

IN THE HEART OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY: 5 PROJECTS DEVELOPED BY EUROPEAN DESIGNERS OF WORTH PARTNERSHIP PROJECT WITH THE AIM OF REUSING RESOURCES AND MATERIALS AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Thanks to the WORTH Partnership Project, Europe's largest virtual incubator dedicated to creativity, designers from EU and COSME countries have been able to work on innovative products and materials with the aim of reducing human impact on ecosystems and giving new life to what was previously discarded.

Milan, 17 September 2020 - Swimsuits created using "environmentally friendly" yarns that protect the environment and the health of the wearer, materials born from the reuse of abandoned fishing nets to create unique and exclusive bags, wooden wall coverings that give new life to discarded materials when trees are cut down, second-hand sneakers reinvented thanks to the use of new and natural materials such as cork, contemporary jewelry created through the combination of materials born from food industry waste with others such as gold, silver, tissue paper and coal. These are just some of the incredible products created by European designers selected within the WORTH Partnership Project, funded by the European Commission.

"Every year in the European Union, [2.5 billion tons of waste](#) are produced, this data shows how the transition to a circular economy is very necessary. Extending the life cycle of products, in fact, can help reduce waste by generating additional value from something that already exists". Explains Korina Molla, project leader of the WORTH Partnership Project. "Fully embracing the concept of circular economy and recognizing its growing importance, we have selected for the second call of WORTH Partnership Project several creative projects that aim to reuse existing and normally discarded products and materials - such as fishing nets or waste materials from the food industry - and create new ones that have a low impact on the environment, with the focus on design, personal taste and consumer needs".

WORTH Partnership Project is Europe's largest creative incubator, with 152 selected projects involving 345 partners from 34 EU-COSME countries - from France to Germany, Spain, UK, Italy, and not to mention the Netherlands, Slovenia, Moldova, Estonia, Sweden, Finland, Montenegro, Serbia, etc. This project by the European Commission is a unique laboratory where European designers can experience the advantages offered by transnational collaborations and participation in an internal market of more than 500 million people.

Below are all the details of the projects that are facing new challenges in circular economy, high resolution images are available [in this link](#).

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OCEANWEAR

Countries involved: Germany, Finland



The collaboration between the German design and consulting firm Beneficial Design Institute and the Finnish clothing brand Tam-Silk Oy has led to the development of a **swimsuit designed using a biodegradable polymeric yarn that protects the environment as well as the health of the wearer**, without forgetting the style.

The team worked on this project with the aim of finding an answer to the pollution of one of the most sensitive ecosystems in the world: the

ocean. Up to 12.7 million tons of plastic and huge amounts of microplastics enter the watercourses every year, where they will take 500 years to biodegrade. Unfortunately, swimsuits are made from the same synthetic fibers to ensure a water, chlorine and UV resistant and quick drying fabric. For this reason, they contain stabilizers, fabric softeners, additives and other chemicals such as PFCs, which are extremely harmful to the marine environment.

"Swimsuit is a garment that we wear in close contact with the body, for this reason, its design requires the cycle of materials used is safe and its composition is respectful to both the skin and the environment. OCEANWEAR wants to respond to both these needs, proposing a garment that is really designed in harmony with nature and without generating waste, but is also able to meet the needs of consumers on a functional and aesthetic level". Explains Stefanie Barz, Project Manager.

THE GHOST BAG

Countries involved: France, Holland



Creating an innovative material starting from waste abandoned at sea and using it to create **an exclusive and environmentally friendly bag**: this is the idea behind the project THE GHOST BAG, created by New Relation, a Parisian project by fashion designer Mattia Akkermans and artist-choreographer Morgan Belenguer, and Polymer Science Park, a Dutch association that deals with innovation in the field of polymeric materials processing technologies.

It is estimated that abandoned fishing nets, also known as ghost nets, amount to 640,000 tons, or 10% of the world's marine waste. Each year they are responsible for trapping and killing millions of marine animals and coral reefs, and are one of the main symbols of oceans overexploitation. THE GHOST BAG has been conceived thanks to a fabric created from these recycled materials, trapped in ECONYL * regenerated nylon fabric, and is recyclable itself. Each piece will be unique and special, as the nets used will be positioned differently each time and will be integrated into an open circuit recycling system.

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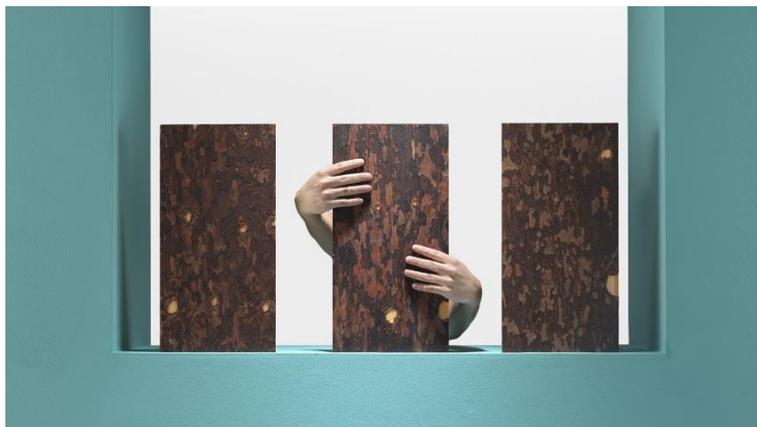
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"The production line will be all European: the fishing nets will be supplied by a fishermen's cooperative in the Netherlands working on the reclamation of the North Sea, the ECONYL yarns and fabric will be made in Italy and the bags will be produced in Paris. With traceability of the production line we want to guarantee a product of the highest quality, which will be unique". Explains Mattia Akkermans of New Relation.

PINESKINS SOFT WALL TILES

Countries involved: Netherlands, Spain

A collection of wood wall coverings in warm colors that gives new life to discarded materials when trees are cut down, including their bark. This project, which sees its genesis in the collaboration between the studio of designer Sarmite Polakova and the Spanish company Seistag, which accompanies companies in the process of innovation and internationalization, was born from the observation that the resources of our planet are constantly drained, addressing the theme of excessive consumption of forests, especially pine trees.



The bark of these trees is considered a by-product of the wood industry and when the tree is cut it is discarded, but if properly harvested and treated, it can become a versatile material with a strong identity and various application possibilities. All this following the current market trend that sees an increasing orientation towards natural and sustainable materials. Pine bark, in fact, can only be obtained from trees that have been felled and not from living plants. Treated in the correct way, the bark maintains its flexibility, color and texture and can be used later.

"One of the main challenges related to the use of this beautiful material is the fact that its processing involves high costs and its availability is limited; we have worked on the search for a way to optimize the product in accordance with the concept of sustainability, choosing natural materials and creating a network of contact with forest cutters so that we can have access to the bark. The result is surprising and has led to the creation of coatings created using bark and pine wood, which are surprising for their unusual texture, colors and scent, perfect for decorating rooms with a touch of style". Explains Sarmite Polakova of Studio Sarmite.

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SOLE SUSTAINABILITY

Countries involved: Holland, Italy

It is a fact that, in most cases, sneakers that are worn out are discarded and replaced rather than repaired. This project of the Second Call WORTH, born from the collaboration between the Dutch brand of genderless footwear Peterson Stoop and the Italian company producing soles for shoes Givans Fondi, wanted to take charge of this problem, finding **an original solution that consists in deconstructing second hand sneakers, and reassembling them using new and natural materials such as cork**. The result is a product with distinctive features that make it aesthetically unique in its kind.



"Since we created our brand in 2016, we have been constantly looking for sustainable materials to use in the sneaker design process, which is why we have chosen to work with Givans Fondi, which produces TP soles, a material that can be recycled and therefore fits well with our philosophy". Jarah Stoop from Peterson Stoop explains: "Without WORTH Partnership Project we would never have been able to work with Givans Fondi; for us having the opportunity to create a collaboration like this was very important, as it allowed us to make a qualitative leap in our products, which have become more professional and sustainable".

The shoes are already on the market and can be purchased on the site <https://petersonstoop.com/>

HOLLOW: A LIE STORY

Countries involved: Romania, Spain



A collection of contemporary and very special jewelry, created thanks to the combination of recycled and innovative non-woven materials with others such as gold, silver, tissue paper and coal. The result of the collaboration between jewelry designer Angela Ciobanu and the Spanish company Innovarty, consultant for product innovation and the creation of advanced materials, this project has seen the birth of a jewelry collection created from waste materials from the food and textile industries.

The residues from the production of these industries were used to create new non-woven fabrics and were then combined with precious elements such as gold and silver to create a truly unique collection.

"With this project, we wanted to create a series of contemporary jewelry pieces, with a unique aesthetic, that could transcend the idea that a piece of jewelry should only be an ornament for the body: it can be much more than that". Designer Angela Ciobanu explains. "Through a special attention

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to the concept of sustainability, the collection aims to redefine the notions of preciousness and value in jewelry and fashion".

The jewelries are already on the market and can be purchased at the following link <https://shop.notjustalabel.com/>

WORTH Partnership Project

Un'iniziativa della Commissione Europea che si propone di sostenere collaborazione tra PM e start-up di designers, produttori e imprese tecnologiche per creare nuovi prodotti e realizzare idee innovative e dirompenti. L'iniziativa è attuata da un consorzio in tutta Europa, nella convinzione che le industrie creative (PMI e start-up) siano i principali motori della crescita economica in Europa. al



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Consorzio:



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KEPA Business and Cultural Development Centre

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IED Istituto Europeo di Design

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AA Avvocati Associati Franzosi Dal Negro Setti

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Per saperne di più:

www.worthproject.eu

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