

PEOPLE OVER PRODUCT





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Cover photography by
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PEXELS

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EDITOR'S *Letter*



Welcome to our Spring Issue, a celebration of all things floral.

Each spring the world awakens; the meadows burst into colour, the trees blow pink and green in the springtime breeze, and birdsong fills the air.

Around us the shops replicate the colours of nature: soft pastels cover our Instagram feeds and the shopping centres are awash with cheerful prints.

Each new season gives fashion brands a fresh excuse to sell us more stuff, but this spring we aren't looking to our social media to see what we should be wearing, and are instead looking to our own wardrobes, and the beauty of the natural world around us.

Flowers and plants are capable of so much more than simply making the world look pretty.

That's why in this issue we are diving deeper into our connection with the plants around us, and how they are intrinsically woven into the history of the clothing we wear and love.

Learn how prickly nettle can be woven into soft fabric (*pg 10*), surround yourself with restorative floral scents (*pg 28*), and lean into the joy of seasonal dressing (*pg 18*).

As always I hope that this issue, and every one beyond it, offers you a chance to take a break from our hectic world, and read about a kinder fashion industry, that places people over product.

Be kind, to the planet, and to others.

CHLOE GRANT
Editor-in-Chief



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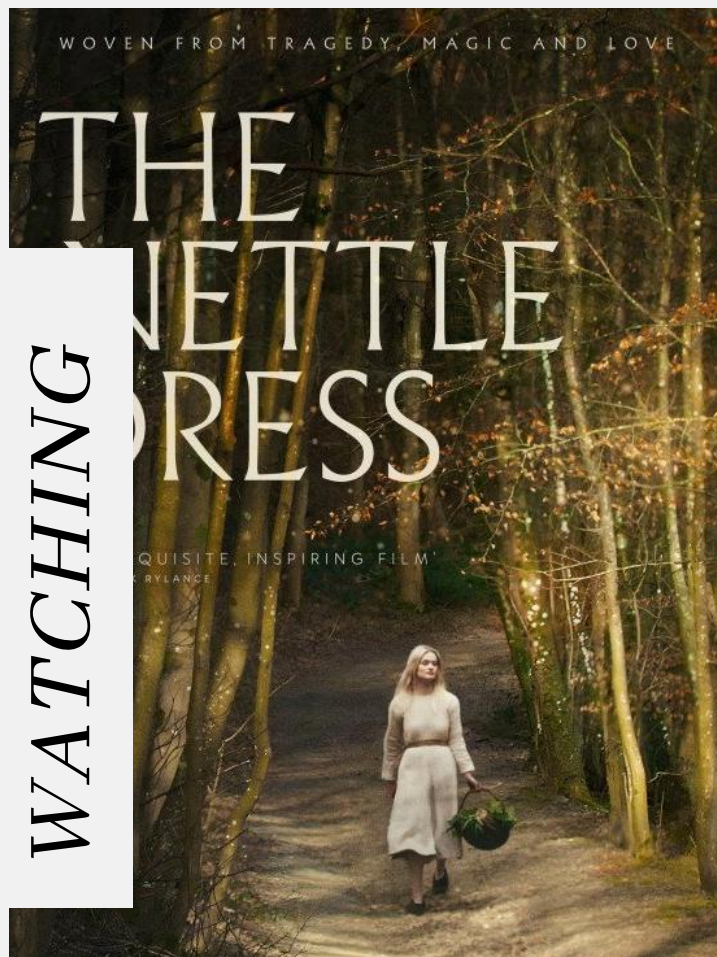
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POP'S RECOMMENDATIONS

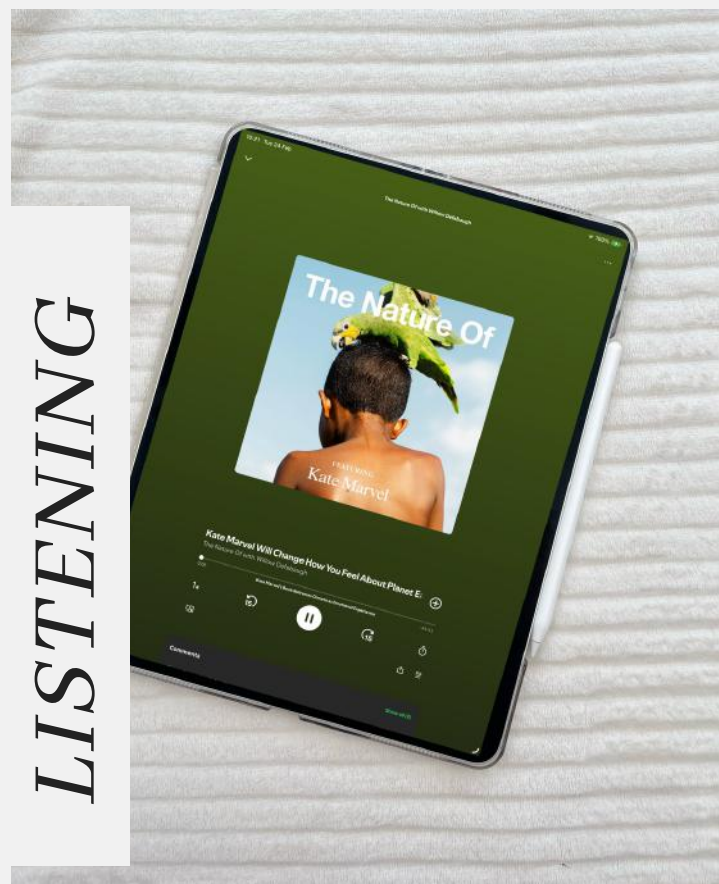


We've recommended *The Nettle Dress* in previous issues of POP, but with this issue's exploration of nettle fibre techniques (*pg 10*) it felt right to revisit it.

This beautiful film follows the journey of one man's creation of a homespun dress. As he forages, spins, weaves, and sews the dress you are taken on an adventure of emotions, exploring the inspiration buried within grief, and the solace found in the beauty of our natural world.

WHERE TO WATCH: nettledress.org

There is so much wonderful sustainable fashion content out there in the world, so we thought we'd condense it down, and share People Over Product's recommendations on what to watch, listen to, and read.



The Nature Of is a podcast hosted by the Editor-in-Chief of fellow sustainability magazine Atmos, Willow Defebaugh. The podcast is filled with deep conversations with writers, artists, and activists looking to combat climate change.

WHERE TO LISTEN: Spotify and Apple Podcasts

READING

THE NATURE OF FASHION

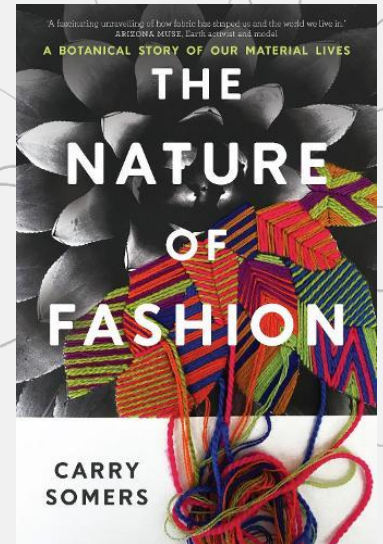
Carry Somers

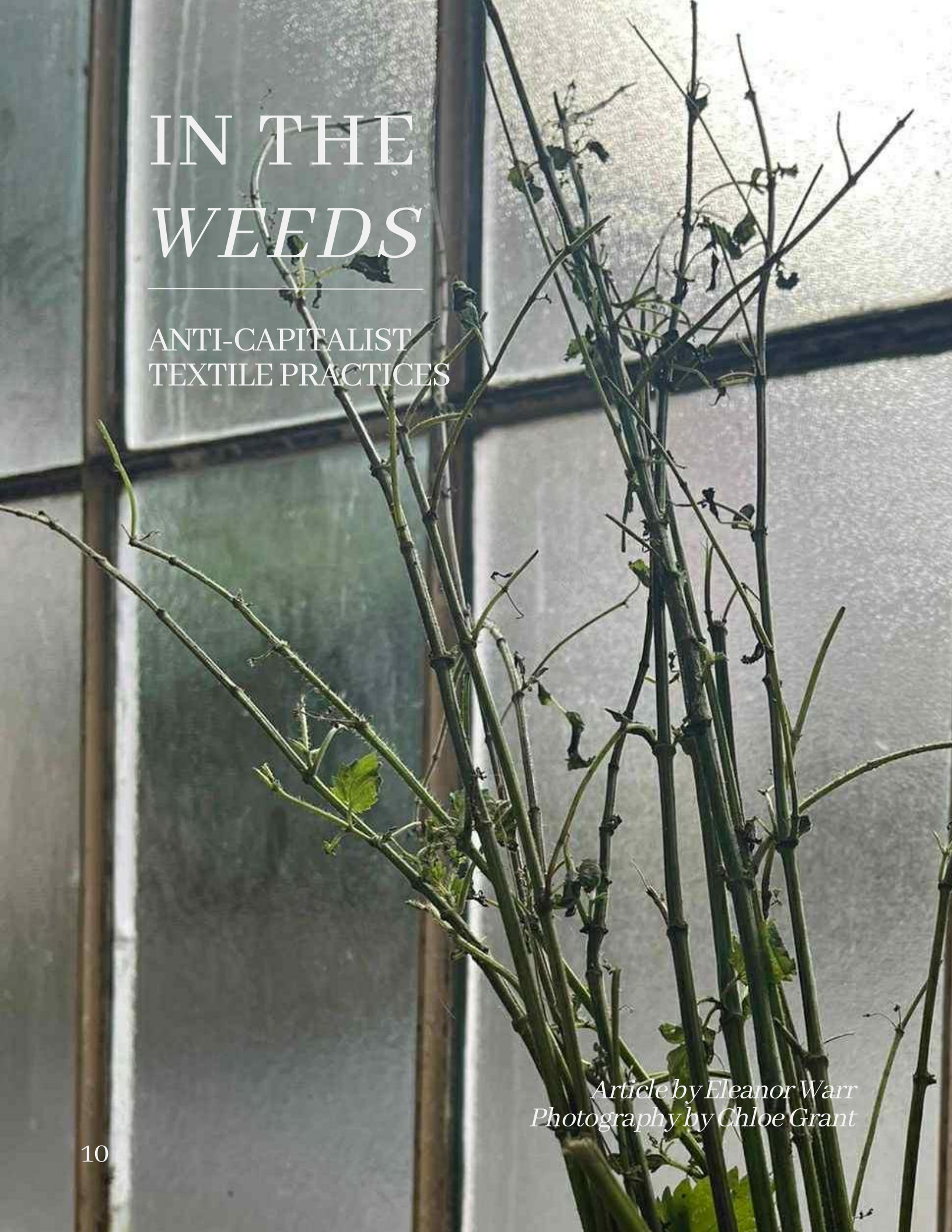
The Nature of Fashion is an exploration into the intrinsic history of cloth and humanity. It provides a rich narrative to the evolution of textiles, following the stories of those whose hands worked the fields, foraged for the flowers, weaved the fibres, and wore the clothes.

These fictional stories are based on Somers' years of research into the cultural ties between society and the clothes we wear, set against thought-provoking musings on our current relationship with the world around us, and how that manifests itself in our wardrobes.

Carry Somers dismantles our colonial views of fashion, and instead brings the stories of indigenous cultures to the fore. She reminds us that 'cultures around the world have been systematically looted for corporate gain, their rich traditions reduced to mere commodities', making us deeply question how we ourselves work with nature. Do we work in harmony with it—only taking what we *truly* need—or do we too pillage and ruin our planet from the comfort of our very own homes?

This beautiful book reminds us that nature is not passive, or something for us to use up and discard. The Earth is capable of being an 'equal partner in the act of creation': providing the knowledge, the inspiration, and the materials, if only we work in harmony with it.





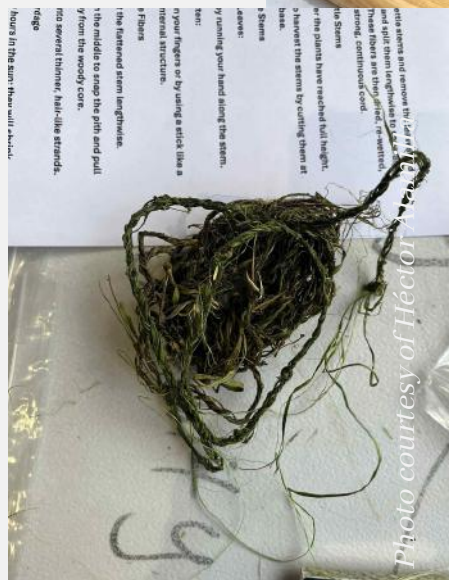
IN THE *WEEDS*

ANTI-CAPITALIST
TEXTILE PRACTICES

*Article by Eleanor Warr
Photography by Chloe Grant*

Jutta lives by the river. She snaps shut her front door and walks towards the flood plain. Beneath the willows and sentry above thistles and yellow-buttoned ox-eye daisies are crowds of nettles, stems slim and packed contentedly together. The silt is fertile, ruffled and soaked with nutrients when the river floods, but, as Richard Mabey describes in his book *Weeds: The Story of Outlaw Plants*, stinging nettles are ‘adaptive generalists’. They thrive on the margins, fringing farmers’ fields, claiming abandoned allotments and rising up through the rubble of flattened warehouses. Their status as weeds—unwanted, unattractive and without use—is established. Jutta is troubling that definition.

Nettle, like flax, is a bast fibre. Pale cellulosic strands run between the epidermis and woody interior of the plant, bifurcating where the leaves veer from the stem. Working with nettles positions Jutta in a lineage with the most ancient form of human interaction with textiles. Bast fibres gathered from wild flax, hemp, jute and nettle were worked by early humans into string, then wound to attach stone blades to tools, loop bags or knot nets, or twisted together to produce rope. As Virginia Postel posits in *The Fabrics of Civilization*, ‘[W]hat we usually call the



Stone Age could just as easily be called the String Age. The two prehistoric technologies were literally intertwined.’

Yet, while flax is farmed and processed industrially, the work of teasing fibres from nettle sits defiantly outside the remit of capitalist conceptions of productivity. Jutta’s curiosity in nettles coincided with the release of *The Nettle Dress*, a film documenting textile artist Allan Brown’s seven year project crafting a simple garment from

THE LOCALISED NETWORK OF
KNOWLEDGE SHARING
IS PERIPHERAL.
THRIVING ON THE
FRINGES



the maligned perennial. The process is slow and the material gleaned minimal. Jutta produces skeins of coarse, greenish yarn with her drop-spindle. Weighing 10-20 grams, they sit, springy, in the palm. In contrast, a typical ball of linen yarn weighs 100 grams, unspooling to around 400 metres. What then, can idiosyncratic engagements with alternative fibres contribute towards a large-scale movement away from fast fashion?

Jutta is uniquely close to the fundamental element of any textile - fibre. Her knowledge of the nettles and their stages of growth has been acquired from books, online forums and Youtube videos, then applied through keen observation of the plants growing in her immediate surroundings. This epistemological and physical proximity to the nettles exposes and exaggerates our general ignorance about the fibres farmed to produce our clothing. I make clothes and pride myself in privileging natural fibres, but when I try to picture a cotton boll, the image is blurred. In contrast, Jutta's nearness to the nettles allows for holistic encounters with the plants and her local environment.

Over the course of a season, she clocks the growth of young leaves, which she picks to make tea, soups and a mean Afghan chutney with oil, nuts and garlic. As the weather warms and settles into summer, the nettles produce tassels of cream, light green

and brown flowers from leaf axils. This is the cue Jutta has been waiting for. She puts on her gloves. Jutta is blasé about the threat of irritation; she has learnt to run her hand up the stems so as to cheat the tiny, needle-like hairs that break on contact and cause an allergic reaction. She snaps the stems near to the soil and carries a bundle home.

Here, she lays them out on the lawn and leaves them to be dampened by dew. Bacteria on the plant and in the soil produce fermentation, degrading the pectin (a natural binding substance marrying the fibres to the surrounding non-fibrous tissues). This is retting, a word whose first recorded use in English dates back to around 1325. The fibres can now be detached from the stem without causing damage to their integrity.

The retted stems, or 'straw', are broken and scutched - walked on, beaten, rolled under a pin or between palms, to further detach the long fibres from the woody material. The proportion of fibre extracted is tiny. The labour feels disproportionate. Woody fragments scatter as Jutta heckles, running a fork through the strands to align the fibres.

Next, she teases a palm-sized comb with hooked teeth down the length of the fibres. This is carding, separation and alignment of the disorganised fibres into a sliver in anticipation of spinning. This work is gentle. If the

fibres are combed too rigorously, they will snap.

Finally, Jutta spins, using a tiny spindle made for her by a friend. The diminutive size suits the small harvest of fibres. As she describes her spindle, Jutta radiates satisfaction particular to possessing the perfect tool.

Jutta's embodied knowledge of these distinct steps contrasts with our removal from the industrial processes that produce mountains of textile products every day.

Jutta's embodied knowledge of these distinct steps contrasts with our removal from the industrial processes that produce mountains of textile products every day. As Jutta talks me through each stage, I gain an insight into the labour and patience required to glean enough yarn to braid a friendship bracelet. By repeatedly enacting these steps, Jutta is gently provoking the idea that one moves from plant to product, that the purpose

of the plant is as resource. The product is elusive - Jutta has no expectation or desire to create another nettle dress. Therefore the process has to be valued on its own terms.

By disseminating her knowledge through demonstrations and workshops, Jutta is contributing to a movement of increasing the sustainability of our relationships with textiles by drawing attention to process. She keeps the curious family of ancient technical language alive. Significantly, these moments of skill sharing have a similar indeterminate economic status as processing the nettles. Jutta is an active member of *The Daily Thread*, a community textile group based at The Old Printworks in Birmingham, England, and volunteers for a local Repair Cafe. Her workshops are free to attend and Jutta is unpaid. The sessions are not likely to receive state or commercial funding because the outcomes do not match the quantitative social impact results that arts and crafts projects must broadly adhere to, such as health, wellbeing or educational transformation. Her method of profiling her process and distributing her learning therefore also sits outside of capitalist models of wage for labour or product for payment.

The cultural history of 'weeds' and the slipperiness of the definition is well documented. Simply put, in the Anthropocene, plants become weeds when they are positioned outside definitions of productivity for human

use as food, fuel or technical materials. Nettles have not been the recipients of technical innovations to become a commercial source of textiles like flax, or food like cereal crops. They are inconvenient volunteers—a status that also attracts a liminal metaphorical status—the glamour of rebels or the solidarity of outsiders. By observing, harvesting and processing the nettles, Jutta thoughtfully reframes their status from unwanted and inconvenient to noteworthy. But the exchange of skills between anti-capitalist textile practitioners in her vicinity is, ironically, weed-like by those same unflattering terms. The localised network of knowledge sharing is peripheral, thriving on the fringes and filling the gaps in the soil left by the fast fashion industry. Mabey identifies nettles and their fellow weeds as the first phase of rewilding once extractivist management of land is paused. By extension, therefore, Jutta's practice and community groups like *The Daily Thread*, with their established roots, might be the precursors to a more organic textile ecosystem.

With thanks to Jutta Stahlhacke for a generous insight into her knowledge and process.

You can find out more about [The Daily Thread](#) [here](#).





FLOALS? FOR SPRING? *GROUND*BREAKING

WHY IT SHOULDN'T BE REVOLUTIONARY
TO *LOVE* YOUR CLOTHES

Article by Chloe Grant
Photography by Cotton Bro Studio via Pexels

Spring beckons upon the breeze, and flowers begin to pop up in our gardens, our outfits, our *shops*.

Seeing a floral dress on your local highstreet is a sure fire sign that spring is coming, just as much as the first snowdrops poking their white petals through the thawing ground.

Yet, year after year, the fashion industry thirsts for change. Trend reports run wild with 'the next big thing for spring', the micro-trend that promises to transform your life, your style, your confidence, before finding itself relegated to the back of your wardrobe before daylight savings have even kicked in.

So, why is it that we continuously search for newness? Why can't we be content with last year's florals?

One of fashion's most beloved films, *The Devil Wears Prada*, includes the iconic line: 'florals? For spring? Groundbreaking', referencing fashion's tendency to return to florals year on year, whilst simultaneously sniding them and craving something novel.

Fashion is seemingly never content with what's gone before; a tendency that creates a perpetual cycle of consumption and waste.

In an industry so driven by trends and an appetite for flash-in-the-pan styles, it actually *is* groundbreaking to love what you own.

When spring rolls around it shouldn't have to be revolutionary to reach for your beloved floral dress, but in the current climate it arguably is.

Adopting a mindset of wearing and loving what you own in the current fashion landscape *is* a radical approach.

So, this springtime, why not revel in the joy of items you know you feel good in: your floral tops and dresses in pastel hues. A little slice of springtime blooming in your wardrobe.

CHLOE GRANT



A TIMELESSLY

———— *PERSONAL*

WARDROBE



*Article by Yun-A Johnson
Photography by Thirdman via Pexels*

Imagine this:

You open your closet and can't help but smile. It feels like your clothes are smiling back. Every single item, you'd wear in a heartbeat.

Spring is coming and you can't wait to put on your favorite floral dress. It's the same feeling of reuniting with an old friend. There's familiarity, no need for explanations. You just pick up where you left off.

That's the beauty and ease of embracing a timelessly personal wardrobe curated for nature's seasons. Each season has its own pieces you adore and look forward to wearing during that time of year. Timeless doesn't mean essential staples. *Timeless means personal joy on repeat.*

Counterintuitive as it may seem, buying new items each season (no matter how cute!) creates *more* styling work. Since they're new, you don't know their quirks or how they work with other pieces in your closet yet. Having go-to favorite seasonal items makes styling easier because of familiarity. You don't have to think twice. You know how to work your favorite cardigan and it looks good every time. When you love your clothes, it shows!

Building a closet of clothes you adore takes patience and trust in yourself. Take a cue from Mother Nature and embrace the process! To quote Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu: "*nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.*"

Below are three keys to owning a timeless wardrobe that feels like you.

1

BE AN OBSERVER OF TRENDS & SEASONS

Both seasons and trends are cyclical. When observing nature, the timing and temperature of each season isn't always the same. Some years, there are unusually warm or unusually cold seasons. Transition times between seasons are especially great for stepping out of your styling comfort zone. Fickle weather requires using items you might not often pair together.

In the past, fashion seasons were more in sync with nature's seasons. These days, trend cycles move extremely fast. This makes it harder to re-wear clothes without looking dated. *This is where styling is your best friend!*

Style is about curation with *intention* and observation is at the core of intention. Choosing to wear an item differently than the way it was worn as a trend gives that item a different vibe. For example, the linen vests/waistcoats worn as a top with matching wide-leg linen pants were a big trend in summer 2024. One way to shift from that trend look, is to unbutton the vest/waistcoat and layer it over a jumpsuit or dress.

Being an observer means you don't have to participate in every trend or season. When we think of fashion as 'rules' it gets too rigid and can feel restrictive and hard to be ourselves. Each season means something different to each person. Embrace what you love about each season and express it in how you dress.

2 APPROACH OUTFIT STYLING LIKE IT'S A *RECIPE*

Dressing seasonally often gets summed up as prints in spring, colours in summer, layers in fall, and textures in winter. *Actually, these can be worn in all seasons!* The key is focusing on what excites you most. The list below isn't about 'dos' or 'don'ts'. See them as recipes to experiment with to find flavours you love for each season. Have fun and let your closet surprise you!

Prints: There's a wide variety of prints: tiny, large, bold, subtle. Take note of the similarities and differences among the prints in your closet. Pair prints with solid pieces or mix and match them with other prints. A helpful way to wear different prints together is to focus on a shared element in both of the prints.



For example, if both prints have squares, that's a shared shape. Or if both prints have pink that's a shared color. Remember opposites attract! Don't be afraid to pair opposite prints together like a bold stripe with a subtle stripe.

Colours: Nature's seasons are great inspiration for colour palettes. Why not come up with your own personal colour palette for each season? If colour feels intimidating, remember to trust your eyes! All colours have a relationship to each other. The best way to observe how colours work together is by placing them next to each other.



Black, white, and grey *aren't* colours. They exist to brighten or darken colours, so pairing them often makes them more intense. A simple way to play with new hues is to pair them with either a blue, red, or yellow garment—the primary colours—meaning they have a relationship with every colour. That's why blue denim is so versatile!

Layers: When I survey friends about their favourite styling season, fall is the most common answer. The main reason being the layering of various pieces from sweaters to jackets to scarves. However, there are also many thin layer options for warmer seasons. If layering is something you love, challenge yourself to come up with different layered looks for each season. I personally love to wear scarves year round; lighter ones in warmer months and thicker ones in colder months.

Textures: An instant way to add visual interest to an outfit is with contrasting textures. Smooth and rough, sparkly and matte. Opposite textures are fun to play with and, more often than not, they look great together. The key is to let your eyes decide. A lot of times we dismiss amazing ideas because we're too much into our heads. Thinking "those don't go together" but if you're open to trying, you might be pleasantly surprised!

3 HAVE SEASONAL *DATE NIGHTS* WITH YOUR CLOSET

The secret sauce to a wardrobe you'll love again and again, is that the individual pieces and the outfits they create together feel like you. As you might've guessed, the way to do this is

by observing what you like and why you like it. The best clues are in your favorite pieces, the ones you can't help but smile at.

Below are a few questions to help you reflect on what inspires and challenges you about the current items in your closet. Make it a date! Grab a treat, then go to your closet and ask yourself the following questions.

YUN-A JOHNSON —————



What items in your closet jump out first? Why?

Are there any overarching themes or similarities among my clothes?

What items do I want to wear more often? Can those be paired with each other?

What clothes do I miss wearing when it's not their season?

What items do I love to wear year round?

What items do I avoid because they feel dated? Is there a way to style them differently using prints, colors, layers, or textures?





EMBROIDERY AS *EXPRESSION* & LANGUAGE

EMBROIDERY AS A FEMINIST SYMBOL AND QUIET ACTIVISM

*Article by Frida Lidbom
Photography by Olga Kalinini via Pexels*

Embroidery has been practiced for centuries, yet it has long been dismissed from the fine art scene because it was seen as “women’s work.” At its most basic, embroidery is defined as the act of decorating cloth with stitches, but its history is far richer than this simple definition. The tradition is believed to date back to ancient China, with evidence of embroidered practices traced as far back as 30,000 B.C.

By the 18th century, embroidery had become a central part of young women’s education in Europe, often framed as a transition into adulthood. Learning embroidery was not only about skill but also about shaping behaviour, preparing girls for womanhood, domestic life, and marriage.

Katherine Grayson writes for Harpy Magazine that, “characterised by a

bowed head and lowered eyes, the very act embodies traditional expectations of women: patience, silence, and a focus on the domestic.” Embroidery required stillness and repetition, qualities that aligned with how women were expected to behave. Because embroidery was taught as part of the transition into womanhood, it also became associated with being “wife material”.

Throughout history, embroidery has consistently been positioned as a decorative practice tied to femininity. It was only in the 20th century that artists began reclaiming embroidery as fine art and questioning why it had been excluded in the first place.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE EMBROIDERY AS *FINE ART*

What was once viewed as a domestic woman’s craft has since become an important form of feminist expression. Today, artists around the world are working to reclaim embroidery as a serious artistic practice, where they are using it not only for beauty but for storytelling, resistance, and activism.

CRAFTIVISM

In many ways, embroidery’s long and complicated history makes it a powerful example of craftivism. The term was coined by author and crafter Betsy Greer to describe the use of craft as a form of activism. Craftivism is rarely loud or confrontational. Instead, it works quietly, through time, repetition, and care. often described as “quiet protest.”

FLORAL EMBROIDERY *AS LANGUAGE*

From its earliest forms, flowers have dominated embroidery patterns. Different flowers came to symbolise seasons, emotions, and spiritual beliefs. Over time, floral embroidery moved fluidly between fashion and culture. In the early twentieth century, couture houses such as Chanel and Lanvin used delicate embroidered flowers on eveningwear, while artists like Frida Kahlo wore traditional embroidered garments as expressions of cultural pride and identity.

In places like Palestine, women continued stitching floral and geometric motifs into dresses as a way of preserving culture under political pressure. Across North Africa, the Middle East, and East Asia, floral embroidery remains closely tied to ceremony, tradition, and continuity, a



practice carried forward rather than archived.

Today, embroidery exists both on runways and in rural workshops. It functions as design, decoration, and quiet activism, sustained by artisans who pass techniques between generations. In this way, embroidery remains alive, practiced with intentional care.

As spring approaches, embroidery will once again surface across fashion, stitched onto garments as both decoration and statement. Timeless and rooted in tradition, the artists behind it continue to push boundaries and challenge how we define activism and expression. Think about that the next time you choose an embroidered piece.

FRIDA LIDBOM

In many embroidery traditions, flowers functioned as a visual language, carrying symbolism and emotions that could not always be spoken aloud. The meaning behind the different flowers can vary from culture to culture, but these are some of the most well-known symbols:

Lavender: Peace,
relaxation, calmness.

Rose: Love, affection,
devotion, and beauty,
but also pain and
sacrifice.

Sunflower: Life, warmth,
loyalty, fertility, and
resilience.

Daisy: Innocence,
youth, and new
beginnings.

Lotus flower:
Purity, rebirth, and
spiritual growth.

Hibiscus: Tropical
and beauty.



SCENTS OF *SPRING*

HOW FLORAL AROMAS BOOST
MOOD, MEMORY AND WELLBEING

Article by Lola Ravid
Photography by Eva Bronzini via Pexels

Spring arrives like a breath of possibility, carried on floral notes that invite us to pause, notice, and breathe. As days grow longer and the air turns soft and sun-warmed, our attention drifts outdoors, where nature stages its most fragrant performance. Blooming flowers emerge in vivid colours, each releasing a scent that can shift our mood in an instant, stir memories of springs past, and gently remind us to slow down.

These seasonal blooms offer more than fleeting beauty; they awaken the senses, grounding us in the present while inspiring subtle refreshment. Our love of floral scents is ancient.

The Egyptians, Indians, Chinese, and Greeks used flowers in rituals, medicine, and beauty—long before science explained why they calm, inspire, and heal. Over centuries, these delicate aromas evolved into slow perfumery—an artisanal, sustainable approach to fragrance creation. Today, floral scents continue to leave a lasting legacy in aromatherapy, recognised as tools for emotional well-being and quietly embedded across cultures worldwide.

Modern research confirms that our scent is special; unlike sight or sound, it travels straight to the brain's emotional centre. A single floral aroma can calm the nervous system or even transport you to a cherished memory. A 2025

analysis published in npj Urban Sustainability, drawing on more than 30 global studies, found that exposure to floral aromas reduces stress, supports emotional balance, and promotes relaxation.

Floral scents are not just pleasant—they are practical, accessible tools for everyday wellbeing. In the pages ahead, I share simple, everyday ways to enjoy the benefits of floral scents this season—small invitations to slow down, feel present, and care for yourself.

1

STRESS RELIEF AND NERVOUS SYSTEM CALM

Take gentle floral pauses throughout the day:



Morning steam ritual: Add a drop of rose, lavender, or orange blossom to a bowl of hot water. Inhale for one minute before starting your day



Floral hand care: Keep a lightly scented, sustainable hand cream nearby as a cue to pause and breathe.

- ✿ **Evening room mist:** Spritz a floral hydrosol in shared spaces to signal the nervous system that the day is winding down.

Why it works: Soft floral notes help shift the body out of “doing mode” and into ease.

2 MOOD ELEVATION & EMOTIONAL BALANCE

Let florals lift your emotional atmosphere:

- ✿ **Mood-matching scents:** Brighter florals like neroli, jasmine, or ylang-ylang on low-energy days; softer florals like rose or chamomile when emotions feel tender.
- ✿ **Scented wardrobe moments:** Place a floral sachet or card in a drawer—tiny doses of beauty discovered unexpectedly.
- ✿ **Fresh blooms on rotation:** Refresh one small vase weekly for an emotional reset without commitment.

Why it works: Florals engage the limbic system, where emotions are processed.

3 ENHANCED MEMORY & POSITIVE ASSOCIATION

Turn scent into a memory anchor:

- ✿ **Signature seasonal scent:** Choose one floral for the season—spring rose, summer jasmine, autumn geranium—to link scent with memory.
- ✿ **Memory-making rituals:** Light a floral candle during journaling, family dinners, or creative work to imprint positive associations.
- ✿ **Travel companion:** Bring a small floral oil on trips and reuse it at home to evoke calm or joy.

Why it works: Scent is the sense most strongly tied to memory.



4

IMPROVED SLEEP & RESTFULNESS

Signal your body it's safe to rest:

- ✿ **Bedtime scent cue:** Apply floral oil to pulse points 30 minutes before sleep.
- ✿ **Linen refresh:** Lightly mist pillows with lavender or rose water.
- ✿ **Wind-down diffuser rule:** Use florals only in evening hours to associate them with rest.

Why it works: Repetition trains the nervous system to respond automatically.

5

INCREASED *FOCUS &* MENTAL CLARITY

Use florals as mental bookends:

- ✿ **Work-only scent:** Keep one floral scent for focus time—geranium or rosemary-rose blends work well.
- ✿ **Scented breaks:** Step away, inhale deeply three times, and return refreshed.
- ✿ **Desk-safe florals:** Small dried bouquets or scented stones provide clarity without distraction.

Why it works: Floral notes ground attention without overstimulation.



6 CONNECTION TO NATURE & SEASONAL RHYTHM

Bring the outdoors in intentionally:

✿ **Seasonal swaps:** Change scents as the seasons change to mirror nature's cycles.

✿ **Garden-inspired rituals:** Even without a garden, floral scents reconnect us to natural growth.

✿ **Weekly scent check-in:** Ask, "What does this season feel like?" and choose a floral that reflects it.

Why it works: Our nervous systems respond positively to natural rhythms.

✿ **Shared joy moments:** Design the space with floral accents that engage the senses, allowing scent and beauty to set the tone before guests gather.

✿ **Micro-indulgence:** Keep a favourite floral scent in your bag for anytime enjoyment.

Why it works: Pleasure itself is restorative.

Floral scents aren't about perfection—they're about noticing, breathing, and savoring each moment. This spring, let blooms guide simple acts of self-care: a vase of fresh flowers, a walk in the garden, a touch of essential oils, or a hint of sustainable perfume.

Slow down, awaken your senses, and invite joy—one fragrant moment at a time.

7 SENSORY PLEASURE & JOY

Let beauty be reason enough:

✿ **Scent for no purpose:** Light a floral candle simply because it smells beautiful.

LOLA RAVID

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PEOPLEOVERPRODUCTMAGAZINE@GMAIL.COM
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THE

SUSTAINABLE

SCALE



Photo courtesy of Sora Shimazaki via Pexels

UNDERWEAR

**THE VERY
GOODBRA**
zero-waste basics

Good on You rating: GREAT

The Very Good Bra created the world's first 100% plastic-free bra. They use a pre-order model to minimise waste, manufacture in safe factories, and recently became a B-Corp.

BOODY

Good on You rating: GOOD

Boody are an Australian brand making underwear from organic bamboo. Their natural materials and inclusive sizing make them a great choice for comfortable basics.

HANRO

Good on You rating: IT'S A START

HANRO use some lower-impact materials, such as TENCEL®, but don't have a public code of conduct, or make major moves to protect those in their supply chain.

Boux
— AVENUE —

Good on You rating: NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Boux Avenue largely use synthetic materials, without attempting to mitigate the impact of microplastics. They also manufacture in countries at risk of inequality and maltreatment.

HOT

Ayten Gasson

Good on You rating: GREAT

Ayten Gasson are an ethical luxury lingerie brand made from reclaimed vintage silk and lace. All of their pieces are hand-made in their in-house studio in Brighton, UK.

PANSY

Good on You rating: GOOD

Pansy are designed and manufactured in California, USA, from USA-grown organic cotton. They offer a wide range of different briefs and even an organic cotton bra!

VS

VICTORIA'S SECRET

Good on You rating: NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Victoria's Secret are one of the biggest global underwear brands, and, in turn, create copious amounts of waste. Though the sustainable tide may be turning, as they are set to bring in Digital Product Passports.

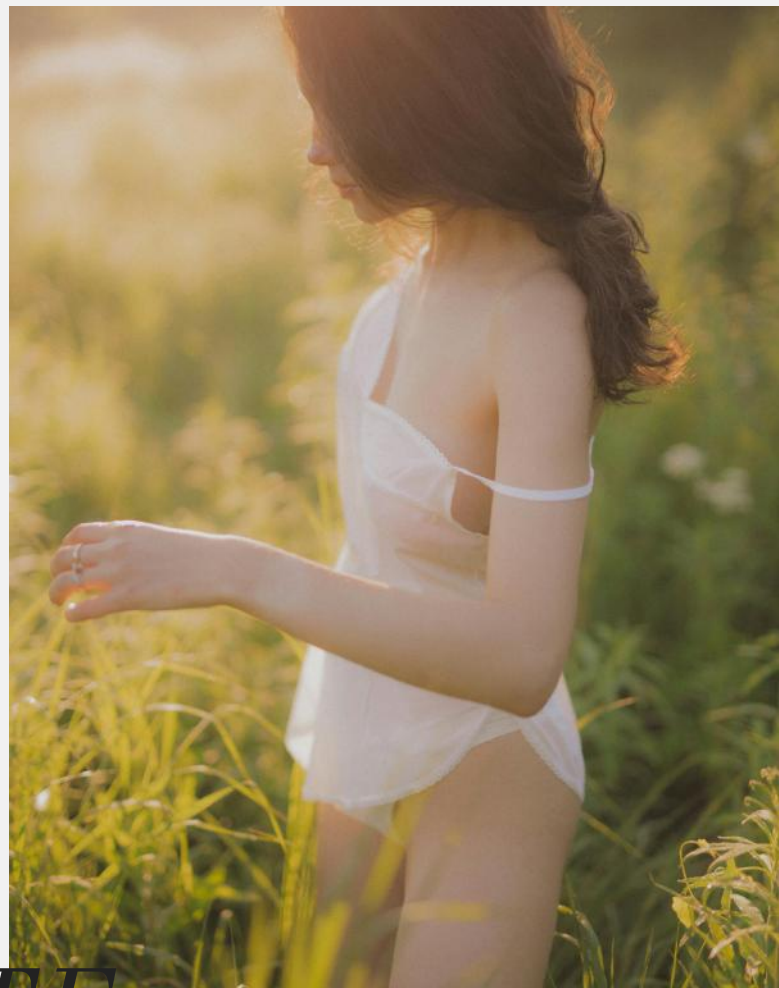
LA PERLA

Good on You rating: WE AVOID

La Perla do not publicly claim to be living wage employers, and do not provide sufficient information on its supply chain. It also uses minimal sustainable materials.

NOT

PANTS MADE FROM PLANTS



AN INTIMATE NATURE

Article by Chloe Grant

Photography by Marina Ryazantseva via Pexels

The fibres we choose to wear in our underwear have a more *intimate* relationship with our body than most. In our underwear, more than anywhere else in our wardrobe, natural fibres should be a priority: providing a foundation for clothing that works in harmony with your body, not actively against it.

New research shows that wearing fossil-fuel-based fibres can result in our bodies absorbing plastic particles and harmful toxins, and this absorption is only heightened in sensitive areas.

This begs the question: you wouldn't eat plastic, so why would you wear it in your intimates?

You wouldn't eat plastic, so why would you wear it close to intimate areas?

So, what's actually so bad about synthetics?

Fossil-fuel-based fibres, such as polyester's, negative impact is twofold: its creation of microplastics negatively harms our planet, and its synthetic make-up has detrimental impacts on our bodies.

Routinely wearing synthetic fibres close to our skin has long been documented as harmful to our bodies, and new research is being conducted all the time to dive deeper into how exactly these fibres interact with our skin.

A recent study from the University of Birmingham shows that when we wear synthetic materials treated with harmful pollutants our sweat can cause these harmful chemicals to 'unlock' and be absorbed into our skin. Although the study primarily focused on flame-retardant chemicals—which are obviously not routinely found in underwear—one of the researchers is keen to emphasise that the study heavily implies that this method of secretion and absorption of toxic chemicals is not unique to flame-retardant BFRs, but can also be applied to a range of chemical plastic additives, that are commonly found in underwear and activewear.

Chemical plastic treatments commonly found in polyester could cause a myriad of health problems if, as the UoB study suggests, they are absorbed into the skin.

Phthalates, used to add flexibility and stretch, have been linked to hormone disruptions; formaldehyde, which reduces creases and wrinkling, is well-documented as a known carcinogen; and antimony trioxide, readily used in the production of polyester, is known to

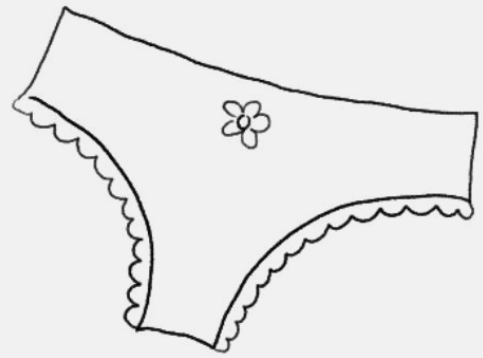
trigger skin irritation and respiratory problems.

And the problems don't stop there; synthetic fabrics, such as polyester, are often dyed using disperse dyes that are proven to be irritants to sensitive skin, such as the delicate skin in our intimate areas.

Polyester underwear has also been linked to heightened levels of infertility, due to the static electricity caused by the synthetic fibres having negative impacts on the ovaries. The study showed that animals who wore polyester underwear over a twelve month period showed diminished serum progesterone—the crucial hormone required to prepare the ovaries for ovulation—and they failed to conceive.

Luckily, the animals and people who wore the polyester garments saw their fertility levels rise once more after switching back to 100% natural underwear. So, whilst the impact of these fibres are incredibly worrying, it also seems to be the case that they are reversible, meaning we still have time to act and save our bodies.

At best, polyester will lead to uncomfortable underwear that doesn't absorb moisture effectively—something which is paramount for bodies that sweat and produce discharge—and at worst it could have drastically detrimental health implications.



WHAT TO WEAR *INSTEAD*

Whether it's simply for convenience and comfort, or to combat more serious health concerns, we'd recommend trying to switch to natural, organic materials in your underwear.

When shopping for intimates look out for pieces that are made using natural fibres, such as 100% cotton or hemp.

Other great fibre choices are man-made bio-based fabrics, such as TENCEL®, SeaCell, or bamboo lyocell. All of these provide superb levels of comfort, without all the nasties of synthetic stretch.

The next page shares our top picks for sustainable undies that are comfortable, natural, and work in the best interest of your body and the planet.

CHLOE GRANT

PANTS *MADE FROM* PLANTS



HU-HA: Best for intimate care



Boody: Best for basics



HARA: Best for non-toxic dyes



Stripe & Stare: Best for fun designs



The Big Favorite: Best for recycling

WHAT DO YOUR
SPENDING
HABITS
SAY ABOUT
YOU?

Article by Yun-A Johnson
Imagery by Yiming Tang via Pexels

A little back story on this quiz:

I used to feel like sustainable fashion was an extra hard journey for me because I quickly got tired of my clothes. I thought if I had sewing skills sustainable fashion would be easier for me. Or, I'd read about capsule wardrobes with staples that easily mix and match together but look at my closet and see tons of different colours, textures, and prints because I crave variety.

My relationship with my clothes changed when I stopped comparing what I didn't have or wasn't doing 'right'. Instead, I looked closer at what inspired me most about my clothes. Gaining a deeper understanding of my personal style was the missing piece in my sustainable fashion journey.

Now my closet is my go-to creative outlet for expressing myself in a variety of ways.

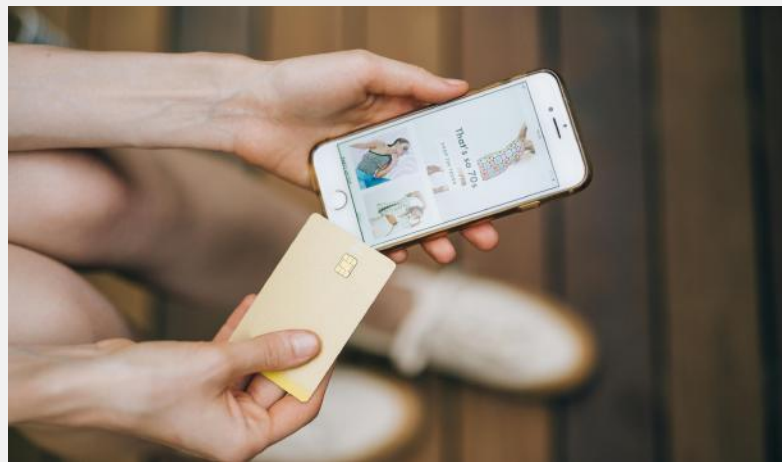
I share this story to highlight that each of us connects with our clothes differently.

In my styling work, I noticed four prominent tendencies among people that invest a significant amount of time, energy, and money on aesthetics (i.e. clothes, makeup, decor) items that beautify ourselves and our surroundings.

From these observations, I created the Spending Style Quiz.

If this quiz looks familiar, that's because it was in a previous issue. It's not a quiz to tell you *what* to wear but a quiz that gets you thinking about *why* you make the choices you do. For double the fun, share this quiz with a friend and talk about your results!

NOTE: If more than one answer applies, don't overthink it, go with your first instinct.



1. You get invited to your dream event, what thought comes into your mind first?

A) Ooo I already know the perfect outfit! I've had my eye on it for months.

B) Yay! Now's my chance to create a one-of-a-kind look.

C) Slight panic that there's not enough time to buy an outfit I will really love... ohh I can rent something, yay!

D) I have no idea what to wear, *but* I'm excited to go shopping and see what I find.

2. How would you describe your decor style?

- A) As long as I have big enough closets, I'm good...
- B) Lots of meaningful items and beautiful craftsmanship.
- C) Minimal...I'm pretty selective.
- D) A variety of items I find beautiful or make me happy to look at.

3. When I open my closet I see...

- A) Lots of clothes! My favourite brands and styles, some in multiple colours!
- B) Original unique clothes, some customised by me!
- C) A curated collection of clothes that I wear on repeat.
- D) A wide variety of clothes, it feels like my style is all over the place.

4. What are you most likely to overspend on?

- A) Buying multiples of my favourite shoes, clothes, or accessories since I know how much I wear them!
- B) Rare vintage finds or sewing supplies...sigh. So many projects, so little time!

C) I rarely overspend, if I splurge on an item, it's something I've saved up for.

D) Ummm where to start... I'm usually trying to talk myself out of impulse purchases.

5. Which statement do you relate to most about shopping?

A) I love shopping, especially online, because I can keep tabs on items I'm interested in.

B) Ugh shopping, I'm usually disappointed by what most modern brands offer. I prefer the beautiful craftsmanship and quality of vintage clothes.

C) I mainly shop from a select few brands and get stressed when I can't find a replacement for an item I love.

D) Shopping is an experience for me. I get inspiration from shopping but I'm trying to be more intentional with my purchases.

Turn the page to find your spending style >>

If you got mostly A's = Consistent Style Spender

You love to splurge on your favourite items and styles. For you, it's a no-brainer to buy multiple pairs or colours of something you wear often.

You're just like Miranda Hobbes from Sex and the City, Lisa Manoban from Blackpink, and Bridget Vreeland from Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants

If you got mostly B's = Original Style Spender

Your style isn't influenced by others. You know what you love and have the skills to personalise items when needed. You love to make your outfits unlike anyone else in the room.

You're just like Charlotte York from Sex and the City, Jennie Kim from Blackpink, and Lena Kaligaris from Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants

If you got mostly C's = Capsule Style Spender

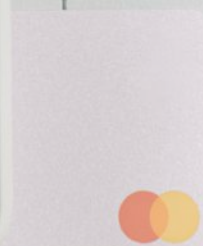
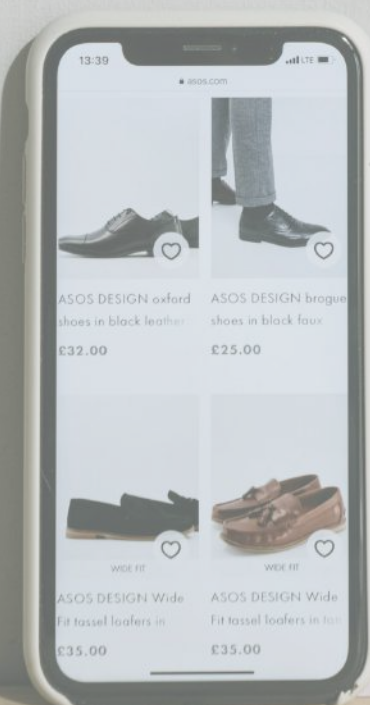
You tend to save up for key pieces because your style inspiration is more specific. You see no reason to experiment because you're clear on what you like and only spend on that.

You're just like Samantha Jones from Sex and the City, Lisa Ji Soo from Blackpink, and Tibby Rollins from Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants

If you got mostly D's = Changing Style Spender

You're easily inspired, especially when you're shopping! You often impulsively buy items because you crave variety and don't want to be pinned down by one aesthetic.

You're just like Carrie Bradshaw from Sex and the City, Rose from Blackpink, and Carmen Lowell from Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants



DO YOU OWN A *SUSTAINABLE* FASHION BRAND?



CONTACT
PEOPLEOVERPRODUCTMAGAZINE@GMAIL.COM
TO DISCUSS ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a piece of dark, wet fabric. The fabric is dripping with a dark liquid, which is falling into a pool of the same liquid below. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall mood is artistic and natural.

Article by Lia Totty
Photography by Lia Totty and Pexels

PAINTING WITH — THE EARTH

*AN ARTIST'S EXPERIENCE OF
NATURAL DYEING*

POP's artist and writer Lia talks us through the transformative natural dyeing class she attended, which had vast impact on her design practice.

Her natural dyeing experimentations, and subsequent connection to the Black Fiber and Textile Network continues to impact her work, reconnecting her with both the natural world around her, and a hidden history of artisanal crafting techniques: the knowledge of which lives on in BIPOC groups bringing in a resurgence of traditional craft.

In 2018, I attended two fabric dyeing classes at a local church's art centre, focusing on natural tie-dyeing and eco-printing leaves, peels, and flowers onto fabric. Each session I learnt about the process of tie-dyeing when using natural plant dyes. Despite only initially intending to participate in the first shibori technique, I was able to continue dyeing with indigo, while the second group began the eco-printing of dry onion peels, and flowers.

I think this was one of those pivotal moments when I knew that my childhood dreams of becoming a fashion designer were not just dreams, and that I truly decided to become a *sustainable* fashion designer.





After I shiboried a handkerchief and a few white canvas H&M tote bags I had brought from my house, I took my lot of shiboried items home. I had used the Itajime technique that creates square geometric patterns on one bag, and the Arashi technique, which creates jagged diagonal stripes on another.

My next instinct was to start natural dyeing at home. *But with what?* I started with a plant I was growing in my yard called amaranth. Amaranth is technically a grain, but I dyed a canvas bag dark pink using the red flowers. The next step was to wash the bag, but when I did, I found that all the color washed out. It was then that I realized amaranth dye is colourfast and that was why it wasn't a popular dye to use for fabrics, which get washed regularly, as opposed to an edible dye for colouring paper or baked goods, for example.

I definitely consider the resurgence in naturally dyeing fabrics to be a sign of good things to come from a climate change perspective. Furthermore, the art of it all can take totally different forms depending on who is doing the dyeing. I personally find the dye application techniques of different dyers, ranging from shibori to painting, to anything else, mesmerising. Once you see something that seemingly has never been done before, you get a feel for something as wearable art.

Enter Abena Motaboli, a natural dyer of the *Black Fiber and Textile Network*.

I was first introduced to Abena Motaboli in a group Zoom with members of the *Black Fiber and Textile Network*, a group founded by Teju Adisa-Farrar. After several BFTN Zoom meetings, I was later connected to Abena via email and then followed her back on Instagram, where I was able to witness bits of her artistic process, travels, and worldly ambition.

Abena Motaboli can “*paint with the earth*,” so to speak, a talent that not many have. Motaboli stands out to me as a person who is highly skilled in organic natural dyeing of natural fabrics, inspiring me whilst I’m still learning about the different types of natural dye plants that create permanent dyes that are not colourfast.

Abena Motaboli can ‘paint with the earth’

Abena’s work is more than just craft: it’s artwork. She not only dyes fabrics but also often creates using abstract techniques that create an amazing outcome.

Seeing her test out incredibly unique, hand-dyed ideas to make such beautiful products is awe-inspiring.



Truth is, I want to know what she knows, and grow at least one of those dye plants in my own yard so I can aspire to inspire others in the language of “painting with the earth” as well.

In the past, I uploaded the picture of the Arashi handkerchief I made to Canva and edited it to create a textile. After having the textile design made, I was able to create bags and stationery using a generic print-on-anything website like Society6.



Now I am interested in learning to do Abena's technique, which I'll keep the details of a secret for now. I am also interested in using dye kits created by farmer-members of the *Black Fiber and Textile Network*, of which I am a designer-member.

LIA TOTTY _____

The BFTN are a global network of creatives working to establish a new era of fashion focused on relationships between the land, one another, and regenerative fibres.

If this article has piqued your interest, or you just want to learn more about what the Black Fiber and Textile Network are doing, you can check out their work at blackfibernetwork.com





Article by Chloe Grant
Photography by Sustainable Fashion Brum

SUSTAINABLE — SPOTLIGHT

Community is the core of the sustainable fashion movement, and one in particular lies close to our heart.

The Old Print Works in Birmingham, England is the host of Sustainable Fashion Week: Birmingham Hub—which our Editor-in-Chief, Chloe, and Editor, Eleanor both worked on—and creator of Daily Thread, frequented by Jutta from the story on nettle fibre featured in this issue.

Now they're establishing regular sustainable fashion socials, letting climate activism bloom in the heart of Birmingham.

COMING TOGETHER TO TRANSFORM FASHION

The times where I have been most inspired to enact lasting change within the fashion industry have been when I am surrounded by those who share the same vision for a fairer fashion future.

That's why I'm so excited about The Old Print Work's upcoming *Sustainable Fashion Socials*, filled with talks, crafting, and community: all focused on building a better fashion industry.

The next social, held on 5th March 2026, focuses on the joy of secondhand shopping, something we *love* here at People Over Product.

Expect tips and guidance on the best way to shop secondhand, styling sessions, expert talks, mending sessions, and a clothes swap. Sharing knowledge, kindness, and circular clothing systems within the local community.

Each social hopes to inspire, support, amplify and empower each other in collective action, proving that little actions can have big impact.

Want to attend? You can buy tickets [here](#).

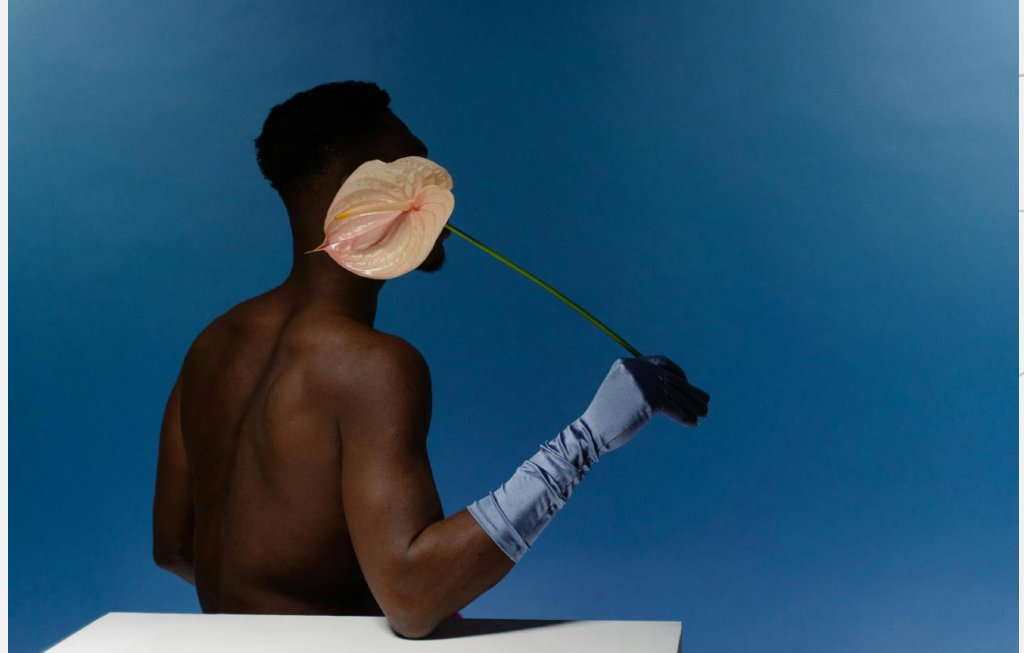


You can find Sustainable Fashion Brum on IG @sustainablefashionbrum to keep up to date with their sustainable fashion events!

Want to read more about The Old Print Works SFW? Read our [Substack](#) post.



SUBSCRIBE TO OUR SUBSTACK



Photography by Ron Lach via Pexels



substack.com/peopleoverproduct

You might have missed...

[Fashion: Reclaimed – How Sustainable Fashion Week: Birmingham Hub is creating a craft-focused, caring community in the heart of England](#)

[The Goal of Zero Waste vs The Global Textile Waste Crisis](#)

[Circular Fashion Lied to Us](#)

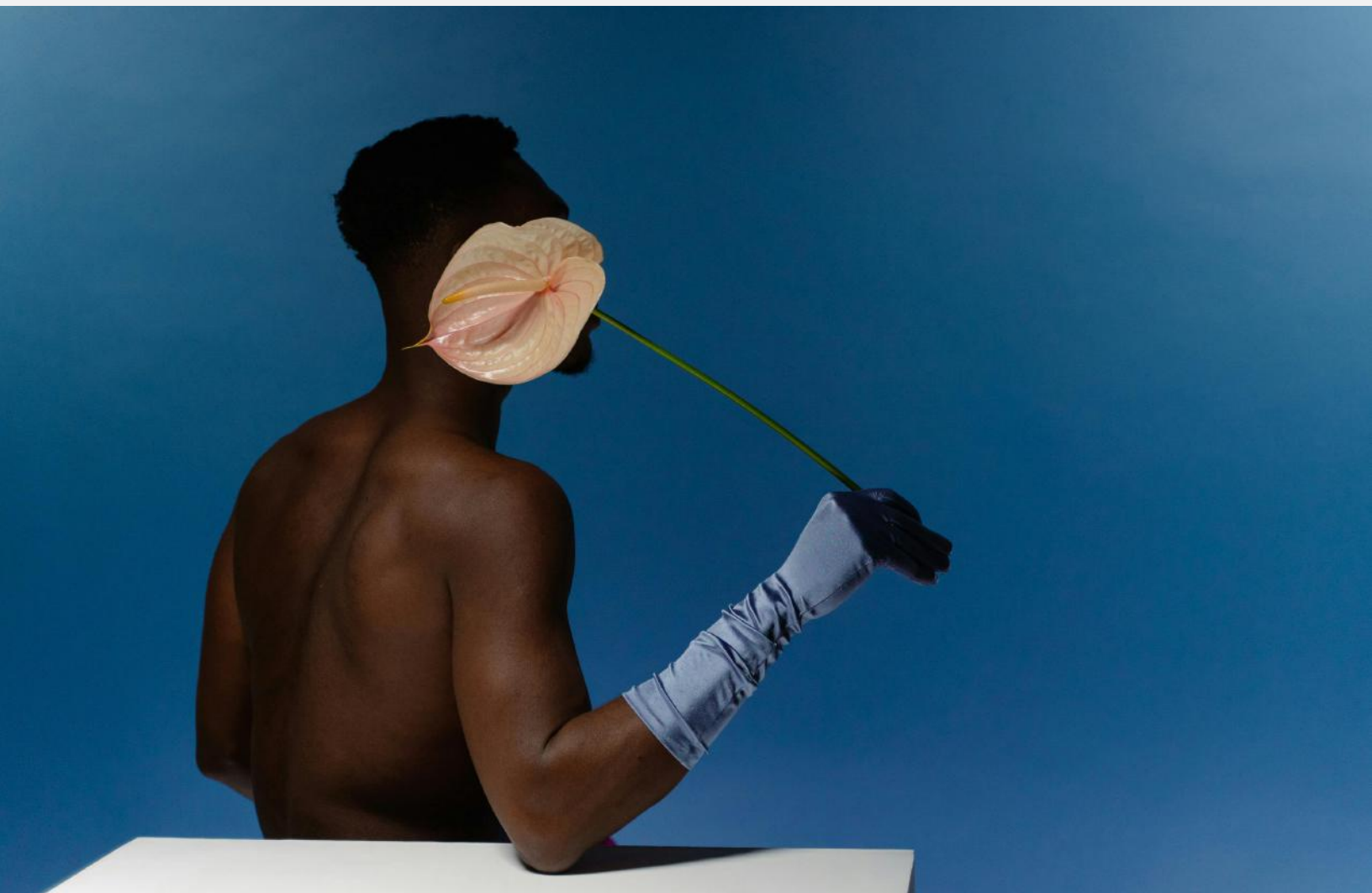
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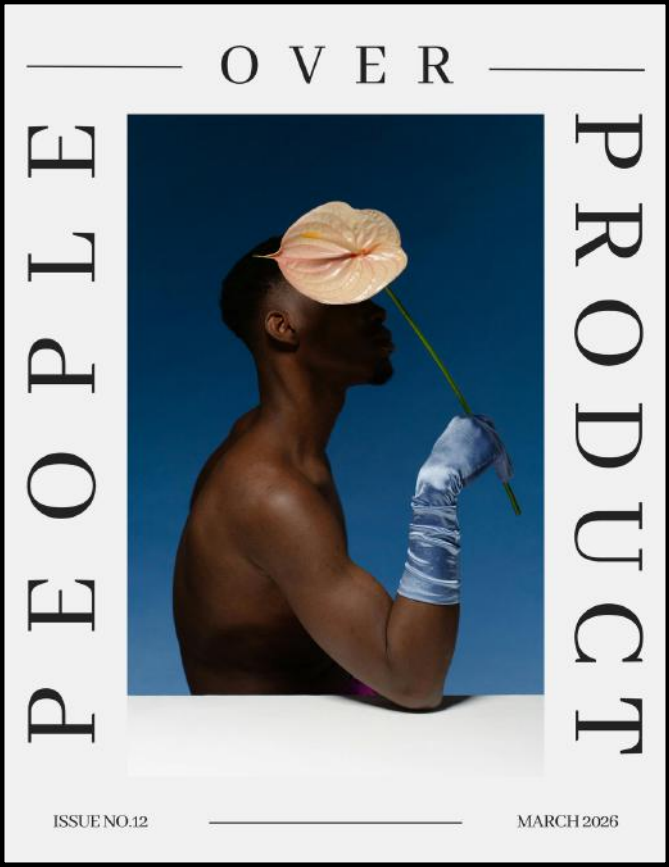
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