

Hannes Nyysti - Ashes to Ashes, Skin to Skin
Material Break-Down

This is the materal break-down of my collection. I will go over the choice of leather, wood, cotton rope and jute in detail, the sourcing of it and my reason for choosing it.

Leather

This is the primary material and the focal point of the collection. My goal was to make my own leather through a traditional method of tanning. I got two goat skins from one of my tanning mentors, Lene Zachariassen, and ten lambskins from the other mentor, Þóra Sif Kópsdóttir, who is also a sheep farmer. The lambs come from Kópsdóttir's farm in Borgfjörður, while the goats come from a local farm near Zachariassen in Vopnafjörður. The tanning liquor is made from spruce bark from the forestry in Heiðmörk. The tanning process was labour intensive, as all the skins were worked by hand, from the scraping to the stirring of the leathers. For the finishing of the leather, a natural leather balm was used, consisting of vegetable oils and beeswax.

Because the leather is vegetable tanned, it remains porous and can be wetmoulded endlessly. This brings another dimension of sustainability, as you can reuse the leather for different pieces. In my case, I kept the integral shape of the animal, and shaped them to the bodies of each model. Afterwards, I remoulded them into a sculpture for the final exhibition. After that, I stretched everything on the drying frame and rolled them together, excited to exhibit them in a new form.



Wood

The wooden body parts made for the collection is a meta reference to the drying frame, both work as an anchor for the leather. But with the body parts, the size roles are reversed; the leather now goes around the frame and stretches around the body, creating the shape. Therefore the end result is showing also the process of how it was made.

I used leftover oak veneer at the schools woodworkshop. It is layered onto a plaster mould and vacuum sealed. When the glue between the layers harden, the shape hold.

I made alcohol-based stain, from the spruce bark used for the tanning. I applied one layer of the stain on the wood and finished of with linseed oil.



Thin cotton rope

Continuing the idea of the meta drying frame, I kept the same thin cotton ropes that I used when drying the leather onto the frame. When I was deciding on attachment, I wanted something fine, strong and natural. This rope gave the best results.

It can be bought in a hardware store, but my project mentor, Ragna Bjarnardóttir, gave me her spares. I soaked bundles of the rope in the same staining that I used on the wood. It gives off a good camouflage when it needed to be hidden, and fits well into the monochrome idea.



Heavy jute

The bottom garment was intended to be mute to give more focus on the leather. Jute has a lot in common with the leather: it has an earthy smell to it, it is strong and shares a similar hue. When ironed flat, the jute was too much attention, its texture being too much of a contrast to the leather. When wrinkled, it blended into the outfit. It could also take desired shapes through this method, so the patterns are all rectangles, representing another zero-waste aspect in the collection.

