the primary highlight of this piece, the high-low skirt's volume showcased well against the transparent nature of the bodice.



08 FORGIVENESS



As an alternative to this look, I constructed a top and skirt featuring the previously mentioned ribbon top, paired with a gold horsehair fabric overskirt that fastened diagonally across the body with a hand-woven ribbon cross-section. To create this skirt, I wove various ribbons into a loom made of leather pieces, then hand-tacked each ribbon to ensure stability. However, this design was ultimately cut, as the dress did not have dynamic movement for a runway presentation and would be better suited for photoshoots.



In another alternative, I attempted to create a Kintsugi clay bodice to reflect this technique. The bodice was made with plaster strips over a mold and dusted with gold. Initially, I crafted the pieces using air-dry clay, followed by a second attempt using a pottery kiln. Unfortunately, this bodice proved too heavy for a runway show and was ultimately removed from the collection.

RUNWAY STYLING



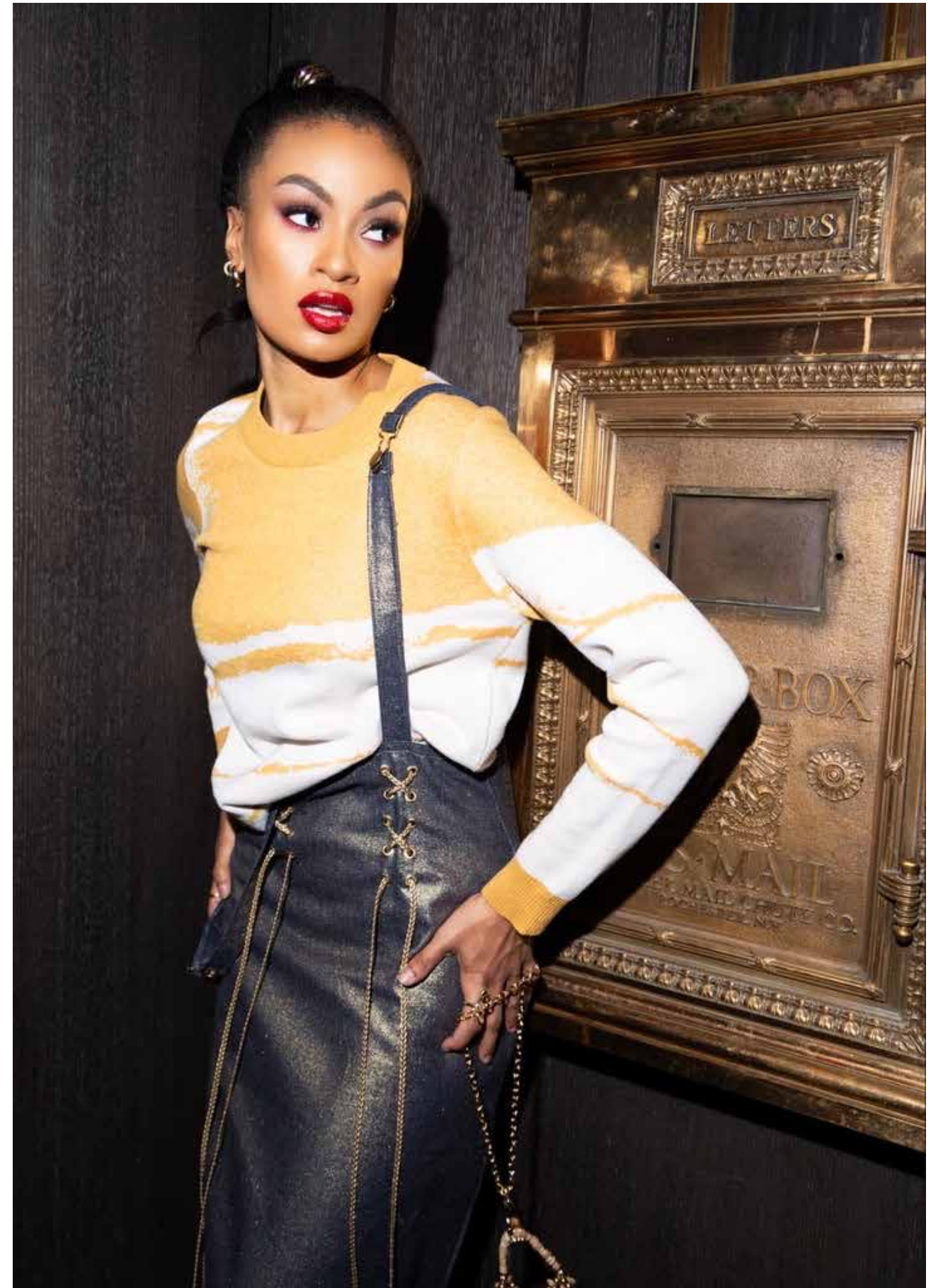
Makeup: Red Smokey Eye with Collection Undertones & Red Lip
Hair: Bubble Pony Tail Representing the Different Stages of the Emotions Shown in the Collection

PRÊT-À-PORTER CREATION

Jaquard Knit Sweater with the Primary Collection Pattern



SHOP: GRETCHENHEIST.COM



PRÊT-À-PORTER COLLECTION VIDEO: <https://www.gretchenheist.com/s-projects-basic-1>



Great Unknown Collection 2024

Supplemental Works & Past Collections

Gretchen Heist, the New York luxury fashion house, has created a collection based upon the majesty and intrigue of the Alaskan wilderness. Each piece in the collection is based on the wildlife, terrain, temperature, and overall natural wonders of the landscape. The collection also has personal ties to the Creative Director, Gretchen Weed. She has spent significant time exploring the Alaska countryside with her oldest sister and brother-in-law who were stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska.



Salmon Roe Slip
Wax Stamp Sealed Dress



Northern Lights - Holographic Gown



Black Bear- Sherpa Coat



Penguin Puffer - Temperature Changing Vest



Musk Ox Duster



Pendleton Blanket- Mountain Stripe Symbolism



Forest Ranger Jumpsuit

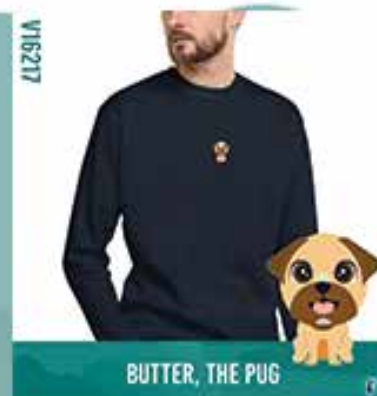


Chugach National Forest Flower Trench



Arctic Butterfly Overcoat

Puppy Playground



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GRETCHEN HEIST

NEW YORK

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