

Project Proposal Project

ADDA6006

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When exploring what my working practices are and how I am evolving as a designer I reflect on how it started in first year, at this point in my life I was unsure about what I wanted to be after this degree, with limited skills I was not optimistic about my success, but after taking the time to explore all the opportunities and skills I was taught I now feel more confident in myself to enjoy and share my artistic integrity and sell my products to others. Since beginning I have started a small store to further push myself out there into printing pieces for people's homes with plans to explore products further to show off my multiskilled abilities. Seeing how I have adapted so much for this final year gives me hope for being a desired designer maker. Being a creator and making objects physically that I love is important to me and is a passion handed down from the family line since my grandfather.

As I start my final year of my course, I am tasked with creating a final project that showcases my skills and work at its best. My project will follow a family narrative, using eco-friendly processes such as natural dyeing and upcycled materials. While doing my summer project, I became drawn to the idea of natural dyeing and reusing materials rather than buying brand-new rolls of fabric, changing the circular economy and encouraging us to use what we have. The European Parliament states that “[b]etween 4% and 9% of all textile products put on the European market are destroyed without ever being used. Used clothes can be exported outside the EU but most are (87%) incinerated or landfilled’ (2020, Edited 2025). This statistical data illustrates how concerning it is and only furthers the decision to use upcycled textiles in my work. I hope to show others how you can upcycle materials into something original instead of buying brand new and show beauty in undesirable objects. Taking the time to source all my materials from a range of second-hand shops means I can take the time to explore different mediums and garments that will have a new life rather than ending up in landfill. Following this, I started looking at the effects of making textile products and the pollution caused by it, whether it’s the dyeing process and the tons of water needed to make the textile itself. ‘Production from textiles “is estimated to be responsible for about 20% of global clean water pollution, mainly from the dyeing process” European Parliament (2020, Edited 2025).

The dyeing process causes a significant amount of pollution and has influenced this investigation of natural dyeing methods and the use of processes that will not affect the environment, through this investigation I want to close that circle in my work by developing my knowledge of this field further. Research was conducted through a range of different natural dye websites and designers to learn more about how processes

work. These were completed in my kitchen and documented how I did each sample which gathered how natural products reacted with the fabrics that I collected from second-hand shops, it further explored the vibrancy of colour, ending up with a huge collection as a baseline for my independent projects quilt idea.

I hope to take the samples and develop these further and create a meaningful quilt that reflects how family and nature flow in unison, which will be a life work. My family are tied to nature, and the gardens are our special places that support us mentally in the harder parts of life. The support the garden had for my grandparents during my grandfathers end of life helped make things a lot easier for us all, he spent his whole adult life with this garden and watched it grow with his children and grandchildren. This makes it a big influence for my major project, and I hope to take elements of these special places on to cloth for others to see and appreciate. I felt a link between my theme and ideas within the book *Stitching Love and Loss* (Collins, 2023), as the overview discusses overcoming grief and suffering loss through stitch, this book has been requested through the library and I will read and take inspiration from its words while creating the final quilt. Furthermore, my visit to the Jen Jones Quilt Museum in November shined a different light on how quilts are constructed, and the beauty of creating Welsh quilts. As a Welsh woman I feel in a way I am following with traditions and hopefully inspiring more people my age to pick up this historic craft for themselves.

The context of my project will relate to a living room collection with wallpaper, homeware and a quilt that will be the centrepiece, being the main inspiration that leads the rest of the pieces. My reasoning for this is that the living room can be considered the hub of the house and a gathering place for friends and family; my collection will reflect the importance of using spaces to bring people together. My audience, in retrospect, is my family, but it could be desirable for families that also have a warm connection to each other and people who like natural processes and colours. A brand that follows this natural dyeing process is Cloth Collective, using naturally dyed fabrics to enhance people's homes, having a passion for using recycled and plant-based materials and dyes which has been a big inspiration for my ideas and how I could bring this idea to life. A quote from House & Garden (2023) details about the site and founder Charlotte Johnston and how she creates her work.

‘Charlotte works with fabrics made from sustainably grown fibres, including a mixture of linen and hemp, sourced from local producers. She hopes the latter, often avoided for its coarse quality, will become more popular: ‘It’s nothing like it used to be – it’s really refined now and could be grown all across the UK.’

My audience may also be people who like having more neutral tones in their home; the earthy tones of my naturally dyed materials bring a subtle element into the home, and I feel an older audience would appreciate it more, as it fits the earthy tones that work well in a traditional home. The quilt could also be seen as a usable item that would be draped across the sofa or chair, a family communal item that brings them all together. In addition, this could be a centrepiece for an aspiring family and kick off the story of another generation.

When considering the materiality of this project the use of sustainable materials is an obvious place to start, with the main quilt being constructed of upcycled materials and natural dye which has a lower impact on the environment, and with this being a one off collection it would lower the carbon emissions being created from this collection, furthermore, when creating the accompanying wallpaper I will explore the use of natural pigment printing. After researching, 'Scraps' (2017), this book explores reusing textiles for fashion, and other creative endeavours. The passage written by Luisa Ceseve stood out to me, her passions for taking waste products and inventing new and fresh ideas for them is felt on a personal level. The quote,

'choosing to work with waste, closing the production loop is an expression of my belief in the moral responsibility of a designer, whose contribution is to build a better person for everyone.'

(Ceseve, 2017, p. 75)

I feel a personal connection with this quote and how it encapsulates my ideology so well, it is inspiring, knowing many more people have the same principles is refreshing and exciting for things to come with my work.

Although not attempted on paper yet, this is still an area I would like to explore and close another gap in the circle of this materials life. This pigment would result from the left-over sediment from natural dyeing and improve my awareness and knowledge when creating products in the future.

The methodology available will consist of creating mood boards to voice ideas, and to explore the materials that will be used and how these will work together to create a cohesive collection. The methods will focus on the creation of the quilt and how this can be used to bring a sense of kinship, I want everyone to feel a sense of belonging when interacting with my final collection. While exploring trends I found that the balance of aesthetics and functionality is important and being able to interact with the

art as a useable quilt will add more meaning to the piece, increasing the longevity to more than artwork for the wall but also something to grow with.

The next process of my development regards assessing my ideas and creating a strategy plan for how I am going to achieve this final collection in my mind, working out how long it will take to create these items in time for the degree show. The principal direction for the quilt, creating an inspired pattern for the piece, the ideas and patterns that come from this will feed the other areas of my collection such as accenting wallpaper and furniture fabric. I need to start this as soon as possible to give myself time for error and developments during my design phases.

When contemplating the role the collection has in society and the impacts of its creation, one might debate that the need for another pattern design collection is superfluous. However, in my case I do not have a choice, when exploring trends retro products are making a comeback. My choice of hand quilting is also a historic process that is harder to replicate which creates a niche for my product in the market and adds character. Through research this became evident, “unlike the clinical precision of ultra-modern spaces, vintage interiors celebrate imperfection and character” (Foyr, 2025).

By participating in traditional and what is considered vintage quilting techniques, this could be an eye-catching quality to a buyer or viewer who is following a vintage styled trend of uniqueness and imperfection which is currently increasing in popularity as this does not conform to social norms or perfection. The purpose of the collection and quilt is to inspire my generation to want a family and evoke emotions through showing my own story with parents and relatives. When someone sees this the usability will be important, as a functional piece it will in theory be washable but with my use of natural dyes it will struggle to hold up with constant washing even by hand, however, if used carefully could survive. While exploring different texts that could influence me, *The Textile Reader*, second edition (2023), quotes are seen. This section of this text, *Claiming the Right to Memory* written by Isabel Cristina Gonzalez Arango (2013/2021) explores how stitching with cloth helped women who had experienced violence of armed conflict between 1998 and 2005 to reflect and come together to find solace with textiles and a sense of community. Isabel states that quote, 'Stitch by stitch, with rhythm of their own, images, memories and emotions emerge' and that 'time capriciously flits from the past to the present as lives are recounted'. (2013/2021, page 64) These ladies had conviction to recant the distressing tales while stitching as a community with textiles, when reflecting on my family narrative wanting a sense of solace in my piece as well that brings you back to the feeling of home and safety is something of importance.

The potential large scale could be a negative for a wall hanging as not every home has the space, however the quilts' main goal is to be a sofa accent and a functional item that will be useful in a busy family home. Balancing between aesthetics and functionality is important and having interactive art brings a stronger connection between the object and its owner with touch and warmth giving a sense of belonging in the room it resides in. The goal is to bring people together to appreciate the family they have and their place within it. In homeware, its purpose is to compliment the quilt and its following colour palettes and motifs that have personal connotations, making the viewer think of the story and the quilts story and meaning. This links to the choice of a living room collection, as it is the heart of a home where everyone resides after a long day to show a sense of belonging.

The vision for my second semester is to competently be a maker who can implement all the equipment available to create an ambitious final collection that utilises all I have learnt through the course, demonstrating how far I have come since the beginning to show potential companies what I have to offer. For my life after third year my current dream is to be a freelance independent artist who is considered multiskilled with my seamstress and printing skills, a hub for any custom piece that either I created or was commissioned and having a range of work to show clients which highlights my individuality against the rest of the competition. This is important to me.

Going into the second semester, there is a need to concentrate on as many skills that pique my interest and how they can flow together to make a multi process product that explores all my strongest areas. I think my ability to learn a range of new processes and skills in my own time will create an innovating set of products that include fresh thinking and combinations. Not every artist can be multiskilled and because of this my ability to do so makes me a more desirable designer.

The ambitions as a maker in the second semester will involve tackling something new, which is quilt making and through embracing all my abilities to create a main centre piece that inspires others who view it and to resonate with them on emotional levels. Regarding the future, being a multidisciplinary maker is my dream, and being a designer who is ecologically minded and responsive to the client's needs, excites me. as someone who prefers working alone being a small business freelancer gives me the best opportunity to become that, while also having free will to create and make whatever I want without anyone holding me back creatively. When considering being a

designer for a larger company, creative freedom is not such a priority however, I am keeping all my options open because you never know what the future holds.

Reflecting on my project, in a way, is to create some closure for the ones I have lost and how important aspects can be immortalised in my quilt and accompany patterned motif collection. The hope is to have a better understanding on upcycling fabrics to make new designs such as quilts to reduce the number of materials going to waste. Although I am only one person, I want to inspire more people to adapt to my ethics regarding this topic. Bringing my textile knowledgebase hobbies to my craft would also be something I want out of my work; I love my time in nature and hiking different areas so incorporating this will help push my core narrative. Another aspect I want to come from this is to develop confidence in myself and the ability to create, since developing my portfolio online I have had interest and that was something I never saw possible. Since improving my mental health, I have been more inclined to explore my passions and through encouragement by people around me to keep going, having a new sense of purpose has helped me take the time to throw myself into tasks I enjoy doing in the studio. This has opened my mind to using these techniques for my own business in the future.

When understanding how to ensure a successful outcome I need to strip the ideology to its essential elements, so it is easier for my brain to digest. By starting with setting a range of goals for myself and my project, I can have the best possible outcome for myself while also being on time with hand in dates and other tasks I am working on. One of the most important considerations needed to be successful is to keep following what I am passionate about and not do something that feels like a chore, as I will struggle to be motivated to complete the work. Another way to keep engagement is by evolving the skills I already have and keep on developing this will improve my abilities for a better outcome, following this success to me looks like a competent and well curated collection that invites viewers to a different point of view and mindset, that involves taking advantage of what materials you already have and being able to use them in different ways than they are intended. Additionally, developing resilience to my failures and being able to grow from them is very important, with ADD I tend to simmer with every mistake I make no matter the significance, so meditating and learning to let go means I can adapt and bounce back from setbacks in a timely manner. Being around people who also do this in practice has helped me to be more confident going forward and means I can evolve as a designer.

In conclusion, being set up in this mindset for the major project is exciting, having confidence and patience to explore more traditional means of printing and stitching on

textiles will be a great opportunity to take pride in what I am creating, while also following the meaning of my materials and the stories that cannot wait to come out and be shared.

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