

Fashion Farm

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Modes of Design

Fashion Farm is a project that challenges the conventions of the design field, it aims to find new ways of engaging with materials and create narratives. Fashion Farm is located at Dyrøya in Northern Norway, it is my ancestral farm that has been inhabited by my family since the 17th century, in this project it functions as a place of departure and a state of being.

In this context farming is used as a metaphor for multitasking, conceptualizing and seasonality.

My design practice break out of the conventional chronological approach to creating, I have a symbiotic relationship to materials, techniques, process and outcomes.

The concept, Fashion Farm, has many constituent elements, the themes revolve around self-sufficiency, resources, collaboration and story-telling. The project plays on the dualism of originating in the personal but addressing the everyday.

A short summary of the elements active today;

«**An heirloom footstool**» - a simple footstool made and designed by my grandfather. With leftover materials from *Fellesverkstedet* in Oslo, I have designed a DIY-kit that lets you build your own version of my grandfathers footstool.

Felt Hats - I was gifted a bag of raw spælsau wool from a farmer in Asker, I have cleaned it, washed it and felted it myself, and then designed hats that I used the leftover woolen threads from my bunad to stitch it with.

Wool Flannel - With quilted bedsheet from the farm and leftover wool from Oslo Mikrospinneri I designed a puffer jacket and vest.

Barn Felt Suit - Unisex suit from dead-stock textiles. The barn suits pattern originates from a jacket found at the barn at Dyrøya. I found the textile for the suit at the antique store, Salgshallen in Oslo.

The t-shirt loom - I had a frame built in the shape of a t-shirt and made it into a loom. I have gathered old t-shirts, cut them into strips to then weave them into a new t-shirt.

«**Mellom Beuys og Bestemor**» A small collection of clothing made from tablecloths and linens from the farm. Sometimes using the pattern from the barn suits.

«Identity-guerilla-gardening» A small potato field planted on an island in Akerselva in collaboration with Kaja Krakowian and Geir Backe Altern. The potatoes I inherited from my father and I have cultivated them at the farms for two seasons.

For this next project I have given a more in depth description of how my process develops, this is just one example and I will explain more during the examination process.

The Robe - One of the first projects I did within the Fashion Farm concept was the robe. I had come across a roll of Norwegian made linen, dead-stock from *Krivi*, that was intended for *Bunad* shirts. I bought the textile very cheaply and wanted to maximize the use of it. Together with Marlene Bakke, we developed a robe that uses as little textile as possible per robe, but still coming out as a robe that could be found in any hotel around the world. I did research within my network to understand what people considered to be a «normal» robe, and aimed to develop something coherent with their opinion. The linen for the robe could have been grown at the farm. The weaving could have been done at the farm. Although, that is not the case, the idea still belongs to a context for farming. After developing and designing the pattern for the robe, I still felt like there needed to be more contributors to the project, I wanted to create an element of DIY so that the eventual user of the robe could have a more personal and close relationship to the finished product. I invited in designer and makers to decorate and personalise their own robes and textiles.

My design strategy has been to celebrate and notice opportunities in materials, resources, locations and individuals that has mostly been excluded from the mainstream fashion field. I have engaged with persons, communities or businesses to create positive, ethical and critical actions, ideas and ultimately products.

The projects mostly use materials as a starting point. I investigate their full potential in terms of design-value, utility and history. The design approach I have developed is pragmatic and the outcomes seek to be inclusive and democratic. I often work in collaboration with others finding that this increases the potential audience.

Fashion Farm as a concept allows me to distance myself from the fashion industry and rather highlight the utility of clothing. Since farming as an activity addresses materials, resources and outcomes, I find it a useful contradiction when working with sartorial matters. It is important to note that most textiles starts out in the hands of a farmer or growing in a field.

It is an invitation that lets the audience and users reevaluate and think about what they choose to dress themselves with.

Self Assessment.

The concept is simple; does this idea/action/product belong to the Fashion Farm? Does it serve a purpose, does it add value and does it create happiness?

Fashion Farm as a design concept highlights the problem of linear thinking in a world made up of circles. My project is about an experiment to see if my ideas can

work in the long term. I seek to set the agenda for my future and create a framework that I can function within far beyond my MA studies.

One of the latest initiatives by Fashion Farm is the «identity-guerilla-gardening» project, although this is not directly connected to design or fashion it opens possibilities to share knowledge about ways of living. A humble potato has the potential of changing our lifestyle and give us independence. The potato functions as a place-holder for how my ideas and practice develops.

The aspect of collaboration is important, because it develops communities and disseminate awareness and knowledge. Working with diverse groups has helped me to understand both my own projects and the world from many different angles.

Out of the projects that are active at this stage, some of them has to do with fashion and sartorial matters, some don't. The reason for this is that the same design principles that exists in the robe or in the felt suit, also exists in the footstool or the potato-field. It has to do with longevity, independence, democracy and liberating oneself from conventional aesthetics.

The ongoing pandemic has liberated me from working within the normal framework of presenting projects in a fashion show or in an exhibition. Being forced to break with the norm has allowed me to develop my project in a more organic and holistic manner. My project challenges the idea of a complete product and rather presents a way of developing something over time. The pandemic has also raised questions and awareness around topics central in the Fashion Farm concept, like self-sufficiency and shortage of materials and labour.

Many of the materials I am using in my projects comes directly from the farm. The materials that are not directly linked to the farm are usually waste or surplus materials sourced from within my own community. I aim to change our patterns of behaviour and help us to celebrate the possibilities and opportunities in the dormant. I am trained to spot potential in resources and materials at hand and with that build creative opportunities.

Knowledge comes from collaboration, discussion and the sharing of resources and I wholeheartedly believe that we are able to change destructive ways of living by celebrating the more humble aspects of life, nature and relationships.

An heirloom footstool - built and designed by my grandfather.



«Identity-guerilla-gardening» - planting potatoes with Kaja Krakowian.



The Robe - exhibited at JF Curated in Oslo, summer 2019.

