

FASHIONING THE FUTURE

Biodegradable clothes and fashions that last decades are part of a sustainable future. By MARIA NOAKES

WE could all be walking around in dissolvable clothes if artist and designer Helen Storey has her way.

The Brit is part of the sustainable fashion movement, which uses environmentally friendly materials and considers social and ethical issues associated with the production of garments.

Where the garment is manufactured, the conditions in which it is manufactured, whether workers are overworked or if child labour is involved, are all issues that are addressed.

Storey's ingenious clothes are made from an alternative textile that dissolves in hot water, leaving behind a fertile matter that is used for seed planting. She worked with textile designers and chemists to perfect the prototypes.

Her waste-reducing designs are showcased in the exhibition, Fashioning Now: Changing the Way We Make and Use Clothes.

"Helen's quite a revolutionary designer. She's very interested in the problems that exist in the world and how fashion designers can contribute to solving those problems," exhibition curator Alison Gwillt says.

Featuring garments, textiles, photographs and video work, as well as Australian and international designs from the likes of Romance Was Born and Issy Myrke, the exhibition is a portal to the future of fashion.

Australian innovator Romance Was Born showcases designs that use recycled materials and vintage fabrics, while Japanese designer Myrke creates clothes that transcend seasonal fashion trends and will last decades.

Gwillt says the idea of "slow fashion" is coming back into vogue.

"If you go back in time prior to the development of ready-to-wear fashion, fashion always lasted a long time. People looked after it because cloth was expensive, clothes were expensive," she says.

"It's only been a recent phenomenon that we've bought lots of clothes for very cheap prices and thrown them away quickly."

American performance artist Alex Martin championed "slow fashion" in The Brown Dress Project, which saw her wear the same brown dress for an entire year.

"This was one person's comment on fashion consumption and the excess of fashion clothing on the high street," Gwillt says. "For the whole year she wore the same brown dress. She washed it, she fixed it, she mended it."

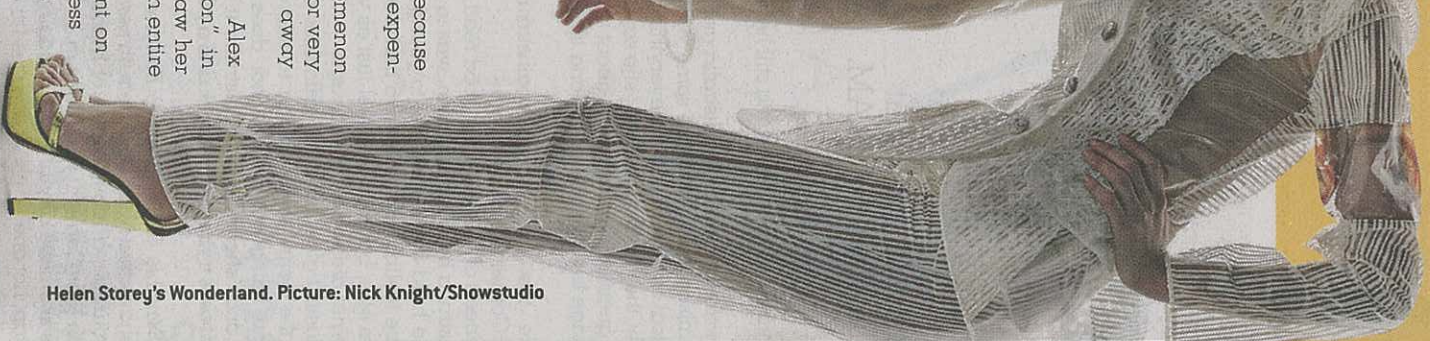
Like Martin, consumers can take an active role in sustainable fashion.

"It's not just about fashion designers coming up with all the solutions – there's lots of things consumers can do," Gwillt says.

"Very few people repair clothing these days because it's easier to go out and buy something and there's a bit of shame attached to wearing visibly repaired items. There's a lot of things that need to shift in our society. We need to change our perception of what we do with clothing and why we wear it."

On the evening of September 13, Gwillt will give a free, behind-the-scenes tour of the exhibition.

Fashioning Now: Changing the Way We Make and Use Clothes, July 24-Sept 19, Fremantle Arts Centre.



Helen Storey's Wonderland. Picture: Nick Knight/Showstudio

Beyond the Brick

WHERE: Munding Arts Centre
WHEN: Today-July 25
Pictured: Oskar Pinter, *The Colour of My Reflection*, acrylic on canvas, 2009



Graduates from Eastern Hills Senior High School, Kalamunda Senior High School, Helena College, Home School in the Hills and the Cyril Jackson Senior Campus display their impressive works. Beyond the Brick takes its title from the tradition established at Eastern Hills Senior High School, where each Year 12 art student paints a brick of the art room wall at the end of their final year.

Pause the Moment – new works by Jennie Neylon

WHERE: Gallery East, North Fremantle
WHEN: Today-July 25
Pictured: *Perfect Day*, hand-cut and folded photograph, 2010



In this exhibition, Jennie Neylon continues her unique combinations of photographic prints of natural phenomena, with geometric three-dimensional structures that have been worked into the print material by cutting, folding and expanding.

HyperVision 2010 – Youth Arts Festival

WHERE: Midland Gate Shopping Centre
WHEN: Tomorrow-July 31
Pictured: Karyne Payne, digital image, 2010



Teenagers from the City of Swan were asked to design a poster for the annual exhibition. The finalists' works are now on display. HyperVision 2010 – Youth Arts Festival also includes workshops in fashion, screen-printing and stop-motion animation.



Light, Shape and Form

WHERE: Atwell Gallery, Alfred Cove
WHEN: Tues-Sun
Pictured: Members' image choice, digital mosaic, 2010

The exhibition is a selection of the images taken by members of the Workshop Camera Club – the largest and most active photographic club in WA.

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