

How this retail concept came together will be illustrated from the communication challenge to the creative concept. The final product is an immersive retail experience:

'IIMUAHII'S Empower House' - A place where anxiety has no power over fashion.

This retail environment will respond to the needs of the **'SAD Souls'**, it generates brand awareness for IIMUAHII, and also creates an opportunity for the brand to have a point of sale.



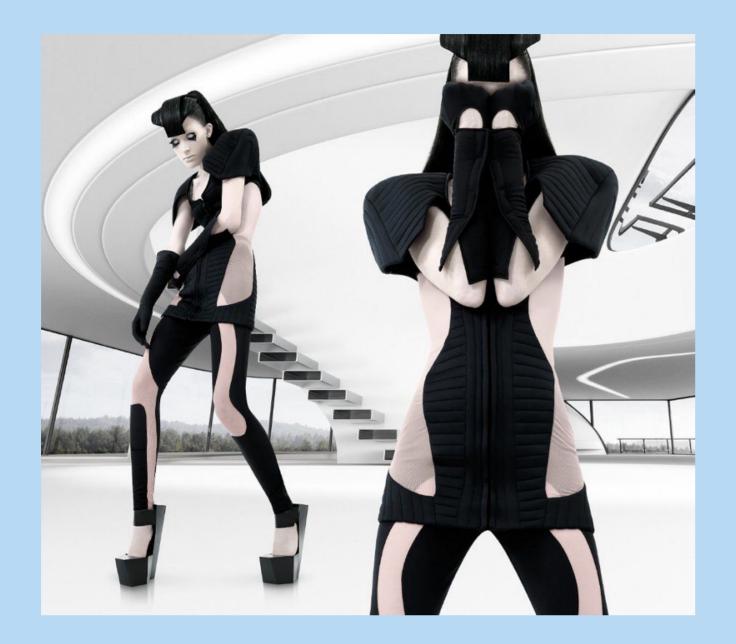
Immerse yourself into the futuristic world of IIMUAHII where the concept all becomes visible.

This concept book is an introduction to the new retail concept of IIMUAHII; 'Be comfortable in the uncomfortable.'



48-49

SOURCES



CAUSE

If you look at the state of the world, we are living in an *age of anxiety*. Anxiety disorders are the most common psychiatric disorders in the world. Almost 10% of the Dutch population suffers from a Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD), which is one of the most common anxiety disorders.

This wave of anxiety highlights an emerging trend that *tackles mental health on a creative level.* For instance, Virtual Reality is being used as therapy to treat social anxiety. Along with, positivity-inducing designs, that focuses on creating peaceful, comfortable and enjoyable spaces that reduces stress and anxiety. This is also due to the increase of anxious consumers; it changes on how they shop.

In addition, brands are now responding to the 'wellness trend' to help people relax and live their best lives by offering anti-anxiety products. Consumers who are stressed out are looking for a shortcut - *a magical cure*.



GOAL

The goal is to rethink how the brand: **IIMUAHII** can *treat*, *approach* and *engage* with anxiety. With the focus on implementing brand experience to improve consumer's experience in a retail environment, in particular consumers with social anxiety.

The strategy of building customer engagement is to add *game mechanics* in the retail experience, which includes a challenge. People have a tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend their capacities, to explore, and to learn. This challenge will give the customer a boost in strength and create a new layer of fun in the retail experience, which generates more interest and interaction with them.

Moreover, IIMUAHII deploys the products to the target group as a 'remedy' that offers solutions to their anxiety. With this, they can connect with the brand.

Ultimately, IIMUAHII doesn't have a point of sale. So, to jump back into the market, a *retail environment* will be mutually beneficial for both the brand and the target group.

PRONOUNCED "EEE-MOOAH-EEE"

IIMUAHII - A name that sounds very futuristic and alienesque. It's an avantgarde clothing brand that looks like it's from another planet.

The themes and subjects that are applied in the collections are not what people would normally consider beautiful.

Unordinary creatures, landscapes, architecture and art, are used as an inspiration to find that one shape or detail to implement in the garments.

Futurism, science-fiction and surrealism are at the forefront of IIMUAHII's fantasy concepts, which explores emotional settings that evoke strong feelings from the viewer.



IIMUAHII's soul is mystic, pushing to foster, rather than follow trends.







Retail as we know is dead. Shopping is no longer a battle of price and convenience, it's a race to create something customers can touch and feel. The idea of creating brick and mortar stores, where people want to hang out and gain an experience, sounds so obvious, but it turns out to be hard to execute and create destinations for customers that go beyond the act of purchase and immerse customers in a 360-degree brand experience.

For that reason, as well as the fact that IIMUAHII doesn't has a point of sale, the brand wants to *shake up the shopping experience* and *make an impactful retail store concept*. This concept offers a groundbreaking experience by immersing social-phobia customers fully into the brand.



MENTALITY GROUP:

She is creative, and has a **strong imagination**. She is ambitious, Performing well is her key driver.

She is an einzelgänger, and likes to being alone at home. She does not like parties, she has JOMO*. She is anti-social, partly because she finds herself **awkward**.

She longs for recognition and appreciation. But she isn't proud of being a conformist.

She is not *just* shy. She is not *just* an introvert. She has Social Anxiety Disorder. She is a SAD Soul.

She is above all, looking for a quiet and harmonious life.

*Joy of Missing Out



what made her into a **perfectionist**.

She believes in **self-development** and equality.

She is **highly sensitive** and modest. Her biggest fear is to fail.

IS SOCIAL **ANXIETY** DISORDER (SAD) JUST ANOTHER NAME FOR BEING **REALLY SHY?**

known as *social phobia*, is **the** fear of being negatively judged, or embarrassed in public. It involves intense fear for certain social situations — especially situations that are unfamiliar or in which you feel you'll be watched or evaluated may be so frightening that you

get anxious just thinking about

them or go to great lengths to avoid them, and disrupts your

Emotional signs and symptoms

life in the process.

- Excessive selfin everyday social
- Intense worry for days, weeks, or even months before an upcoming social situation.
- Fear that others will notice that you're nervous.

Physical symptoms

- Racing heart
- Turning red or blushing
- Feeling dizzy
- Excessive sweating
- Trembling
- Panic attacks

Behavioral signs

- to a degree that limits your activities or disrupts your
- Staying quiet or hiding in the background in order to escape notice and embarrassment.

Thus, social anxiety is not just being shy or self-conscious on occasion. It gets in the way of your everyday functioning and

> Here is some essential information about Social Anxiety Disorder that you need to know, in order to understand the target group and concept.

How to overcome anxiety

One of the most helpful things you can do to overcome social anxiety is to face the social situations you fear rather than avoid them - also called exposure. Avoidance keeps social anxiety disorder going. While avoiding may help you feel better in the short term, it prevents you from becoming more comfortable in social situations and learning how to cope in the long term. In fact, the more you avoid a feared social situation, the more frightening it becomes.

Side note: the

to go outside.

mentality group does

have social anxiety,

but not that extreme

that they don't dare



KEY INSIGHT

Social-phobia people find it difficult to get out of their comfort zone and therefore continue the avoidance behavior, which increases the anxiety. In order to tackle the fear, they have to face it.

KEY MESSAGE

Expose yourself to what gives you anxiety.

REASONS TO BELIEVE

IIMUAHII's clothing serves as a harness that offers comfort and protection, giving you more confidence and the courage to step out of your comfort zone.



PLAN OF APPROACH

IIMUAHII wants to create an immersive retail experience called: 'IIMUAHII's Empower House'

GOAL

The goal of the immersive retail experience is to educate social-phobia people about their anxiety, while challenging them to step out of their comfort zone. This will make them realize that they are stronger than they think, and help them to overcome their anxiety.



BIG IDEA

'Be comfortable in the uncomfortable'

Social-phobia people have more courage to face their fears if they're comfortable in their skin. IIMUAHII offers them that **comfort and protection** to be confident to step out of their comfort zone - the uncomfortable.

PAY OFF

Overcome anxiety by expanding your comfort zone.





STYLE

The shapes, materials and colors are translated from the visual identity of IIMUAHII, but also exemplifies social anxiety. Giving social-phobia people the look and feel which they can relate to, will make them feel understood and more connected to the brand. The style of the environment creates a place where they feel like they genuinely belong, as it appeals to their aesthetics.

IIMUAHII also wants to rejoice the fact that social-phobia people are different from the norm, and that it is beautiful to be an alien. The implemented avant-garde aesthetics of IIMUAHII will display social anxiety in a different; positive light. Moreover, let them perceive this during their darkest moments, they must focus to see the light - **all through a dystopian atmosphere**.

VALUES

Values that becomes visible in the retail environment are:

EDUCATION & EXPLORING

The immersive retail experience is based on the concept of a 'serious game', to educate about social anxiety in a fun way through a dystopian world.

PUSHING BOUNDARIES

The task-oriented game aspect **tests the limits** of the anxious customers by pushing them out of their comfort zone to face their fears.

EMPOWERMENT

The retail environment is **power-driven**; it strengthens abilities of anxious customers by giving them a confidence boost. Conveying that, if you are SAD, you can be strong like a

FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- The location of the retail environment is easy to find, due to the fear of socialphobia people of getting lost, and it needs to be located in an area that is quiet and not crowded.
- Crowded places make social-phobia people anxious, due to this there is only a maximum of 20 people allowed in the store.
- The **shopping route needs to be clear** to avoid stress of getting lost.
- The environment needs to have **plenty of space to breathe**. Messy spaces make
 anxious customers overwhelmed. Leaving
 ample space between garments on rails for a
 stress-free shopping experience.
- The environment needs to have minimal use of props and a limited select of products for a calming appearance.
- The staff consists of two members, but they're only allowed to stand at the checkout.
 So, that the customers can really take their time to explore the area, and experience it in a pleasant way without getting disturbed or anxious of the feeling being watched.

- The retail environment must be **calming**, by making it comfortable and enjoyable. With the exception of the Anxiety Zone.
- The environment needs to be sensorial tactical, implemented by tactile textures that increase engagement for a playful, immersive experience.
- The retail environment must explore energygiving properties, that reduces anxiety and evoke positive mood through chroma-infused lightning.
- The environment needs to be power-driven. Making the intended customers **feel powerful** to step out of their comfort zone; as well as in the shop as outside.
- Even though the look & feel of IIMUAHII is dystopic, it should energize and uplift the customer by the implemented colors and healing stones.
- The storytelling within the store must be short and clear where the intended customer feel related to, to feel understood and it truly makes an impact.
- The quotes and texts in the environment needs to **empower and motivate** the anxious customer to do the task in the Anxiety Zone.
- The whole experience must change the view of the anxious customer on their anxiety, positively. As a result, they feel more confident when leaving the shop.

SHAPES

Un-ideal forms of beauty, which would normally consider ugly or weird



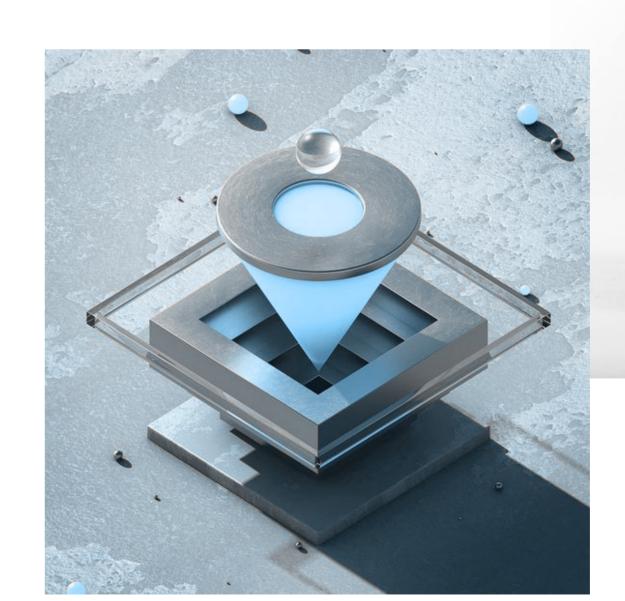
Social-phobia people often walk with their heads down because they feel awkward and strange. Like everyone's judging them. Translated into eccentric arched objects.





There is a stigma surrounding Social Anxiety Disorder, tending to involve the idea that social anxiety is normal and avoidable. That puts social-phobia people in a box as if it's just shyness.

Translated into boxy and geometric shapes.





[25]





Something alienesque' and out of this world

Social-phobia people often feel like they don't belong. They have feelings of alienation: disconnection from civilization. Translated into bizarre, spherical unearthly life forms.



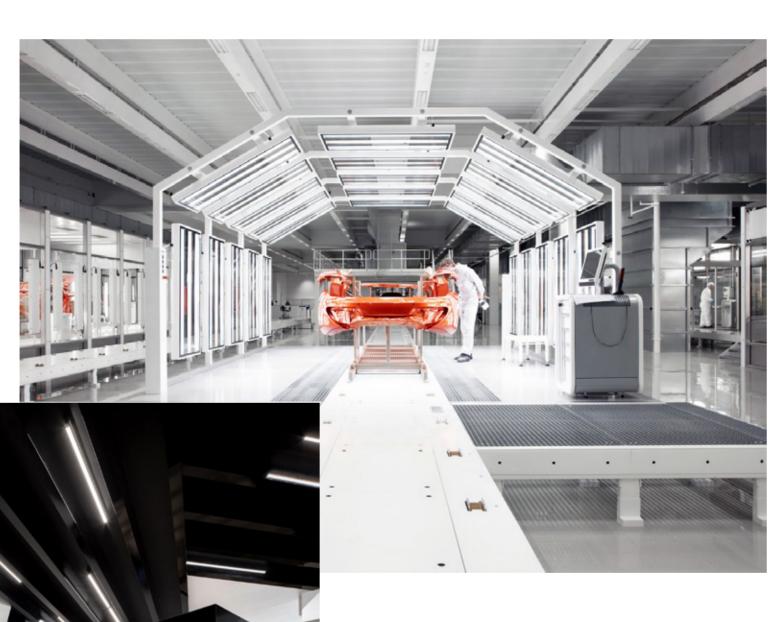
SHAPES



[27]



SHAPES



Social-phobia people often stay cloistered in their house, where they feel comfortable by not having to interact with anyone.

Translated into sculptural harness-like shapes.



Unique styles and distinguishing aesthetics embodying a superhuman theosophy

[29]

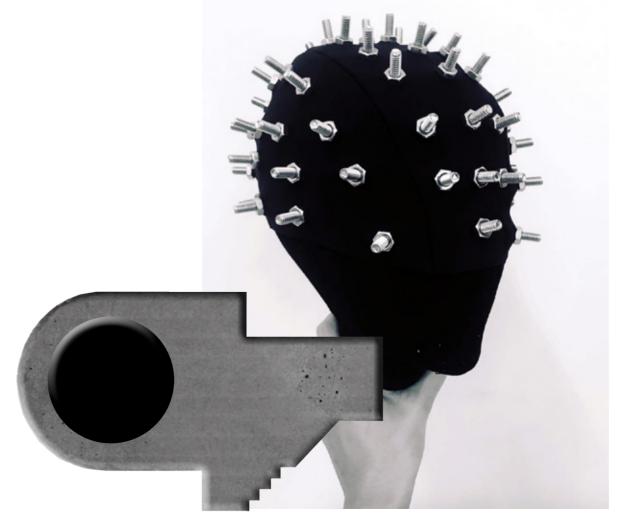


MATERIAL & COLOUR

many stay Tran meta and

Social anxiety makes people go inside themselves and try to 'protect' this secret, trying to hide their anxiety from others, because they fear of being rejected. Therefore, many social-phobia people stay in their dark closet.

Translated into strong metal in mysterious black and space white.



Science-fiction inspired aesthetics and futuristic settings set the tone

[31]

[30]

MATERIAL & COLOUR

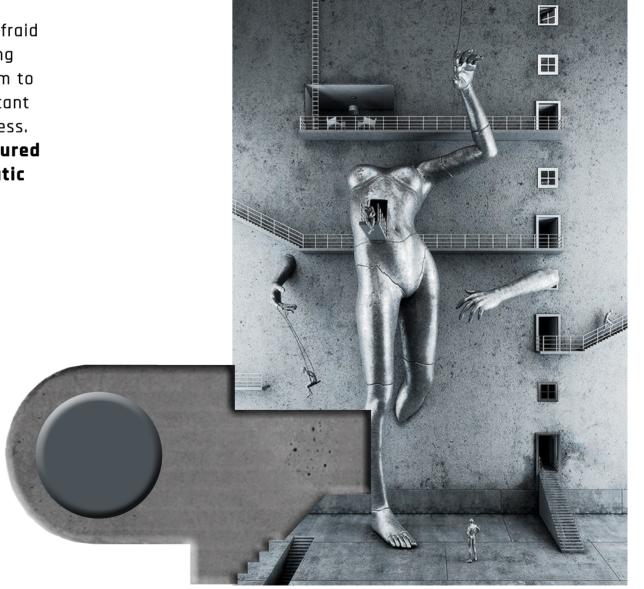


Cloudy sky
and floating
mass embodies
the powerful
transcendence of
the human form



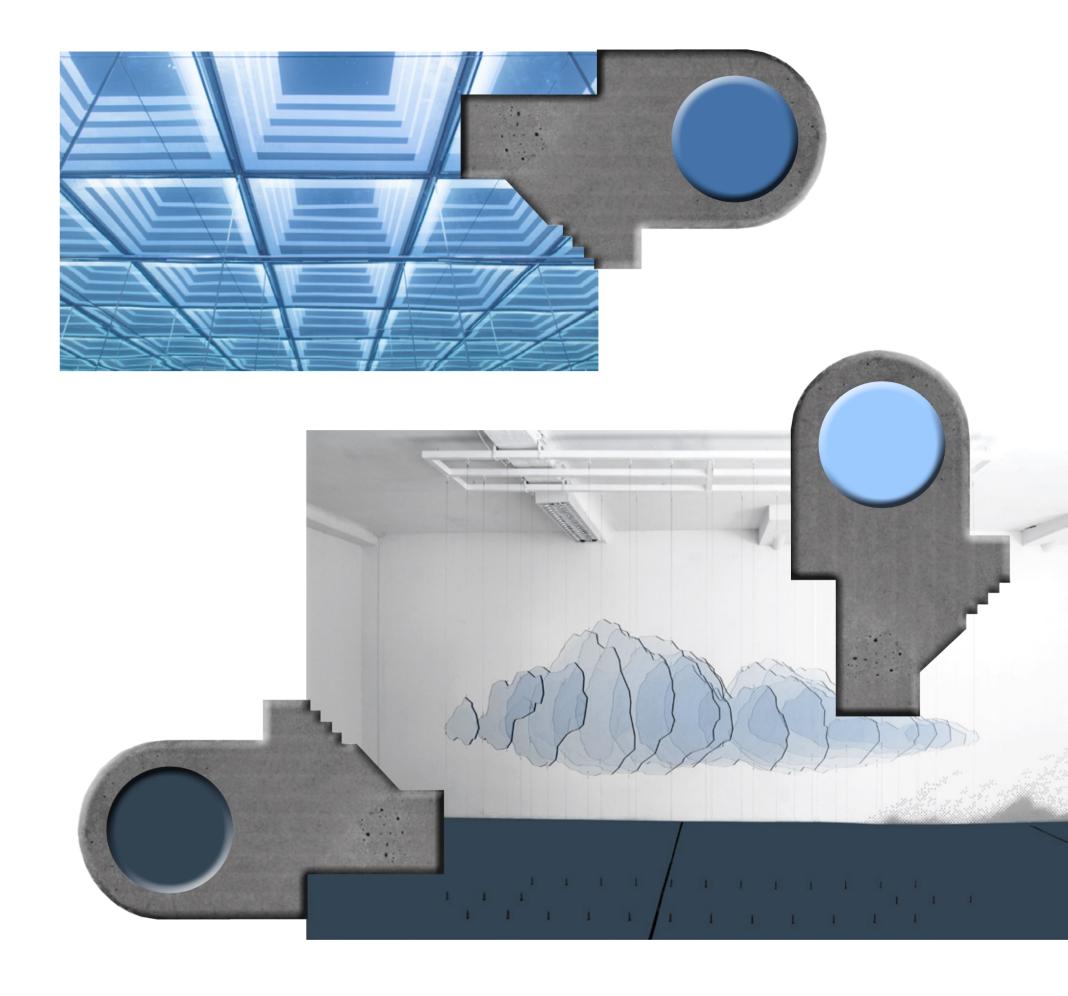
Social-phobia people are afraid of making mistakes or being imperfect. It's causing them to avoid things, and a significant amount of emotional distress.

Translated into raw textured concrete in monochromatic color palettes.



[32]

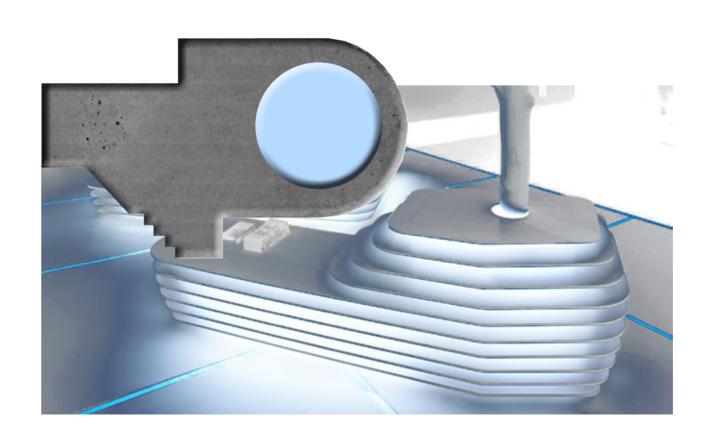




We all have an inner critic, but for socialphobia people that critical part is much
louder and meaner. Their inner critic
can make them feel anxious by telling
themselves that they aren't living up to
others' expectations. They long for an
internal harmony with their inner voice.

Translated into structured layering of
plastic in calming shades of blue.

MATERIAL & COLOUR



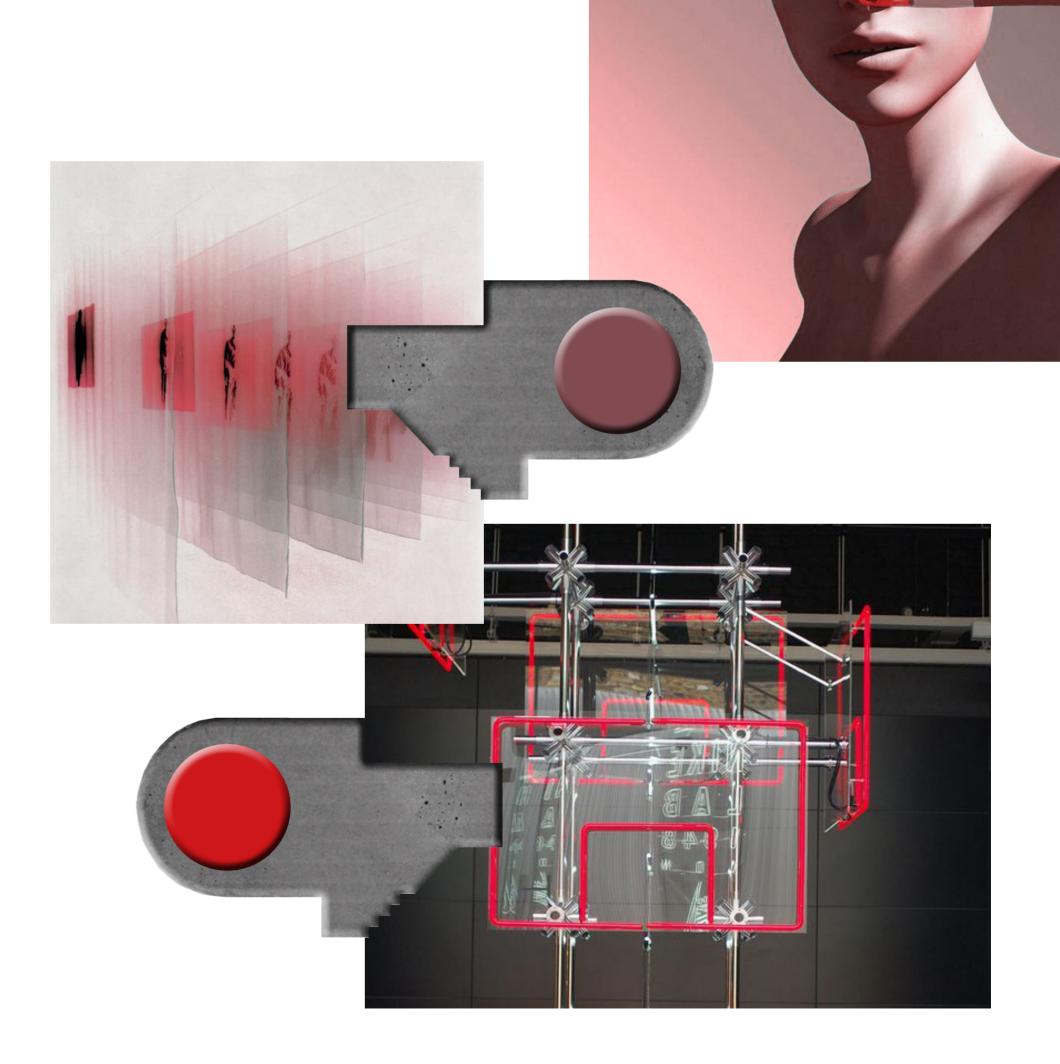
Constructured simplicity explores the light that shines from within

[34]



Social Anxiety Disorder often involves physical symptoms similar to panic attacks, including blushing, excessive sweating, trembling, difficulty breathing and heart palpitations that can make the person feel that they are in danger. They worry that other people will notice their fear.

Translated into transparant glass reflectives and blushy shades of red surrealism.





RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

The retail environment is divided into 3 zones:

[1] Learning Zone[2] Anxiety Zone

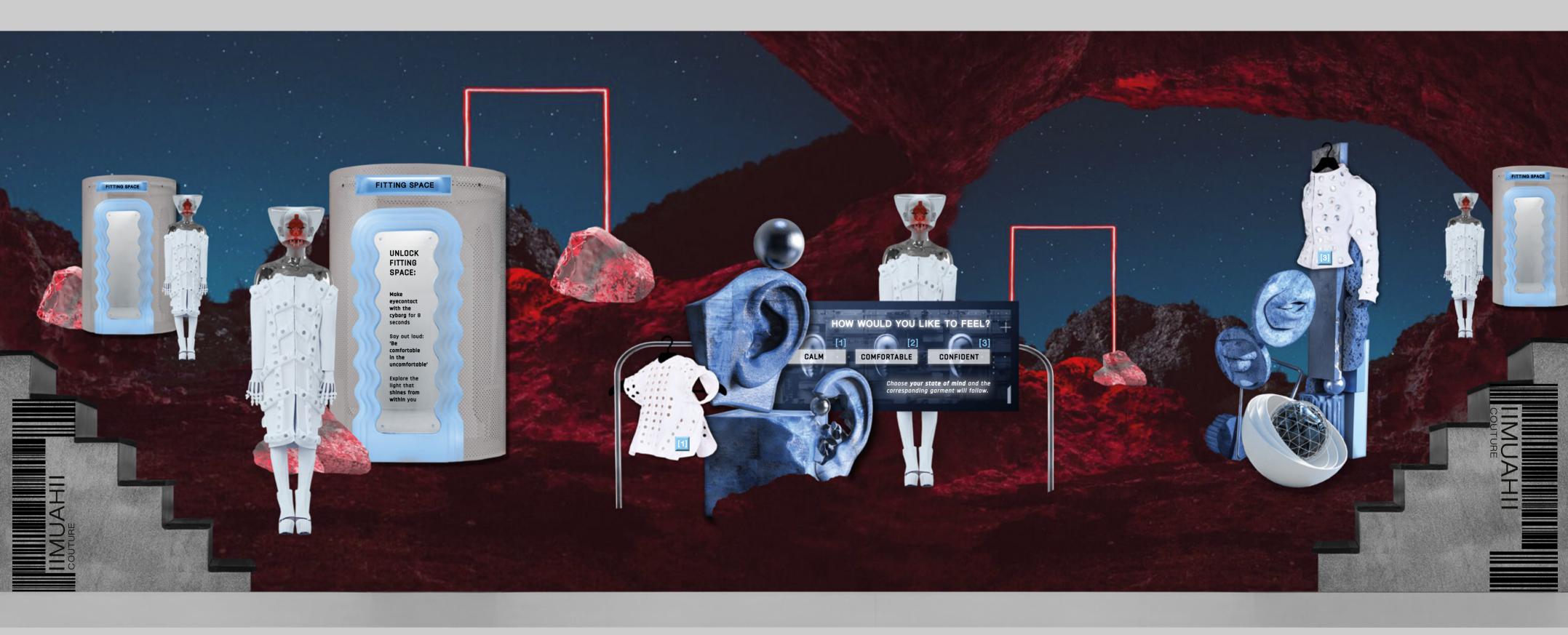
[3] Comfort Zone



[1]
LEARNING
ZONE

Redirecting attention from self to: environment

The Learning Zone is about 'How to Be a SAD Warrior'. The game aspect that is implemented in this zone is sensory stimulated, to educate the anxious customers about how to fight anxiety; 'focus on their surroundings'. Considering, social-phobia people are often stuck in their heads, and do not pay attention to what is happening in the environment. This way, the customer really gets submerged into the space and get to see, feel and touch the brand. This is not only valuable to the customer, but also beneficial for the brand. Dynamic graphics of IIMUAHII will grab the consumer's attention, and motivate them to focus on the experience.

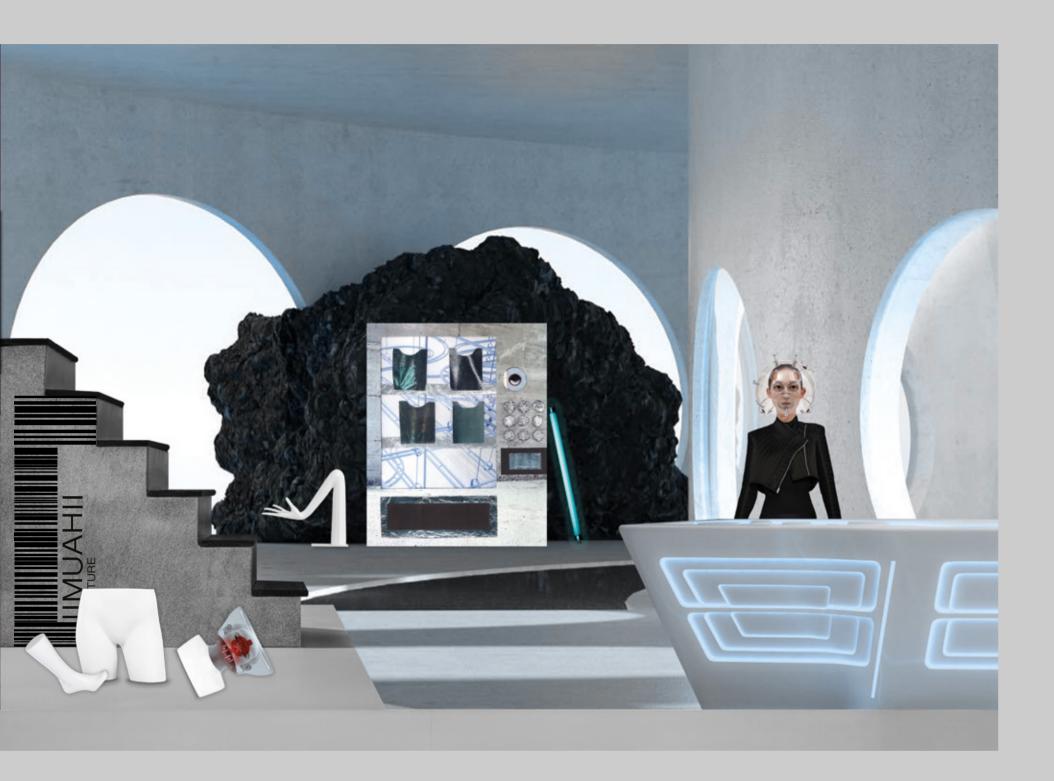


[2] ANXIETY ZONE

Redirecting attention from self to: task

The game aspect in this Anxiety Zone is a challenge, presented in the form of a task which has a lightly stress factor. As social-phobia people often are afraid of making eye-contact (with a real person), the task is to make eye-contact with the cyborg for 8 seconds (the stress level is not too high because it is not a real person). And say out loud: 'Be comfortable in the uncomfortable'. This is the concept but also a positive affirmation. It is a statement that

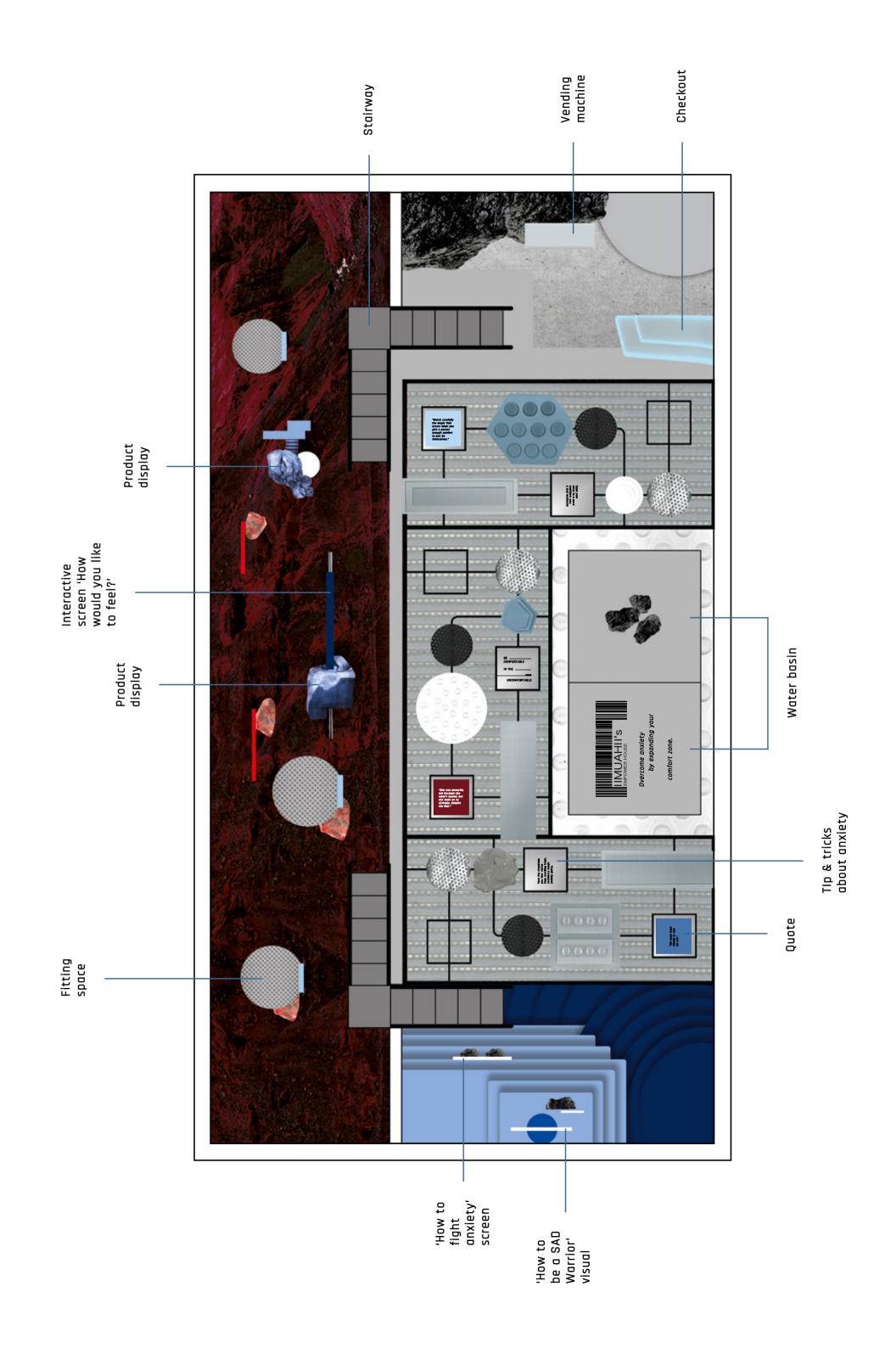
they repeat themselves, to gain confidence and belief in themselves. With this task they can get access into the 'Fitting Space'. In addition, to make the experience more interactive, there is a digital screen that reacts to the customer's feelings; they can **choose a state of mind** and try on the garment that goes along with it. The reward of this is that they can feel calm, comfortable or confident.



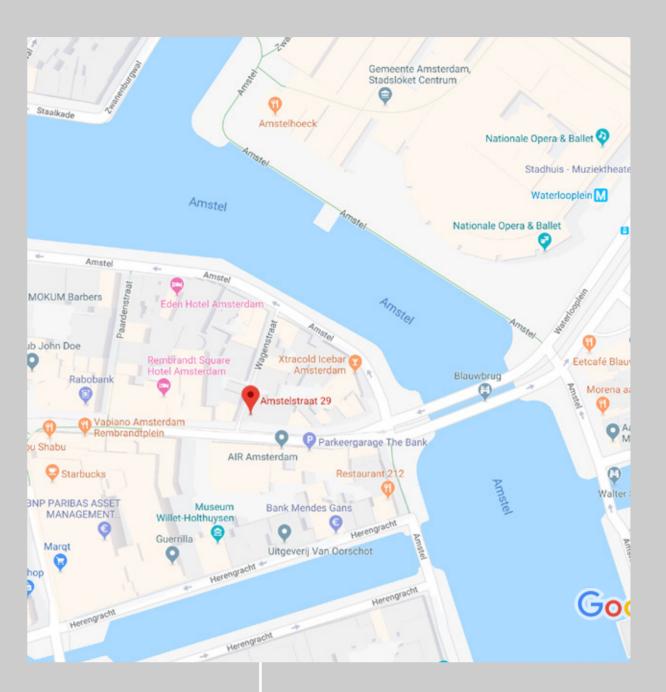
L3]
COMFORT

Redirecting attention from self to: task

The Comfort Zone will pass on the message that the anxious customer has just become a **'SAD Warrior'**, from passing the Learning Zone and the Anxiety Zone. By learning how to fight their anxiety, and doing the task in the Anxiety Zone, they've realized that they are stronger now. Their comfort zone is stretched. As a consequence, going to the checkout where a real person is placed in this zone won't be a big challenge anymore. They **feel the confidence and power** to deal with more social anxious situations from now on.





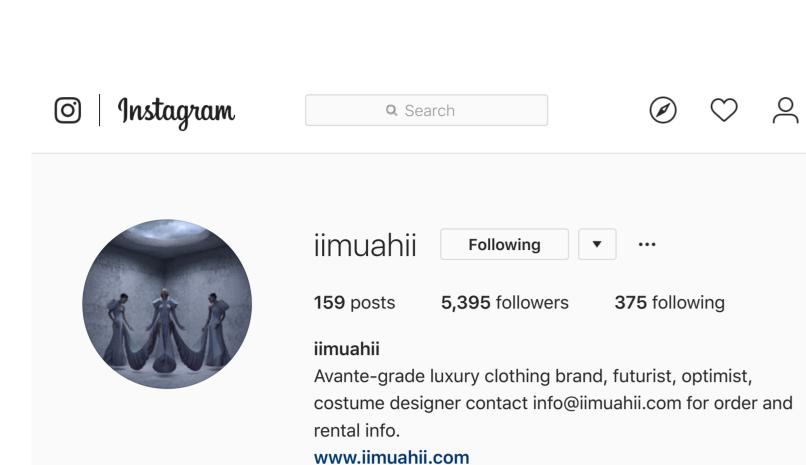


AMSTELSTRAAT, AMSTERDAM

The multifunctional and independent business space at Amstelstraat is located in the heart of Amsterdam, and will be a good location for 'IIMUAHII'S Empower House'. It is not that crowded as in the shopping areas, as it is in a small side alley where passersby sometimes just walk by to get to restaurants at Rembrandtplein. It is convenient for the intended customer, because it is a well-known place. They don't have to get anxious about getting lost.

The space has several entrances and a high-quality finishing level. It comprises approximately 139 m² of floor space, and is suitable for a shop that wants to radiate their own identity. With this location, IIMUAHII can really shine through with her avant-garde aesthetics.

LOCATION







TAGGED

Ⅲ POSTS















#socialanxiety



DIGITAL STRATEGY: ONLINE COMMUNICATION

General goal

The goal of online communication is to let the target group know that the brand IIMUAHII exists in the first place. As well, make them aware of 'IIMUAHII'S Empower House', that will be launched in Amsterdam.

Instagram

For outfit inspiration, creative projects or research, the target group will mostly seek online due to their social anxiety. They are visual creatures and spend a big amount of time online, as they don't go out a lot. Since Instagram is the most used social media channel, it will be the channel to communicate the launch of the immersive retail experience.

The Instagram posts will consist short texts that the target group feels related to. It will immediately grab their curiosity. The text on the post isn't just to inform; it needs to intrigue on a mysterious way and convince, making the audience curious to actually visit 'IIMUAHII'S Empower House'. Visuals that appeal to their aesthetics will be used to convey this and attract them.

The post will increase brand awareness, boost intended customer's engagement and more SAD Warriors will be created.

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