Capes Make The Man

A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Fine Arts in Textiles in the Department of Textiles of the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island

by

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‘Capes Make The Man’ is a project that provided me with the opportunity to grow as a designer and an artist. Over the last two years at RISD, I’ve frequently asked myself questions about my place and role as a man in the United Arab Emirates, and what awaits when I move back after graduating. Using personal narratives and cultural symbols from home, I bring to life the archetypes I carry as a mature masculine – my king, warrior, magician, lover and dancer. The end result is a series of bold, wearable capes, resembling stage costumes worn by pop stars on concert tours. Through a combination of screen printing, dyeing and embroidery techniques, the capes visually contextualise these archetypes, what they personally mean to me and the characters I embody when caped.
To my family – thank you for moulding me into the man that stands before you. To my nephews – I can’t wait to see you all grow into the beautiful men you are meant to be.
Studio Rules

1 - Turn on table fan: for some reason, the studio is unfurtable warm. It's probably because of the recent shift to larger studio spaces by the window. Fan should be on at medium speed, angled just right to get the perfect amount of ventilation without being hit with cold air.

2 - Turn on music: Music is a must. Turn on iTunes or my preference: YouTube. If studios are empty, play it full blast & sing your heart out. If spaces are occupied, get those wireless headphones out & plug them in for your hearing pleasure.

3 - Vegetate - Check your mail. Read the news, tweet/post on Instagram, stalk on social media. You need to fest before getting any serious work done.

4 - Sketch - A good, productive day always starts with a good drawing. Drawing relaxes those creative juices. Draw something that doesn't necessarily relate to your studio's research. Are you a fan of a pop star? Draw them. Had a visually engaging dream? Draw it. A funny story you recently heard? Interpret it through drawing.

5 - Prepare your materials - Are you screen printing today? Plan out all the materials you'll be using for the day - screen, emulsion, squeegees, inks, acetate. Make sure you have everything before you go to work. If not, head to the RSD Store.
6. "Hungry? It's probably lunch time if you didn't even notice. Pack your lunch? Enjoy it at your desk, watching funny videos or the latest episode of your favorite show you're watching. Didn't make any lunch yourself? Head to Ellie's, or even make breakfast?"

7. Work — you've got to start by now. And that happens more than...
I am from the United Arab Emirates and half Egyptian, studied in a Catholic school, and I am very Westernised in my lifestyle choices. It all has to do with living in Dubai, which in itself is a hybrid city – constantly changing, always evolving. I coined the phrase ‘Krossbreed’ years ago as I started my career as an emerging artist. I label myself a ‘krossbreed’ – exploring dualities in the works, and combining various mediums to create hybrid results. My work is a reflection of both my Middle Eastern heritage, as well as the Western influences I have acquired all my life. I don’t think I’ve met anyone outside my immediate family who shares a similar story as mine. With my father passing away three years ago, I’ve come to understand more about what life has to offer or throw at you. It informs my work. I speak about the politics of home. I’m not a man of politics, but there’s no denying there is a political voice in almost everything. I’m not yet sure of my place back home. What does it mean to be the next patriarchal ambassador of my household? Where is my place as an artist once I move back? I think I make work to find answers to these questions, within the society I’m very much a part of. I believe in the country I call home, even with its flaws. I am informed about how my home functions. I want to prove that there is a place for me, not just in favour of my personal search, but also in service to my country and my love for it – a way of giving back. I guess the work I make here is in honour of the respect, love and longing for home I have whilst being away.
Symbolic
Identity
primary
(reinterpreted
clean
reduced
essentialized
gesture-based
linguistic
powerful
Strong
*comic
intersectional
bipolar, linear, hodgepodge
aspirational
political/non-political
traditional
modern
between worlds
bold
* unabashed
personal
unfamiliar

distanced
illustrative
funny
hesitantly
political
non-judgemental
family
heritage
homage
relevant to history & pop culture
concentrated

adequately
homework
archetypes of identity/masculinity
lineage
dress-
language
Layer
enjoy
semiotic
ceremony
costume
supers
*strong
*mixed
*masculine
around
person
*caricature
*concentric
*chimeric

You're born naked. The rest is drag.
23 Nov '17
The Dark Lady, Snow St.
12am-3am
Walked past the dark lady
after leaving from an unproductive
day @ studio. Looked like
a fun party. Dropped by
Avril to my apt at walked
back. It was the "butterball"
Montgomery party. Since I have
no Thanksgiving plans this
year, why not celebrate
by dancing?!
Entertainment by a few
drag queens included, like

- Peyton St. James

23 Nov '17
Fletcher, Union St.
@ Sanft Studio
3-4pm
Passed out in
Sanft studio while
he was drawing.
Been feeling my
most stale.
Also, apparently

*snore*
The word ‘disguised’ can be interpreted in various ways in relation to my work. Disguised in the sense of concealing one’s body. Disguised as in dressing up to conceal one’s identity and who they are, only to reveal another entire public persona. Disguised as in concealing/hiding certain ideas to emphasise a duality of what can be revealed and what is concealed in society back home. I don’t see the word disguised as a negative. I do believe in some things being private, and not everything needs to be constantly shared with the public. Since I’m very interested in working on textiles intended for the body, I explore the idea of what is revealed and what is concealed or can be disguised. I think it’s very playful. A person is always in disguise when dressed up, ready to go out in public. Not everyone is truly or constantly honest in revealing who they are. Just like RuPaul says “You’re born naked, the rest is drag.” I’m interested in what is revealed of a person’s character when they are in disguise. The work I make explores how we carry personal narratives with us through the garments we wear. Even though in disguise, you still reveal information about your personality.
1 Oct '17
9:00 pm
Walking back from studio (CIT) to
home (Regency Plaza Apts).
Heyboiset St.
Found this cone hung along a car park
gate on a chain link. It looked like the
cone was being tortured! Looks kinda funny.
Why would anyone do that?!?!

2 Oct '17
3:00 pm
@ studio
Read on Instagram

"Someone told me once that shooting stars are really
just angels throwing away their cigarettes before God
could catch them smoking."

R.I.P. Tom Petty
I'd like to think I'm a funny guy! It's very specific – a Mezaina sense of humour. My dad’s side of the family is very sarcastic, while my mum’s side is spontaneous and slapstick. This hybrid ‘Mezaina humour’ is reflected in my work, both on purpose and unintentionally. I don’t think I can always be serious. I’m not nice when I’m always serious. But sometimes people don’t get why I’m always amused. I get called out at least once every year by someone asking me “What’s so funny?” What an obnoxious question! I remember back in school, teachers and grumpy nuns would always ask me this same question. It’s as if finding humour in the mundane is wrong. I remember as an undergrad student back home, I was warned by a professor that there were undertones of sarcasm in my work and I needed to be careful not to offend anyone. That was probably the first time I understood the concept of knowing your audience. This hasn’t discouraged me from adding humour in the work, but I’m definitely more conscious of how to communicate a joke without coming off as offensive. With my current work, I do find male dynamics back home funny, even though it is a serious topic. The role of patriarchy is a subject generally left undiscussed. I’d rather see the lighter side of the matter, and be tongue-in-cheek about it. Some may say it’s humour, but there’s definitely a lot of honesty. By making people smile or laugh, I can get my message across without getting into too much trouble. So far it’s been working pretty well...
Sometimes I wonder if I am sane in the first place! Compared to a group of friends back home who fall under the same age bracket, my lifestyle choices are considered insane. I always get asked why I am not married yet, because it’s the sensible and ‘sane’ thing to do. It’s just not for me. Not yet at least. I think I’m still very selfish and keep myself first, which is why I’m back in school. I’m not sure if I’ll ever be ready to hold off a lot of the things I enjoy in life that keep me sane in order to settle down. The thought of settling down drives me insane. Besides dancing, the people I love keep me sane. My family is not perfect, but I accept and love them very much. And knowing they’re there keeps me sane. The same goes with friends and loved ones. Knowing there’s a support system, even when I’m far away, keeps me sane. I also think not taking life too seriously helps. Work, school, relationships – I try to take it all positively and joyfully. There are things on a daily basis that drive me insane, but I try not forget to laugh about it. And if I do, someone is usually there to remind me and keep me in check. I also think the realities of life keep me sane and grounded. I count my blessings every day and I know that my life could’ve been very different under circumstances beyond my control. Losing my father three summers ago keeps me sane. The moment I witnessed my dad leaving this world was the worst moment in my life. Seeing that could drive many insane. But witnessing the fragility of life and thinking about how one day we...
A list of sanities will all leave this world made me realise that the only way to live a good life is to make the best one possible, before it's all gone. Life is full of hardships, but there's still room to stay positive, grounded and sane. And I think I've finally figured it out.
26 Sep '17
Saudi Arabia announces women are now allowed to drive! Finally! Congrats to all the Saudi women who can finally drive. One step closer to a better future. It's about time.

1:30pm C1T (Studio)
Missing family.
Very very much.

Abdullah (Dad)
Fahima (Mom)
Hind (Sister 1)
Jihan (Sister 2)
Norah (Sister 3)

- Abdullah (nephew 1)
- Rabi (nephew 2)
- Essa (nephew 3)

27 Sep '17
1:15pm Outside C1T

This is Diane. She is the homeless person who's always on C1T. Everyone seems to know Diane. But not well enough to get her off the streets, I guess. I always wonder what it's like to be out on the streets on a daily basis.
The military had no direct impact on me growing up in the UAE. It existed, but never really had any presence. But due to the recent political climate in the Middle East, the country has enforced mandatory military service for all male UAE nationals (optional for females). You cannot escape military conscription unless you’re severely ill, or an only son like myself. But for some reason, I get random text messages from the national service office requesting my enlistment, or to provide documents. This frightens me. I always wonder what would happen if they started enforcing only sons as well. I am over thirty now which makes me safe, I think! I’ve had many close friends enlisted into national service. And I’ve worried about them when they’re away training in camp. So far everyone’s been fine, but their stories are sometimes disheartening. I don’t think I’d be happy to be forced into national service. I strongly believe it should be a matter of choice. I guess a positive about military service is the discipline one acquires, and the physical stamina you gain from all the training. But I would never want to go to war. Life is too precious for war. I’m dreading the day when my nephews come of age and will have to be drafted. My nephews are like my own little brothers, sons. I find it crazy that one day they will be able to handle weapons. I’ve watched them grow and play joyfully with their many toys. And now, they’ll grow up to play with toys that hold major consequences when used against others. I do get angry, frustrated and sad about how the military has impacted the lives of many young men and families, especially those who’ve lost sons. It upsets me knowing that many will never have the opportunity to have a future because of the possibility of death. The lost opportunity of living a long, happy life. The lost opportunity of starting a family of their own. Of becoming fathers to their own sons.
I've always said if I wasn’t doing art or design, I would’ve liked to have worked in the music industry. I jokingly say how I just want to be an entertainer, and befriend Rihanna! Is that too much to ask?! But jokes aside, I've always found entertainers admirable, specifically singers, who create shows on stage. I love concert experiences because you are one with the music and the people on stage. Their performances and personas really take an audience to another place for a few short hours. It feels religious. This sense of the otherworldliness at concerts came about during my first experiences in going to live shows, especially pop concerts by artists like Kylie Minogue. This 5ft pop star manages to take us on an adventure through visuals and music. The lights turn off, the music starts to play, and out of nowhere, the pop princess magically appears on stage, as if a deity, where eyes and ears worship her over the course of the show. From that moment on, it is an experience of sound, song, stage, dance, and a whole lot of costume changes! The power an individual has on stage over their audience is remarkable. I know it’s cheesy to say that the shows Kylie Minogue puts on are inspirational. But they really are! As a brand, the visuals she references both from historical and cultural contexts – she is a true artist. But generally speaking, concerts really capture a moment where one is taken away from the real world and all its problems, and elevated to an uplifting and intimate experience. I’m an entirely different and insanely positive
person at the end of a really good show. I wish I had that kind of power. It goes back to why comic books have always been a huge influence on me growing up – admiring these mythical super humans who have the power to make a difference.
14 Oct '17
5.30 - 11.00 am
Street's place
Sydney's place
5.30 - 11.00 am

13 Oct '17
1 pm - 4.30 pm
Catch up with Arabis's friends
Soccer
Arabis is so cool!

12.30 am - 3.30 am
Rick & Friends @ Essay
Algae is going out tonight
Definitely need to drop

Empty Crypt

RSSD is always wrong
You know what are our studies
Arabis is so cool!
Kylie Minogue released a song earlier this year titled ‘Dancing’ with the above lyric in the chorus. If I had a theme song, this would be it! When I go out to let loose and have a good time, I’d rather dance than attend social gatherings where I have to talk. I don’t know why it’s always been this way, but dancing has been an escape for me. I’ve been told I started dancing before I could walk. I was always surrounded by music growing up, thanks to my parents and sisters. Dancing elevates me to another mental state and heightened place. I’m not a professional dancer, but music forces out an energy from me that is unexplainable. And people take notice when I’m on the dance floor. I don’t know why people do. Is it because no one expects the regular looking, bearded guy wearing glasses to bust a move, singing along to almost every lyric to every song played?! For those brief hours on the dance floor, I do feel as if I am feeding off the music and other people’s energies, collectively sharing positivity and feeling unified on the dance floor through music. And I know something is right. People sometimes even cheer when I dance. I guess this is as close to feeling like an entertainer as possible – when on the dance floor.
I’m a shy guy! I vividly remember being very young and blushing when grownups would ask me questions. The worst was when people would speak to me in Arabic. I would always look down in embarrassment and give them a bashful smile, unable to respond because my Arabic was, and still is, weak. My shyness initially derived from the nervousness of speaking in Arabic. I didn’t speak much growing up, and when I did, it was to answer other people’s questions. I was pretty low-key in school, and pretty quiet at home. I never saw myself as a leader. And I still feel the same way. I feel more like a backup character than a main star, which works great! I also think the women I’ve constantly been surrounded with have always had stronger personalities than me. My mum, sisters and nanny, female friends in university, female colleagues at work, and now at RISD – they include some of the strongest women I’ve ever met. It’s really weird how things always come full circle in every chapter of my life. I’ve always had boss ladies! And being a ‘gentleman’, the podium is always theirs. This also fed into my personal interests in popular culture. I love characters like Buffy the Vampire Slayer, the Charmed sisters, or Xena: Warrior Princess! I’m a fan of Kylie Minogue, Janet Jackson, Blondie… the list is endless. But it all makes sense – I think I’m shy because women make me shy. Lame, but true! One of the more powerful ways I communicate is through my T-shirts. People know more about me through the messages I share on my chest than
with the words I say. I still don’t share much unless people ask. But I overly share my music. And I also share with the work I make. My work makes space for not being shy.
Last year’s final project involved creating wearable textiles inspired by a specific multicultural community and street from back home. Its motifs and patterns reflect the visual narratives found in these areas and their symbolic meanings. When back in Dubai, I plan to document these fabrics in their inspired habitat; amongst the bustling streets filled with cars and heaps of pedestrians, neon shop signs with burnt out bulbs, street cats and smells from shawarma shops. I’d like to photograph the fabrics being worn by me and see how the community interacts and responds to these textiles as I wander around the neighbourhood in costume. I already anticipate a lot of laughs and questions from onlookers. I’m curious to see how these textiles blend within the urban landscape. Will it perform as camouflage, and allow the wearer to blend in and disappear, or will it completely stand out? I wonder if observers will be able to see their stories shared, embedded into these fabrics. A lot of people in these communities do not speak much English or Arabic, as most are from the Asian subcontinent. But I’m curious if the visuals break the language barrier and people will relate to what’s been printed on these fabrics. The fabrics compliment the dusty roads and sidewalks, filled with parked wooden trolleys, owned by individual men who haul these heavy objects around, assisting women and families who’ve purchased large, weighty items. On the streets, there are also plenty of male barber shops that show South Indian television channels, giving
A Sikka story

their clientele the comfort of home as they cut their hair. Clothing lines with garments of reds, whites and cream flanks old peeling walls with vintage signs of existing shops and shops that once were.
Part II
I think any artist has the ability to create experiences with their works. I strongly believe in the idea of ‘Disegno’—touched by God in order to create. I found it so beautiful learning about it as an undergrad. I’m not very religious, but I do believe that God could’ve touched me and many others with his creativity. I attempt working with various media to create experiences through my works, be it through illustration, textiles or design. I always say I’m happy if my works make an audience smile. Even that moment can be a special experience. Growing up, I was disconnected from stories from my heritage. Making work which references my cultural background provides me with that connection. I’ve always been influenced by comic books, stories and tales from Asia and the West. My love for comics started when my mum purchased my very first issue of The Spectacular Spider-Man. I can watch Studio Ghibli films an infinite number of times, and Disney fairytales hold a special place in my heart. Only recently have I been interested in tales from the Middle East and Arab world—of man’s interaction with creatures and spirits that wander land and sea, sharing underlying themes on the human condition—like ‘Bu Darya’ of the oceans, who pulls sailors and children underwater if they’ve wandered too far from land, or the seductress ‘Um Duwais’, who seduces and deceives men into temptation and sin. I want to make garments for the male body that resemble those of heroes and kings from mythical worlds in order to empower the wearer. Back home, there is a cultural significance to weapons as objects of power and masculinity. I would like to comment and compliment these power objects by creating textiles which present an imagined, personal experience of the masculine condition.
Why capes? It all began when I was refining my vocabulary when explaining the work I’ve been making over the last couple of years here at RISD. I’ve been using the term ‘wraps’ when describing my textile pieces, when in fact they did not behave or function like wraps at all. As I’m focusing on garments for the male form, the general criticism was that the textiles looked incomplete, still appearing as fabric lengths instead of wearable pieces when draped over the body. The textiles needed to be more refined and functional, based on their description. I didn’t want to discard the idea of wraps, but I needed to figure out what these fabrics were. Over the winter break, I was reading the book ‘King, Warrior, Magician, Lover: Rediscovering the Archetypes of the Mature Masculine’ by Robert Moore and Douglas Gillette, and it finally hit me – I needed to make capes! Creating capes complement my ideas behind the ‘superhero’ archetypes I’ve been exploring in the works. Different capes for different archetypes. I’m immediately reminded of my love for live shows and the concert experience – an individual evoking different characters during different acts, through music and costumes. An audience is taken on a journey, with heroic, god-like figures on stage as their guide. I’ve finally come to the realisation that these capes are meant for me. Would I transform and become a specific character when adorned? Do I finally have the opportunity to play the role of a superhero, a dream I’ve always had since I picked up my first comic book when I was nine years old?!
I want to make capes

These capes are about my experiences – being away from home, growing up away from family, becoming a new man whilst living alone. My thesis experience has been a response to some major changes happening in my life and the personal growth happening in anticipation of my return home. The capes are a culmination of where I’ve come from and where I am as a mature masculine, the archetypes that define me – my king, warrior, magician, lover. And dancer.
I adorn myself with my possessions, wrapped in my cape, weighted and heavy.
Considerations (today)

Acknowledging the shape/panel

Islamic sacred texts hierarchy of visuals

Let fabrics inform characteristics of cape story

Borders

back vs. front

drawing

- Falcon flying?

- Nature lab?

- Observational study of falcons

- Use textile base in basement

- Falcon flying

- Dramatic elements - talons

- Use textile base in basement

- Power symbol

- Raised shoulder

- Wings over shoulder-blades (over front)

- Embroidered

- Pin graphics on muslin rather than print

- Placement

- Keep interesting color of ground w/ other elements on fabric

- Show more if actual fabric

- Print on non-crescent white fabric or call them fawaz
One of the first things I remember hearing days after my father passed was how lucky I was something tragic happened when I turned thirty, and not when I was younger. I think about my father every day. I think about my family every day. I’ve noticed how emotional I’ve gotten over the last few years, towards pretty much anything that makes me sad. I try to remember my relationship with my dad and our love for each other. I was his youngest, his only son. And he was my father. Even though we were both generally quiet and sometimes introverted, we both loved and respected each other, even if we didn’t always show it as we aged. What I miss about my father are the positive memories I have of him, slowly being overshadowed by the last, hard seven years of his life as he battled cancer. I wish I knew how he was feeling a lot of times, what he was thinking. I’ve been told I’ve become very much like him – appearance wise and how I keep my real emotions to myself, not showing the rest of the world how I feel. I start to wonder how much I’ve learnt about being a man from my dad, as well as from the women in my family. Being the youngest, I was very protected, having responsibilities being given to the eldest in the household. I think I learnt a lot about what it means to be a man from my sisters and their personal experiences with the men in their lives. I think I learnt about being a good man from the mistakes of other men! I feel I have a role to play in teaching my four nephews the same – to be good men, when they’re ready for the real world.
Photos?
pedestals/T-

maybe not dress forms/mannequins? =>

- consider backdrop?
  Yes or No

think of dress forms/
mannequin placements
- circle - square - dispersed - aligned
-...
-...
-...
-...

- we have to take care
  of platforms/photos elsewhere.
- email dept.

- work order from dept.
  for delivery of mannequins
  pick up

General
installation hours
9am - 6pm

Installation:
May 20-21
22?

(Installation)

Exhibition hours
12-5pm

 commencement day:
10-6pm

4/2 - email final proposals
May 23-6-8pm
May 24-2 June
3 June
20-install

Friday
May 18
Delivery of works
I am a falcon, swooping down to attack my prey. I am camouflaged within the desert landscape of browns and tans. You will not sense me approaching.
I’m not a fighter. I never got into physical kerfuffles growing up. Except on the occasions where I was involved in stopping fights which included my friends. I was always afraid of getting hurt if I ever was involved in a physical encounter, because I was never sure if I was able to defend myself. That’s why when the mandatory military service was announced, it frightened me. Because if I ever were to do it, I feel I would struggle. My father wasn’t the most physical either, and I guess I was the same growing up. I did have my moments of physical prowess when I would regularly go to the gym prior to grad school. I do miss it and look forward to that discipline again once back home. However, my father was a true ‘warrior’ when he battled cancer for seven long years, fighting hard until his final breath. Being a warrior isn’t just about throwing a punch. It can also be mental. I guess one can become a warrior by adapting to daily human challenges; relationships, health, the struggle of making ends meet. It makes you stronger, harder, wiser, a fighter – like that Christina Aguilera song! I think my love for comic books and superheroes came about because I was the skinny kid who dreamed in the pages of these action packed panels. The stories of these heroes who were doing good, yet struggling with their own personal vices, as well as being misunderstood by the public. That was a relatable trait found in comics – the human within the warrior.
My cape is mystical, fuelling me with magic, its talismanic symbols protecting me.

* garment a week?
* living, layering, dying
* create a process for each cape...

- pattern/muslin (each cape)
- (scale)
- materiality
- post-spring break
- "MAKING MAKING!!"
- SCALE - MARKS
  - embroidery vs. TEXTURES
  - point vs.
  - dyes vs. - VERSATILE

Specificity

- Uptake & natural dyes (hot knife)
  - pick up from Alison

Things to do:
- Embroider design - KING + muslin pattern
- Cut falcon pattern - WARRIOR
- "Screen print" - LOVER
- "M" - MAGICIAN
- "D" - DANCER

Embriderer
- KING - MAS
- and - magician? - DANCER
The magician archetype in a man is his "bullshit detector". Watch, thinker, king, psychopath.

"Deceiving ego" thoughtlessness, control.

Magician to america. Shadow magician. Bad guy.

I’ve always been fascinated with magic. Not many believe in it, but I think I do, or the idea that something lives or exists beyond the human plane. I remember whenever I used to fall sick as a child, my nanny would sit me over the kitchen counter, wrap sugar in tissue, and start reciting words under her breath as she moved the wrapped sugar from the top of my head to the bottom of my feet. I don’t know what she used to say to this day, but whatever it was, it worked every time. I thought it was pretty cool and magical, as if my nanny had the power to heal. I did have a phase where I was into witchcraft and would read about it, yet too afraid to cast anything myself. I preferred watching characters like Buffy or the Charmed sisters use their powers to kick demon butt on TV! I also believe in carrying good luck charms or talismans. Back in high school, on the days I had to collect my grades I’d always carry a card which had the words ‘good luck’ on it, believing that this card was my lucky charm. My mum to this day always tells me to carry a pocket sized Quran with me whenever I travel, and I keep it by my bedside to protect me while I sleep. There are photos of me as a baby where I’m wearing the ‘evil-eye’ pendant on my onesie. I started wearing the ‘evil-eye’ again as an undergrad because I felt like I was constantly surrounded by people with bad mojo. Looking back at all these memories, these magical charms and objects have played an important role in my life over the last three decades. It’s hard sometimes to believe that these inanimate objects
are able to exude any form of power. Maybe it’s all just in my head. But for what it’s worth, I do believe that they add a little magic to our sometimes boring world.
My lover is consumed, enveloped in my warmth, wrapped as one, losing sense of the outside world, never wanting to let go.
I wonder whether I’ve understood what it means to be a good lover. There’s always room for growth. But comparing myself to the young man I once was years ago, I have become a better lover. I’ve learnt about love from my family. There have been ups and downs, but as they say, you can’t choose family. It’s the notion of unconditional love. I love my sisters because they taught me everything. I love my parents for showing me their best and worst traits. I love my nanny, for showing me how to love unconditionally and to care for others. I love my nephews, my brother-in-law. I love the people I’ve surrounded myself with over the years – friends, acquaintances, lovers. I learnt about heartbreak many years ago, and how crazy and ridiculous it was to allow myself to be consumed by love for another. How foolish and destructive one can be with their ‘first love’. But that’s what happens when one begins to understand falling in love for the very first time. Mine was a traumatic experience, but I am glad for it to have happened. I understood never to allow longing for love from someone else to take over. To make sacrifices that you’d regret in the future. To talk about love now is a very different story. I think I’ve evolved for the better, becoming more sensible and mature about it all. I am in love – with people who love me, with music, with my craft, with magical nights on a dance floor with strangers, bonding over the music. There’s more to the word love than just the notion of what we’re used to. And I think I’m in a good place to move forward and fall in love some more.
The Lover

print on carpet

LOVERS CAPE

Red?
floral motif

throw lover onto the rug?
I am waves of colour, crashing across the dance floor as I kick, jump, twist. I shine brightest in the dark, the mirror ball, my guide.
I WANT TO MAKE
CAPES

Title?
All my friends are superheroes,
based on novel by Andrew Kaufman
- A collection of 4-6 pieces - in the form of cloaks/capes
- masks?
- thesis book/publication - 3d print format
  - journal/journey
  - comic component?
- installation - stage/podium ('thrones') →
  - wallpaper
  - posed/static motion + transforms.

Atmosphere
- Gods cape drawing?
- treatment (manuscript)
- various fabrics/materials with the same print?

Shapes, silhouette
- size + scale
- consider surface
substance (also)
to inform
- heirarchy +
characteristics of
archetypes

→ exaggerate
for heirarchy of
characters/archetypes

Performative
- visible
- commercial
wearable
- garments

* stories of these
capes.
I turned thirty-three this year. Even though it feels like ‘another day, another year’, there’s something about the number thirty-three that feels wholesome. As if something is complete – the closing of a chapter, the beginning of something new. I also think it’s the fact that I’ll be returning home after my time at RISD two years older. I thought about how I wanted to enter my thirty-third. Being away from home and loved ones, I wanted to enter my new year doing what I love, with the people I love in Providence. I left thirty-two on the dance floor, and entered my thirty-third dancing to the sounds of beats that move me. I wore a fringe tank top, because I thought fringe would be the appropriate accessory to heighten my movement. Also, I’ve never worn fringe before! I think there’s a sense of being comfortable in my own skin. It’s a privilege coming this far, and I look forward to what the next thirty-three has to offer...
I wonder what a future cape would look like. What type of cape would define my elder self? I don’t fear ageing, but I occasionally panic over the thought of not being in this world one day. I think a future cape would act as a vessel that carries everything symbolic from my life. A future cape that’s more about my past than about my future. Something that holds memories when my memories begin to fade. And when I leave this world, someone from my future would keep it. And it would live on in their futures. Who knows if I’ll ever meet my future family, but maybe these capes will share information about their maker, the man he was, and the family he came from.
“Every man’s work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself [..]”

– Samuel Butler
18 October '17
4:05 pm
outside RISD library
found this sticker stuck
on a bench. thought it was
funny, a sweet gesture
to meeting new people at an
outdoor bench, or just
a friendly 'say hi' to a
passerby...

House of Hades
One Man Versus
American Media
WSociety '17

19 October '17
5 pm
on Washington st.
Found this on the road.
Found this on the road.
I was walking to VOID mansion.
For lunch. Not sure if it's real.
Also, have you ever seen this?
What does it mean??
Thank you

My family

My friends home and away

My fellows

The Salama Bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation and the Emerging Artists Fellowship

The Rhode Island School of Design

The RISD Museum

The Angelo Donghia Costume & Textiles Study Center

The Textiles Department

Faculty and staff I have engaged with over the last two years

Undergrad and grad students who became friends

New friends

Everyone that helped

The drag queens of Providence and New York City

Everyone I met on the dance floor

The city of Providence

My textile sisters – Anjuli, Carolina, Cassie, Charlotte, Winnie
Kings Camp

Why am I making these copies? I've been stuck in a rut trying to answer this question, so I hope I can find an answer.

In terms of trying to answer this question, I'm supposed to be working on patterns of motifs for my camping trip. I decided to draw Miguel's concert, which I attended last night. The concert was fantastic and soulful, and the experience I needed to free myself from thesis. But watching Miguel's performance made me think the answer to the same question - why am I making these copies - is the answer to my question. I can't think of a better way to reflect and reframe my experiences than by drawing Miguel's concert. I also think that these copies are meaningful, not just for me but for Miguel's fans as well. I hope that my thoughts and reflections on my experiences during the concert will help others.

The concert was a major moment of growth for me, and I feel ready to admit to my personal growth. I've been auprès of the audience, and it's been a great experience. I am grateful for the opportunity to go back to my love for live music and the experience of being inspired by Miguel's performance. I hope that these copies will inspire others to experience the magic of music and all that it entails.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>In My Head</td>
<td>AlunaGeorge</td>
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<td>02</td>
<td>Walking On Broken Glass</td>
<td>Annie Lennox</td>
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<td>03</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>Blondie</td>
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<td>04</td>
<td>Bury It</td>
<td>CHVRCHES (ft. Hayley Williams)</td>
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<td>05</td>
<td>Not In Love</td>
<td>Crystal Castles (ft. Robert Smith)</td>
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<td>06</td>
<td>I Feel Love</td>
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<td>Be The One</td>
<td>Dua Lipa</td>
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<td>08</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>Fifth Harmony (ft. Gucci Mane)</td>
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<td>09</td>
<td>Have Fun Tonight</td>
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<td>Systemagic</td>
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<td>Damnn Baby</td>
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<td>FAB.</td>
<td>JoJo (ft. Remy Ma)</td>
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<td>Fasta</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>LMK</td>
<td>Kelela</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Khalid</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Bruk Off Yuh Back</td>
<td>Konshens</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
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<td>Attitude</td>
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<td>The Pop Kids</td>
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<td>Favorite Star</td>
<td>Quadron</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Dancing On My Own</td>
<td>Robyn</td>
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<td>Cranes In The Sky</td>
<td>Solange</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>I Can’t Go On</td>
<td>Robin Bengtsson</td>
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<td>Kick Jump Twist</td>
<td>Sylvan Esso</td>
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<td>Love Galore</td>
<td>SZA (ft. Travis Scott)</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Tell It To My Heart</td>
<td>Taylor Dayne</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>Best Of My Love</td>
<td>The Emotions</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>Ma Lo</td>
<td>Tiwa Savage (ft. Wizkid and Spellz)</td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>My My My!</td>
<td>Troye Sivan</td>
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If you designed characters for a new book, did you need a hero, sidekick, or monster/villain...what would these characters look like? Draw them and describe their powers they have.

The hero:
A regular kid who finds a magical axe that destroys magical demons of evil. Also gives him powers to fight the bad guys. Wears an ancient costume to protect his identity, just real life with his duties of defending his city against the forces of darkness.

The sidekick:
A witch, misunderstood for being 'witch' when actually she uses her powers for good when her powers manifest. The 'hers' markings appear on her arm, face, releasing powers of her unorthodox magic staff which has a magic staff which has a magic staff which...
The villain:

The ultimate evil once thought to be a myth, origins from originate from the faintest end of the darkest, coldest deserts. He's intangible & very difficult to defeat. Only the most magical of beings or weapons can challenge this creature. He wants to bring evil to the world...