

REFLECTION
♦
DIARY

Consumption - Nature

ABSTRACT

Convivere is a project that arises from a research process on the complex relationships between consumption in the global fashion system and nature. The fashion industry is one of the most damaging to the environment, with its rapid and ever-changing sales cycles and its massive extraction of natural resources. As a result, nature and human fashion consumption practices have increasingly been at odds, resulting in enormous difficulties in reconciling these conflicting relationships.

Therefore, the fundamental question behind Convivere is how we can rethink fashion in relation to nature, proposing new possibilities outside the prevailing extractivism in the industry. Through speculative design, we imagine other possible worlds in order to reflect critically on how our fashion consumption practices have impacted the biosphere and how these relationships could begin to change.



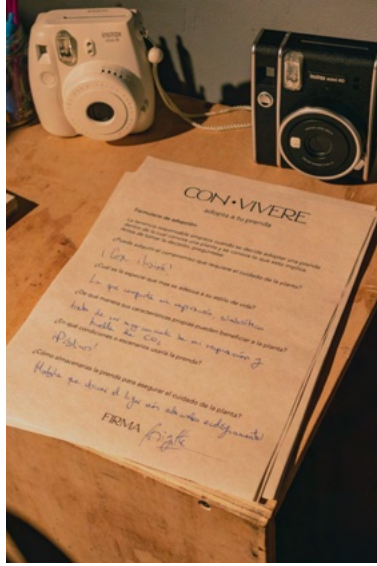
Visual representation of our world (created with AI)

WORLD

With the lockdown resulting from the pandemic, nature once again took over the places that humanity had taken away from it. Vines, seeds, fungi, and other beings began to creep through windows and cracks in clothing stores, growing on both synthetic and natural textile surfaces.

Nature's power acted swiftly, restoring the lost ecological balance on the planet. During this process, nature became an active agent within the fashion industry, participating in the clothes' design.

This raised awareness among people, who began to understand the value and purpose of nature and to respect its role within our surroundings. Consequently, a process of adopting garments was established, with care systems and benefits for specific plants, allowing them to coexist with us in our daily lives.



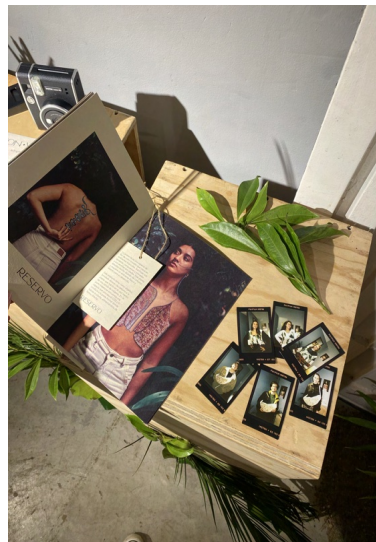
Adoption form filled



Visitors during the enactment



Visitors during the enactment



Lookbook and polaroids

ENACTMENT

What if clothes and ornaments were living beings?

Guests of this activation will participate in a fictional world where they can adopt an artifact, created to benefit the organisms living in the clothes.

Each garment in this world has been intervened and co-created with beings from nature, such as chia seeds, oyster mushrooms, jacaranda, papayuelo, etc. For this reason, artifacts are created to help these beings survive and continue to reproduce through the benefits that humans can provide them.

RECIPE

Ingredients:

- Displayed clothes: One vest intervened with plants and one fanny pack/bumbag intervened with fungi (Oyster mushrooms)
- Tags: Two tags, one for each garment. One should contain care instructions for the plants on the vest, and the other for the fungi on the fanny pack.
- Mirror: Full-length mirror for people to try on the articles on themselves.
- Instant camera and film packs: These will be used to take photos of each person with the garment they are adopting.
- Lookbook: It will showcase other designs of possible clothing items within this world.
- Pens: Participants will use these to write their reflections and fill out the adoption form.
- Adoption form: Participants will answer questions, make commitments, and finally sign to formalize the adoption.
- Postcards: Participants will use these to write their final thoughts on the project and the experience they had.



CON • VIVERE

adopta una prenda





CONVIVERE



RECIPE

Steps:

1: Participants browse through the displayed artifacts, each with a label indicating the care they require.

2: After browsing, the person chooses an article that interests them to adopt.

3: The participant tries on the article they chose. They can use a mirror to see how their new outfit looks.

4: A instant photo (Polaroid) is taken of the participant wearing the article.

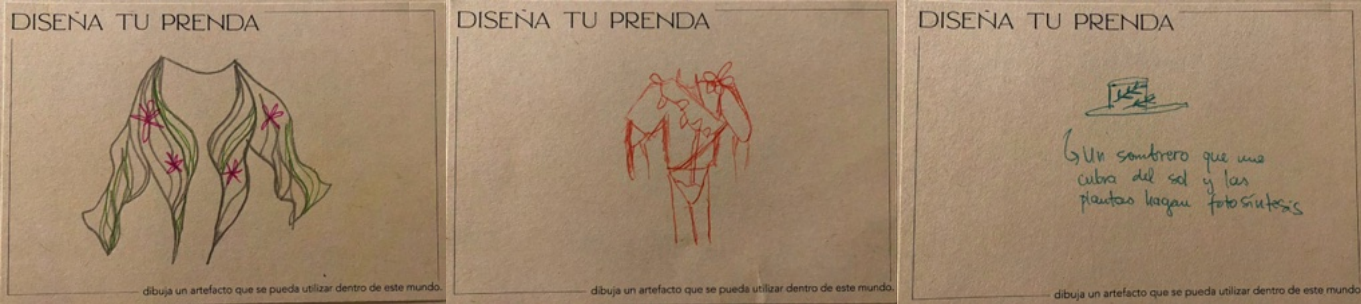
5: The adoption process of the garment takes place.

6: Participants are given an adoption form, which they sign to commit to properly caring for the garment and the organism living within it. They also provide a brief reflection on how they can contribute to its well-being.

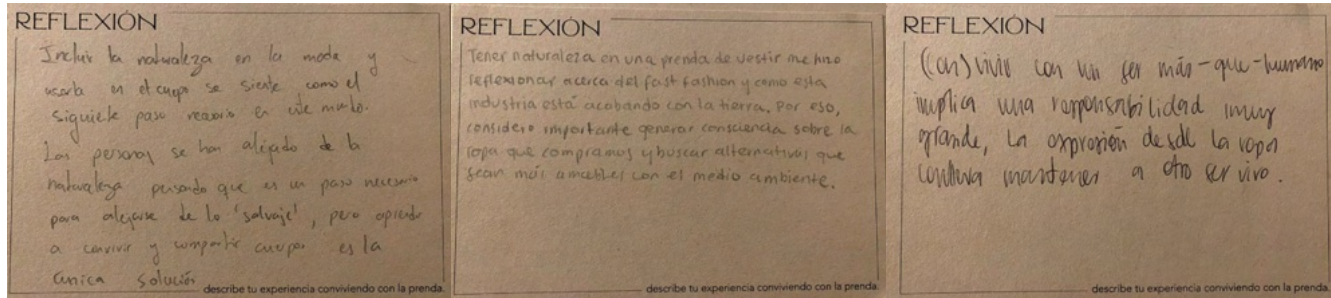
7: Participants are given a postcard to write a short reflection about the experience.

8: Participants will have the opportunity to design and draw their own clothing article for this world, taking inspiration from what they saw in the exhibition and the lookbook.

9: Finally, participants can take their adoption form along with their Polaroid photo with the article.



Drawings of visitors designing possible artefacts that can be used in this world.



Written reflections of visitor's experience during the enactment

For the Convivere project exhibition, visitors have experienced deep reflections on new forms of creation, the impact of fast fashion on nature, the importance of self-awareness in benefiting other organisms, lifestyle changes, and the adaptation of their spaces to ensure the survival of organisms under their complete responsibility. These reflections have sparked a sense of responsibility and commitment to sustainability and coexistence with nature in their everyday lives. One notable aspect of these reflections was the success of the created garments and sketches in the lookbook as a reference for viewers and visitors to understand the mechanism and cycle of exchange. This was evident in the new garments created by each visitor, which were tailored to their specific dynamics, prior knowledge, and experiences to properly care for the organisms present in the new garments.

VISITORS REFLECTIONS

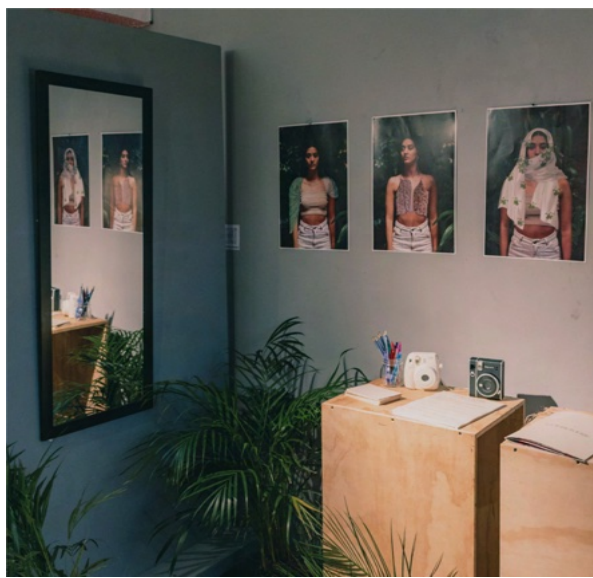
GROUP REFLECTIONS

Since the inception of our project, each team member has expressed a commitment to alternative and sustainable fashion practices. Being aware of the need to rethink how we conceive and consume clothing, the concepts of consumption and nature allowed us to maintain a critical perspective and delve into more ethical and respectful behaviors towards the environment. For the project, garments were co-created with nature, taking into account an ecosystem's natural cycle. This initiative required a deep understanding of the processes that various organisms such as chia seeds, fungi, bacteria, and vines undergo in terms of their care and habitat. Therefore, the experimentation process was crucial to comprehend and create with nature.

The idea of making a garment capable of maintaining a cycle of interchange with nature changes our way of thinking. For a long time, we have had an extractivist attitude towards nature, simply taking without considering the consequences and giving nothing in return. But this new perspective invites us to co-create and turn it into a cycle where we give back and benefit nature.

However, it is important to recognize that it has been challenging for us to detach from extractivism and understand its profound meaning. At first, we could not see beyond our own needs and how nature could benefit us, as it has always been more evident how nature can provide us with resources and well-being, rather than the other way around. The experimentation carried out by each of us was key, as it allowed us to reflect on how our lives and behaviors had changed since we were cultivating living beings within our garments. Taking care and ensuring that these organisms had everything that would benefit them and keep them alive was what allowed us to understand how people's consumption habits could change once they became aware of the responsibility that comes with having a being that accompanies and relies on them daily for survival. The responsibility of caring for these garments lies with the consumer, so reducing consumption becomes essential, as it implies taking on the responsibility of maintaining, conserving, and preserving these garments over time.

Throughout this project, we found ourselves at the crossroads between our old extractivist mentality and the new perspective of co-creation and care. It was a challenging but necessary path to find a sustainable balance between human beings and nature. By doing so, we contribute to maintaining the life cycle of the organisms that are part of these garments, as in this case, human beings have more to offer the organism, such as water, oxygen, substrates, and human warmth. Creating these garments not only changes our way of thinking and consuming within the fashion industry, but also prompts us to reflect on our role as designers and the power we have to reduce excessive consumption and generate consumer awareness to be responsible, value, care for, and be part of a cycle of exchange and reciprocity with nature. Only through these actions can we build a future where human beings and nature coexist harmoniously.



Photos of exhibition and enactment

By:

Manuela Cadena, Santiago Colmenares,
Mariana León, Estefania Mariño, Mariana Rojas

CON•VIVERE