



Hello, Shall We Dance?

Spring - Summer 2014

The title of this project, 'Hello shall we dance?' is meant as an invitation for two design disciplines to meet: textile design and illustration. In the project, Louise Ravnløkke collaborates with the illustrator Signe Parkins to create narratives by combining the cartoon with the tactile qualities of the textile media.

This meeting between the two design disciplines came out as an installation consisting of 3 free-hanging tapestries and a series of 5 three-dimensional textile creatures telling an open and explorative story about friendship and the joint inspiration that can appear when connecting to someone you just met. As a whole, the installation is a textile cartoon that invites you to explore and construct the story on your own by looking at the tapestries from different views and walking between the tactile props.

The installation was shown at PINK POP POLYCHROME exhibition at Nicolai Art & Design in Kolding (DK), August-September 2014, and during the festival 3 Days of Design in Copenhagen, May 2016, in Offcinet as a part of the exhibition Textile and Digital Techniques.

The Collection HELLO

As the second outcome of the collaboration, the design of one of the exhibited tapestries was transformed into a series of blankets to be produced for a limited collection.

The collection of blankets consists of six colour variations, all with the motif of the cartoon Shall we dance? comprising a sequence of nine illustrations. The illustrations are on each end supplemented by a border of smaller and larger dotted patterns; small dots at one end and large dots at the other. The collection of blankets is kept in pastel colour variants of 'breadcrumb', 'mustard', 'moss', 'sorrel', 'granny' and 'seagull' with a graphic contrast in black and white. On the back of the blanket, the motif and colours are mirrored.

The blanket is knitted from 100% fine merino wool, which is lightly washed (felted) and decorated with a running stitch at one end. Each blanket comes with extra thread and a needle to make one's own marks as part of the narrative.

Aesthetics in Mending

Summer 2021

Garment mending as a care and maintenance practice does not solely have the potential to extend clothing lifetime. Mending can also be seen as a bottom-up approach to altering a clothing culture through creativity and making. As a further exploration of how materials and aesthetics may influence individual fashion expressions, Louise Ravnløkke made and analysed full garment mending experiments.

Louise has mended textiles and garments since childhood. When she knew how to sew, she had the basic techniques to repair simple damages and as she developed her skills alongside challenges of damages of various kinds, she also developed her understanding of how to navigate possibilities. However, the acceptance of mending as being visible has in recent years evolved as a social tendency together with the ecological awareness of the need for climate transition. We are seeing a grassroots movement of mending garments with decoration – even showing examples of how to emphasise and highlight the wear and tear of the damage. Being curious about this change in the precepting of garment patina, damages, and wear and tear, Louise set out to explore how this might influence fashion aesthetics: Can we talk about aesthetics in mending?

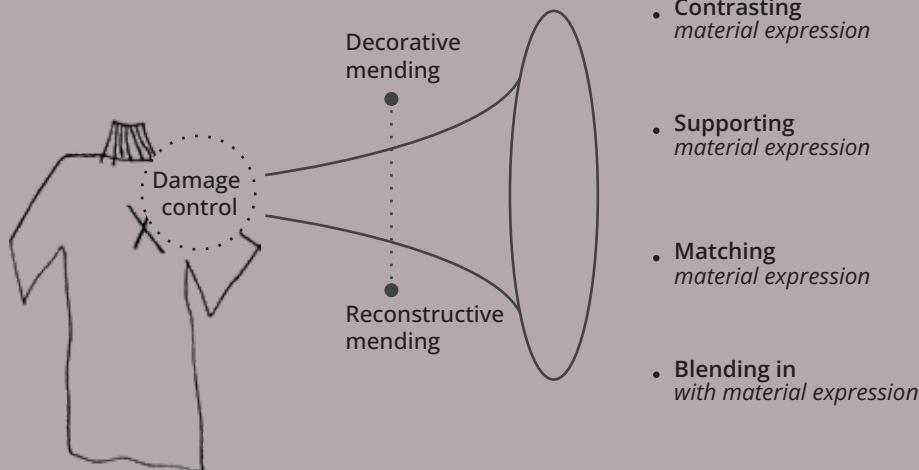
Mending Concepts

Grouping and analysing the characteristics of the cases of full-garment mending assisted in building an overview of textile aesthetic engagements with mending. Progressing from the left to the right in the spectrum of Mending Concepts shows: (1) controlling the damage, (2) approaching mending in a reconstructive or decorative way, and (3) intending a material expression that is contrasting, supporting, matching, or blending in with the existing garment design. Each of these steps relates to choices of material and aesthetic qualities which underlines a complexity when engaging with mending while taking the appearance into account and not solely focusing on functional durability. Embedded within this is also the potential of cultivating a broader understanding of what aesthetic value mending might bring to a damaged garment. Delving deeper into the engagements may assist in understanding the creative process and the landscape of material expressions, and how these may provide a new aesthetic appreciation of a damaged garment.

This topic is discussed in the journal article *Textile Aesthetics in Mending*, which is forthcoming in Spring 2024, and in the conference paper *Textile Aesthetic Dialogues of Garment Mending* presented at PLATE conference in June 2023.



Mending concepts



Louise Ravnløkke

PORTFOLIO

Designing Mending Engagements

Summer 2021

In a joint exploration, Iryna Kucher and Louise Ravnløkke wanted to explore how design can support and facilitate engagements with mending. In this way, the exploration was built on insights from Iryna's PhD research on mending practices and Louise's PhD dissertation on how designers can engage users in a design process through tangible dialogue tools. Together Iryna and Louise developed a workshop set-up to facilitate peoples' engagements with mending.

Since the establishment of the Repair Café Foundation in the Netherlands in 2012, we have witnessed growth in repair cafés as a part of a "fixer movement" on a European level. Likewise, craft practitioners are creating awareness of creative engagements with mending techniques which are shared in viral realms and a growing number of inspirational books. At a grassroots level, these initiatives are showing a shift of interest moving away from passive consumption towards actions on longevity on the level of the wearer and owner of garments. Building further on the wave of this movement, Iryna and Louise wanted to further explore how design can contribute to even more mending engagements.

Co-Explorative Workshops

This exploration centres around two participatory mending workshops, which were designed to open a dialogue on how design might support mending practices. The setting of both workshops was based on participatory textile-making – an emerging methodology, which combines the familiarity and flexibility of textile practices and privileging the social encounter as a space of mutual learning, sharing experiences, and strengthening shared interests.

The workshops occurred in two different settings. However, they had the common denominator of asking participants to bring along one garment to mend, which had damages of holes, tears, or stains. Also, the workshop provided participants with all the necessary equipment and textile materials for their engagements with mending.

Find out more about the co-explorative workshops and engagements with mending in the publications *The Mending Concepts Booklet*, *Designing Engagements with Mending practices*, and *Textile Aesthetic dialogues of garment mending*.





Use of Knitwear as Design Inspiration

Spring - Summer 2016

The study Use of Knitwear as Design Inspiration centres around women's wardrobes to better understand the characteristics of using garments – knitwear in particular. It implies users' practices in relation to knitwear and how these insights are used as inspiration for the design process of developing a concept of knitted jumpers for customisation.

The idea is hereby to design for the user's experience of the garments. For sure, it is possible to extend the durability of garments through resistant materials and the construction of them, but if the garment is only used a few times, and then replaced with new ones, its lifespan is not very long. It can therefore be argued that the difference between durability and longevity is associated with the use of clothing.

Studying user's practices of knitwear, Louise set up a design experiment to do in-depth interviews with female participants. To guide the dialogue in a semi-structured way, Louise brought a selection of knitted textile samples and jumpers for the interview. These were a mix of different types of materials, structures, textures, and constructions. For example, the opposition between a tight and a loose knitted textile, as well as the experience of a tight-fitting or loose-fitting jumper. The intention was hereby to support the participants in expressing themselves about knitwear, based on quality, appearance, touch, shape, fit, details, usability and function, and thereby put into words personal preferences and experiences, using knitwear.

Use of Knitted Prototypes

The participants examined the knitted prototypes and described their experience with the different textile samples and jumpers – some dealing with haptic and visual perception, others focusing on the participant's experiences with fit, cut, decoration and other details, in order to gain an insight into the participant's personal preferences associated with use. In this way, the materiality of the knitted prototypes and garments acted as a catalyst for articulation and dialogue, as well as creating a common basis for an in-depth conversation about the participants' experiences with the use of knitwear.

This study is a part of Louise's PhD research – Design of Knitted Jumpers for Longevity: Knitted Prototypes as a Tool for User Dialogue in the Design Process, which examines ways in which the textile designer can contribute to the sustainable development of the industry in view of the paradigm shift that the industry faces.

Swatching for Mass Customisation

Winter 2017

Swatching for Mass Customisation is based on industrial knitwear manufacturing applying newer digital machinery and computer software, as these newer technological developments make it possible to produce knitwear on-demand while customising each knitted garment. Louise Ravnløkke has used the technology as a framework to explore what potential this gives. As a business model, on-demand production can minimise deadstock of garments that most often end up for incineration.

From a design perspective, Louise explores and unfolds the influences it has on the design of jumpers as well as designing them. Applying an approach of on-demand manufacturing gives the designer a chance to flip the design process and engage with the user while also challenging professional skill sets alongside technology and strategies for sustainable transition.

Customisation at industrial scale is still a newer initiative within fashion. In this study, Louise has combined the concept of customisation with elements of theories and design strategies to test and challenge these in practice. She therefore set out to explore how this affects the role of the designer and the designer's own process. In doing so, Louise explores parameters for customisation through knitted prototypes, including knitwear swatches, colour samples and working drawings of jumper style.

The Design Concept for Customisation

The design concept for customisation was developed in a physical form, to be included in another study as a prototype of the potential business concept. As such, the design concept comprises knitwear swatches representing the different choices which can be made when selecting a personal jumper. In the other study, the design concept was used to examine users' experience of being involved in the design process.

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