

FASHION UTOPIAS: AN EXPLORATION OF THE POSSIBLE BASED ON NEW ECOLOGIES OF MATTER & WHANAUNGATANGA (RELATIONSHIP BUILDING) WITH CLOTHES

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Abstract

This ‘phygital’ workshop (physical and then digital) invites wearers to radically open their mind and imagination to actively redefine their relationship, thoughts and actions with clothing. Participants will be asked to imagine and create a new vocabulary for fashion that does not include consumption. Instead, we will build strong whanaungatanga with ourselves, mind-body-spirit and our clothing, through a series of guided rituals inspired by new materialism, care and ecology. The language processes and images created in this workshop will start to develop a new framework for fashion experience to be shared with others. What if fashion was a way of building relationships with ourselves, each other and non-humans? The goal of this workshop is to shift our thinking about our relationship to things, both animate and inanimate, in the terrestrial and spiritual worlds to broaden our understanding and expression of sustainability through the everyday medium of clothing. Drawing from non-Western perspectives, relationality and interconnectedness, offers a counterpoint to the dominant western, capitalist, modernist way of thinking that is at the root of our separation from each other and has driven climate change.



Figure 1. Image 1: Pepeha and whakapapa. Jennifer Whitty.