

The image shows a person from the chest up, holding a large, dark, textured object. The person is wearing a dark, long-sleeved garment. The background is a complex, multi-colored pattern of overlapping, translucent shapes in shades of blue, green, and yellow, resembling a cellular or crystalline structure. The overall lighting is soft and diffused.

RESEARCH DOCUMENT

A Story Unfold

Joeke van der Veen
Michelle Lievaart

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Introduction

Why body language?

Body language is a way to express ourselves. Our nonverbal communication, the facial expressions, gestures, eye contact, postures and tone of voice, is very important. 60% Until 80% of our communication goes non-verbally. The ability to understand and use nonverbal communication, or body language, is a powerful tool that can help you connect with others, express what you really mean and build better relationships.

According to Amy Cuddy, psychotherapist, speaking to someone who gives no non-verbal feedback, is even worse than being hackled.

Texting, emailing and twitter are new forms of communication without body language. That means that people who often use these text-only messages may be sending half the message and receivers easily can misinterpret this. The use of emoticons seems to be of no help in this matter. Research found that emoticons had no effect on the way a message was interpreted. It could even be more confusing. 'Typing LOL with a straight face' is a serious hit on Google.

We believe that body language eventually can become a forgotten language. That's why we want to bring back body language into a garment, that helps you express your feelings and discover the world of non verbal communication. With this garment we want to make a statement and bring back body language into real life communication.

Research question

How can body postures, as a form of non verbal communication, inspire expressing garments?

Research topic

Research topic

Body language is one of the most important ways to communicate. This way of communicating is not only for human, also in nature we see a big variety in body language.

Chameleons for example use their skin color not only for camouflage, but also to communicate with others. Christopher Raxworthy, chameleon expert, says: "Males become more brightly marked to advertise their dominance, females become dark or flash red spots to advertise their hostile response to males or their non-receptive status. Aggressive chameleons may become very dark."

While chameleons have their own way to communicate, the body language of apes is much more similar to the way humans are expressing themselves. Amy Cuddy is a psychotherapist who explains the nature of high and low power. High power is a feeling that will be expressed by exaggerated gestures. Apes, but also humans, naturally stretch out their arms and body. While low power will be expressed by taking as little space as possible. We will put our legs and arms together and reach our head to the ground. A natural reaction is to complement others non verbal's. If someone is showing high power, we tend to make ourselves small, and vice versa.

According to Amy Cudding, the worst is when someone is not giving any non verbal feedback, because then we cannot tune our own body language to the other.

And this is actually what happens when we communicate via screens. For example e-mail, Whatsapp and Facebook are highly impersonal mediums; one cannot experience the more complete range of understanding that results from face-to-face contact with an individual. 'Typing LOL with a straight face' is a hit on Google and you can find a Facebook page with the same name which shows the digital way of expressing our feelings: expressing our emotions with emoticons and abbreviations while sitting behind our screen with a totally straight face. Digital ways to express ourselves are never as authentic, real and expressive as real body language. Once we understand this, we can keep it in mind when we are chatting or posting about our feelings. But will we remember how to express ourselves when we are communicating in real life?

Sources:

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2005/09/0926_050926_chameleon.html

https://www.ted.com/speakers/amy_cuddy

<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~kemmer/Words/emoticons.html>



Amy Cudding



High power



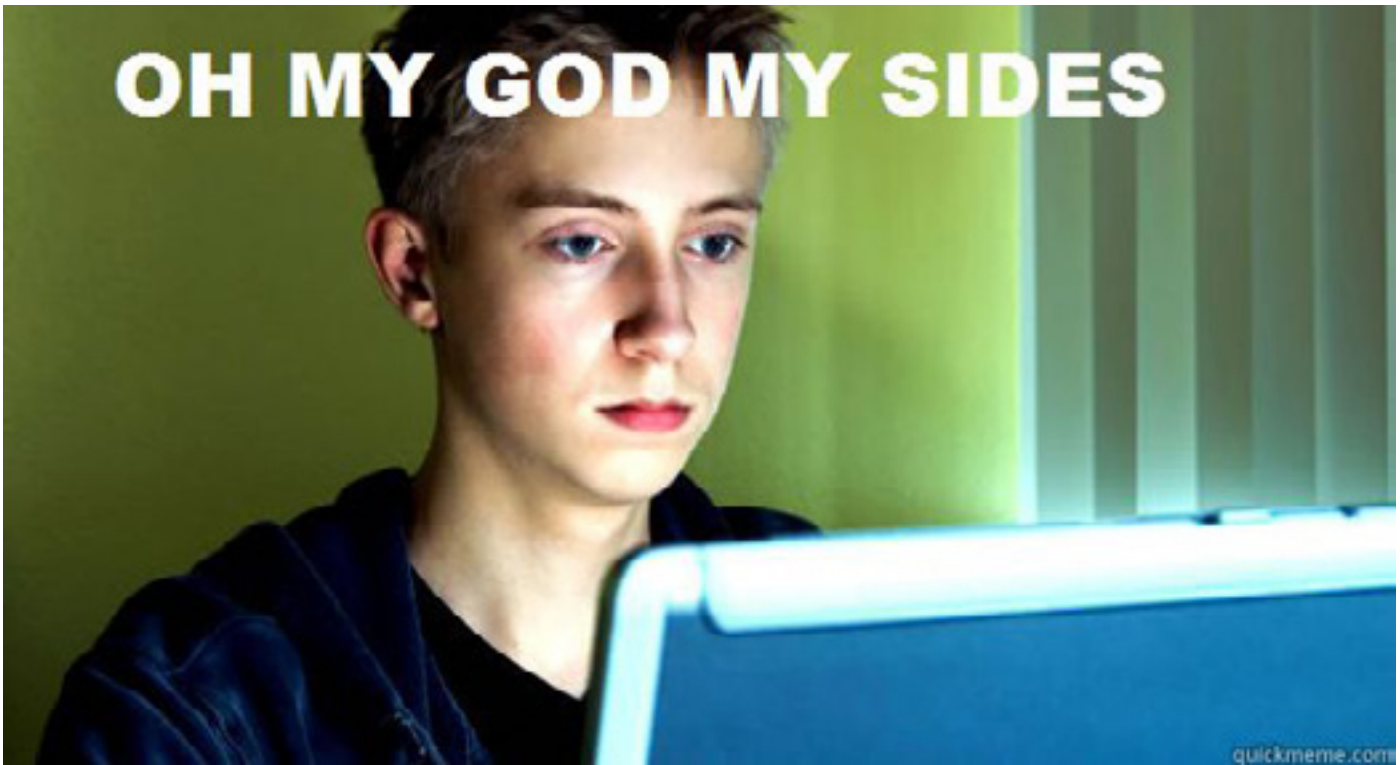
Low power



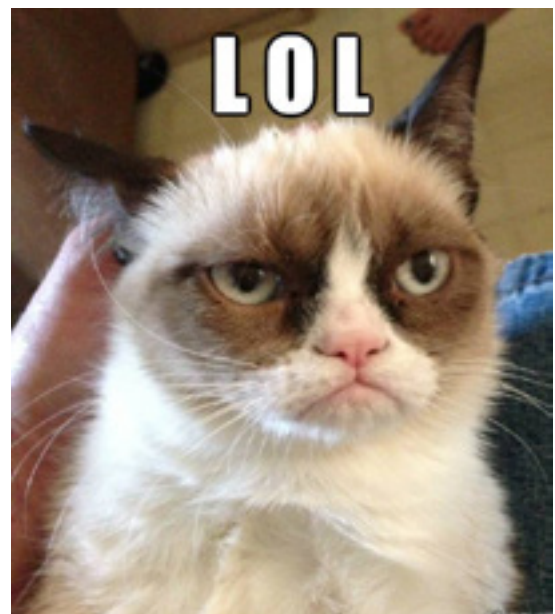
Complementing others non verbal's



No non-verbal feedback



My face when I type "LOL"



Typing LOL with a straight face

Research design

Our research consists of different steps, here is a short summary:

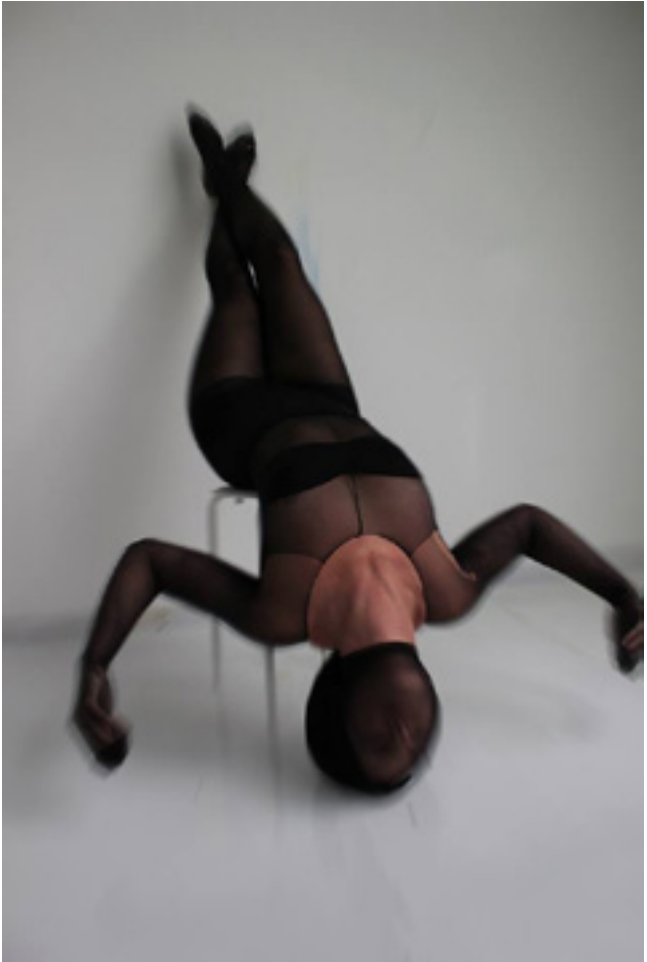
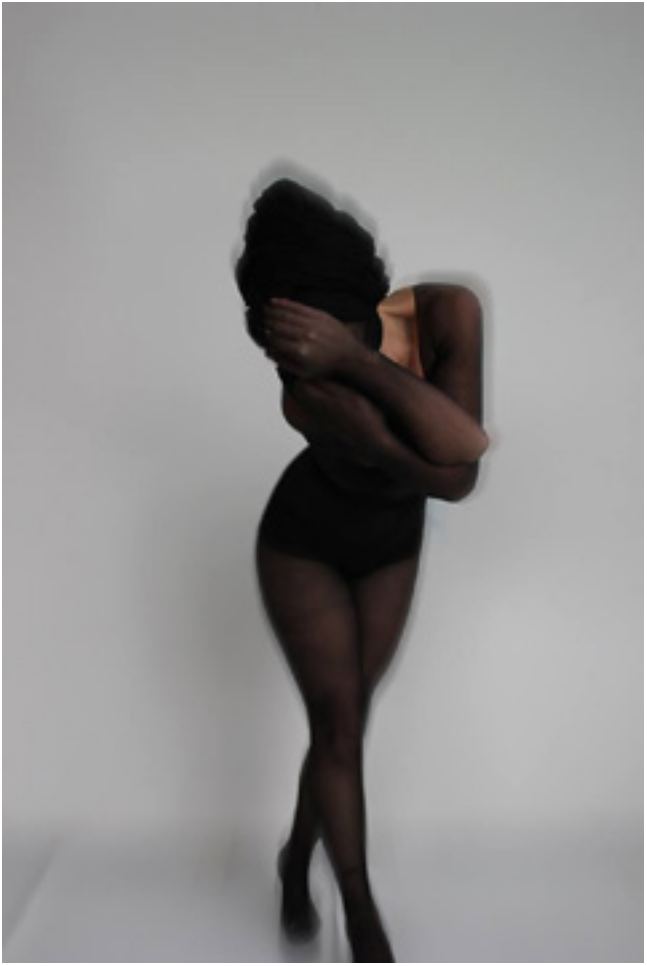
First, we investigated how relevant the topic body language was, by researching different sources about communication (see 'Research topic').

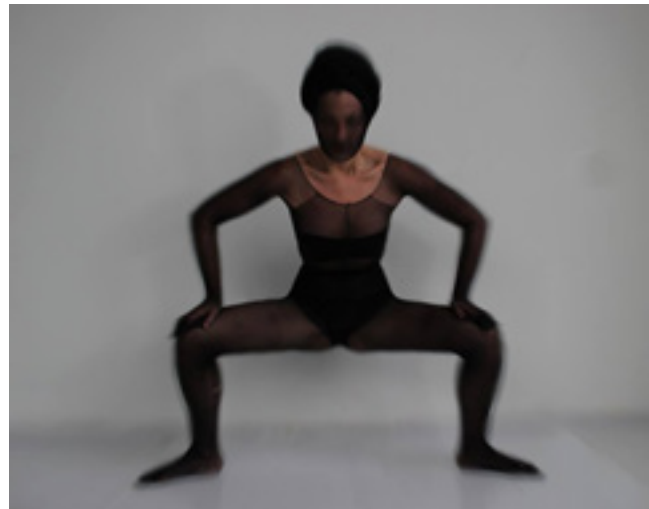
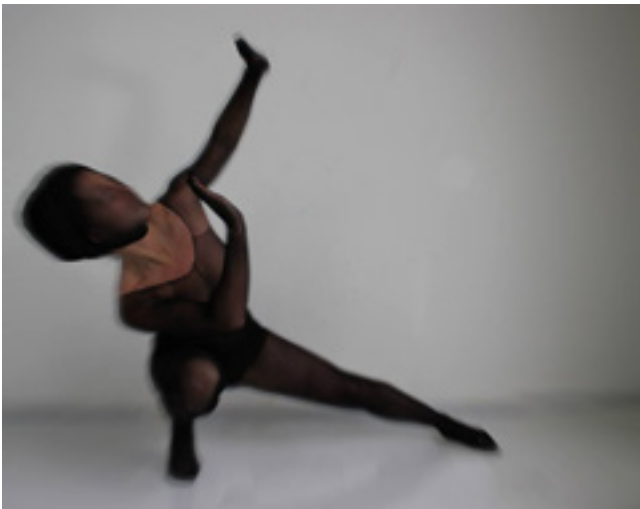
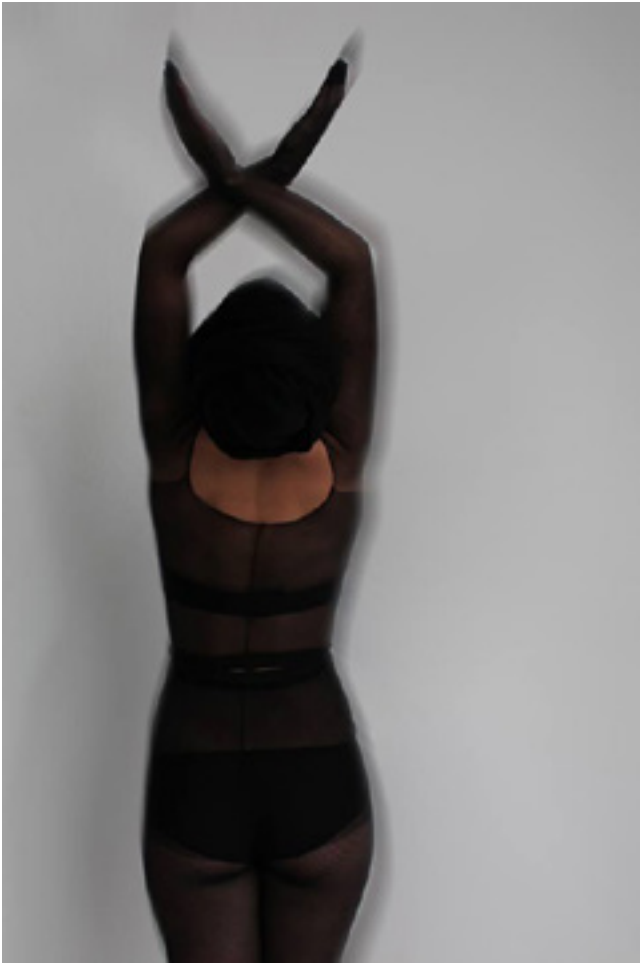
Then, by studying the movements of dancers, who really exaggerate their body language, we came up with a couple of postures we wanted to use for the garment.

By doing a research to expressing garments and objects from other designers we visualized our ideas and discovered the possibilities of different materials. We were really interested in garments and objects that move and interact with the body. For example the bamboo objects from Maria Blaissee that transform by the movement of dancers.

The last step was to experiment with creating the idea we had in mind. We decided to use a folding technique that allowed bending, stretching out and shrinking. By folding different patterns we chose the most flexible pattern and we used the plotting machine to engrave the folding lines. After a meeting with Ricardo we discovered the possibility to change the color of the garment by using led lights and an arduino, which was an option to exaggerate the body language even more.

'Garments become a second skin that lives, breathes, grows and deforms.'
- Rijksmuseum Twenthe about Bart Hess





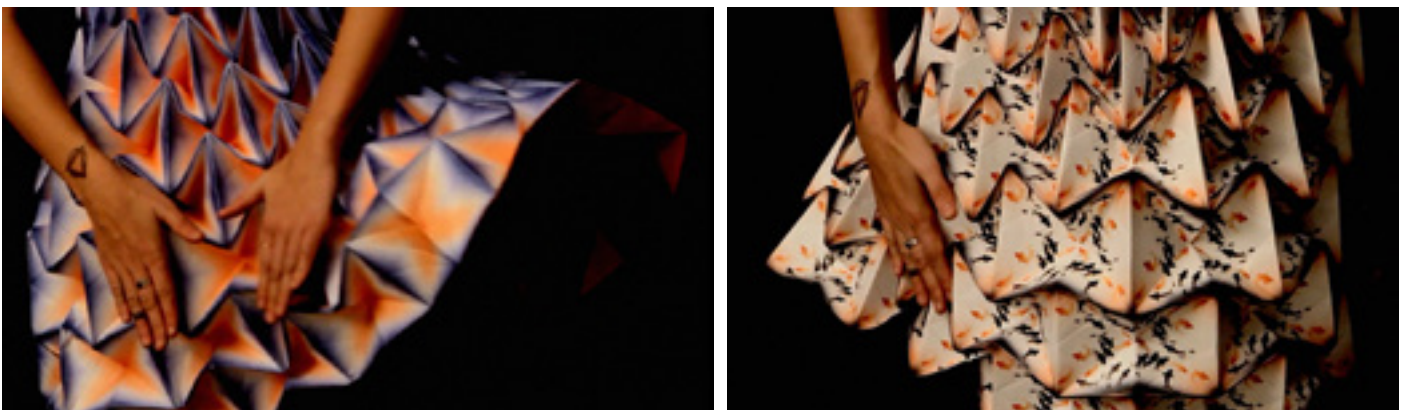
Selection postures: shy, dreary, happy, angry.

A research to dancers who exaggerate their body language inspired us for these eight postures. The postures are going from really small and withdrawn (low power) to big and stretched out (high power). This will create the most diverse movement and transformation in the garment.



Air Dress by See the Unseen

Dress that changes color by using wind reactive ink, which makes us think of the skin of a chameleon.



Unfold by Jule Waibel

Moveable dress made with the same folding technique we used.

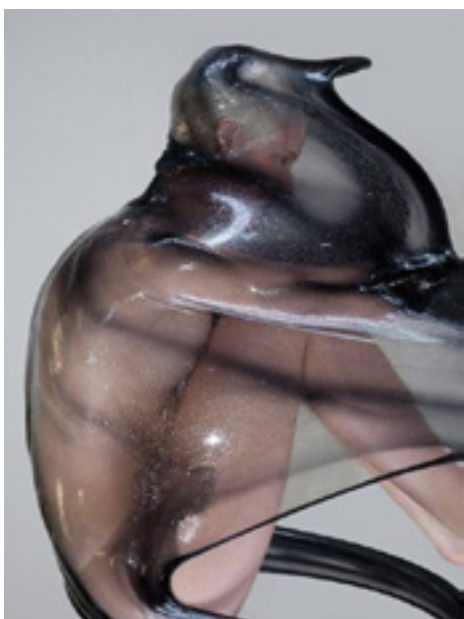


Bamboo by Maria Blaisse

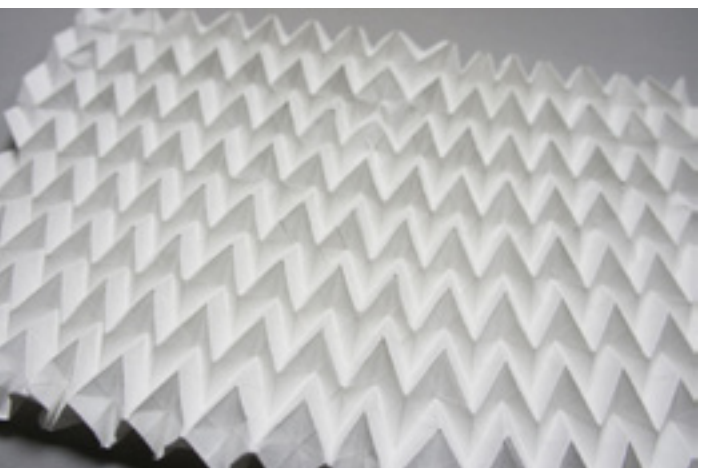
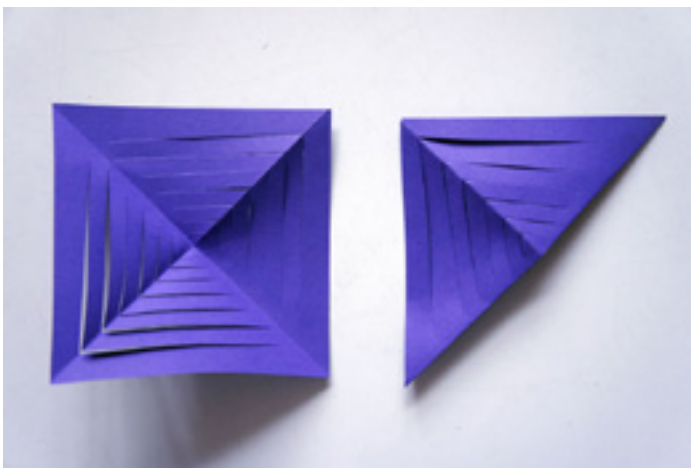
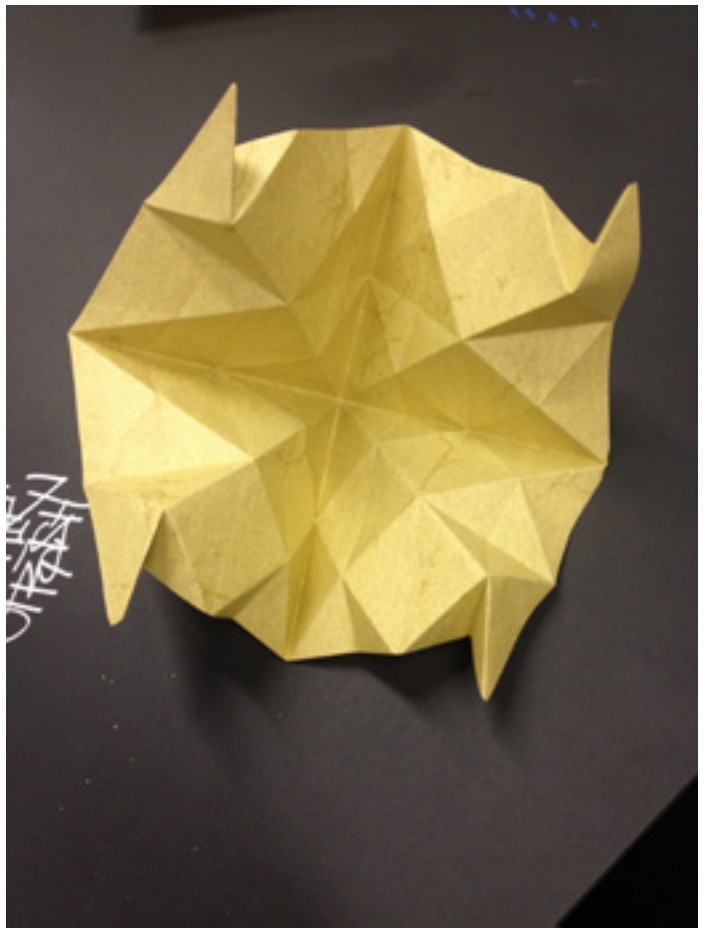
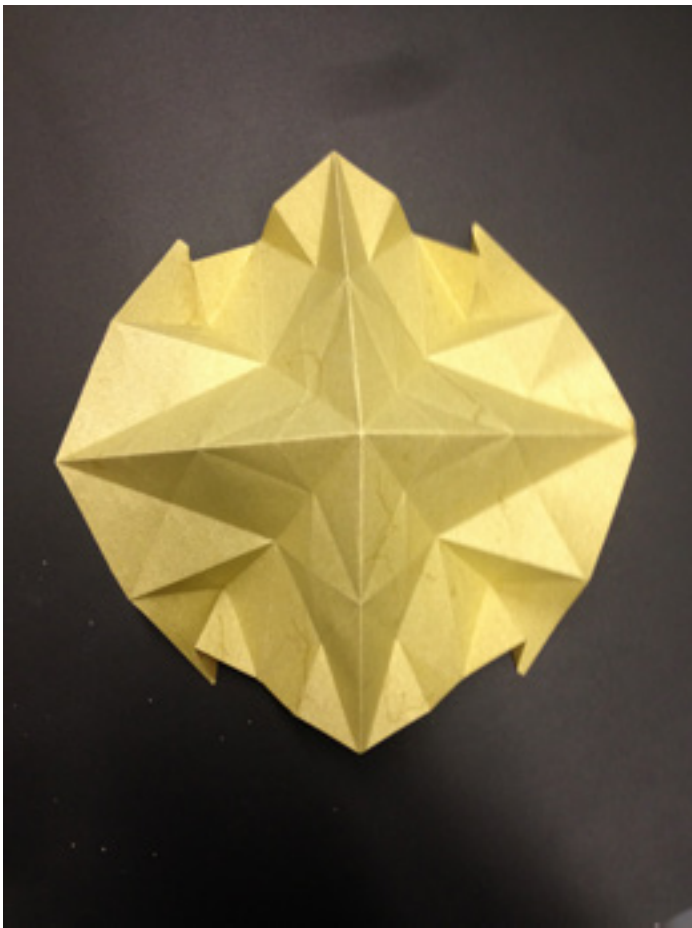
The emergence of form shows a variety of objects transforming by movement.



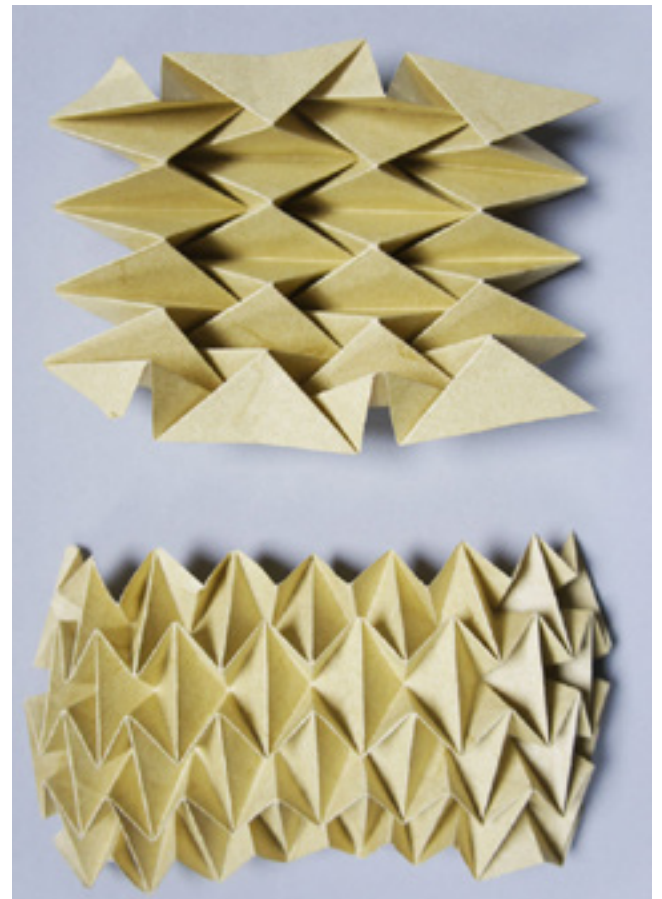
SYNCH by Katherine Roberts-Wood
Another layered, chameleon skin look-a-like, garment.



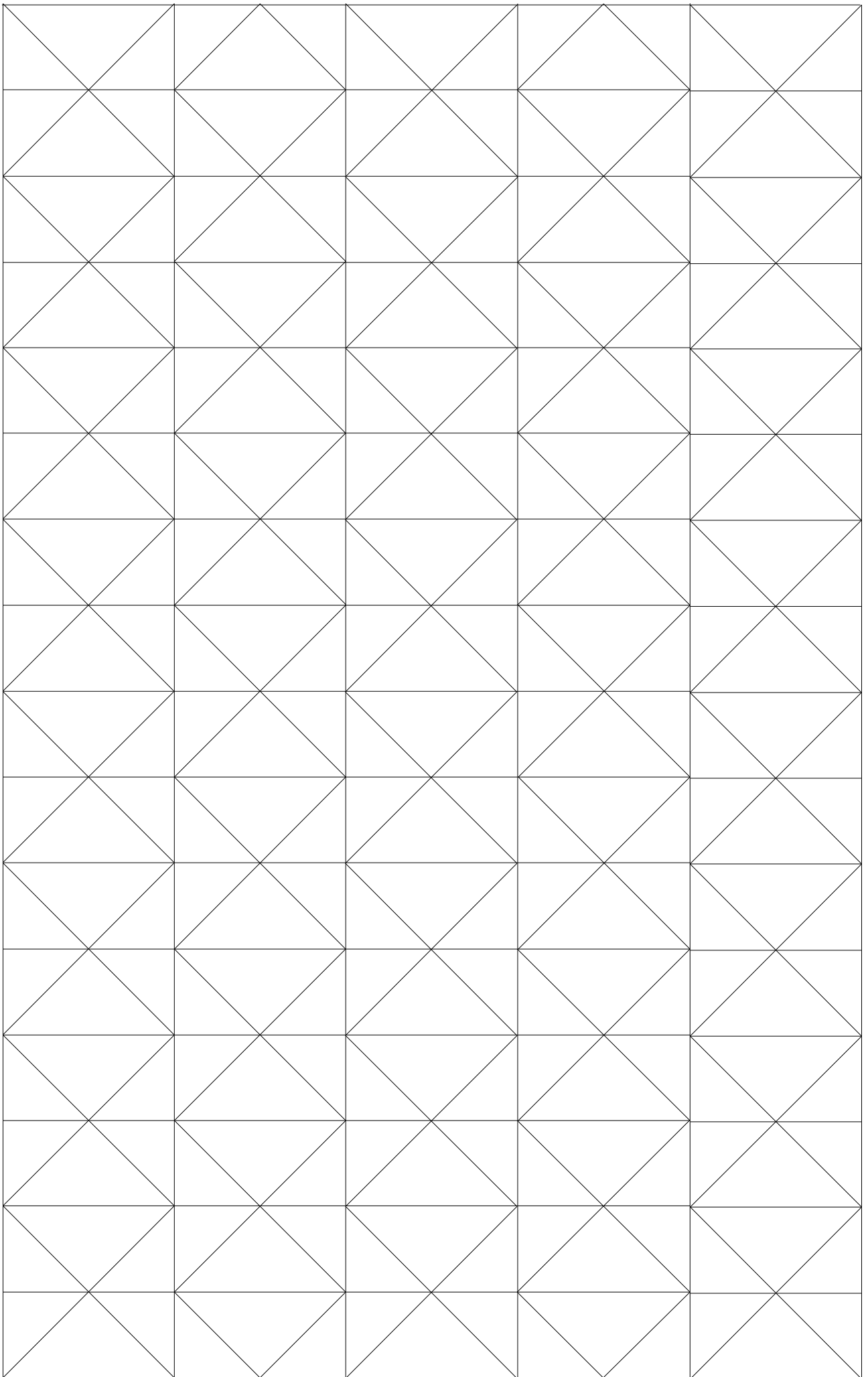
Mutants by Bart Hess
Flexible material getting deformed by the body.



Experiments with folding structures



We chose these two folding structures to work with because of its flexibility. They can totally shrink and then totally stretch out, which communicates the idea of low power and high power. The 3D structure is also an esthetic feature of the techniques. The pattern of the last technique was easy to duplicate into a 2D pattern in Illustrator so we could engrave the folding lines with a plotting machine. We chose to use a firm but light transmittance paper.



Conclusion

A garment is nothing without the body. The body gives shape and form to the garment. Without the body the garment will be a meaningless pile of fabric on the floor.

But what if we saw it the other way around? Let the garment work as a medium to express emotions while listening to the body.

Bodylanguage is an international language spoken by all of us. This language reveals the way we feel. Due to modern technologies communication nowadays goes through telephonescreens, where there is a lack of bodylanguage.

Because 80% of our communication goes through bodylanguage, a lot of miscommunications appear while talking through telephonescreens with each other. Our fear is that bodylanguage in the future will be a forgotten language. That's why we wanted to develop a garment that works as a medium to express emotions.

Letting the garment change from form as our bodylanguage changes so the garment will grow along with you to become a second skin. A garment that lives, breaths, grows and deforms. Which will give a whole new meaning and dimension to the garment.

It will be a new way of communicating and bring people closer to each other. During the development of the garment we found some difficulties in finding the right techniques to create a garment that could move and also change color. We chose to use a folding technique that could change shape by movement and by placing in movement sensors and LED's. The LED's will light up in a different color when certain bodypostures are made. With as a result a garment that expresses emotions in color.

Design prototype

