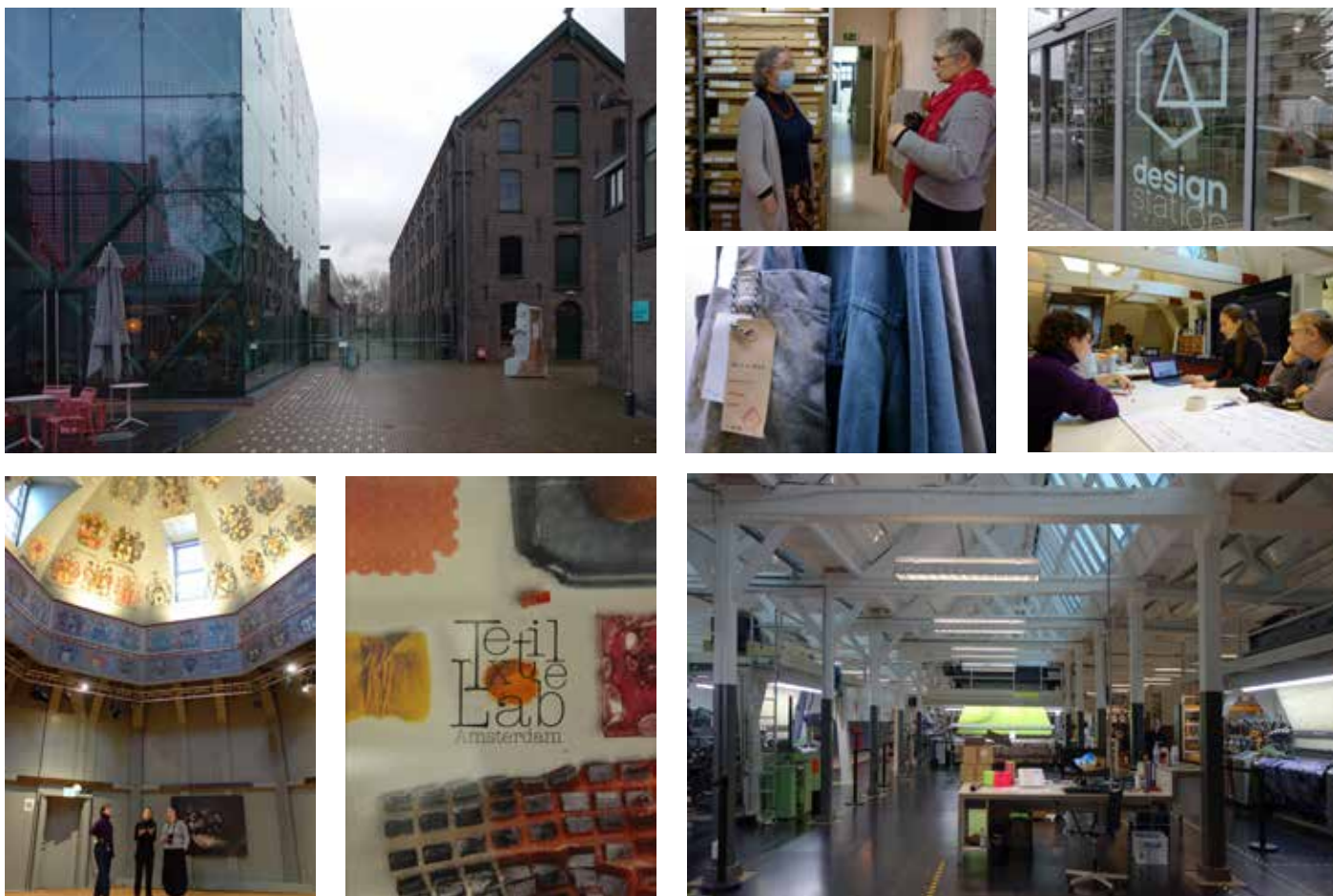


# Netherlands/Belgium Cooperation Tour: Textile Studies, Craft Education and Makerspaces



Impressions from the Netherlands and Belgium: TextielMuseum Tilburg/outside view; Textile Research Centre, Leiden/Gillian Vogel-sang-Eastwood/Bärbel Schmidt; Texlab Liège/design station; Fashion for Good/Hul de Kes; Waag TextileLab/Michelle Vossen/Maro Pebo/Bärbel Schmidt; Waag TextileLab/guild auditorium; Waag TextileLab/Amsterdam; TextielLab Tilburg/jacquard weaving lab.

*Fotos: Bärbel Schmidt/Lucia Schwalenberg*

**Textile Studies, Craft Education and Makerspaces were the main topics of a cooperation tour to the Netherlands and Belgium by Prof. Bärbel Schmidt and Lucia Schwalenberg/Osnabrück University. The goal of the Textile Studies program at Osnabrück University is to train future teachers of textiles studies, to stimulate the students' curiosity and interest in textiles and encourage further studies in textile culture. The Textile Studies department offers an academic setting in which students discover that knowledge is unlimited and learning is for life. Textile Studies has a special responsibility to promote Education for Sustainable Development and creative skills.**

**The project is funded by the Lower Saxony Ministry for Science and Culture through the support program INTENSIVinternational which aims to strengthen pan-European collaborative projects. This project follows on from a research trip to Finland. Its goal is to investigate holistic educational approaches to Textile and Craft Education as a cross-generational, cross-cultural and interdisciplinary lifelong learning process. Its aim is to explore concrete possibilities for cooperation between Nordic Craft and Textile Education Institutions, Osnabrück University/Lower Saxony and our neighbours the Netherlands and Belgium for student, staff and knowledge exchanges. The focus of the research is on Makerspaces as future-oriented locations for a shared economy, shared education and equipment and as places for joint knowledge transfer.**



Fashion for Good, Amsterdam: Botanical colours/Hul le Kes; vegan leather/Phool Fleather; asparagus surface/Happy van der Heide.

Vegan leather from temple flowers, surfaces made of asparagus peel, biodegradable ecoglitter from eucalyptus trees: Located in Amsterdam, Fashion for Good is packed with material research, explorer skills and alternatives to an otherwise mostly damaging fashion industry.

Fashion for Good is a global initiative aiming to make fashion good with a museum in the heart of Amsterdam. The focus is on innovative technologies and business models that have the potential to transform and change the fashion industry. In addition to its museum in Amsterdam, Fashion for Good offers a coworking space that allows partners to collaborate in making fashion a force for good. Common goals are the five essentials: material (safe, healthy and designed for reuse and recycling), economy (circular, shared and benefiting everyone), energy (renewable and clean), water (clean and available to all) and lives (living and working conditions that are just, safe and dignified).

Fashion for Good scouts start-ups with innovative materials or techniques. Dutch designers Hul le Kes makes garments by hand using leftovers or antique fabrics showing signs of wear and tear. Hul le Kes offers a dyeing, mending and reshare service. Happy van der Heide creates unique items out of fish leather supplied by local fishermen. Fleather is a vegan leather developed out of flower waste from Indian temple flowers. Fashion for Good gives an inspiring insight into sustainable alternatives for the production of fashion and textiles: This marked a perfect start to our research trip to the Netherlands and Belgium.



Fashion for Good, Amsterdam.



Waag/TextileLab, Amsterdam: Historical guild auditorium with Michelle, Maro, Bärbel; material archive with leaflet and silicone skin.

*Technology is not neutral - this is the philosophy of Waag, a futurelab for technology and society. Situated in a historical city gate and weighing house, the Waag was formerly the meeting place for guilds in the heart of Old Amsterdam. The guild auditorium is part of the Waag, which consists of a trans-disciplinary team of designers, artists and scientists. The publicly-funded institution aims to design an open, honest and inclusive future. The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as well as the European Union support Waag, which aims to use design, technology, networking and education to address social challenges.*

*Waag bundles its activities in several Research Labs to empower people to design the future. One of them -- the TextileLab -- focuses on circularity, sustainability and equality within the changing fashion and textile industry. The Lab combines material research with a material archive, current and historical manufacturing processes as well as analogue and digital craft techniques. The TextileLab contributes to Workshops, conferences and education projects. The outcomes of their projects are displayed in the Fabricademy. Thanks to Michelle and Maro for hosting us and to Cecilia Raspanti and Ista Boszhard for making our visit possible.*



Waag: FabLab and TextileLab, Amsterdam.



Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood and Prof. Bärbel Schmidt discussing historical textile/Textile Research Centre, Leiden.

Having examined questions of global fast fashion, we were immersed in a treasure trove of historical textiles. The Textile Research Centre/TRC is an independent foundation located in the historic centre of Leiden. Its aim is to study textiles in the context of science, crafts and craft education. The TRC does this by focussing on dress and identity as well textile technology from both pre-industrial and industrial times. The collection, with more than 30 000 textiles, is constantly growing, and is published online under open access. The core focus is on European garments, in particular from the Netherlands and Germany. The collection includes a library and an exhibition space and is supplemented by workshops and research facilities for international students, scientists and designers.

Our visit to the TRC's director Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood included signing a cooperation contract between University Osnabrück/Textile Studies and the TRC. This cooperation will enable Textile Studies students from Osnabrück to analyse unidentified Dutch and German regional dresses from the TRC collection under the supervision of Prof. Bärbel Schmidt. The research will culminate in an online exhibition and a booklet. The work is being supported by the Lower Saxony Ministry for Science and Culture for the development of German-Dutch cultural relations. Among the precious pieces which have found their way to Osnabrück University for examination are historical Dutch and German caps, shawls, bodices, aprons and skirts.



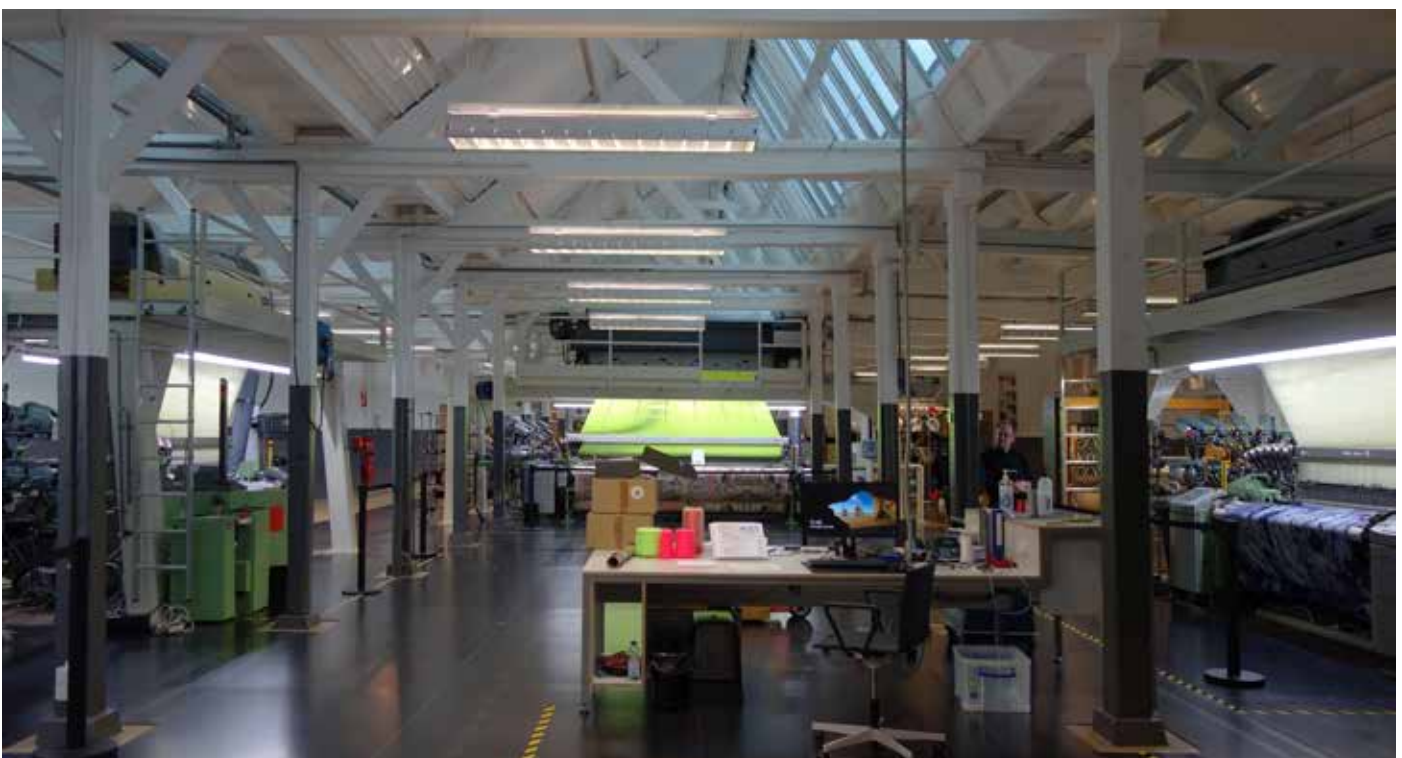
17th century modelbuch for embroidery from Nürnberg and German costume caps, stored in Textile Research Centre, Leiden.



Bridging the gap between the past and the future:TextielMuseum, Tilburg.

Bridging the gap between the past and the future is a core purpose of the TextielMuseum Tilburg. The working museum is located in a former textiles factory which is now linked to a new building. The museum is a globally unique combination of industrial heritage and future-oriented innovation for textiles. The history of the former sheep farming region of Brabant is marked by the rise and fall of the textile industry. Its history is most apparent in its woollen blanket factory and a 19th-century damask weaving atelier. Besides the historic jacquard looms, there is an archive of pattern drawings, punch cards, sample books and damask linen.

As a knowledge centre for textiles, the TextielLab is excellently equipped with industrial weaving, knitting, tufting, embroidery and lasercutting technology. Artists and designers from all over the world seek to work here. Projects including the stage curtain for the opera in Oslo, room dividers for the Rothschild Bank in London or wall hangings for the Kunsthaus Bregenz have been completed here. In addition to cultural history and modern technology, the TextielMuseum and TextielLab in Tilburg also focus on textile education. A key reason for our trip was speaking to and exploring cooperation options with Michelle, the centre's representative for higher education.



TextielLab: Knowledge centre for textiles, Tilburg.



Long Live Fashion! Installation Christien Meindertsma in cooperation with Wolkat textile recycling; fixing-fashion-room, mending-guide: TextielLab and TextielMuseum, Tilburg

In addition to the permanent display the TextielLab and TextielMuseum are currently presenting temporary exhibitions on cultural history, design and sustainability in the fashion and textile industry. The exhibition Long Live Fashion! opens with an installation by Christien Meindertsma, who has analysed discarded garments. Using hundreds of information cards on the wall, Meindertsma provides insights into how many raw materials are used in our clothing. For her research, the designer delved into the collecting and processing operations of Wolkat, a Tilburg textile recycling company. The exhibition inspires its visitors to use garments more sustainably. They discover the number of raw materials that are used for clothes, learn to repair textiles in a fixing-fashion-room and have a customized item made with recycled textiles in a Microfactory run by fashion students.

The TextielMuseum and TextielLab Tilburg are annexed by a public library. Tilburg - in this gathering of cultural history, know how, high-end technology and professional guidance - is an extraordinary and globally unique education centre for schoolchildren, students, designers and artists aiming to develop their talent and skills and to realize their visions.



Microfactory: Fashion items custom-made from second-hand textiles with a small machine park run by fashion students. Long live Fashion! Exhibition: TextielLab and TextielMuseum, Tilburg.

Texlab Liège defines itself as a lab for prototyping textile design. The workshop offers a variety of machines including a digital jacquardloom TC2, a digital embroidery machine as well as different sewing and plotting machines. The Texlab is funded by Wallonia and the European fund FEDER for fostering regional development. The Lab organises workshops and has a start-up consultancy for professional designers and artists. It is situated in a coworking-space belonging to Wallonie Design, called design station. Fanny Van hammée and Marie Beguin accompany clients from their first draft to the prototyping production process. The Texlab is an encouraging example of a professional textile makerspace, made possible by regional and supra-regional funding.

Thanks to ... everybody who shared informations and made this tour possible. Special thanks to Gillian Vogel-sang-Eastwood, Michelle Vossen & Maro Pebo, Michelle Baggerman, Fanny Van hammée and Marie Beguin.

About Bärbel ... She teaches Textile Studies as a Professor at Osnabrück University/Germany. Her research fields are textile culture and textile education. She is working on a cooperative project with the Textile Research Centre Leiden/NL and Immaterial World Cultural Heritage Blueprint.

About Lucia ... after studying Journalism and Textile Design in Munich and Hannover, Lucia completed the Shuttle Course at Kunsthochschule Linz/Textiles Zentrum Haslach/Austria. She works as a textile designer, weaving lecturer and research staff member at Osnabrück University/Textile Studies. She is working on her PHD-project "The Beiderwand weaving workshop Meldorf as a textile place of memory".



Texlab Liège: Fanny Van hammée introducing the digital embroidery machine to Bärbel Schmidt.



Texlab Liège: Outside view of design station Wallonie.