



mulleres do mar

a collection by Belén VNG.

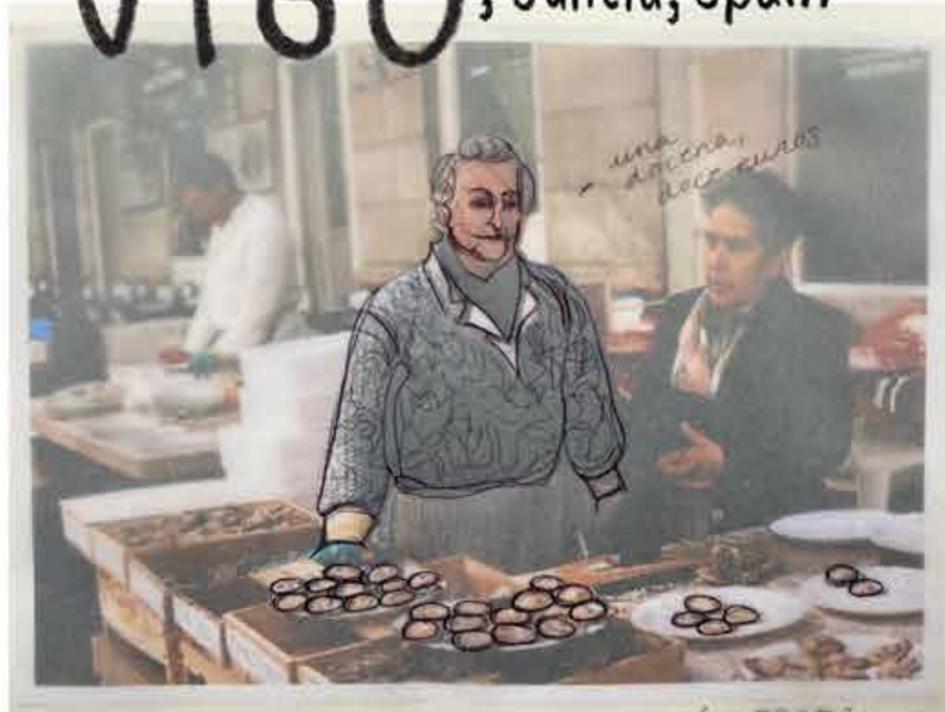


mulleres do mar is a very personal exploration of what it means to be a woman from the city of Vigo —a *viguesa*, carrying the rich history of my hometown and its relationship to the sea.

Through this process of discovering the unique traditions, materials and craftsmanship techniques of the place I grew up in, I found the responsibility within myself to protect and preserve them by finding a place for them in my own contemporary practice.

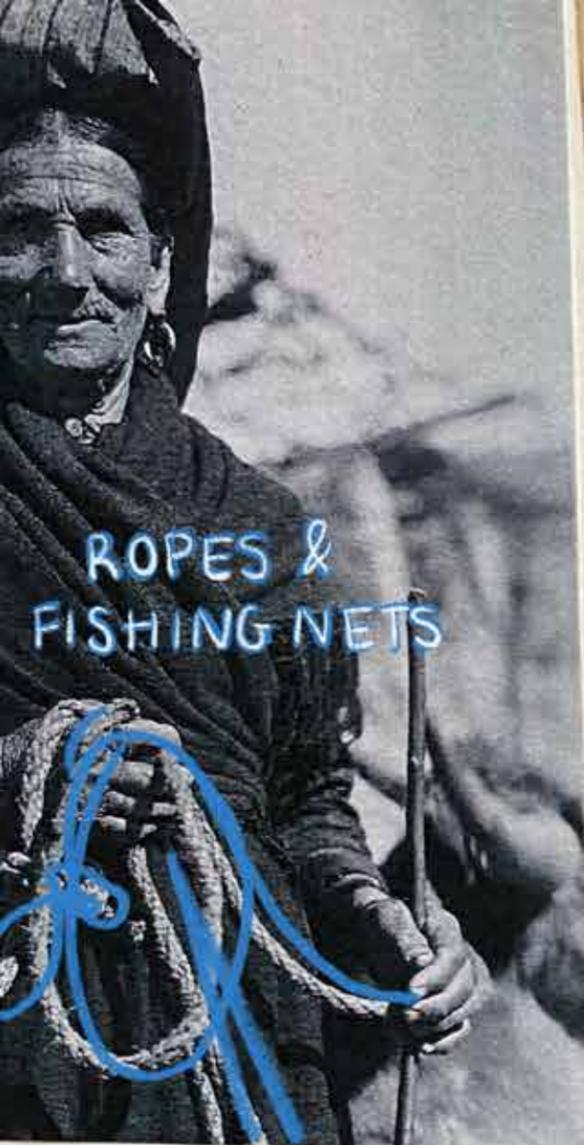
With this collection, inspired by Vigo and weather-protective wear, I want to introduce new ways of sourcing natural, upcycled and innovative materials in order to create functional zero-waste pieces and textiles.

VIGO, Galicia, Spain

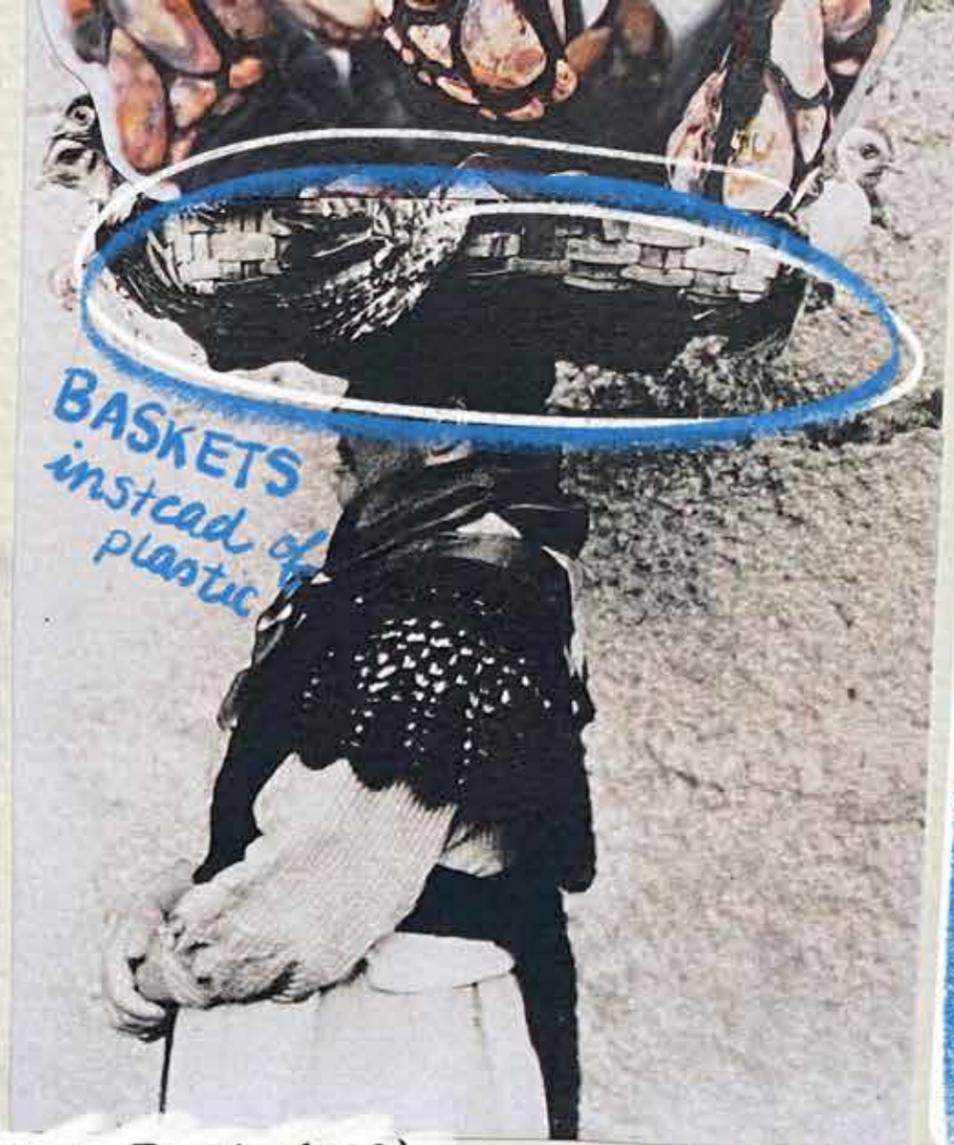


My hometown, *Vigo*, is a city in Galicia –the Northwest area of Spain, where the limits between land and ocean are –literally and culturally– almost invisible.

The city straddles on the shore of an inlet of the Atlantic Ocean, the *Ria de Vigo*, and it holds today one of the most important ports in the world, and a long history of how its streets were built around its prosperous fishing industry.



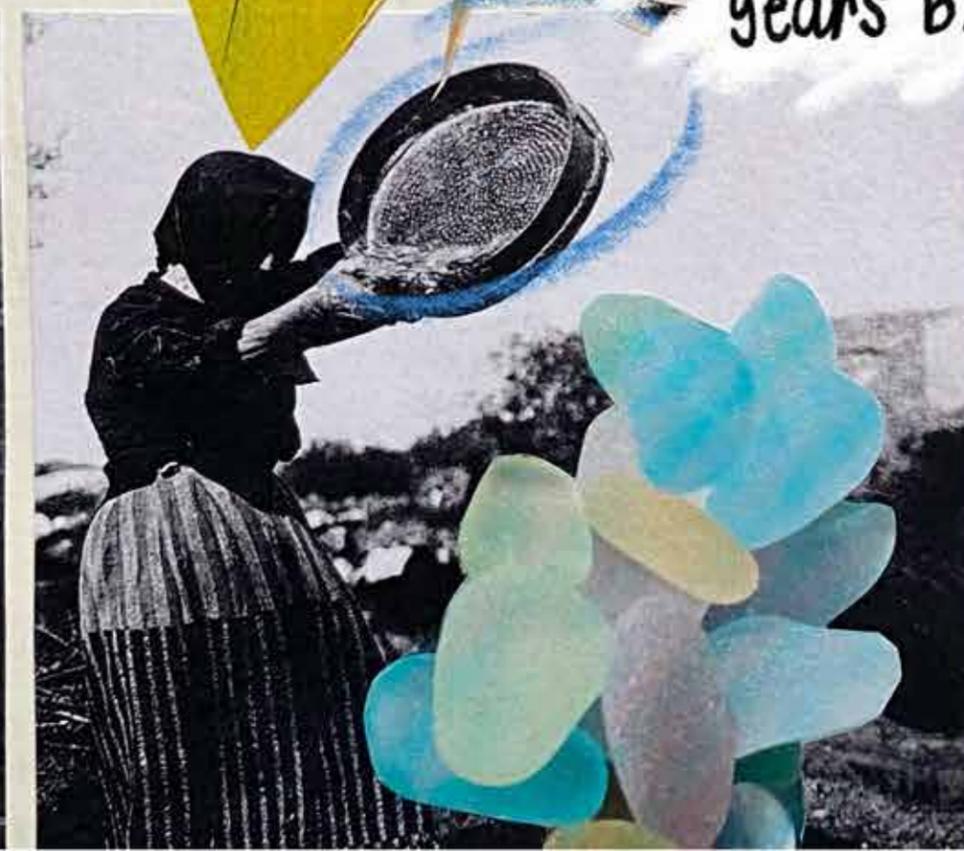
ROPES & FISHING NETS



BASKETS instead of plastic

Material selection ~ (research)

- * Archival research (what materials were used before plastic?)
- * What were the lives, traditions, clothes, jobs of *viguesas* like then vs. now?
- * In what ways am I, a *viguera*, equal and different?



years b.P (before plastic)



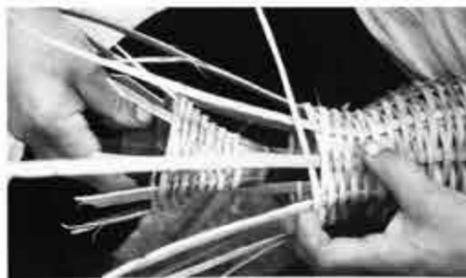
visual research focused on women and rural life

Material selection
(*'field research'*)



Artesanía Galega

learning the art of basket-making



*learning
the art of
basket-making*



Rubén Berto Covelo

Rubén, local artist and artisan,
and I co-created two wicker body pieces
as part of my inspiration and process.
His insight on this craft was fundamental
for this project.

(ideation)
translating
traditional elements
into my contemporary
practice



COROZA GALEGA

Unha coroza, ou caroza, is a traditional dress piece from Galicia, used to protect field workers from the rain (the OG raincoat).



(more)
Material
selection

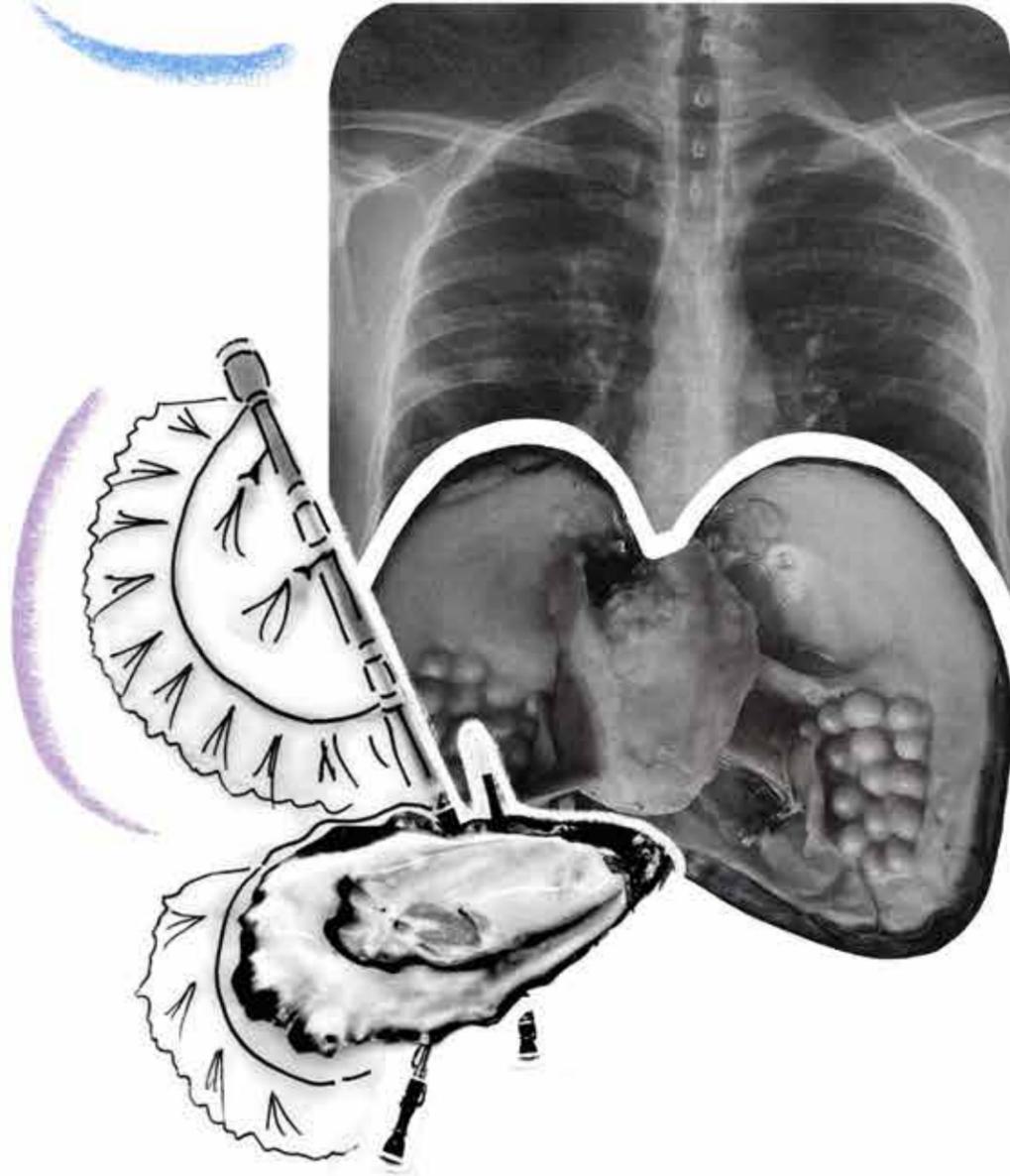
weather proof
materials &
silhouettes



'COROZA'
the OG raincoat



(+)
translating
traditional elements
into my contemporary
practice



mother of pearl

reflective material

Sourcing Materials

As a *viguesa*, and as a human, I wanted this project to have a *sentiment* (and duty) of responsibility at its core.

This is why the way in which I was sourcing materials had to reflect mine and Vigo's relationship to the sea, as well as a sense of urgency to protect it—just like my home's traditions—by finding a place for this responsibility in my contemporary practice.

material selection

(to create functional weather/waterproof hand weaved textiles)

- * upcycled products ^(that were put in) from the sea (ropes, fishing nets, cords)
- * scraps & leftover water/weather proof textiles - donations/collaboration
- * seam sealing technique → non-ammonia-based natural rubber coating
- * natural element - ropes made from natural fibers, untreated
- * zero waste - wood
 - ↳ scraps used for padding



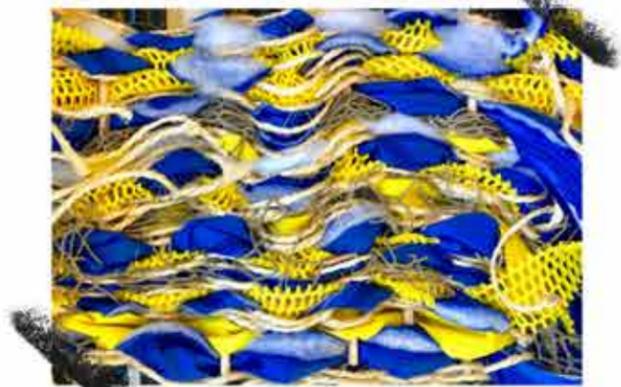
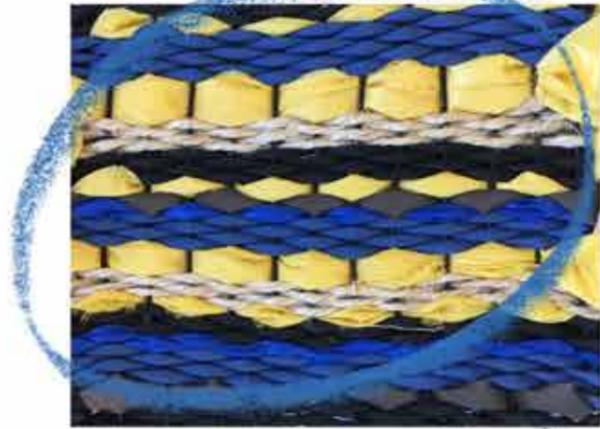
Parley for the Oceans

Parley is a platform that brings people together, from artists to scientists, to “harness the imaginative side of human culture” in order to find solutions to defend diversity on land and in the sea.

For this project, they collaborated with four different types of their “ocean fabric” –made entirely out of ocean plastic, and all leftover from past projects.



(further)
Materiality
explorations



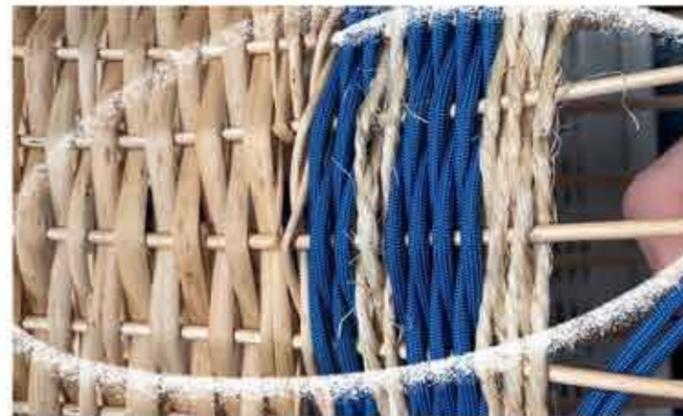
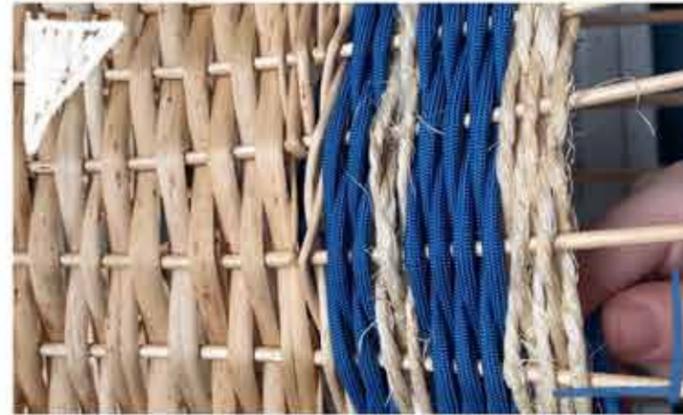
* weaving with
a basket-making
technique.





* braiding with the coroza technique

* weaving with a basket-making technique.



combining elements
visually through collage

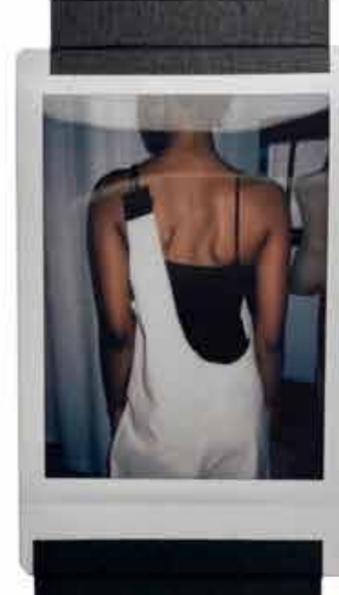
refining collages &
incorporating materiality



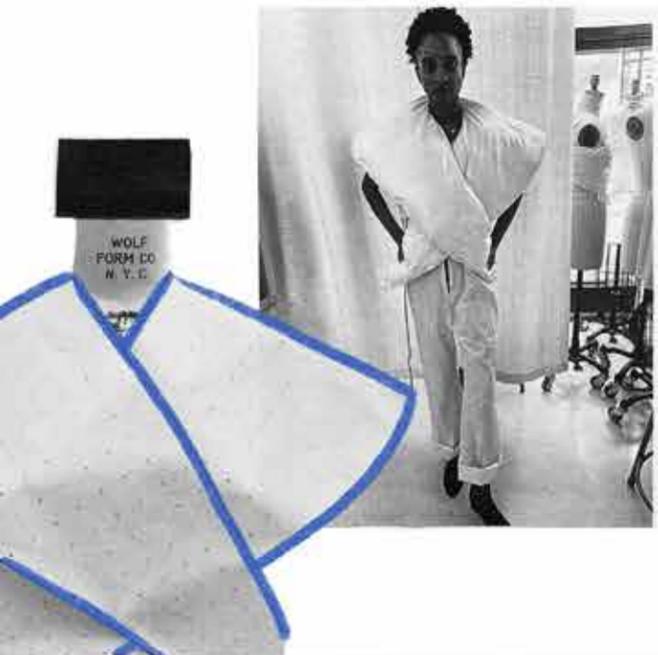
final line-up~



fittings ~



fittings ~





mulleres do mar

In early March of 2020, when the fittings and final production stages of this project were taking place, the world was hit with a global pandemic. Parsons closed its doors, along with the rest of New York City, and the further production of “*mulleres do mar*” was made almost impossible. Although at first this was a heart-breaking disappointment, I soon learned that I had been given the gift of time.

Throughout the entirety of this process, time was always an obstacle, especially when it came to finding and sourcing these materials that were key to the concept. Because of transportation times, wanting to avoid shipping, the time it took to find possible collaborators and donations, etc., I many times found myself having to use “placeholders” where upcycled materials would go in my pieces and textiles.

This is why by having to put this project *on hold*, I was also being given the opportunity to help it reach the full potential that I had imagined. Or even a bigger one.

Belen VNG,

mulleres do mar

by Belén VNG.

BVNG.

vazqb542@newschool.edu