

A Choreographed COLLECTION

BY MOR LUMBROSO

A choreographed dance executed by professional dancers looks effortless. Their movements are light, swift, seamless, and leave the impression that what they do requires little work. But beneath the surface, a dancer is a well-trained and hardworking machine. The ease of their movements is the result of years of training and perfecting their craft, to the point where each movement becomes a mechanism within the body. As a result, the dancer consistently experiences an inner tension between control and release. The continuous awareness of the body creates the illusion of effortless movement. Therefore, one of the most fascinating elements during an on-stage dance performance is the huge discrepancy between what the audience sees and what the dancer feels.

As a former dancer of the Alvin Ailey Dance School in New York, it was natural for me to use dance as inspiration for this collection. I wanted to find a way to combine my experiences as a dancer with my newfound passion for fashion design. After exploring various ways in which fashion and dance are linked, I sought to create a choreographed collection that embodies precisely the tension between the airy, effortless appearance of the dancer on stage and the strict machine working within. ➡



The divine, weightless appearance of dance led me to explore phenomena that seem to beautifully defy gravity. Naturally, my first thought was of birds' wings. The mechanism that allows the bird to expand and fold its wings reminded me of a dancer's arm movements. This provided the first significant source of inspiration for the collection's patterns and play on volume. I translated the links of the wings into pleats of fabric that I wove into one another. This structure allowed me to tighten certain areas while having great volume in other areas without the common use of darts.

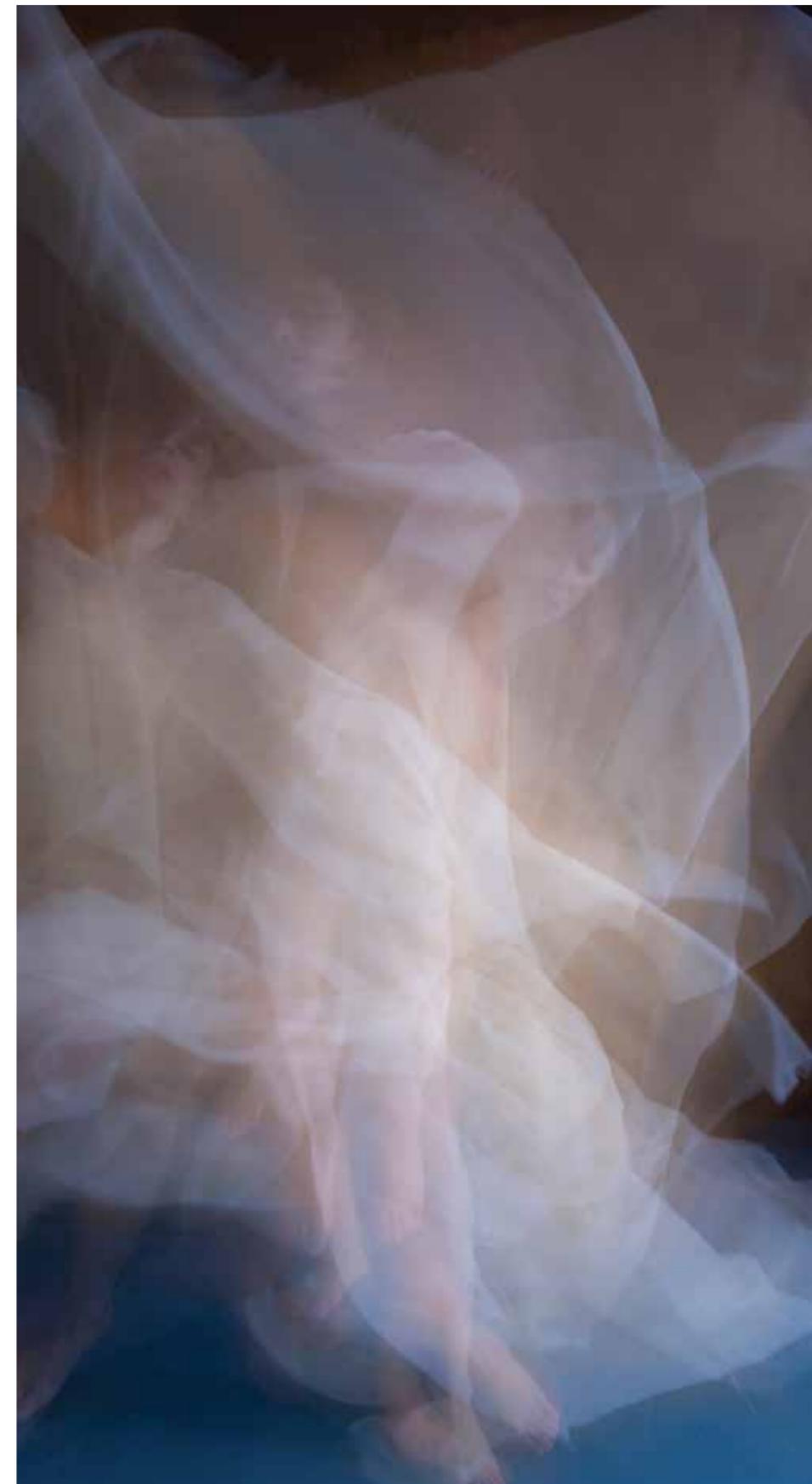
My second thought was to find a way to plan and predict the garment's movement as if I were choreographing instead of designing. With this idea in mind, I began researching different fields and uses of fabric. I eventually discovered the intriguing world of parachutes. By using their smart geometric structure as the basis for the collection's patterns, I was able to predict that the garment would collect air within it while the model was walking, creating a beautiful movement. The shapes created by the patterns in the garments have also added a geometric element to the whole collection. ➡

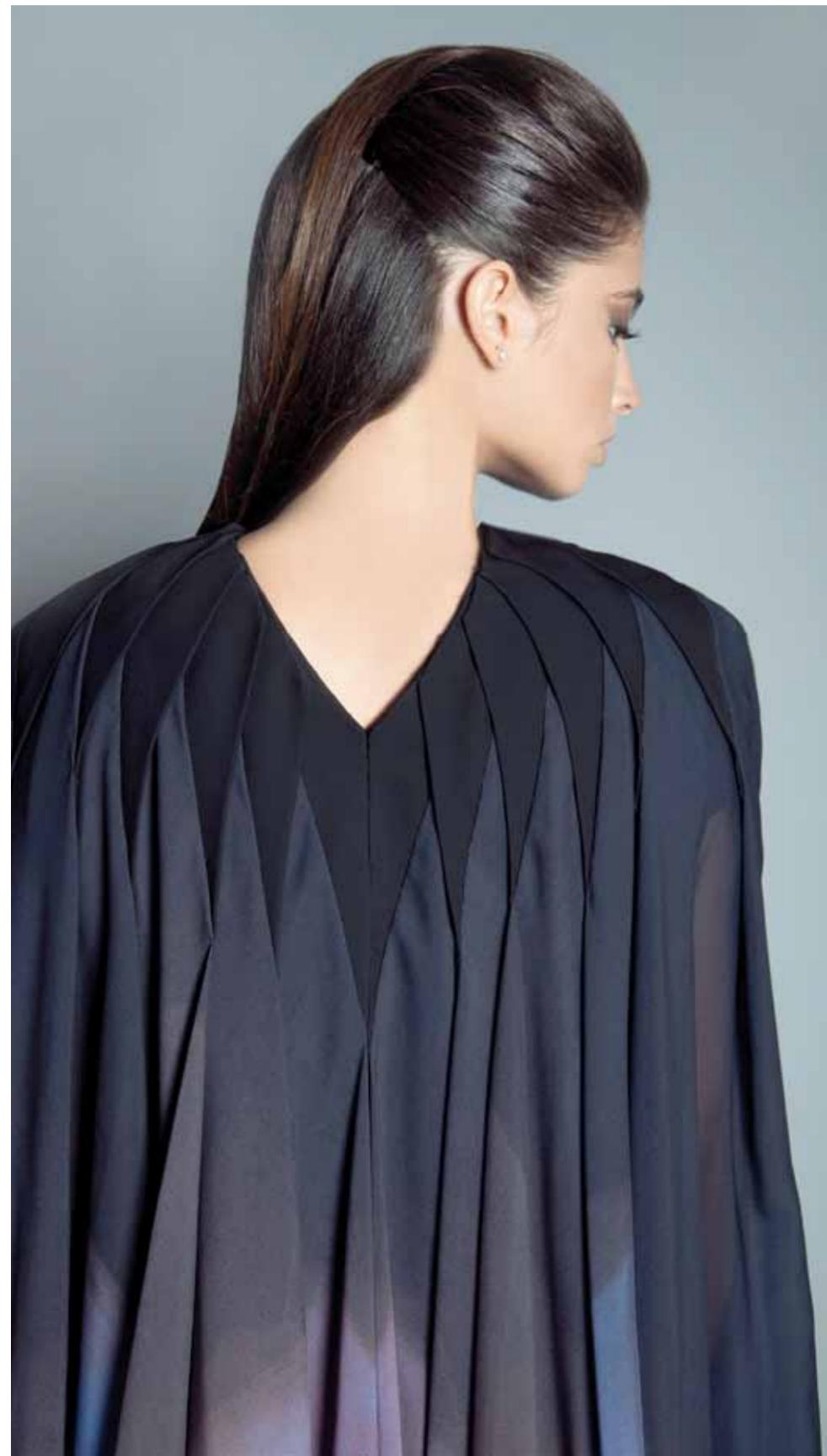




The combination of the structure inspired by birds' wings, and the parachute's structure, embodies the tension I wanted to create in the collection. The tightly arranged pleats hugging the body represent control, while the free and open structure of the parachute weaved into the pleats represents effortless release. In order to enhance the tension between the restrained mind and the free body, I used heavy wools and light silks for the construction of the pieces.

Another part of my research was to conduct a photo shoot with a dancer. I wanted to capture moments of fabric in motion and examine the relationship between body and fabric during movement. Working with a professional photographer, we photographed a dancer wearing six meters of white fabric in a dark room with long exposure. The results, featured here, captured the emotion and airy essence I wanted for the collection. I developed the photographs into the prints displayed on the garments. These gave the tone and color scale of the entire collection. ➡





One of my other goals was to express the dancer's state of mind while dancing, that which is hidden from the audience during a performance. I wanted to visualize repetitive movements and intangible feelings like rhythm, breathing, heartbeat, goosebumps, and the awareness of one's body. The rhythm in the garments was visible in the pleating and movement. Therefore, I added geometric-shaped embroideries, inspired by parachute patterns, made of thin silver reflective thread. The thread is barely visible, but when it catches the light, it appears for short, shiny moments. The embroidery is understated and, like goosebumps or heartbeats, are noticeable only when paying close attention.

The process of creating this collection has taught me new things about dance and my relationship with it in my post-dance years. It has opened a new world for me where I can continue to research dance, performance, and choreography as a fashion designer. It presented the possibility of future relationships between these different forms of self-expression, which I love. ❖

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