

Revalue Local Textiles:



Iaac



Distributed
Design

*How
stories
breathe*

*new
life
into*



by Janina Schröter

This paper is for you, *if you..*

- ☐ seek an *exemplary structure* to conduct your own *design research*
- ☐ need *recent numbers and policies* around textile consumption
- ☐ are interested in *how to find and source discarded textiles* near you
- ☐ want to connect to your local textile community, but *don't know where to start*
- ☐ are curious how to *translate interviews* and field research into *design outcomes*
- ☐ look for *inspiration to upcycle or transform second hand textiles*

Abstract

*I've always believed that textiles hold memories.
Yet eventually, most garments end up in bins, treated as worthless.
What does that say about how we value what we wear?*



In order to extend the lives of discarded textiles in our local communities, we need to be encouraged to reconnect with them.

This paper provides you with recent relevant numbers about the textile value chain centered around the global north. Alongside insights into the journey of connecting to local stakeholders and exploring ways to transform sourced fabrics. These fabrics can be overlooked because they lost their original use or are out of style.

Crafts offer a way to re-engage with them and transform them into something new, both in form and in meaning. This process led to the creation of five pieces: a bag from a pillowcase, a bag from a mattress cover, a memory-stitched pillowcase and a mending glove.

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Introduction

The scale of our textile problem

The Global scale of the textile problem

There is something wrong with our textile consumption and disposal, especially in the global north. We use our clothes and when they don't fit, break or are out of style we throw them away. What happens next is often invisible to us Central Europeans. We imagine recycling, donation, or creative reuse, but the truth is far from that.

*In 2024 the Ellen MacArthur Foundation states that, globally around 70 to 80% of disposed textiles are incinerated, landfilled, or end up in the environment.*¹²

Shipped to places far away, the Kantamanto Market in Ghana³ or the Atacama desert in Chile⁴, where waste-management systems struggle to cope.

The waste doesn't just disappear, but causes soil contamination, water pollution, and CO2 emissions from long-distance transport and incineration. The textile and fashion industry now represents 2–8% of global greenhouse gas emissions⁵. Even more concerning is that as of 2022 less than 1 % of textile waste is recycled into new garments.⁶ Meanwhile, local collection systems are overburdened and underdeveloped, leaving most textiles to be discarded, not revalued.

Systemic and behavioral Contradictions

Sustainable or Circular Fashion, have been presented as a solution, but the current system and consumer behaviour makes it difficult to succeed meaningfully.

As the Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2025) points out, resale, rental, and recycling do not guarantee sustainability if production volumes remain high. Playing into the Jevons Paradox, efficiency gains or “better” options can unintentionally lead to increased consumption, not less. Consumers feel good about saving resources in one area, allowing them to spend in another.⁷ Additionally, there has been a growing skepticism, as people doubt its benefits and mistrust brands in fear of greenwashing and due to lack of transparency.^{8 9} And even those who are interested are now more price-sensitive, hit by years of inflation and economic pressure, and often unwilling or unable to pay extra for sustainable options.¹⁰ Instead of reducing consumption, this dynamic pushes demand toward cheaper fast fashion, reinforcing the very cycle circularity claims to fix.

Voluntary behavior change alone is insufficient.¹¹ To shift the system meaningfully, structural interventions and clear regulatory frameworks are essential. Especially in European countries, who are responsible for a big part of textile consumption and waste worldwide.

1 Ellen MacArthur Foundation: We need extended producer responsibility for textiles, 14. June 2024, URL: <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/epr-policy-for-textiles?sortBy=rel>

2 Ellen MacArthur Foundation: #Wearnext, 22. June 2021, URL: <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/articles/wearnext> (accessed on 15. May 2025)

3 The Or Foundation: Dead White Man's Clothes, Accra: The Or Foundation, 2022. URL: <https://dead-whitemansclothes.org>

4 National Geographics, John Bartlett: Fast fashion goes to die in the world's largest fog desert. The scale is breathtaking., 5. March 2024, URL: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/chile-fashion-pollution>

5 United Nations: Unsustainable fashion and textiles in focus for International Day of Zero Waste 2025, Nairobi, 27. March 2025, URL: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/unsustainable-fashion-and-textiles-focus-international-day-zero>

6 European Commission, EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles, 2022, URL: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/textiles-strategy_en

7 World Resources Institute, Here's what could go wrong with the circular economy, 2019, URL: <https://www.wri.org/insights/heres-what-could-go-wrong-circular-economy-and-how-keep-it-track>

8 Mintel: The Future of Fashion: Circular and Sustainable Textiles, 2024, URL: <https://www.mintel.com/insights/retail/the-growth-of-circular-and-sustainable-fashion-trends/>

9 Fashion Revolution: Who made my fabric?, 2021, URL: <https://www.fashionrevolution.org/whomademymyfabric/>

10 McKinsey & Company: The State of Fashion in 2025: Challenges at Every Turn, 2024. URL: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/state-of-fashion> (accessed on: 17. June 2025)

11 Ellen MacArthur Foundation, Scaling circular business models: a guide for fashion leaders, June 2025, URL: <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/the-fashion-remodel/insights>

Recent efforts & developments in the EU

*On average, textiles consumption in the EU increased from 17 kg per person in 2019 to 19 kg per person in 2022 and in total around 7 Million Tons per year.*¹²

This rising consumption highlights the limitations of relying on voluntary behavioral change alone. The EU is shifting from voluntary action to enforced regulation, aiming to reshape how textiles are produced, consumed, and discarded.

One of the key legislative steps in this shift is the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation, entered in force on the 18th of July 2024, setting standards for sustainability measures for European products, including textiles. Notably, it includes the Digital Product Passport containing a unique product ID for textiles.¹³ While its full impact is still unfolding, this step signals a broader recognition that textile value must be made more visible, even if many stages of production still remain difficult to trace.

In addition to product design, the EU is targeting the end of life phase. The most recent policy here is *Extended Producer Responsibility*, passed in December 2024, requires all EU Member States to implement separate collection of textile waste by January 1, 2025.¹⁴

Coherent with this, the *Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles* (2022)¹⁵ presented the goal to make all textile products in the EU durable, recyclable and repairable. As of the 29th May 2025, high rates of separate collection of textile waste should have been ensured by all EU Members. Yet the actual enforcement and reporting across member states has been uneven and have not been published even after the deadlines.

One unintended consequence of better textile sorting may be increased export of waste. To prevent this, the EU introduced the *Waste Shipments Regulation* passed on the 11th of April 2024.¹⁶ But its impact remains to be seen, as countries who still want to receive shipments can apply for an exemption.

While policies show early signs of success, with countries like France imposing stricter laws on extreme fast fashion brands,¹⁷ total textile waste generation continues to rise.

¹² European Environment Agency: Circularity of the EU textiles value chain in numbers, 26. March 2025, Link: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/management-of-used-and-waste-textiles>

¹³ European Commission: Ecodesign for Sustainable Products, 18. July 2024, URL: https://commission.europa.eu/energy-climate-change-environment/standards-tools-and-labels/products-labeling-rules-and-requirements/ecodesign-sustainable-products-regulation_en

¹⁴ OECD: Extended Producer Responsibility, 11. December 2024, URL: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/extended-producer-responsibility_67587b0b-en.html

¹⁵ European Commission: EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles, Brussels, 30. March 2022, URL: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/document/download/74126c90-5cbf-46d0-ab6b-60878644b395_en?filename=COM_2022_141_1_EN_ACT_part1_v8.pdf

¹⁶ European Parliament and council: REGULATION (EU) 2024/1157 on shipments of waste, 11. April 2024, URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1157>
¹⁷ Forbes: France says no to fast fashion, will the world follow?, 30. June 2025, URL: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/zoewong1/2025/06/30/france-says-no-to-ultra-fast-fashion-will-the-world-follow/>

Catalonia/Barcelona: local waste patterns & challenges

But how do these EU-level goals translate into local realities? Catalonia, a region with ambitious circularity goals, offers a concrete case.

Starting with the *Pacte para la mode circular*¹⁸ in 2021, a voluntary agreement that unites stakeholders across Catalonia's textile value chain to promote circular economy practices. Key objectives include reducing textile waste generation by 5–10%, increasing separate collection rates to 25–30%, and ensuring that 55–60% of collected textiles are prepared for reuse, with 40–50% recycled. Since many sorting and collection systems in big cities are overburdened, they have also implemented a Sectoral Territorial Plan for Municipal Waste Management called PINFRECAT, in 2025 to improve the Infrastructure development to support circular waste management by 2035.¹⁹

Aside from the efforts, the reality is still quite shocking. As of 2022, Catalonia generates 166,000 tonnes of textile waste annually, that's 21.3 kg per person, roughly the equivalent of discarding the weight of a standard cotton tote bag every single day and around 2 kg above EU average.

89% of textile waste (147,240 tonnes) cannot be recovered due to incorrect disposal with only 11% of it being selectively collected. Of that 11%, only 5–10% is reintroduced through second-hand sales.

The waste is mainly divided in 3 channels, who can be representative for many European countries:

1) 60-70%

Export to Africa, Pakistan, Europe, and South America

2) 20-30%

"Recycled textiles" Recovered through Recycling, sent to Pakistan

3) 5-10%

"Unusable textiles"

Used for energy recovery or disposal²⁰

Keeping the *Waste Shipments Regulation* in mind one can assume that Catalunya will face a big amount of textile waste they have to make use of locally and is in need of alternative coping solutions.

Even taking into account the efforts of the local government to improve the textile value chain infrastructure, most textiles never enter recovery systems. Unfortunately, there is a mismatch between policy goals and consumer behaviour, time will tell how well incentives will work. Nevertheless there will have to be a change, since the overdependence on exports raises ethical, environmental concerns and decreases the traceability of textiles.

Though structural interventions are underway, they remain only part of the equation. Addressing the textile crisis also requires cultural and emotional shifts, a deeper rethinking of how we relate to the things we wear.

¹⁸ Generalitat de Catalunya: Circular Fashion Pact, 2021, URL: https://mediambient.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/ambits_dactuacio/empresa_i_produccio_sostenible/economia_verda/Obs-economia/moda-circular/Circular-Fashion-Pact_220419_summary.pdf

¹⁹ Agència de Residus de Catalunya: Draft to plan for Catalonia's future waste management infrastructure, May 2025, URL: <https://www.acrplus.org/en/news/arc-draft-plan-for-catalonia-s-future-waste-management-infrastructure-4904>

²⁰ Agència de Residus de Catalunya, La recollida selectiva dels residus tèxtils, 2022 https://residus.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/lagencia/publicacions/prevencio/recollida_residus_textils.pdf

Revalue Local Textiles follows the journey of how discarded fabrics in the global north can be reevaluated using research, field-work, and crafts.

Now is the time to slow down, rediscover value in what we already have, and ask ourselves;

how can we be encouraged to reconnect to local discarded textiles?

Methods

An new set of values in a new city



This question was already familiar to me. Recently I had worked on a project to make bags out of overlooked fabrics. Not only to give them a second life, but tell their story using design. This way, the user could reconnect to the product. The original product was tied to market success, focused on selling a limited product and communicating value through branding. But monetary value isn't the only form of value.

Distributed Design, a network of Makers who openly share knowledge and build upon it, offers a new set of values to work with; openness, collaborative, regenerative and ecosystemic thinking. They set the stage for rethinking my own approach moving away from limited consumption and toward exploring how design can foster connection, care, and shared ownership.

To adapt the project, I turned to action research and chose to explore the community value in reconnecting with textiles stories locally. For this, I connected to the global and local network of upcyclers and maker studios. To share knowledge and patterns, as well as collaborate in an online workshop for the EU project make-a-theek. Finally, I applied the learnings in practical work with locally sourced fabrics

Conversations with global* Stakeholders

**from the distributed design network*

Before diving into the site specific explorations I took the time to connect to people from the distributed design network around the globe who address similar challenges in their localities. Conversations with them provided me with insights and inspiration on how to connect with the local textile community in Barcelona later on.

Overview of Stakeholders interviewed

<i>Name</i>	<i>What they are</i>	<i>Based in</i>	<i>Why I connected</i>
Ophir El-Boher	Collaborative Designer	Costa Rica	A contemporary TUTA project
Daan Sonnemans	Design Activist	Eindhoven, NL	Decolonial design and collaboration
Sara Arnold	Fashion Activist	London, UK	Our Common Market, Degrowth and Fashion industry

① Ophir El-Boher, Collaborative Designer

One of the first open source patterns in the global north was published around a hundred years ago in a newspaper. It was the pattern to a one-piece suit for men; the TUTA. After a period of economic instability the designer THAYAT created it so people could make their own clothes at home, focusing on the most practical, adaptive and simple cut. Until today, the TUTA pattern has often been misinterpreted as unisex, while it was created for men specifically.

Ophir el Boher, a collaborative designer, found this project and applied it to a modern context in her MFA in Collaborative Design at the Pacific Northwest College of Art from 2017 to 2019. In it she investigated how to make a contemporary TUTA for people identifying as women. Moreover, the role of the TUTA pattern and gender identity, and how making your own clothes by hand can empower you to feel good in your own skin. In her workshops many participants who identified as non-binary took away a much needed solution of appropriate clothing and self-expression that became central to their practices and lives.

Things that stuck with me most:

→ **Stay consistent in the conscious selection of textiles**, taking into account their form, quality of material, and local accessibility. In her case, as she was living in the US this meant using old bed sheets or workwear from Goodwill. For an even more distributed approach, in a following project, made for global audiences, she suggested materials that are available globally, like cotton button-up shirts.

→ **Create an afterlife for your project.**

This can be a hashtag, website, installation or a community. Ophir's TUTA kit was purchased by a library and offered a way to reference the project in the future and for the library to keep an archive of projects they believed were important to maintain.

→ **Interaction with textiles as a form of self care.**

She had worked within the distributed design paradigms in the TUTA project. During one of the workshops making the TUTA with others, she realized how personal value is created through engagement. Imagine empty hands with nothing to do, once they get involved with a craft it creates a personal connection offering a form of self-care.

Where do i start best?

Find your best individual starting point. Each practitioner wanting to influence and join forces should take into account what's relevant for the big picture, and at the same time, know and respect their personal passions, strengths and goals.

② Daan Sonnemans, Design Activist

Breaking out of your bubble is hard, many don't even reach the point to question what is taught as right in the system they live in. Once inequalities are uncovered, "helping others" is often fulfilled in a form of white saviorism. But if you do it right it can actually end in a beautiful collaboration where everyone benefits equally.

That's what happened when Anabel and Daan co-founded the [Kantamanto Social Club](#) in their residency with the OR foundation focusing on the decolonization of systems. In the heart of Accra, in Ghana, the Kantamanto market itself has existed since the 1960s. Ever since the global north began exporting surplus clothing to other countries and continents — consuming far more than they need and discarding the rest — these garments have rarely been recycled. Instead, they end up here. The market is a big business, with thousands of retailers, tailors, upcyclers and many more, but is still in a financial and resource dependency on Europe. The collective wanted to change that; what if you sold the discarded clothes back to the west, to their prices, upcycled and rebranded? This would create a sort of a circular and more beneficial cycle for the Kantamanto Makers. And offers the possibility to create an ecosystem of local stakeholders who then in turn put pressure on policy makers to gain independence from Europe. They have been building the system ever since, and are soon even exhibiting the work at Amsterdam Fashion Week and Dutch Design Week.

Things that stuck with me most:

→ **Optimism as a tool for change.** Rather than framing the Kantamanto project as a protest, it was framed as an opportunity. One that reveals the contradictions of the global system without falling into guilt or despair. Asking, what if we can make people care by showing what could be built instead?

→ **Talk to the stakeholders within the existing ecosystem.**

This way you make sure you don't interfere, but contribute and support in a meaningful way.

→ **Stricter Policy in Europe can have negative impacts on export countries.**

Inspiring projects mentioned by Daan:

[The OR Foundation](#) - a charity in the US and Ghana, working at the intersection of justice, education and fashion development

Where do I start best?

Talk to stakeholders and **listen, be open and interested.**

③ Sara Arnold, Fashion Activist

Sara Arnold is a fashion activist from London and co-founder of [Our Common Market](#), a global gathering space for diverse, community-centred fashion, clothing and textile projects initiated by [Fashion Act Now](#). She and her co-founder Lara Fank aim to bring visibility to commons-based fashion systems worldwide.

Before becoming an activist, she studied Fashion Design and Business & Entrepreneurship. This made her realize that the linear growth system of the fashion industry creates a “false scarcity” through privatisation and hyper Individualism. In the long term, alternative ways of working and thinking are needed. The platform they created aims for a balance between not erasing the individual but also giving space to communities.

Things that stuck with me most:

→ **Focus on where and how people meet & the fabrics we use and need there.**

She mentioned protest by extinction rebellion, offering to print on shirts protesters brought/ were wearing at the protest instead of selling them online. Owning such a shirt created a lasting community spread across cities afterwards. Weeks later Sara was riding in the subway when she spotted a person wearing one of these shirts. By this she knew right away they were both of a similar mindset and the shirt made it happen.

→ **Create community through participation.**

Find a way that designers expand the idea. Don't only focus on mending and upcycling workshops, but find new ways to create community. Like mending in a public market.

→ **Explore a new technique and share it.**

Like her co-founder, Yasia started a brand XOMENKO, compressing old fabrics into new forms. This way they are not limited to what they were before and become something completely new.

→ **Make it beautiful.**

Either create something very well finished or the complete opposite, on purpose.

Inspiring projects mentioned by Sara:

→ Yasia Khlomenko, [XOMENKO](#) - pressing old fabrics into new forms

→ Alice Holloway, [Sweatshop](#) - bicycle charging sewing machine for fixing/ sewing shirts

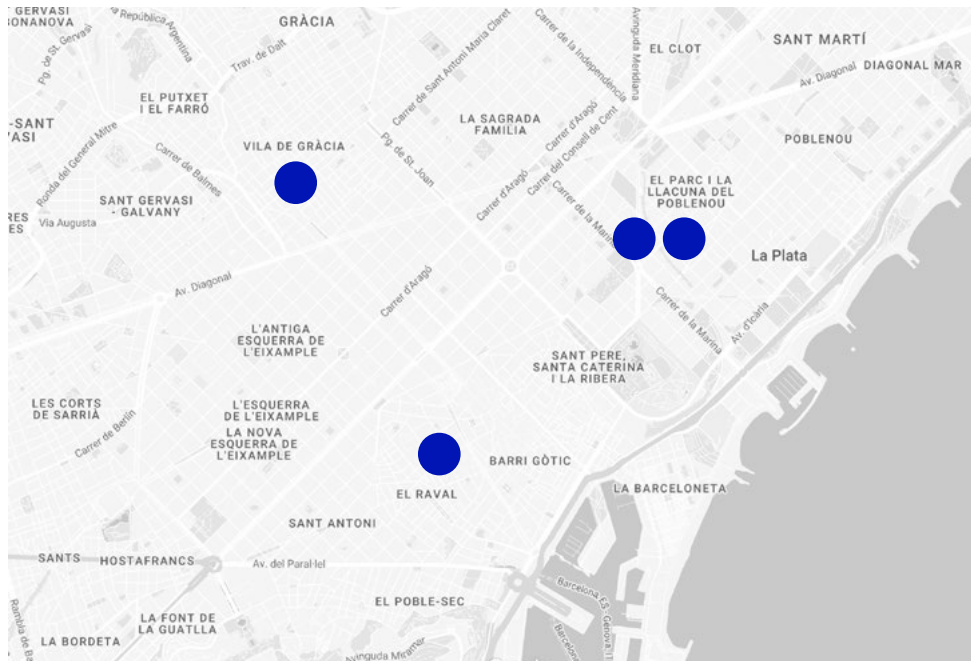
→ Celia Pym, [SOCKS](#) - mending but makes it CHAOS

Where do I start best?

Go in front of a mall, or an area where there are a lot of people shopping and make them want to interact with your intervention instead.

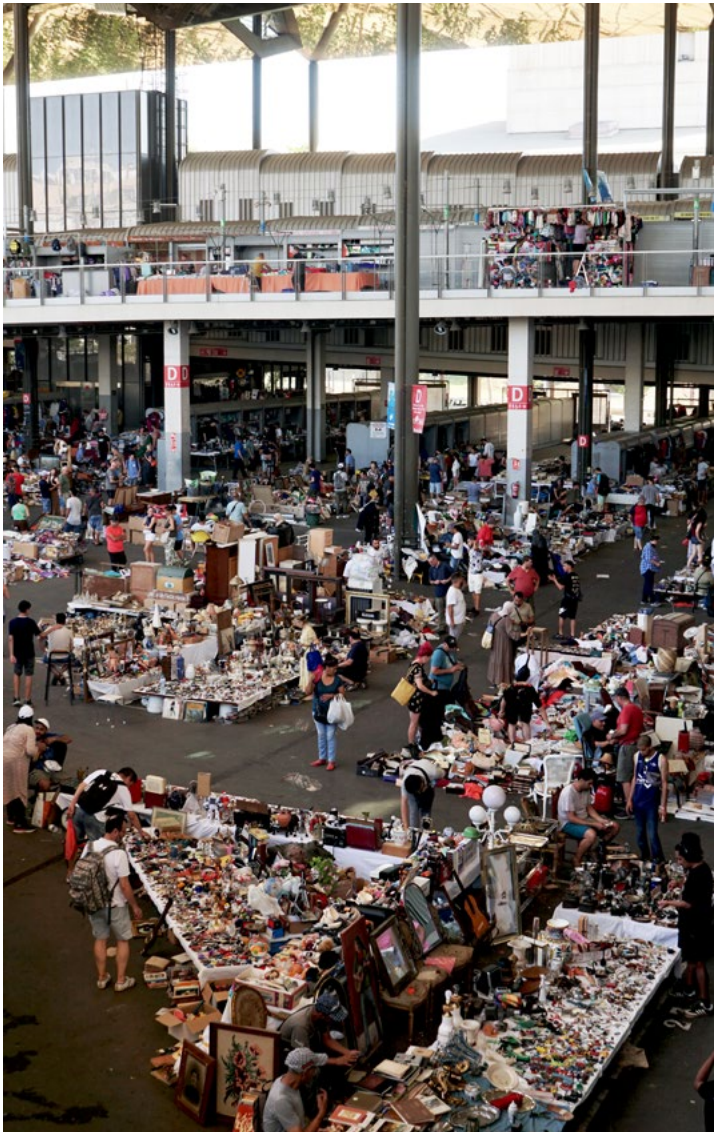
Connect with local stakeholders

Through my conversations with global stakeholders of the distributed design community, it became clear that I needed to connect locally. As I was working in a strange city with no connections it meant I had to break out of my comfort zone a lot. On a quest to find a special textile with a story to work with I began going to local markets, studios, deadstock etc.



Overview of local Stakeholders

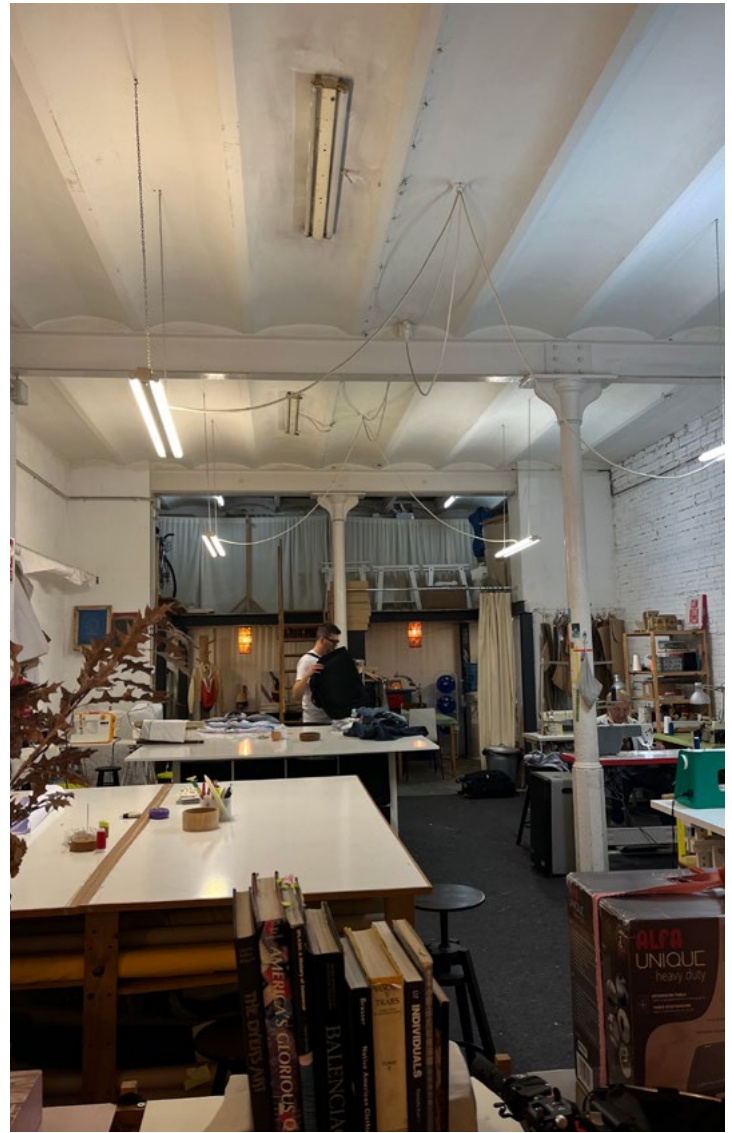
Name	Where?	What?	What they do?	Why I connected?
Mercat dels encants	Glòries	Second hand market	Sell all types of products: textiles, clothes, interior, cameras etc.	Big variety of vendors and textiles, opportunity to connect to locals working with textiles + long tradition behind the market
Lantoki	Raval	Sustainable Brand	Sell clothes and patterns, rent sewing machines and offer Workshops	10 years in the business, great way to ensure stability and diversify income
Cabra	Gràcia	Denim Brand	High quality denim	Understand the fabric better and collect denim scraps
Stocks Textiles	Poble nou	Deadstock shop	Sell local industrial deadstock textiles	Big variety of good quality and antique textiles



Mercat dels encants

On a Monday evening I joined the people strolling through the open air market, [Mercat dels Encants](#). It consists of 3 stories and a bunch of sellers offering a big mix of items and lots of fabrics. Downstairs in the area where things are thrown together in stacks I noticed old lace napkins, towels and tablecloths. Sometimes they were still in a little box with letters and talismans that could've been the previous owners. The textiles were embroidered with so much care and of such a high quality that made it clear they are from a different time, a different generation.

All these memories of people left to lie in the piles. I wanted to put them on a stage and reinvent them so people would want to use them again.



Lantoki

What if you want to sew an idea or mend a piece of clothing, but you don't have the skills or a sewing machine to use? Spaces like [Lantoki](#) offer you to rent a machine, advice on how to use it or even learn it in a workshop. If you don't want to make things, buy their self made ethical clothing in their shop in the front. They also offer the patterns to use. This way they diversify their income and attract a big community of customers, makers and locals.

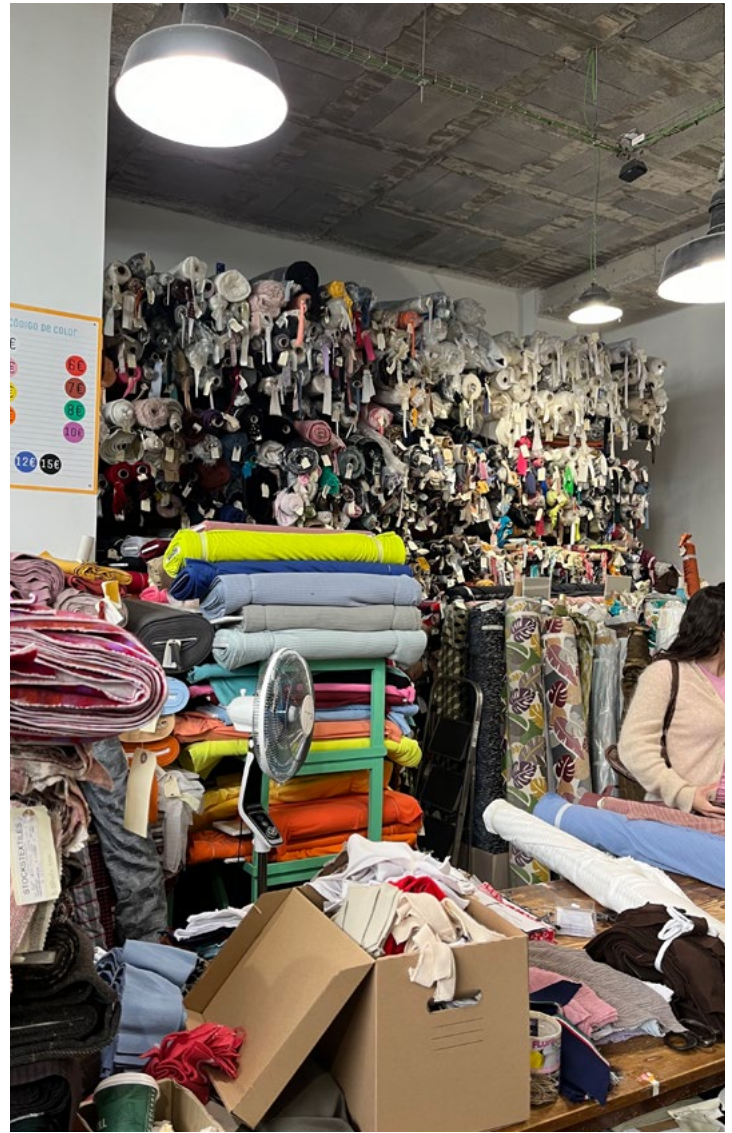


Cabra

If you have ever tried sewing your own clothes, you know how hard it is. Imagine sewing a pair of high quality denim jeans. Daniel and Camila, the founders of [Cabra](#) do this in their studio in Gràcia. Solely using high quality denim from Japan and transforming it into timeless pieces. Once you enter you get to see durability of things everywhere. Not only the denim fabrics but also a variety of vintage sewing machines.

There I got introduced to *Selvedge*, a technique used on high quality denim, to trace back where the fabric is from. A usually white and red colored pattern embedded alongside the long edge of the textile. The patterns vary depending on each factory and work like a trademark. If we want to make textile value chains more transparent, this is an inspiration from the past to how it can work.

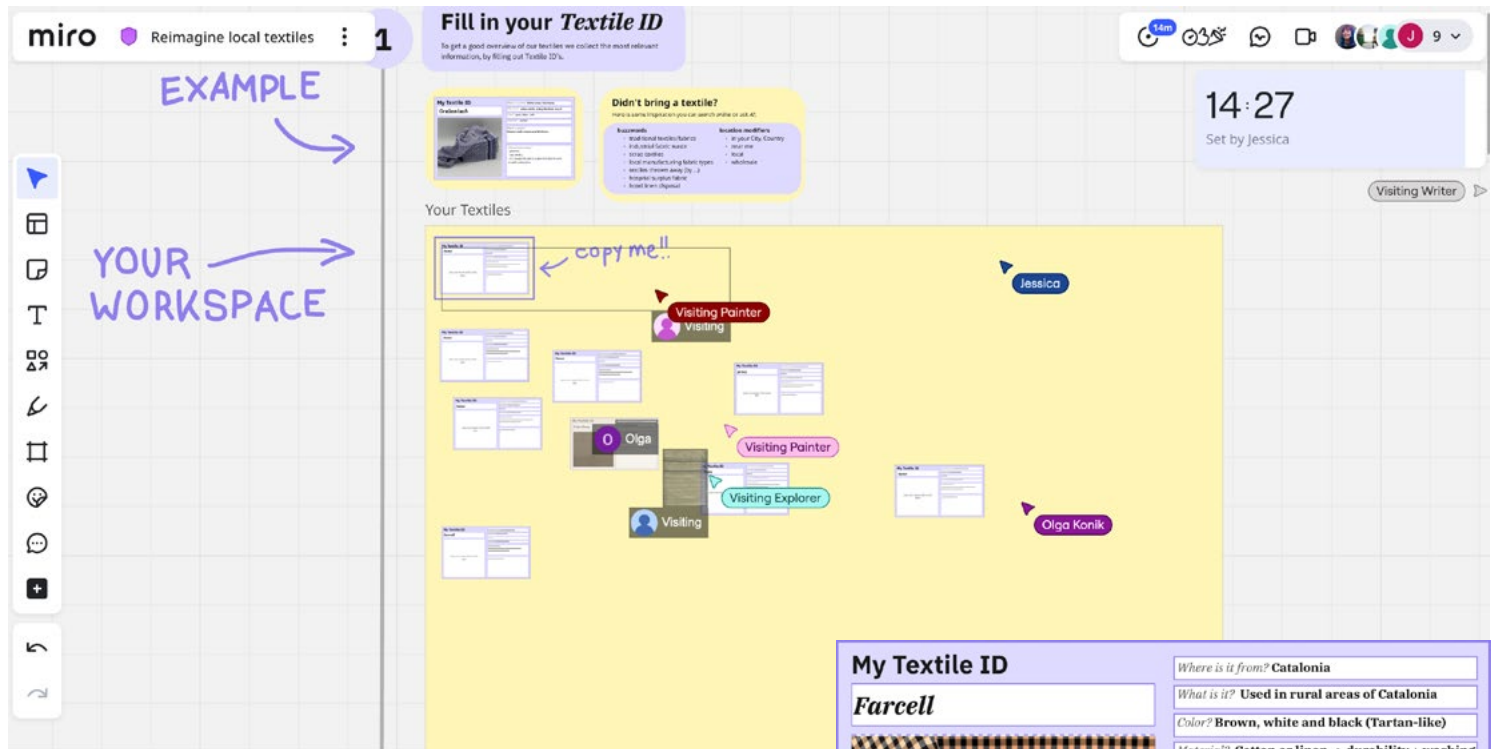
Before I leave I get to choose out of a leftover box of cut out textiles, and take them with me not knowing what they will become.



Stocks Textiles

We can find second hand fabrics in a higher amount at local deadstock places. However, they don't all carry a story. [Stocks Textiles](#) in Poblenou collects the data of where and how they got their textiles. As the owners are experts they can tell invisible stories themselves. In a corner of the shop they have a stack of 70s mattress cover fabrics with a distinct pattern.

Online workshop: Reimagine local textiles x make-a-thek



To check in with the community of makers about the need to reconnect and reevaluate textiles we hosted an online workshop in collaboration with the EU funded project make-a-thek. The goal inspired by Ophirs idea in the interview to give the project a way to live longer.

Together we worked in miro to collect overlooked fabrics with an unexpected story by filling in a Textile ID, and explore their past, present and future use in a timeline. In the session 9 beautiful textile stories were shared not only by locals of Barcelona, but also by people all over Europe and beyond.

This created the first version of a community-built classification system, a local textile archive.

You can contribute and access the archive [here](#).

My Textile ID	
Farcell	Where is it from? Catalonia
	What is it? Used in rural areas of Catalonia
	Color? Brown, white and black (Tartan-like)
	Material? Cotton or linen -> durability + washing
Where to find it? Original use was for wrapping bundles -> Tablecloths, napkins, aprons, cushion covers, kitchen towels, traditional costumes, tourists shops	
Why is it overlooked? - Looks old-fashioned - Replaced by modern packaging - Mostly valued in cultural or folkloric contexts - Design might be considered too simple or utilitarian for contemporary fashion	

My Textile ID	
Chikankari	Where is it from? f.e. Pakistan, Karachi
	What is it? f.e. top - Kurta (in Urdu)
	Color? - White
	Material? f.e. cotton, muslin
Where to find it? f.e. local fabric markets, specific cloth shops etc.	
Why is it overlooked? - the process of making it is quite intricate and requires a lot of detailing. The craft is often lost to its slowness, and commercialisation has led to overlooking its true essence of embroidery on white muslin - light breathable fabric.	

My Textile ID	
Tela Olona	Where is it from? Northern Italy
	What is it? Fabric for ships, tents, grains
	Color? -
	Material? Hemp or linen
Where to find it? Second hand markets, sacks for grains, old items	
Why is it overlooked? - labour-intensive life cycle - missing local production and know-how (costs) - too rustic, sturdy to be used for clothing	

Material sewing experiments

With the textiles collected on the visits to different stakeholders I started to experiment what they could be transformed into to help people reconnect to them. Originally, they stood out to me because of their story or quality. Now they needed to stand out to others too.

MATERIAL CARD



WHAT?

TABLECLOTH

FROM WHERE?

MERCAT DES ENCANTS, BARCELONA

MATERIAL

COTTON

PRICE

5 €

WHAT I THINK WILL BECOME OF IT

1. BAG
2. MENDING GLOVES (ALL INKL.)
3. CURTAIN/ INSTALLATION

MATERIAL CARD



WHAT?

PILLOWCASE

FROM WHERE?

MERCAT DES ENCANTS, BARCELONA

MATERIAL

COTTON

PRICE

10 €

WHAT I THINK WILL BECOME OF IT

1. BAG
2. MEMORY STITCHING
3. LAPTOP CASE

MATERIAL CARD



WHAT?

MATTRESS COVER

FROM WHERE?

DEADSTOCK, POBLENOU

MATERIAL

COTTON

PRICE

16€

WHAT I THINK WILL BECOME OF IT

1. BAG

MATERIAL CARD



WHAT?

NAPKIN

FROM WHERE?

MERCAT DES ENCANTS, BARCELONA

MATERIAL

COTTON

PRICE

2 €

WHAT I THINK WILL BECOME OF IT

1. MEMORY STITCHING (LATER ON BAG)
2. HEADPIECE
3. CHAIN



① Mattress Bag

I turned the 70s mattress fabric I had found at *Stocks Textiles* in Poblenou into the original design of my crossbodybag for Fundstück. The pattern stood out and people approached me to tell me about how they had a mattress cover like this themselves.



② Pillow Bag

To honor the hours of skillful embroidery that should have given the fabric a high value but for some reason went unnoticed, I turned the pillow-case from the *Mercat dels Encants* into a practical piece, a bag, and stuffed it to give it volume and draw attention to the embroidery.





③ Memory Stitching

The scenes of the mercat stuck with me. To share my impression I embedded them into the fabric using a sewing machine, then stuffed it with wool. This way one could tell the story of where I found the fabric at first sight, without having to read it.



④ N.R.s Napkin

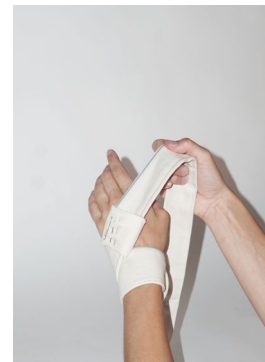
Two pieces, a napkin and a tablecloth, I collected were the most difficult to transform. I couldn't get myself to cut them due to their visible high value. An elderly woman at the market had shared with me that to make 2 cm of the hem it takes 1 hour. When I draped them on the table next to each other I noticed they both had the same letters embedded. They probably belonged to the same person; N.R. The letters represent the last leftover of the person who used to own them, like an echo. To draw attention to it I posed the biggest question I asked myself on the fabric; Who is NR?





⑤ Mending Glove

A way to give a fabric a longer life to interact with it by mending. But to carry a sewing kit around with you it has to be easily accessible. The mending glove is a wrap around band, made of CABRAS high quality denim, and includes the most relevant mending tools. It's adjustable to your hand, leg or arm and due to its flexibility is practical to pack. An approach to bring mending closer to everyone.



Final outcome

We started with the question; *how can we reconnect with the value of discarded textiles?*

It led us to a series of textile experiments, developed through collaboration with stakeholders and site-specific material sourcing in Barcelona. Each object, be it a bag, glove or embroidered pillow, aims to make textile stories visible. These results are intended to serve as conversation starters, not solutions.

Through interviews, workshops and on-the-ground research, I realized that the answer lies in three things:

- *get our numbers straight*
- *understand the local value chain system*
- *connect with people*
- *experiment hands-on with materials*

When we explore alongside others and an open end we are led to unexpected outcomes.

Thank you!

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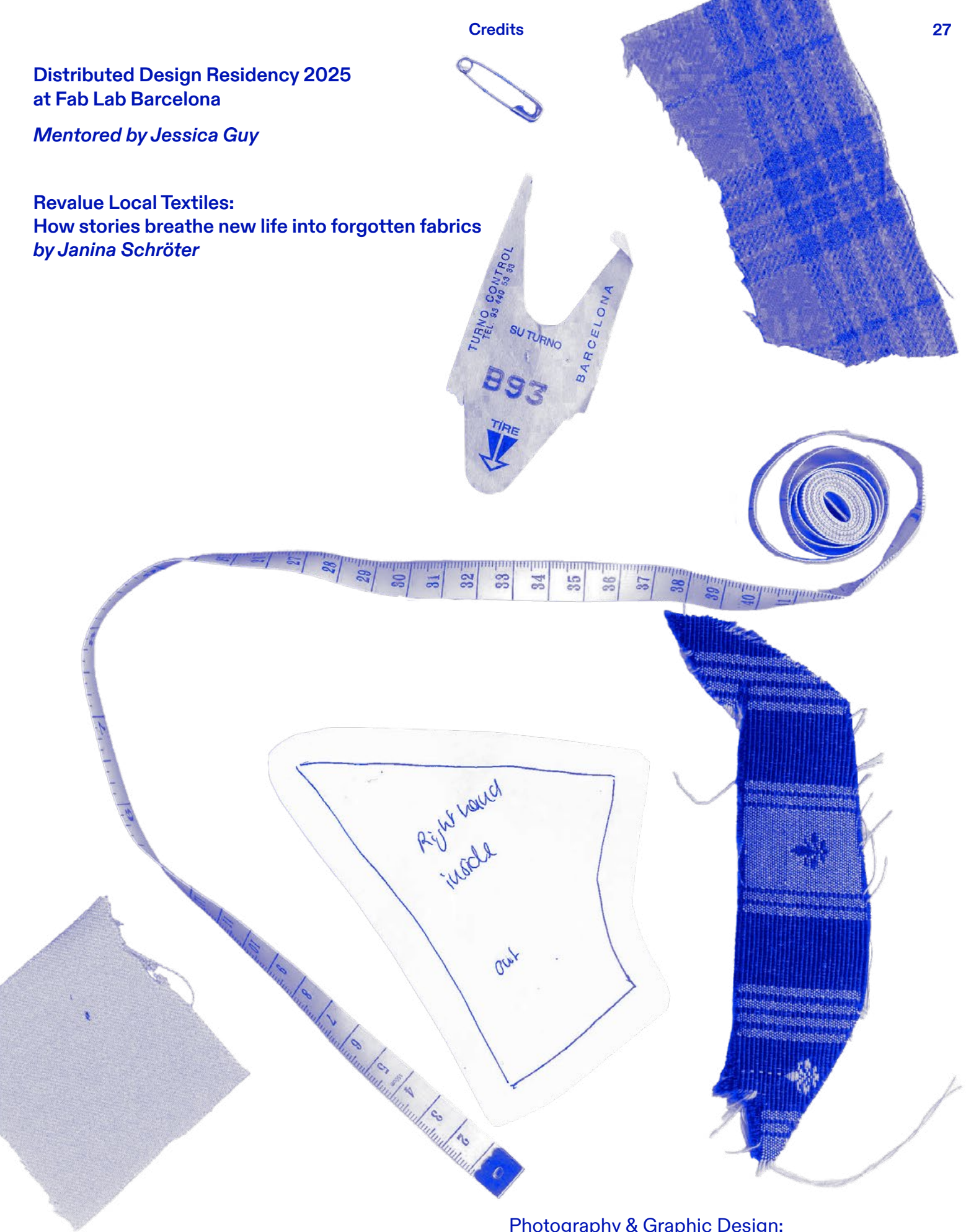
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Distributed Design Residency 2025
at Fab Lab Barcelona

Mentored by Jessica Guy

Revalue Local Textiles:
How stories breathe new life into forgotten fabrics
by Janina Schröter



Photography & Graphic Design:
Janina Schröter

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