





Making matters

Makers, artisans, and craftspeople explore the world through their interactions with materials. How things are made and what they are made of interests us passionately. We care about where things come from, how they are used and ultimately, what their end life may be.

When we take a tool in hand and touch it to our material, we join a long chain of human gesture in the ritual of transforming, shaping and giving substance to our ideas.

Tuscan vegetable tanned leather is a material that connects far back into the very roots of man's tradition of making, born of the necessity to make use of every part of the animal used as food. It was, and is, a precious material and its transformation, through the interaction of natural processes, from waste matter into a resource of durable value over time, was an evolutionary achievement.

Vegetable tanning, as performed in Tuscany by the members of the Genuine Italian Vegetable Tanned Leather Consorzio, is a very ancient process that has been enhanced through ever increasing vigilance to its impact on the biosphere. Every step in the process is traceable and all by products of the activity are themselves gathered and returned as a resource of value, as is the goal of a circular economy.

Everyone participating in the Craft the Leather workshop becomes very aware of how every aspect is interconnected with the traditions special to this place. Great attention is placed on the process footprint because this is a territory of highly esteemed agricultural specialties in a landmark landscape. And the tanners themselves live here; their investment in the thriving balance of nature is very personal.









Italy

Rome,

Esamanufacta

The hexagon is the geometric shape that inspired me for this project. Formed by two opposing triangles, the hexagon was for Pythagoras the symbol of the creation and union of the male and female universe. It is a transversal geometric shape in multiple areas: from nature, to architecture and design.

Thanks to its modularity, the hexagon, an efficient versatile shape, is able to confer three-dimensionality and harmony, fully enhancing the beauty of the material used. These characteristics have allowed me to represent the conceptual cornerstone of my project: the Uniqueness of the individual and the Power of the collective.







Renzo Calisto

Accademia Costume & Moda







Japan



인간人間 **Human**

As a photographer, human beings are most interesting to my eyes. Exquisite curved shapes and mysterious structures are always my subject and they become objects to explore as a bag designer.

I tried to create this beauty with this good leather.

#body

To express the beautiful curves of the human body smoothly, I created the shape in a mold and I worked with material molding techniques.

#Hahoital

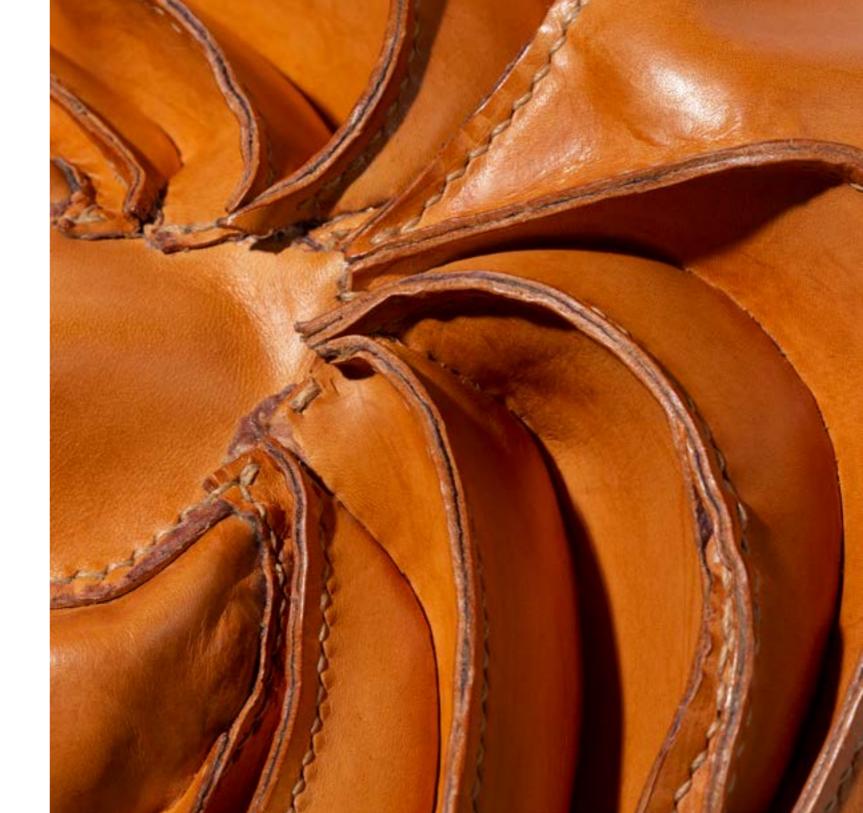
A Korean traditional mask called Hahoital covers our face and hides our emotions. It is a mask with a fixed expression, however, maybe it is not a mask but our real face that we do not want to reveal.

#Lips

Sexual attraction, a means of speaking, and a tool for taking nourishment. The importance of so many functions does not mask the beauty of this form.

-A human being is a huge bag that contains a lot of things which it both expresses, or even, hides.







Jae Hoon Kim

Bunka Fashion College Tokyo, Japan







Feet, Seat, and Love

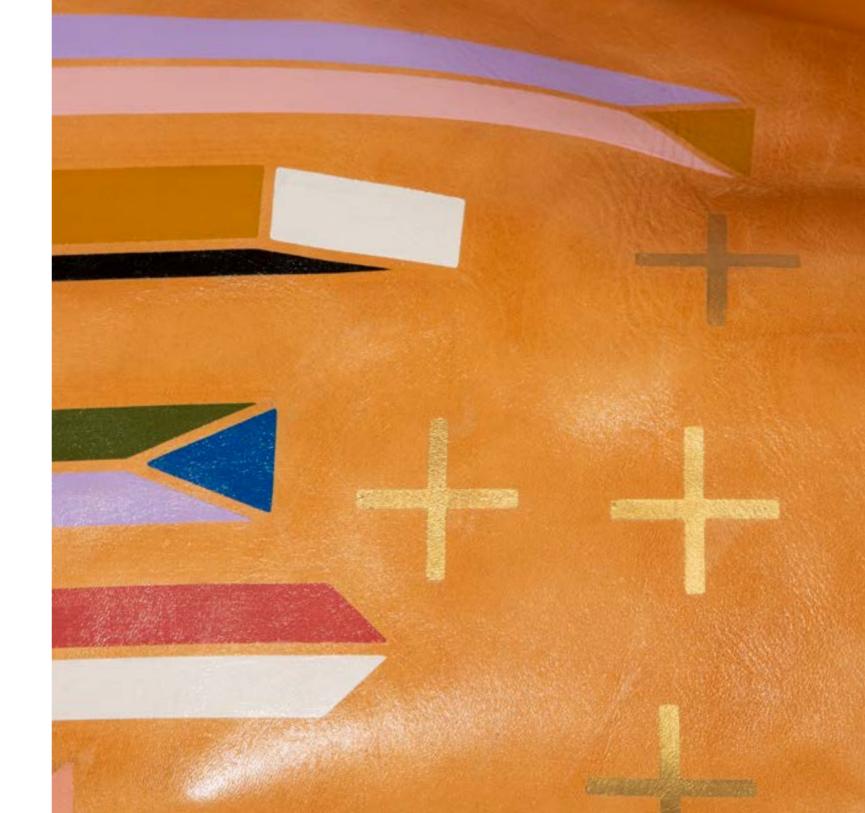
The most important thing for me when developing this collection was experimenting with veg-tan leather and exposing this material to different uses.

Leather is a material I am still exploring. This project allows me to have an intimate connection with leather and to discover some of its extraordinary characteristics.

The objects of my collection are aimed to exalt unique features that only veg-tan leather has. Contrasting qualities that coexist in this material such as softness and strength, flexibility and hardness, were inspiration for this project.

I have developed three decorative and everyday objects, subtle and soft to the touch, yet sturdy and lasting.

Capel Manor College









Capel Manor College London, UK





Fernando Gutierrez

College for Creative Studies - Detroit , MI

USA



Submerged

Ideas about water floated in my mind while I made this collection. Water has an unparalleled relation to human life and I wanted to address our relationship to it as leather artisans and bring attention to the issues surrounding it. While in Italy, I was blown away by the Cuoio Depur purification plant, but couldn't help being sadly reminded of Michigan, with water shutoffs in the city of Detroit and the Flint water crisis. As clean water becomes more important, I want to highlight vegetable-tanned leather as the premium low-impact choice in my own redefinition of luxury, one that promotes craft, longevity, and the embracing of natural flaws.









Marta De Hojas Lapido

ESDIR- Escuela Superior de Diseño de La Rioja Logroño, Spain

Trama

TRAMA is a three piece collection configured exclusively with seamless and unsewn interwoven leather.

It highlights the quality of the leather itself without modifying it and without subjecting it to sewing processes. A bodice, sandals and an earring for the left ear have been made. Both sandals and bodice are versatile and allow structural modifications that vary the design if we change the intertwining of the strips.

All the pieces are handmade, therefore, the leather has not been subjected to any process except for cutting and gluing.

TRAMA is a project inspired by natural textures and the manual handling of the leather.







ESDIR- Escuela Superior de Diseño de La Rioja Logroño, Spain











Green Pedal

GLOBAL WARMING is a serious issue today due to over use of resources. One main cause is vehicular gas discharges emitting around 24 pounds of carbon dioxide and other global-warming gases for every gallon of gas. About five pounds comes from the extraction, production, and delivery of the fuel, while the great bulk of heat-trapping emissions, more than 19 pounds per gallon, comes right out of a car's tail-pipe.

Riding a bike provides a fairly fast and dependable mode of transportation for which gas isn't required. Biking saves money, helps the rider get fit and simultaneously helps to reduce the problem of global warming.

For my collection I was inspired by some of the mechanics, movement and the geometric shapes of bicycles. My objective was to incorporate these elements by using wet mold techniques on veg tan leather in my footwear and bags.

Fashion Institute of Technology
State University of New York





Fashion Institute of Technology New York, NY - USA









Japan

Tokyo,

Ecdysis

Footwear in which three forms are combined into one. The outer shell of this composite footwear can be removed, like a reptile shedding its skin, hence the name Ecdysis.

With three forms footwear combined together, Ecdysis is footwear that provides the user with full-protection.

By removing the outer shell, Ecdysis becomes a sandal, which allows the user to travel lightly.

The innermost element of Ecdysis is a sock, the traditional Japanese Tabi.

The design of Ecdysis is inspired by Japanese Rhino beetlesthe silhouette of the footwear is all curved and roundedged. The volume and shape memory of vegetable tanned leather matches my design and gives form to the image.

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JP

Hiko Mizuno College of Jewelry Tokyo, Japan







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London,

A Spiral Dynamic

"the psychology of the human being is an unfolding, emergent, oscillating, spiralling process." - Clare W. Graves

I consider the 'spiral' as representative of an ever-evolving process of discovery in life.

Since participating in Craft the Leather 2019, I reflect on how the Tuscan Vegetable Tanned Leather Consortium is embedded in a productive cycle, supporting and protecting their environment at each stage of production. I see this as a spiralling dynamic that preserves, shelters and nourishes their community. With this perspective I made a series of 3 works that frame and revolve around the body.

The manufacturing of my works follows a sequence of pattern cutting, hand dying and hand stitching leather to brass frames.

I want my designs to suggest how the future of accessories and production can reflect collective value.

ual london college of fashion







Jade Houben

Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp Antwerp, Belgium

In My Nature

One by one I connect the different leather elements to each other. I see my interpretation of nature growing slowly but steadily.

By wearing my jewellery pieces you see changes happening in the material; the leather ages, but doesn't ruin, thanks to the beautiful characteristics of vegetable-tanned leather. The story of the wearer becomes visible in my work.

Wearing my work is a crucial part of the continuation of growth and change in the pieces. They become more beautiful, day by day.

I want the wearer of these pieces to feel like nature is growing and crawling on them and for this experience to make them more aware of nature and in all its beauty.









Evelien Sommen

SASK- Academy of Fine Arts Sint Niklaas Sint Niklaas, Belgium

Da Vinci Code

Leonardo Da Vinci once said "The noblest pleasure is the joy of understanding". For me this quote represents CTL completely. My goal was to understand the functionalities of veg tan leather and embrace its unique characteristics in the designs.

I developed patterns inspired by sketches of Da Vinci combined with micrography. The patterns were processed using multiple techniques: engraving in different strengths whereby natural shades of brown were acquired, darkening by exposure to UV light and laser cutting.

For heels I chose to use resin to highlight and intensify the beauty of the leather. The curvature of the heel changes the pattern depending on the perspective and works as a magnifying glass, referring to micrography.





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SASK- Academy of Fine Arts Sint Niklaas Sint Niklaas, Belgium







Accademia Costume & Moda

Rome – Italy

Accademia Costume & Moda has a long tradition in educating professionals for the Fashion and Entertainment Industries, qualifying itself in the years as a centre of excellence for its didactic method. Founded in 1964, today the Accademia is among the Top 3 Fashion Schools in the World for its Undergraduate and Graduate Courses in Fashion Design within the prestigious global ranking "The Best Fashion Schools in the World 2019" by The Business of Fashion (BoF). To confirm this result, Accademia is among the 25 best fashion schools in the world according to the annual Fashionista.com ranking. The placement ratio is above 90% of the total population. Accademia is currently the only Italian fashion school to have won the prestigious LVMH Graduate Prize, in the 2016, 2018 and 2019.



www.accademiacostumeemoda.it

Bunka Fashion College

Tokyo – Japan

A school that is a world leader of fashion Bunka Fashion College is a forerunner of fashion education in Japan. Knowing that it must produce powerful leaders for the fashion industry, the college has established four courses that follow all aspects of the industry. Among these courses, Fashion Accessories and Textile Department aims to teach expertise and skills that can respond to footwear, bag, millinery and jewelry industries' trends, and to develop human resources that can demonstrate creativity with imagination.

文化服装学院 BENKA FAMILIEN COLLEGE

www.bunka-fc.ac.jp

Capel Manor College

London - UK

Capel Manor College is London's leading specialist land-based further and higher education provider for young people and adults passionate about animals, nature and the environment. Capel Manor College is the only college in Europe to run a full-time saddlery course that teaches traditional English saddlery skills making handcrafted saddles, bridles, harnesses and other leather accessories. The College also offers an in-depth shoemaking course that provides a unique introduction into the industry and an opportunity to learn all aspects of footwear pattern-cutting and making.

Students at Capel Manor College are immersed in a hands-on, creative and practical learning environment, with exceptional, industry-experienced tutors who are experts in their fields.

www.capel.ac.uk

College for Creative Studies

Detroit, MI - USA

Located in the heart of Detroit, the College for Creative Studies (CCS) is a world-class institution that educates artists and designers to be leaders in the creative professions. CCS provides students with the tools needed for successful careers in the dynamic and growing creative industries, fostering students' resolve to pursue excellence, act ethically, engage their responsibilities as citizens, and learn throughout their lives. With world-class faculty and unsurpassed facilities, students learn to be visual communicators who actively use art and design toward the betterment of society.

www.collegeforcreativestudies.edu

Capel Manor College



ESDIR - Escuela Superior de Diseño de La Rioja

Logroño - Spain

With more than 450 students, ESDIR is a dynamic college in which a great number of activities are organized during the academic year: workshops, lectures, publications, exhibitions, visits to companies and all type of events related to design. Besides, we are part of Erasmus+program according to which we welcome students from a variety of countries and at the same time our students can make part of their studies abroad.

Our accredited trained teaching staff is deeply involved in the teaching task as well as in the daily follow up of our students' work.

We are located in a wonderful building in the city centre with the perfect facilities for the teaching and practice of design. The fact of providing training in four design fields makes us a unique college in the north of Spain and makes transversality and exchange among studies easier.

www.esdir.eu



New York City, NY - USA

FIT's Accessories Design Program – the first of its kind in the U.S. – offers the Associate in Applied Science degree and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, plus the country's only certificate programs in Millinery and Performance Athletic Footwear. Students learn how to design, construct, and produce a full range of accessories. Faculty members are industry professionals who teach the skills needed for success in the industry. FIT's Manhattan location provides unparalleled opportunities for real world experience through field trips, networking, industry-sponsored competitions, and internships at top accessories firms. The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), a college of the State University of New York, has been a leader in career education in art, design, business, and technology for 70 years.

www.fitnyc.edu





Hiko Mizuno College of Jewelry

Tokyo – Japan

Hiko Mizuno College of Jewelry is the only government authorized jewelry college in Japan. It has continued its journey as a college nurturing "making" and creative design techniques by establishing the Watch, Shoes, and Bag departments, and in 2012, the Tokyo College of Cycle Design. Hiko Mizuno has attracted global recognition as an academy of developing design fields. Our educational policy "Man & Object" informs all areas of study: the relationship of objects to the human body and all products are designed with a good understanding of the human structure. The pieces produced by the students can be considered art pieces as well as fashion/product designs directly related to contemporary life styles.

www.hikohiko.jp

London College of Fashion

London - UK

The University of the Arts London is Europe's largest specialist arts and design university, home to 19,000 students from over 130 countries. It brings together six esteemed arts, design, fashion and media colleges - London College of Fashion being one of them.

Historically LCF was 'Cordwainers, the prestigious school for shoemakers', founded in the late 19th Century. The heritage of craftsmanship and expertise set in place by the Worshipful Company of Cordwainers remains strong at the core of the Footwear, Accessories and Artefact departments.

MA Fashion Artefact at LCF is now in its twelfth year. It is internationally recognised as a pioneering incubator of artisan designer makers, where we nurture a combination of traditional craftsmanship, industrial technologies and independent design perspectives to make contemporary fashion products that challenge socio cultural attitudes and reflect on our lives today.



ual london college of fashion

Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp

Antwerp - Belgium

Founded by the Flemish painter David Teniers in 1663, the Antwerp Academy is one of the first art schools in the world as well as one of the first artists' collectives. It is hosted in an impressive historical site in the center of Antwerp, a city that is internationally acknowledged as a booming hub of creativity. Providing bachelor and master programs in fine arts (painting, sculpture, art integration, printmaking, photography, graphic design, theatre costume, jewelry and fashion design), we attract students from all over the world. Our strength is in the unique combination of traditional skills, edgy experiment and critical discourse. Apart from the work in the studios, the Antwerp Academy fully engages in publishing and exhibiting, often in close collaboration with museums, art schools and other art institutions from Belgium and abroad. Our goal is to be a cultural motor for a society in need of the creative and the critical.

www.ap-arts.be

SASK Academie voor Schone Kunsten

Sint-Niklaas, Belgium

The Academy of Fine Arts at Sint-Niklaas, Belgium, is part of the part-time art education system in Belgium. Students attend courses on evenings and during weekends. The four-year shoe design program focuses on the dynamic between the artistic and craft aspects. Students are trained to analyse these different angles of approach and stimulated to push their boundaries. The program was set up to train shoe designers who are capable of using their creativity to design shoes and turn out prototypes. The department is very ambitious. By establishing contacts with other institutions, foreign schools, studios, workshops and the industry specialized in shoes, we create an environment where the students can fully develop themselves. The apotheosis of every academic year is a show, in collaboration with the fashion design department, where the designs of the students are shown to a mixed public of professionals and fashion lovers.





www.academiesintniklaas.be

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Consorzio Vera Pelle Italiana Conciata al Vegetale

The Veg-Tanned Leather Consortium was founded in 1994 by a small group of traditional Tuscan tanners. Today the consortium brings together 22 tanneries, all of which share the same production objectives and operate in Tuscany, in the area between Pisa and Florence. In the Tuscan Leather District high quality vegetable-tanned leather is still produced according to an ancient production process which uses tannins extracted exclusively from tree barks and plants, the skills of master craftsmen and all the time necessary. The result of a knowledgeable combination of technology and tradition, the leathers produced by the members of the consortium satisfy the needs of a niche market in which not only high quality, but also style and individuality are fundamental requisites.

The aims of this no-profit organisation are to promote vegetable-tanned leather, to safeguard a typical Tuscan product, to guarantee the quality of raw materials and processes used in its production and to highlight traditional techniques whose origins lie deep in Tuscan history. Yet the consortium also looks to the future with the organization of study activities, events on emerging trends, seminars and workshops for young designers and producers, guided tours of tanneries for students of fashion schools and the publication of materials about characteristics and quality of the leather.

The Genuine Italian Vegetable Tanned Leather Consortium regulates, protects and guarantees the production of Tuscan vegetable tanned leather with the quality trademark "Pelle Conciata al Vegetale in Toscana" (Tuscan Vegetable Tanned Leather). The trademark is registered in Italy and abroad and is the exclusive property of the Consortium, which grants it in use only to its member tanneries.

www.pellealvegetale.it



8th International Creative Competition for new designer/makers

Catalogue of the work inspired by the weeklong international workshop exploring the culture, tradition, and innovative possibilities of a product of local excellence: Tuscan Vegetable-Tanned Leather.

Photo and Artwork: Key Image + Marketing

With special thanks to all of the community that makes Craft the Leather possible:

Domenico Castiello, Gustavo Defeo, Max Robba, Giorgio Testi, Saskia Wittmer,

Bottega PB1, Consorzio Cuoio-Depur, Consorzio Toscana Manifatture, PO.TE.CO.,
the member tanners of the Consorzio, for their continuing support of this project
through the generous sharing of their time, experience, and of course, leathers
and all the staff at the Fondazione Conservatorio Santa Chiara in San Miniato.



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