OVER

PEOPLE



PRODUCT

ISSUE NO.11

DECEMBER 2025

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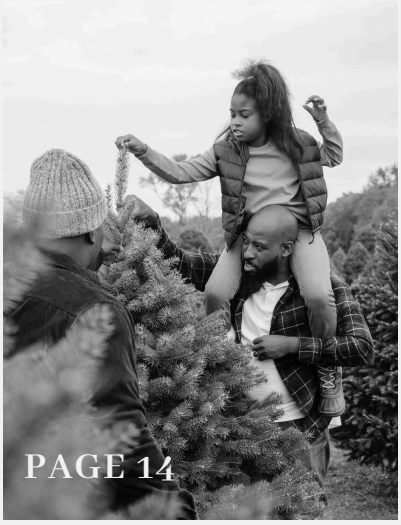
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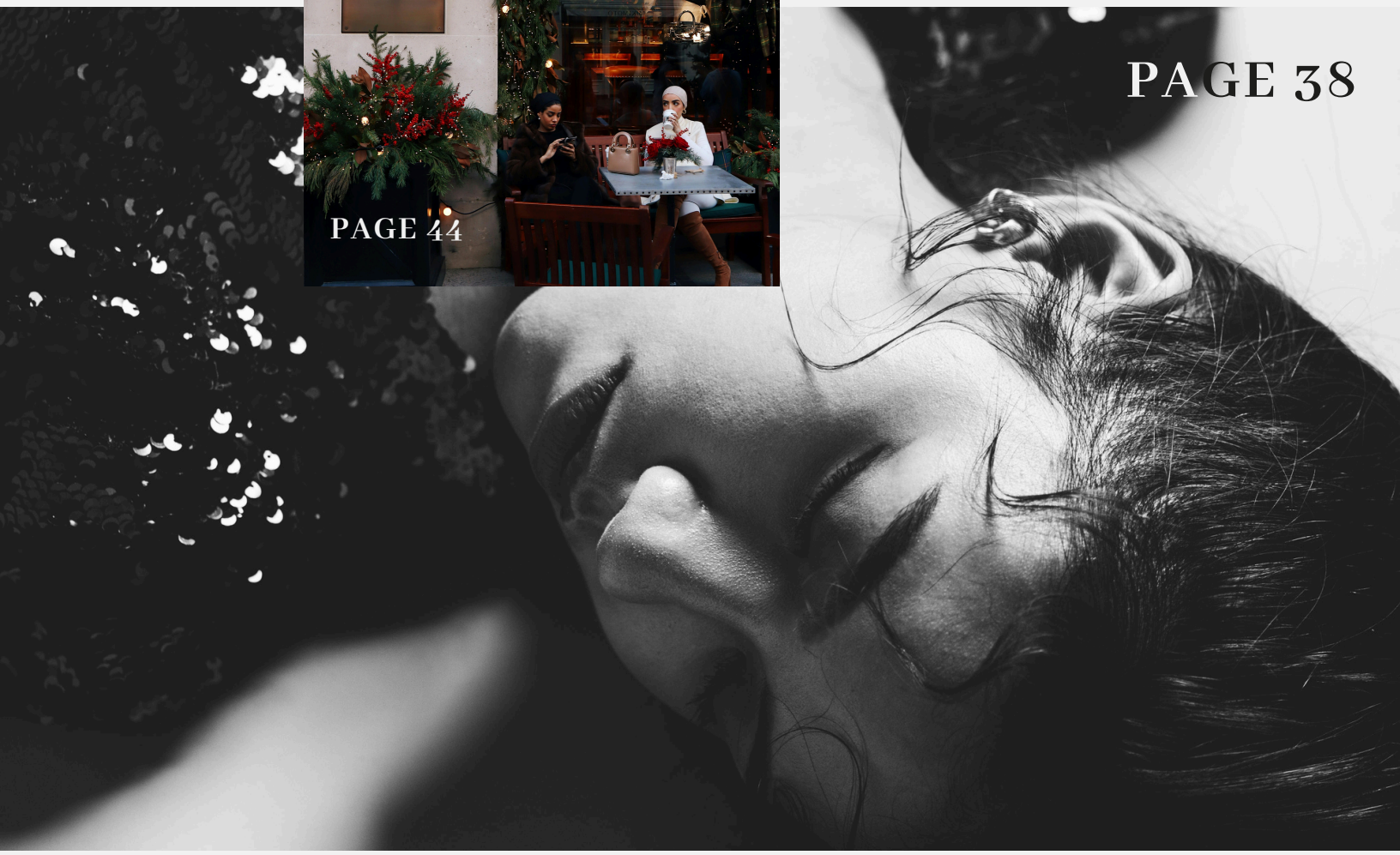
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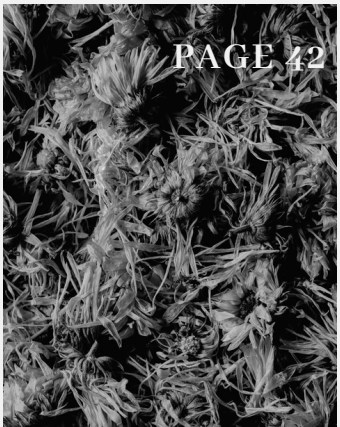
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# EDITOR'S *Letter*





*Welcome to our December Issue,* our annual foray into festive joy.

At this incredibly consumption-heavy time of year we've chosen to instead shift our focus to the non-material gifts, offered up in the world around us, that we often take for granted.

From the gift of sunlight, growing crops and flowers that can then be woven into fabric or utilised as natural dyes, to the gift of self discovery: a lifelong journey encompassing character, style, and story.

This issue is testament to the fact that the festive period doesn't have to revolve around disposable—often plastic—gifts, and can instead be used as a time to recentre, reflect, and surround yourself with joy that isn't centred in materialism.

In this issue we're inviting you to join us in a festive personal style challenge *(pg 10)*, exploring the possibilities of non-materialistic gifts *(pg 14),* embracing a slower holiday season *(pg 31),* and assessing the cosiest clothing of the season on our sustainable scale: pyjamas *(pg 40)*.

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.

Have a happy holiday season, and remember:

*Be kind, to the planet, and to others.*

CHLOE GRANT
*Editor-in-Chief*



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# DO YOU OWN A *SUSTAINABLE* FASHION BRAND?



CONTACT
PEOPLEOVERPRODUCTMAGAZINE@GMAIL.COM
TO DISCUSS ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

# POP'S *RECOMMENDATIONS*

*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.*

---

## *WATCHING*




*River Blue* is a powerful documentary demonstrating the fashion industry's catastrophic impact on our world's waterways.

From the colossal amount of water required to grow, treat, and launder our clothes, to the vast impact of toxic dyes polluting the world's rivers and oceans, *River Blue* tackles this problem head on in a truly unforgettable film.

**WHERE TO WATCH**: riverbluethemovie.eco

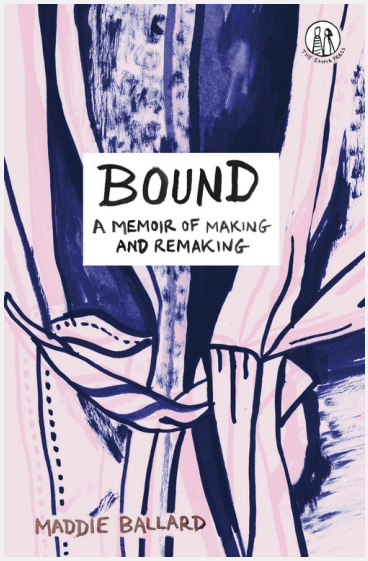
## *LISTENING*




*Remember Who Made Them* is a six part podcast series combining sustainable fashion with social justice. Expect interviews with guests such as Aja Barber and Ayesha Barenblat; perfect for any sustainability advocates.

**WHERE TO LISTEN**: Spotify, Apple Podcasts and YouTube.

# *READING*




**BOUND: A MEMOIR OF MAKING AND REMAKING**
***Maddie Ballard***

*Bound* is a personal story shared by the author, Maddie Ballard, as she traverses delicate situations in her personal life, including a break-up, a relocation, and a racist incident at work.

In the background of all of these major life events, and their consequent emotional upheavals, Maddie's crafting and sewing offers her a sense of escapism. Whilst life throws its challenges Maddie finds solice in the embrace of cloth, and the slow chug of her sewing machine. Throughout the chapters of this book—each of which is dedicated to a different sewing project—the hand-made garments come to represent community, safety, and identity, as she pours more and more of who she is into each piece she makes.

This beautiful book, and the garments she documents making, come to act as a rich tapestry of this chapter of her life, and a true testament to the healing power of slow-paced creativity.

For a more indepth discussion on *Bound* you can read the article *The Gift of Crafting* by Eleanor Warr on pg. 23.

*Bound* would make a perfect gift for a loved one who loves sewing their own garments, or even as a festive treat to yourself.

*You can buy Bound directly from The Emma Press at theemmapress.com*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1<br>**Spread some holiday cheer!**<br>Share *People Over Product* magazine with your friends and family. | 2<br>**Fill in the blank:**<br>My favourite holiday colour is<br>_____ | 3<br>**Style that colour**<br>Wear two things from your own wardrobe in your favourite holiday hue. | 4<br>**Dream up a festive outfit**<br>Plan an outfit for your dream festive event, using items in your own wardrobe. |
| 5<br>**Fill in the blank:**<br>When I open my closet<br>_____<br>always makes me smile. | 6<br>**Dress up for fun**<br>Incorporate the item that always makes you smile into an outfit for a fun, festive activity. | 7<br>**Organise your wardrobe**<br>Pop some festive music on and reorganise, so that your holiday outfits are easily accessible. | 8<br>**Cosy up with a book**<br>Cosy up with *Bound* by Maddie Ballard and read about her personal fashion journey. |

# 24 DAYS OF *PERSONAL* STYLE

Take part in our sustainable fashion advent calendar, that's full of festive fun!

Following along? Make sure to post your stylish Christmas countdown on socials and don't forget to tag us @peopleoverproductmagazine

*This advent calendar was created by Yun-A Johnson and Chloe Grant*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9<br>**Spread festive joy**<br>Compliment a friend on their outfit, and note down what you particularly like about it. | 10<br>**Treat yourself!**<br>Choose one of the gifts from our gift guide and treat yourself. | 11<br>**Journal about style**<br>Sit down with a notebook and answer the sustainable style prompts on page 19. | 12<br>**Take time to relax**<br>Have a cosy night, take time off from the festivities, and read the latest *POP* issue. |
| 13<br>**Make it sparkle**<br>Add a sparkly accessory to your outfit today; if you can't do it at Christmas, when can you?! | 14<br>**Donate unwanted items**<br>Donate clothing that you no longer wear to your local thrift store or garment recycling point. | 15<br>**Pick one: Cosy, Chic, or Festive**<br>Style an outfit inspired by the word you chose. Don't forget to tag us in selfies! | 16<br>**Plan for the new year**<br>Plan out your fashion new year's resolutions, could you commit to #NONEWCLOTHES? |
| 17<br>**Wrap your presents**<br>Gather any unwanted scarves to use as reuseable gift wrap! Watch a tutorial here. | 18<br>**Savour the luxuries**<br>Choose something you've been saving for a special occasion and wear it today. | 19<br>**Festive movie night**<br>Style an outfit inspired by your favourite holiday movie character, then cosy up and watch it! | 20<br>**Celebrate party season**<br>Wear your festive event outfit from day 4 and attend a holiday event with your loved ones. |
| 21<br>**Donate to charity**<br>If you can afford to, donate to a sustainable fashion charity, such as the OR Foundation. | 22<br>**Fill in the blank:**<br>All I want for Christmas is to feel<br>_____<br>in my clothes. | 23<br>**Be true to yourself**<br>Put together an outfit inspired by how you want to feel flaunting your personal style. | 24<br>**Embrace the holiday spirit!**<br>Pop on your favourite outfit, pour a glass of fizz, and celebrate! |





# THE GIFT OF *PERSONAL* STYLE

*Article by Yun-A Johnson*
*Photography by Cotton Bro Studios via Pexels*

Personal style is a gift that's accessible anytime because it's about observing yourself. When we're constantly shown beautiful items just a 'click away' to buy, it's hard to feel sure it's our style.

***"Do I really love this? Or is it because I see it everywhere?"***

Personal style comes from within you. It's your *personal* definition of beauty. The key is asking more specific questions about what you're drawn to.

Do you love wearing contrasting textures? Are you drawn to bold lines or shapes? Instead of thinking of your clothes as tops, dresses, and pants; focus on the colours, textures, and patterns that attract your eye.

Ask yourself: *"Why do I love this?"* *"What makes this beautiful to me?"*

Personal style is an ongoing discovery because it's something only *you* can bring out.

It's a gift that keeps on giving! Next time you're in comparison mode, feeling pressure to 'keep up', or too much in your head, choose the gift of personal style! Pause, observe, and get specific about the things you love.

---

*To aid you on your journey of discovery towards personal style why not follow along on our 24 Days of Personal Style advent calendar, designed to gift yourself the joy of finding your true style.*

***YUN-A JOHNSON***



# THE GIFT OF *A NON-MATERIALISTIC* CHRISTMAS



## *RETHINKING GIFTS AND CONNECTION*

*Article by Frida Lidbom*
*Photography by Any Lane via Pexels*

*The seasons are changing, and the cycle continues.*

We live in a world where we continuously consume — always wanting new things, more things. We buy, we replace, we throw away. Each season brings its own celebration, and with it, another wave of spending. One of the biggest peaks of the year comes at Christmas.

Not only do we buy decorations and new, pretty clothes for ourselves, but we've also learned to express love through gifts — each one wrapped neatly in paper and ribbon. But is this the only way to show someone that we care for them and love them?

According to research from the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin (2020), consumers report greater happiness when they spend money on experiences rather than material gifts.

Similarly, a study by Cindy Chan and Cassie Mogilner, "Experiential Gifts Foster Stronger Social Relationships Than Material Gifts," found that recipients of experiential gifts reported stronger improvements in relationship quality compared to those receiving material gifts. These findings may help explain why more people are choosing experiences over physical presents.





## GIFT THAT TRULY GIVE *VALUE*

The benefits of sharing or giving experiences together are many.

Experiences often hold deep emotional value and create lasting memories. Another factor contributing to this shift is that people are becoming more aware of their consumption habits, with many now embracing a more minimalist lifestyle that avoids unnecessary possessions. Think about it: if you ask a family member what they want for Christmas and they don't have a clear answer, why give them something you can't be sure they'll use? An experience or activity, on the other hand, will always be appreciated and remembered.

Some families introduce non-material gifting gradually, for example, applying this approach only to adults at first. Changing younger children's habits can be more challenging, as studies suggest that younger kids often get more happiness from receiving material gifts than experiences. But could this be more a matter of mindset than age? Another key benefit of giving experiences is the reduced environmental footprint, as well as the opportunity to spend quality time with the people you love. Of course, not all experiences are low-impact — travel, for example, can have a high carbon footprint — but the essence lies in shifting our mindset toward showing appreciation and love in ways that *create memories* rather than accumulating things.

*We've curated a selection of gift ideas overleaf for plenty of meaningful experiences you can consider giving your loved ones this year.*

While tangible gifts may feel more exciting in the moment, experience gifts can also be presented thoughtfully. Consider creating a voucher or card explaining the gift, or including an item you already own as a symbol or hint of the activity. This makes the experience feel tangible and special without giving a physical product.

# EMBRACE THE *CHANGE*

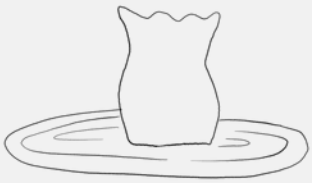
It's not only up to consumers to change this mindset — businesses can also take the initiative and encourage the purchase of experiences. They have an opportunity to support less materialistic gift-giving by offering and promoting experiences or activities as gifts, aligning with the growing trend and responding to consumer demand for more meaningful, memorable presents.

Ultimately, gifting is about more than the object itself; it is about connection, thoughtfulness, and the memories we create together.

By choosing experiences over material items, we can give our loved ones something that lasts far beyond a single day: shared moments, laughter, and meaningful time together. Whether it's a weekend getaway, a class, or simply a special outing, these gifts encourage presence over possession, and mindfulness over consumption.

***FRIDA LIDBOM***





## SKILL-BUILDING COURSES

Gift a for a partner or family member with a secret passion — for example, pottery workshops, cooking classes, or sewing lessons





## TRAVEL TICKETS

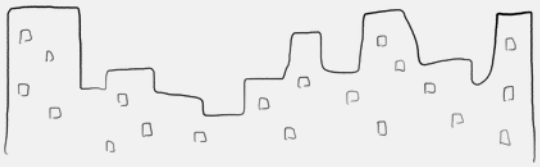
Travel tickets to a new destination open up the possibility for a plethora of adventures, what makes for a greater gift than that?




# THE *NON-MATERIALISTIC* GIFT GUIDE





## WEEKEND GETAWAY

It doesn't have to be far from home, but a change of environment can provide a break from everyday life



## CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Cultural experiences, like attending a musical, theatre performance, concert, art exhibition, or film screening, make for great memories



## SELF CARE GIFTS

Self care and wellness-focused gifts, such as a spa day or a relaxing massage, makes for a perfect gift for the busy people in your life



# THE GIFT OF *NEW* BEGINNINGS



*Article by Chloe Grant*
*Photography by Cotton Bro Studio via Pexels*

The new year is a natural time for reflection on the past twelve months, and setting intentions for the brand new year ahead.

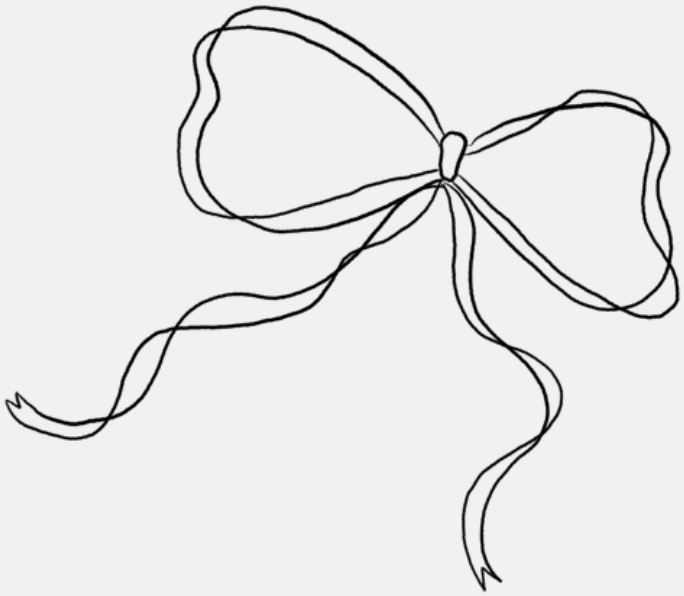
With so many resolutions being set it's easy for thoughts about your style and approach to fashion to fall to the wayside, but the prompts on the following page have been created to bring fashion to the fore, tying it into your resolutions and conscious actions for 2026, and beyond.

Slowing down over the holidays can be a great time to get a journal out, reassess your personal taste, and take a catalogue of what gifts you've just received, what you no longer feel attached to, and enter the new year on a proactive high, determined to be more intentional and sustainable.

As someone who has kept a diary since the age of 11, and regularly uses journal prompts to reflect on my thoughts and actions, using them to set new year's resolutions for my style felt like a natural progression.

Grab a notebook and pen, light a candle, get cosy, and let's set intentions to enter the new year together.

***CHLOE GRANT*** _____



***How does my current wardrobe make me feel?***

_____

_____

_____

***How would my dream wardrobe make me feel?***

_____

_____

_____

***How could I achieve my dream wardrobe whilst being kind to the planet and all those who live on it?***

**Circle all the actions you want to try/continue doing in 2026.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Go thrift/vintage shopping | Host a clothes swap | Make your own clothes using deadstock fabric |
| Upcycle pieces you own/thrifted finds | Take part in a clothing challenge | Commit to buying nothing new for 2026 |

***What sort of consumer do I want to be in 2026?***

_____

_____

_____

***How can I support small business/ethically made fashion this year?***

_____

_____

_____

***What fashion challenge can I take on for 2026?***

☐ **The #NONEWCLOTHES Challenge**

#NONEWCLOTHES is a 90 day challenge started by Remake, where you commit to buying no new clothes for the duration of the challenge.

You can either commit to buying no clothes at all, or buying no 'new' clothes, allowing you to still shop pre-loved and secondhand.

Whether it's something you adopt for the first three months of 2026, or for the whole year, #NONEWCLOTHES aims to directly challenge our compulsion to consume and forces you to work with the pieces already in your wardrobe instead of relying on constant newness.

*Head to remake.world/no-new-clothes/ to find out more.*

☐ **The Rule of Five Challenge**

Tiffanie Darke's 'Rule of 5' challenge makes you really evaluate each and every clothing purchase you contemplate making.

The Rule of 5 challenge, based on the idea that 5 items each is all we're able to buy if we are to reach the goals of the sustainable fashion industry and curb an immense climate crisis, allows you to make five fashion purchases over the entire year.

With the average consumer reportedly buying 37 garments per year this challenge may be harder than you think!

*Head to ruleoffive.substack.com to find out more.*

the

# Club Preloved

@ Hotel Indigo





## 07.12

## CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE MARKET

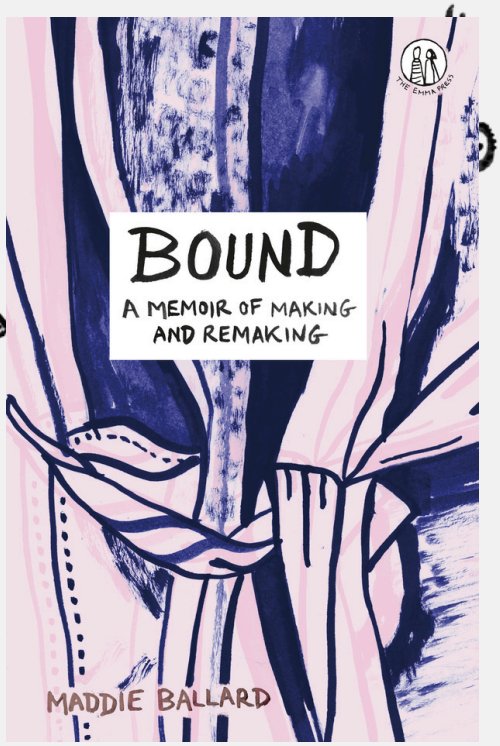
1-6pm



PRELOVED & VINTAGE STALLS | LIVE MUSIC | GOOD VIBES

*Shop & Connect*

# THE GIFT OF *CRAFTING*




*Article by Eleanor Warr*
*Illustrations are by Emma Dai'an Wright*

In Spring 2020, writer Maddie Ballard is scrolling through Instragram in between drafting job applications. She spots a post of a cobalt linen skirt made by an acquaintance: 'The fabric is so beautiful it looks sentient'. Ballard is inspired. Her partner's mother lends her an old sewing machine. She is introduced to sewing notions. She learns to sew a straight stitch; she learns to slow down. She chooses a beginner dress pattern and makes a start.

*Bound: A Memoir of Making and Remaking* is Ballard's first book, a series of essays charting a period of change in her life, gathered by stories of learning to sew and making clothes. Ballard sews to manage heartbreak and to outfit herself for new experiences. It is a thread of continuity through a time of substantial shifts and a form of creative expression. Making clothes allows Ballard to externalise internal transformation.

In each chapter, Ballard draws out details about process that resonated with me as a fellow sewist. Her journey from coaxing cloth into clothing for the first time, to confidently making garments that equip her as she navigates a new job, a new city, or renewed friendship with her body, offer striking moments of recognition for readers who are also makers.




The 'grounding, material world' of sewing offers Ballard unique gifts as a writer. Ballard tailors the technical language of garment construction to suit her storytelling. Each essay is named for a technique that takes on a metaphorical resonance.

For example, the chapter titled 'Cut One Pair' charts a day Maddie spends with her cousin, Lisa, buying fabric, sewing and snacking together. The phrase is an instruction familiar from sewing patterns meaning to cut out a pair of matching pattern pieces from fabric, such as a pair of sleeves or, in this case, a pair of cousins, cut from the same familiar cloth, content in each other's company.

Learning to make clothes also gifts Ballard with understanding about 'the level of labour that goes into every $10 dress on the H&M sale rack'. She becomes curious about the fashion industry's flaws and explores ethical alternatives.

In the opening essay 'First Love', Ballard describes her first 'make' - a dress 'with crooked, flimsy pockets and a poorly topstitched waist'. It's not perfect, but Ballard loves the dress 'as much for the care it has prised from me as for its shape on my body'. This level of care provokes reflection. Ballard's lengthy engagement with fraying selvedges, the hot iron, her aching body and the fatigue of concentration help her empathise with the labour of bodies made invisible by globalisation producing clothes, predominately in the Global South, for high street brands. She is shocked at the low value of a typical commercial garment-maker's labour. After three days of making, Ballard implicitly calculates that if her first, precious make was sold for only $10, her labour would be worth pennies.

Ballard chronicles her deepening engagement with the fashion industry's lack of environmental sustainability in her account of making a zero-waste dress. While carefully constructing a garment from tessellating shapes so that only scraps are left unused, Ballard reflects that 'sewing sustainably - like shopping sustainably - involves asking hard questions'. She knows that she does not have the capacity to commit to every way that sewists and makers try to reduce their impact on the environment. She recognises that aesthetic taste and pleasure play a part in her making. Ballard concludes that 'the opposite of a thoughtless consumer is not a saint: it's a conscious consumer' and carries this consciousness forward into her future projects.

Perhaps most significantly, making clothes provides Ballard with a way of processing emotional disturbance and protecting herself against harm, as well as materialising with her heritage.

In the fourth essay, 'Second Skin', Ballard recounts a racist incident in her workplace. While employed as an editor at a magazine, Ballard receives an email from a colleague that glibly conflates Chinese New Year and the Lunar New Year. Ballard is upset and triggered, reminded of racist incidents in the past. She crafts a careful response providing context then seeks relief and distraction in the process of making a garment: 'To keep my helplessness at bay'. Caught in a situation in which she feels powerless, this project gives her a sense of agency.

Ballard makes her favourite pattern, the Paola Workwear Jacket, from fabrics-stores.com. She knows it well enough not to need instructions, executing each step systemically, 'seething and methodical'. This surety contrasts with the anxiety she feels sending a reply to her colleague's email and her apprehension about how her considered response will be received by her predominately white peers.



The choice of garment is significant. Workwear developed as demands for clothing to protect the wearer emerged during the Industrial Revolution in Europe. Untailored items such as aprons, overalls and jackets were designed to be cheap to produce, made from robust textiles like cotton twill with practical features such as pockets and tool loops. In 1844, Adolphe Lafont created what is credited as the first 'Bleu de Travail', a simple, unlined cotton jacket with a collar, buttons down the front and large patch pockets for tools, top stitched for ease of

assembly. This boxy jacket became a proud symbol for two centuries of French workers, the iconic blue (chosen due to the dropping price of blue dye since the evolution of chemical alternatives) standing in colour-blocked contrast to the white-collar managerial class.

In 1968, middle-class French students adopted the Bleu de Travail as a uniform during the student revolts to show solidarity with the working classes. Meanwhile, in North America, companies such as Carhartt, Dickies and Levi Strauss were producing hard-wearing garments for workers in industrial and agriculture settings. These were co-opted in the 1980s and 1990s by subcultures such as hip-hop artists and skaters in New York and Detroit, who integrated workwear into their styling. Workwear became streetwear. Carhartt and Dixies have since developed streetwear spin-off brands to cater for growing demand as nostalgia for workwear continues, arguably increasingly permissible as swathes of manual labour and manufacturing work in the Global North moved offshore and out of sight.

Ballard's jacket carries the key design elements of the Lafont's Bleu de Travail. There is significance in the item as a garment designed to protect the wearer in the workplace. Although Ballad is working with laptops and proof copies rather than heavy machinery, the protection the garment affords her is symbolic.

The process of making is therapeutic - in sewing the French seams of her jacket, Ballard reinforces her own frayed edges. Her choice of fabric also resonates with the history of workwear and has metaphorical implications. Ballard chooses a hardwearing corduroy with a nap that mirrors her resistance to the racist incident - 'the fibres refuse to lie down smoothly in one direction'.

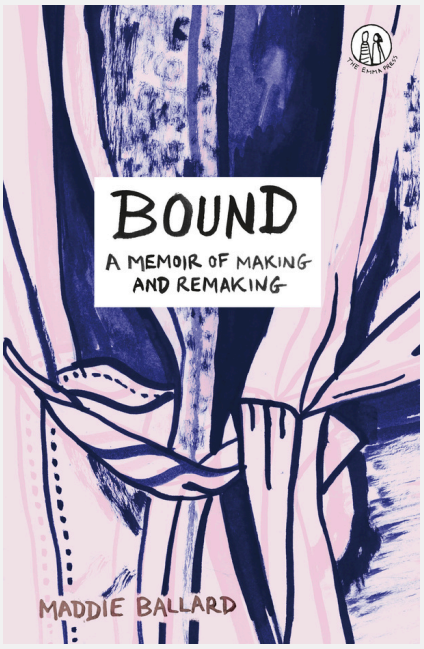
Ballard further reinforces her jacket when it occurs to her to line it with the names of her female family members, recalled by her grandmother, embroidered in Cantonese characters. Stitching these lining coincides and aids the dissipation of her anger. Through embroidery, a feminised and domesticated form of textile art, Ballard establishes a fond connection with women whom she has previously feared, taking the meanings of their names as talismans and keeping her female relatives physically close to her body.

The finished jacket is soft armour - a quiet act of protest combining traditionally male and female coded textile heritage, the industrial workplace and the domestic sphere. It projects bravery with its 'practical, durable exterior while the 'secret of the lining' act as a circle of support - women who also experienced racialised aggression encircling Ballard's body, their names traced 'lucky red'. Ballard describes the lining as an 'externalised knowledge'. Ballard materialises her

heritage while protecting herself, processing her hurt through making with confidence and in implicit dialogue with fashion history.

Whether you are about to lower the needle to sew your first seam or cladding yourself daily in a wardrobe of one-of-a-kind creations, Bound is a gift to those engaging with thoughtful making and seeking a sustainable relationship with fashion and textiles.

***ELEANOR WARR***



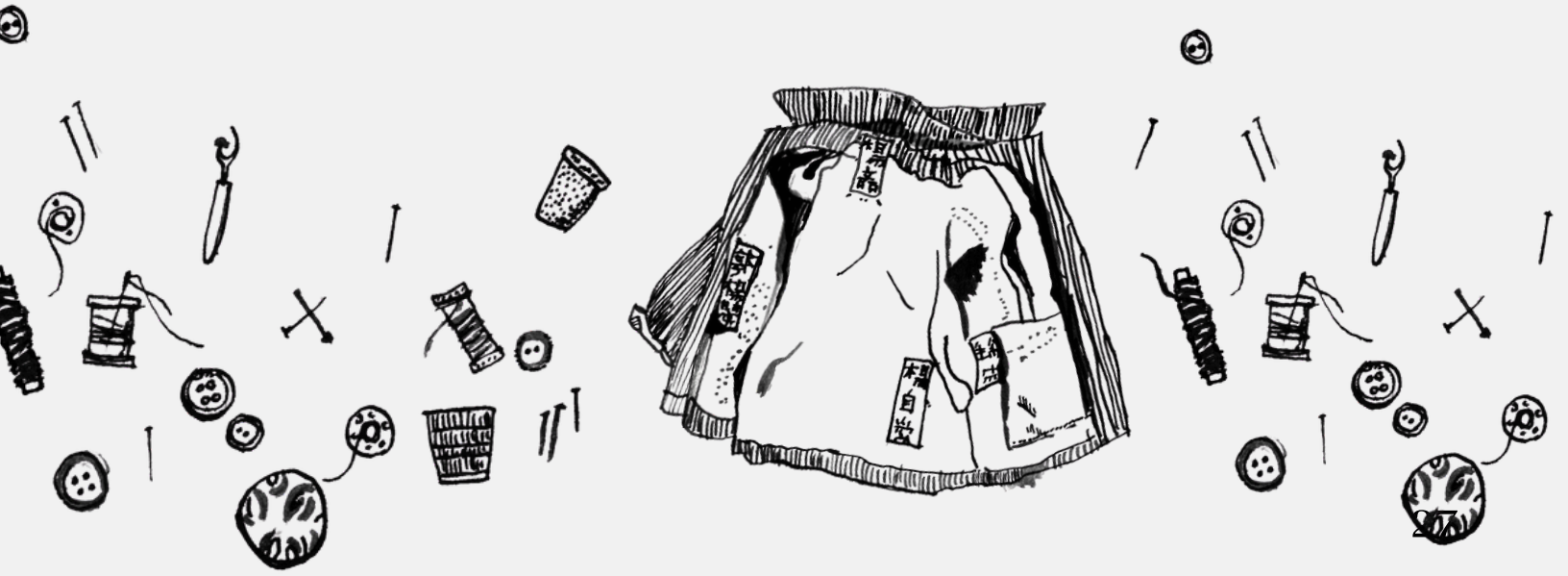

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Quotations from *Bound: A Memoir of Making and Remaking* by Maddie Ballard (The Emma Press, 2024).

Bound was published in the USA as *Patchwork: A Sewist's Diary* by Tin House, 2025.

*Maddie Ballard is a writer and editor of mixed Chinese heritage. Born in Syracuse, New York, she grew up in Aotearoa New Zealand and currently lives in Wellington.*

*She can be found on Instagram @maddieballard27 or at fieldnotesonfeeling.substack.com.*



# SUSTAINABLE *FASHION* GIFT GUIDE

*Perfect gifts for all the fashion lovers in your life who want to take a step back from consumerism and support small, sustainable businesses instead.*



Echo Trainers, LØCI, £150



Strawberry Thief Zipped Sewing Kit, *Liberty*, £18.95



Clean Eileen Jeans, Nudie Jeans, £145

Floret Dangle Earrings, *I Was a Sari*, £16





Hydration Heroes Gift Set, *Odylique*, £27.50




Wear Next, *Clare Press*, £17.99

***A perfect little stocking filler, also available in multipacks for the ultimate treat!***



Bumboo Low Rise Knickers, *Bumboo*, £18

PlanetCare 2.0 Microfibre Filter, PlanetCare, £75.90






Exosome Mighnight Balm, *TROPIC*, £46




Less, *Patrick Grant*, £9.49

***Most of the impact of our clothing on the planet is determined in the laundering stage; these are two easy sustainable fixes!***




Laundry Liquid, *Faith in Nature*, £32.99

***Adding sustainable fashion books to your TBR list is a great way to learn more about sustainable fashion***



Mermaid Doodle Cowboy Boots, *Brother Vellies*, £979




Personalised Handwriting Hammered Ring, *Wild Fawn*, £550

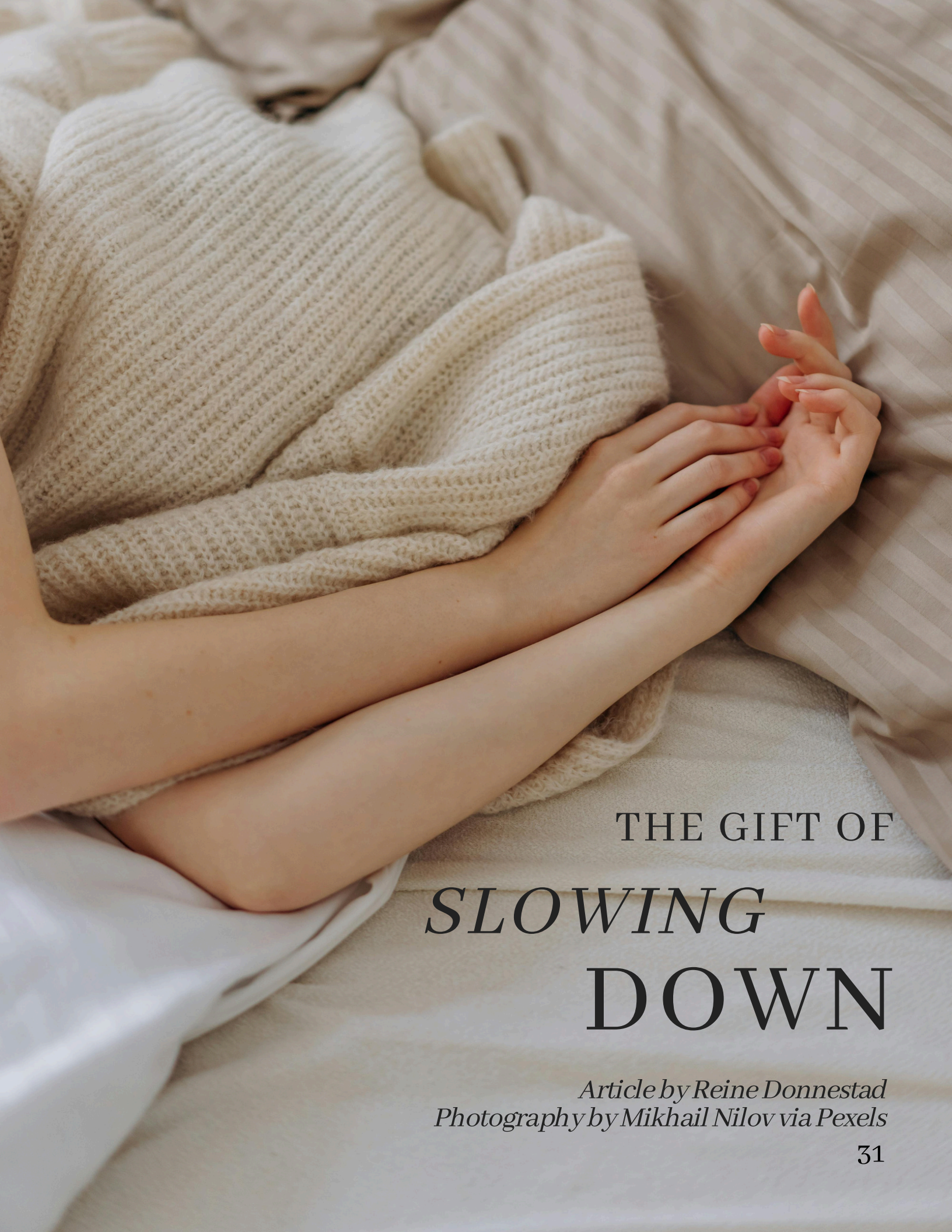


Hobo Bag, *I Was a Sari*, £27

# DO YOU OWN A *SUSTAINABLE* FASHION BRAND?



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# THE GIFT OF *SLOWING* DOWN

*Article by Reine Donnestad*
*Photography by Mikhail Nilov via Pexels*

As the last of the fall leaves drop and the vibrant colours of fall fade, the days begin to shorten, reminding us that winter is just around the corner. As nature pulls its energy inward, it slows down preparing for rest; a natural change in rhythm invites us to do the same.

With the whirlwind of the holidays fast approaching, there could never be a more important time than now to enter into our own hibernation, giving ourselves the gift of slowing down and embracing a period of rest and reflection that strengthens us for the spring ahead. It's a time for cosy nights in, warm blankets, soft candlelight, journaling our dreams for the new year, and slow, savoury dinners with friends and family.

***In Danish culture, there's a word that embraces this practice: hygge — a feeling of coziness, comfort, and well-being that comes from creating a warm atmosphere and cherishing the simple things in life.***

Embracing a mindset grounded in rest, connection, and contentment, is a powerful shift that matters far more beyond our own well-being. Slowing down is a form of environmental preservation. The modern pace of consumerism creates this cycle of needing to accumulate more, and more —burning us out and exhausting ecosystems. Taking the time to slow down interrupts this cycle. When we take the time to rest and focus inward, we rediscover what truly matters and nurture the energy that sustains us.

*So how do we embrace this season of restorative rest — in a way that intentionally restores both ourselves and the Earth?*



## REST AND *REPAIR*

In the darker, quieter months of winter, when we naturally spend more time indoors, we're offered the opportunity to reflect, repair, and restore. It's the perfect time to take stock of what surrounds us to mend, fix, and give new life to the things we already own.

Most towns have tailors and repair shops, but there are so many resources on the internet that can teach us how to bring life back into our wardrobe. Removing pills on sweaters, sewing on missing buttons, or adjusting a seam for a better fit can help us feel more confident and connected to what we own. It's a quiet act of defiance to a system that always wants us to buy more, and more, *no matter what the cost.*



Taking care of clothes for longer also keeps waste out of landfills and reduces strain on natural resources. The fashion industry alone accounts for about 10% of global carbon emissions and 20% of global wastewater. When we extend the life of what we have, we lessen our environmental impact. Curating and tailoring quality pieces uniquely to you over time becomes a way to develop your personal style while being so much gentler on the planet.

This season of repair invites us to slow down, appreciate what we have, and to find meaning in the rituals of maintenance and restoration.

## TRENDY AND *TIMELESS*

There always seems to be a new trend around the corner. Our social feeds are overflowing with messages telling us to buy, consume, and upgrade constantly. Fast fashion has us chasing trends that seem to change weekly, and the rise of niche aesthetics has become a quasi statement of hyper-individuality. At its best it's a way to explore your artistic expression through clothing, and at its worst it's a trap to get you hooked on clicking "Buy Now".

Before fast fashion brands became popular, fashion companies would follow typical trend cycles: Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter, with Resort and Pre-Fall collections filling the gaps.

Now, the rise of micro-trends, popularised by fast-fashion, is speeding up production cycles and enabling overconsumption. Since 2000, the fashion sector's production has roughly doubled, and consumers are typically keeping clothes for only half as long. It's unsustainable, and creates more waste than we could imagine.



Shifting the way we approach trends and being mindful about the content we consume can have a deep impact on the planet. Curating digital and physical wardrobes with intention can change more than just what we wear. By following creators, artisans, and brands rooted in ethics and longevity, we support a fashion system that values sustainability over speed. Choosing durable, quality garments, and curating a capsule wardrobe is more than style, *it's climate action*.

## A SEASON OF REGENERATIVE *REST*

Slowing down this season means giving time to ourselves so that we can show and be present in the moments that matter most. It's a simple reminder that the season for growth is as equally as important as the season of rest. Embracing this time is a gift to ourselves, and the planet that sustains us every day.

***REINE DONNESTAD***

# THE GIFT OF *SELF* DISCOVERY



*Article by Lia Totty*
*Illustrations by Lia Totty*

*Sometimes reflecting on our journeys, and practicing gratitude for our own life experiences, can be the greatest gift of all. One of POP's very own writers, Lia, talks us through her personal fashion journey, covering her first foray into clothing design through to her career as a writer, creator, and innovator in the sustainable fashion space; proving that this Christmas, giving ourselves the chance to explore our passions can provide us with the true gift of self discovery.*

---

As a child, I was first introduced to fashion through the beauty of stars like Halle Berry, Aaliyah, and Lucille Ball. Back then, I had an early grasp on some of the inspirations for the technology used by modern fashion designers of the day.

I had a Barbie Fashion Designer computer game that had 3D Barbies walk a runway in the printed clothing I styled for them to wear. The coolest element of that game was that you could print out 2D patterns for making Barbie Doll clothing. So, you could say I was already a fashionista at the tender age of 5, learning to sew doll clothing by hand. Over time, I began to develop the ability to visualise how simple geometry could create different 3D shapes on a doll, regularly using a sewing machine at age 7.

My friends and classmates came to know me for my talent in fashion illustration. By age 11, my other most notable inspirations for clothing and hairstyles were TLC and Missy Elliott. I was making hooded crop tops from college tees, making pleated plaid skirts, and repurposing my blue jeans with black denim panels on the sides because we didn't have a lot of money, and I was growing like a weed. I used my mother's sewing machine until I was age 15 when my parents bought me a crystal blue Singer. This is when I began thrifting.

Before I knew it, I had bloomed into a design-centric person. Getting away from the technology of it all, I loved to be outside in nature and began to identify as an environmentalist. I would often visit the Arboretum with my mother in my free time. My mother, who taught me to sew, also taught me to appreciate gardening.

As a college student, I put my artistic instinct on the shelf and became an urban gardener. I grew vegetables and herbs, but fashion called me. I learned about the organisation Fibershed and aspired to develop a local, sustainable supply chain. Making a change in the industry became my goal. So I held a multi-pronged, educational, eco-ethical fashion event series promoting local designers, fashion thought leaders, and an environmental movie screening.



Fast-forward to 2019, I had a few great experiences learning different shibori techniques: natural dyeing with indigo, and eco-printing with flowers, leaves, and onion peels. I dived back into sourcing dye plants for my own growth, learning to grow and dye cotton canvas with the bright red, leafy plant, amaranth, only to find that it was colorfast. In that moment of seeing the dark pink dye on a tote bag, I was hooked, and decided to come back to natural dyeing in the future when I found more resources.

In 2020, at the height of the coronavirus pandemic, I decided to become the change I wanted to see by joining Remake and by recognising that I never stopped wanting to be a designer. So I bought a heavy-duty Singer sewing machine, started developing a website, and marketing my designs for Impact Luxury, my newly created LLC. I began seeking out more opportunities to make my professional goals as a sustainable fashion designer a reality. Eventually, I discovered a fabric printer in North Carolina and sent them some textile designs I made on Canva.

One day, I reached out to Teju Adisa-

Farrar, the founder of a network for black fibre and dye enthusiasts, who was interviewed as part of a Remake ambassador's podcast. After several BFTN meetings, I realized I could have one collection that was heavy on organic cotton printed fabric, upcycle for another collection, and do natural dyeing for a third collection.

However, times were hard as they had always been. Having come from humble beginnings, I found the BFTN network awe-inspiring. Truth is, I wanted to know what those farmers and natural dyers knew, and to grow at least one of those dye plants in my own yard, so I too could use dyes to inspire other creatives to come back to nature.

Now, I am slowly working on getting my first collection of handmade earrings made for boutiques, my vegan leather bag designs manufactured, and my print-heavy crop-tops manufactured by factories in the USA. I'm already sourcing for the second collection, and it's only a matter of time before I continue experimenting with regenerative, organic, natural dyes again by growing madder root in my own front yard.

As a designer, we go through seasons for sourcing, seasons for creating, and seasons for outsourcing. It is slow work. And I never went through the process in college of developing a collection for the runway, but I enjoy this slower process. It feels more authentic to my nature.

***LIA TOTTY***





# THE GIFT OF *SECONDHAND SPARKLE*

## ALL THAT GLITTERS IS *NOT* GOLD

*Article by Chloe Grant*
*Photography by Trinity ChenBeckmann*

Shop fronts glisten with mannequins decked in decadent golds and frosty silvers. Dresses adorned in shimmering metallic scales draw up images of never-ending parties; a glimmering disco ball; the sound of champagne popping.

*Party season is here.*

As the festivities amp up, so does the sheer magnitude of sequinned clothing covering the shelves of fashion stores. Bejewelled midi skirts, metallic dresses, and shimmering tops all dazzle the eyes of any high street shopper each December, but the true impact of this annual injection of sparkle may be darker than you think.

Sequins are—for all intents and purposes—microplastics. They may well be pretty, shiny chunks of plastic, but fragments of plastic they are nevertheless.

That means that each time we wear, wash, or discard of our sequinned clothing these tiny shards of synthetic materials are set loose into the environment, clogging up our waterways, and harming our planet.

A study by Oxfam in 2019 discovered that 40% of women would consider buying a sequinned item during festive season, but only 25% of them were certain they would rewear it; resulting in a colossal amount of plastic waste being discarded each year.

So, what can we do this holiday season to try and fight this over-indulgence in plastic waste?

## EMBRACE SECONDHAND *SPARKLE*

Looking to secondhand resale sites—such as Depop, Vinted, or eBay—or visiting charity shops and thrift stores, to shop for your sequinned items, is a much better way to inject a touch of sparkle into your wardrobe for any upcoming winter celebrations.

A lot of charity shops currently have curated selections of clothing perfect for Christmas parties, NYE celebrations, and any other festivities you're celebrating this season, making it easier than ever to find a new-to-you outfit that looks fabulous, and doesn't unnecessarily harm our beautiful planet.

Renowned sustainability-focused designer Stella McCartney, in collaboration with *Radiant Matter*, has released BioSequins in recent years, made from a non-toxic plant cellulose rather than plastic. Innovations such as these ignite hope that bio-based alternatives may one day be mainstream, allowing for a truly sustainable sparkly season.

***CHLOE GRANT***

# *THE* SUSTAINABLE *SCALE*



*Photo courtesy of Mikhail Nilov via Pexels*

## *PYJAMAS*

# HOT

no nasties +
PLANET POSITIVE CLOTHING

**Good on You rating: GREAT**

No Nasties creates organic cotton clothing, included their uber-comfortable nightwear. Each of their garments removes more $CO_2$ than it creates, and all of their materials are GOTS-certified.

general sleep

**Good on You rating: GOOD**

General Sleep are dedicated to preserving artisanal weaving craft throughout their supply chain, to make their organic cotton sleepwear.

KAT THE LABEL

**Good on You rating: IT'S A START**

Kat The Label have made moves to utilise lower impact materials throughout their design process, but they are still lacking evidence that they have a thoroughly safe, transparent supply chain.

MATALAN

**Good on You rating: NOT GOOD ENOUGH**

Matalan does not provide evidence that they pay a living wage across their entire supply chain, and do not consistently use sustainable materials.

D&D

**Good on You rating: GOOD**

Desmond & Dempsey are a B-Corp certified sleepwear brand, specialising in luxurious linen and silk printed pyjamas. Their fabrics are OEKO-TEX®-certified and all of their factories are SEDEX-approved.

araks

**Good on You rating: GOOD**

Araks operate a culture of mindfulness to tackle the climate crisis; they reuse scrap fabrics, work with GOTs-certified organic cotton, and manufacture their items in their in-house New York-based studio.

Bed Head PJs

**Good on You rating: IT'S A START**

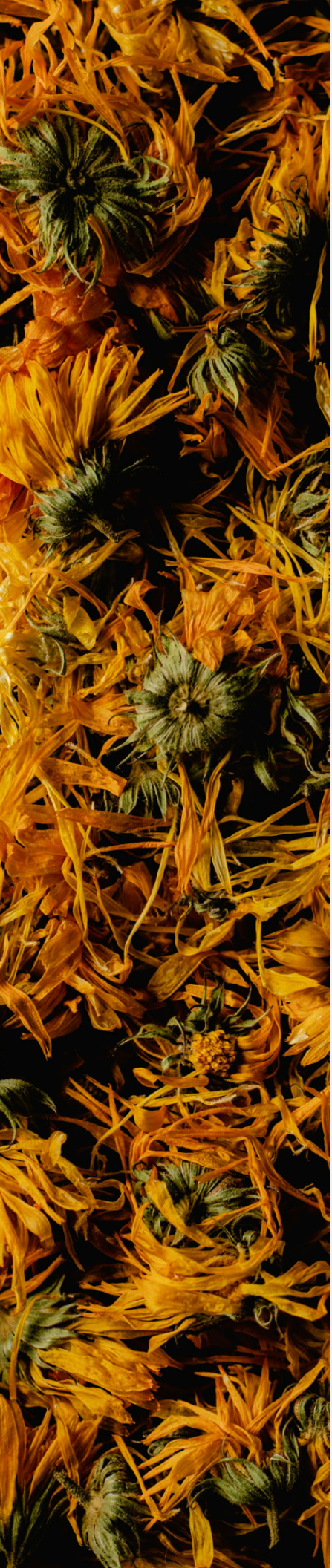
Bedhead Pyjamas uses some low-impact materials, such as organic cotton, but they haven't disclosed the location of their supply chain, or a public code of conduct.

SAVAGE FENTY
LINGERIE BY RIHANNA

**Good on You rating: WE AVOID**

Savage x Fenty work on a membership system, which encourages over-consumption, and do not disclose any form of sustainability code of conduct.

# NOT



# THE GIFT OF *COLOUR*

## EASY NATURAL DYE COLOURS TO TRY AT HOME

*Article by Chloe Grant*
*Photography by Eva Bronzini via Pexels*

Nature has gifted us with an abundance of beautiful colours; from the cyan blue of the sky on a bright winter's day, to the deep red of holly berries decorating your holiday wreath. That immense treasure trove of colours can be admired, not only whilst out in nature, but also in our own wardrobes, through the process of natural dyeing. These dyes can be created using things we regularly have sat in our cupboards, that have the ability to utterly transform our wardrobes.

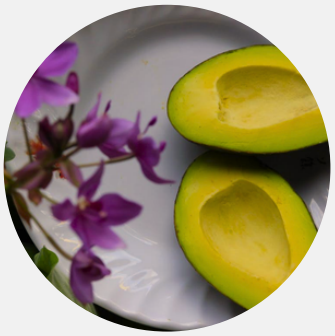


### TURMERIC

Turmeric creates a rich, vibrant yellow; a similar colour to the spice itself. The dye works really well on cotton fabrics, but it is a very strong dye (even on skin!) so make sure to wear gloves!

### AVOCADO

Avocado skins produce a pretty pink tone, which looks lovely on linen loungewear. Over time it fades to a soft peach colour, meaning your garment will continue to evolve with you!



# DO YOU OWN A *SUSTAINABLE* FASHION BRAND?



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# THE *ENVIRONMENTAL* IMPACT OF *CHRISTMAS* SHOPPING

*Article by Cecylle Ulivieri*
*Photography by Anna Kozlova via Pexels*

*As this issue draws to a close it's important to be reminded of why we've chosen to highlight non-material, planet-friendly gifts this holiday season. Christmas shopping has a vast, detrimental impact on our planet each and every year. So, this festive season, why not give someone the gift of sustainability.*

---

Every year, as soon as the holiday season rolls around, the world seems to shift into shopping mode. Streets glow with decorations, inboxes overflow with promotions, and our carts, both physical and digital, fill up fast. It's festive, fun, and surprisingly hard on the planet. Holiday shopping might feel harmless, but behind the scenes, it leaves a much bigger environmental footprint than most of us realise. Let's take a closer look at what's happening and how we can celebrate more sustainably without losing any holiday magic.

Holiday shopping is one of the most joyful parts of the season, but it also creates a much bigger environmental footprint than most people realise. Behind every gift we buy is a long chain of production and transportation. Raw materials are sourced, products are manufactured, packaged, and shipped, often multiple times, before they ever arrive on store shelves or at our doorsteps. All these steps generate emissions, and the popularity of fast shipping makes the problem worse by relying on less efficient transportation methods that increase the overall carbon output of holiday purchases.

Another major issue is the explosion of packaging waste that comes with the season. Household waste increases dramatically between Thanksgiving and New Year's, largely due to boxes, plastic wraps, bubble mailers, and decorative paper. Many types of wrapping paper, especially those with foil or glitter, can't be recycled, meaning they go directly into landfills. The same goes for the protective packaging used for online orders. What feels like an exciting unboxing experience often ends up contributing to long-term waste.

Overconsumption also plays a significant role in the environmental impact of holiday shopping. The pressure to find the perfect presents and take advantage of limited-time sales often leads to buying items that won't be used for long. Cheap novelty gifts, fast-fashion clothing, holiday-themed décor, and electronics with short lifespans frequently end up discarded within months. These items contribute to e-waste, textile waste, and general landfill overflow, all of which carry environmental consequences long after the holiday season ends.

Returns add another hidden layer to the problem. Online shoppers often buy multiple sizes or variations with the intention of sending some back, but returned products don't simply go back

on the shelf. Many require additional packaging and travel inefficient routes through return centres. A significant portion can't be resold at full price—or at all—and may end up in liquidation or disposal. The convenience of free returns masks a complex, carbon-intensive process behind the scenes.

Holiday travel further amplifies the environmental impact of the season. Millions of people hit the road or take to the skies to visit family and friends, creating one of the highest travel-emission periods of the year. Flights are particularly carbon-intensive, and packed holiday schedules mean transportation systems run at full capacity. While travel is an important part of holiday traditions, it contributes significantly to seasonal emissions.

Despite all these challenges, it's absolutely possible to enjoy the holidays in a more sustainable way. Making small, intentional choices, such as buying durable gifts, choosing local or secondhand items, avoiding rush shipping, or creating handmade presents can significantly reduce waste. Even simple decisions, like using recyclable wrapping paper or planning travel more efficiently, help lighten your overall footprint. Sustainability doesn't require sacrificing holiday cheer; it simply means celebrating in ways that are thoughtful to both loved ones and the planet.

*CECYLLE ULIVIERI*



the

# Club Preloved

@ Hotel Indigo





## 07.12

## CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE MARKET

1-6pm



PRELOVED & VINTAGE STALLS | LIVE MUSIC | GOOD VIBES

*Shop & Connect*




*Article by The Club Preloved & Chloe Grant*
*Photography by The Club Preloved*

# *SUSTAINABLE* SPOTLIGHT

*In our summer issue our sustainable spotlight fell on Lauren Cooley, founder of The Club Preloved, and now it's time to share their festive makeover as they host a sustainable Christmas market in a historic building in Exeter, England.*

## FROM RETAIL ICON TO RETAIL *REVOLUTION*

In a powerful full-circle moment for Exeter's retail landscape, the building that once housed House of Fraser—a beloved destination where generations shopped their favourite brands—will return to its shopping roots this Christmas, but with a revolutionary twist. On Sunday 7th December, *The Club Preloved* transforms Hotel Indigo Exeter's entire ground floor into the city's only sustainable Christmas market, proving that the future of retail honours the past while reimagining what's possible.

The symbolism is impossible to ignore. Where a traditional department store once drew crowds to discover curated collections and quality pieces, *The*

*Club Preloved* founder Lauren Cooley will host 10-15 carefully selected sustainable businesses showcasing preloved fashion, vintage treasures, circular brands, and conscious gifting, all in the very space that represents Exeter retail's storied past.

"This venue tells the story of retail's evolution in one building," said Cooley. "From iconic department store to boutique hotel, and now back to retail, but this time, retail reimagined with intention and values at its heart. It's not just a venue choice, it's a statement about honouring where we've been while creating where we're going."

## THE ONLY SUSTAINABLE *MARKET* IN EXETER THIS *CHRISTMAS*

While Exeter's famous Christmas Market draws thousands to the Cathedral Green with traditional festive offerings, *The Club Preloved* Christmas Boutique Market stands alone as the city's only shopping experience devoted entirely to sustainability and circular fashion.

Running from 1pm-7pm on 7th December, the event transforms Hotel Indigo's downstairs and restaurant area, newly relaunched as *Dottie's*, into an immersive boutique shopping experience featuring live music from local artists, exclusive sustainable sellers, and the signature community-driven atmosphere that has made *The Club Preloved* events sell out across the UK.

Located in the heart of Exeter city centre, steps from Cathedral Green and perfectly positioned to capture festive footfall, the market offers conscious consumers a luxurious alternative to conventional Christmas shopping.

## A *MOVEMENT* NOT JUST A *MARKET*

The Club Preloved has built a reputation for creating experiences that feel more like celebrations than shopping events. Following their sold-out Manchester Fashion Week takeover that attracted 150+ attendees and garnered BBC Radio coverage, and their Devon debut that united 50+ creators with a combined reach of 2 million followers, the Christmas Boutique Market represents the next evolution of community-driven sustainable retail.

"We're redefining how people shop, connect, and celebrate the festive season," Cooley explained. "This isn't about competing with traditional Christmas markets, it's about offering something entirely different. Luxury, excitement, and energy, all rooted in

values rather than volume. This building was once where people came to find quality and curation, we're bringing that ethos back."

Attendees can expect:

- Beautifully styled indoor boutique market celebrating preloved and sustainable shopping
- Live music creating festive atmosphere throughout the day
- 10-15 exclusive sustainable businesses, circular brands, and creative makers
- The biggest Exeter gathering of local influencers, content creators, and press to date
- Lauren Cooley hosting and creating the welcoming, values-driven community atmosphere *The Club Preloved* is known for

## FROM RETAIL PAST TO RETAIL *FUTURE*

The venue's transformation from House of Fraser to Hotel Indigo, and now to a sustainable marketplace, mirrors the broader evolution happening across the retail industry. Where traditional department stores offered curated collections and quality shopping experiences, *The Club Preloved* brings that same philosophy into the circular economy, proving that conscious retail can be just as aspirational, beautiful, and exciting.

Hotel Indigo Exeter, with its boutique aesthetic and central location, provides the perfect backdrop for *The Club Preloved*'s vision of what sustainable shopping can look like, not austere or worthy, but beautiful, energetic, and luxurious.

"This building was once the destination for shopping in Exeter, a place where people discovered brands they loved and pieces they treasured," said Cooley. "We're honouring that legacy while writing a new chapter, one where every piece has a story, every brand has values, and every purchase makes a positive impact. The building's DNA is retail excellence. We're just evolving what that means."

## WHAT'S NEXT FOR *THE CLUB PRELOVED*?

The Christmas Boutique Market is part of *The Club Preloved*'s UK-wide expansion following the launch of their Regional Ambassador Programme. With ambassadors now leading events in Manchester, London, and the North West, and international expansion planned for 2026, the organisation is scaling its community-driven model nationwide.

"Every event proves that conscious consumers aren't asking for less — they're asking for better," Cooley added. "Better quality, better stories, better impact. And they're willing to

show up, support small businesses, and be part of something that matters. This Christmas market in Exeter—in this iconic building—is proof that sustainable retail isn't the future. It's already here, and it's honouring everything retail was always meant to be."

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You can find The Club Preloved on Instagram under @theclubpreloved and visit their directory of preloved sellers at theclubpreloved.com

Founded by sustainable fashion advocate and digital strategist Lauren Cooley, *The Club Preloved* connects over 150 sustainable brands, conscious creators, and purpose-led businesses globally with a combined reach of over 2 million. The platform bridges the gap between small businesses and big opportunities, creating immersive events that prove community collaboration is the future of sustainable fashion.



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*Photography by Ron Lach via Pexels*

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Circular Fashion Lied to Us

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ISSUE NO.11

DECEMBER 2025