

SENUJI DE SILVA
BA (HONS) FASHION
ISSUE: SANDAPAYA//SUMMER 26

SANDAPAYA

where I felt as a child

SENUJI DE SILVA

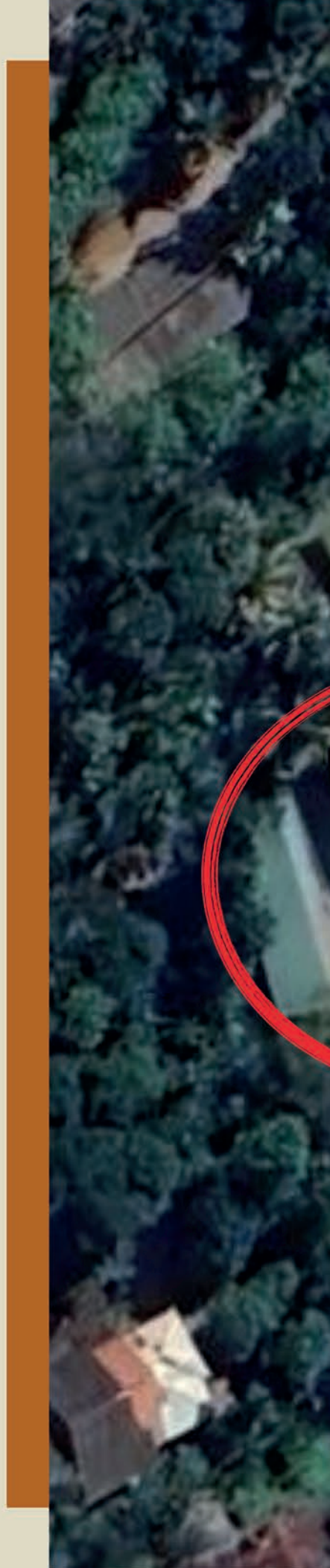
SANDAPAYA



SATELLITE view of my great-grandparent's house, which my dad has established his business without destroying any of the family heirlooms.



**PILESSA
KURUNEGALA
SRI LANKA
60058**



Buddika Marketing



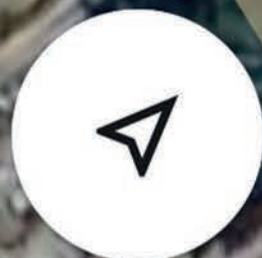
Buddhika Car
Importers (Pvt)
Recently viewed



Hello Boba pilessa



Katugastota - Kurunegala - Puttalam







'SANDAPAYA' meaning where the moon shines, the name of my great-grandparent's house, where generations of my family grew up. This fashion collection is inspired by the architecture, furniture and the memories associated with this place.

EKANAYAKE WIJAYARATNE
BANDARA
WASALA MUDIYANSE
RALAHAMILLAGE
MADDHUMA BANDARA
WIJAYARATNE
great-grandfather

This is the wedding photo of my great-grandparents in late 1930s (parents of my paternal grandmother) previous owners of SANDAPAYA. They belonged to the Sri Lankan Upper-class of Sri Lanka hence the very long name. They are wearing Nilame Kit (groom) and Osariya (bride) which were limited to upper-class people. Nilame kit consists of a decorative jacket with exaggerated sleeves and heavy embroidery paired with tuppottiya which is 36 yards of fabric wrapped around the body to achieve the exaggerated hips.





WIJESURIYA MUDIYANSE
RALAHAMILLAGE
MADDHUMA
KUMARIHAMY
WIJESURIYA
great-grandmother

A vintage black and white photograph of a wedding party of six people. From left to right: a young girl in a floral dress, a woman in a white sari, a man in a white dhoti and a patterned shawl with a crown, a woman in a white sari holding a bouquet, a man in a white dhoti and a patterned shawl with a crown, and a young boy in a white shirt and tie. They are standing in front of a dark, draped background.



rakana
 moraraka
 January 1900
 Penrice Is. Lewis
 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 83

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M.B WIJEYARATNE



My grand-parents' marriage is the cultural correlation occurred in my family that defined my heritage. My great-grandparents belonged to the Sinhala upper-class society in Sri Lanka, and their daughter, who is my grandmother, grew up during a time period where the class/caste system was strongly considered. She fell in love with my grandfather who was from a completely opposite caste group which a Catholic/Portuguese descendant family considers an unacceptable partner for my grandmother from her family. So my grandmother went against the rules and chose love; her **rebellious** acts define my heritage and who I am today.

EKANAYAKE WIJAYARATNE
BANDARA
WASALA MUDIYANSE
RALAHAMILLAGE
PREMALATHA
DE SILVA
grandmother

CULTURAL CORRELATION

Wijayaratne to de Silva



GALAGAMA
ARACHCHILAGE
DON PASQUEL
IRAJ
DE SILVA
grandfather



COLOUR inspiration for this collection is drawn from my great-grandparents house to evoke the sense of nostalgia in my collection launched in SUMMER 2026. FIRST IMAGE is my grandmother's old machine more than 80 years old. SECOND IMAGE is the mortar and pestle used to grind a famous side dish called coconut sambol. THIRD IMAGE is my great-grandparen't house located in North-Western province, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka. FOURTH IMAGE is a mirror built by my great-grandfather.

All these images stand as enduring symbols of my childhood. Although this is not my own home, it is the place I instinctively return to at the slightest inconvenience, as if drawn by something deeper than habit. It is here that our entire family gathers for every occasion, transforming the space into a living archive of shared experience. I remember my grandmother once recalling one of her father's sayings



“

my great-grandfather once said,
this house would always be filled with people, with
memories, and with something far greater than either. ”



COLOUR INSPIRATION





Mirror table in SANDAPAYA 1930-1950, Sri Lanka



SINGER sewing machine manual peddle bought during 1950's
by my great-grandfather as a wedding gift to his sister

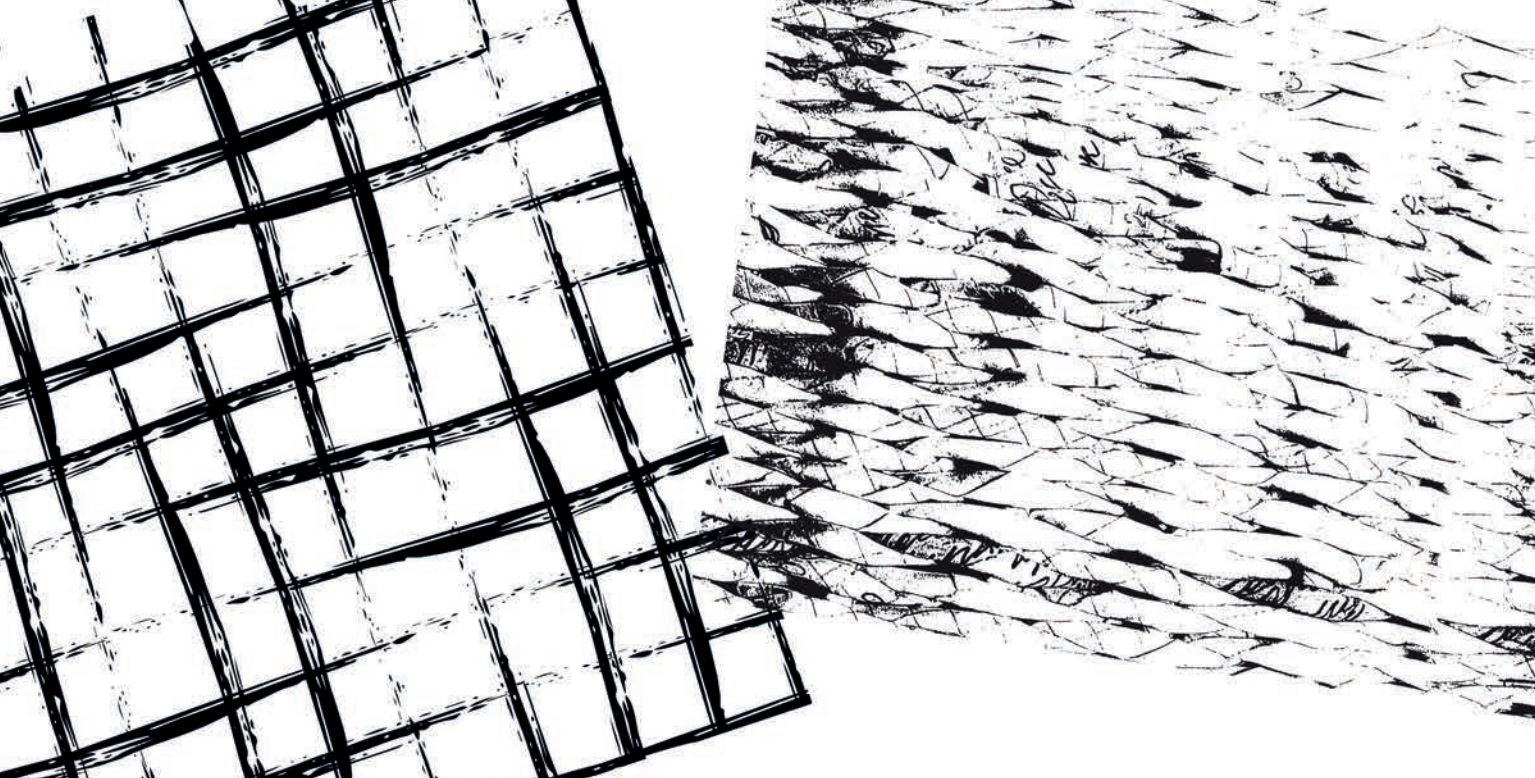


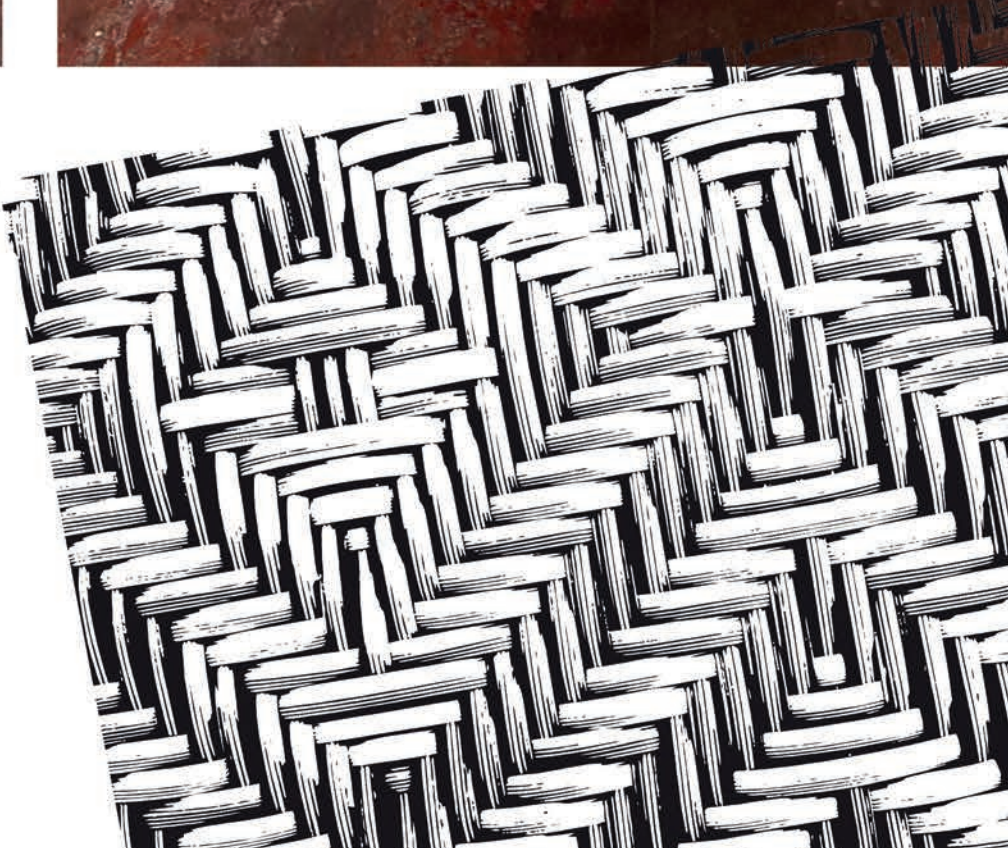
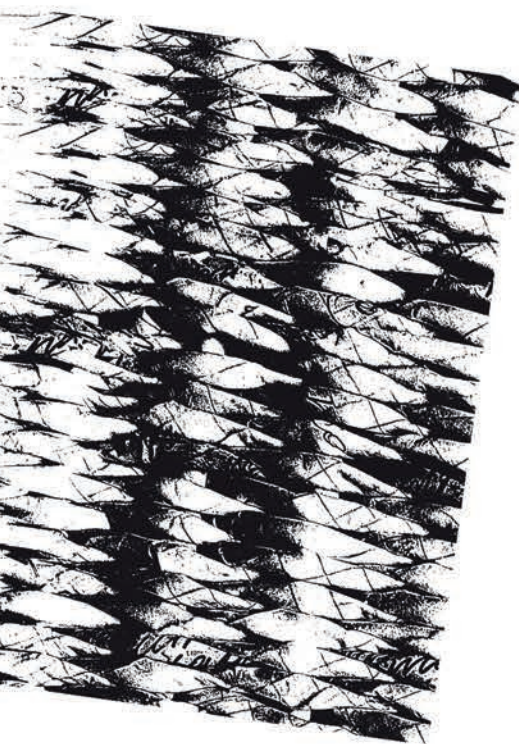
SANDAPAYA wooden plaque of the name of the house



Moulds made by great-grandfather for traditional sweets for Sri Lankan New Year during April

THE CANE CHAIRS AND TEXTURE







Daily buddhist pirit chanting of
my garndmother: the reflection of
wall carvings the naked flame,
smell of the flowers and incense
sticks...definition of the
SANDAPAYA.

I moved to a different country
with big dreams but I still crave
this feeling, seeing this made me
think how unbothered and
peaceful the life in this house?

This is one of the dressing rooms with natural lighting these wall carvings are done by my great-grandfather which was a famous pattern during early 1940s of Sri Lanka. This pattern carvings are all around the house. This is a textile pattern I created.





2026
NEW YEAR
CELEBRATIONS IN SRI LANKA

Because of my fashion collection sourcing trip to Sri Lanka I got to celebrate it with my family, we started the day with boiling milk in a pot until it overflows, symbolizing prosperity, abundance, and new beginnings. This is a tradition Sri Lankans follow in every new beginnings of life.

I made Sri Lanka butter cake and jam sugar cookies to share with the family. We spent the day together gathering in SANDAPAYA.





CEYLON ON A PLATE



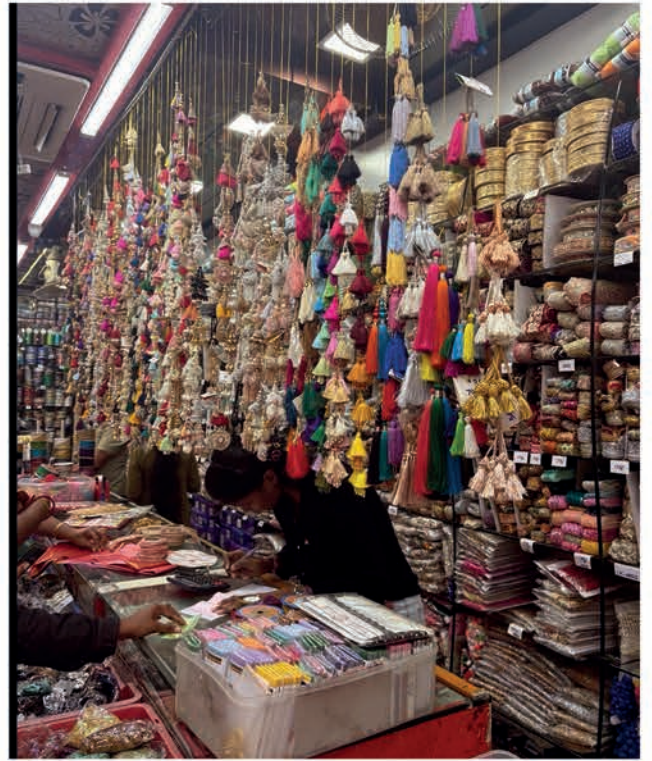


Home cooked meals and Sri Lankan street food is one of the main things I was most looking forward to in this trip. Food is a huge part of our culture and a form of love. Getting a taste of my grandmother's home cooked meals was pure joy to me. I'm sure it's one of many ways of showing her immense love to me. I was there in a good season to get the taste of Sri Lankan mangoes, I bet, you'll never taste anything better.



PETTAH





Pettah hits you before you even arrive. The noise reaches the tuk-tuk first horns layering over horns, vendors calling out prices, the metallic grind of a shutter rolling up somewhere down a side street. Then the smell: dried fish and incense and ripe fruit and diesel, all of it woven together into something that shouldn't work but completely does. Such a great place for fashion trims and fabric sourcing. I always enjoy roaming around the streets.



CHASING THE SUNRISE

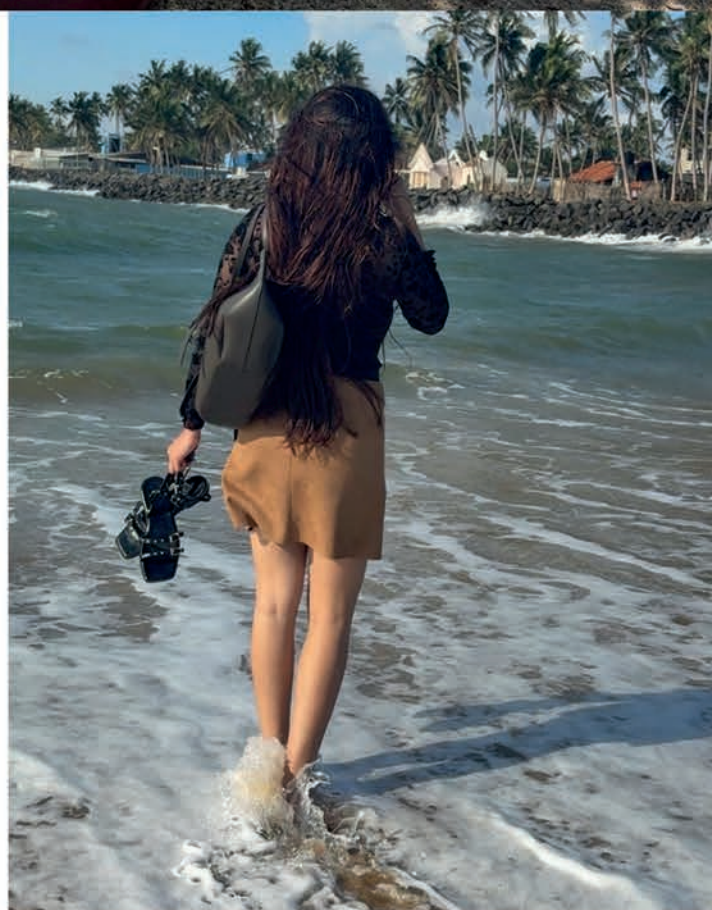
This is a sun rise captured by one of my friends during our train ride from Colombo to Ella, this is near Haputhale, approximately around 6.30 am. It was covered by the fog, but the rising sun made it magical. This is one of the highlights during our journey.



**THE WILDLIFE AND NATURE
OF SRI LANKA**



Sri Lanka is a premier biodiversity hotspot, boasting high endemism including 91% of its amphibians. During my trip to Sri Lanka, I had the opportunity to explore the wildlife, nature of my own home which gave me a great comfort and new perspectives for my design concepts.





MIRISSA BEACH, SRI LANKA

Mirissa crept up on me I wasn't expecting much, but the moment I rounded the bend and saw that crescent of palm-fringed beach stretching out below, I was completely taken. The water is impossibly clear, the pace is slow, and somehow it manages to feel like a secret even when it isn't.

CRAFT **FASHION**

**SRI LANKAN NON-TEXTILE CRAFTS INTO FASHION
RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL PROCESS**

S INTO

ON

HION

wewal craft is used to create furniture/home goods

Wewal weaving

The traditional art of weaving with rattan known locally as wewal

I'm experimenting with wewal craft to create complex design details throughout my collection
eg:- 3D animal figures, structured hip details

Wewal craft is 100% done by using natural materials: kitual, hana, wewal
For the dyeing process using plant-based natural dyes.

Natural materials

Sustainability and ethics

Using local artisans

Local artisans are rarely appreciated with the new technology

- I expect to upbring their craft to the global fashion industry.

- Respecting their craft and acknowledging the sources

~~Attte~~

- Empowering women's weaving collectives

Recycled Craft

Cultural Silhouettes

Nilame

- Exploring structured silhouettes

- Creating intricate embroidery details

Saree

- Draping inspiration

Laksha

This is known as lacquer work a traditional Sri Lankan art form that involves applying layers of lacquer to wooden or other objects.

Attempting this craft on leather.

There are few ways of doing this craft based on the shape and texture of the object

I'm choosing this.

- Niyapothu wada (Nail art)
- Lakada art

Batik

This is a traditional craft of dyeing fabrics using a wax resist technique

Batik on silk fabric to maintain the elegance of the collection.

aiming craft

Colonial
ties

- Post independence revival movements

Portuguese - catholic
Sri Lankan heritage (grandfather)

- Exploring portuguese silhouettes
- Portuguese textile work.
- Combining both Sri Lankan and portuguese elements
eg- Lace with wewel

family history

Sri Lankan Upper class
(grandmother)

- Analysing Oraniya, Asymmetric details
- Structure from the Nilame Kit.
- Exploring the contrast of both cultures.

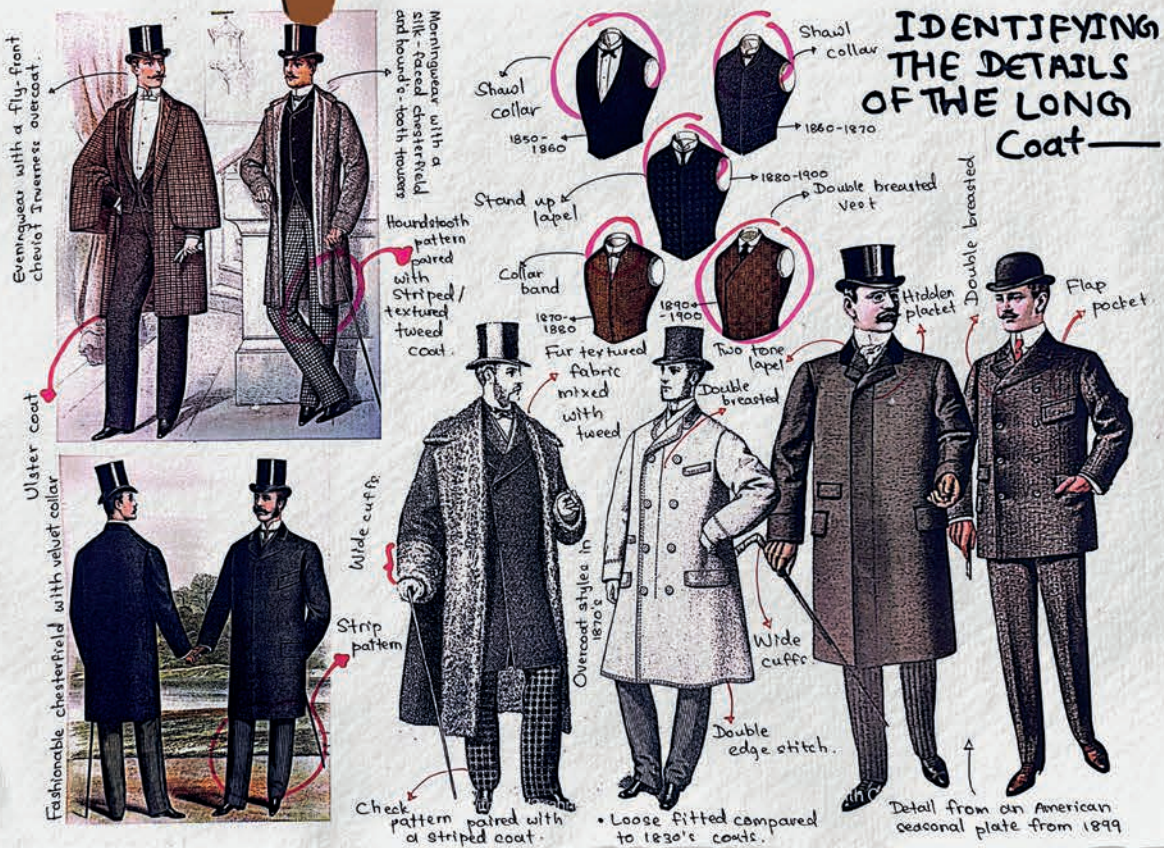
Portuguese silhouettes

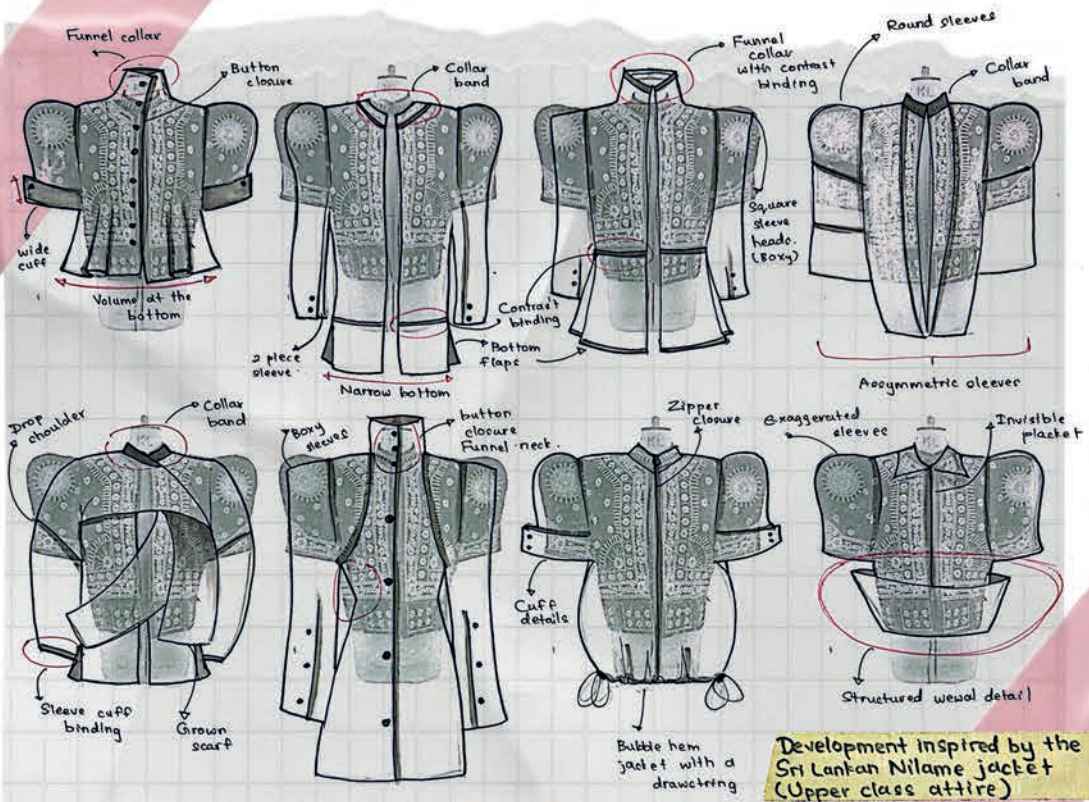
- To awaken the idea of two worlds colliding. I'm going to create silhouettes that represent both cultures

Oraniya

shaped &
d forms
ed by
Oraniya

Asymmetric
layering referencing
traditional wrap styles.





Development inspired by European Men's jackets : Mixing with contemporary details



A cane chair has sat in my great-grandparents' home for over eighty years. It has never been repaired, never repurposed it remains exactly as it was, quietly holding the weight of everything that happened around it. My grandmother fed me in that chair. She told me stories sitting in that chair. As a child I never thought to ask what it was made of or who made it. I simply existed within it, the way you exist within things that feel permanent.

I knew it only as a wewal chair rattan, in English and that was the extent of my awareness for most of my life. It wasn't until I began researching material directions for my graduate collection that the memory surfaced, and with it came something I hadn't expected: urgency. I needed to understand this material properly, not just reference it.

So I went to Wewaldeniya Sri Lanka's city of rattan to experience the craft firsthand. What I found there reframed everything. Street after street of artisans, each practising their own inherited version of the same tradition, passed down through generations without interruption. Watching them work, I realised this wasn't simply a craft being kept alive it was a living culture, owned completely by the people who practice it. They are the reason it still exists.

This project began with a chair and a childhood I didn't fully understand at the time. It ends or rather, continues with a commitment: to bring wewal into fashion, and in doing so, to show the world what Sri Lankan artisans are truly capable of.

THE CANE



CHAIR

SANDAPAYA
where I sat as a child
সানদাপায়া





CANE PLACEMENT WITH HANDLOOM



"As part of my methodology, I sought materials that carry cultural memory rather than simply cultural reference. Wewal Sri Lankan cane work became an instinctive starting point. Growing up, cane chairs were simply furniture; it was only later that I recognised how deeply associated I am with the material, how much of my domestic landscape it quietly shaped. This subconscious familiarity felt significant. By reintroducing wewal into a fashion context a space it was never designed for I wanted to test a premise central to this collection: that beauty and craft do not require conventional framing to be valid. The transgression is the point."

Wewaldeniya, often referred to as "Cane Town," is a well-known village on the Colombo-Kandy road in Sri Lanka, recognized as a specialized hub for traditional cane (wewal) craftsmanship. Roadside shops sell handmade cane products—furniture, baskets, ornaments, and lampshades—representing a heritage craft, making it a popular stop for traditional, durable, and sustainable souvenirs.



**WEWALDENIYA
SRI LANKA
71058**





WEWALDENIYA, SRI LANKA



WEWALDENIYA, SRI LANKA

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CALAMUS ROTANG

Calamus rotang (known locally in Sri Lanka as Wewal or common rattan) is a vital, native climbing palm species used extensively in traditional and modern Sri Lankan weaving, furniture manufacturing, and handicrafts. It is highly valued for its strength, flexibility, and durability.





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A VISIT TO WEWALDENIYA



Types of wewal products used in day-to-day life along with other sustainable products like coconut shell spoons, pan baskets



Inside of a workshop where they store the raw materials



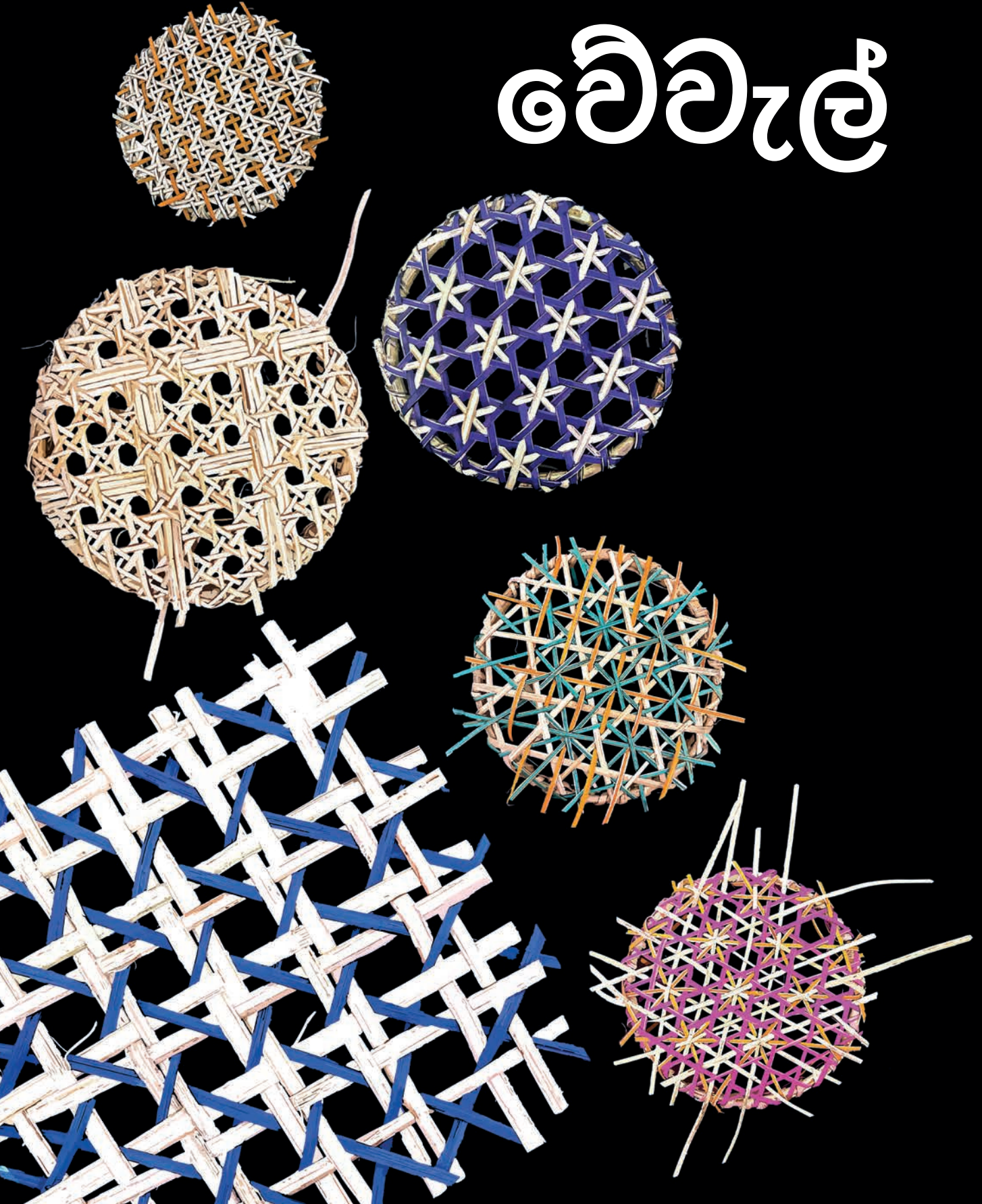
Workshop covered in pan mats to block the sunlight, because it could affect the quality of the materials



Selling rattan lamps and much more rattan products

CANE SAMPLES

ବୌଦ୍ଧ





Wewal material washed and dried ready to refine the back of the cane strips



Scraping off the back of the strips to make it more flexible and light-weight



Weaving the samples in a round frame, because it's difficult do the weaving on a flat surface.



FINALISING TEH CANE PATTERN

After doing few samples with different patterns, weaving techniques, colours and weights, I finally decided on the pattern I want to go forward with, it is a 6 petal flower woven into a hexagon. The colours are purple and original cane colour. My initial idea was to use the same weave in two different scales in the same garment, but after doing the sample I realised it could have different weights so it will have more technical issues so I'm using both front view of the weave and the the back view of the weave instead of two different scales.

GESTURE LINEUP OF WEWAL





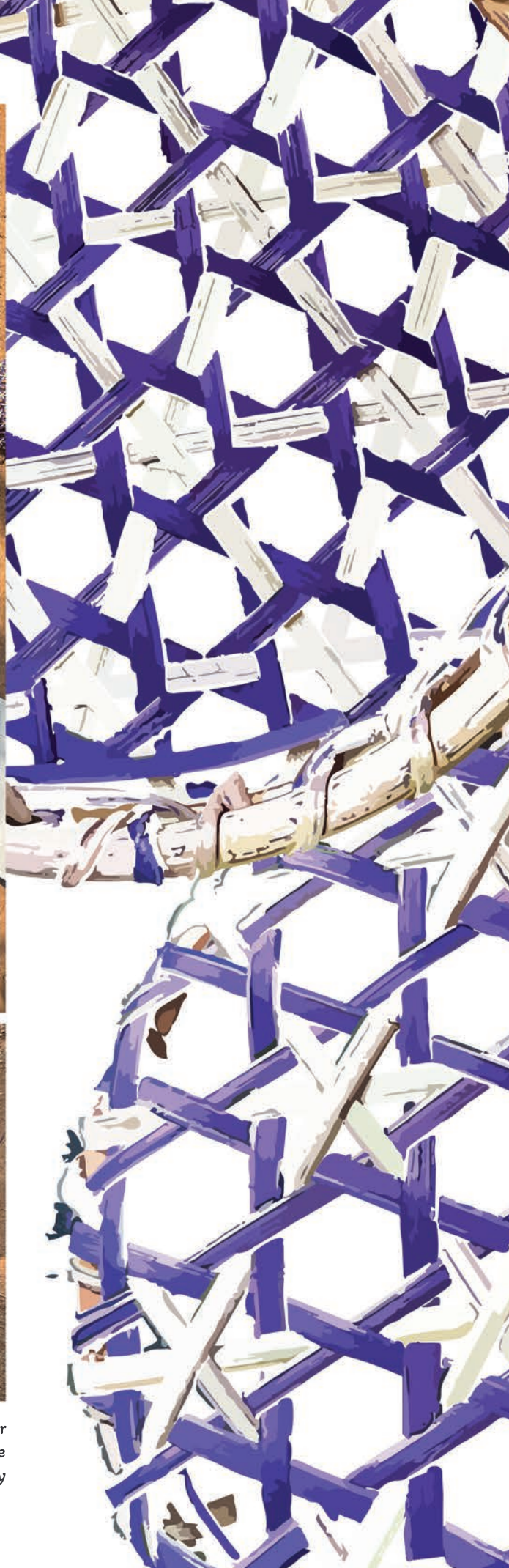
WEAVING THE FINAL CANE PANELS

Weaving the panels into the frames, when you cut the cane panels from the frame they glue the edges to seal it



Using a tool to run through the cane strips, the tool has different sizes and thickness levels, so when you pull the cane strips through it will scrape off the excess.

Workplace: materials fully dried and ready to weave. They have already made frames when weaving panels which could be cut and separated from the frame after finishing the weave



Dyeing the cane strips: they make bundles of cane and boil the water for few minutes with the colour. After that they place the cane in the boiling water. The pot used in here is an aluminium pot and they usually make a fire outside and leave the pot on top and let it sit for a while



HANDLOOM

Selyn is Sri Lanka's only Fair Trade certified handloom company. It was founded in 1991 to empower village women by providing sustainable work. Today, it engages nearly 1,000 traditional weavers across several workshops to create handmade, 100% cotton and silk products. The handloom mill is located in my hometown, Kurunegala which made me feel even more special to work with them for my graduate collection.





Rolling the yarn into conesto fill the bobbins



Yarn store in Selyn, they have their own colour codes and different weights of yarn



Weaving the fabric: traditional, human-powered machine used to create fabric by interlacing warp and weft threads without electricity,



This is a weaving wheel, or more commonly a spinning wheel, is a traditional device used to twist fiber (cotton) into yarn for weaving.

VISIT TO SELYN SRI LANKA

Selyn is a company I've worked for during my placement year. It is a family owned business and a fair-trade certified company which is located in my hometown Kurunegala which is another reason I choose selyn to create my handloom fabrics.

fabric sample



Memo No. _____
Date _____

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Memo No. _____
Date _____



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#8

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MERGING HANDLOOM AND WEWAL CRAFTS

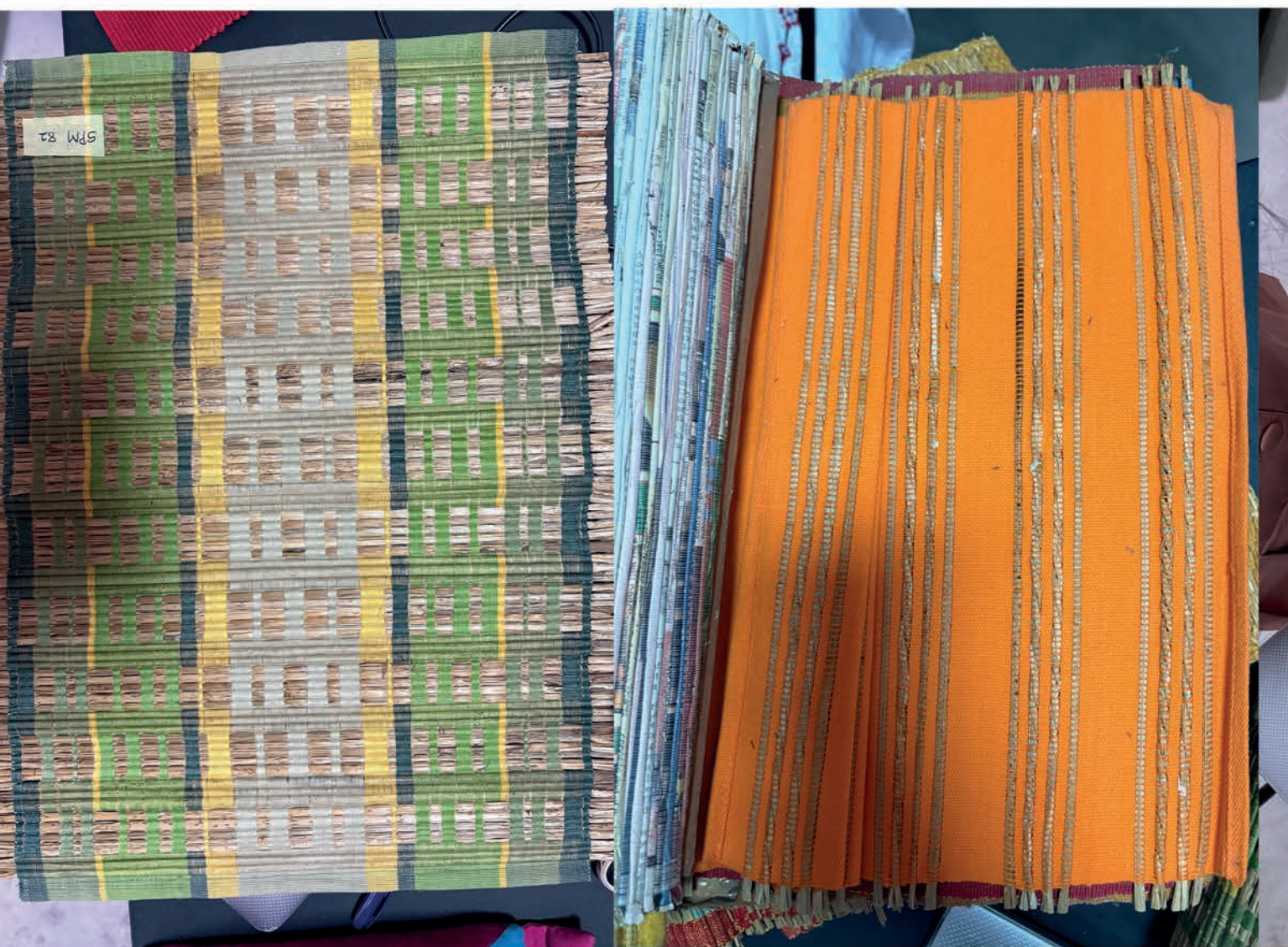
I wanted my handloom fabric to carry the same shades as cane. When you dye cane, you don't have many options in terms of tone you can only move between the lighter and darker ends of the same colour. So I decided to let that limitation guide the handloom palette, adjusting the colours to mirror what cane naturally offers. From that idea grew a larger intention: to combine cane with handloom, bringing a non-textile material into conversation with a textile one. For me, that combination also holds a deeper meaning it reflects the fusion of two different cultures that happened in my family through my grandparents' marriage.

COTTON YARN SAMPLES FOR HANDLOOM

PASTE YARN
SAMPLES

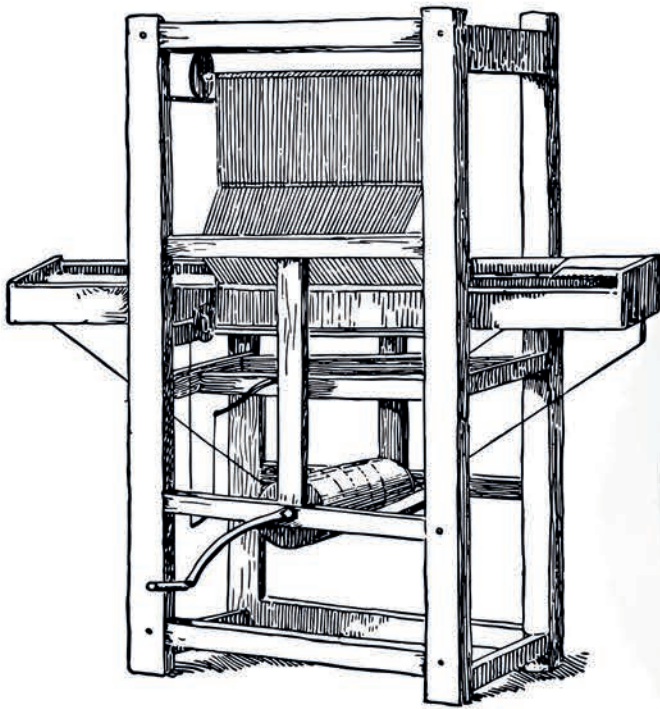




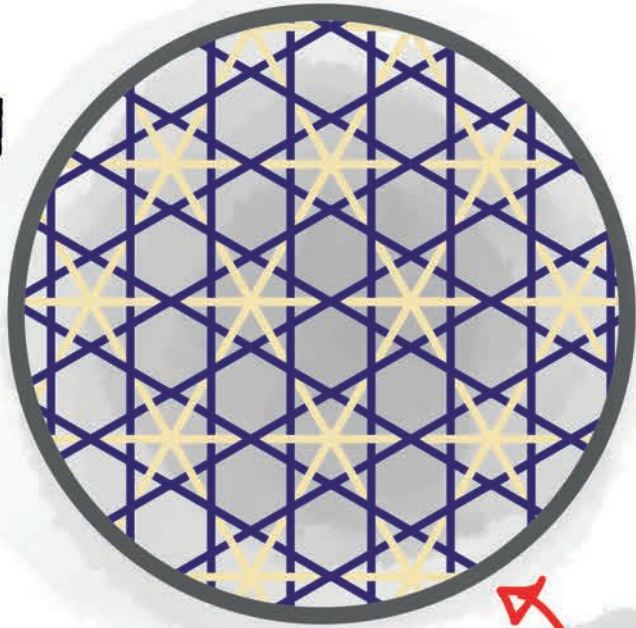




I've looked into different ways to incorporate sustainable material into handloom while inserting jute and hemp sticks to the weave to create different patterns



Manual handloom machine



I picked the diamond twill weave because it looks similar to the cane weave



Border of pala-peti

TRADITIONAL HANDLOOM WEAVING PATTERNS

Plain weave



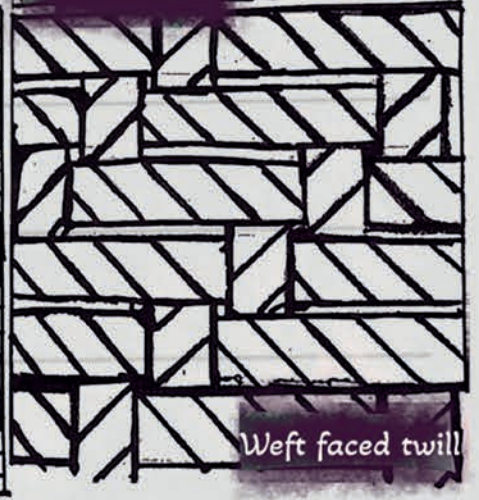
Para-mala



Pointed twill weave



Diamond twill



Weft faced twill

SAMPLES OF HANDLOOM AND CANE STITCHED ON TO HANDLOOM

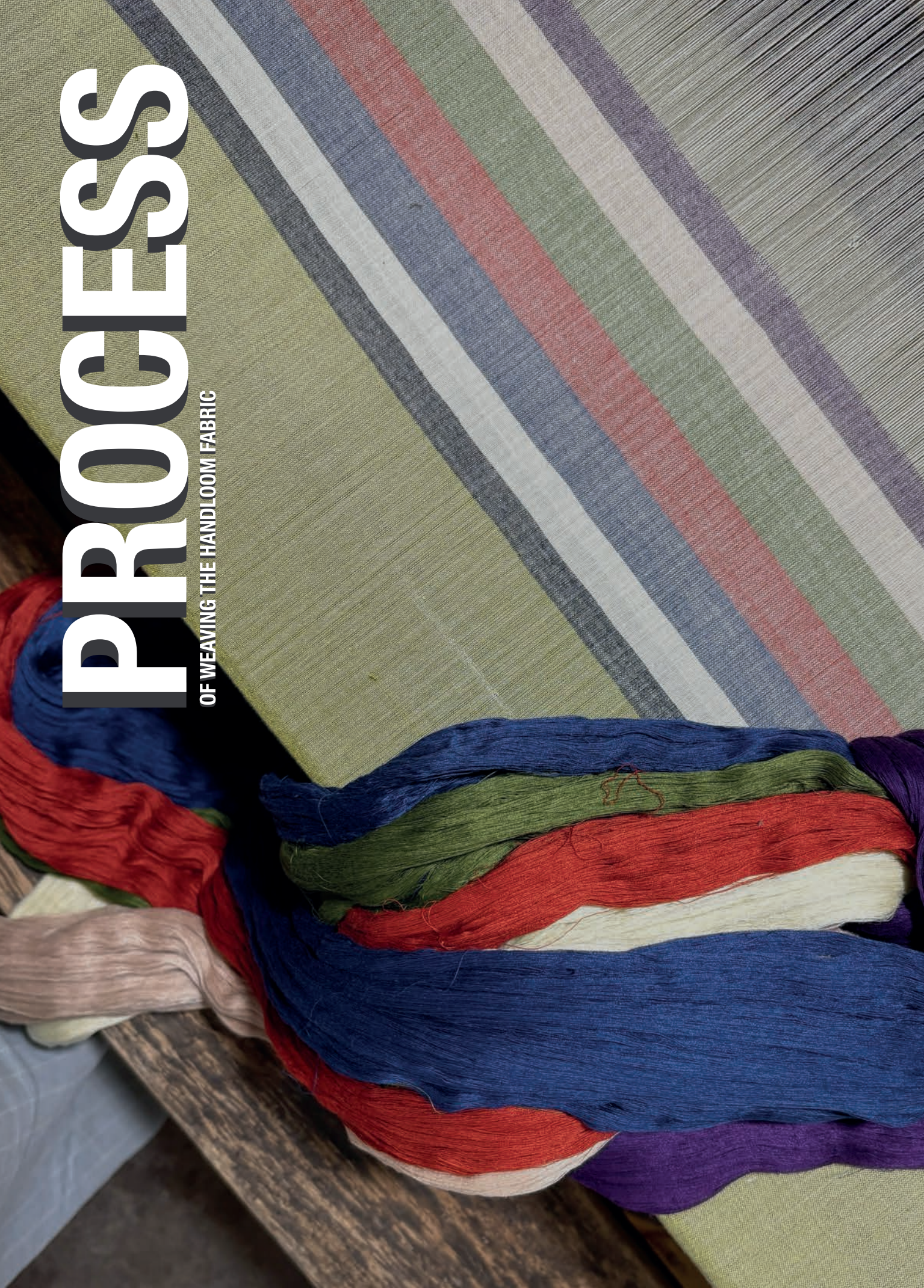
WEAVING THE HANDLOOM

I wanted the handloom pattern to echo the woven structure of cane, so I chose a diamond twill. In the jacket, the handloom acts as a frame for the cane so it was essential that the fabric could hold its own against the weight of the material. To achieve that, I twisted eight yarns together to reach the thickness I was after. The colours I chose mirror the cane directly: purple and beige. For the second handloom fabric, I went in a different direction a much lighter plain weave with silk yarn introduced for a subtle sheen. I developed this in two versions: one striped, one in a full beige.



PROCESS

OF WEAVING THE HANDLOOM FABRIC

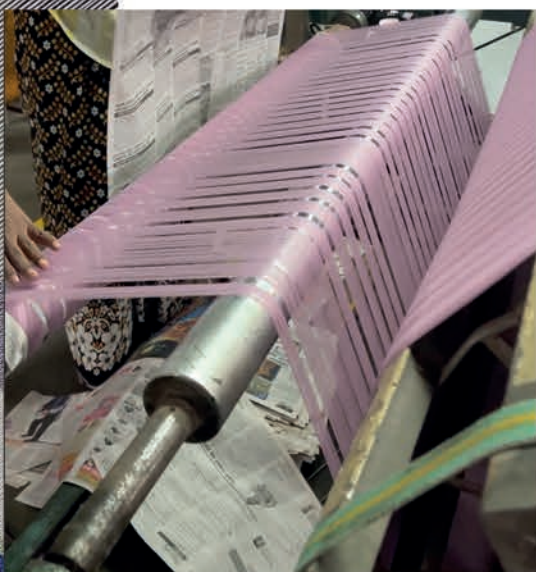




Winding the bobbin with the selected yarn



Since my fabric yarn was twisted together with different colours of yarn they rewind a new bobbin with previously winded bobbins while twisting them



Rolling the wope on a separte machine and this has to be later inserted into the machine



Matching the colours with the csne, I did few colour variations from each colour



Weaving the fabric



Cutting the fabric, they weave another inch from the edge before cutting to seal the weave

paste a sample of pan here





PAN CRAFT

Pan craft in Sri Lanka is a traditional, eco-friendly handicraft using Pan (reeds/rushes) from marshlands to weave baskets, bags, and mats (paduru).

Handcrafted by rural women, these items are durable, natural, and sustainable alternatives to plastic. The craft involves drying, dyeing, and interlacing reeds, representing a significant cultural heritage. Primarily uses Pan (reed), along with rattan, cane, and coconut fiber to make functional items.

