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My final year of university started with picking a dissertation topic. I was keen to make my Dissertation and my Textiles project linked so that my research could be integrated into the practical work I was passionate about, creating a cohesive body of information to inform both projects.

As I am passionate about sustainability, it was important that I picked a topic which explored this area of fashion. I found that the fashion industry was having a massive impact on marine life, and was inspired by the wealth of textures, colours and shapes that come from the ocean. I decided on the topic of 'Fast Fashion, Synthetic Textiles, Microfiber Pollution, and its Impact on Marine Ecosystems'.

Out of the total microplastic pollution in the world's oceans, 34.8% of the pollution arises due to the use of synthetic textiles, a large portion of which originated from the laundering of synthetic textiles.

A study estimated that a single polyester t-shirt has emissions of 5.5 kg CO₂e, compared with 2.1 kg CO₂e for one made from cotton.

Almost 60% of all clothing produced is disposed of within a year of production.

50% of our oxygen comes from the ocean by way of phytoplankton, the lungs of the ocean. When microplastics block sunlight, phytoplankton cannot photosynthesize and therefore cannot convert and deliver the oxygen that all life needs.

From these findings, I decided that my projects this year needed to address these issues. and these were my aims.

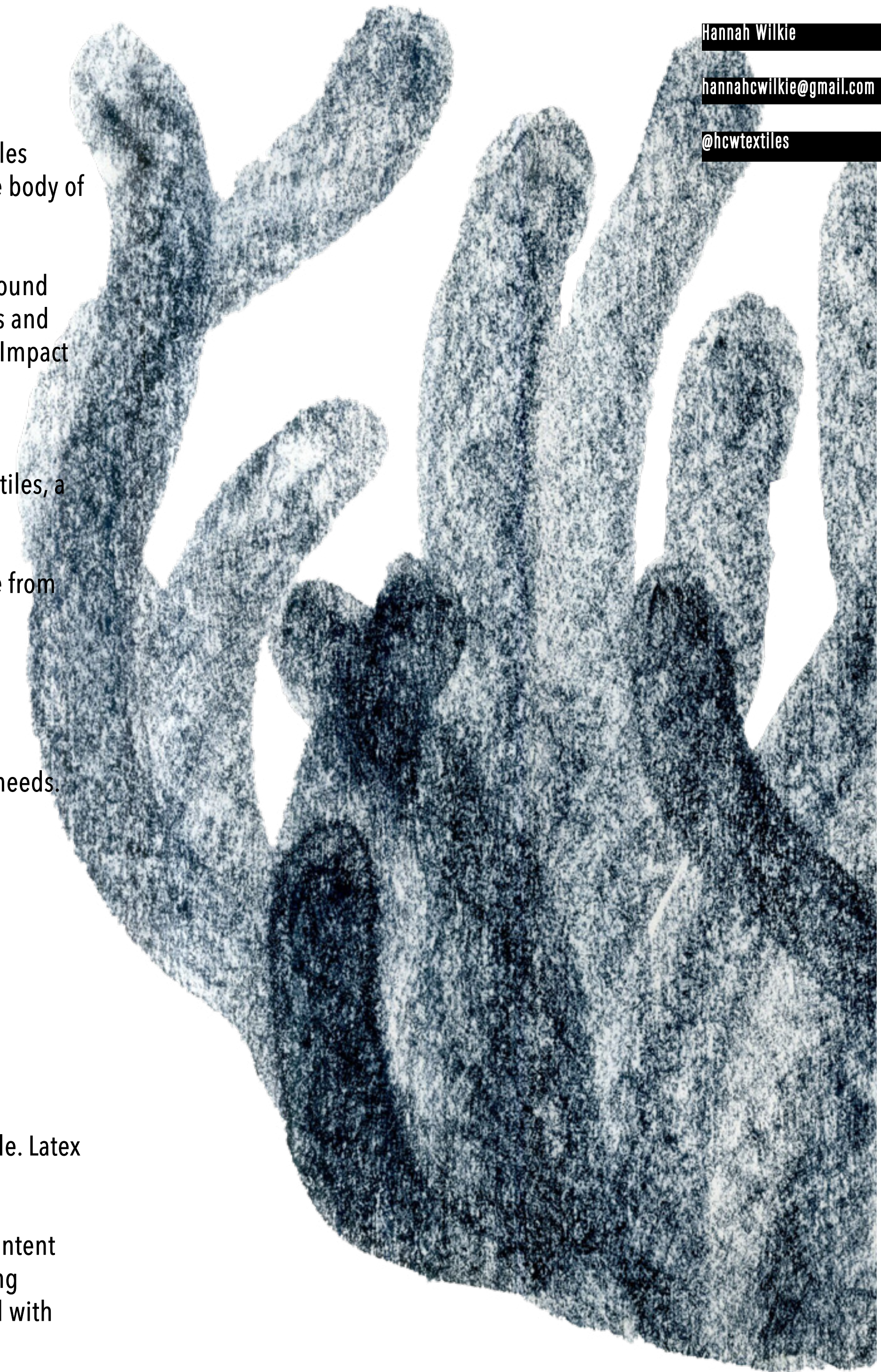
Research into and utilise sustainable materials.

Address the issues that come with laundering textiles and come up with a solution.

Create high-quality, timeless samples with the hope that they will last long and be cherished.

I started researching sustainable materials and found that natural latex is biodegradable, renewable, and sustainable. Latex also wasn't a material that I had used before so it was exciting to learn about.

Although I have included plastic and synthetic textiles, I consciously designed the majority of my samples with the intent that they can be wiped down instead of washed. The inclusion of plastic in my collection serves a dual purpose - providing waterproof qualities and aiding in the reduction of microfiber pollution. Each piece which is encased in plastic, is crafted with the intention to be cherished and wiped clean.

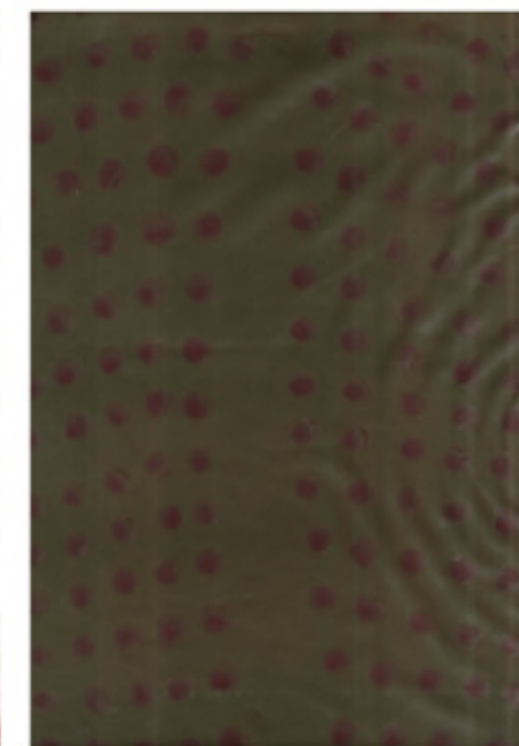
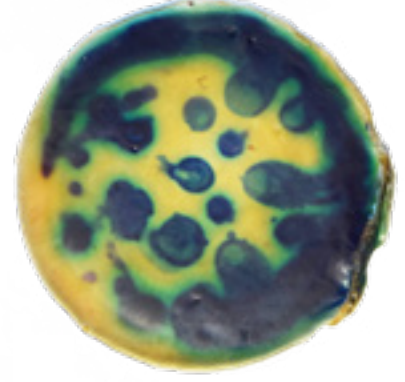
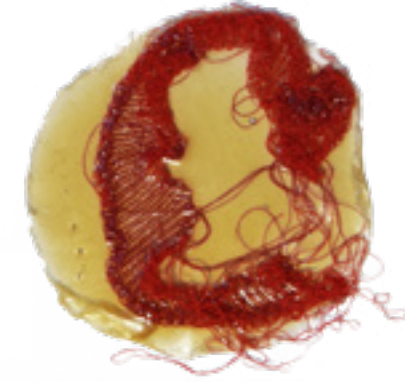
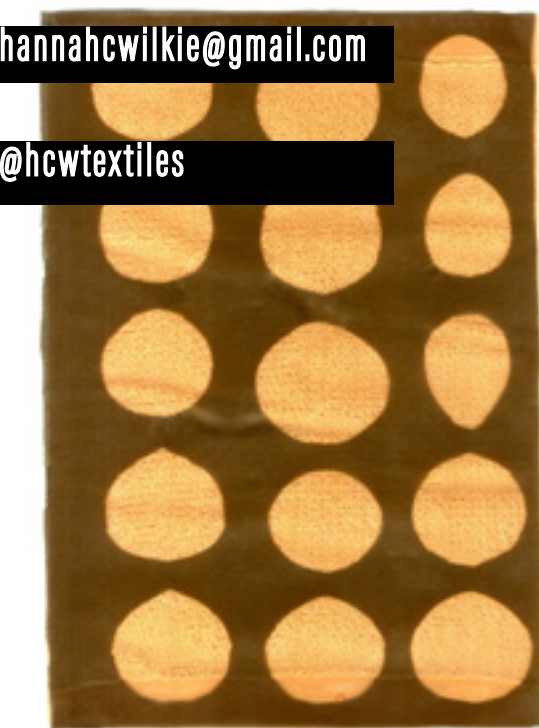


BENEATH THE WAVES

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These textile samples were the beginning of my creative journey this year. Throughout this process, I gained valuable knowledge about materials like PVC, knit, latex sheets, liquid latex, and sublimation printing. Additionally, I learned techniques for adding color and patterns to liquid latex, experimented with embedding various objects into the latex, and discovered the captivating "wet look." This wealth of information proved invaluable for the remainder of my creative endeavors.

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