



WASTE TO WEARABLE

Utilizing discarded plastic materials in pragmatic,
aesthetically pleasing bag design

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Opinnäytetyön kokonaisvaltaisena tavoitteena on esitellä vahvuuksiani ja kiinnostuksenkohteitani suunnittelijana - käytännöllisten asusteiden suunnittelua ripauksella taiteellista rosoisuutta, kierrätysmateriaaleja projektin pohjana hyödyntäen. Antaen näin laajan yleiskuvan brändistäni.

Opinnäytetyö jakautuu kahteen osaan. Ensimmäisenä tutkimusosuus ylijäämä materiaaleista, innovatiivisista tekniikoista, kulutustottumuksista ja surrealismien merkityksestä hankitaan hyödyntäen menetelmiä, kuten kirjallisuus, vertailuanalyysi, haastattelu sekä testaten sopivia materiaaleja ja tekniikoita. Toinen osa koostuu suunnitteluprosessista, materiaalien hankintaan ja aina tuotteen valmistukseen.

Opinnäytetyön lopputuloksen merkitys on suurimmilta osin henkilökohtainen, kuitenkin tähdäten herättämään ajatuksia ja keskusteluja.

Pääkysymys

Kuinka luoda kestävä ja visuaalisesti vaikuttava laukku, hyödyntäen jo olemassa olevia materiaaleja tinkimättä kuluttajan käyttökokemuksesta?

Toissijaiset kysymykset

Mitkä muovi jätemateriaalit todella toimivat asusteessa, jonka on tarkoitus kestää aikaa ja kulutusta, sekä millaisia tekniikoita voidaan hyödyntää laadun takaamiseksi?

Kuinka sisällyttää surrealistisia elementtejä tuotteeseen häiritsemättä sen käyttökokemusta?

Mitkä tekijät muodostavat tuotteen arvon kuluttajan silmissä?

Avainsanat uusiokäyttö, surrealismi, brändi-imago
Sivut 30, 3 liitettä

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Summary

The overall aim of the thesis is to showcase personal strengths and special interests as a designer - practical accessory design embodying that artistic edge, while utilizing recycled materials as the basis of the project. Showcasing an overall view of the brand image.

The thesis is divided into two sections. First, the research part around leftover materials, innovative techniques, consumer habits and the importance of surrealism acquired utilizing methods such as literature, benchmarking, an interview as well as testing materials and techniques. The second part consists of the designing process, material sourcing and product process of the final product.

The significance of the outcome is mostly personal, although meant to raise thoughts and conversations

Main question

How to create a durable yet charming bag design, utilizing already existing materials, while not compromising consumers' user experience?

Secondary questions

Which plastic waste materials truly work in a piece that's meant to last time and use, as well as what type of techniques can be utilized?

How to incorporate surrealistic elements into designs in a wearable manner?

What makes a product valuable in consumers' eyes?

Keywords upcycling, surrealism, brand image
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Table of Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Thesis idea and personal background.....	1
1.2	Main goal and other objectives.....	2
1.3	Framework and key concepts	3
1.4	Methodology and process	4
2	Research	5
2.1	Materials and techniques	5
2.1.1	Why plastics?	6
2.1.2	PP and PET plastics.....	6
2.1.3	Could plastics be fantastic?	7
2.1.4	Technique testing	8
2.2	Surrealism as inspiration.....	9
2.2.1	Surrealism by definition	10
2.2.2	Surrealism and I	11
2.3	Benchmarking.....	12
2.3.1	JW Anderson.....	13
2.3.2	Minna Parikka.....	14
2.3.3	Paula Votteler.....	16
2.3.4	Benchmarking takeaways.....	17
2.4	Consumer analysis	18
2.4.1	Consumer interview.....	19
2.4.2	Consumer profile	20
3	Implementation	22
3.1	Design process	22
3.1.1	Moodboard	22
3.1.2	Moodboard of details	24
3.1.3	Sketching.....	25
3.1.4	Bag design	26
3.2	Product process.....	26
3.2.1	Materials acquired	26

3.2.2	Techniques utilized	27
3.3	Final product	28
3.3.1	Photoshoot	28
3.3.2	Editorial images	29
4	Reflection	29

Figures

Figure 1	Frame of reference
Figure 2	Technique testing.....
Figure 3	JW Anderson collage
Figure 4	Minna Parikka collage
Figure 5	Paula Votteler collage
Figure 6	Consumer profile.....
Figure 7	Moodboard.....
Figure 8	Moodboard of details.....
Figure 9	Sketching
Figure 10	Materials acquired.....
Figure 11	Techniques utilized
Figure 12	Moodboard for photoshoot
Figure 13	The Desquamàre bag

Appendices

Appendix 1. Data management plan

Appendix 2. Consumer interview questions

1 Introduction

The overall aim of the thesis is to showcase personal strengths and special interests as a designer - practical accessory designs embodying that artistic edge, while utilizing upcycled materials as the basis of the project. Showcasing an overall view of the brand image. The result consists of research outcomes around the topic, as well as a final product in the form of a bag design. The significance of the outcome is mostly personal, although meant to raise thoughts and conversations

1.1 Thesis idea and personal background

Throughout the degree, focus has been placed on material and technique research, with a strong emphasis on innovation. During an exchange year, a keen interest in accessory design developed further, a passion that has continued to grow ever since. Blending creativity with practicality while grounding the work in personal, environmentally conscious values remains essential. Beyond just design, the work aims to reflect commitment to creating products that have a lasting positive impact.

In the face of the environmental crisis, it is considered vital for the evolution of the fashion industry to prioritize continuous innovation in material manufacturing and manipulation. Currently, the fashion industry is generally recognized as one of the largest contributors to environmental degradation. As Amy Powney reminds in the Fashion Reimagined documentary (Hutner, 2022), 'if the fashion industry were a country, it would rank third in carbon emissions after China and the United States'. The mass production of textiles requires vast amounts of water, moreover, harmful pesticides used in conventional farming practices are known to contribute to soil degradation and the poisoning of ecosystems. Additionally, synthetic fibres like polyester, derived from petroleum, are found to take hundreds of years to decompose, contributing to the growing problem of microplastics in our oceans.

The extraction of raw materials for fashion, such as leather, cotton, and wool, is known to often lead to deforestation and the destruction of natural habitats. For instance, large-scale cattle ranching for leather production is recognized as a key driver of deforestation in rainforests like the Amazon, endangering biodiversity and threatening wildlife populations. The rapid expansion of monoculture cotton farming has also resulted in significant habitat loss, as natural landscapes are cleared to make way for large cotton plantations, further disrupting delicate ecosystems and displacing wildlife.

In response to these issues, I have committed to solely use upcycled materials in the final product. By exclusively working with pre-existing materials, the aim is to close the loop of production and

consumption, creating circular yet economical practices that can help reduce the demand for virgin resources. This approach is expected to address the environmental impact of raw material extraction, as well as promote a more responsible use of resources, reducing waste and contributing to a more sustainable fashion industry. Upcycling allows materials that would otherwise end up in landfills to be given a second life in a purposeful, beautiful manner.

The core purpose of the work is to provoke deeper reflection on what truly makes a product valuable. Beyond aesthetics and function, values such as environmental impact, longevity, and the ethical implications of production should also be included. Shifting perspectives is crucial, in making systematic changes in the industry and society. By prioritizing sustainable practices and promoting circularity, the goal is to challenge the throwaway culture that has become entrenched in fashion and inspire others to see the potential for beauty and utility in materials that already exist, while protecting the natural world and its inhabitants for future generations.

1.2 Main goal and other objectives

The main goal is to find answers in the following questions, as well as to design and execute a bag, combining the results acquired through the research in physical form. The significance of the outcome is mostly personal, although meant to raise thoughts and conversations.

Main question

How to create durable yet charming accessory designs, utilizing already existing materials, while not compromising consumers user experience?

Secondary questions

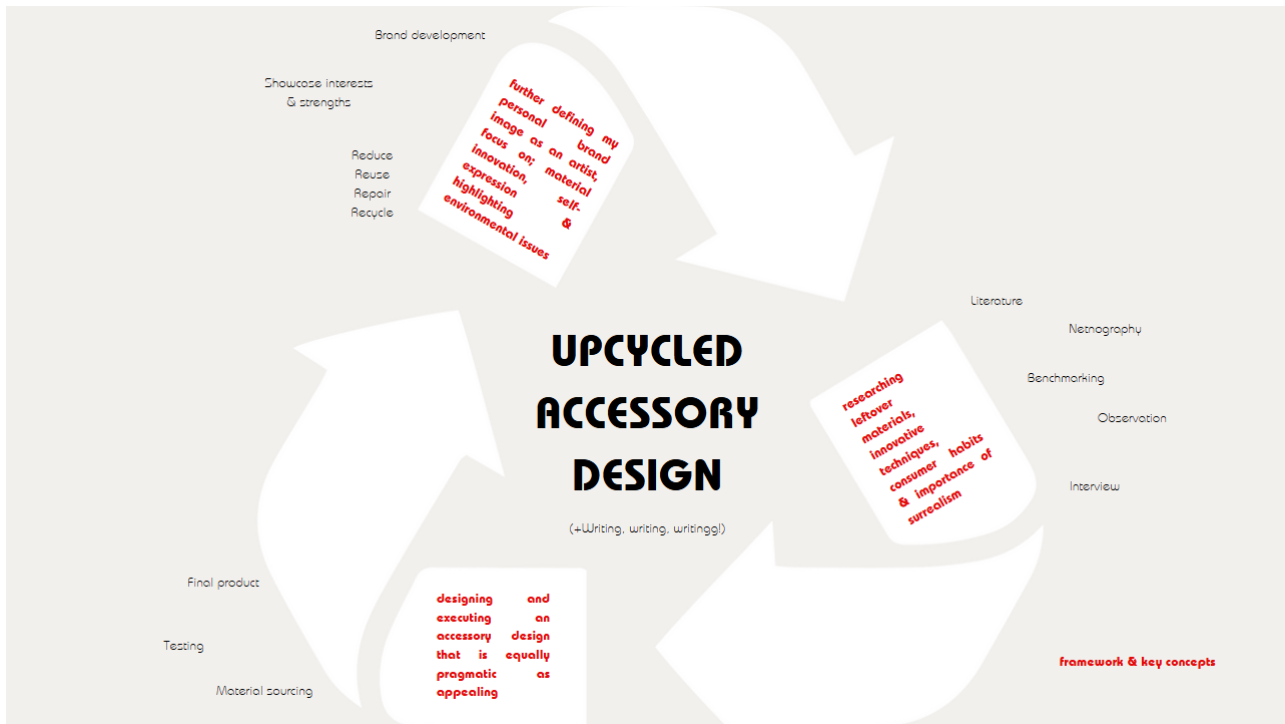
Which plastic waste materials truly work in a piece that's meant to last time and use, as well as what type of techniques can be utilized?

How to incorporate surrealistic elements to designs in a wearable manner?

What makes a product valuable in consumers' eyes?

1.3 Framework and key concepts

Figure 1 Frame of reference



To further define a personal brand as an artist, the focus will be centred on three core concepts - material innovation, self-expression, and highlighting environmental issues. Existing materials will be repurposed, with the aim to transform what would otherwise be considered waste into a functional, unique accessory, challenging conventional design and offering a fresh perspective on sustainability. The designs will reflect the personal artistic vision, blending creativity with eco-consciousness and communicating a message of individuality and authenticity.

Environmental awareness will be maintained as the red thread throughout the work, advocating for a shift away from fast fashion through the principles of reduce, reuse, repair, and recycle. Waste will be minimized by prioritizing the use of upcycled materials, promoting imaginative techniques, and ensuring recyclability to promote a circular economy. The accessory will be both a reflection of creativity and a commitment to sustainability.

In terms of brand development, the focus will remain on showcasing personal interests through innovation, self-expression, and environmental responsibility. Through consistent messaging and a high-quality product, a brand will be further defined that resonates with consumers valuing both aesthetics and sustainability, inspiring them to embrace an ethical approach in fashion even further.

In designing and executing the upcycled accessory, the goal is to create a product that is both pragmatic and appealing. The final design will balance functionality with aesthetic value, ensuring that the accessory is not only stylish but also durable in its design. Major emphasis will be placed on material sourcing, with upcycled materials being selected that remain high-quality, while also contributing to the overall design vision.

1.4 Methodology and process

The thesis is divided into two sections. First, the research part is focused on leftover materials, innovative techniques, consumer habits, and the importance of surrealism, to be acquired through methods such as literature, benchmarking, consumer interview, as well as testing materials and techniques. The second part consists of the design process, material sourcing, and the product development process of the final product.

For this project, focus is placed on researching leftover materials and exploring innovative techniques to repurpose these materials into an exciting, stylish bag accessory. Materials that would typically be discarded are sourced, and creative methods used to breathe new life into them. Consumer habits are examined, particularly the growing demand for sustainable and unique products, to ensure the designs resonate with the values of the target audience.

To inform the design process, a combination of literature research and benchmarking is engaged with to understand trends and best practices for upcycled fashion. An interview with a likely consumer will provide direct insights into preferences, while observation of past and current fashion industry practices will help identify gaps and opportunities for innovation. Additionally, the concept of surrealism is incorporated into the designs, with this creative influence being used to push boundaries and introduce unexpected elements that challenge traditional design.

Throughout the research, design, and product development process, continuous engagement with the writing process of the thesis is maintained, ensuring that insights, reflections, and progress are documented alongside the creative work. This allows for the effective integration of theory with practice, capturing the evolution of the design and maintaining a cohesive narrative throughout the project.

2 Research

The first part of the thesis is centred around finding solutions in relation to how upcycled materials can be utilized through innovative techniques, the importance of surrealism in design, and the needs of consumers.

2.1 Materials and techniques

The decision to primarily use plastics for this project was made after several key factors, crucial to both the production process and the long-term sustainability of the final product, were carefully considered. One of the most compelling reasons for sticking with plastics is their sheer abundance, as they are recognized as one of the most widely produced materials in the world.

Another important aspect that led to the decision was the durability that plastics can provide. When designing a product, the ability to withstand regular use or exposure to various environmental conditions is essential. Plastics, being strong, resistant to wear, and relatively low maintenance, offer a degree of reliability that other materials might not be able to match, yet. This durability factor ensures that the final product will serve its purpose effectively throughout its life cycle, reducing the need for frequent repairs. It also contributes to the overall value of the product, as customers can trust that the item will perform consistently and maintain its quality.

In addition to the practical benefits, plastics were chosen to adhere to the principle of using exclusively monomaterials in the design. A monomaterial approach, where a single material is used throughout the product, can be incredibly beneficial in simplifying the recycling process. Many products today consist of a combination of materials, which can make recycling more difficult, as each material requires a different method of processing. By sticking to pure plastics, easier processing is ensured at the end of the product's lifecycle. This simplifies the task for consumers', who will find it easier to recycle the product responsibly. Easing the recycling process is a valuable factor in promoting and supporting a more sustainable lifecycle for the product, as it contributes to reducing the environmental impact of waste.

By focusing on plastics and monomaterials, the long-term impact on the environment is considered. While plastics have faced criticism in certain contexts, when used thoughtfully and responsibly, they can play a significant role in reducing waste and supporting a circular economy. The fact that several plastics are recyclable means that, in an ideal scenario, the material can be repurposed, creating less demand for new raw materials. This aligns with broader goals of sustainability, where the aim is to minimize resource depletion and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills. Therefore, the choice of plastic is

not only about the immediate benefits of the product's durability and functionality but also about its potential for future reuse and recycling. In conclusion, by opting to use plastics, the needs of visual engagement, product longevity, and environmental sustainability are balanced.

2.1.1 Why plastics?

Plastic waste is recognized as a massive global issue, with millions of tons of plastic being discarded in landfills and oceans every year. According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation in the article *Plastics and the Circular Economy – Deep Dive* (2019), approximately eight million tons of plastic waste are reported to enter the oceans annually, causing harm to marine life and ecosystems. The sheer scale of plastic consumption and waste is not only straining the environment but also social systems. Inefficient recycling and waste management systems result in a significant amount of plastic not being reused or recycled, leading to pollution, resource depletion, and considerable economic costs.

The environmental impact is profound, with plastics breaking down into microplastics that can contaminate food chains, harm biodiversity, and pollute natural habitats. Socially, particularly in low-income and coastal areas, communities are affected by health hazards, loss of livelihood, and the burden of waste management. The Ellen MacArthur Foundation emphasizes that a transition to a circular economy, where plastic is reused and recycled in a closed loop, can help reduce waste and its harmful effects, benefiting both the environment and society.

Motivated by these disheartening facts, the goal is to contribute to addressing the issue from the inside out, by capturing attention and initiating conversations about the topic, using personal passion and creative self-expression, in the form of a bag design.

2.1.2 PP and PET plastics

PP (polypropylene) and PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastics seem like the evident choice for the upcycled bag design for a few key reasons. First, these plastics are widely recyclable and can be easily repurposed, making them a viable option for waste reduction. Both PP and PET are incredibly durable, as stated in *Recycling and Utilization of Plastics in Finland* (Järvinen, 2016, p. 90–91, 98–99), making them ideal for creating accessories that are designed to stand the test of time. Versatility in design is also offered by these materials. Whether through crushing, melting, or weaving, creative exploration can be achieved while maintaining eco-consciousness in the process. Since both plastics are lightweight and strong, excellent functionality can be provided without compromising style. Environmental impact can be minimized through the upcycling of plastics, while high-quality, unique products are still produced.

2.1.3 Could plastics be fantastic?

The use of PP (polypropylene) and PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastics in upcycled, handmade accessory design is an exciting and impactful choice for sustainability for several reasons. First, by upcycling PP and PET plastics, a much-needed second life is provided for these materials, as they are among the most accessible and abundant types of plastic waste. This consequently helps reduce the amount of plastic waste that would otherwise end up in landfills or the ocean, even if only by a small percentage. Additionally, less energy and fewer resources are used when upcycling these plastics, compared to producing new items using raw materials, which means the accessories created hold an inferior carbon footprint, aligning with the commitment to more sustainable practices.

PP and PET are also known to be incredibly durable and strong, making them ideal for accessories that need to be both long-lasting and usable. Endless design possibilities are opened by working with upcycled PP and PET, as these materials can be moulded, melted, and reshaped into unique shapes, textures, and colours. They are some of the safest plastics to melt due to their low content of cyclic compounds, making them essentially refined wax. This allows the creation of one-of-a-kind accessories that are not made at the expense of nature.

Furthermore, the circular economy is supported by upcycling, where materials are reused rather than discarded. The practice of repurposing plastic plays a crucial role in promoting more responsible and sustainable production. Since the materials used are recyclable at the end of the product's lifecycle, the plastic can be repurposed as plastic waste, and the polyester fabric as textile waste.

2.1.4 Technique testing

Figure 2 Technique testing



To repurpose plastic waste, hands-on, low-tech methods are employed. First, the plastic waste was carefully crushed between two sheets of baking paper, ensuring the material was evenly distributed. Then, a steam iron was used to gently melt the plastic at a controlled temperature, allowing it to fuse and form a solid, flexible sheet. The heat from the iron softened the plastic without burning it, enabling the creation of smooth, durable surfaces suitable for various design ideas. This technique was not only efficient but also provided a way to test PP and PET plastic, assessing their melting points, texture, and durability under pressure. The outcome was a unique, upcycled surface that offered both functionality and aesthetic potential.

The second technique involved the plastic waste being cut into specific pieces, ensuring alignment with the design vision. Once the pieces were cut into the desired shapes, the edges were further sculpted using a flame. By carefully applying heat to the edges of the plastic, manipulation of the material was successful, giving the pieces an irregular, unique finish. The flame also enabled the softening of the plastic slightly, allowing it to mould into smoother curves and eliminating sharp edges. This process not only refined the aesthetics of the material but also enhanced its durability, making the edges less prone to cracking or chipping. Through this technique, functional and visually appealing shapes were achieved, while ensuring the upcycled plastic maintained its integrity and usability in the final accessory design.

Finally, the last technique involved the plastic piece being heated and bent. The material was heated with a hairdryer to soften and increase its pliability. By directing warm air onto the plastic, the material was gradually heated to the right temperature, allowing it to become flexible without losing its integrity. Once sufficiently heated, the plastic was bent to the desired shape. The plasticity of the material allowed it to be moulded precisely to fit the design vision. As the plastic cooled, it retained the new shape, returning to its original firm and sturdy form. This technique allowed for the creation of unique forms and curves, possibly enabling the crafting of accessories with a customized, organic look.

2.2 Surrealism as inspiration

The choice to draw inspiration from surrealism for the project was driven by its ability to provide a space to step outside the boundaries of traditional design and challenge the norms that are often seen as constraining creativity. Surrealism, as an artistic movement, invites the exploration of the subconscious, allowing the tapping into deeper and more abstract ideas, transcending the limitations of logical thinking and everyday conventions. This kind of freedom in design opens an entirely new atmosphere of possibilities, where something truly unique can be created, pushing the boundaries of traditional aesthetics and redefining what is considered beautiful or functional.

One of the most compelling aspects of surrealism is its ability to blend the irrational with the familiar, creating an intriguing juxtaposition of elements that would typically not be associated with one another. The mundane can be transformed into something strange or thought-provoking, allowing experimentation with material manipulation in ways that would be difficult in more conventional design approaches. The fusion of unexpected materials, shapes, and forms creates a design language that is not only visually interesting but also intellectually stimulating. A sense of discovery and exploration is encouraged, where the work is engaged with on a deeper, subconscious level, considering the underlying meaning or emotional response it elicits.

By embracing surrealism, innovative approaches to materials and form can be explored, opening new avenues and approaches to sustainable design. Surrealism's emphasis on the unexpected and unconventional allows materials to be thought of in out-of-the-box ways, challenging their typical uses and encouraging experimentation with alternative options. This approach can result in the creation of products that are not only visually striking but also sustainable, as materials are reimagined that might otherwise have been discarded or overlooked, giving them new life in unexpected contexts.

Furthermore, surrealism's playful, dream-like qualities help break through the conventional and predictable ways of thinking about functionality. In a typical design process, focus is often placed on

efficiency, utility, and practicality. However, surrealism invites the boundaries of what a product can be, both functionally and aesthetically, to be explored, questioning and bending those rules. This leads to the development of pieces that defy traditional notions of design while still maintaining a sense of purpose or deeper meaning. In doing so, works are created that offer a fresh perspective on how objects can be used, enjoyed, and experienced, encouraging consumers to think differently about the relationship between beauty, utility, and imagination.

Ultimately, in surrealism creative license is given to push the process further, expanding the possibilities for innovation and sustainability. Its ability to merge the abstract with the everyday opens endless opportunities for exploring new design languages that go beyond typical expectations. Through this lens, not only is there the possibility to create a unique and thought-provoking piece, but the status quo can also be challenged in both artistic and environmental terms, providing a fresh, bold perspective that inspires a more sustainable future in design.

2.2.1 Surrealism by definition

Surrealism is an avant-garde art and literary movement that began in the 1920s, characterized by the blending of reality with the irrational and the exploration of the unconscious mind. Polizzotti (2024, p. 36–39) describes characteristics such as unexpected juxtapositions, bizarre or distorted forms, and the manipulation of everyday objects in unusual ways in *Why Surrealism Matters*. Spontaneity, automatism, as well as the liberation of thought from logic and convention, are also emphasized, with the aim to reveal and express hidden truths while challenging perceptions of reality.

The impact of surrealism on the world of fashion has been profound, with its dreamlike, irrational qualities challenging conventional beauty and reality. Its influence in fashion can be traced back to Elsa Schiaparelli, one of the first designers acknowledged to embrace the movement. In the 1930s, collaborations with surrealist artists such as Salvador Dalí and Jean Cocteau, resulting in garments that blurred the lines between art and fashion. The famous lobster dress (1937), with its large lobster motif and the shocking pink colour created by Schiaparelli, was a bold expression of surrealism, integrating absurd imagery and unexpected forms into haute couture.

Surrealism in fashion was revisited in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, with Alexander McQueen leading the charge in the 1990s and 2000s. Known for his dark and often controversial collections, surrealism was used by McQueen to challenge perceptions of beauty, identity, and the body. Distorted, otherworldly forms, such as the iconic armadillo boots in his 2010 spring/summer collection, were featured, transforming the model's silhouette into an almost alien figure. Themes of death,

transformation, and the subconscious were often explored in McQueen's work, offering a surreal commentary on societal norms.

In more recent years, the surrealist tradition in fashion has been continued by JW Anderson, with a contemporary and eclectic approach. Known for mixing high fashion with elements of pop culture, playful, dreamlike designs are often featured in Anderson's collections, such as garments incorporating unusual shapes or textures and accessories like sculptural bags and exaggerated proportions. Traditional gender norms are challenged by his work, and surrealism is reinterpreted in a modern context, making it accessible and relevant for today's fashion landscape.

Surrealism in fashion has evolved from Schiaparelli's groundbreaking designs and McQueen's rebellious, theatrical interpretations to JW Anderson's playful, contemporary takes. Throughout its history, surrealism has been established as a tool for designers to push the boundaries of fashion, exploring the unconscious mind, identity, and the human experience in ways that defy logic and expectation.

2.2.2 Surrealism and I

Utilizing surrealism seemed like the organic path personally, for its profound ability to question the status quo and provoke thought, all while avoiding the imposition of rigid ideas onto the viewer. A space is offered, where ideas can be explored freely, leaving room for conversation, curiosity, and idealism while resisting the need for definitive answers. Creativity flows freely from the unconscious mind, in a dreamlike state where the imagination is unrestrained and free from judgment. This freedom fosters the kind of exploration that challenges conventional thinking, encouraging the discovery of solutions that are visually striking and conceptually groundbreaking. Answers are not simply presented - a look deeper is urged, layers of meaning peeled back, and the underlying truths that often go unnoticed sought after. The mind is awakened, establishing perceptions shaken, and a deeper understanding of the world inspired - one rooted in the realm of possibility and unfiltered imagination. A call to explore layers beneath the surface, to confront the unknown, and to rethink how art and reality are perceived.

The work of designers like JW Anderson and Alexander McQueen has been particularly influential in this respect, shaping personal views on surrealism within the context of fashion. Anderson's ability to blend the surreal with the everyday, incorporating abstract forms and unexpected textures into his pieces, demonstrated the power of subtle disruption. Something that challenges yet still resonates on a personal, almost subconscious level. His work pushed boundaries without being overtly alienating, offering a kind of surrealism that can be felt as grounded, yet impossibly transformative. On the other hand, McQueen's designs exhibited a darker, more dramatic quality, using surrealism to confront deep-

seated themes such as identity, mortality, and beauty. His collections often felt like a journey into the subconscious, where the bizarre and grotesque collided with elegance and form, forcing a confrontation with uncomfortable truths. Emotions were stirred, and intellectual reflection was sparked by his fearless approach to the surreal. Together, their work demonstrates how surrealism can provoke and inspire, evoke emotion and critical thinking, and offer a rich, multifaceted canvas on which to create and explore. Their influence reminds that surrealism, in its many forms, holds the power to shift perceptions, unravel societal constructions, and challenge the boundaries of artistic expression. That alone is incredibly profound and inspiring.

2.3 Benchmarking

The works of JW Anderson, Minna Parikka, and Paula Votteler were chosen for benchmarking due to their innovative approaches on surrealism, material manipulation, and sustainability. JW Anderson is recognized for his surrealist designs and bold use of materials, with boundaries being pushed in high fashion through deconstructed shapes and experimental accessories. Playful, surreal footwear is excelled by Minna Parikka, who often uses unconventional materials to create whimsical pieces with a bold demeanour. Handmade designs showcased on Instagram (@paulasprojects_) by an emerging designer Paula Votteler, combine self-expression with sustainability, eco-conscious practices and craftsmanship being the primary focus. These specific designers were selected because of their unique approaches to creativity, resulting in the successful production of marketable products. Through the critical examination of their approaches, an understanding of what works in terms of material manipulation, surrealist expression, and sustainability is aimed to be gained, while areas for improvement are also identified. Valuable lessons can be offered by their practices on how to innovate while maintaining an ethical and practical balance in design.

2.3.1 JW Anderson

Figure 3 JW Anderson collage



Funky, fresh, and surrealist elements are at the core of Jonathan Anderson's design ethos, with both Loewe and his self-founded brand JW Anderson standing out in the luxury fashion industry. Anderson's work is often characterized by its playful, avant-garde approach to fashion, where traditional forms are deconstructed and reinterpreted with a bold, contemporary twist. At Loewe, a historic brand founded in 1846, new life is breathed into the label with eccentric accessories and garments that merge classic luxury with unexpected, surrealist elements. Whimsical shapes, like sculptural bags and oversized, distorted silhouettes are used, providing Loewe's collections under Anderson's reign, with a fresh, quirky edge. Meanwhile, his namesake brand, JW Anderson (founded in 2007), shares a similar sensibility, but with even more emphasis placed on experimental designs that blur the line between fashion, art, and functionality. Deconstructed garments that challenge conventional tailoring and unusual accessories are featured, with statements being made about individuality, often evoking a sense of surrealism that encourages wearers to rethink the boundaries in fashion.

Both brands fall within the luxury market, with their positioning being aimed at an elite, high-end consumer base. Anderson's creations are targeted toward the top 1% of global consumers, whose access to these designs is often exclusive due to their scarcity and high price point. This positioning underlines Anderson's commitment to producing fashion that is not only artistically unique but also a symbol of status and prestige. However, despite their avant-garde appeal, scrutiny has been faced by

both Loewe and JW Anderson in terms of sustainability. The Good on You ratings for both brands highlight a significant area for improvement, with Loewe being given a 'Not good enough' rating and JW Anderson being marked as 'We avoid' when it comes to sustainable practices. These ratings suggest that while Anderson's work is visually innovative and compelling, both brands are still dragging behind in their commitment to environmentally responsible practices, an issue increasingly apparent within the luxury fashion sector. This gap in sustainability efforts contrasts with the progressive nature of his designs, offering a challenging paradox - high fashion that pushes creative boundaries, yet still grappling with the ethical concerns of the modern world.

2.3.2 Minna Parikka

Figure 4 Minna Parikka collage



Benchmarking Minna Parikka's work, including both her original, namesake brand and her new footwear line Minna Minna, offers valuable insights into how a designer can evolve while maintaining a unique design identity, particularly through the lens of surrealism and sustainability. Parikka's initial brand founded in 2005, became known for its surrealist approach to footwear, with designs influenced by vintage styles, particularly from the 1950s, and elements of fetishism, which were integrated with feminine, playful aesthetics. Her 2010 A/W 'Surreal Sigh' collection exemplified her skill in blending sensuality and fantasy, with exaggerated shapes and unexpected materials used to create whimsical yet seductive pieces. This surrealist element, blending dreamlike influences with wearable art, remains a

hallmark of her creative identity. Parikka herself described her design style during this time as sensual, seductive, and spontaneous, showcasing a liberated, boundary-pushing approach to design.

With her new brand, Minna Minna, launched in early 2024, a more sustainable, transparent approach to production has emerged, while the signature risk-taking design flair is still incorporated. Unlike her previous collections, Minna Minna places a heavy emphasis on ecological practices, with production occurring in Spain free from harmful chemicals and plastics used minimally. The brand's slogan, 'our actions create a string of pearls' is reflected not only in its ethical production methods but also in the design of the shoe soles, symbolizing interconnected, sustainable actions. Prices are positioned in the mid-range, making the brand accessible while still adhering to high standards of quality and craftsmanship. This shift towards transparency and sustainability shows Parikka's responsiveness to the growing demand for eco-conscious fashion, without compromising on her distinct creative voice.

By examining Parikka's work across both her established brand and her new venture, a deeper understanding was gained in terms of how surrealist creativity was balanced with sustainability over time. Her evolution from avant-garde surrealism to eco-conscious design highlights a key challenge in the fashion industry, which is how to innovate in both artistic and ethical ways. Through Minna Minna, Parikka has managed to preserve the playful, artistic elements of surrealism while embracing responsible practices, offering a valuable example of how design can adapt to contemporary values. An analysis of her approach to material utilization and sustainable practices was helpful in critically examining how surrealism can be commercially viable and ethically produced. In the same breath, the elements that work and don't work in making such evolution, both artistically and financially successful, were simultaneously identified.

2.3.3 Paula Votteler

Figure 5 Paula Votteler collage



Learning about Atelier Paula Votteler, particularly in its early stages, provides insightful perspectives on creativity through sustainability and how true craftsmanship can intersect within the fashion industry. Votteler's independent brand, showcased through her Instagram account (@paulasprojects_), is focused on the innovative use of waste, excess, and leftover materials, with discarded fabrics being turned into one-of-a-kind clothing and accessory pieces. This commitment to sustainability is not only about reusing materials; it is about creating something new and artistic from what would otherwise be considered waste, with each piece being imbedded with a sense of environmental responsibility and creative ingenuity. Intricate embroidered details, creative patchwork, and refreshingly original methods of transforming overlooked materials into wearable art characterize her work. This approach highlights Votteler's dedication to the mastery of her craft, as every design is executed by Votteler herself, making each piece not only unique but also incredibly labour-intensive.

By focusing on intricate detailing and the careful manipulation of waste materials, conventional notions of luxury are challenged, with the demonstration that it is not only about high-end materials or exclusivity but about the artistry, care, and intention that go into creating a truly unique garment. This blend of sustainability with the high craftsmanship typically associated with luxury brands makes Atelier Paula Votteler a fascinating example of how creativity can be harnessed in the face of environmental challenges while maintaining a commitment to quality. Critical lessons on how the fashion industry can embrace sustainability without sacrificing the artistry and labour that define high-end fashion are offered

by benchmarking her approach. By examining Votteler's work, a better understanding of how waste materials can be reimagined in luxury fashion is gained, along with how designers can maintain their artistic integrity while aligning with growing demands for ecological responsibility. This helps with critically evaluating the strengths and potential challenges of such a design approach in creating a marketable, sustainable, and high-quality product.

2.3.4 Benchmarking takeaways

In today's world, where everything is readily available and accessible, a desire for individuality seems to increasingly drive consumers. This yearning is manifested in the growing quest for products and styles that reflect a unique sense of self, serving as an antidote to the uniformity and over-saturation of mass-market consumerism. Surrealism in fashion has emerged as a powerful response to this void, offering a way to stand out in an era dominated by mass production and conformity. Surrealist fashion seems to have evolved from a niche artistic movement into a commercial force, capitalizing on consumers' desire for self-expression and uniqueness. It does not only serve as a symbol of wealth and status but has also become a tool for those seeking to distinguish themselves in a world that can often feel devoid of personality. The surrealist designs analysed in this context – by JW Anderson, Minna Parikka, and Paula Votteler, have successfully tapped into this growing market for individuality. Consumers have been offered the chance to fill the void of 'main character syndrome', where being the centre of attention and embracing quirkiness has become the ultimate form of social currency.

The power of commercial surrealism lies in the ability to take the ordinary and place it into spaces traditionally reserved for only the most luxurious, turning the mundane into something fascinating and desirable. This approach offers a fresh perspective on what luxury can mean in the modern world. Rather than relying on traditional symbols of wealth and opulence, surrealism in fashion invites the viewer to see beauty in the peculiar and the unexpected. By reimagining the everyday, even its overlooked objects or themes, like the flora and fauna, into high-fashion statements, almost kitschy yet self-aware approach to luxury is utilized, redefining what it means to be 'high-end' in a post-modern, almost ironic sense. This is particularly evident in the growing appeal of whimsical and outlandish designs that serve as a playful contrast to the beige monotony and 'quiet luxury' that have dominated the fashion landscape over the past decade. A much-needed break from the dullness is offered by surrealism, injecting excitement, character, and a sense of adventure into a fashion world that has at times felt devoid of vibrancy.

However, when products are mass-produced, a sense of inauthenticity can creep between the layers of designs. What was once a deeply personal expression of artistry can become diluted when churned out on a large scale, leading to the questioning of the true value of these pieces by some consumers. The

authenticity of using everyday objects and materials as part of a fashion statement, something deeply connected to the average, human experience and personal identity, can be called into question when marketed as luxury. It may begin to feel less like an extension of reality or artistic exploration and more like an overblown, perhaps even cosplay-ish attempt at high culture, seeming relatable yet not replicable. This tension between surrealism as a true form of self-expression and its commercialization can create an uneasy line between what feels genuine and what comes across as a staged performance of personality.

At the same time, an undeniable shift towards one-of-a-kind, sustainable designs can be detected, where individuality is not just about standing out but about making a statement through more ethical and conscious choices. These alternatives are growing in popularity, though they remain mostly accessible to the moderately wealthy and above. Sustainable design, by nature, is more expensive due to the labour, craftsmanship, and ethical sourcing involved in creating high-quality, especially unique products. As a result, while there is an increasing demand for sustainability and originality, it is still predominantly a luxury that remains out of reach for many. This growing interest in sustainable, original pieces also signals a shift towards an appreciation for authenticity, craftsmanship, and eco-conscious values that resonate deeply in an age of mass consumption and fast fashion. However, the higher price point of these designs highlights the ongoing challenge of making truly sustainable and original fashion design more accessible to a wider audience. This dynamic creates a complex situation where individuality is increasingly sought by consumers, but the high cost often places these options only in the realm of the wealthy, perpetuating the divide between what is desired and what is practically attainable.

By examining the rise of surrealism and sustainable fashion side by side, both trends seem to be responses to the broader societal shifts towards yearning for individuality and authenticity. Yet they also come with their own set of challenges. Surrealist fashion offers a playful, kitschy escape from the ordinary but risks being felt inauthentic when it becomes too commercialized. Meanwhile, sustainable fashion offers a more meaningful alternative but can remain inaccessible to the masses due to its high cost. These competing trends reflect the tension in today's fashion landscape between self-expression, sustainability, and the reality of the price tag that comes with the quality-over-quantity ideology, highlighting the complex nature of the modern consumer's quest for authenticity in a highly capitalist world.

2.4 Consumer analysis

The consumer analysis is considered an essential part of the design and marketing process, as valuable insights into the wants, needs, and values of the target audience can be provided. By conducting this

analysis, the aim was to gain a deeper understanding of who the consumer truly is, not just in terms of basic demographics, but also their preferences, desires, and the underlying motivations that drive their purchasing behaviour. Understanding who the consumer is, on a psychological and emotional level, helps shape the product's design and messaging, ensuring that it resonates with them effectively.

Another key component of the consumer analysis will be looking deeper into the main factors that influence their decision-making process when it comes to spending. Knowing what drives purchasing decisions enables the product and its messaging to be tailored to directly address those concerns, whether through unique features, ethical sourcing, or superior craftsmanship.

This analysis allows informed decisions to be made about product design, ensuring that everything is aligned with the consumer's preferences and expectations. By thoroughly understanding their profile, who they are, and what factors influence their purchasing choices, a product that not only meets their needs but also builds a lasting connection. This comprehensive understanding of the consumer helps establish a strong foundation for developing a product that is both desirable and meaningful in the eyes of the target market.

2.4.1 Consumer interview

By engaging directly with a potential consumer, key preferences, values, and motivations were uncovered, which will inform the design and development of the product, ensuring that it not only meets functional needs but also resonates with the target audience on a deeper, more personal level. The interviewee was handpicked for their superficially obvious interest in fashion and design, for personally resonating with the overall aesthetic, as well as for interest in environmentally preservative practices - personifying the type of consumer imagined to be curious of a brand focused on the themes mentioned.

Through the interview, a deeper understanding of the consumer's emphasis on quality, durability, and sustainability was gained. A clear preference was expressed for well-crafted items that stand the test of time, both in terms of design and material integrity. This reinforced the decision to focus on durable, high-quality materials that will ensure longevity in the designed accessory product. By aligning with the consumer's desire for sustainable products, an accessory that lasts, rather than one that contributes to the disposable nature of fast fashion, will be created.

Sustainability emerged as a non-negotiable factor for the consumer. It was expressed that their preference manifests as an interest in brands that use eco-friendly materials and are transparent about their production processes. The consumer's concern for the environmental impact of the products they purchase reassures that sustainability will continue to be a central theme throughout the design process.

The interviewee also highlighted the importance of ethical practices and transparency in the production of fashion-related items that they prefer to purchase. A brand that openly shares information about sourcing and labour conditions is more likely to be supported.

At the same time, timeless designs that transcend trends were valued by the consumer, with a preference for products that become staples in their personal collection. Classic design elements are combined with unique, quirky details, such as unexpected silhouettes or materials, to make personal style stand out without compromising in versatility or longevity. Similar balance of timelessness with individuality in the product will ensure that it remains both stylish and functional for years to come while expressing individual creativity.

By using the interview as a research method, firsthand insights into the values and needs of the consumer were gathered, which will guide the design process for the accessory design. Understanding what consumers want and expect allows for the creation of a product that is not only aesthetically pleasing but also meets the growing demand for sustainable, ethical, and functional fashion. Moving forward, these findings will be integrated into design decisions, ensuring that the final product resonates with the consumer and aligns with their values.

2.4.2 Consumer profile

Figure 6 Consumer profile

values, needs & inspirations

Sustainable and fair production are nonnegotiable as well as durability and fit of pieces. Focuses on building a curated collection that will last a life time, finds inspiration in the mundane; nature, close circle and music. Values art and design in forms of collecting and consuming. Enjoys culture!

why i need them

Once trust is earned becomes a loyal consumer, willing to pay a higher price point when the products quality corresponds. Wants to support upcoming designers.

what's in their wardrobe

Relies on timeless pieces made of quality materials for the core of their wardrobe. Highlights personal style through combining pieces with eccentric details, bold colors and textures as well as kooky designs. Mixes traditionally feminine and masculine silhouettes. Pays attention to detail even in everyday wear.

**EDDA 77,
LONDON
RETIRED MAGAZINE EDITOR
ORCHID ENTHUSIAST, POET
& GRANDMOTHER**

where they buy from

Vestiaire Collective

STELLA MCCARTNEY

Etsy

'WHY BE BORING WHEN YOU COULD BE WEIRD?'

consumer analysis

The creation of the consumer profile begun by analysing insights gathered from an in-depth interview with a potential consumer. The core values that emerged from the interview - sustainability, fair production, and a desire for quality, were directly shaped into the profile's foundation. A clear preference for durable, well-crafted products that align with ethical standards was expressed by the consumer. The importance of sustainability and fair production practices was emphasized, pointing to a non-negotiable stance on environmental responsibility and a preference for products that last a lifetime, rather than contributing to the disposable culture of fast fashion. This insight was made central in defining the profile, illustrating a consumer who values long-term durability and wants to ensure that their purchasing decisions have a positive environmental impact.

The consumer's appreciation for sustainability was also reflected in a preference for products made with eco-friendly materials and transparent production processes. This reinforced the idea that purchasing choices are driven not just by aesthetics or functionality, but by a desire to support brands that share a commitment to ethical practices. By focusing on these attributes, it was ensured that the profile would reflect a consumer aligned with the principles of reduce, reuse, repair, and recycle.

Further exploration of the consumer's style and habits revealed a nuanced relationship with fashion. Timeless designs that serve as the core of the wardrobe are sought, with pieces that can be worn for years, while individuality and uniqueness are also valued. This is why quirky, bold designs, eccentric details, and a mix of traditionally feminine and masculine silhouettes are gravitated towards. The desire for timelessness and versatility, paired with a need for personal expression, informed the profile's focus on consumers who appreciate design that balances longevity with individuality.

The consumer's background further revealed a deep connection to culture and art, reflected in purchasing habits. Based on the interview a customer was imagined, Edda, a retired magazine editor, orchid enthusiast, poet, and grandmother from London. She draws inspiration from everyday life, nature, close relationships, and music, which is then applied to her fashion choices. Her motto, 'Why be boring when you could be weird?', illustrates her playful yet thoughtful approach to fashion. Shopping from platforms offering unique, sustainable options, particularly from Etsy, Vestiaire Collective, and high-end, ethical brands like Stella McCartney, is enjoyed. This choice of retailers reflects an appreciation for both sustainability and individuality in fashion, as well as a commitment to supporting emerging designers. A willingness to pay a higher price for quality reinforces the profile's emphasis on sustainability, creativity, and investment in items that align with personal values.

By synthesizing these insights, the final consumer profile is encapsulated, representing a sophisticated individual who blends a strong ethical stance with an eclectic sense of style. This profile, based on

the core is the Ouroboros symbol, which represents the cyclical nature of life, rebirth, renewal, and transformation. This aligns with the design philosophy of upcycling, where waste materials are given new life, emphasizing continuous transformation rather than an end.

Surrealism, as seen in the works of designers like Maison Margiela, which resulted in particularly successful fashion products like the Tabi shoes, also inspired the moodboard. The ability to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary is mirrored by the design intention of blending the unusual with the everyday, making ordinary materials feel surprising and fresh. The surrealist idea that reality itself is often the most surreal resonates with the exploration of waste materials, nod to the plastic bag included, symbolizing the excess of modern consumption. These materials, once discarded, are repurposed into a functional and meaningful accessory, showing the beauty and utility that can be found in what is often overlooked.

The snakeskin texture is also explored, inspired by the Ouroboros symbol as well as past material testing, with an emphasis placed on experimenting with these plastics to create new textures and forms, such as scales. This process aims to challenge traditional concepts of craftsmanship and materiality, incorporating the unexpected into the design. The idea of confronting the harsh environmental realities, particularly the role humanity plays in the crisis, is woven into the narrative. The quote 'so it seems, our end is always self-made' reflects the need for the responsibility to be recognized in creating the problem and finding solutions, no matter how uncomfortable the truth.

In conclusion, the moodboard represents a vision of transformation, where an accessory is designed not only to be useful and aesthetically pleasing but to challenge the boundaries between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Attention is drawn to the urgent need for environmental practices and a new perspective is encouraged on waste, value, and our role in the current state and future of the planet.

3.1.2 Moodboard of details

Figure 8 Moodboard of details



A moodboard of details for the upcycled accessory design was created, visualizing key elements that aligned with the core values of sustainability, creativity, and functionality. The focus was placed on showcasing waste materials, specifically plastic waste like polyester clothing and packaging, with the intention of turning them into something both beautiful and useful. The texture of snakeskin, inspired by the layered nature of plastic, was made a central design element, where a sequin-like effect was envisioned, created from repurposed materials to avoid the environmental impact of traditional sequins.

The sculptural yet functional form of the Coperni handbag influenced thoughts on balancing art and usability in the bag, aiming for a timeless and usable design. The Ouroboros symbol definition was also to be featured, representing cyclical renewal and purity, reinforcing the idea of upcycling as a continuous, closed-loop process.

Additionally, the Gucci Dragon Baby, though impractical, inspired the striving for the surreal and whimsical in the design. These ideas were visualized on the moodboard of details, where each element; texture, form, and symbolism were explored, coming together to shape the final product. The concepts were vital in forming the foundation of the accessory, guiding its development to merge sustainability with artistic expression.

3.1.3 Sketching

Figure 9 Sketching



The sketching process for the bag design began with the conceptualization of the shape, with inspiration being drawn from the Ouroboros symbol - representing cyclical renewal and the commitment to sustainability. A circular, looped form was naturally adopted for the bag, reflecting the idea of upcycling and the continuous cycle of life and materials. Surrealist influences were incorporated through the idea of scale-like textures, suggesting a snake's skin, which would be represented by upcycled plastic pieces in the final design.

As the sketches progressed, experiments were made with how these elements could be integrated, ensuring that the bag's sculptural circular shape remained wearable while still evoking a whimsical, surreal quality. The overlapping plastic scales were positioned to create visual interest, with the light being caught and the material's transformation from waste to beauty being emphasized, while proportions were adjusted to balance the sculptural form with usability. The overall aim was to blend form and function, with a seamless flow being maintained between the surreal texture and the bag's practical purpose.

3.1.4 Bag design and required materials

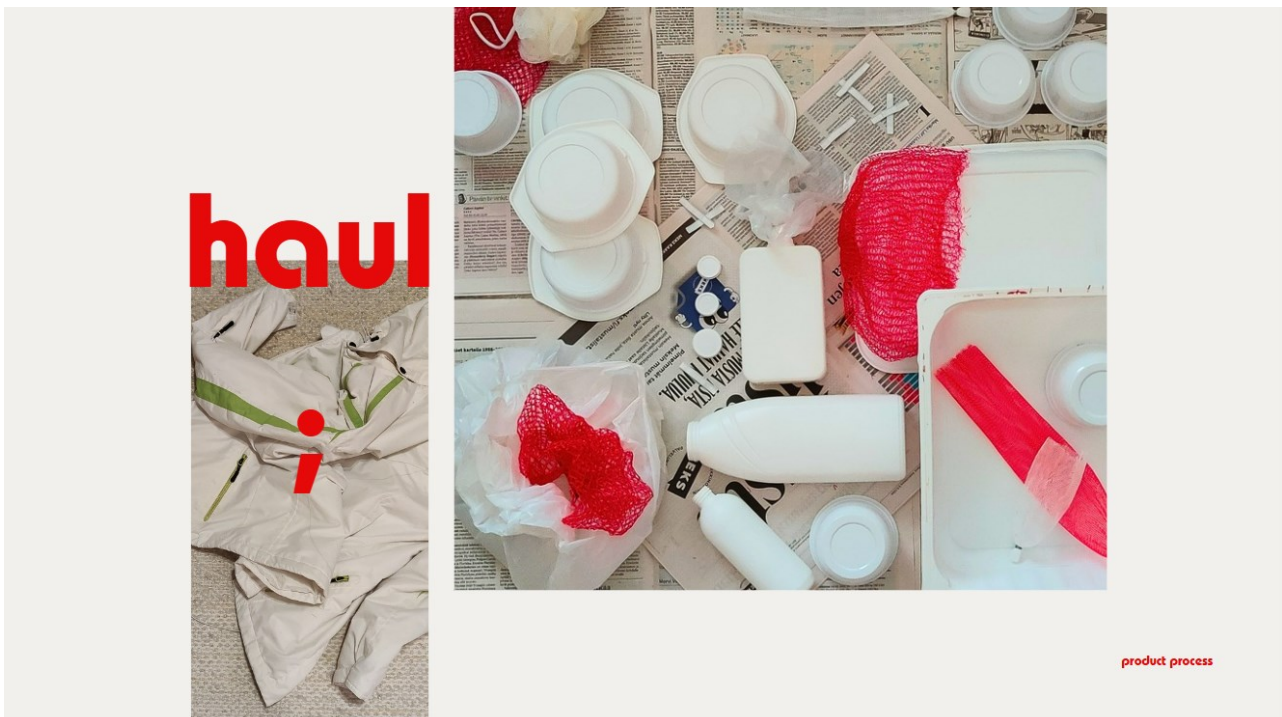
The bag was to be made of a polyester fabric base secured from an old, used, and discarded outdoor jacket. The outer shell, being water-resistant, was designed in case the wearer is surprised by the increasingly unpredictable weather conditions. The filling for the bag is obtained from the material scraps leftover throughout the process. The scaly look is achieved by utilizing PP and PET plastic, mainly sourced from food and cosmetics packaging. The spine for the product is created from a PET plastic net sourced from a washing sponge 'loofah,' and the entire item is sewn together with a matching polyester yarn.

3.2 Product process

The product process involved the sourcing of materials, the implementation of material manipulation techniques, and the presentation of the final product through editorial images. Peeling back the layers of what's really needed and what isn't, leaving space only for the necessary with a touch of excitement.

3.2.1 Materials acquired

Figure 10 Materials acquired



product process

Materials were acquired once the vision of the product and its needed parts became clear. An outdoor jacket made of pure polyester was found at a local second-hand store and chosen because of its visible

was to attach the inner pouch of the bag and fill the inner walls with scraps, ensuring more structure, and to finish with a branding logo that was attached on the inside.

3.3 Final product

In the final phase, nothing else is left to be done except for the presentation of the final product - The Desquamàre ('scaling') bag. It aims to challenge the bland ideas associated with sustainable fashion design, while not compromising versatility or contemporary approach to timelessness. Transcending what a functional bag design entails, telling a story completely of its own, with the wearer only required to wear it and tear it until its unescapable destiny back in the recycling system awaits. A closed loop, cycle of life, ouroboros.

3.3.1 Photoshoot

Figure 12 Moodboard for photoshoot



The imagined atmosphere of the editorial images felt most organic presented visually, in the form of a moodboard. The tone wanted to signal was the anticipation of something around the corner, while unable to pinpoint exactly what that something might be. The tingling whole body sensation, like a frost bite after wandering in the white drifts as far as the eye can reach, for hours on end.

3.3.2 Editorial images

Figure 13 The Desquamàre ('scaling') bag



4 Reflection

As the conclusion of the thesis process is reached, a profound sense of satisfaction and accomplishment is felt regarding the research that has been conducted and the conclusions that have been drawn. The journey has allowed for the exploration and deep analysis of the ways in which eco-conscious practices can be successfully integrated into the design process, ensuring that sustainability and environmental responsibility are kept at the forefront of modern product development. Particularly satisfaction is taken in how the research has not only delved into the materials and techniques that promote the circular economy but has also allowed for consideration of how these elements can be harmoniously balanced with the product's overall usability.

Throughout this process, invaluable insights into consumer preferences have been gained, and a clearer understanding of the desires and expectations of today's market has been achieved when it comes to both sustainability and innovation. These findings have been crucial in shaping the approach to design, guiding the creation of a product that not only serves a purpose but could also appeal to the values and interests of modern consumers.

The final product that has been developed stands as a direct reflection of these research findings. It is successfully demonstrated how a product can embody the principles of surrealism, incorporating unique and thought-provoking materials, techniques, and shapes that challenge conventional norms. This approach is executed without compromising the personal design style, which has always been centred around timelessness and practicality. The commitment to producing designs that have lasting appeal, rather than being dictated by transient trends, is evident in the result. The fusion of surrealist influences with the belief in the importance of creating enduring objects has culminated in a product that I am truly proud of. It exemplifies not only the research that has been conducted but also the growth as a designer who is capable of merging innovation with sustainability, creativity and art with function.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Data management plan

Description of thesis research data

Research data includes observation, utilizing online platforms around materials and techniques, documentary about the changing fashion industry (Hutner, B. 2022 Fashion reimaged), brand benchmarking (JW Anderson/Loewe, Minna Parikka/MinnaMinna, Paula Votteler/Paulasprojects_), finding topical images for moodboards as well as articles about plastic waste and pollution (Ellen MacArthur Foundation). Other forms of research include books on plastic recycling and utilization in Finland (Järvinen, P. 2016 Muovien kierrätys ja hyötykäyttö Suomessa) as well as on the importance of surrealism (Polizzotti, M. 2024 Why surrealism matters?). An interview with a potential consumer is also conducted to further determine their wants and needs in a product. The target group consists of people of all ages and genders with an appreciation for unique design and a passion for preserving nature. The results are collected through personal notes and exhibited in an introspective text format. The design process, utilizing all the previously acquired data, is showcased through visually documenting the whole process from sketching to the final product.

Management and storage of the research data

Data is stored in personal physical notes from where they will be transferred to the PowerPoint and Word documents for analyzation and utilization.

Processing of personal data and sensitive data

Thesis will contain no data of confidential information due to its irrelevancy on the topic.

Ownership of research data

The results of the thesis are owned by yours truly. Copyrights of data collected by others are credited to their respective owners.

Further use of research data after the completion of the thesis

The research data will not be reused. I, the thesis author will securely store the data for one year from the date of thesis approval to ensure the results can be verified if necessary, and then securely destroy the data.

Appendix 2. Consumer interview questions

Understanding consumer preferences

1. Can you describe what key features you look for when choosing an accessory or fashion piece?
2. What factors influence your purchasing decisions when it comes to accessories?
3. How important is it for you to connect with a product on a personal or emotional level? What makes that connection happen for you?

Quality, durability and sustainability

4. How do you define quality when it comes to accessories or clothing items?
5. What does durability mean to you and how do you expect that to be reflected in the products you buy?
6. How significant is sustainability in your decision to purchase a product? Are there specific materials or brands you prioritize for their eco-friendly practices?
7. What concerns, if any, do you have about the environmental impact of the products you buy?

Ethical practices and transparency

8. How important is transparency to you when it comes to the brand's sourcing and production processes?
9. Would you be more likely to support a brand that openly shares details about their production methods, materials and labour conditions? Why or why not?
10. How do ethical production practices influence your shopping habits?

Timeless design and individuality

11. How do you feel about products that aim to be timeless or classic in design? What do you think makes something timeless?
12. Do you prefer accessories that are versatile and easy to pair with different outfits, or are you more drawn to bold, unique designs? Why?
13. How important is it for you to have an accessory that stands out but still feels practical and wearable on daily basis?

Consumer needs and expectations

14. What do you expect from a product in terms of functionality? Are there specific needs or problems you hope an accessory could solve for you?
15. Can you describe a time when you bought an accessory that really resonated with your personal style or values? What made that purchase memorable?
16. What do you think is missing from the current accessories market that you would love to see?

Price, longevity and investment

17. When considering an accessory, how do you weigh price against longevity? Are you more willing to invest in something that will last, or do you prioritize affordability?

18. Do you prefer to buy fewer high-quality items or more budget-friendly, trendy pieces? What drives that choice?

Influence of trends and personal style

19. How do trends influence your purchasing decisions? Are you someone who follows trends, or do you prefer to stick with what aligns with your personal style?
20. How do you see your style evolving over time? Do you tend to invest in items that adapt with you or those that stay consistent?