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SHARED ROOTS:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF
CULTURES AND NATIONS MANIFEST THROUGH ART AND
DESIGN

by

HANNAH BALDWIN

*thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree*

of

UNIVERSITY HONORS

in

*Interior Design
in the department of Art and Design*

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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

Logan, UT

Spring 2020

ABSTRACT

Design creates culture. Culture shapes values. Values determine the future.

— *Robert L. Peters*

The way that people influence their surroundings through art and design is a fascinating lens through which to view culture and history. Visual arts, including architecture, illustrate how cultures meld and shape one another's histories and values as they come in contact. Pattern making, in particular, is found in every culture as a way of recording and making sense of the patterns of life. This project seeks to highlight the interconnectedness of cultures by examining the history and cultures of three European countries through the lens of pattern design. Field research was conducted in Italy, Romania, Spain by visiting museums, natural and historic sites, talking with locals, and examining art and architectural styles through sketching, photography, and a series of memoirs. The culmination of this project is a line of coordinating, but distinct, wallcovering designs that represent each of the three countries. The collection illustrates the individual yet interconnected natures of these countries, emphasizing the beauty of being distinct yet connected.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude to Jack Baldwin, my travel companion, for encouraging me in my work, providing critiques, and being a supportive husband. To Susan Tibbitts for introducing me to the world of pattern design, and offering critiques, technical help, and encouragement. To Steven Mansfield for offering tireless advice and critiques. To Darrin Brooks for his endless passion for design and supporting me in my design work. To Holly Murdock for her extensive knowledge of design, encouragement, and coaching. I could not have asked for a better capstone mentor. To wonderful individuals from Romania, Spain and Italy for being so welcoming and letting me get to know them and their cultures. To the Caine College of the Arts for providing facilities and space for me to create. I would not have been able to dedicate the time required to graduate from the Honors program without the financial support of the Seely-Hinkley, Dover, and Hansen families in the form of scholarships. I could not have graduated with a BID without each one of you.

CONTENTS

abstract.....	i
acknowledgments.....	ii
patterns of culture.....	1
introduction.....	1
approach.....	2
italy.....	4
romania.....	19
spain.....	36
conclusion.....	50
reflective writing.....	51
works cited.....	53
appendix a: travel log.....	54
a1. italy.....	54
a2. romania.....	55
a3. spain.....	56
appendix b: photography.....	57
a1. italy.....	57
a2. romania.....	71
a3. spain.....	84
author's biography.....	98

PATTERNS OF CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Culture and design share a cyclical relationship. People's behavior and values influence the way things are designed and then those very things that were shaped by culture begin influencing behavior and values. This interplay has been occurring for millennia. When one starts to view history and art from this viewpoint, the line between the designer and the designed becomes blurred. It begs the question, who is designing who? However, as one begins to observe the patterns of culture influencing design, design influencing culture, cultures sharing design with others and in effect, design sharing culture, one can gain insights on the interconnectedness of people, places, and things.

Fritjof Capra, and Austrian-American physicist once said, "... understanding of life begins with the understanding of patterns" (Capra & Luisi, 2014, p. 94). Although he was speaking with regard to physics, this statement holds true when applied to the relationship between culture and design. Understanding patterns, both figurative and literal, can help one see how humanity fits itself into the fabric of the world.

Life operates in ebbs and flows, undulating patterns that often go unnoticed. A pattern is a natural or orchestrated repetition of elements. There are infinite types of pattern. Patterns in time, events, sound, behavior, objects, and nature. For those who have an eye tuned to the patterns of the everyday, existence takes on deeper meaning as they attempt to replicate and abstract those patterns (Hicks, 2010, p. 14). It gives one a sense of place and meaning. Throughout history, man has made visual patterns to explain the patterns constantly occurring around us. Pattern making has long been a way of conveying meaning (Gordon, 2011). From the tombs of the Egyptians, to the tattoos of the Maori, to the temples of the Romans, to the tapestries of Europe, to the mosaics of the Middle East, to American pop-art, pattern making plays a role in every culture. They are used record religion, genealogies, seasons, moon phases, histories, politics, superstition, hopes, beliefs and values (Gordon, 2011, pp.202-245). Man-made patterns document and give context to the patterns of life.

As an exploration into the world of pattern, design, and culture, this project seeks to illustrate how a culture and its design can influence the viewpoint of a person and in turn, their design work. Part of this project included visiting three European countries, Italy, Romania, and Spain, and observing the interrelated natures of their cultures and design as well as their interactions with each other. From those discoveries, a collection of wallcovering designs would be developed to represent each of the three cultures. Following is a description of the approach.

APPROACH

As I approached this project, it was very important to me that I visit each of the three countries in person. I wanted to immerse myself in each culture as much as possible. My purpose was to explore the relationship between culture and design in these countries, as well as their connections to each other. I sought to view the cultures through as many lenses as possible. Through architecture, history, folklore, religion, food, nature, and art. I visited museums, talked and ate with locals, wandered the streets, hiked, read, went to markets and met craftspeople. During these experiences, I tried to attune myself to the patterns occurring around me. The patterns of buildings, people, nature, and light helped me find a sense of rhythm and place. Noticing pattern gave me a little view into the interconnectedness of art, people, and culture.

Photography played an important role in documenting my travels. I took an artistic approach, focusing mainly on colors, textures, and small details rather than full images. The idea was to capture the sense and essence of the place rather than just an image. I hoped that by doing this I would be able to capture patterns of place and culture that could then influence my own patterns. A collection of these photos can be found in Appendix B.

"A color, a texture, or a pattern can become very personal, like a Proustian key to a place in one's memory" (Hicks, 2010, 13). This project became just as much a study of how these cultures affected me and my design as it was an exploration of the cultures themselves. Writing memoirs played a key role in design development because they allowed me to pinpoint the places and patterns that elicited the greatest emotional response. By writing experiences into a story, and romanticizing them just a bit, I've found that it allows me to identify the keys that unlock meaningful memories. The following descriptions of each country are a combination of traditional research, field observations, and my own personal impressions. The intent is to provide background information on each country and then paint a picture of how the patterns of a culture influenced the view of an individual and how they were then translated into new patterns with lives of their own.

Pattern making is not a series of segmented procedures with one step happening after another. It is fluid. Exploring nature, human nature, the nature of the cities, and mother nature, I felt connections to these places that were already beginning to take shape in the form of lines and colors. As I walked the streets, and talked with locals, patterns were forming in my mind. Albeit, not all of them were good and some were discarded, but weeding and pruning is all part of the design process. With each experience, the ideas

*“I observe everything that is part of our everyday
life searching for the essence of these things . . . Out
of the observation of the world, there emerges and
abstraction, a pattern, which finds its own life . . .”*

— Allegra Hicks (Hicks, 2010, p. 14)

ITALY

HISTORY AND STORIES

rome: enduring life

It seems appropriate to start with Italy because it has had such a large influence on so many other cultures. Anciently, Rome had a heavy influence in Europe and the Middle East. Roman ruins can be found across these regions and pieces of their culture still live in many countries' language, politics, architecture, and art (Cronin, 2015).

The architecture of Italy has permeated cultures around the world. The iconic Corinthian columns and archways of Rome are still seen in architecture today. Many United States government buildings were patterned off of Roman designs. The building style is not only beautiful, it carries with it a cultural message of power and authority which is why that style is so often used in government (Gardner, 2015). The "triumphal arch" is used in many countries to commemorate a victory. As I walked the forum, I was struck by how imperious the crumbling ruins still appeared. They still communicated the power of Rome in their scale and design. However, these designs are not completely Roman. The Romans took the idea of columns from the Greeks as well as their love of symmetry (Gardner, 2015). No design is ever truly one's own. It is always inspired by something else. The patterns adorning many Roman buildings are derived from nature. Many feature one of the oldest plant species in the Mediterranean, the acanthus leaf. Anciently, it was recognized as a symbol of enduring life (Lewis & Darley, 1986). Looking at the friezes ornamented with this leaf, one can almost hear faint echoes of the Roman Empire's wish to endure forever. Observing architecture around the world, one might say that in some ways it has.

florence: living statues

During the Renaissance, Italy again became a major cultural influencer. Many of the discoveries and values that arose during this time are still a part of modern thought. A competition to design the doors of St. John's Baptistery in Florence marked the beginning of a shift from belief in the importance of the collective to the importance of the individual. Up until that point, art was done anonymously for the glory of God. This was the first time in centuries an artist would be recognized personally for their skill. This began a burst of artistic innovation creating an atmosphere where artists like Raphael and Michael Angelo could thrive (Gardner, 2015). The change in the design process of the baptistery, led to a change in culture, which led to further advances in art, which then influenced cultures beyond the city of Florence. The belief in the power of the individual, and idea of the 'Renaissance Man' are themes that can not only be seen in the

art and design that sprung from that golden age but in the foundational values in many Western cultures (Cronin, 2015).

The day was rainy, the streets, were wet and the wind was cold, yet nothing could dampen my excitement to explore the city of Florence. I had studied about it in school for years, and longed to go there for just as long. I remember standing in line to see the David and hardly believing I would finally get to see this celebration of humanity. Upon entering the building, I was knocked speechless at the sight of the famous sculpture. Of course I had seen it numerous times in photos, but those were nothing in comparison to the real thing. I had seen sculpture before, but never anything so life-like. I almost expected to see his chest rise and fall with breath. I was amazed at how much painstaking effort was put into portraying a single individual. After standing in awe for an unknown amount of time, I ventured deeper into the museum. I entered another gallery. This one was full of busts of the wealthy people of Michael Angelo's era. They were lined on shelves that stretched up to the ceiling. It gave the impression of a crowd of people pleasantly chatting together. Their faces were all so distinct, and expressions so individual I felt as if I could tell their personalities just by looking at them. As I walked through the space, a tune I once learned on the piano came to mind. The melody, entitled "The Living Statues of Pemberly," still brings back memories of Florence every time I hear it.

venice: streets of water

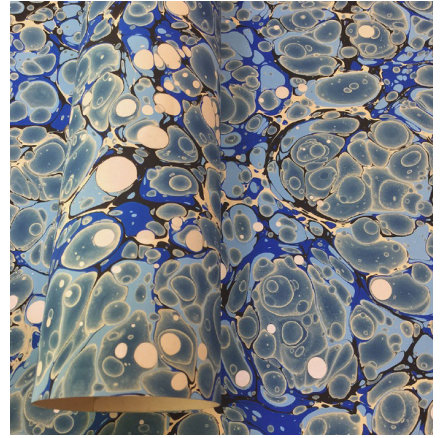
Italy is not only known for its magnificent sculpture and paintings, Venetian hand-blown glass and marbled papers have been coveted commodities for centuries. Talking to craftspeople, I was impressed by how directly these peoples' lives were shaped by design. The businesses are generally passed down from father to son. Each family's trade shapes the life of the new generation before it is even born. All time is spent mastering the craft, and one's very existence is tied to the art.

Venice was a center of trade from the 9th century to the 14th and is recognized as the first international financial center (Coispeau, 2016). It was a melting pot of culture as people were able to experience art, design, and goods that passed from exotic lands through the gates of Venice and into Europe. Today, Venice is still very much a mixing places of cultures as it is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Europe. On every street a different language can be heard.

"All that glitters is not gold" (Shakespeare, 1600). Wandering the maze of streets and canals this quote came to mind. Certainly the city didn't glitter. The buildings were old and crumbling but still possessed a sort of dignity. The canal water was murky and dull but had a distinct light green tint I had never seen before in water. I had heard from a lot of people that Venice was a bit of a let down. I heard it was dirty and smelly and not worth my time. I still went though. I went with the hope of finding a city of unpolished gold. What I found was iridescent hand-blown glass, colorful hand-marbled papers, passionate craftspeople, charming accordion music echoing through the alleys and streets that weren't even streets. The idea of canals as roads captivated me. It made me feel like I was in another

INSPIRATION

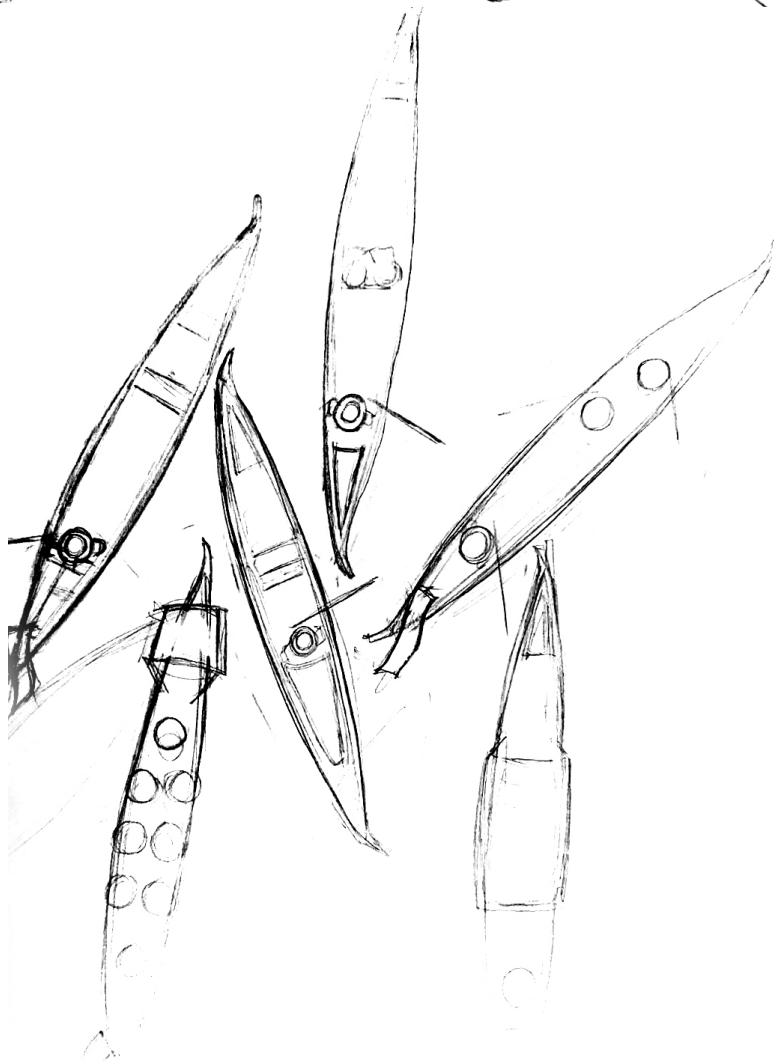
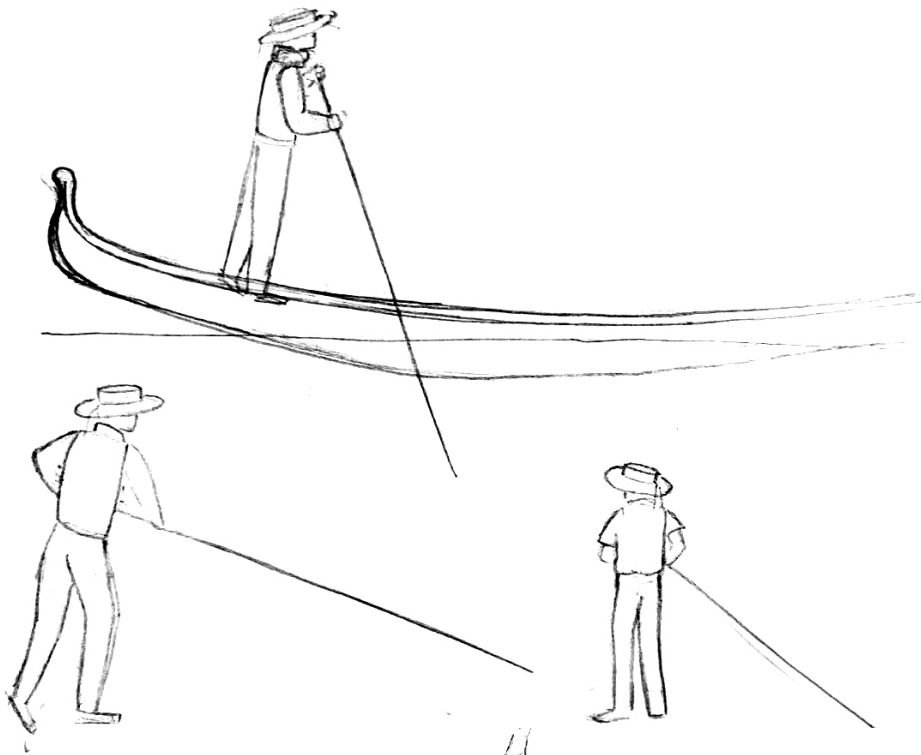
rippling water, gondola songs, winding canals, swirled paper



SKETCHES

After exploring a couple different ideas, I decided to focus on gondolas and that unique light green water of the canals for my pattern. Something about them felt mysterious and almost magical and I wanted to capture it in my design. I started with simple sketches of gondola shapes to explore how they could become a pattern. At this point I hadn't decided if I wanted a side view or aerial view of the boats.

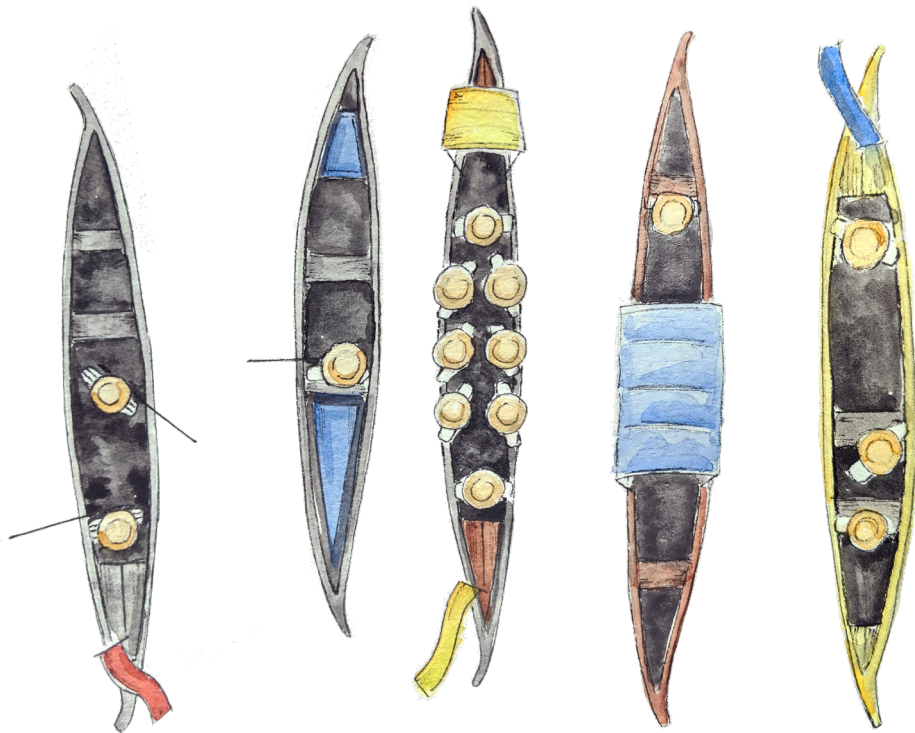




WATERCOLOR STUDIES

gondolas

The next step in the design process was to start adding color. I explored several different colors and styles of gondola. I liked the colorful flags and shades added to the boats during Carnival. Particularly from an aerial view, it helped the boats look more individualized.

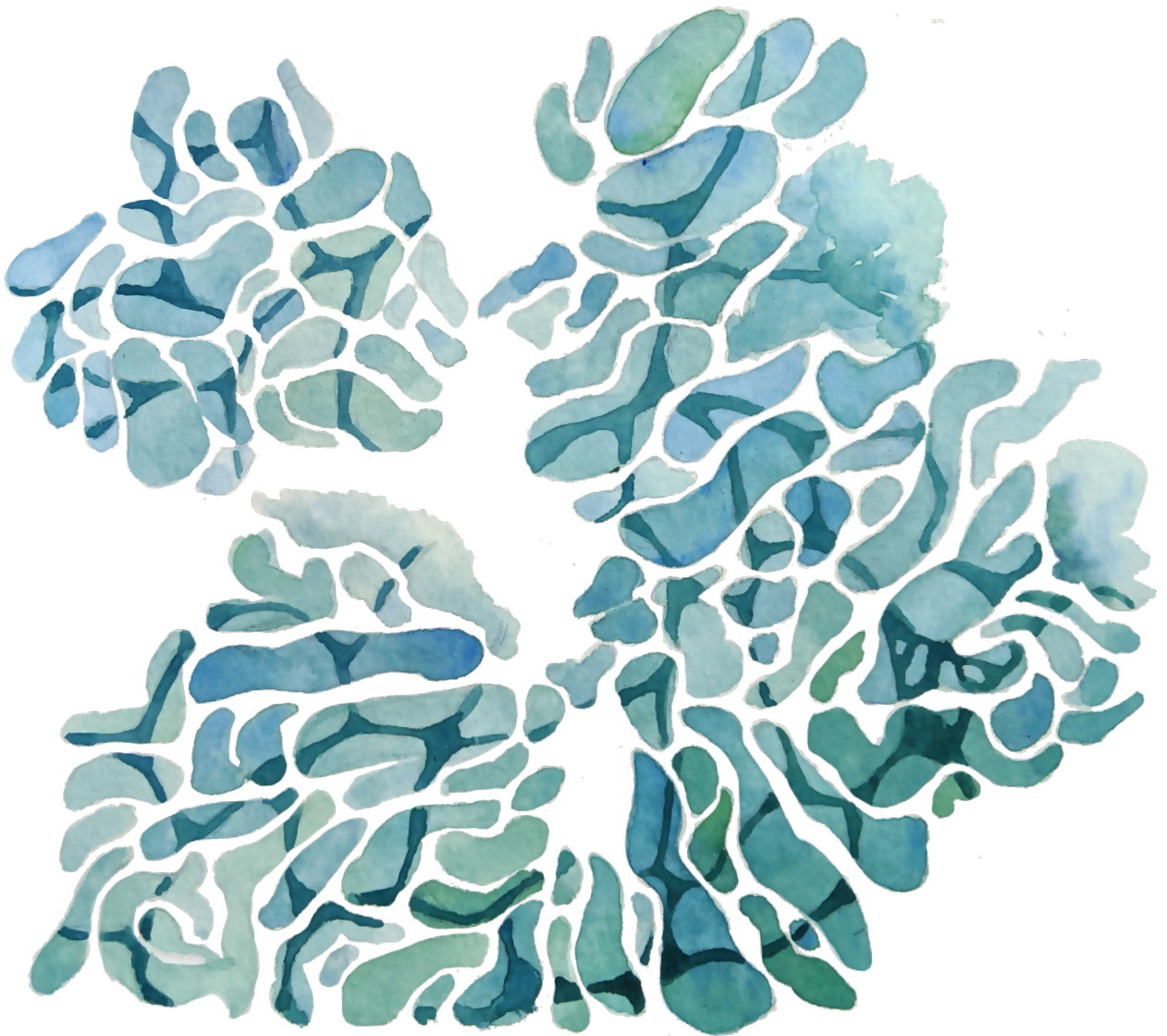




As I explored side views of the gondolas, the different gondoliers became the differentiators between the boats. I liked the idea of creating story-like characters for my pattern. I also played with the idea of adding seagulls in order to create more motion and layers.

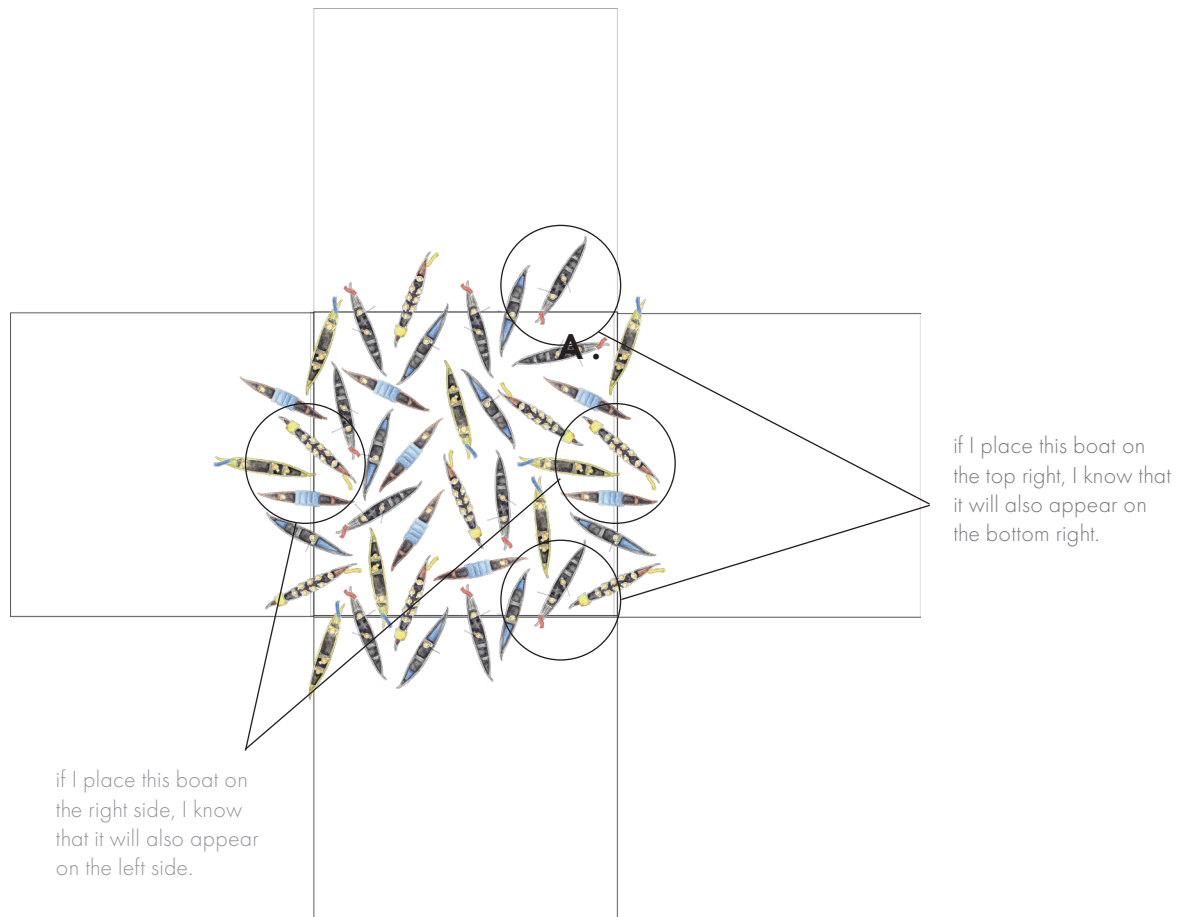
water

Inspiration for the water came from Venetian marbled paper. I had originally planned on doing a solid or at least more subtle background, but it felt too flat. Then I remembered one of my favorite shops in Venice. It was a paper store that sold hand-marbled paper. I got to talk to the owner about the history and process of marbling. I was so amazed by the detailed patterns that emerged from such an arbitrary-seeming process. As I reflected on that experience, I decided to base my water on a marbling pattern. It is simplified, but I liked how it added depth, organic shapes, and a sense of spontaneity. This texture would later become the foundation of my wallpaper.

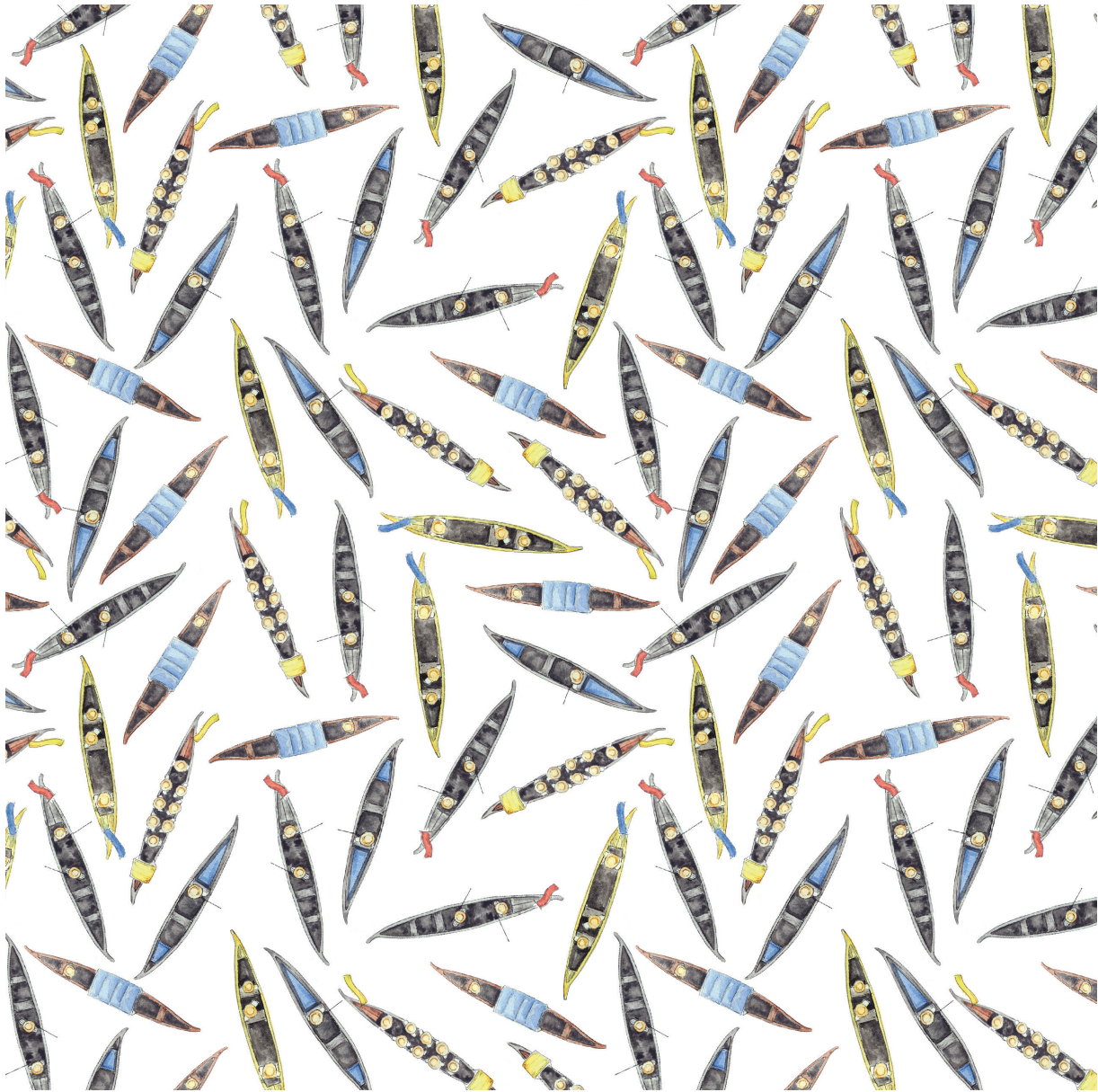


CREATING A REPEAT

Because each pattern is intended to be printed on 20.5" wide strips of wallcovering that had to be taken into account. This pattern was originally done in 20.5"x20.5" repeating pieces. The technical process of creating a repeat was a learning curve for me. It involved creating a pattern within a square and then using squares to match elements along the edges so that they would correctly line up.



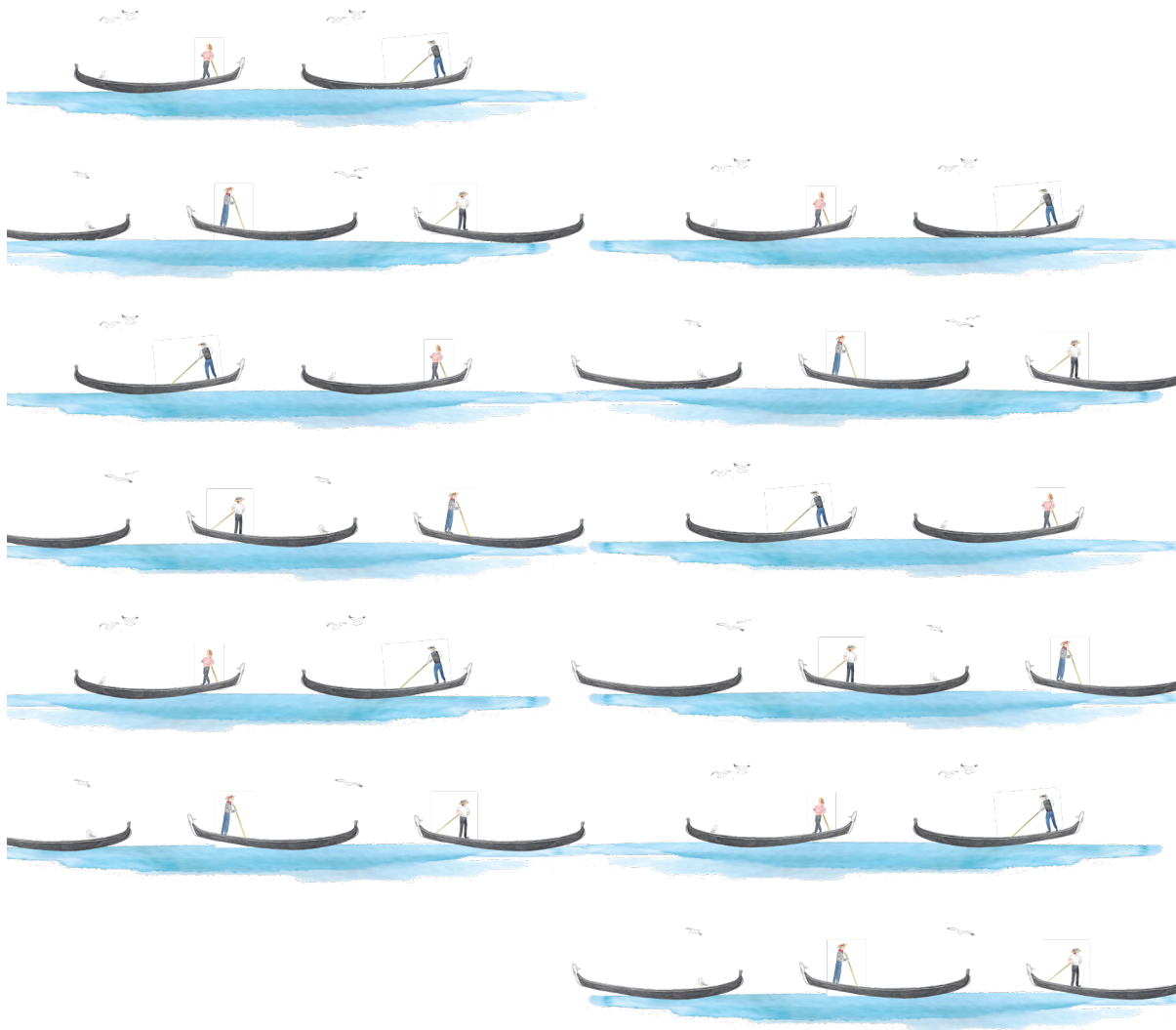
PATTERN ATTEMPTS



After painting my gondolas, I started figuring out how to create a pattern repeat. This is the first repeat I came up with without the water added. At this point I was still thinking of the boats as the central focus of the pattern. I clustered them tightly together, with the idea of creating a Venetian traffic jam.

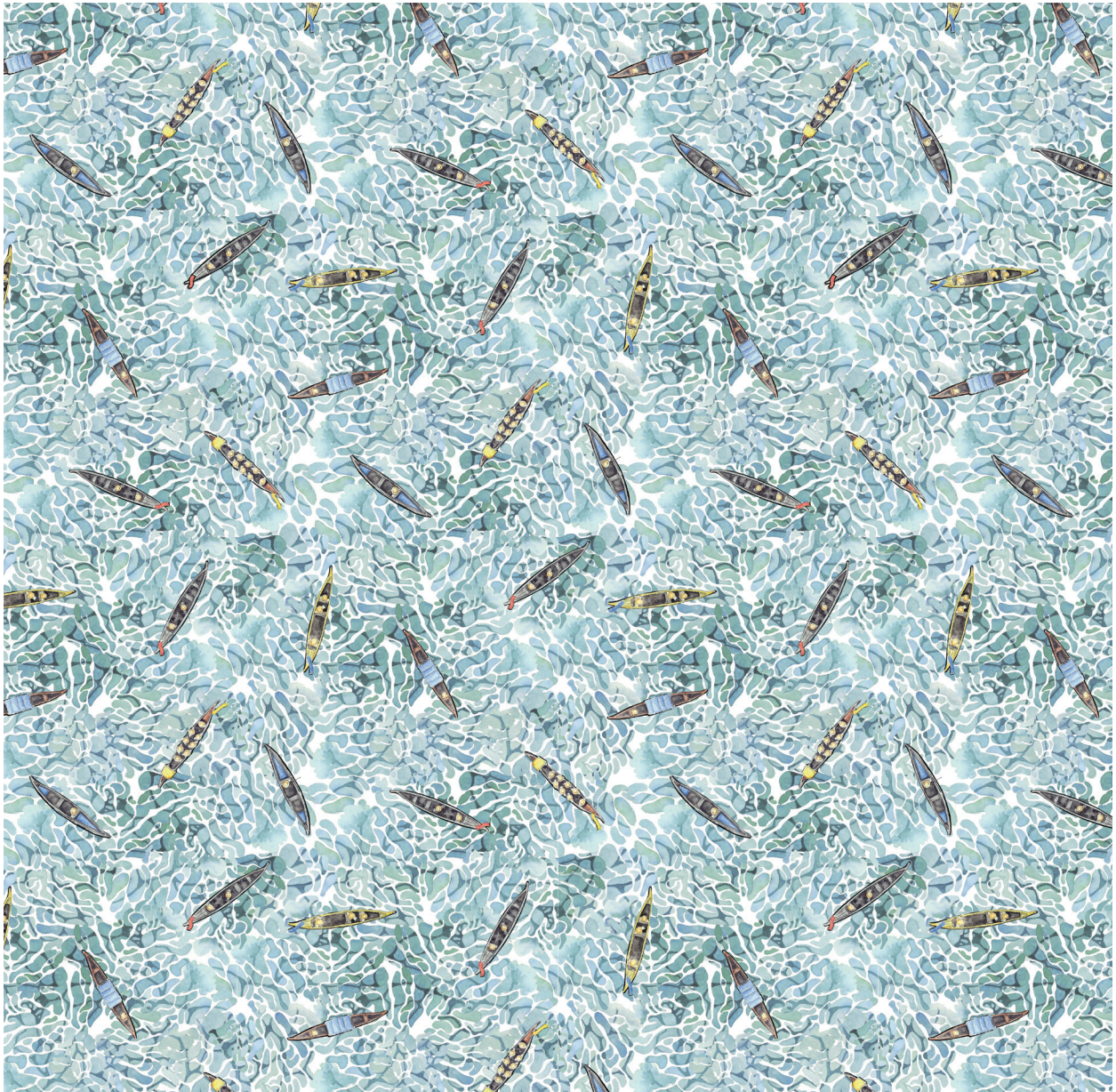
Before the water was added, I was fairly happy with how the pattern was progressing. However, once I added my water illustration, the design became too busy. The eye didn't know what elements to focus on. I probably could have done a solid background with the original boat pattern, but it would have been a shame to lose the depth of the water pattern and the connection to a Venetian art.





In response to how badly my aerial pattern was looking with the water added, I started experimenting with the more traditional view of gondolas. Obviously, the repeat isn't completed with this one, but I decided to move on before I finished it. Something about it felt a bit too childish and simplistic to me. Maybe I will come back and explore this one some more another time.

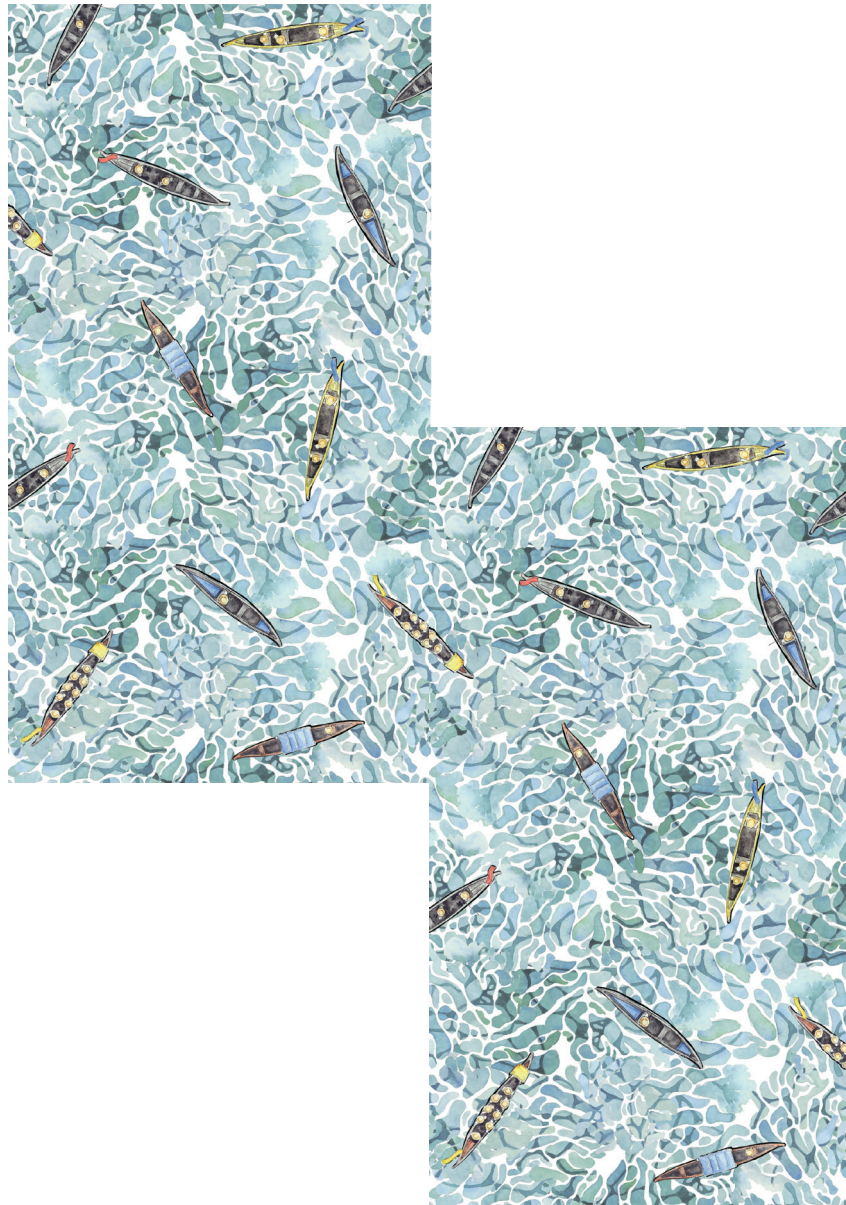
FINAL PATTERN: FULL REPEAT



After several iterations, I decided to return to my original repeat. I made some minor adjustments that made a big difference. I separated the gondolas so that instead of viewers focusing on the linear shapes of the boats, the organic curves of the water became the star. This choice helped me develop the idea of creating a sense of mystery by requiring viewers to look closely at the pattern in order to see the story or theme.

FINAL PATTERN: REPEAT PIECE

The repeating pieces for the pattern are 20.5"x41" rectangles that would be repeated vertically on a 20.5" wide wallpaper. I ended making this pattern a drop repeat instead of just squares in order help it not feel too repetitive. In order for a drop repeat to line up horizontally, it must be slid halfway down the first pattern piece in order to match up.



FINAL PATTERN: APPLICATION



This pattern highlights the beautiful rippling waters of Venice punctuated every now and then by a gondola. The organic shapes provide a subtle sense of movement, while the contrasting linear shapes of the boats add interest. The pattern of the water was inspired by the hand-marbled paper Venice is so famous for. Together with the historical texture, subtle hues, and unusual view, the pattern creates a sense of spontaneity and mystery. It invites viewers to step in and take a closer look.

ROMANIA

HISTORY AND STORIES

land of the other romans

One of the many countries whose culture was deeply influenced by Rome is Romania. This becomes apparent just by reading the country's name. The kingdom of Dacia, as it was anciently called, was occupied by the Romans from 106-274 AD (Hitchens, 2017). During this time the cultures of the Daci and Romans were intermixed and Roman influences can be seen to this day. Romanian is the closest spoken language to Latin, and common given names include Caesar, Aurelia, Cornelius, and Marcus. The people of Romania are very proud of their heritage and call themselves Romani, or the Romans.

a land of mystery

Despite Westernizing influences, Romania has incredibly deep-rooted pagan traditions that are still practiced today. Folklore and superstition are still a large part of many rural Romanians' daily lives (Hitchens, 2017). Rituals of driving away evil spirits, divining the future, and inviting blessings from good fairies are still practiced if not out of belief, for the sake of tradition. I remember one particular car ride through the mountains of Transylvania, passing fur-clad shepherds with their flocks, gypsy camps, tiny villages that looked straight out of a storybook, all the while hearing the howling of wolves. I felt that this place was still wild and untamed. It was full of mystery. It felt like fairytale stories could be taking place just beyond the misty trees I was zooming by.

a land of contrasts

Romania was the first foreign country I visited. Before I left, I knew it as little more than the land of vampires, gypsies, and where Charlie Weasley studies dragons. In the cities, I discovered a country deeply scarred by Communism, a people suspicious of strangers, and a culture still heavily influenced by tradition. One thing that struck me was the difference of lifestyle between different Romanians. You could meet a person who was a young professional living in a high-rise, and another who lived out in the country very similarly to how people would have lived a hundred years ago. I remember visiting one of the nicest malls in the country, and probably one of the nicest malls I have ever seen, and being shocked to see a man dressed head-to-toe in sheepskin. He had a tall dark woolly hat and a thick beard. He looked like he must have wandered out of a storybook. Riding down the escalator, I saw a whole group of sheep men circled together. One whipped out a cell phone. They were shepherds protesting farming legislation.

a land of tradition

Out in the country, or *la tara*, many Romanians live simply and some still practice traditional folk arts that have been passed down for generations. On special occasions, they will dress up in traditional Romanian costume. Around holidays, people will come from *la tara* to the towns to sell their wares at markets called *targs*. Craftsmen create intricately patterned stoneware, delicately carved wooden dishes and boxes, meticulously embroidered cloth goods, and hand-made masks. Romania is still very regionally distinct between the areas of Transylvania, Walachia, Moldova, Banat, Maramures, and Dobrogea. Those divisions can be seen in the different patterns and colors used in folk arts (Hitchens, 2017). Much like the Scots and their tartans, different patterns represent a different regional heritage. The patterns are a way of communicating one's place in the world.

On a sultry summer evening, a friend and I were walking to the town square. Faint music could be heard from the direction we were heading. Upon arrival, we discovered a craft market had been set up on the cobbled streets in front of the palace. Men and women dressed in the traditional garb of their region sold brightly-colored odds and ends. Girls in white dresses wearing crowns of yellow flowers danced among the crowd. Performers dressed as creatures from folk legends tiptoed on stilts through the hoards of people. It was summer solstice and the fairies had come to town.

a land of scars

Although villages in the country don't seem to have changed much since old times, scars of a dark history can be seen in the cities. From 1947 to 1989, the country was run by a communist dictatorship (Hitchens, 2017). Signs of this can be seen in the architecture of the larger cities. Bucharest, once called "the Paris of Eastern Europe" had many of its brightly-colored, ornately-patterned buildings torn down and replaced by gray, concrete apartment blocks. During this period, people were not permitted to worship, many cultural activities were ended, and no one knew who they could trust. Soviet culture and ideals were attempting to stamp out any sparks of Romanian independence. The disapproval of individualism can be seen in the harsh, blank walls of the communist blocks where people were forced to live. Thirty years after the fall of communism, there has been a powerful resurgence of culture and religion. The older generation that was unable to show their beliefs for most of their lives has returned to the old ways with uncommon zeal and vigor. Many of the younger generation look to other countries to find their sense of place and identity. Countries like Italy and Spain have begun to embody the hope of a new beginning for many young Romanians.

It was a lightly snowy December day, and several of my friends and I were ready to step in from the cold for a moment to enjoy some hot chocolate. Alex, one of the newest in our group of friends told us he could take us to the best hot chocolate place in town. He was a quirky young man who could often be seen wearing a purple top hat and orange vest. Some would have called him eccentric, others forward thinking, and others crazy. He led us to an alley between two historic-looking buildings. At the end of the narrow walk was a sign pieced together out of old boards. It read, "The Tea Spot" with an arrow pointing up a curving set of stairs. The ceiling was low and curved and the walls were painted with swirling hues of pink, lime green, red and electric blue. At the top of the stairs, we entered a room decorated with murals of multicolored mushrooms and cherubs. There was no furniture besides the dark green beanbags strewn about the room. Bob Marley played quietly in the background. As I looked around at the Dr. Seussian walls of this building that was older than America, watching long-haired Romanians strumming guitars, I thought to myself that there was no way they were only selling hot chocolate and tea here. Alex and some of his friends from the Tea Spot sat down with us and we proceeded to talk about their hopes and dreams for the future. Many of them felt stifled by the country's traditions and communist history. They longed for new ways of thinking, new ways of doing things. It seemed that many of them had taken up the last burning embers of the hippie movement of the 1960s (a movement that Romania was not a part of) and were hoping it would kindle change in their homeland. They wore their beliefs on their sleeves, trading the traditional costume of their parents for outlandish, flowering thrift-store styles. They were in search of a new identity, a new sense of person and place.

INSPIRATION

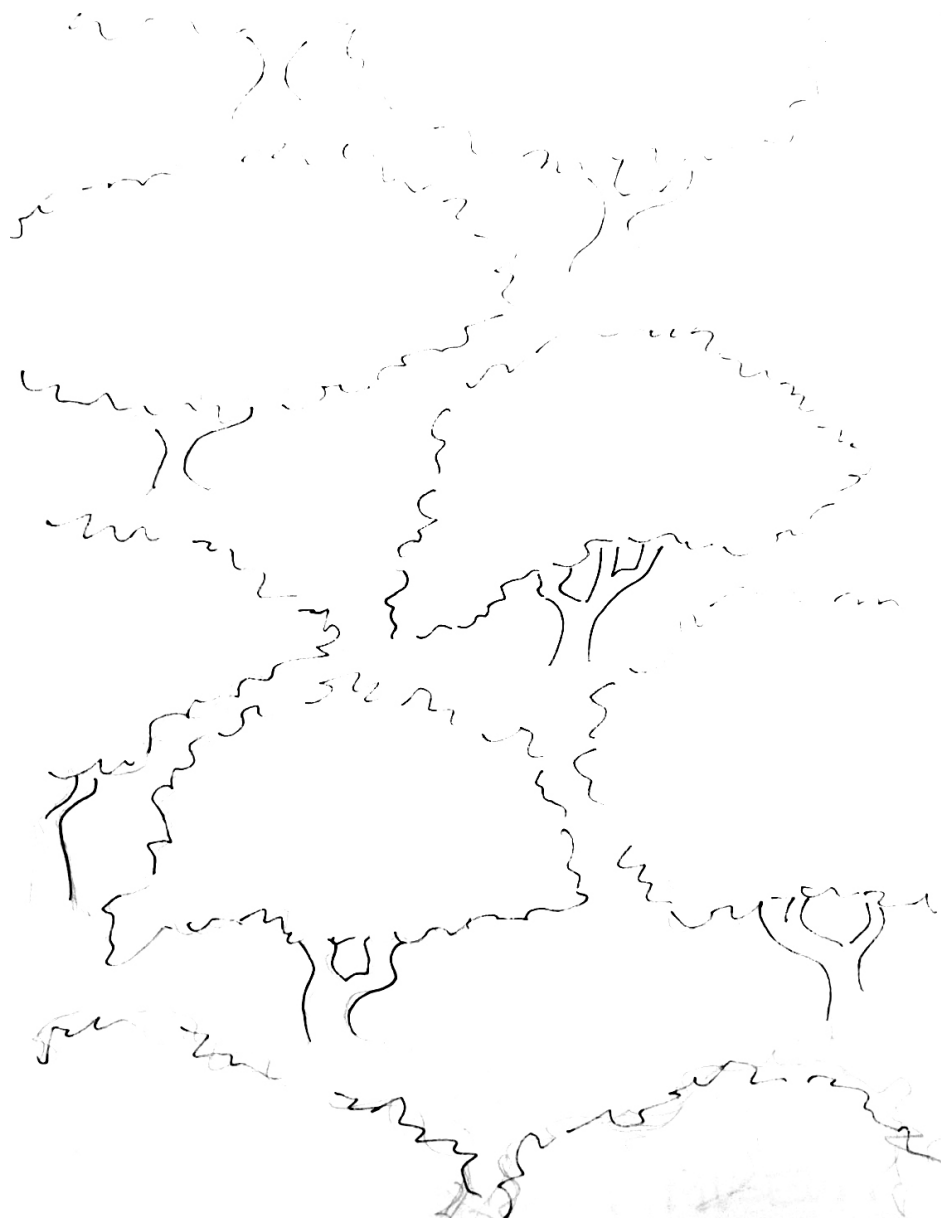
deep forests, mountain villages, folklore, forest creatures



SKETCHES

For this project, deciding on the subject matter was easy. I wanted by design to feature a forest with scenes from Romanian folklore hidden between the trees. However, figuring out the best way to portray it was difficult. I had particular difficulty deciding how I wanted to portray the trees, and how hidden I wanted the characters to be. I spent more time in the sketching phase than I did on either of the other projects.





After several iterations, a pattern for the trees started to emerge. This one similar to how the final trees turned out. What changed was the height of the trunks. In many Romanian forests, the trees just have a canopy with very view branches along the way up. I wanted to emphasize this in my pattern.

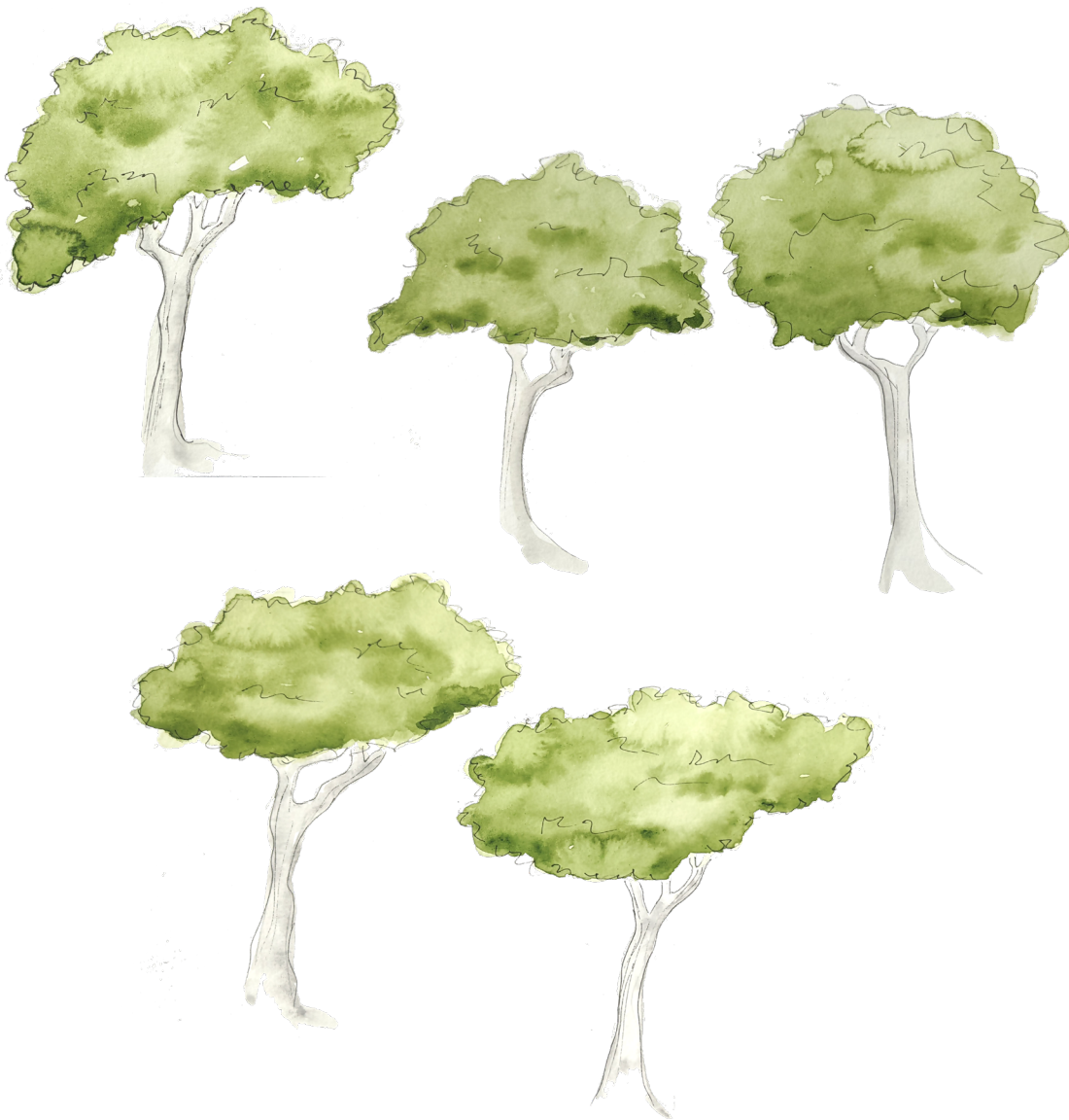
With time, more defined creatures started to appear. I figured out that they needed to have a sense of motion. Moving animals were better than stationary ones for this pattern.



WATERCOLOR STUDIES

trees

My great debate with the trees was how defined the foliage should be. I was tempted to draw individual trees and have that create a small pattern within the larger pattern. However, I just couldn't get it to look right. They kept looking overly-busy. I ended up trying to emphasize the beauty of the watercolor when you let it be free and bleed where it wants to. The focus on the medium helps tie this pattern to the water pattern in the previous one.





dancing bears

The idea for the dancing bears came from a New Year's tradition. People dress up as bears with red tassels on their ears and perform what is called the Bear Dance. The purpose of the dance is to scare away evil spirits for the new year. During this time, you can hear drums beating and people shouting from every street. For my illustration I decided to paint actual bears wearing traditional Romanian costume along with red tassels from the dance.

wolves

The idea to have wolves in the forest was an obvious one. On many occasions, driving through the forests of Transylvania, I could hear the howling of wolves. Romania is also thought to be the origin of the werewolf legend. For centuries, the people feared the mischief of shape-shifting men who could become wolves on a whim. For my illustration, I portrayed two wolves to be playing in order to keep a lighthearted feel to my pattern. Only one wolf, stopping to rest and read a book suggests that these creatures may be more than what they appear.





grass

One particular struggle in this pattern was how to portray the forest floor. I didn't want it to be distracting, yet there was a lot of white space that needed filling. I originally thought to create a sense of ground with streaks of green paint, but they felt too heavy and looked too similar to the treetops. Instead I opted to use a combination of vertical pen strokes and dots of watercolor. This created more of a sense of jumping, dancing movement, to complement the movement of the animals and contrast with the smoothness of the trees.

cottage

The cottage represents the home of Muma Padurii, the old woman of the forest. She appears in many Romanian legends as the defender of the forest. Similar to a witch she is not necessarily evil, but not entirely good. She keeps to her forest, healing wounded animals and helping the plants grow. However, the unwary traveler may fall subject to her indignation. At first, I had thought draw an old woman with a shawl feeding a deer, but I ended up deciding that hinting at her presence with a cottage was better than outrightly depicting her. I felt it would help keep an air of mystery without making it creepy.





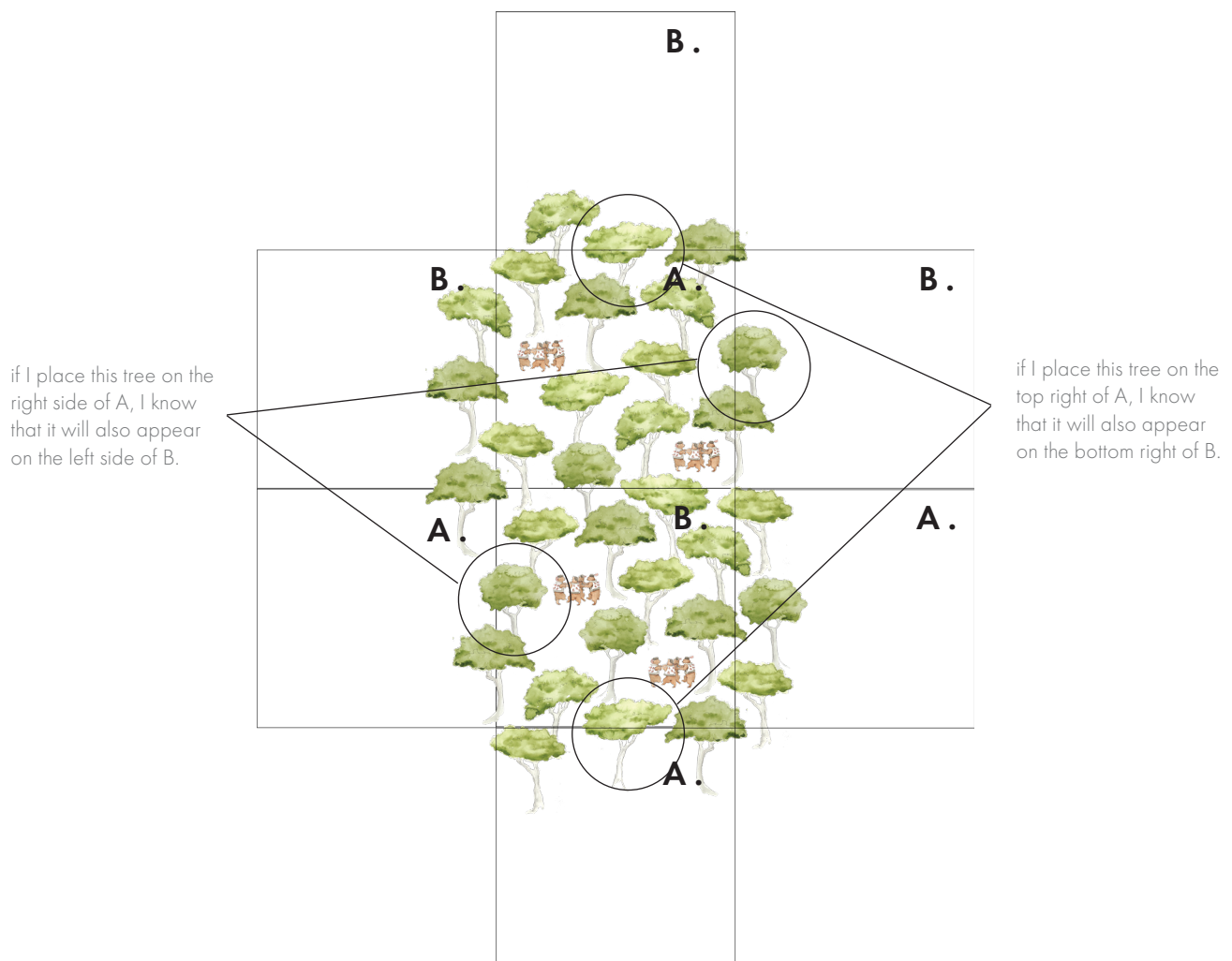
deer

The deer were inspired by two different stories. The first is a folksong about nine brothers who are out hunting and get turned into bucks and have to live in the woods. The second is legends of wood nymphs who dance in the forest with bells tinkling on their feet. I decided to combine the two stories and the end result was two prancing deer with bells tied to their ankles. The addition of bells gives an otherwise normal forest scene something unexpected.

PATTERN MAKING

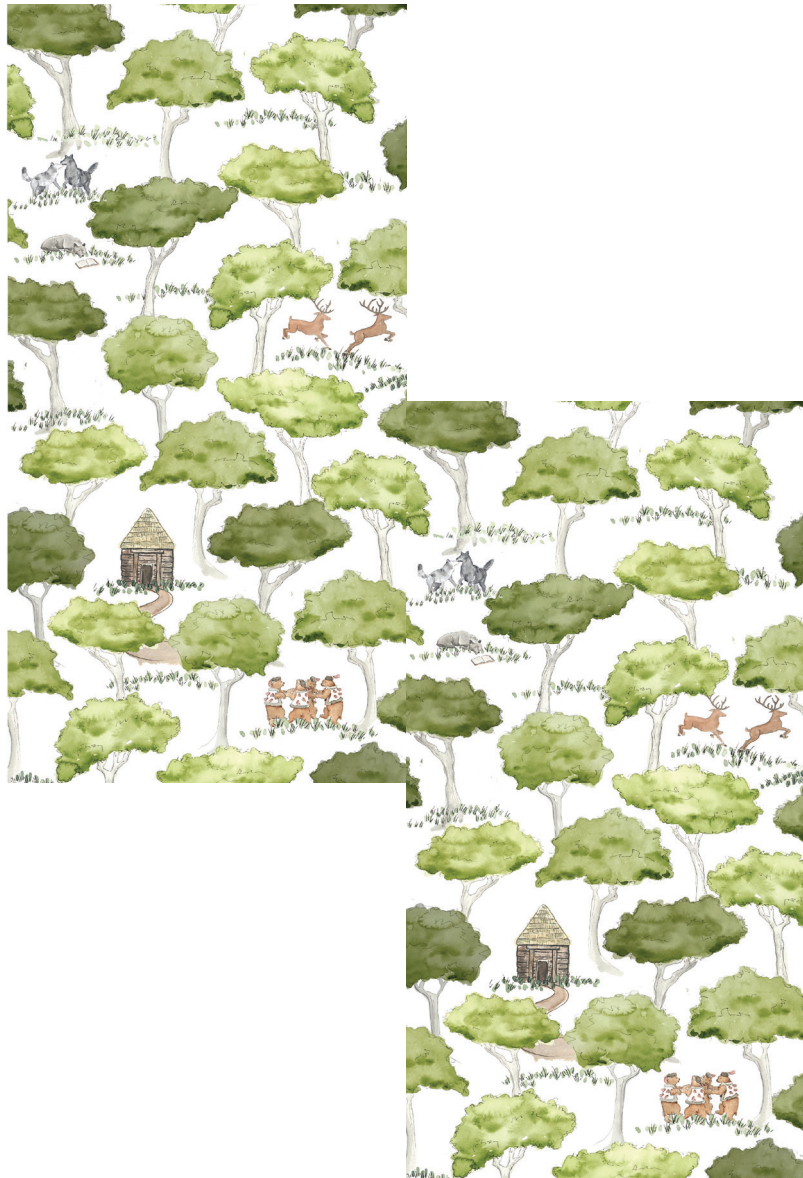
CREATING A REPEAT

Because each pattern is intended to be printed on 20.5" wide strips of wall covering that had to be taken into account. The patterns was done in 20.5"x41" repeating pieces. Each square is 20.2" x 20.5". A complete pattern repeat piece is an A square on top of a B square. The patterns are drop repeats, meaning one pattern piece horizontally matches up to another by dropping it down half the length of the first piece i.e. an A square matches up to a B square. The following image illustrates how this was done.



FINAL PATTERN: REPEAT PIECE

The repeating pieces for the pattern are 20.5"x41" rectangles that would be repeated vertically on a 20.5" wide wallpaper. This type of pattern is what is called a drop repeat meaning that when you line the pattern up horizontally, it must be slid halfway down the first pattern piece in order to match up.



FINAL PATTERN: FULL REPEAT



Although coming up with the individual pieces of this pattern was challenging, putting it all together happened quite naturally. The running, jumping, and dancing of the animals provide a sense of motion to the still overall pattern. When I look at this pattern, it makes me want to hear the stories a child would make up to explain the whimsical scenes hidden among the trees. This pattern not only records the folklore of Romania, it encourages viewers wonder, and create stories of their own.

FINAL PATTERN: APPLICATION



The overall design of this pattern is defined by the trees while a closer look reveals the creatures within. Each scene is inspired by a Romanian folktale or song. The effect is a light and airy forest scene with bits of stories woven between the trunks. The varying shades of green help add depth to the pattern despite the white background. The soothing repetition of trees is a nice contrast to the mysterious characters hiding amongst them.

SPAIN

HISTORY AND STORIES

spain and america

When people hear the word Spain, many think of bulls, flamenco dancing and the color red. Others think of the culture that influenced their own. Spanish is the official language of 31 different countries. Because of conquistadors like Cortes and Pizarro, much of the Americas has been influenced by Spain (Phillips, 2019). I remember visiting old town San Diego, California admiring the old Spanish-Colonial architecture. It was a beautiful hybrid of Spanish style mixing with what was available in the new land. Its classic metalwork, tile roofs, and use of courtyards has made it a popular style for homes in the South West of the United States. It brings an air of the exotic and cultural, yet meshes extremely well with the desert climate.

memories of oranges

When I remember Spain, the tangy taste of oranges always comes to my lips. One of my first interactions with this country came while living in Romania. In the winter, grocery stores would have crates upon crates of Spanish oranges still on the branches. They were a bright bit of warmth to an American struggling to survive the frigid Romanian winter. My first visit to Spain was in the winter. Orange season. We spent the majority of our time in the south exploring streets lined with mandarin trees and driving past orange orchards on our way to cliff-top castles. I still miss the freshly squeezed orange juice served at every café.

Although my association of Spain with oranges may seem extreme, many landscape architects will also think of oranges when they think of the Iberian Peninsula. The Patio de los Naranjos, is a courtyard filled with 98 orange trees that dates back to Moorish times. The garden is known for its ingenious irrigation system and perfect, striking simplicity of the regimented lines of orange trees. One architect friend of mine described it as the most beautiful garden he had ever seen.

The courtyard is part of a religious complex that includes the Mosque of Cordoba. Worshipers would come to perform ablutions, washing their hands in the waters at the base of the trees before going into the temple to pray (Lajo, 1990). According to traditional accounts, the grounds were originally the location of a small Visigoth church that was built over when the Moors arrived (Bloom & Blair, 2009). The Mosque and accompanying buildings have since passed between the hands of Christians and Muslims multiple times through history. Each time the conquerors would add architectural elements of their own. The religious buildings are now a hybrid of the two cultures influencing and building off each other.

night owls

It was our first morning in Madrid and we decided to get out the door early so we could see everything we had planned for that day. Of course we left later than planned. But to our surprise, when we stepped outside, it looked like we had left three hours earlier than planned. At eight o'clock in the morning, it looked as if it were 4 a.m. Everything was shut down and the only people out were the street sweepers. Spanish time was something we still weren't used to. Later that day, at 5 in the evening we were ready for dinner. But none of the restaurants would be open until 8. Of course they would stay open until 3 in the morning.

The modern day siesta is thought to have originated in Spain. Although in most cultures a mid-day nap is considered a luxury, in early Spain it was considered a necessity. When most work was physical labor, it made sense to take a rest during the hottest part of the day and then continue one's work in the cooler hours of the evening (National Sleep Foundation). This led to a sleeping schedule that has become one of Spain's biggest stereotypes. Although most working professionals no longer indulge in an afternoon snooze, nearly all shops and restaurants hold to the tradition of the siesta. They close their doors in the mid-afternoon, and then re-opening in the evening welcoming guests into the early hours of the morning.

blue tile

Before visiting Spain, I used to associate red with the country famous for its bull fights. However, now after exploring bits of this Mediterranean region, I think of blue. The reason is a little town near Alicante called Altea. This collection of houses is known for its whitewashed walls, blue roofs and doors, winding streets and hilly terrain. This is the place that made me love Spain. One of the things that delighted me most about the town was the array of blue-painted tiles that seemed to randomly dot the streets and walls. These tiles known as Azulejos, are a painted tin-glazed ceramic tile used in Spain and Portugal. Although they are decorative, they serve the functional purpose of temperature control. The word is derived from the Arabic zellige meaning "polished stone." Arabic influences can be seen in azulejos in their geometric and vegetal patterns. The style and pattern can be used to indicate the age of a building mapping cultural values and historic events.

the rock

The first city we stayed in was Calpe, a resort town on the south of Spain that floods with tourists every summer. Lucky for us, it was winter. Besides the occasional retiree walking their dog, we had the entire

place to ourselves. The most noticeable landmark on coastline of Calpe is an enormous rock that juts out from the beach like a tiny mountain on its own private peninsula. It's called La Roche de Ifac. It rises 332 meters into the sky and was known by the Phoenicians as the Northern Rock. One morning we decided to climb the giant. The hike was not long but it was incredibly steep. Stairs carved out of the limestone itself led us on a winding path upward. Although it was winter, the sun was warm, the breeze off the Mediterranean was refreshing, and the scent of the abundant lavender was heavy in the air. About two thirds up where the cliffs got sheer, we reached a cave that tunneled completely through to the other side of the rock. From there we were scrambling over crumbled white stones. A host of seagulls seemed to be holding a conference in the amphitheater-like dent in the side of La Roche. Echoing across the stones, their voices sounded nearly human. Sweating, and tired we finally reached the top. In a small way, I felt like one of the lookouts who used to stand watch at the top of this monument for invaders. The view of the city was spectacular, and the view of the azure water even more so. I've never seen water so blue.

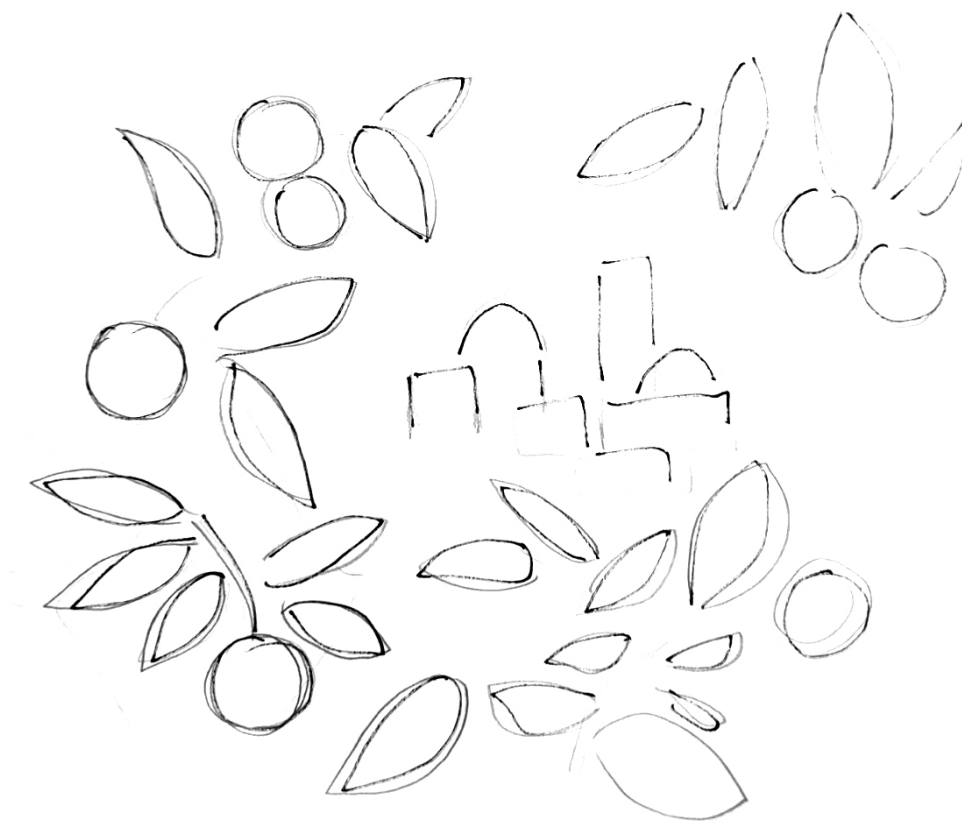
INSPIRATION

hand-painted tiles, blue roofs, whitewashed walls, orange trees



SKETCHES

From the start, I knew that I wanted to feature orange trees in my pattern for Spain. It took numerous sketches to figure out how I wanted the orange trees to appear and what surprise would be hidden in the pattern for those who take a closer look at the pattern. At first, I was sketching whole trees with scenes of the city behind, but it was too similar to the Romania pattern and the city wasn't subtle enough. More focus needed to be on the orange trees. I landed upon the idea of creating a view of peeking through the branches of a tree at little glimpses of a city beyond.





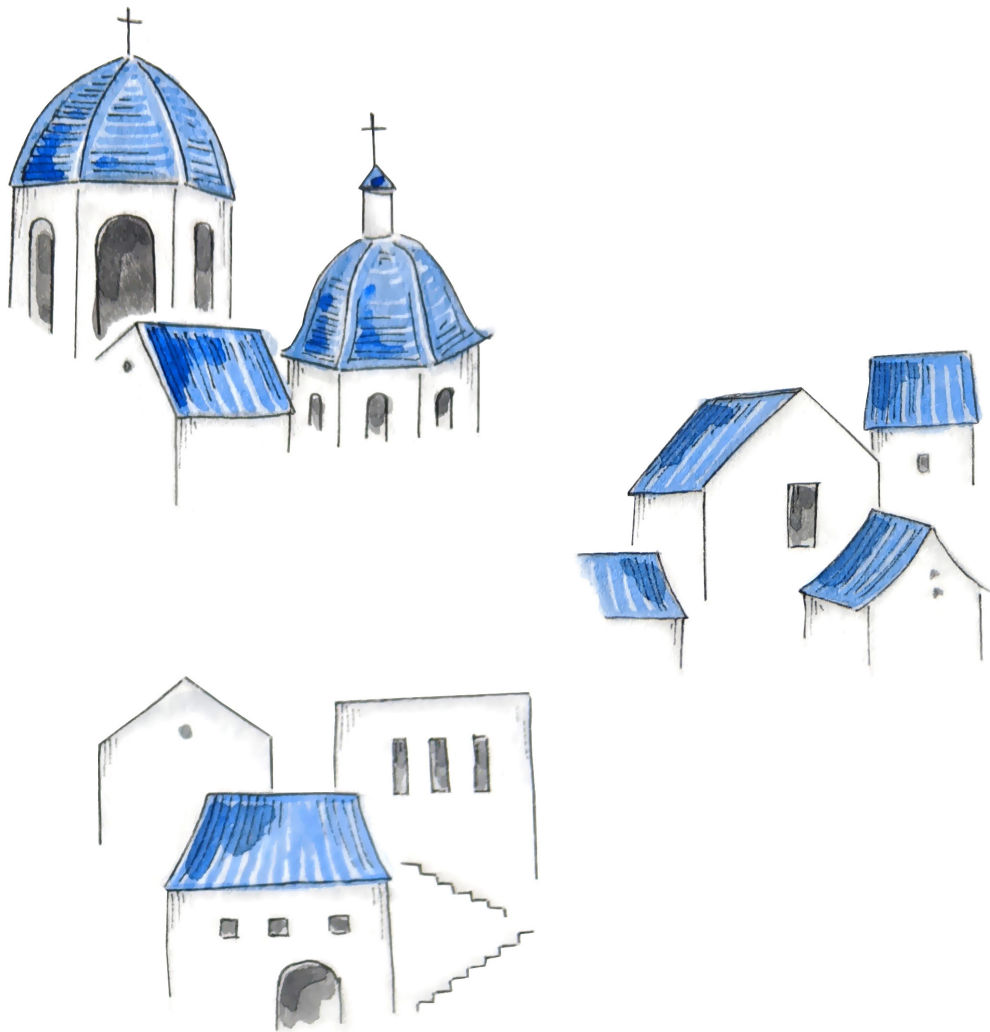
As I settled upon the idea of focusing on the foliage of orange trees, this is the sketch that took shape. This was only my third attempt at sketching this pattern and was by far the fastest to come together. From this sketch, I moved on to watercoloring the pattern.

WATERCOLOR STUDIES

orange branches

This design came together very quickly, at least the elements of it did. From the start of my watercoloring, everything just seemed to come together. My first attempts at the orange foliage turned out good enough that I ended up using them in the final pattern. As mentioned before, I chose to use blue for the leaves instead of green. It was a nice variation from the expected and a nod to the plant motifs on the blue Spanish tiles I saw everywhere.

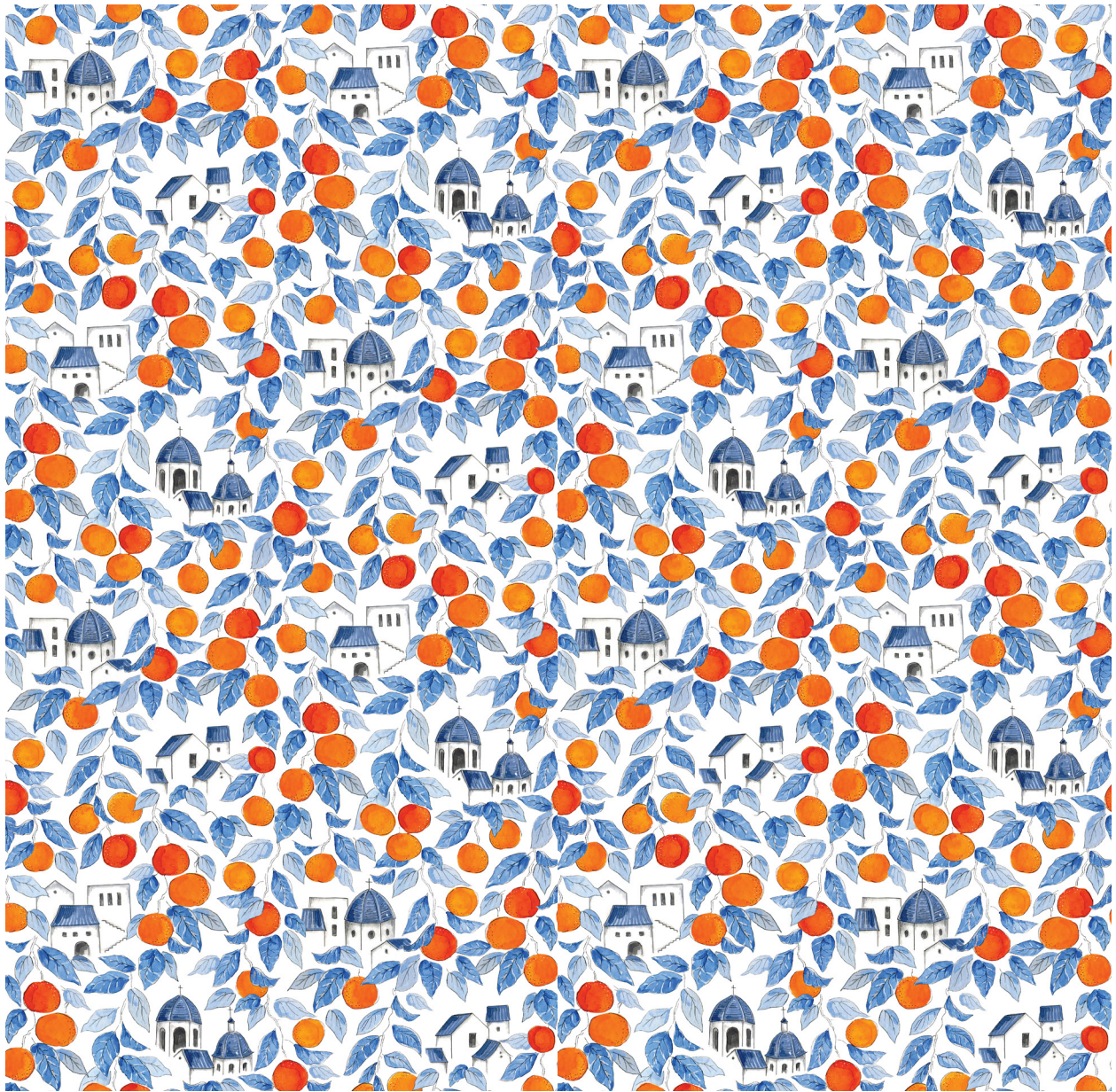




city

For the foliage I took a more detailed approach, lining the veins of the leaves and lightly texturing the oranges. Because I wanted the orange trees to be the focal point, I chose to depict the buildings with simpler lines. The feel of Altea is very simple and geometric, like white blocks stacked on top of one another. I wanted to create this same sense of simplicity in the illustrations.

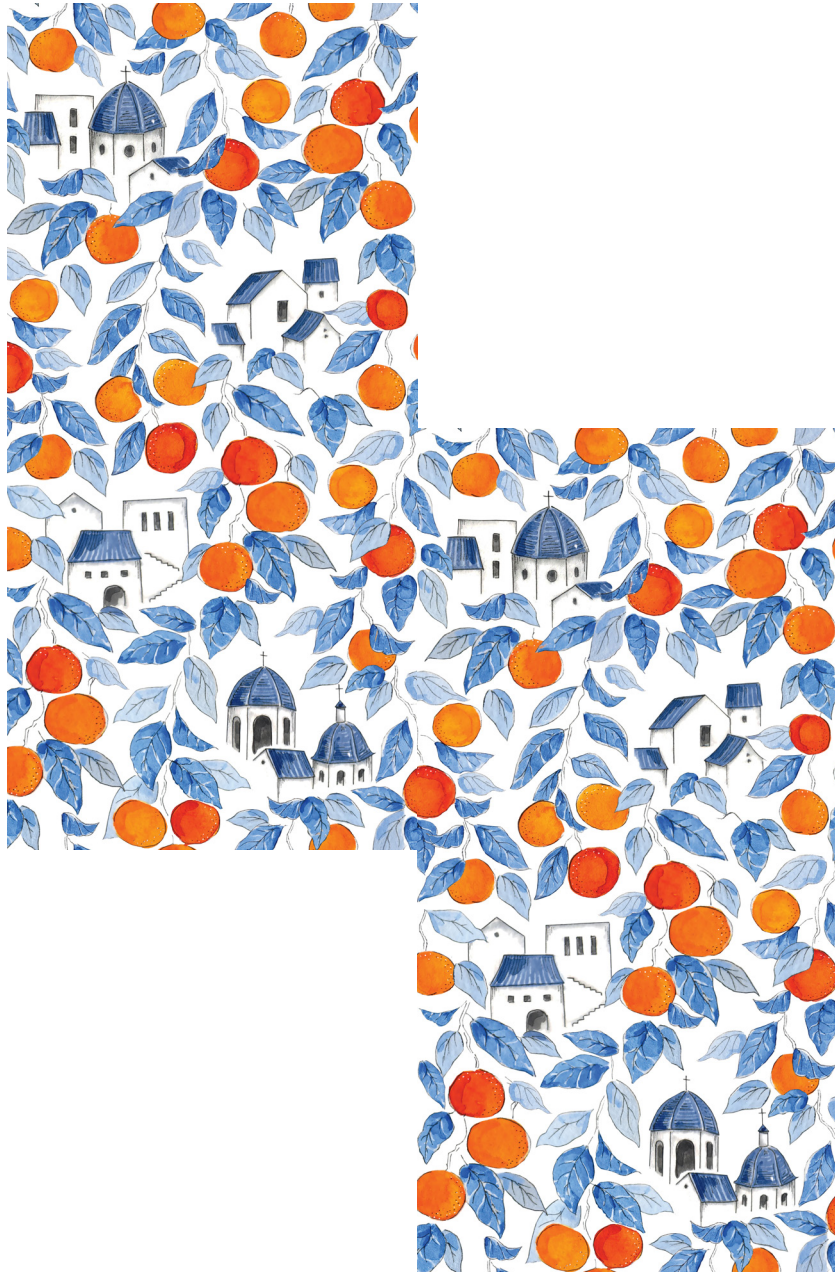
FINAL PATTERN: FULL REPEAT



Although the individual pieces for the pattern came surprisingly easily, arranging them together to create a pattern was far from easy. It was like a jigsaw puzzle trying to get the foliage to fit together and appear natural. Although I stuck with the same idea and vision, it took hours and hours of adjusting to get the pattern to work. The end result is a magical view of a truly charming city.

FINAL PATTERN: REPEAT PIECE

The repeating pieces for the pattern are 20.5"x41" rectangles that would be repeated vertically on a 20.5" wide wallpaper. This type of pattern is what is called a drop repeat meaning that when you line the pattern up horizontally, it must be slid halfway down the first pattern piece in order to match up.



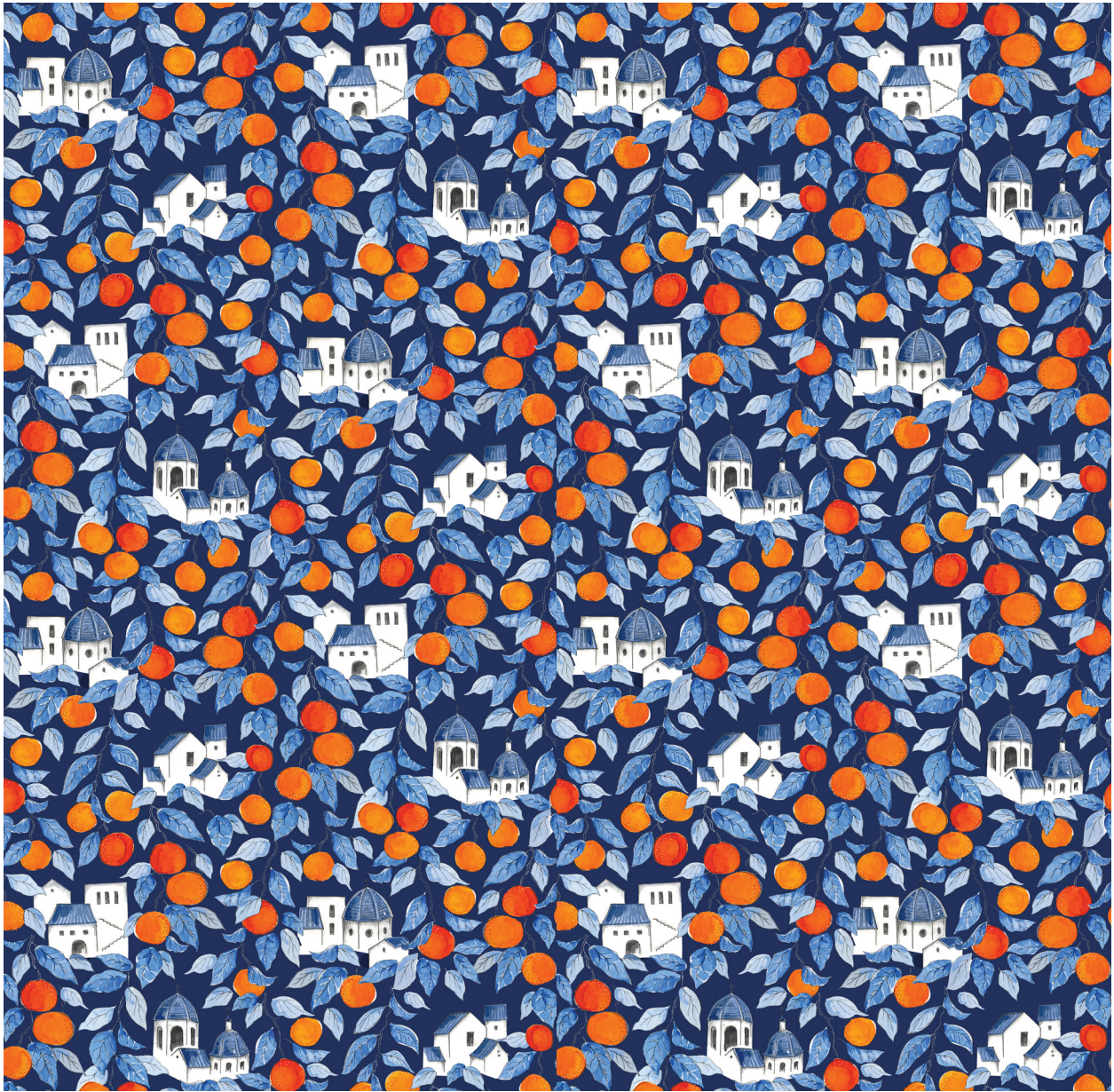
SPAIN

day pattern



To play off Spain's nocturnal habits there are two versions of this pattern. One to represent the day-time and one to represent the night. This has a light, sunny, energizing feel that is reminiscent of the sparky tang of oranges. The scene creates the sense of peeking through the branches of orange trees toward the beautiful city beyond. Inspiration for the blue foliage came from hand-painted tiles that dot the streets and walls of buildings in the old towns.

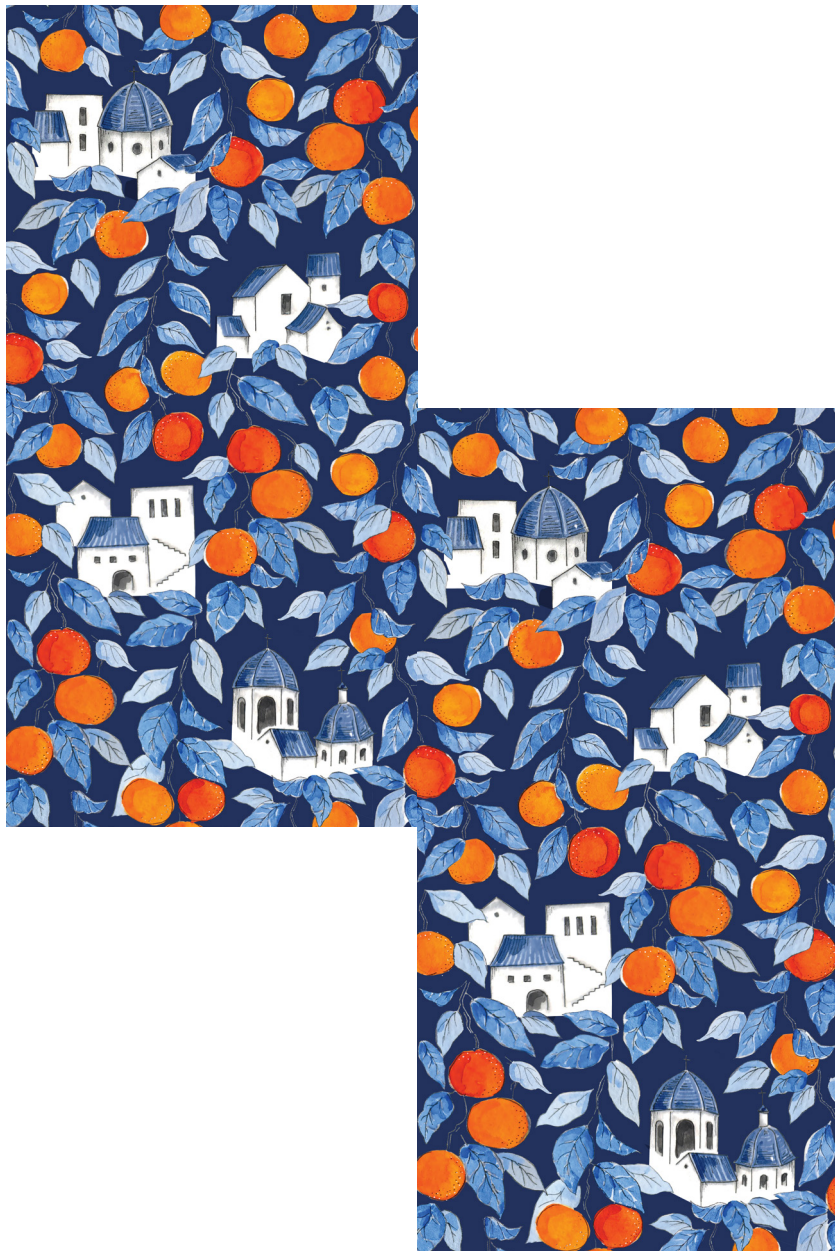
FINAL PATTERN: FULL REPEAT



To get the dark background to work, it took painstaking hours of trimming errant white edges off of leaves in order to avoid the “sticker effect.” It also took some reworking of the pattern to create a natural break for the buildings to end into the leaves instead of having stark white edges. Despite the frustration, I was happy with how this one turned out and the entirely different feel it provided.

FINAL PATTERN: REPEAT PIECE

The repeating pieces for the pattern are 20.5"x41" rectangles that would be repeated vertically on a 20.5" wide wallpaper. This type of pattern is what is called a drop repeat meaning that when you line the pattern up horizontally, it must be slid halfway down the first pattern piece in order to match up.



SPAIN

night pattern



This pattern has a moodier feel. The deep blue background contrasts strongly emphasizing the white buildings that were just a subtle hint in the previous pattern. The town represented is Altea, a city in the south of Spain known for its whitewashed buildings, blue roofs and doors, and winding cobbled streets. This pattern evokes the feeling of wandering Mediterranean streets in the moonlight, the scent of citrus heavy in the air and a warm breeze whispering through the leaves of orange trees.

CONCLUSION

The visiting of the three countries provided insights on the interrelated natures of their cultures and design as well as their connections with each other. It illustrated how people and design influence one another. Not only did this study reveal insights on the macro scale of entire cultures and their designs, but it also showed on the micro level of how a culture can influence the work of a single individual. The observation of people, places and things revealed patterns that I could then translate into patterns of my own. The wall covering patterns ended up encapsulating many things. Pieces of history, art, folklore, botany, and my own personal impressions are all tied up and stored within those patterns. They are a visible evidence of how pattern is used to record meaning.

total word count: 7,785

REFLECTION

The experience of doing an Honors capstone project ended up being a valuable learning opportunity. At times it was overwhelming, frustrating, and exhausting, but there were also parts of the process that were really rewarding. The opportunity to travel was incredible. It alone was life-changing. It gave me such a depth of knowledge, experience, and inspiration to draw from. I believe my designing abilities have significantly improved because of my exposure to far away parts of the world. The lenses through which I was viewing those places further deepened my experience. With the lens of trying to notice pattern as a way to interpret and understand culture, I gained valuable insights on others and myself. I think that observing other cultures and ways of doing things provides valuable contrast and allows you to see yourself, your similarities, differences, and values more clearly. This project offered my ample time for self-reflection.

Taking the time to imagine and create patterns was also valuable. I have always been interested in pattern design and it was a good learning experience to try to create patterns of my own from start to finish. It was quite the learning process and took a lot of trial and error. However now, I now know better ways of approaching things and can now work better and faster. Now that I know more so what I am doing, I think I will be a lot braver in the future approaching pattern design. I have already traveled to a few more countries, and I may continue my project for fun as a way of documenting my travels.

My mentor Holly was a valuable asset. There were many times I felt overwhelmed and ready to give up and she was always able to help re-motivate me. As an arts student it is sometimes hard to feel like your research is valid, especially when you are comparing it to your science-major friends. Holly was able to help me see the value in my work when I was doubting its worth. She also helped give me direction in my research. With creative endeavors, it can be difficult to focus your research and know what things can be just impressions and what should be backed by hard evidence. I know that Holly probably doesn't realize how incredibly helpful she was. I definitely would not have completed this project without her.

I didn't have a whole lot of interaction with the Honor's department while doing this project. I know that they would have been willing to help, but I guess I didn't really know what to ask for help with. I didn't realize that I could get grants for my research which would have been helpful. I think that maybe making it clearer to students what resources are available would be useful. Maybe the Honors office does send out emails about resources, but I will be honest that I rarely look at emails from the Honors department because I get so many. Maybe if I got fewer, I would actually look at them. So maybe it's my fault I wasn't aware of resources.

I would say that one of the hardest parts of this project was figuring out how to approach my research and what constituted as research. Another challenge was the sheer amount of time this project

took. Between researching and writing, and creating the patterns themselves, it took a lot of time away from my normal school projects. My major is one that is incredibly project-based and these projects often take much more time than studying material for a test or writing a paper. It was difficult to add another project to my load when I already had so many projects to do. It was often hard to feel like I could sit down and work on this when I had so many looming deadlines.

For future students, I would recommend getting a head start on their Honor's capstone. I definitely shoved mine off for much longer than I should. It would have been a much less stressful experience if I had just done it earlier. Classes and schoolwork all tend to pick up during the Spring semester (at least in my experience) and it was unwise to leave a lot of my capstone work to the end of the school year. That being said, once I dove into my project it was really enjoyable. It was fun to switch to product design when most of my projects are architectural. I would recommend choosing a topic or project that really interests you. It will make you much more likely to complete your capstone. For me, travel has always been a passion and I was really interested in learning how to do pattern design. For years I had been thinking of creating patterns based on my travels, but I never made time to do it. This project gave me the perfect opportunity to start. Capstone projects can seem really intimidating, so it helps to map out a project on a time line. That makes it feel so much more manageable.

I think it's also important to remember that you don't have to make earth-shattering discoveries or be the next Shakespeare with this project. It is an opportunity to learn, research, and explore. It's a chance to find something you are interested in and pursue it a bit. It could be a good chance to explore areas of work or study you don't feel like you really got to in school. For me, we did one pattern-design project in my four years of school and this project gave me a chance to explore in more depth an area I thought was interesting.

I would say that overall this was a very stretching experience, especially while trying to complete my school projects. It was difficult, but I learned, grew and became a better designer because of it. It gave me the opportunity to learn a new skill, it deepened my travel experiences, and I now have a great project to add to my portfolio.

word count: 1,007

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APPENDIX A: TRAVEL LOG

A1. ITALY

Rome

Roman Forum
Palatine Hill
Colosseum
Pantheon
Trevi Fountain
Spanish Steps
Il Vittoriano
Piazza delle Quattro Fontane
San Caro alle Quattro Fontane
Piazza del Popolo
St. Peter's Basilica
Piazza Navona
St. Angelo Bridge
Palazzo Barberini
Capuchin Crypt

Florence

Cathedral of Santa Maria del
Fiore
Baptistry of Saint John
Ponte Vecchio
The David
Uffizi Gallery
Giotto's Bell Tower
Piazza della Signoria
Piazzale Michelangelo

Siena

Piazza del Campo
Siena Cathedral
Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena
Craft market

San Gimignano

Cistern Square
Grand Tower
Church of San Gimignano

Venice

Grand Canal
Doge's Palace
Bridge of Sighs
Venice Cathedral
Various shops

Pisa

Leaning Tower of Pisa
Pisa Cathedral

APPENDIX A: TRAVEL LOG

A2.ROMANIA

Brasov

Black Church
Poiana
Tampa
Strada Sforii
Piata Unirii
Piata Sfatului
Turnul Alb
Council House
Various shops
Homes of locals

Bran

Bran Castle
Village Museum

Sinaia

Peles Castle
Pelesor

Feldioara

Fortified Church
Homes of locals

Oradea

Oradea Fortress
Black Eagle Palace
Nufarul
Moon Church
Town Hall
Ciuperca
Episcopal Palace
Tarii Crisurilor Museum

Iasi

Palace of Culture
Golia Monastery
Trei Ierarhi Monastery
Eminescu's Linden Tree
Cetutia Monastery
Iasi Botanical Garden
Homes of locals

Bucuresti

Palace of Parliament
Cismigiu Gardens
Stavropoleos Monastery
Manuc's Inn
CEC Palace

APPENDIX A: TRAVEL LOG

A3.SPAIN

Calpe

Penon de Ifac
The Queen's Baths
Old town
Street market
Forat de la Mar
Various shops

Alicante

Explanada de Espana
Various hiking trails

Altea

Altea Beach
Parroquia de Nuestra Senora
del Consuela
Various shops

Guadalest

Fortified Church
Portal de Sant Josep
Campanario
Museo Casa Orduna
Algar Waterfalls
Various shops

Madrid

Royal Palace
Plaza Mayor
Crystal Palace
El Retiro Park
Mercado de San Miguel
Prado Museum
Gran Via
Museo Reina Sofia
Cybele Palace
Plaza de Toros de Las Ventas
Rio Park
Sabatini Gardens
Old town
Various shops

Toledo

Puente de San Martin
Puerta de Bisagra
Puerta del Sol
Toledo Cathedral
Roman Circus
Puerta de Alcantara
Various shops

APPENDIX B: PHOTOGRAPHY

All photography was done by Hannah Baldwin in order to document travels done for this project. This is a selection of her photographs and for the sake of space does not include the entire collection of her. This exploration into the world of pattern, design, and culture, illustrates how a culture and its design can

B1.ITALY

Rome, Florence, Sienna, San Gimignano, Venice, Pisa



rome



rome



rome



rome



rome



rome



rome



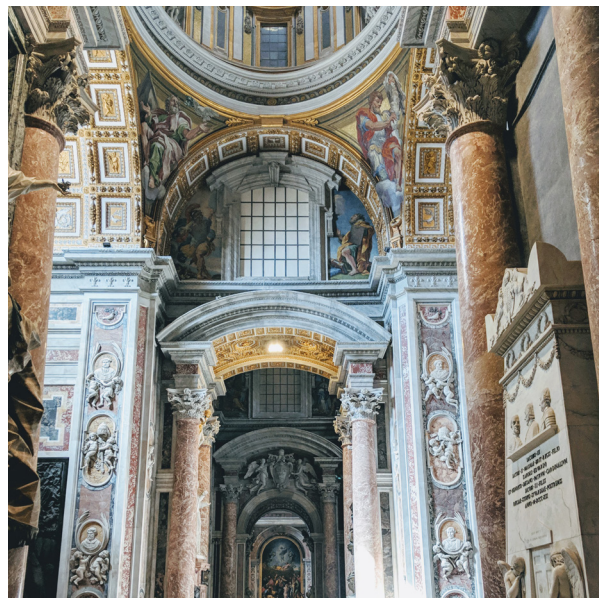
rome



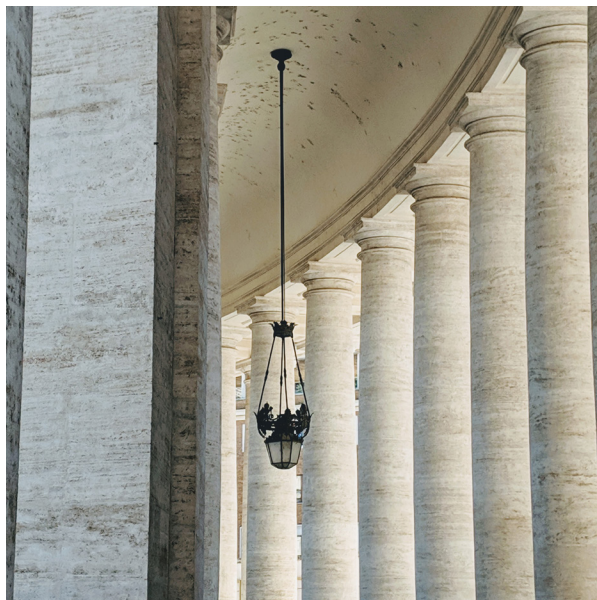
rome



vatican city



vatican city



vatican city



siena



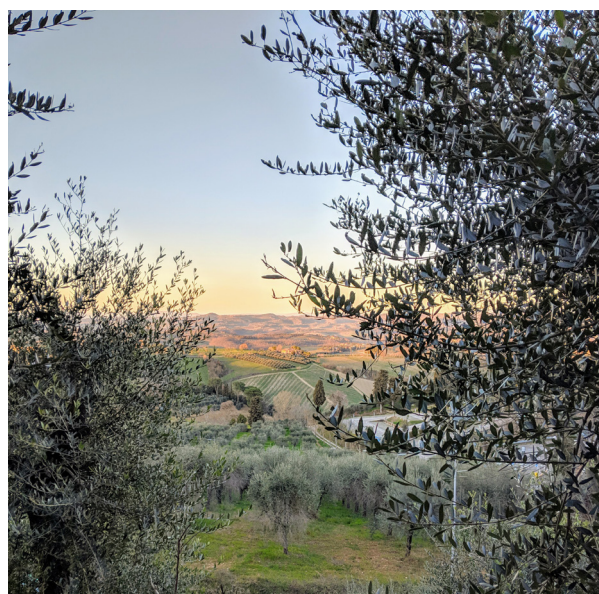
siena



siena



san gimignano



san gimignano



florence



florence



florence



florence



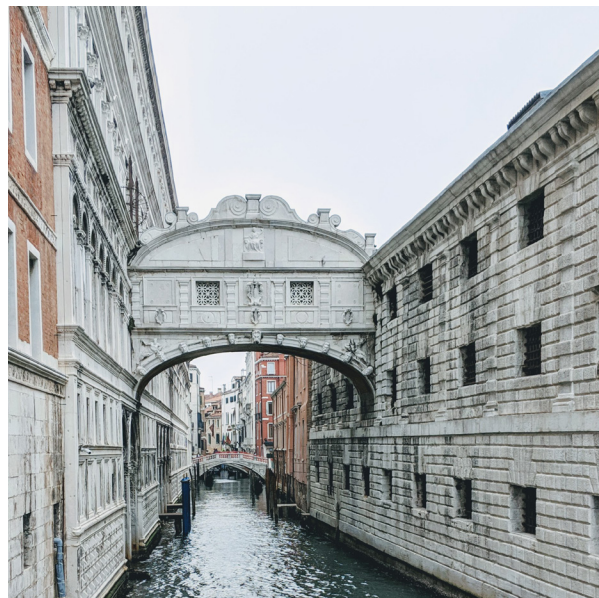
venice



venice



venice



venice



coastline



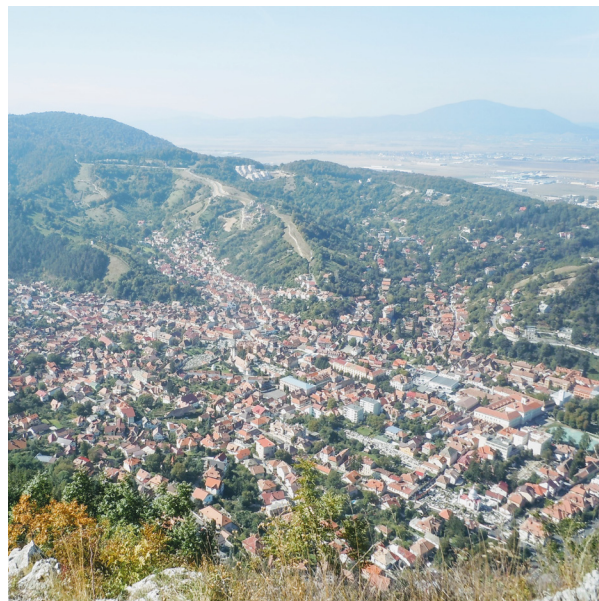
coastline

B.2 ROMANIA

Brasov, Rasnov, Feldioara, Bran, Oradea, Bucuresti, Iasi, Busteni



brasov



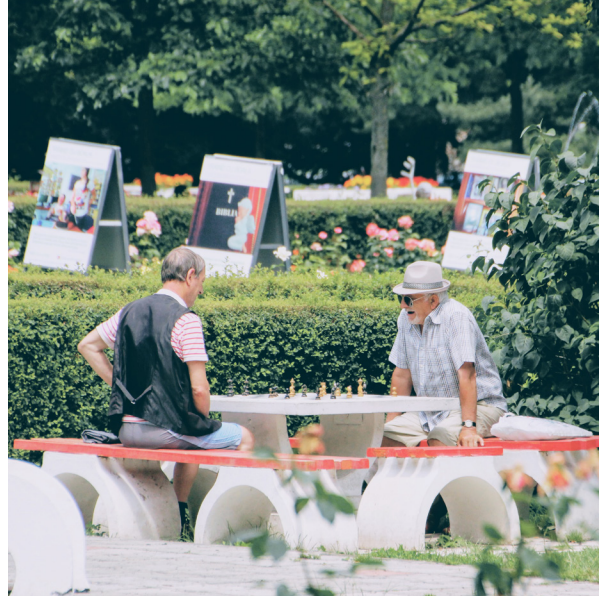
brasov



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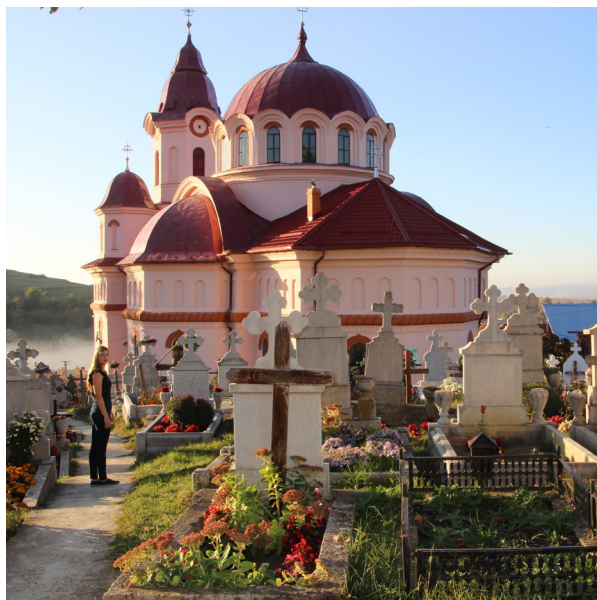
brasov



feldioara



feldioara



la tara



feldioara



feldioara



feldioara



feldioara



feldioara



la tara



la tara



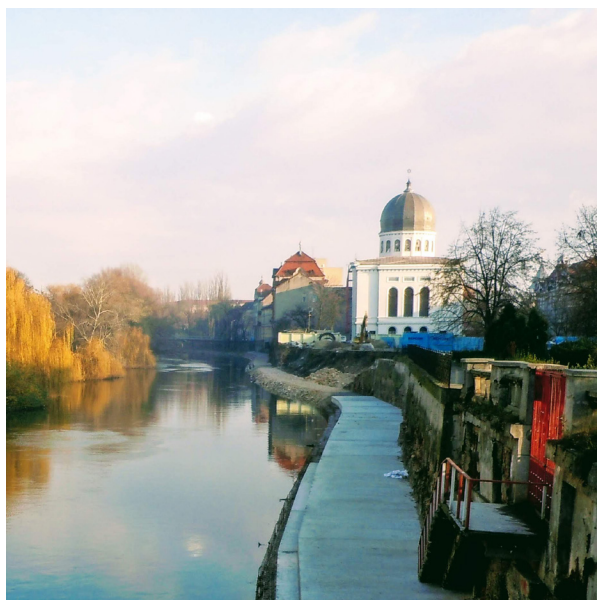
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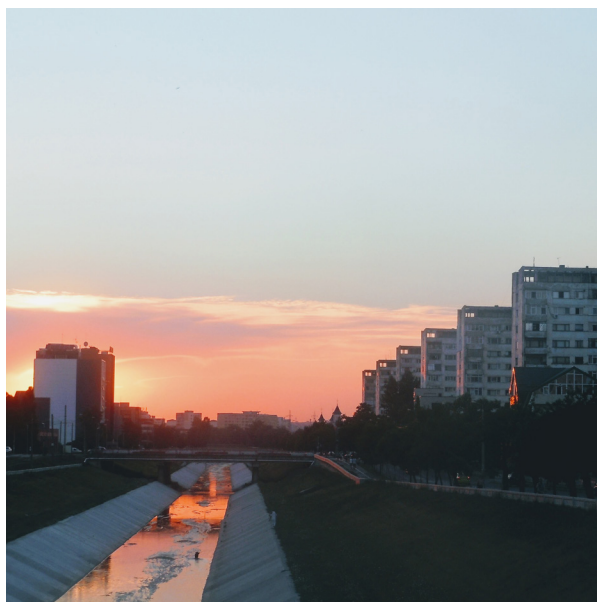
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bran



oradea



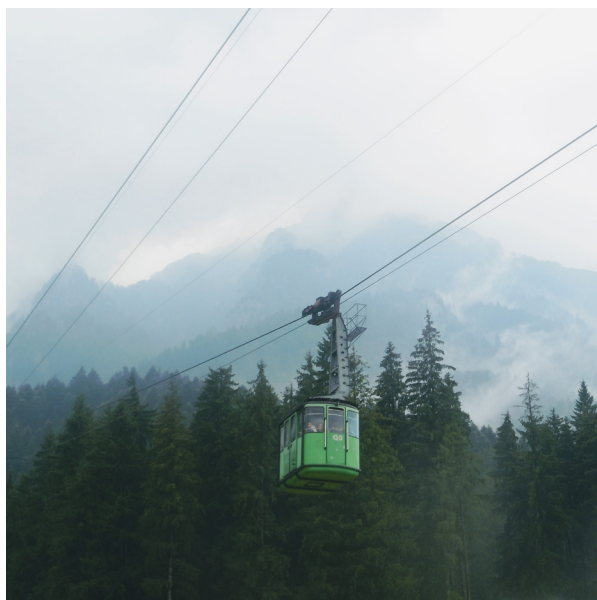
ias i



ias i



bucuresti



busteni

B3.SPAIN

Calpe, Altea, Alicante, Guadalest, Madrid, Toledo



calpe



calpe



calpe



calpe



calpe



calpe



altea



altea



altea



altea



altea



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alicante



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toledo



toledo



AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Born in Salt Lake City in 1994, Hannah Baldwin has always had a passion for travel. Although her family did not do it much while she was growing up, she contented herself with books of far-off places. She moved to Logan, Utah to complete a degree in Interior Design. Along the way, she has found ways to combine her love of foreign cultures with her design education. After her first year of school at USU, she took time off to live in Romania where she learned to speak Romanian. From that first trip out of the country, she was inspired to start creating patterns to document her travels and the cultures she experienced. Two summers after returning from Romania, she volunteered as an English teacher in a Haitian orphanage for three months. There, she learned to speak Haitian Creole and continued documenting her travels through illustration and photography. Since then, she has taken shorter trips to Italy, Spain and Germany all the while gathering inspiration for pattern making. Hannah has had great success during her time at USU winning numerous design competitions and scholarships. Upon graduation, Hannah will be working as a hospitality designer for an architecture firm in Salt Lake. She anticipates working there for a year and then working abroad. After 18 months of work in the professional world, she will be prepared to take the accreditation exams to become a licensed interior designer. Ultimately, she hopes to start her own interior and product design company that will specialize in connecting consumers to craftsmen in third-world countries. In her spare time, she intends to continue to travel the world.