

Transforming Clothes

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What if clothes were designed as seeds? Seeds embody an inherent potential to transform into plants with specific characteristics (shape, colour, presence of flowers and/or fruits, etc.) when influenced by external factors such as humidity, light and temperature. Following this concept, we pose the question: what if clothing had alternative, planned configurations during use, rather than degrading? This inquiry is embedded in a garment that transforms in contact with water, sunlight and friction (use). Water dissolves the supporting structure of the embroidery, revealing the underlying fabric and the dynamic expressions of the embroidered lines, which change from straight and static to organic and dynamic. Sunlight changes the colour of these lines. Finally, engravings become incisions during use, changing the shape of the garment.

By actively embedding future performance(s) in the garment we explore alternative lifecycles. The prototype can be used to examine possible everyday futures where the role of clothes is not to **be**, but to **become**. During the process of designing and making, the prototype triggered discussions about traditional clothing cycles and how everyday futures could be different. The designing and making of the prototype is the trigger, the garment should be integrated in a research setting in order to perform as a research artefact. Observing, documenting, and analysing the process of design and the interaction of the prototype with users during its lifecycle is a possible way of integration. As a result, new knowledge can be created and shared. However, designers, prototypes and the users perform in the present. How can we use them to understand the future?

We find making a natural way of gaining and creating knowledge. However, the question remains on how these artefacts can help to answer questions about the future. What are the conditions for a prototype to become a research artefact? Which complementary research processes are needed to understand aspects of the future on the basis of a concrete (present) object?