

MASS REDUCTION



AUSTRALIAN TAPESTRY WORKSHOP 2022



EILEEN BRAYBROOK (VIC)

AARON BILLINGS (VIC)

ELISE CAKEBREAD (VIC)

APHRA CHEESMAN (VIC)

JOANNA FOWLES (NSW)

BLAKE GRIFFITHS (NSW)

ELOISE RAPP (NSW)

RAASLEELA (INDIA)

REIKO SUDO/NUNO (JPN)

LISA WAUP (GUNDITJMARA/TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER/VIC)

'Mass Reduction' presents the work of artists and designers who through playful transformation of textile remnants and interrogation of linear modes of textile consumption offer innovative creative design approaches to confronting textile waste.

These works provide an antithesis to heedless textile production by championing mending and embracing wear and tear, privileging waste materials in design, slow process and repurposing and reusing textile waste. As well as through material choices, many artists employ a theoretical investigation into how we create and consume textiles and invite reflection on the value of post-consumer materials.

Presented as part of Melbourne Design Week 2022, 'Mass Reduction' speaks to broader concerns around the waste created by the textile and apparel industries and current modes of 'end-of-life' resource consumption. This exhibition promotes rethinking design process and material choices, reduce environmental impact and posit the transformation of textile waste to an even higher value textile product.

Left: 'Mass Reduction' in situ at the Australian Tapestry Workshop.



EILEEN BRAYBROOK (VIC)

'Visible Mending'

Top left: 'Grace's Jumper' 2021, hand knitted wool jumper, thrifted and mended with scrap yarn. Braybrook was inspired by the tag the maker had sewn on the collar 'Made with Love for the Boss' to cover a hole in an awkward spot.

Top right: 'Claire's Jumper' 2022, hand knitted wool jumper with hand spun yarn, mended and embroidered with yarn. This jumper belonged to Braybrook's neighbour when she was a child, a relative had knitted it with yarn she had spun from the sheep on her farm. So much time and energy went into bringing this jumper into existence – which inspired the artist to mend it. The possum had become a bit distorted as a result of felting, adding some bursts of colourful blossoms gives it some well deserved newness.

Bottom left: 'Astral Travel' 2022, hand knitted mohair jumper, mended with lurex and wool yarn. This is a simple mend using a swiss darn technique. The small mend is highlighted with metallic lilac yarn to add to the magic of this already beautiful knit.

Bottom middle: 'Michelle's Jumper' 2021-22, commercial/industrial Fairisle Knit Jumper, mended with hand dyed yarn and scrap yarn. Here Braybrook used a combination of scrap yarn and yarn that was hand dyed with nettles from her backyard to mend this very loved jumper for an old friend. Nettles hold a lot of symbolism from many different cultures and are used in folk medicine, and are said to offer powers of protection. The garment is well worn and Braybrook spent lot of time rebuilding the cuff and reinforcing the elbows.

Bottom right: 'Little House' 2022, knitted wool jumper, mended and embellished with scrap yarn. The purl rows in this knit reminded Braybrook of little streets which led her to turn the mend into a house motif. She added more colour to the jumper using scrap yarn saved from previous projects threaded through the purl stitches.

During the pandemic Braybrook lost access to her studio. As she lives in a very small house, she needed a project that she could do from home that would satisfy her yearn for making but not waste any materials or take up too much space. At the time, Braybrook also had a newborn, so the project had to be portable and quiet.

She turned to her large collection of knitwear, many with holes and in need of mending. She rejected the idea of invisible repairs and instead looked for a way to breathe life and newness into old knits. She could now tell a new story with contrasting yarns and decorative embellishments that give these knits a second life. Braybrook hopes her 'Visible Mending' project inspires others to give their old knits a new life and help to reduce ever growing textile waste.

Eileen Braybrook is a Melbourne based textile and knitwear designer. Since graduating from RMIT's Bachelor of Textile Design in 2013, Braybrook has collaborated with renowned Australian designers such as Romance Was Born, Erik Yvon, Adiars and Country Road. Her playful, conversational style explores colour and texture, mixing nostalgia with otherworldliness. She works across fashion, interiors and experimental knit design. Braybrook's recent work involves rescuing vintage knitwear and giving it new life through darning and repairing techniques.



AARON BILLINGS (VIC)

'Double-Butt Pig' 2022

Embroidery floss and pencil on calico, silk and linen, 72 x 72cm.

This quilt is assembled from embroidery samplers, forming a border and an improvised embroidery work in the central panel, collected over the past ten years of Aaron Billings's textile teaching practice. Embroidery samplers are a way for students to test out embroidery techniques on scrap fabric before moving onto their final work. Due to this, samplers are often discarded as they are not seen as final artworks. Billings writes,

'I love the doodle like, subconscious quality that these remnants hold, they are like abstract drawings with thread. The central panel of this piece is a work that I made while shop sitting at Pink Ember Studios. I made this work in a free hand, improvised way: one stitch after the other, never quite knowing what was happening. Eventually the shape of pig emerged, and I gave it a face.'

Aaron Billings is a Melbourne based textile and comic artist, and gallery manager at artist collective and studio space Pink Ember Studio. His quilt-making began as a process of repurposing scrap material and test screen prints from his time as a student at Monash University. Billings prints, illustrates, and embroiders his quilts to document and share his projections of a queer future; a nod to the folk-art of quilting, and its particular re-emergence during the AIDS epidemic. Recently, Billings has been teaching embroidery. He collects his samples, and samples leftover from his students and has been reimagining them into his 'workshop detritus' quilt.

ELISE CAKEBREAD (VIC)

'Second String', 2022

Repurposed textile waste including pre-consumer waste, production waste, post-consumer waste and deadstock materials. Cotton, polyester, wool, linen, acrylic, canvas, lurex, silk, mohair, rayon. 49 pieces: approximately 21cm x 15cm each.

'Second String' is an ongoing project exploring techniques, processes, traditions, concepts and strategies for transforming textile waste. 'Second String' directly examines the textile waste crisis and ideas of circularity in art and design. Cakebread devised 'Second String' to look at ways in which the problem of textile waste could be addressed within her practice as well as the design, art and fashion industries more broadly.

For this ongoing project she has created a series of swatches or 'croquis' that explore a variety of techniques for the recycling of both pre-consumer and post-consumer waste textiles. The project is about experimentation, research and development. The result is an evolving collection of ideas that represent Cakebread's personal investigation into ways of transforming these materials. No new materials have been bought for this project.

Elise Cakebread is an artist and founder of Cakebread textile design studio, based in Gordon, Victoria. Cakebread explores materiality, tactility, sustainability, disposability and the ornamental through experiments with traditional textile processes. She focuses on the tensions created by unexpected contrasts that emerge between material, form, colour, texture and scale. This gives life to sculptural work, installations and decorative objects. Cakebread's work has been exhibited nationally, including at Craft, Design Tasmania and The Australian Design Centre. She is currently undertaking a creative fellowship awarded by Regional Arts Victoria.





APHRA CHEESMAN (VIC)

'Holes', 2022

Copper (scrap, gifted and new), mild steel (scrap, gifted and new), found coat hanger, found elastic cord, furniture paint, furniture wax, found sewing pins (glass and stainless steel), vitreous enamel (glass), sterling silver (recycled and new), stainless steel. Smallest 15mm x 25mm x 10mm, largest 120mm x 80mm x 10mm.

Aphra Cheesman collects traces of encounters between people and things, gleaning objects and materials that are worn or decayed, with signs of interactions and use. She considers how the contact zones between people and materials are examples of a networked materiality – an intersection of social, political, environmental and economic forces. This body of work responds to worn patches in everyday objects such as clothing and furniture. By reconstructing these worn patches, the contact zones over time between the body and object are made tangible.

As brooches, the objects can be attached to pieces of clothing or textile, and hence used to 'patch up' the worn areas. In doing so, she considers alternative modes of repair. The act of mending also presents an alternative to the subject-object relations often dictated to us by the cycles of capitalism - buying, owning, using, discarding - offering a potential to re-examine both our place within these systems, and our relationships with our things.

Aphra is a Naarm/Melbourne based artist, from Aotearoa/New Zealand. Her process is both playful and observant. She is interested in the in-between moments of daily life and she is continually looking for objects, materials and things in her everyday that she finds odd, beautiful, humorous, or simply appealing. This begins the process of translating her observations into further research, and making work. In 2020 she completed her BA (Fine Art) (Honours) at RMIT. She was selected as a finalist for 'Fresh!' Graduate showcase at Craft Victoria, the Marzee International Graduate Show and 'Talente' in Munich in 2021.



JOANNA FOWLES (NSW)

'Chroma Codes', 2020

Dyed fabric using the following:

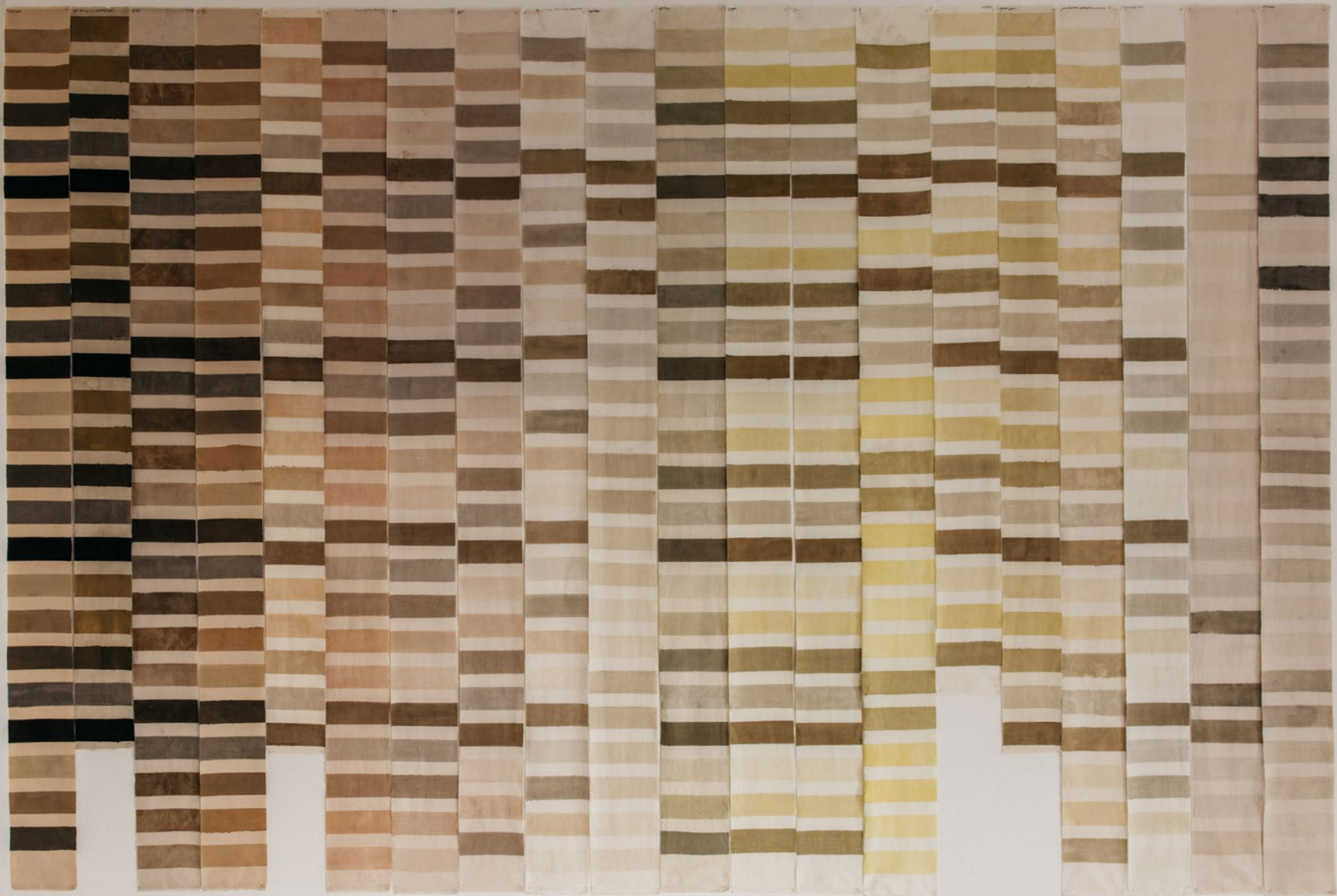
Sydney Red Gum Bark (*Angophora costata*)
Blackbutt Pods (*Eucalyptus pilularis*)
Tea Leaves (*Camellia sinensis*)
Blackbutt Bark (*Eucalyptus pilularis*)
Bunya Nut (*Araucaria bidwillii*)
Brown Onion Skin (*Allium cepa*)
Avocado Pip (*Persea americana*)
Avocado Pip (*Persea americana*)
Needlebush Leaves (*Hakea gibbosa*)
Black Beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*)

Artichoke Leaves (*Cynara scolymus*)
Carrot Tops (*Daucus carota sativus*)
Carrot Tops (*Daucus carota sativus*)
Carrot Tops (*Daucus carota sativus*)
Daffodil Flowers (*Narcissus*)
Jasmine Leaves (*Jasminum*)
Needlebush Leaves (*Hakea gibbosa*)
Artichoke Leaves (*Cynara scolymus*)
Black Beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*)
Black Beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*)

'Chroma Codes' is an installation of colour from nature extracted from plants, weeds and food waste showcasing the colour potential of urban foraged materials as alternative dyes. Swatches of colour are meticulously hand-painted and dyed to create an immersive colour library of unique Plant Chroma Codes, a distillation of plant material and place. Each colour coded panel tells a story of a material linked to a specific region, influenced by weather and the seasons to reveal multiple unique colours. The Plant Chroma Codes installation demonstrates an appreciation of natural materials and their use to colour textiles.

Joanna Fowles' practice-led research investigates the contemporary applications of natural dye from local urban foraged materials. Fowles' experience of almost two decades within the fashion and textile industry as a designer, screen printer and textile lecturer at UTS has led to an acute awareness of the environmental implications of the industry. Rather than using traditional dyes sourced from overseas locations, she documents the colour potential of materials sourced directly from nature.

Weeds like invasive fireweed (*Senecio madagascariensis*), windfall branches and leaves of eucalyptus, deadheads from daffodils (*Narcissus jonquilla*) become speculative colourants for the dye pot. Food waste forms another stream of enquiry. Dyes extracted from redundant post-primary-use materials such as coffee grounds (*Coffea arabica*) and avocado pips (*Persea americana*) sourced from domestic waste and local cafes highlight the potential to divert waste streams, adding to a closed-loop circular design system. This research territory allows Fowles' to apply her dye expertise through a changemaker approach discovering alternative solutions that work with the environment to form unique plant chroma codes palettes.



'Chroma Codes' by Joanna Fowles in situ at the Australian Tapestry Workshop.

BLAKE GRIFFITHS (NSW)

'A Rug For Reorganising Value (Of Waste & Self)', 2018

Left: 'A rug for re-organising value (of waste & self) September', 2018, wool, cotton, gelato tub, yoghurt tub, strawberry punnet, coffee filter, glad snap bag, foil, salad leaves packet, lentil packet, bread bag, deep heat packaging, junk mail, spinach box, receipt, tea bag box, incense box, envelope, chocolate box, cup cake pan, air plane ticket, tissue, keep cup packet, shoe box, hot chips packet, egg carton, thrums, tea bag, plastic bag, holoumi packet, elastic, ear bud, sticker, tasty cheese pack, tape packaging, sesame snap packet, toothpaste tube, glad wrap, bread bag, chocolate bar wrapper, coffee grinds packet, tom yum goong packet, tea bag sachet, festival wrist band, incense packet, blueberry punnet & cellophane, 130 x 74cm.

While the home may be a site of love, comfort and tranquility, it is undeniably also a site of waste creation & increasingly so. Assuming the familiar form of the blanket, this artwork has been woven from the artists' material waste over a six month period. Close inspection reveals a visual litany of daily waste; a chocolate wrapper; a bread bag; cat food tin, newspaper, magazine and single use plastics. Revealed also is our personal inextricable connection to that we so often want to eliminate, disguise and hide through consignment to the rubbish bin. By shredding, cutting, twining, plying and weaving waste into a large scale textile, the artist actively reassigns and transforms the 'no value' of domestic waste, making it a site of value and creativity; a site of tactile familiarity.

Blake Griffiths is a weaver living and working in Broken Hill, NSW. Griffiths' work grapples with the tension between making/producing concurrently to social, cultural, environmental, and political issues; using textiles to understand the world and hypothesize new futures. Deeply informed by his local environment, and his connection to Broken Hill, Griffiths utilises found materials, such as emu feathers, and domestic waste collected from his daily life. By shredding, cutting, twining, plying and weaving waste into a large-scale textile, Griffiths actively reassigns and transforms the 'no value' of domestic waste, making it a site of value and creativity, and tactile familiarity.





From left:

'A rug for re-organising value (of waste & self) July', 2018, wool, cotton, lentil packet, bread bag, coffee filter, chocolate box, chocolate wrapper, band aid, sesame snap packet, toothpaste tube, junk mail, pre-made salad pack, hair tie, banana chip packet, thrums, bubble wrap, rubber band, bill, envelope, tissue, cosmetic packaging, toothpaste box, masking tape, coffee grinds packet, incense packet, asparagus tag, tea bag, orange fruit netting, coriander packet, strawberry punnet, salmon packaging, paper serviette, bread tag, egg carton, green beans packet, butter wrapper, yogurt lid, pharmacy bag, silver water bag, tyvek, biscuit packet, haloumi packet, spice mix packet, cotton wool, bubble wrap, air plane ticket & receipt 130 x 120cm.

'A rug for re-organising value (of waste & self) June', 2018, wool, cotton, bread bag, parmesan packet, make up wipe, ear bud, plastic bag, straw, incense packet, thrums, hair tie, coffee filter, tea bag, foil, air plane ticket, take away coffe cup, toothbrush packet, copper wire, paper clip, tomato punnet, paper bag, receipt, chewey packet, bin liner packet, conference paper, scrap paper, tissue, feta packet, coffee grinds packet, wire ties, orange fruit netting, egg carton, junk mail, sock label, cotton reel, vegemite label, glad wrap, butter wrapper, toothpaste tube, chocolate bar wrapper, scrap fabric, bamboo skewer, yogurt lid, dish sponge, vegetable stock packet, toilet roll, coathanger packet, chocolate box, sticky note, clothing label, milk carton, lettuce packet, haloumi packet, bin liner packet, electrical packaging, coconut milk label, aesop packaging, batteries packet, extension cord packet & envelope, 130 x 134cm.



'Mass Reduction' in situ at the Australian Tapestry Workshop.



ELOISE RAPP (NSW)

'Gingham All You've Got', 2021

Cotton shirting, cotton thread, natural indigo, each 90cm x 140cm.

Old cotton business shirts are disassembled, broken down into a series of rectangles and reconstructed in a patched arrangement resembling the original checks and grids of the cloth. These new textile structures re-examine and re-contextualise the original purpose of the shirts. One of the pieces is dyed with natural indigo, a pigment that has long held a relationship with cotton workwear.

The title is both a nod to the universality of gingham, check & plaid and a critique on the urgent need to make use of what we have; to recognise our old textiles as robust materials we must actively care for, repair and re-value.

Eloise Rapp is a Sydney-based designer and maker working at the intersection of craft and system change. Her work emphasises experimentation, collaboration and community engagement as a way to humanise textiles. She has over ten years of design experience in the fashion industry, and has taught at UTS, UNSW, Tainan National University of the Arts, Taiwan and Vantan Design Institute, Tokyo. Her work has been exhibited at the CCCD in Hong Kong, Gaffa Gallery and the Australian Design Centre. She now runs a responsible textile studio, 'Push Pull Textiles', to build her vision of a viable alternative to exploitative and extractive production methods.



RAASLEELA (INDIA)

'Yardage', 2018

Handstitched and embroidered handwoven cotton created from recycled and remnant materials, 1.1 x 2.3m.

This 'yardage' by RaasLeela is handwoven cotton fabric created from upcycled fabrics. These are remnants that have minor damage or weaving defects in one part, if this happens the whole roll is discarded. RaasLeela removes the damaged parts and upcycles the rest of the fabric. Some of the pieces are also from cutting waste that is generated from garment production.

RaasLeela Founder and Head Designer Hetal Shrivastav writes:

'Traditionally sustainability was not a fashion but was a way of life. Using artisan's creativity is RaasLeela's inspiration. We do not want artisans to just sit in a corner and follow designers' instructions. We also want them to enjoy what they do, know what they are making and for whom, get involved in the design and understand the need to simplify the production with their technical knowledge. Here in this piece of textile, Sumi, Dilshad Banu and Sonaben have sat together to compose this piece with their special skills. At times Sumi was working on the base fabric doing her joinery stitch and sometimes all three would work on it together. Sonaben doing her Bawalio Stitch and Dilshad Banu doing her Spider stitch and running stitch. It had been a wonderful experience for them to work in a team and develop this piece.'

RaasLeela is a textile brand based in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, comprised of an all-women team of makers and artisans. RaasLeela follows sustainability as a lifestyle by repairing, conserving and consuming less and following eco-friendly practices. Every design, material, and process is thoughtfully considered for its purpose. RaasLeela focuses on making a difference – in consuming resources, in reviving crafts, in providing an inclusive growth to people who are connected with the brand. Their processes involve considered making of garments and homewares, including repairing and upcycling garments, low-water and bleach free dyeing, and bespoke pieces.

This piece is hand stitched by RaasLeela artisans Sumi Makwana, Dilshad Banu Sheikh and Sonaben Jambukia.

Sumi Makwana - Applique

Sumiben is one of the most ambitious people on the team. She is an all-rounder when it comes to embroidery work at the studio but her expertise lies in making tikdi, tikda (small and large circular applique patches), and fabric pipping.

Dilshad Banu Sheikh - Herringbone & Accessories

Dilshad Banu is young at heart, a happy-go-lucky lady, never fails to amaze everyone by creating exceptional trims and finishes. Herringbone stitch also called 'Sadu Bharat' is her forte. She also is an expert in making adorable tiny badges known as 'Billas' in different shapes and sizes.

Sonaben Jambukia - Bawalio

Sonaben is one of the team's most upbeat individuals. She exudes confidence in everything that she does and is proficient in embroidering interlaced stitches called Bawalio, a type of Rabari embroidery that is becoming rare day by day. She is the only person in the studio who can do this embroidery with ease.

Detail of 'Yardage' by RaasLeela in situ at the Australian Tapestry Workshop.





REIKO SUDO/NUNO (JPN)

'Futsu Crisscross', 2022

'Kibiso Suzushi Stripe' (2 lengths), 'Kibiso Tsugihagi', Kibiso (outer layer of processed silkworm cocoons), Kibiso fibre, 'Kibiso Futsu Crisscross'.

'Futsu Crisscross' is one of the results of NUNO's experimentation with upcycling kibiso—using the waste product to make something of greater value. Kibiso, an industrial waste product, is the protective outer layer of the silk cocoon that is “wiped off” and discarded in order to reach the finer silk fibre underneath. Consisting of sericin and other amino acids that ultimately help to protect the silkworm, kibiso has been used by other industries in such products as foods and cosmetics.

Until 2008, kibiso fibres from the hard outermost layer of the silk cocoon were discarded as manufacturing waste as they are too tough to spin into threads. However a newly invented method for reducing the thickness of kibiso fibres has opened up many new possibilities for textile production. This two-sided futsu double-weave combines kibiso yarns with raw silk in crisscrossing bands.

'Kibiso Suzushi Stripe' refers to a crisp, cool fabric woven of unpolished raw silk. Here a lustrous suzushi is finished with coarse tonal stripes of kibiso. 'Kibiso Tsugihagi' is Japanese for patchwork. Assembled in “chemical lace” fashion, the overall design may look constant, but depending on the fabric scraps we have on hand, no two lengths are ever alike.

Reiko Sudo is one of Japan's most influential contemporary textile designers, renowned for creating innovative textiles, championing new sustainable manufacturing methods and working to highlight Japanese textile heritage. She is the Design Director of leading textile design firm Nuno, which was founded in 1984.

Known for pushing the boundaries of textile production, Sudo and her team integrate Japanese dyeing and weaving traditions with cutting edge technology and experimental finishing methods, whilst combining diverse materials such as cotton, silk, metal and paper. The results are original and distinctive textiles which can be functional lifestyle items produced on an industrial scale or individual works of art in their own right. Nuno textiles have exhibited globally at major international museums, including New York's Museum of Modern Art, London's Victoria & Albert Museum, and the National Museum of Modern Art's Craft Gallery in Tokyo.



'Futsu Crisscross' by Reiko Sudo/NUNO in situ at the Australian Tapestry Workshop.

LISA WAUP (GUNDITJMARA/TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER/VIC)

'Continuity and Protection', 2022

Clockwise from top left: 'Protected Neckpiece', 2022, stencilled ostrich leather, enamel paint, assorted feathers, hand dyed fibre, leather, cotton thread, copper wire; 'Continuity Neckpiece', 2022, remnant fabric from Lisa Waup X VERNER Journeys collection (screen-printing denim), ink, ATW wool, cotton thread, assorted feathers, wool wadding; 'Continuity Earrings', 2022, remnant fabric from Lisa Waup X VERNER Journeys collection (screen-printed denim), ink, ATW wool, cotton thread, assorted feathers, wool wadding, recycled sterling silver; 'Protected Earrings', 2022, stencilled ostrich leather, enamel paint, assorted feathers, hand dyed fibre, cotton thread, copper wire, recycled sterling silver.

This body of work details Waup's connection to body adornment. Not only has it been conceived and intended as wearable art – for her it becomes enveloped with protection, an armour of sorts. Adorning the body with natural pigments, natural objects and markings have been utilised around the world by first peoples for thousands of years. These acts carry cultural connections and record what has happened in the past, or what ceremony or practice is happening, who you are and what connections you have.

These works, 'Continuity' and 'Protection' have been created using a variety of materials from nature and also materials rescued from the fashion industry which would have been destined for land fill. Waup's practice is heavily inspired to reuse, rescue and give materials another life and purpose from what that were originally created for. The stitched and stencilled mark making on the body adornment details reference a connection to family, Country and tracing lost history.

Lisa Waup is an artist and curator of Gunditjmara, Torres Strait Islander and Italian heritage, based in southeast Melbourne. Her practice is comprised of printmaking and distinct, mixed-media weaving techniques, including woven sculptures, vessels and body adornment. Waup's unique brooches and earrings feature remnant fabrics from her 2017 and 2019 collaboration with Melbourne fashion design Ingrid Verner. Soulfully woven with both found and natural materials, her pieces allow her to share stories while creating a connection to place and kin. Waup has exhibited at ACCA, NGV, NMA, Fremantle Art Centre, Art Gallery of South Australia and ReDot Gallery in Singapore.

CONTINUITY AND PROTECTION LISA WAUP (GUNDITJMARA/ TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER/VIC)

Clockwise from top left:

Protected Neckpiece, 2022, stencilled ostrich leather, enamel paint, assorted feathers, hand dyed fibre, leather, cotton thread, copper wire, recycled sterling silver, 2022

Continuity Neckpiece, 2022, remnant fabric from Lisa Waup X VERNER Journeys collection (screen-printing denim), ink, ATW wool, cotton thread, assorted feathers, wool wadding, recycled sterling silver, 2022

Continuity Earrings, 2022, remnant fabric from Lisa Waup X VERNER Journeys collection (screen-printed denim), ink, ATW wool, cotton thread, assorted feathers, wool wadding, recycled sterling silver, 2022

Protected Earrings, 2022, stencilled ostrich leather, enamel paint, assorted feathers, hand dyed fibre, cotton thread, copper wire, recycled sterling silver, 2022

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This exhibition was part of Melbourne Design Week 2022, an initiative of the Victorian Government in collaboration with the NGV.

Mass Reduction is proudly supported by the City of Port Phillip.

All photography by Marie-Luis Skibbe.

AUSTRALIAN TAPESTRY WORKSHOP

