

My Project Concept:

For my final major project, I wanted to create a body of work consisting of the research, ideas and development that is the deterioration of the fast-fashion industry; and how sustainable fashion is the solution for the future of our environment.

Through this project, I have found a myriad of talented artists, designers and photographers to draw inspiration from. Along this journey of sustainable fashion, I have learned a lot and hopefully you can see that within my work.

When I first decided to make sustainability the core of my project, I initially thought to design a small clothing line. Made from second-hand materials to minimise textile waste, also known as a "thrift flip", once I designed my clothing I took it upon myself to model and have an editorial style photo shoot to capture my designs thoroughly.

My end goal was to gather my research and photography to create a magazine cover. After careful consideration on the 8th week into my 12-week plan my agenda spontaneously changed. I had generated multiple photographs that I wanted to exhibit, that the idea of just a 'cover' would be too chaotic to display them all including my research. In other words, I decided to expand the cover into a small magazine and couldn't be more thrilled with the idea.

So eco was born.

Sustainable Fashion The Future:

Sustainable fashion is a movement and process of fostering change within the fashion industry, that focuses on the revolution towards greater ecological integrity and social justice.

Sustainability will be the priority for fashion over the next decade, as the climate crisis remains foremost in the minds of consumers and brands.

Not to mention the current innovations in the textile and fashion industry, that assure a bright future for sustainable fashion, as it will reduce water consumption by 95% and energy by 75% with minimal textile waste.

As of now more and more designers are switching to sustainable fashion, upcoming designer Phoebe Tonkin said; "if you're going to start a clothing line in 2020, it's going to be eco friendly and responsible." I completely agree with Tonkin and think we all should be mindful of our environment when purchasing our new "wardrobe".

Sustainability is just one of the solutions to a happy and healthy future of not only our earth but ourselves also.

However, if we were to get behind the right way of living and support sustainable fashion brands, we could help protect the well-being of our surroundings; instead of buying into mass-produced corporate operations that destroy our living, we could have a chance to change.

The possibilities for this campaign are endless for example, you could shop sustainably or at a thrift store to give second-hand clothes a new home. Why not go through your old clothes and turn them into something trendy and chic? Don't throw out clothes you never wear anymore, sell on depop or donate them instead to minimise textile waste and your carbon footprint.

Fast Fashion The Reality:

Fast fashion is the production of inexpensive clothing, rapidly sold, by mass-market retailers in response to meeting the "latest trends". This so called "community" allows clothes to be more affordable though it comes at an environmental cost.

The fashion industry produces 10% of humanities carbon emissions, which is the second-largest consumer of the worlds water supply.

Due to limited natural resources of fabric reproduction in the fast-fashion world, this results in cheap clothing made almost entirely out of plastic to fill our oceans with harmful microfibres.

Therefore because consumers buy in bulk of what's "hot", when the trend phase passes people throw away these clothes, leaving them to pile up in landfills. The scary thing is that globally we produce 13 million tons of textile waste each year, 95% of which could have been reused or recycled.

Proving again that the fashion industry is one of the most polluting industries in the world. It will continue to stay that way unless you switch to sustainable fashion.

Mass-produced clothing shops such as Shein, Misguided and Boohoo etc; are supporting cruel working conditions along with underpaying and child labour. This is another reason why you should not reinforce this kind of manufacturing and go green instead with sustainable fashion.

Interview with Maggie Meehan and Anthony Laface:

- Why is sustainability so important to you?

Sustainability can mean many things but in our case it means consuming at a rate that is slower than the rate of replenishment. We are big believers in equilibrium and if you consume faster than you replenish then this has detrimental impacts to the environment.

For us, sustainability is important because we need to be sure that our actions leave the smallest possible footprint on the environment, leaving the world as a better place for future generations. It's also a simple concept too, if you can do better then you should

- What made you decide to start a sustainable clothing brand?

Both Maggie and I watched "The True Cost", which is a documentary that you should watch it if you haven't already.

This documentary spoke to Maggie and I both but in different ways. Seeing the generation of waste resulting from the fashion industry, the intensity of resources consumed by materials such as polyesters and leathers, and in general the poor working conditions of those who make the clothing sold by major brands was really eye opening.

We decided that we wanted to bring a product to the market which gave people a choice to vote with their dollars. They could choose to buy nice clothes that we manufactured knowing that they were supporting a brand that focussed on doing better.

- What is your opinion on the fast fashion industry?

In short, they should be doing more. There are many facets of fast fashion which are quite ugly, which is ironic because they are typically hidden from view by glamorous models on runways. But ultimately, the industry falls short in the following areas:

1. Labour conditions and exploitation of cheap labour in third world countries;
2. The use of fabrics that require intense manufacturing, chemical treatments; and
3. The generation of excess stock that, if not sold, ends up in landfills.

The most confronting part about some fast fashion labels, e.g. H&M, is that they are "greenwashing" some of their products by selling them as "sustainable". It's an unfortunate outcome but there are a lot of people in the market who are reluctant to research beyond the marketing they are fed.

I think with all of the resources and data that is available, the fast fashion industry could be doing much better.

- How has your business grown since you created your brand?

Slowly, but there are a few factors driving that. We weren't sure if we wanted to manufacture in house, outsource, make to order, indent order, wholesale, etc. So we went through a few different learning curves along the nearly 6 years that we have been in business.

However, we are now in a much better position than what we were compared to 12 months ago. We have recently signed a wholesale agent, our e-commerce sales are becoming more frequent and our supply chain is much more established.

We still have kept our core principles of using fabrics woven natural fibres and to limit our environmental impact we manufacture in small batches to ensure we have enough to meet market demand but also to avoid overproducing. We have been able to grow the business and maintain our commitment to being a sustainable label, which is why I strongly believe that fast fashion brands can do the same.

- Where do you see your brand in the future?

Good question. It's hard to say because if you asked me this 12 months ago I wouldn't have guessed we would be where we are now. We will be rebranding shortly and changing our name to "Maggie the Label" so that is one thing I can say with confidence.

Ultimately I would like to be selling in boutiques Australia wide and tapping into various international markets. But from an operations perspective, we will still be making in small batches, using fabrics woven from natural fibres and being mindful of our overall footprint on the environment.

@indecisivethelable



Inspirations:

People like Maggie Meehan, Maggie Marilyn and Phoebe Tonkin who are all sustainable fashion designers have influenced my way of thinking and creating. By sourcing their materials locally and only using 100% renewable resources they are developing to help our environment in the revolution that is sustainable fashion.

I am very proud of the clothing that I have given a second home to and it has made me realise the waste that people go through with clothes that are near perfect condition. These designers are helping our earth so we should stand with them, whether it be supporting their brands or thrift flip your old clothes.

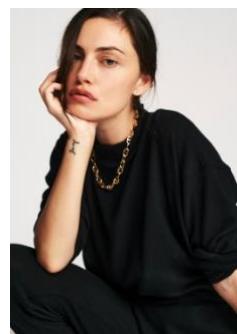
Maggie Meehan



Maggie Marilyn



Phoebe Tonkin



For my photography, I took insight from these two very different editorial fashion photographers Carlijn Jacobs and Lindsay Adler. Jacobs has such a euphoric atmosphere to her work that portrays almost a hallucinating state, I love how in every photo she creates an in-depth story. Adler's work on the other hand is more straight forward and minimalistic although her lighting is always so vivid and alluring which seems to captures her model's aura perfectly.

When I was setting up for my photos I used a tripod ring light and set it up against the window with the most light in my house. Whilst improvising a backdrop I tied a rope to both doors that were opposite each other behind this window and I draped a white sheet over it, creating a blank canvas that I continued to pose in front of for my thrift flip clothing.

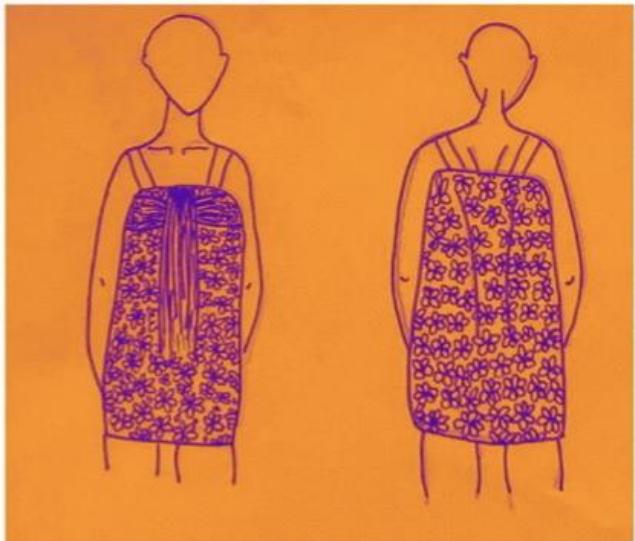
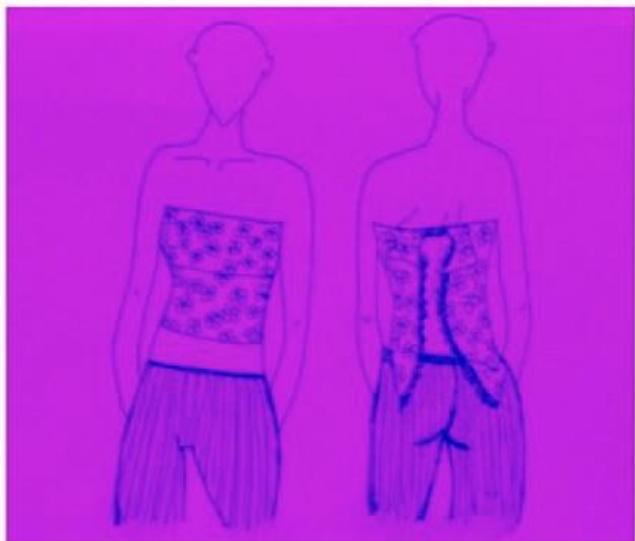
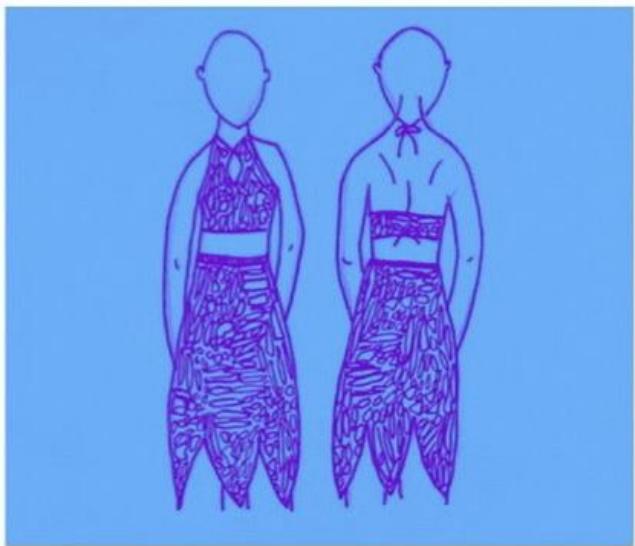
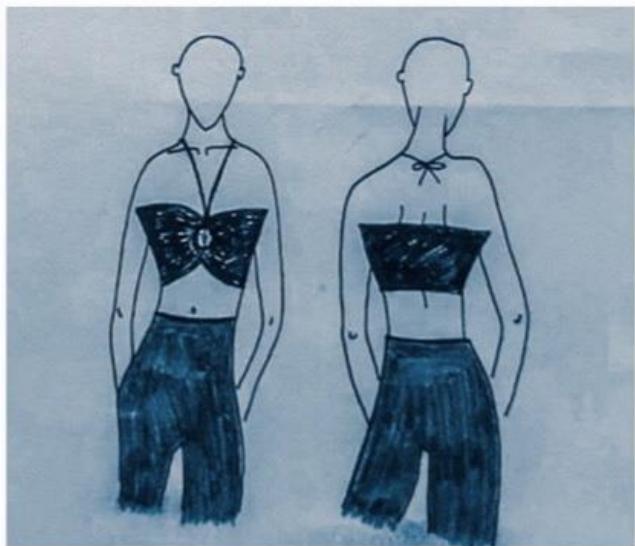
Carlijn Jacobs



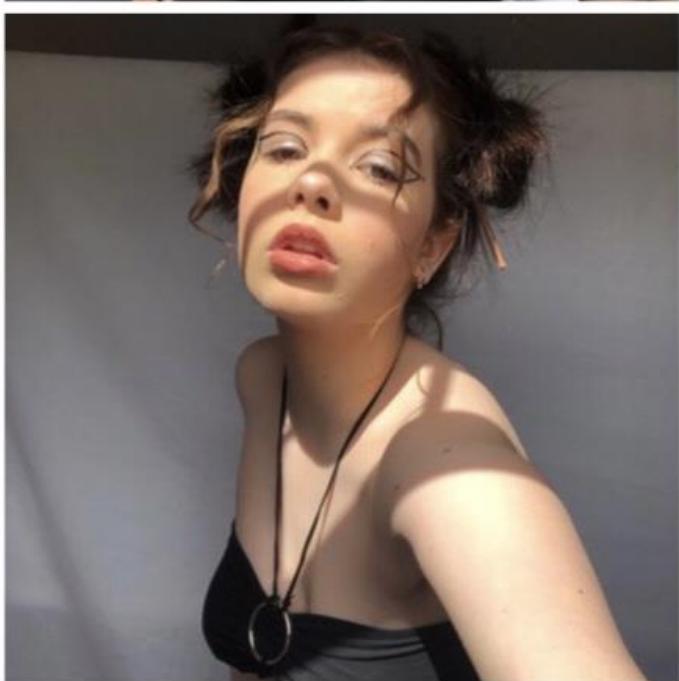
Lindsay Adler



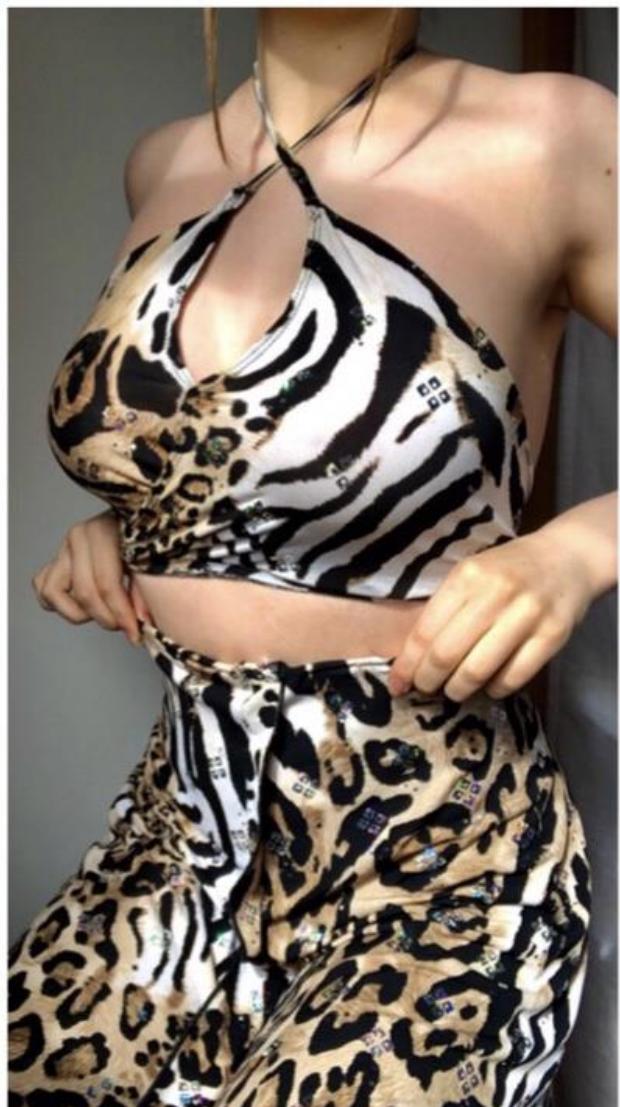
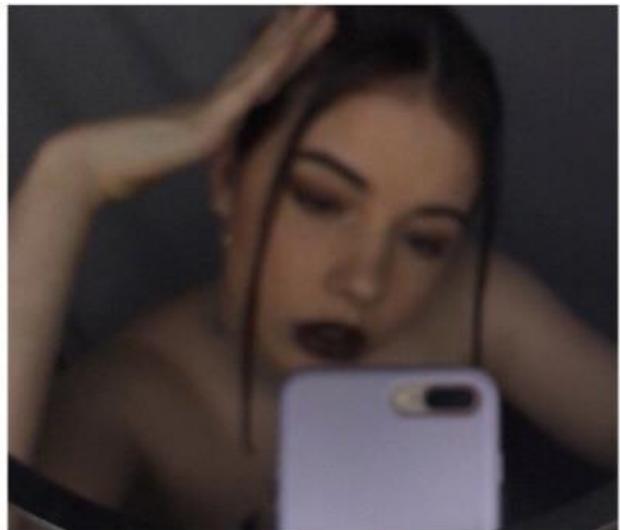
My Design ideas:



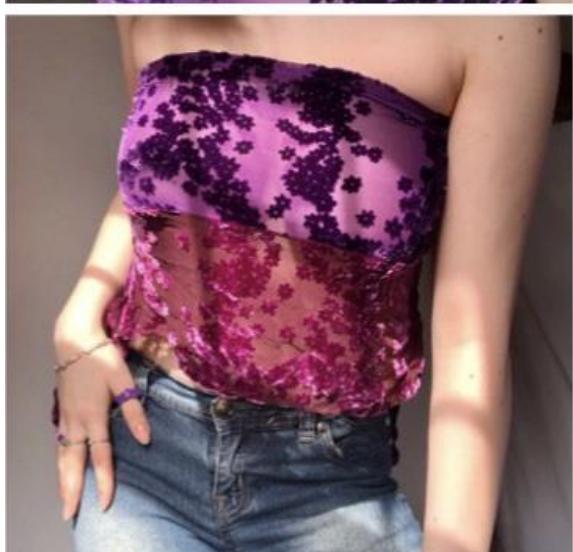
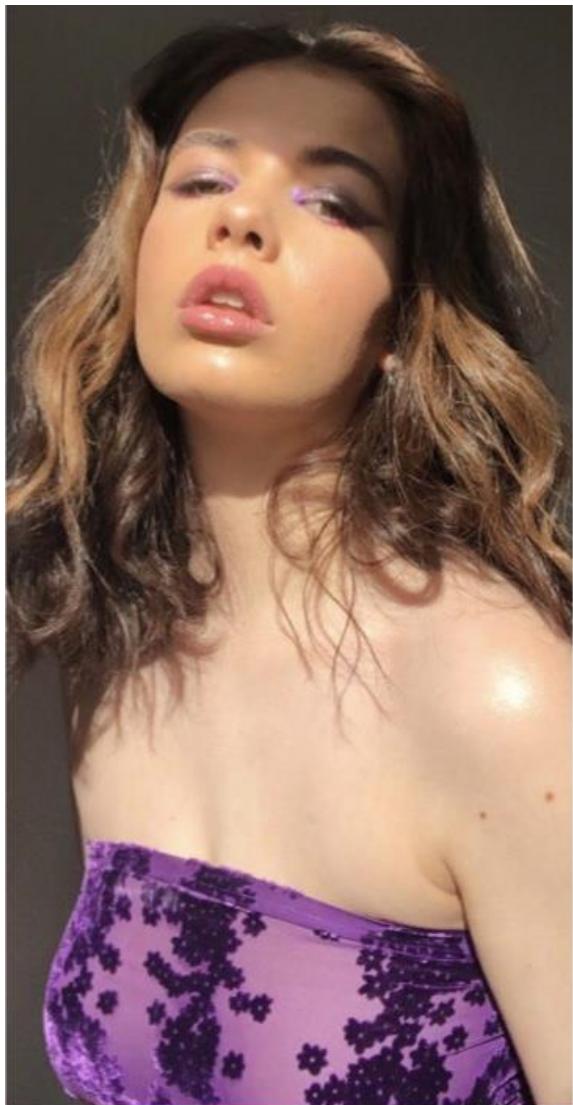
Editorials:



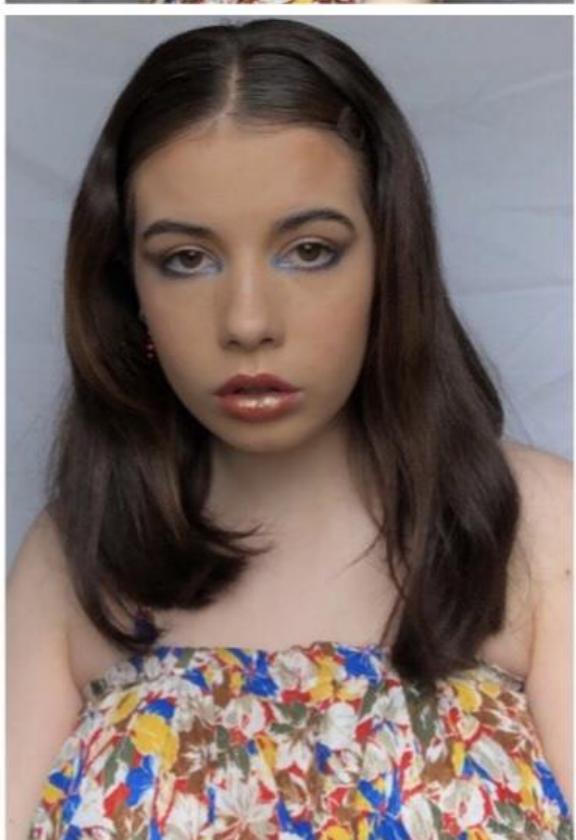
Editorials:



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Interview with My Grandma:

When I began designing my 'thrift flip' clothing I rummaged around my wardrobe for things I didn't wear anymore and could use to that advantage. Coincidentally, my Grandma was donating clothes she also hadn't had the desire to keep, so instead passed them down to me for this project.

Whilst I explained my project to my Grandma, I informed her of the harmful reality that is fast fashion. People these days buy so many cheap clothes and throw them away after only a few uses. In response, she told me that in her day growing up you bought the best quality clothing meaning 'higher-end brands' and kept reusing them. The clothing she passed down to me had been kept for over 30 years and was in great condition.

Her clothes were mainly made of cotton, wool and linen. My Grandma is from Co. Tyrone, the county known for its linen factories. So it was quite popular to wear in those days since the flax was grown locally.

Then in later years, synthetics became the fabric of choice because of its affordable price and it was easily washed. She believes that's when people started choosing quantity over quality and I second that.

My Grandma knows a thing or two about fashion, to say the least, she has been complimented on her style for years now and alongside my Papa who is equally as 'dapper', they both worked in the fashion/retail industry for quite some time 43 years to be exact.

In 1969 my grandparents started their own business called 'Moddeon Man' in Strabane, Co. Tyrone. They sold menswear and would travel to trade shows twice a year in London and Harrogate to see trends and order in new stock. My Grandma says it was so much fun to experience all of the latest fashion, first hand.





This two-piece was bought in
Harrods, London 1990

This dress was bought in
Panache Monaghan, 1987



Clothing before the "thrift flip"



Purchased in the South of France,
Ralph Lauren, 2005

Purchased in Cilento, 2007



These are both tops I preowned from new look and monsoon:

Sustainable textile exploration inspired by artist Louise Baldwin and my primary photography:



Find them on Instagram:

Designers:

@indecisivethelabel

@maggiemarilyn

@shoplesjour

@madebyemer

Photographers:

@carlijnjacobs

@lindsayadler_photo

Artist:

@louisebaldwin_textiles

I check out my blog:

@ <https://thegoddessguidetrends.fashion.blog/>

