



The Fabric of My Life

Newsletter 2

The Fabric of My Life (FABRIC) is a collaborative project between cultural institutions in DK, GR, and DE with the aim to innovate and test new methods in the cultural sectors concerning migration history, to empower refugee women and to train cultural workers and design students. FABRIC fosters new digital and cultural products co-created with refugee women.

In FABRIC, we see clothing as an individual means of communicating our identity, our history and the future at which we aim. European and refugee women are invited to co-create and contribute to exhibitions, both digital, pop-up, and conventional shows, and use clothing to narrate their life stories.

FABRIC trains cultural workers to widen their scope, reach out to new audiences and speak directly to refugee/immigrant populations

Activities

January 22nd 2019

Kick off meeting Athens Danish Institute

Speakers:

Stella Spantidaki (ARTEX Director) made a introductory presentation of the project The Fabric of My Life (partners, methodology, objectives).

Chryssa Karpatziani, Lawyer LL.M. & MSc, PhD Candidate in the Sociology of Law, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Spyros Koulocheris, Lawyer LL.M. & Head of Legal Research at the Greek Council for Refugees, PhD





Candidate in the History of Law, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (research project Dress and the Law, www.dressandthelaw.gr), presented their research “The garment that unifies and differentiates. Anthropogeographical approaches and regulatory settings”. In this project, they study the relationship between dress and fashion and different Greek and European regulations. They talked about the new markets that have emerged in Athens to cater for the needs of the refugees in specific clothing, about the self-identity and its relation to our own garments, about law regulations in Greece regarding clothing and presented the methodology and objectives of their research.

Elia Petridou, social anthropologist (Aegean University) presented her research on recycling and donating textiles and clothing on the islands Lesbos and Chios (e.g. “Dirty Girls”, collection and washing of abandoned garments and blankets and distribution to refugee camps, recycling of life-jackets to bags).

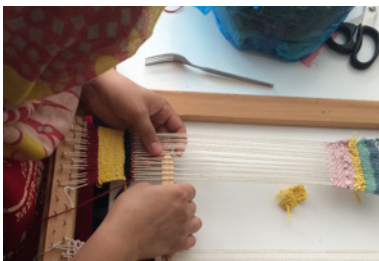
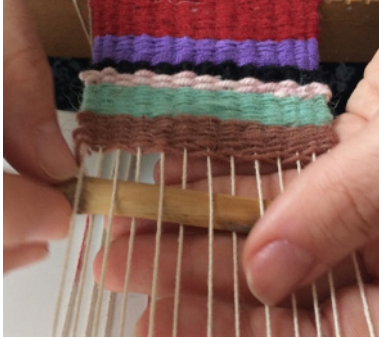
Louisa Karapidaki, art curator (Academy of Athens), talked about her experience from curating the art exhibition “New Homelands” in 2018, organised by the Creative Europe project “FAIDRA: Family Separation through Immigration - Dramatising Anecdotal European History”.

March 13th 2019

Creative Europe Athens Meeting

The Creative Europe Desk Greece organized a workshop at the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports with all Greek institutions that run Creative Europe projects, in order for everyone to present their own projects and to provide an opportunity for the participants to meet new people and foster collaboration²¹ Greek institutions from different backgrounds came together and discussed ongoing and new projects. FABRIC was represented by Stella Spantidaki, ARTEX Director.

May 2019



Textile Workshops in Athens

In May 2019, ARTEX in collaboration with the Threads of Patience, art project of Irini Gonou and Kleopatra Tsali (textile artists), started a weekly weaving workshop series at the Multifunctional Center for Refugees and Migrants in Athens with immigrant women from Cameroun and Congo. The workshop involved dyeing wool threads with kurkuma and hibiskus tea (karkadesh) and weaving on small wooden frames (tabby, sumak). The women had no previous weaving experience and were quite enthusiastic with the workshop, and they found weaving very creative, but also very calming.

(<https://www.accmr.gr/en/services/service/333-πολυδύναμο-κέντρο-προσφύγων.html>).

Deutsches Textilmuseum Krefeld (DTM) and Akademie Mode und Design (AMD) Düsseldorf Exhibition project modules at the AMD Düsseldorf in cooperation with DTM

Collaboration started May 2019, opening date of the exhibition at DTM was scheduled for May 2020, but will be moved to spring 2021 since project-manager Dr. Uta-Christian Bergemann will leave the project for a steady position by July 31st, 2019.

So far, Uta-Christian Bergemann has worked out the collaboration with four departments of the AMD Düsseldorf:

1. the departments of Fashion and Design Management (head: Regine Hövelmann),
2. the department of Fashion Journalism and Communication (head: Ina Köhler),
3. the department of Fashion Design (head: Markus Wirtz, responsible professor: Claus Bortas)
4. the department of Brand and Communication Design (head: Ralf Lobeck).



Workplan

The workplan as Uta has designed it will be carried out, but changes may come up in terms of the time-table. Some activities will be started at a later date while others were already finished. A general meeting with the heads of the AMD-departments, Uta and Annette Schieck will be held on July 9th, 2019, and changes on the work plan will then be communicated to the project-members

We plan the workload of two semesters, the summer term 2019 with the development of the content and the winter term 2019/2020. In winter term we will continue the content, the fashion designers will create dresses, the brand and communication designers will develop the design of the exhibition and its commercials.

In February Uta Bergemann started to prepare the work of the students. Therefore, she got a fellowship of the Fresenius Hochschule and the AMD. She read the scientific literature and developed the methods of research. The researches will concentrate on the five most prominent migrant groups of Düsseldorf: Japan and Far East, Turkey, Syria and Near East, Morocco and North Africa, Ghana and West Africa. Podcast have been produced and sent to Mikkel, CTR.

We have done research in the fashions and dresses of those migrants, their motivations of wearing specific dresses, that might be inspired by traditional costumes of their countries of origin, the business and trade of those dresses, fashion designers, creating those dresses, the tradition of fashion and costume in the countries of origin.

Since April the work has started in three seminars, which contribute to the researches:

- a. the second semester of the course of studies “Fashion and Design Management” is preparing an opinion poll of the migrants in Düsseldorf,
- b. the sixth semester is researching the fashion of the migrant communities in Düsseldorf. These researches are accompanied by the course of studies “Fashion Journalism and Communication”; the students are conducting interviews with the above mentioned migrant groups and creat-

ing podcasts.

c. therefore, on April 11th/12th Mikkel Nørtoft, University of Copenhagen, offered a training in podcasts for the students of the Academy of Fashion and Design Düsseldorf (see below)

Conferences

Uta Bergemann has attended current conferences, that accompanied the exhibition “Contemporary Muslim Fashion”, Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt / Main in order to get better insight into in the public discussion of the dresses of migrants:

1. the first conference was held from April 12th to 14th. The conference was discussed and opposed intensively by the German public.
2. the second was organized by the Goethe-University of Frankfurt, Mai 8th, concerning the “Islamic veil, symbol of honour or suppression”.

Teaching and learning activities

March 25th 2019

Podcast workshop in Copenhagen, Mikkel Nørtoft and Jane taught podcast production.

April, 6-7th 2019

Podcast workshop in Düsseldorf, Mikkel Nørtoft taught podcast production

April 11-12th 2019

Podcast workshop for a class of students at Akademie Mode und Design (AMD) in Düsseldorf, taught by Mikkel Nørtoft. The purpose of the podcast school was that the students now have the tools to make more podcasts for The Fabric of My Life, but even more to empower them to be able to make their own podcast in the future with minimal equipment. The first day went with a quick introduction to interview and recording techniques and equipment, followed by the students recording their own interviews and then learning how to convert files, and edit their recordings. The second day, the students finished their editing and learned how to



enhance the sound of their recordings with effects, adding intro/outro and background music, mixing and exporting podcasts.

June 30th 2019

Visit to the Victorian Home (Klunkehjemmet), guided tour by curator Anne Mette Marcher Andersen. The 19th century Victorian home of a wealthy pasementary, buttons, and ribbons merchant in Copenhagen. See how textiles are used as status, wealth and symbolism <https://en.natmus.dk/museums-and-palaces/the-victorian-home/>

July 1st 2019

Podcast workshop, training undertaken at the National Museum for partner in Fabric

July 1st

Visit to Viking Age exhibition at the National Museum and talk on artistic reconstruction of Vikin dresses

Public lectures about FABRIC

January 10th 2019

Tekstil som kulturens DNA,
1 hour talk by ML Nosch at AOF Herlev, an association for elderly people in the suburbs of Copenhagen (ca. 80 participants)

– **March 7th 2019**

The Fabric of My Life. New Creative Europe Project. A talk given by ML Nosch and Gitte Engholm, in the Agency for Culture and Castles, Ministry of Culture, Copenhagen (ca 25 participants)

– **April 2019**

Speech and lecture at the occasion of Queen Margarethe II's Science Award, given in the Royal Academy of Sciences, by ML Nosch (100 participants)

– **May 2019**

The Fabric of My Life. Clothing, Memory and Emotions, Evening Lecture given in the Danish Institute at Athens, by ML Nosch (200 participants)

– **June 29th, 2019**

Elia Petridou from University of the Aegean, Greece gave





a lecture on Dress, Gender and Embodiment: Theoretical perspectives, Cases in point, Implications for research at the conference Gender, Fashion, and Embodiment in Islam at University of Hamburg

Publications

September 2018: Stella Spantidaki Textiles reveal the identity of a person and a community, Artex

Submitted May 1st : Marie-Louise Nosch, The Fabric of My Life, Archaeological Textiles Review 2019 (4 pages text about FABRIC, published in an international journal for textile research and craft)

March 2019: paper in Arabic about textile initiatives and projects for refugee women in Denmark, written by Buthaina Shaheen

(https://www.arbdk.info/2019/03/denmark-2019-live.html?fbclid=IwAR1AVTi75f_y2_0e4HCkevY8jTA05_UNTgexWr-Box8BGKYAVT-P77Jx7Cws).

Summary in English and Danish:

(<https://ctr.hum.ku.dk/nyhedsliste/migrant-and-refugee-women-show-their-creativity-through-embroidering-sewing-and-knitting/>).

Meetings and planning

May 3rd Marie Loiose Nosch and Stella Spantidaki met in Athens for planning of activities.

They also met with the colleagues from the Dress and the Law project, Myrsini Pichou and Chryssa Kapartziani, and discussed dress regulations in Europe

<http://www.dressandthelaw.gr>

June 30th to July 1st 2019, 2nd Monitoring meeting, in Copenhagen.

Gitte and Marie-Louise had made a program with training, visits, planning and discussions.



Program: Sunday 30th June:

Sunday we met with students and organisers from Hack Your Future, the socio-economic company for refugees who have built our podcast platform. See <https://www.hackyourfuture.dk/>

Meeting with the mentors and teachers at HYF, Majd, Christopher, Daniel and Benjamin. And the graduates of class 07 who made our podcast platform: Johanna May Baguio, Yana Khuchieva, Monya Kwene Alete, Badr Amine, Samyar Modabber. They presented how they made the platform.



Program Monday 1st July

On the Monday, we spent the whole day at the National Museum of Denmark. The training was about seeing various textiles and clothing in museum exhibitions, plus we went through planning and monitoring of FABRIC

Agenda contained: Work plan updates, time sheets, communication plan, evaluation plans, 2nd FABRIC Newsletter, 3rd meeting: where and who, promoting Fabric on SoMe, news and plans from the textile artists Solveig Berg Søndergaard and Rezvan Farsijani.

Upcoming activities

Conference at AMD with Annette Schieck and Uta Bergemann in order to work out the project's activities after Uta Bergemann has left the project (from August 2019).

3rd Monitoring Meeting in Krefeld, 10 th of October, 2019

3rd Newsletter, Krefeld Annette Schieck

Training workshop at DTM Krefeld by Else Skjold, Wardrobe studies.

Annette Schieck are meeting with Dr. Targid Yousef, being in charge of migrant activities in the department "Migration und Integration" of the city council Krefeld.

Appendix:

1. Updated Communications plan
2. Summary of 2nd meeting, Copenhagen