



Waste Couture: Climate Conscious Queer Style

Santi S. (They/He)

Today's agenda (Workshop 1):

- Learning about textile waste in relation to climate change
- The history of DIY
- The 'gender free' fashion movement
- Queer style inspo & visual showcase
- Q+A

Today's agenda (Workshop 2):

- DIY demos & experimentation
- Working on your creation
- Trying on garments & accessories
- Show & tell: resource exchange
- Q+A

G(end)er Swap CIC

LGBTQ+ style outreach: pop ups, workshops, digital resources through a sustainable lens.

www.genderswap.org
@genderswap_





SANTI

DIY fashion & Thrifting

Founder of G(end)er Swap

Create resources on
gender affirming style

Makeup artist

Drag performer

Astrology lover



Why wear 'waste'?



earthlyeducation and earthylyguy

Alvedon · retire (final)



The fashion industry produces more CO₂ annually than all international flights and maritime shipping combined. There are enough clothes today to clothe the next six generations. Buying less and buying secondhand are acts of resistance.



Fast fashion causes major environmental impacts:

Only in the UK, around **350,000 tons** of waste clothing end up in landfills every year.

The fashion industry is accountable for **10%** of global carbon emissions, producing 1.2 billion tons of carbon dioxide annually.

With **92 million tons** of clothes thrown away each year, the world's textile waste generation problem has reached a point where it is visible from space.

Producing a single cotton T-shirt and a pair of jeans requires 2,706 and 7,570 litres of water, respectively

Heavy Metals like lead, chromium, and antimony accumulate in ecosystems and enter the food chain, affecting wildlife and human health.

over **300 million trees** are cut down every year to be further transformed into viscose, modal, lyocell and rayon.

Stats on the Impact of the Fast Fashion Industry

Second most polluting
Industry in the world (after oil) with
92 million tons of waste yearly



10% of global carbon
emissions annually

It takes **7,570 litres** of water
to make just one pair of jeans



Less than **1%** of all textiles
worldwide are recycled into new
products



Fast fashion causes

20% of global
water waste

35% microplastic
on oceans



87%

of materials used to
make clothing end
up in landfill
That's one truckload
every second

The background image is a wide-angle shot of a large textile factory. Numerous workers, mostly women, are seated at long tables equipped with industrial sewing machines. They are working on various pieces of fabric. The factory has high ceilings with large windows, and the overall atmosphere is one of a busy, large-scale manufacturing environment.

Fast fashion has a socially devastating impact:

A 2018 [US Department of Labor report](#) found [evidence of forced and child labour](#) in the fashion industry in Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India, and more

Within the 75 million workers of the industry, approximately 80% are young women aged between 18 and 24, primarily from developing countries.

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In regions like Tiruppur, India, known as the "Dyeing Hub of South Asia," residents suffer from respiratory illnesses and water scarcity due to pollution from dyes.

During peak seasons, workers are often required to work intensively for extended periods, sometimes up to 36 hours-shifts and 80 hours per week.

FAST FASHION IMPACTS



**LOWEST
PAID
TEXTILE
WORKERS**

USD \$26/month
in Ethiopia

60–70 MILLION
GARMENT WORKERS
WORLDWIDE



75%
ARE WOMEN

- ☐ Low wages
- ☐ Accidents
- ☐ Unsafe workplace



Slow Fashion



Second-Hand
Fashion



DIY Fashion

What can we do?

break....

The History of DIY

Queer fashion & Craft:

Repurposing

Alternative materials

Recycling

Unique creations

Political messaging

Punk roots

An expression of rebellion, young punks used aesthetics to defy normative understandings of gender, family structures and hierarchy.

DIY stemmed from an anti consumerist mindset dictated in the 60's and 70's and manifested in an aesthetic that privileged safety pins, ripped up clothing, charity shop garments and heavy hardware and work boots.

DIY became a messenger: big political slogans/messaging worn on the back of jackets, on t-shirts and exercised through body modification.



More...

1940s/50's: butch and femme culture

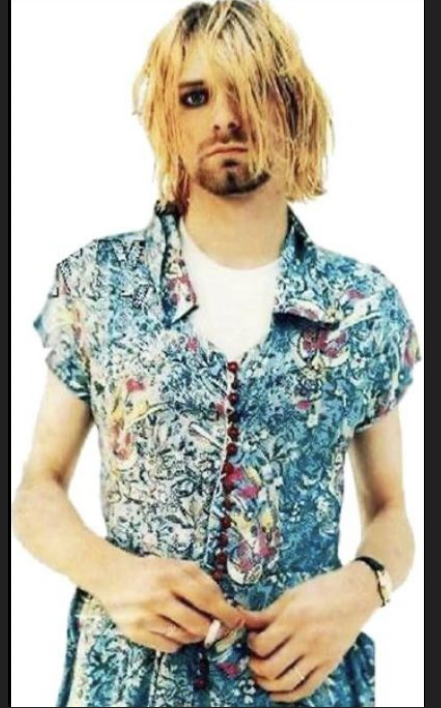
1960s: peacock era, Bowie- flamboyance

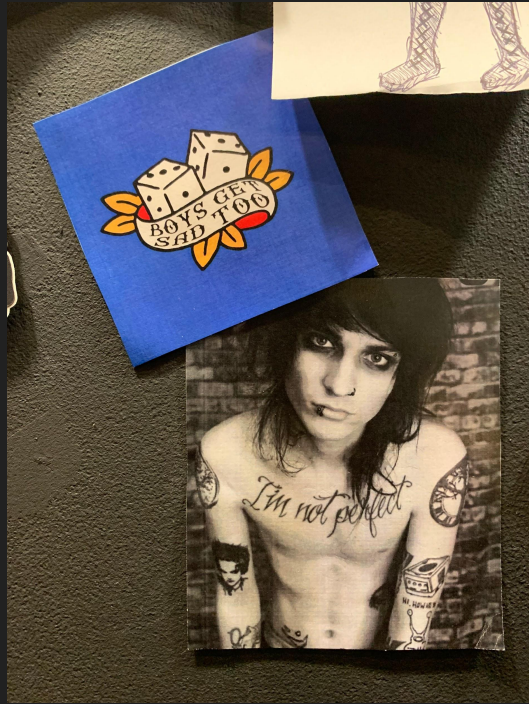
1970s: free love/different expressions and gender roles

1980s: Boy George and Prince

1990s: grunge era - Kurt cobain/KD lang/club kid culture etc.

2000's: emo culture and 'kawaii core' in the west





Barbican (2025).



Fashion & Textiles Museum.



KD lang

“Fashion, as a messaging device, is a tool to express solidarity. It is a material statement, physical evidence, a strengthening bond”

-Eleanor Medhurst,
Dressing Dykes

DIY in Queer Expression

DIY is a key part of Queer fashion History, it was (and still is) used to reclaim space, to protest and to explore identity on a personal level.

In Lesbian activism around the 70's, slogan t-shirts were utilised to express solidarity and to reclaim space - particularly making their mark in protests and pride marches

At the renowned Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (MWMF) in the 90's protests happened after a trans woman was kicked off of the grounds. From this, Camp Trans, a trans inclusive camp event with a mission to bring down MWMF was formed. DIY aesthetics included silk screened Camp Trans t-shirts and ratty t-shirts with a hand sewn anarchist symbols.



Entering the festival

photo by Mariette Pathy Allen

DIY in Queer Expression

Ball room culture: emerged in 1960's New York among young queer people of colour. The balls were a spectacle of performances and self representation - using whatever resources they could find to serve a look.

Cosplay: DIY costumes and character exploration

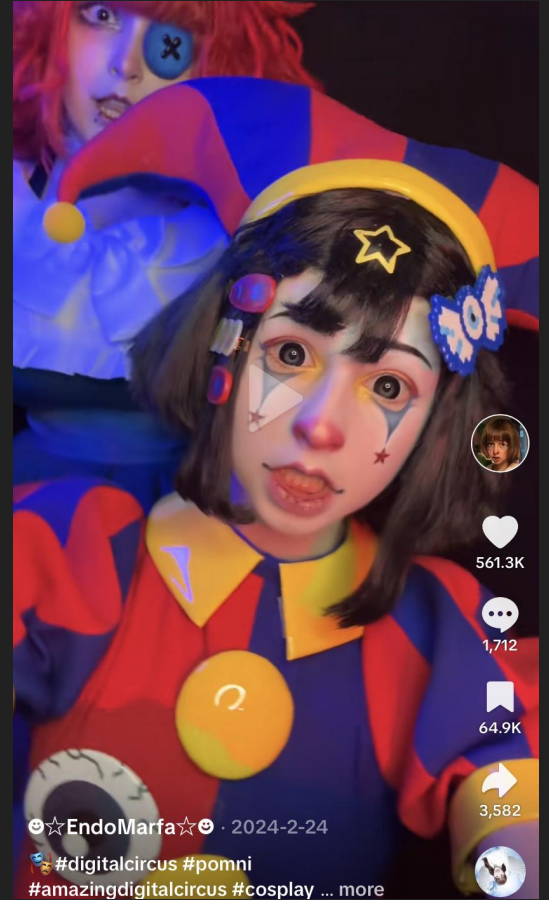
Experimenting with identity via DIY patches, badges, flagging/hanky code & now DIY slogan shirts and upcycled queer style

Subcultures: furies, goblincore, 'core culture' and more



Paris is Burning 1990





CRAFTED WITH PRIDE

QUEER CRAFT AND ACTIVISM
IN CONTEMPORARY BRITAIN



EDITED BY
DANIEL FOUNTAIN



Laura Gardner &
Daphne Mohajer va Pesaran (eds.)

radical
fashion
exercises

a workbook
of modes
and methods

Valiz

AGAINST MEMOIR



MICHELLE TEA



'LIKE A SMART KID WITH
A DIRTY CRAYON
EXPLAINING TO US ALL
HOW SHE
SEES GOD.'
EILEEN
MYLES



The digital archive is an ongoing project.



Bathroom



Expressing identity through dress

Slow Fashion & Second Hand Fashion

Sustainable materials

Locally sourced & made

Charity shopping

**Why is DIY a necessity for
queer self expression?**

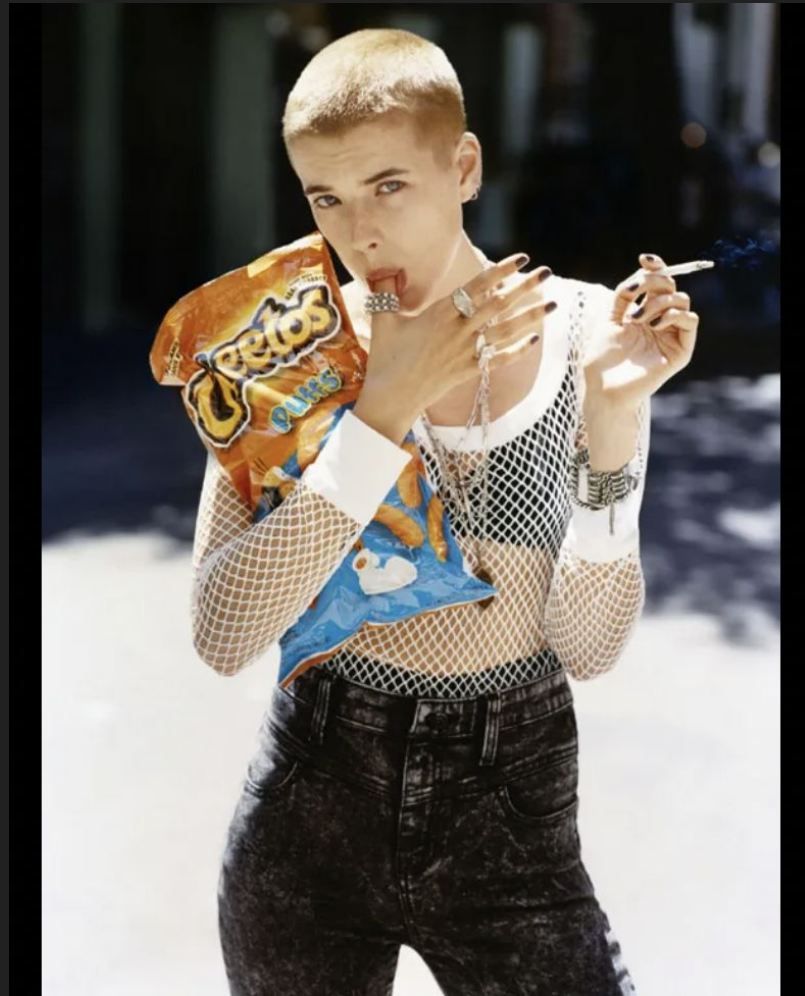
2000's 'gender neutral' fashion

Exclusionary of different body types/designs

Gender neutral designs became synonymous with plain/oversized/ 'tomboy' aesthetic

Trans people and gender-diverse people not being represented

The term 'unisex' inaccurate/retail spaces still hostile places for queer people to shop







Levi's Pride Campaign, 2021

How Sustainable Is Your Pride Merch?

I'm Izzy (They/them), I'm a climate educator and organiser based in Cardiff, working part time in community energy and I'm also the founder of **Who Made My Pride Merch**.



@whomademypridemerch

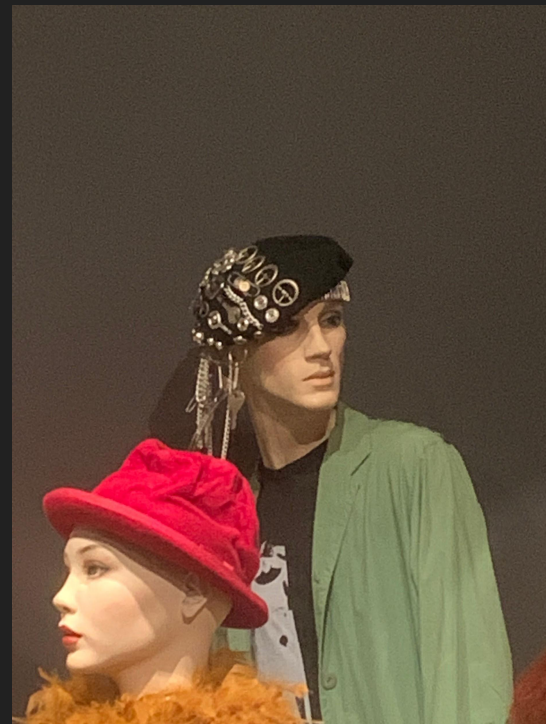
DIY = A NECESSITY!!!

Visual Showcase & Brainstorm Session

Fashion & Textiles Museum (London)



Leigh Bowery exhibition



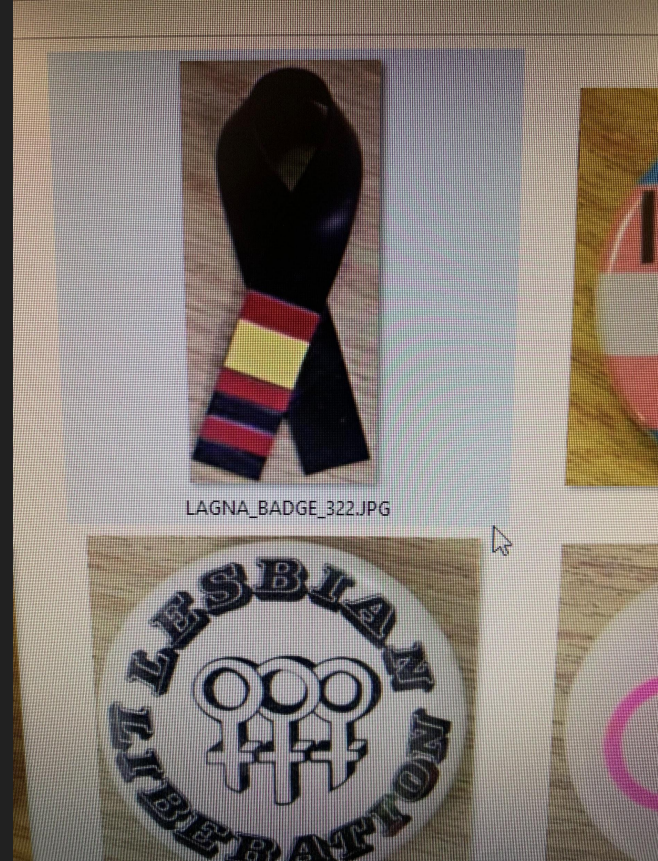
Continued

Design Museum (Gothenburg)





Bishopsgate Institute (London)



FASHION RESEARCH LIBRARY (OSLO)



@suaysewshop

Drag



DIY Fashionista Accounts

RESOURCES

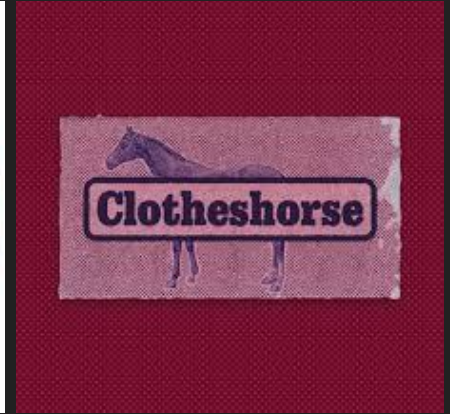
1. Slow Fashion Movement
2. Fashion Revolution (Singapore)
3. Lucky Sweater app
4. TIN Wardrobe
5. www.earth.org
6. www.greenmatch.co.uk

IG:

@earthlyeducation (IG)

@suaysewshop (IG)

Podcast:
Clothes Horse Podcast



Leading Fast Fashion Brands by Revenue, 2024 (in billions GBP)



QUESTIONS

WORKSHOP 2: DIY

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Texture



MATERIALS

Fringe, fluff, denim, bubbles,
smooth etc.



THINGS TO CONSIDER

Shape



Materials

Stiff, durable, pointy/flat etc.



WHAT'S YOUR THEME?

Sub themes?



THINGS TO CONSIDER

Colour palette



COLOURS

Saturation, depth, brightness,
natural (metals etc)



TIME TO MAKE YOUR OWN CREATIONS



G(ENDER) SWAP

Crafting Gender Euphoria