

Silent Goodbye

designed by **Ying Gao**

s i l e n t

goodbye

Life through another pair of eyes,

My senses **dull** from age and wear

The world around me seemed **unclear**

But my senses started to fade

others **enhance** and become **unafraid.**

by **ying** gao
bfa graphic design thesis project
san José state university



Silent Goodbye

Ying **Gao**

BFA **Graphic Design '23**

Senior **Thesis Project**

San José State University

dedicated to

to those who cannot fully perceive the world, you are seen, felt, and heard. The long and lonely journey of loss may be filled with anxiety but you are ***not alone***.

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my **Abstract**

Have you ever stopped to consider how your senses shape your perception of the world around you? For most of us, our senses are an integral part of our experience of the world, allowing us to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch the things around us. But what happens when we lose one or more of our senses; how does it impact our world, perceptually or emotionally?

No one ever thinks about what happens to ourselves when we lose our senses. It seems implausible, borderline impossible that such unfortunate events will occur to ourselves. The human brain is so great that it adapts and adjusts itself to whatever issue that may occur. When we do lose our senses, the location of the brain where it resides gets overtaken by the other senses—heightening them and therefore making them stronger. Adjusting the brain to rely on these new senses rather than the ever-disappearing sensation through our journey of grief, alongside a new range of emotions.

The journey of our lost senses is sadly even comparable to losing a loved one—slowly going through the five stages of grief: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. Through the journey of loss, others would not know the beginnings of hardship of your loss. From people wearing fake eyeglasses or wearing fake ankle braces for an aesthetic—oftentimes, it may come off as uneducated because they do not know.

thesis **Statement**

It is important to get a simple view of the world that only a certain small percentage of the people can perceive. Creating a physical and interactive experience to be able to grasp how those with lost senses perceive the world physically and emotionally.

research **Questions**

General direction of research for the thesis project.

first iteration



1. How do we perceive the world when one of the senses are unavailable?

2. How to create a new self of values for the viewer to affect their perception?



3. How to optimally activate the five senses for full engagement?

Notes:

- focus on storytelling
- dont manipulate, tell truth story
- include the 5 senses

final iteration

1. How do we perceive the world when one of the senses are unavailable?
2. What is the emotional journey that comes with losing your senses?
3. How to optimally activate the five senses for full engagement?

article findings

Our brain gets is able to heal itself. The area where your missing senses are replaced. Also known as **neuroplasticity**.

also known as neural plasticity, or brain plasticity

"the ability of the brain to form and reorganize synaptic connections, especially in response to learning or experience or following injury."

the two types

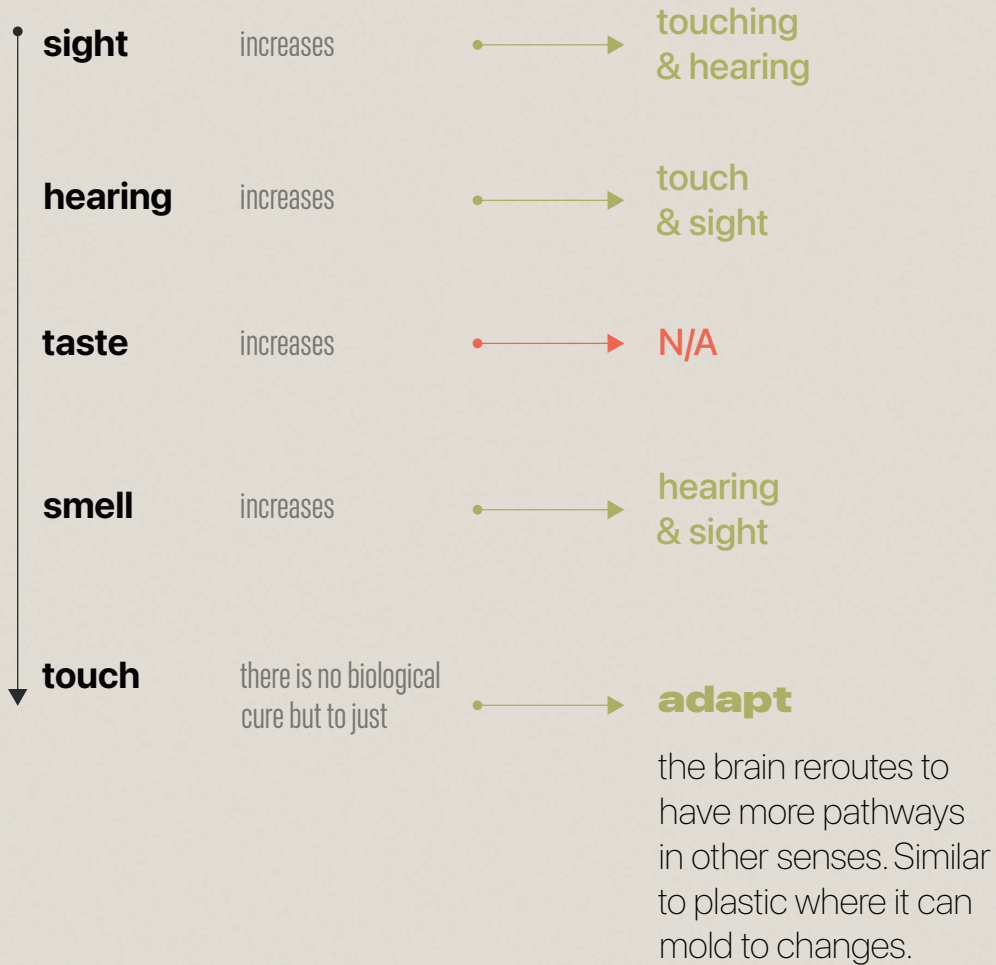
Structural Plasticity:

Associated with memories and emotions

Functional Plasticity:

Compensating for damage by relocating functions in the brain

losing



Summary

Human brains are wired to heal and adapt when there are changes to the individual. Which is applicable to the topic of losing our senses.

thoughts **After presentation**

After my presentation, "Perception? Maybe it's Deception," to two SJSU graphic design faculty, Randall Sexton and Chan Sik Kim gave their feedback in response to my topic.

Randall seemed to equate my topic around the cinematography direction, most likely due to my comment about how in storytelling, each individual detail is important to the final outcome of the story. While also telling me to research older movies such as Hitchcock.

Both Chang and Randall both expressed concern regarding the final medium of my topic and recommended utilizing a physical format—especially after I expressed wanting a motion graphic. They questioned me how to include the five senses, especially smell and touch in a flat two-dimensional format.

Chang also reveals that he thought my topic had been tried-and-true throughout over many years and to think of a fresh approach regarding the subject matter and to think about relating it back to the creative process. I had definitely considered the ramifications of my topic before—particularly regarding how to implement the senses. touch and smell in motion graphics. However, my presented solution of utilizing visuals and typography was not enough. During the rest of the presentation, I thought over their remarks on how to have a more modern take while considering a more physical approach to the medium.

Therefore, after considering their concerns, I want to change the outcome of my approach to be a physically-interactive storybook—allowing more physical senses to be included. In addition, also changing the concept of the story could revolve around a designer's thought process and how they incorporate the stimuli in their own design project.

locating **Thesis range**

Review the comments you received from the Thesis Proposal Presentation. Compare what you meant with what was heard. What was mentioned that you had not considered?

emphasis on physical

people,
places,
things

Collect texts, images, objects and
or other visual representations to
create the mise en scene of your
thesis area of interest.

people, things, things

3 large objects related to your thinking

3 physical places where your thesis thinking might be found

Loud concerts



Doctor's Office



Scientist Lab



Wheelchair



Bed



Stage laser lights



3 tiny objects related to your thesis



Hearing aids



Acceptance



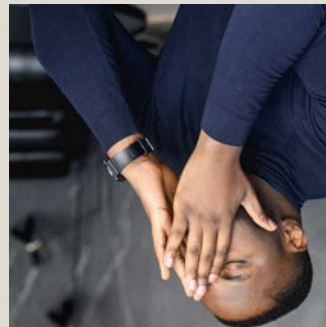
White-noise machine



Lonely



Glasses



Frustration

3 abstract qualities related to your thesis

3 physical qualities related to your thesis



Being able to love yourself



Dependent on medicine



Body sensory loss



Chef



Firefighter



Construction worker

3 blue collar jobs that your thesis performs

3 new items from the last two days where your thesis lives in the present

3 foundations or organizations that commission your thesis

National Associations of the Deaf



Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



American Speech-Language-Hearing Association



High energy inductive therapy (HEIT) for faster healing



Over-the-counter (OTC) rechargeable hearing aids



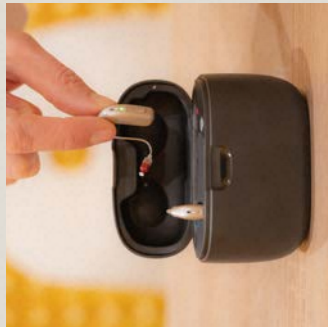
Genetic diagnosis helps guide care of childhood hearing loss



people,
things,
things

3 historical events that gives your thesis context

Invention of hearing aids by Miller Reese-Hutchison in 1898.



Earliest instances of hearing loss were discovered in skeletal remains dating over 10,000 years ago



Individuals who use headphones in an already noisy environment are at a 4.5-fold higher risk of hearing loss.



3 supermarket items that could nourish your thesis



Bright foods



Omega 3 fats & vitamin d



Sleeping mask

people, things, things

3 films that are the start of your curated thesis film series

Birdbox (2018)



Shokugeki no Soma (2015)



Perfume: The Story of a Murderer (2006)



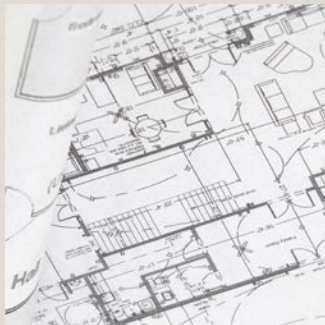
John Stanton



Robert Nichols



Jade Ragoschke



3 designers that could give a workshop related to your thesis

WE BELIEVE that clouds are unjustly maligned and that life would be immeasurably poorer without them.

We think that clouds are Nature's poetry, and the most egalitarian of her displays, since everyone can have a fantastic view of them.

We pledge to fight 'blue-sky thinking' wherever we find it. Life would be dull if we had to look up at cloudless monotony day after day. We seek to remind people that clouds are expressions of the atmosphere's moods, and can be read like those of a person's countenance.

We believe that clouds are for dreamers and their contemplation benefits the soul. Indeed, all who consider the shapes they see in them will save money on psychoanalysis bills.

And so we say to all who'll listen: Look up, marvel at the ephemeral beauty, and always remember to live life with your head in the clouds!

manifesto

Write a short manifesto as a way to invite others into your way of thinking,

To love design is to imagine.

To dream of a new way to perceive.

Imagining how the world and its people operate.

Over seven billion stories but not two are the same,

as the ongoing flow of life takes us away.

Similar to the vagueness of our senses, we are also vague.

Who is to tell us what's wrong or right,

Our interpretations are what is true in the end.

We agonize, We adapt, we change, we persevere

In retrospect, all of this will soon become happy little memories,

so why not just continue to live our life, continue to laugh, and

continue to design.

by ying gao

framing reference

Conduct a well-prepared, focused, and thoughtful interview with an expert in your field of interest, whose experience, knowledge, and expertise, can offer insight into your project.

Subject Names:

Yvette Ramos

Time:

February 17th at 2pm

Format:

Zoom

Questions:

1. How did the loss of your senses effect your quality of life?
2. How do you think your sense of perception of the world changed before and after the loss?
3. How did you feel emotionally when you did first lost your senses? What about currently?
4. How did you adapt to use your senses? Is there certain textures/sensory cues that you depend on more?
5. How do you think other people you see the world from your experience? And what do you think of their interpretation?

Yvette meeting 2/17 notes

senses lost:

sight:

Increased reliance on **touch and hearing**

Example: at night, feeling around for glasses and hearing is there are any metal sounds.

smell/taste:

Increased reliance on **touch**

Example: Feeling the texture on her tongue when consuming the foods to imagine the taste

emotions felt through the process:

internal emotions

- did not feel like eating
- hard to take of themselves
- always a false hope of them being better
- a very tiring journey
- negative emotions
- if it goes with their outfit
- wear glasses only when going out alone
- stressed, frustrated, scared
- started to regularly wear glasses after a long time
- hoped it was not true
- goes out with their life regularly
- did not tell parents at first

external emotions

- felt people were judging due to glasses
- does not wear glasses in public a lot
- thinks people use disability as an aesthetic
- do not understand the struggles (financial, etc)
- gets made fun of and a lack of empathy

repository **Of insight**

Produce a collection of your most resonant, salient quotations from your readings and research.

1. Sensory perception is the silken web that binds our separate nervous systems into the encompassing ecosystem
2. Sometimes, people don't even perceive senses the same way.
3. Reading can give us a sense of belongingness that we all instinctively want as human beings
4. Images—what you imagine—possess not only the power to heal, but to take you to higher realms of knowledge and experience than you've ever visited.
5. Haven't we all, at some wonderful moment in our lives, signed, "I wish this time could last forever?"
6. The sensation you experience most recently is the easiest for you to recall.
7. Imagery can be as vivid as your reality.
8. You start your snowy journey in the frigid climates of the polar icecap and conclude it in the jungles of a prehistoric world.
9. We process so much of life through our eyes, ears, and nose.
10. Wish I didn't hate it.
11. I was scared, overwhelmed, that I would not get better.

12. Your body, because it is of matter,
which is of space, which is of time,
which is of motion, which if of your
illusion , is also illusion.
13. The sight of grandchildren's faces,
the smell of home cooking, the
sound of a friend's voice

14. "Our perception of yourself as **separate from the whole is an illusion. **You and the universe are one.**"**

When a person loses one or more of their senses, such as sight, hearing, or touch, smell or taste, their perception of the world may change dramatically. They may begin to see themselves as separate from others and the world around them, feeling isolated and disconnected. However, as they adapt to their sensory loss, they may start to develop a deeper awareness of the interconnectedness of all things in their universe.

Your perception of yourself as separate from the whole is an illusion. You and the universe are one. How you perceive the world is not completely black and white—they are ultimately different so many different factors which may affect your view. Ultimately, who is to tell you what is correct or not. For all we know, everybody may be viewing the world wrong while only your perception is correct. The intermixing of how we perceive the world is what makes us. Discussing our differences and eventually coming to a collaborative conclusion is what makes us unique and powerful.

Similarly, a person who is deaf may learn to communicate through sign language and other visual cues, which can lead to a deeper understanding of the importance of nonverbal communication and body language in human interaction. As we gain alternative methods to aid us with communication discrepancies, we have a better solid understanding of who we are and what we represent.

Overall, the journey of sensory loss can lead to a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of all things, as individuals learn to adapt to their new reality and develop new ways of perceiving and interacting with the world around them. For when we do lose our perception, there are secondary options which are just as powerful and correct as the primary preferred method of communication.

annotated **Bibliography**

Produce a collection of your most resonant, salient quotations from your readings and research.

01 Describing the five main senses and their traits.

Bradford, Alina, and Ailsa Harvey. "The Five (and More) Human Senses." LiveScience, November 10, 2022. livescience.com/60752-human-senses.html.

02 How to visualize our five senses provocatively

Fezler. (1989). Creative imagery: how to visualize in all five senses. Simon & Schuster.

03 the mental benefits of getting lost in a story.

DiGiulio, Sarah. "Why 'Getting Lost' in a Good Book Is The Break Your Brain Needs Right Now." NBCNews. Better by Today, July 22, 2022. nbcnews.com/better/pop-culture/

04 The concept and effects of classical conditioning

Stangor, Charles, and Jennifer Walinga. "8.1 Learning by Association: Classical Conditioning." Introduction to Psychology 1st Canadian Edition. BCcampus, October 17, 2014. opentextbc.ca/chapter/7-1-learning-by-association-classical-conditioning/.

05 Explanation of the science of sensory loss

"Take Care of Your Senses: The Science behind Sensory Loss and Dementia Risk." National Institute on Aging. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, January 10, 2023. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/take-care-your-senses-science-behind-sensory-loss-and-dementia-risk>.

06 Gathering of images

"Take Care of Your Senses: The Science behind Sensory Loss and Dementia Risk." National Institute on Aging. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, January 10, 2023. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/news/take-care-your-senses-science-behind-sensory-loss-and-dementia-risk>.

missions
trials
drawings
technological issues

03

try-outs

outcome iterations

first iteration

second iteration

final iteration

drawing try-outs

technological issues



initial topic ideas



1. Utilizing storytelling as a medium to create an immersive experience that could take full advantage of the brain's interpretation of stimuli.

2. our five senses is parallel to being alive. And as we lose them, us being "alive" diminishes. I wrote a more thorough explanation below.



3. Going on a different path and describing the complexity of emotions through the five stages of grief through the language of flowers.

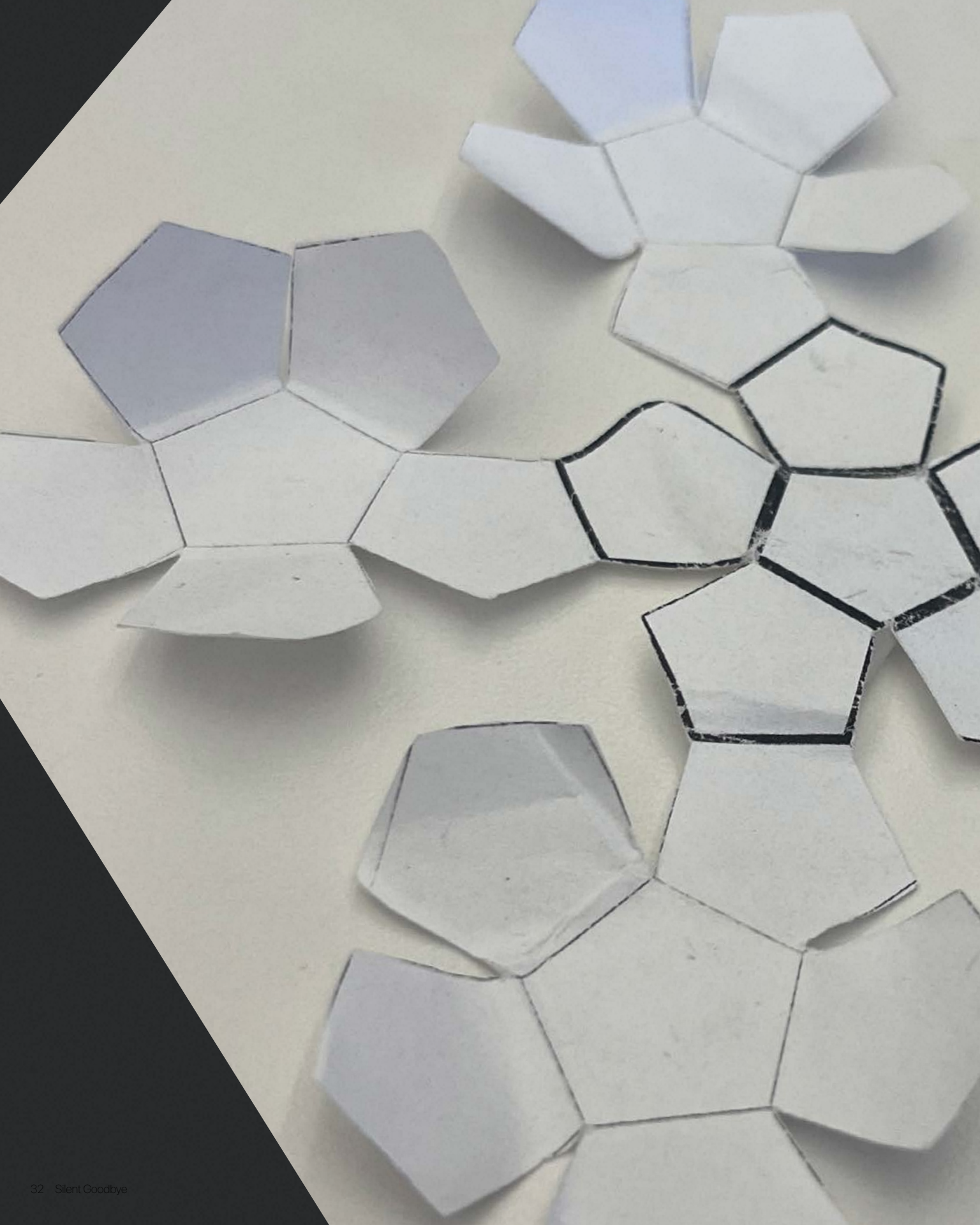
4. Different people process excessive amounts of stimuli. If they are walking down a busy sidewalk, how would someone with logical thinking perceive it or what about someone who is currently angry

final iteration

1. Creating a physical and interactive experience to be able to grasp how those with lost senses perceive the world.

outcome Iterations

Final direction of outcome





first form

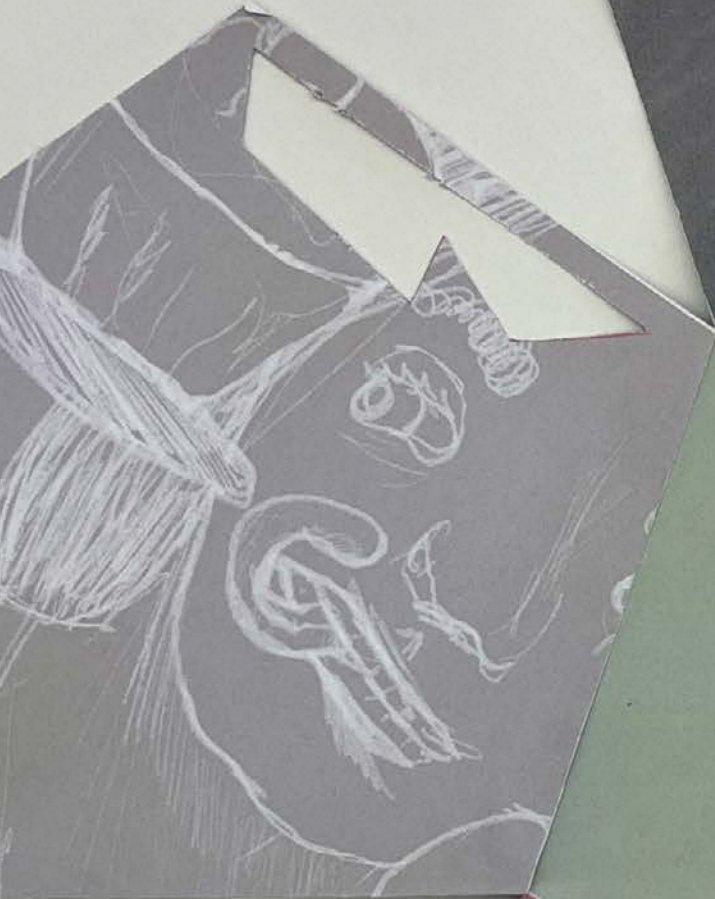
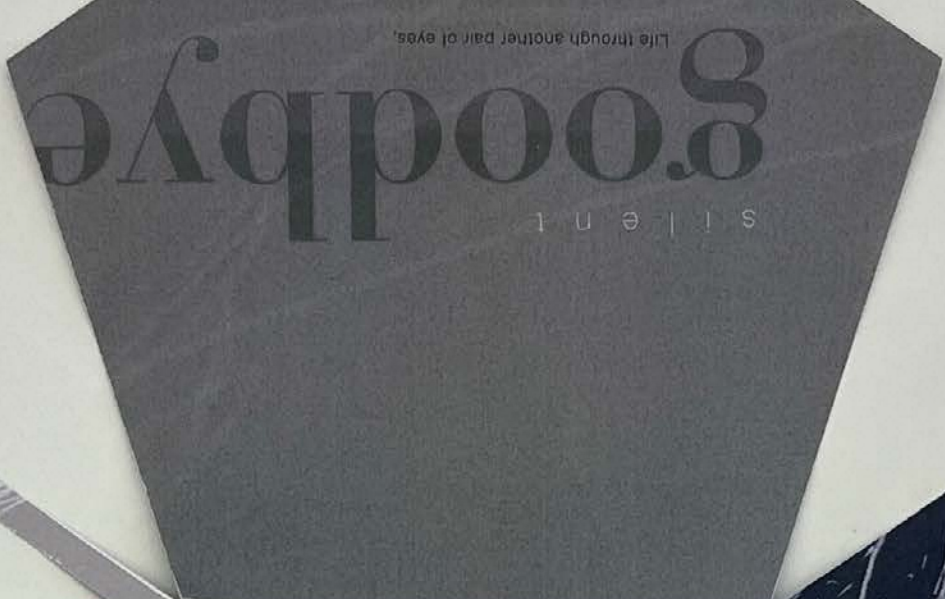
Many pentagonal folds into one pentagon. Each strand equates to one sense and the stages of grief.

first iteration

Experimenting with the type of drawings
and the physical textures being included.

the denial of
Sig





As my senses fade away,
I find **new ways** to **adapt** and play
In times of **need**, I discover light,
And **despair**, I discover my **might**

Though losing senses can be a **trial**,
It **opens up** a brand new aisle
I learn to **trust** my intuition,
And navigate life's new rendition

So even as my senses **wane**,
I find the **strength** to keep the reign
For in **hardship**, I shall **persevere**.
A life that's **rich and full of wonder**.



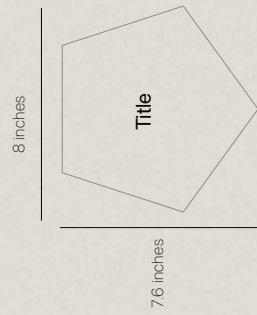


outcome **Iterations**

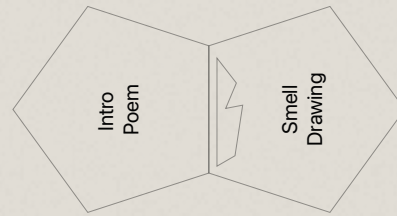
Experimented with colors, drawings, and typography. overall the design looks more polished and cleaner. but still lacking in some parts.

form **Try-outs**

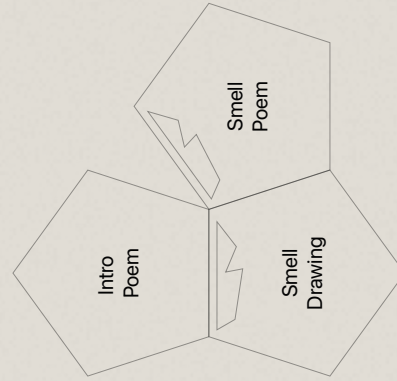
Outline of the iteration of the diecut shapes and where each content will belong o which page.



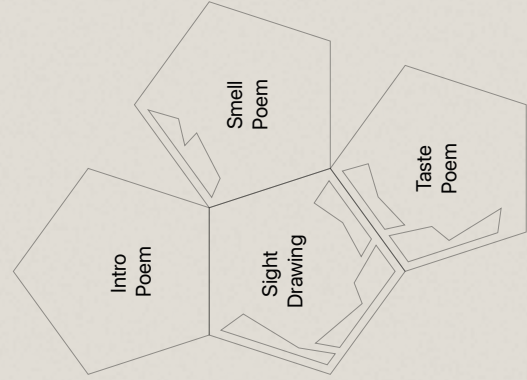
1. Flat



2. Flip up

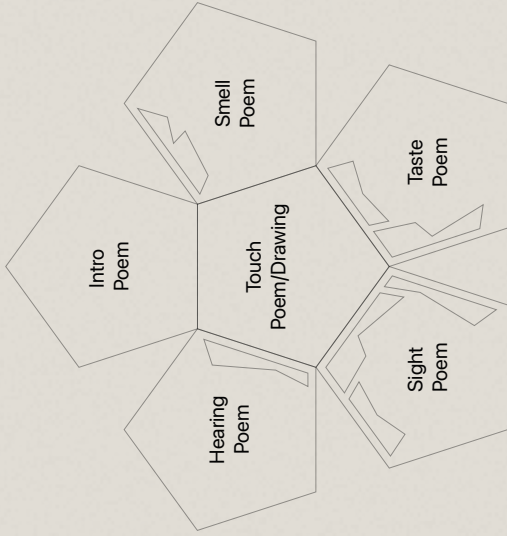


3. Flip to Side



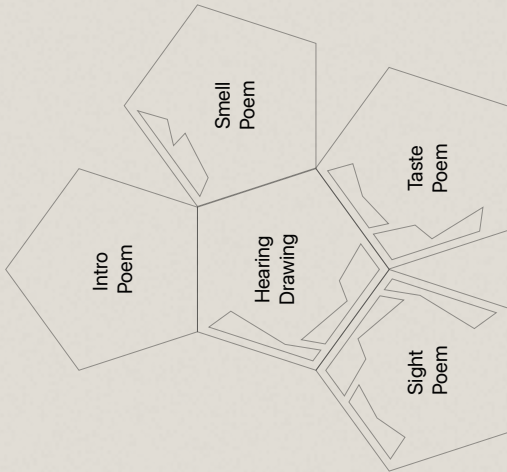
4. Flip to bottom right

20.2 inches



21.2 inches

6. Full bloom



5. Flip to bottom left

iterations on iterations



experimented with

shapes

colors

die-cuts



experimented **with**

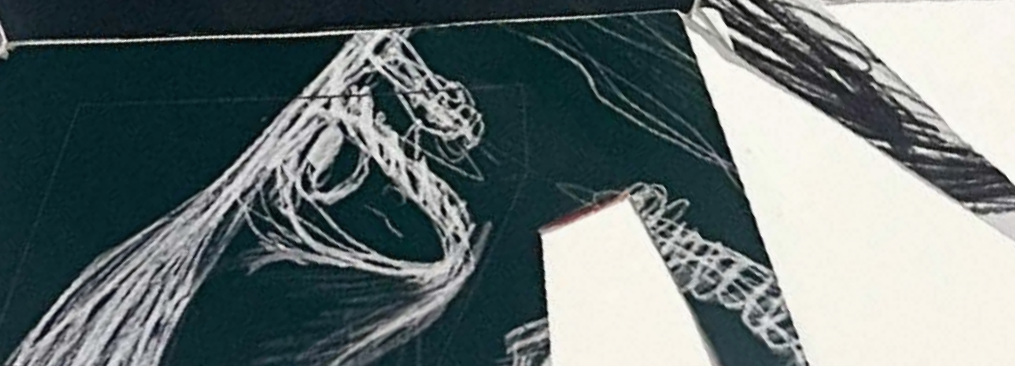
composition

drawings

typography



As my senses fade away,
 I find new ways to adapt and play
 In darkness, I discover light,
 And in silence, I hear my night.
 Though losing senses can be a trial,
 It opens up a brand new aisle,
 I learn to trust my intuition,
 And navigate life's new rendition.
 So even as my senses wane,
 I find the strength to keep the reign,
 For in adaptation I discover
 A life that's rich and full of wonder.





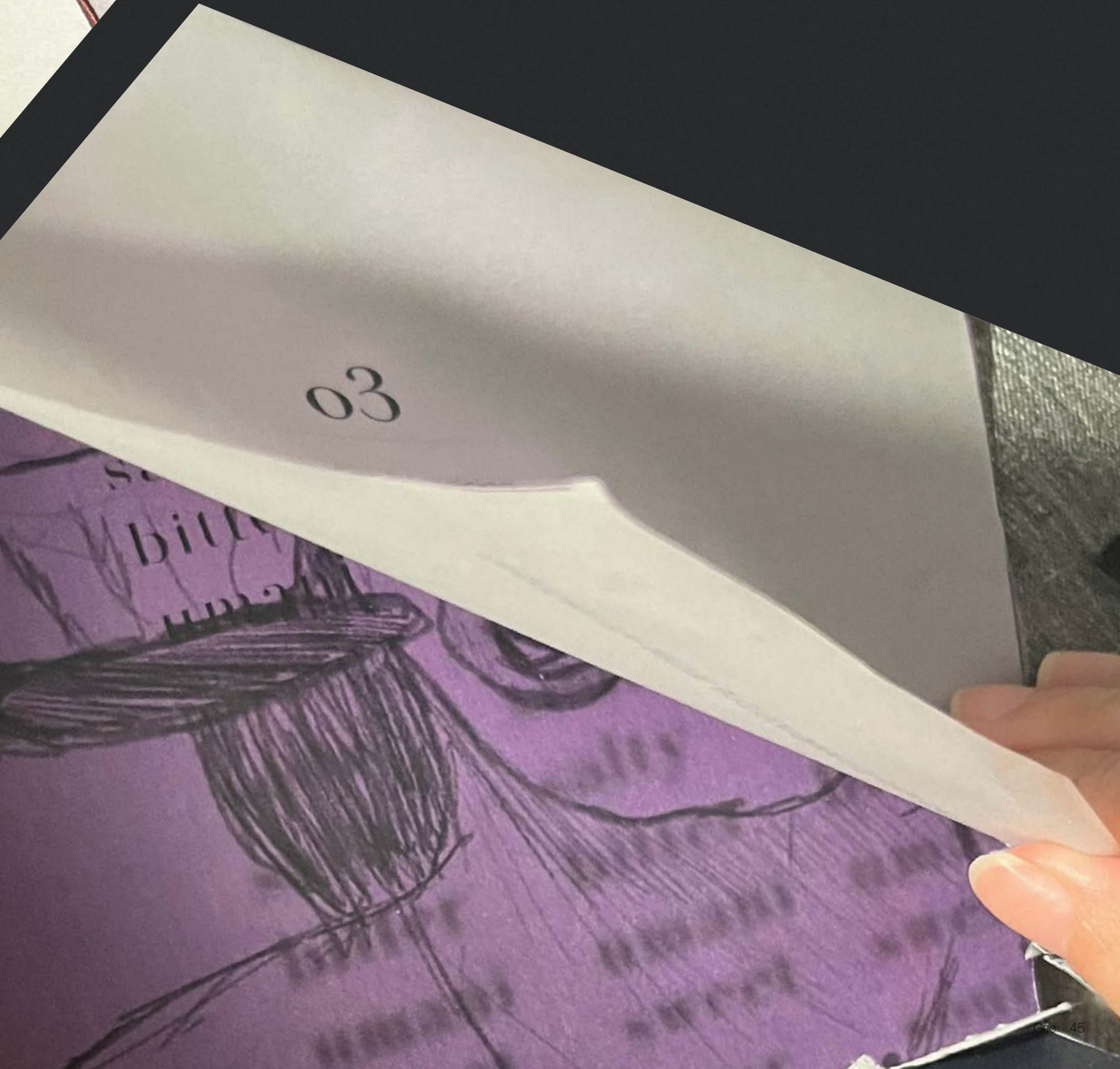
second **Iterations**

More dynamic colors and shapes.



more form **Try-outs**

Tried out circular cut-outs and even a transparent flap.



final try-out

As always in each project, as you near the end, the project will inevitably come to a closer arrival. A more true mock-up of the final outcome.

silent

Goodbye

Life through another pair of eyes,

02

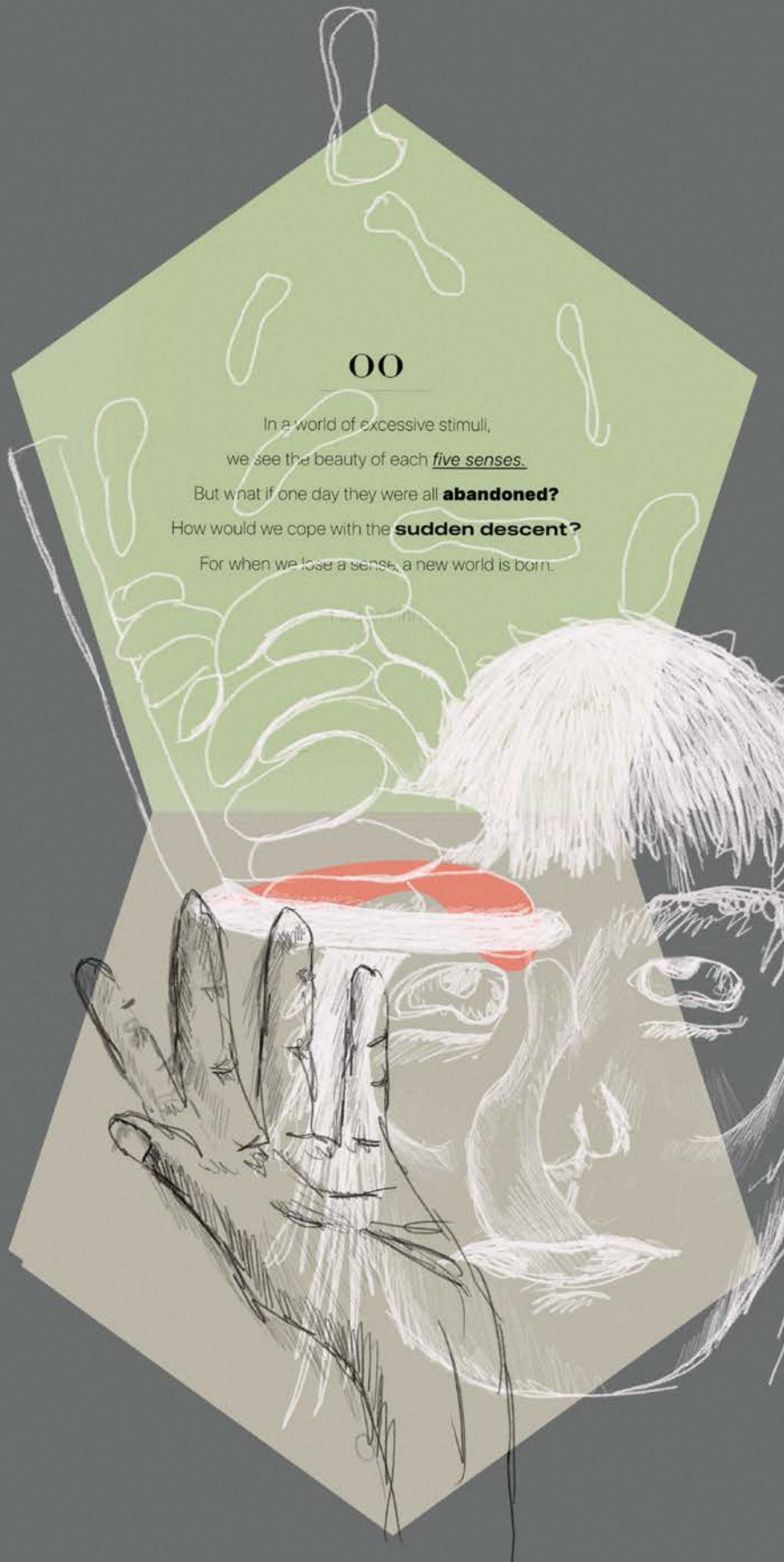
smelling anger

In skill to guide me, no fragrance to follow,
A word to guide me, no aroma to swallow,
For the sense of touch I slipped away,
Leaving a world of color and sound to play.



00

In a world of excessive stimuli,
we see the beauty of each five senses.
But what if one day they were all **abandoned?**
How would we cope with the **sudden descent?**
For when we lose a sense, a new world is born.



01

smelling through

When I close a flower over to close,
I see the world through its nose,
As my senses smell the world to stay,
Leaving me in a new way.



concrete Drawings

More rendered drawings and typography.

03

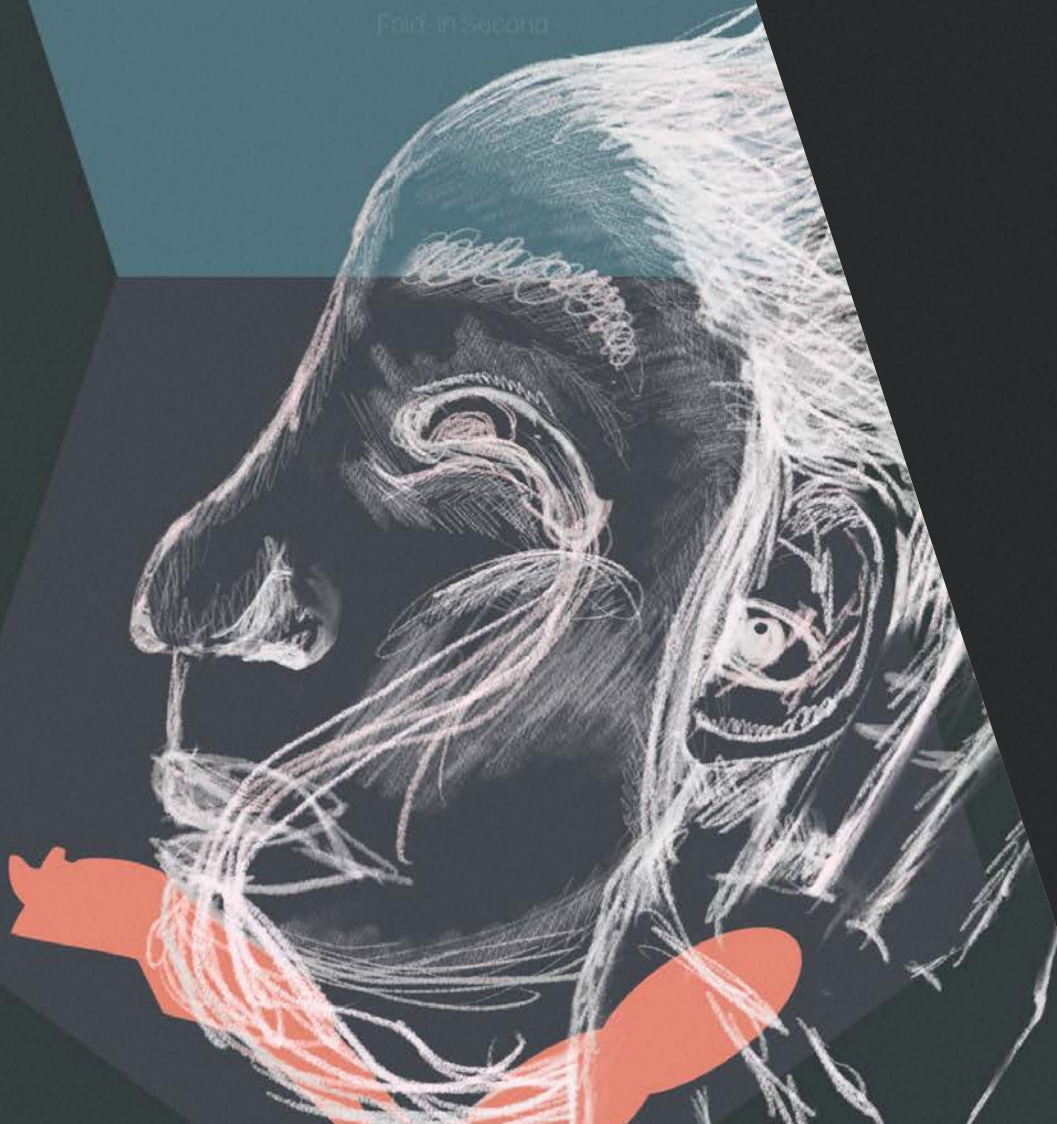
seeing bare thing

In darkness, my **hands** and **ears** become my **g**

No longer bound by what I see, but what **I feel**
every **sound** and every **touch**, a new world app

A walk through unfamiliar frontiers.

Fold-in Second





To

adapt

is the

new

Total IT Security

lierr



technological **Issues**

As always, there are some technological issues that always arrives. From the plotter distorting my drawings, the blade-cutter completely ruining one of my mock-ups and not being accurate. I had to be able to adapt to these issues since physical projects are more reliant on others.



about the final outcome

Describing the state and outcome of the project

Purpose:

To educate and show how people who lost a sense perceive and adapt to the world.

Outcome:

coffee table book in a pentagonal format

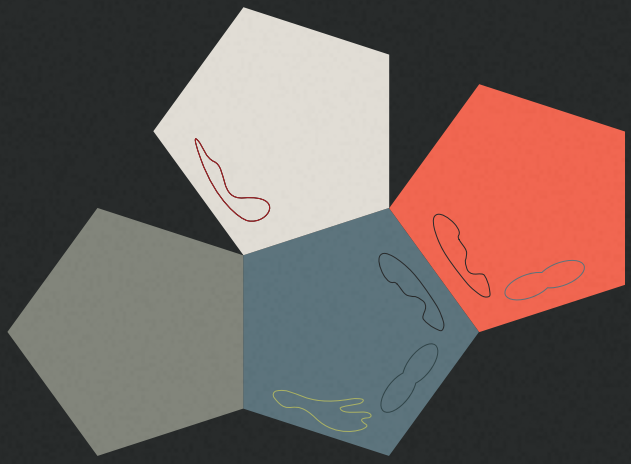
Audience:

20's to 30's, young working professionals

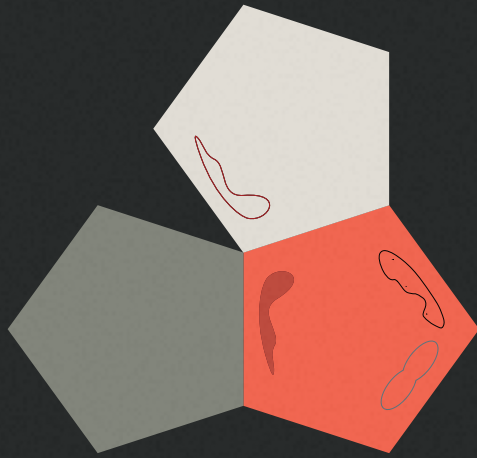
About:

As you open the book, it tells a story of the correlation between the emotions of losing your senses and the five stages of grief. Each stage of grief has their own assigned senses and will showcase the new enhanced senses. The die cuts on each sense will show how each senses's perspective will be enhanced. At each die cut is where I will physically insert the enhanced sense. The pentagonal shape represents each of the five senses and the stages of grief. Opening up the book, it blossoms into empathy and understanding for many.

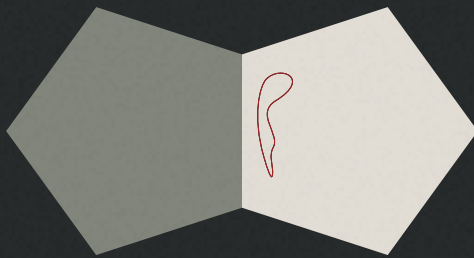
Creating a **whimsical** and an **imaginative** environment with human characteristics such as an extra long tongue, **scaled** sizes of noses, eyes, and etc. the typography also follows that direction with it being **warped** and a lot of **movement**.



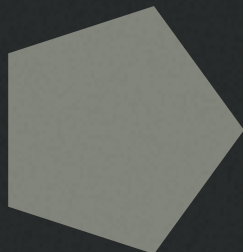
Third flip



Second flip



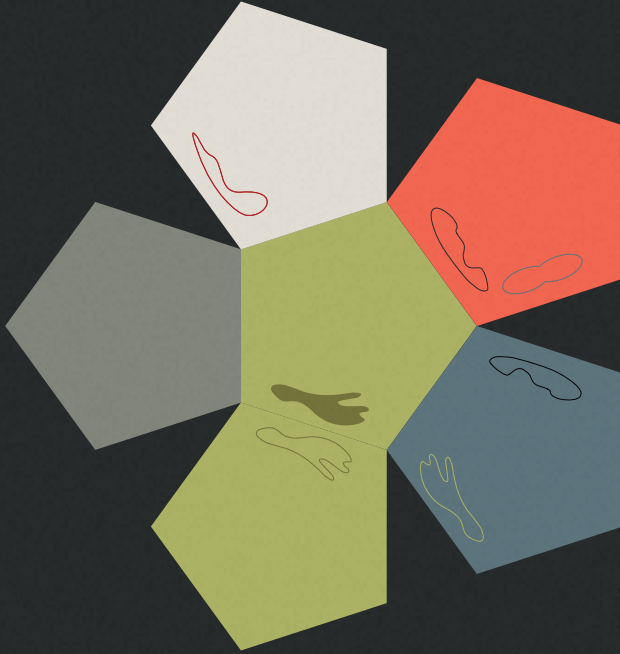
First flip



Cover



Fourth flip



Fifth Flip/full bloom

outline of the **Outcome**

Showcasing where the die-cuts and the pages are through a vector form.



Cover



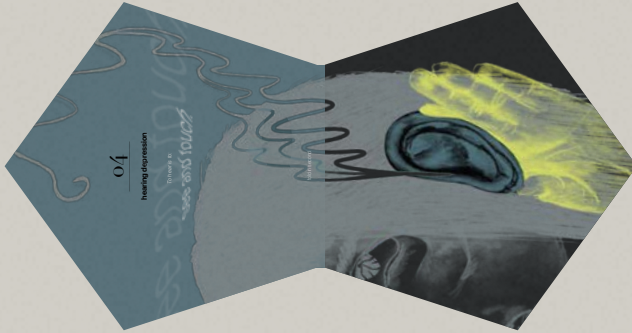
Tasting denial



Smelling anger



Seeing bargaining



Hearing depression



Touch Panel/Final flip



Easter-egg poem

flat Forms

General direction of research for the thesis project



final outcome

introducing **Silent**
Goodbye 8x8" coffee table book



cover **Flip to first page**

Opened up to "tasting denial" where a die-cut of a candy-wrapper dosed with a sweet smell.



magnet so the book will close and open cleanly



candy wrapper with a sweet scent.



closer smell











smelling the wrapper



second page

"Smelling anger" where the wrapper is embedded alongside a die-cut to a plastic and a gradient.



Loud plastic, loud noise when touched

Gradient for vision

rustling of the plastic





Creative Imagery

How to Visualize in All Five Senses



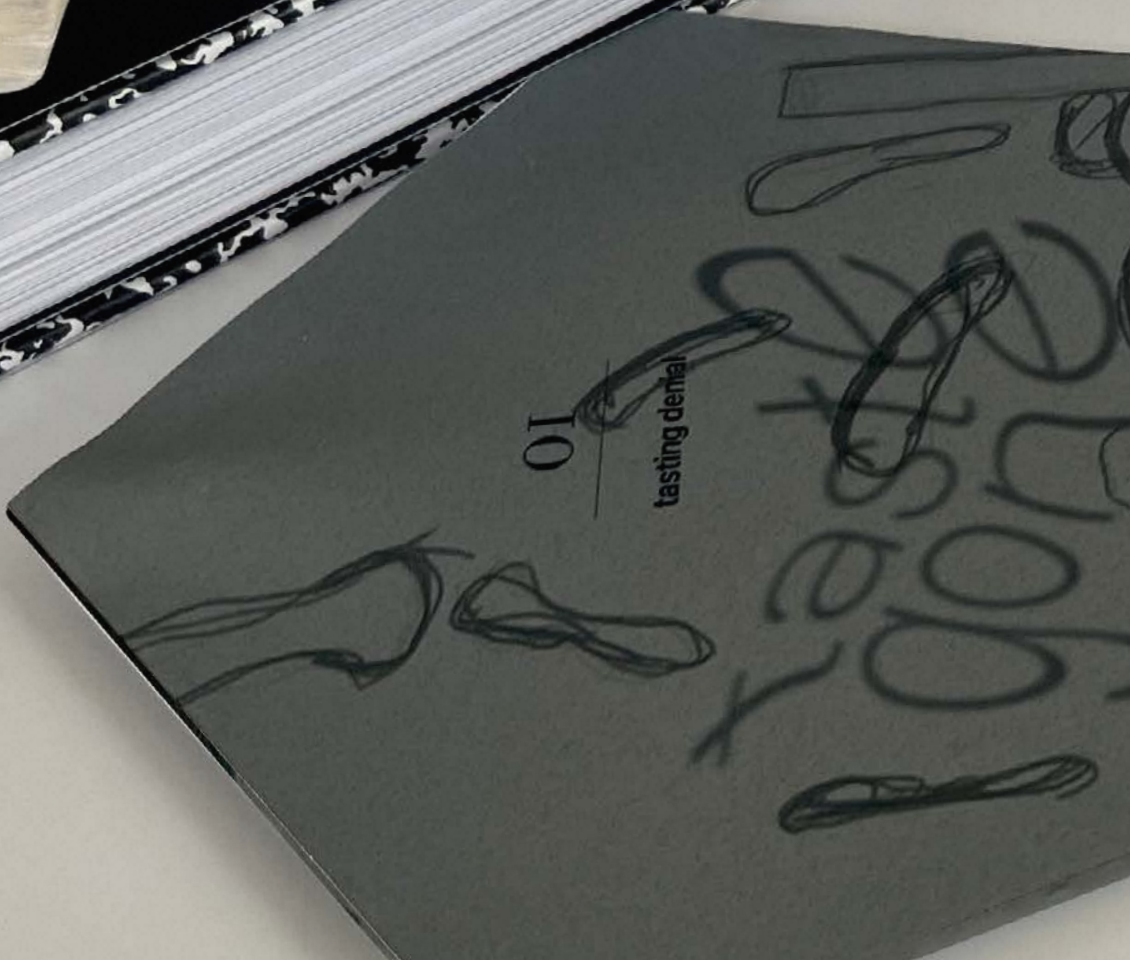
...ve series of images for healing,
...e goals, and reaching higher
...sciousness

FEZLER, Ph.D.

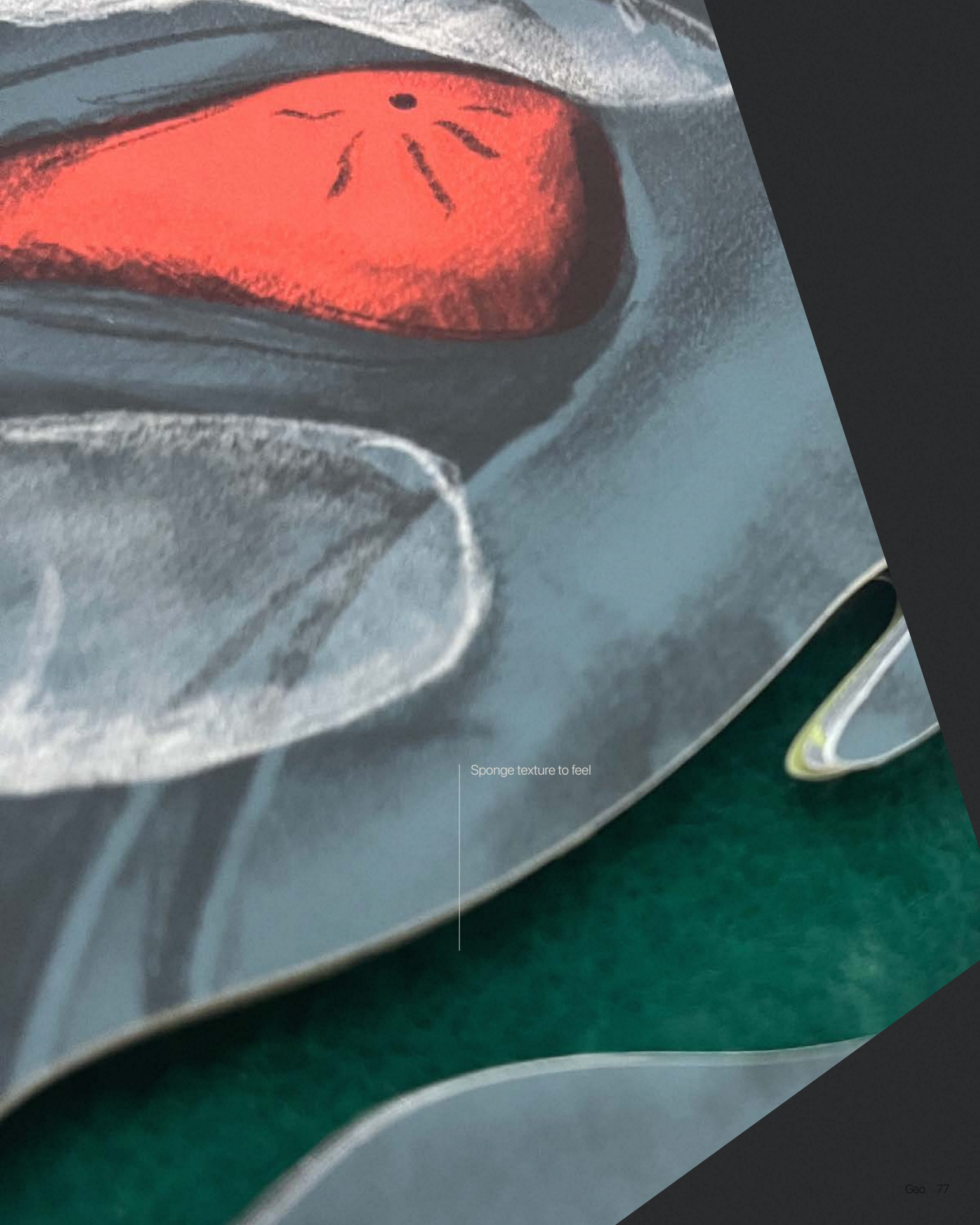
UNIVERSITY

...ple laugh,
...d (every once
...ne world

...ch
...el Bieru







Sponge texture to feel



sound in/

1000000





104

hearing depression

To hear is to

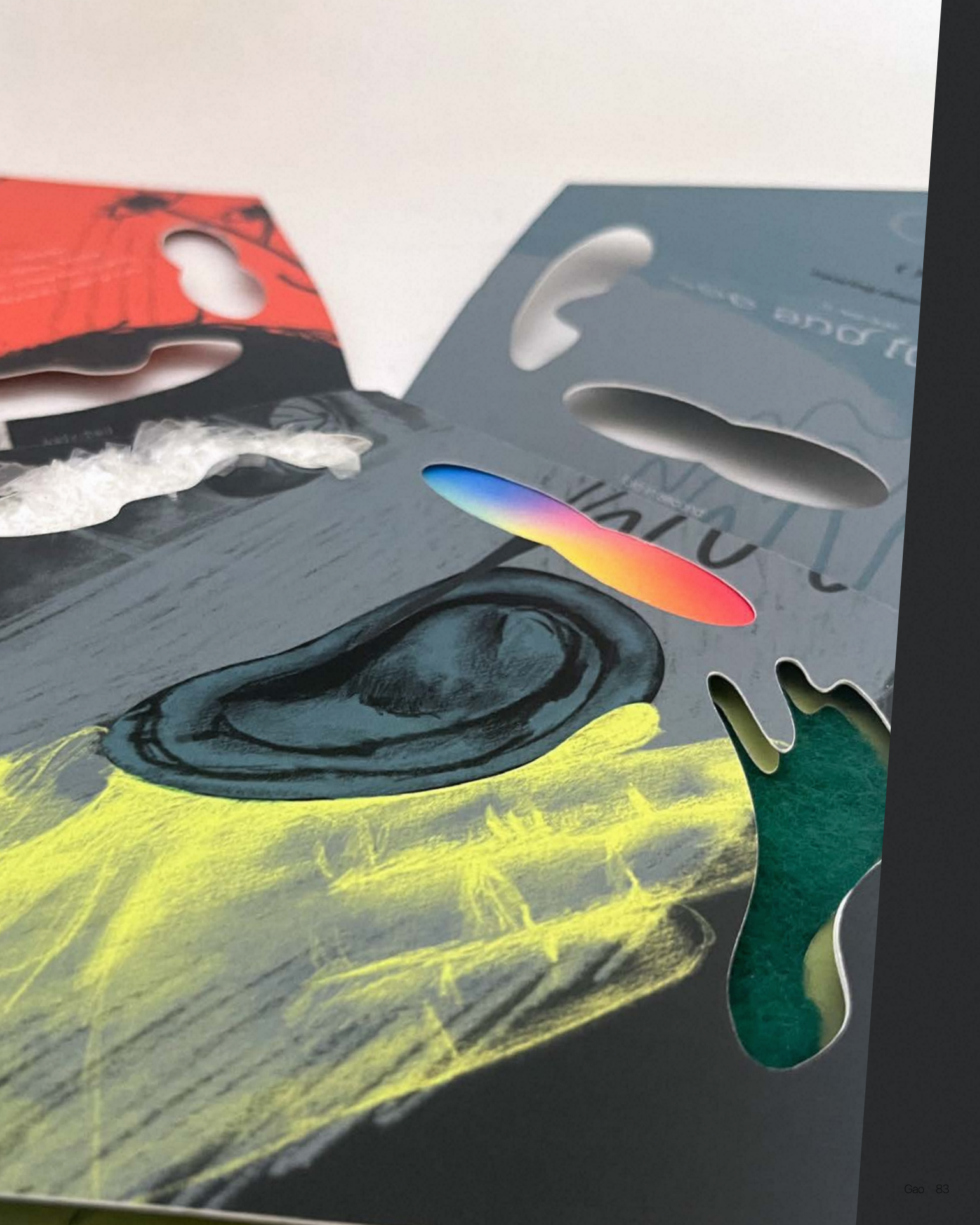
flip of the page



fourth page

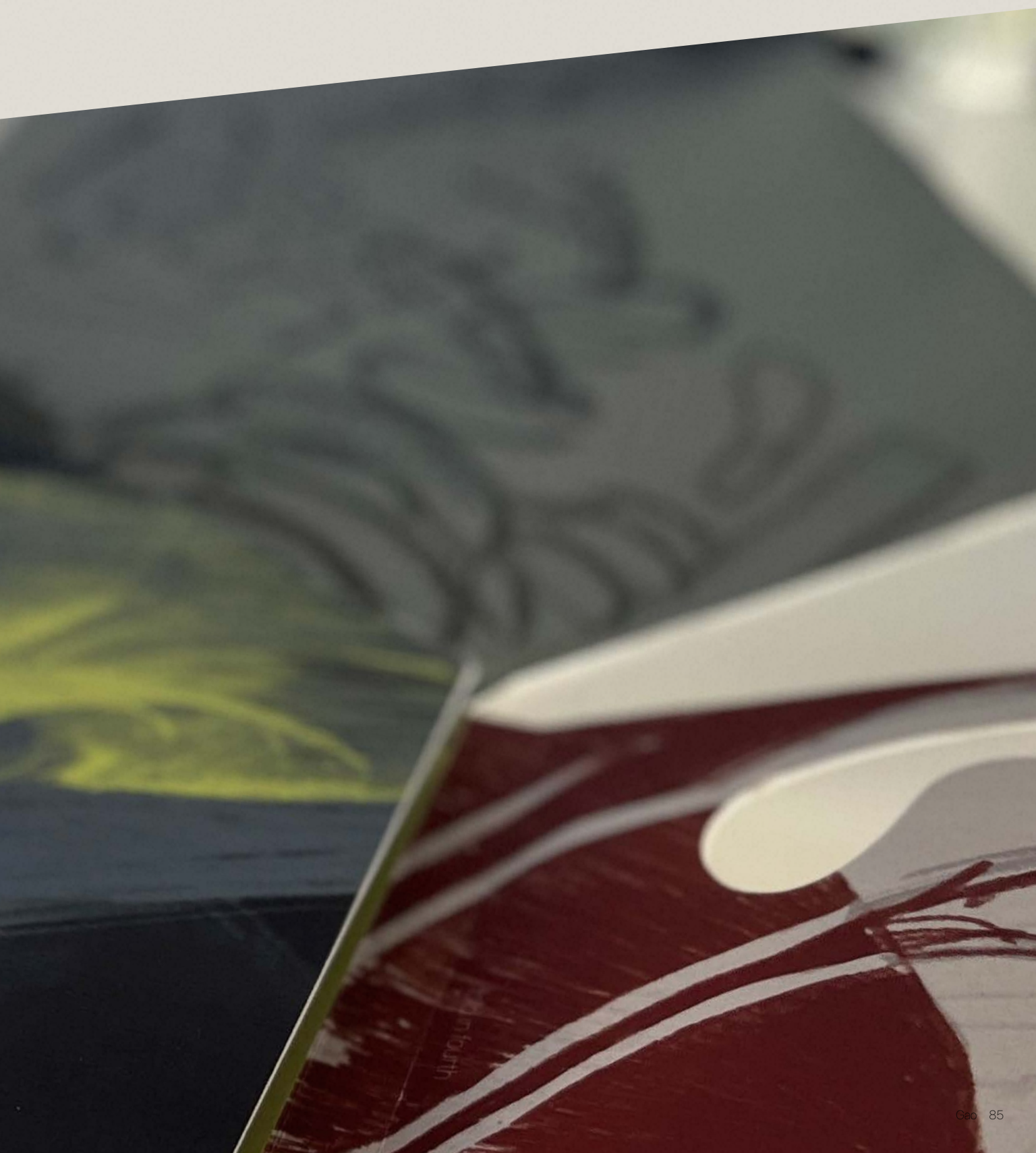
"Hearing depression" where the loud plastic and gradient is embedded with a die-cut to the texture.





A photograph of a dark, possibly black, surface. In the foreground, there is a piece of clear, crumpled plastic. To the left, there is a blurry, colorful object that appears to be a gradient of colors from red at the top to blue at the bottom. In the background, there are some faint, blurry shapes in green and yellow. The overall scene is somewhat abstract and artistic.

seeing the gradient





03
being bargaining
with every step I take in silence
I sense the world from deep inside
for though my vision may be gone
My hearing and touch carry on.

fold in third

fold in second



depression
To hear is to
and touch.

feeling of the sponge

to
adapt



Little sponge whips
are flowing to the
middle embedded.

is still
no



fold in second



...pie la
...nd (every one
...he world

04

hearing depression

To hear is to:

see and touch



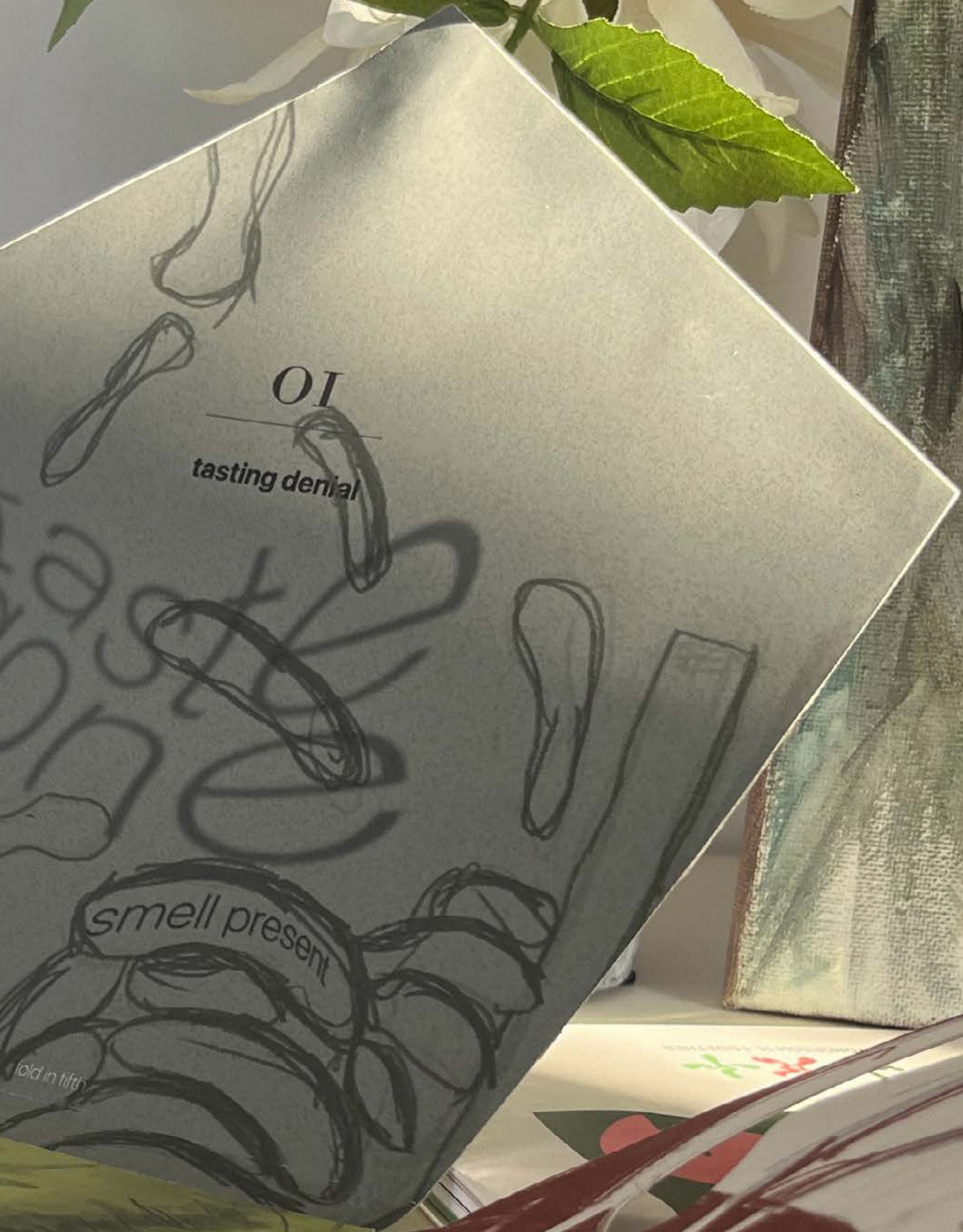
adapt



fold in first

is the
new
reality.





OI

tasting denial

smell present

fold in fifth



back side

Has an easter-egg poem to summarize the experiences of those who have lost their senses, alongside the drawings





As my senses fade away,
I find **new ways** to adapt and play.
In times of need, I learn to admit
And depart, I discover my might.

Though losing senses can be a trial,
It **opens up** a brand new aisle.
I learn to trust my intuition,
And navigate life's new rendition.

So even as my senses wane,
I find the **strength** to keep the reign.
For in hardship, I shall persevere,
A life that's rich and **full of wonder.**







Thank you.



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reflection

There was a lot of up and downs for this project. It has been my pleasure to work on this project, to showcase a world that is often ignored by many.

colophon

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