

WORDS | Jennifer Parkes

SLOW DOWN

IT'S TIME TO BIN FAST FASHION!

We're used to living in a world where everything is instant and on demand; from food to broadband to fashion, the buzzword is FAST.

We've had a taste, and fashion brands are all too ready to feed our desire for cheap on-trend clothing with new and affordable throwaway items almost every week – but at what cost?



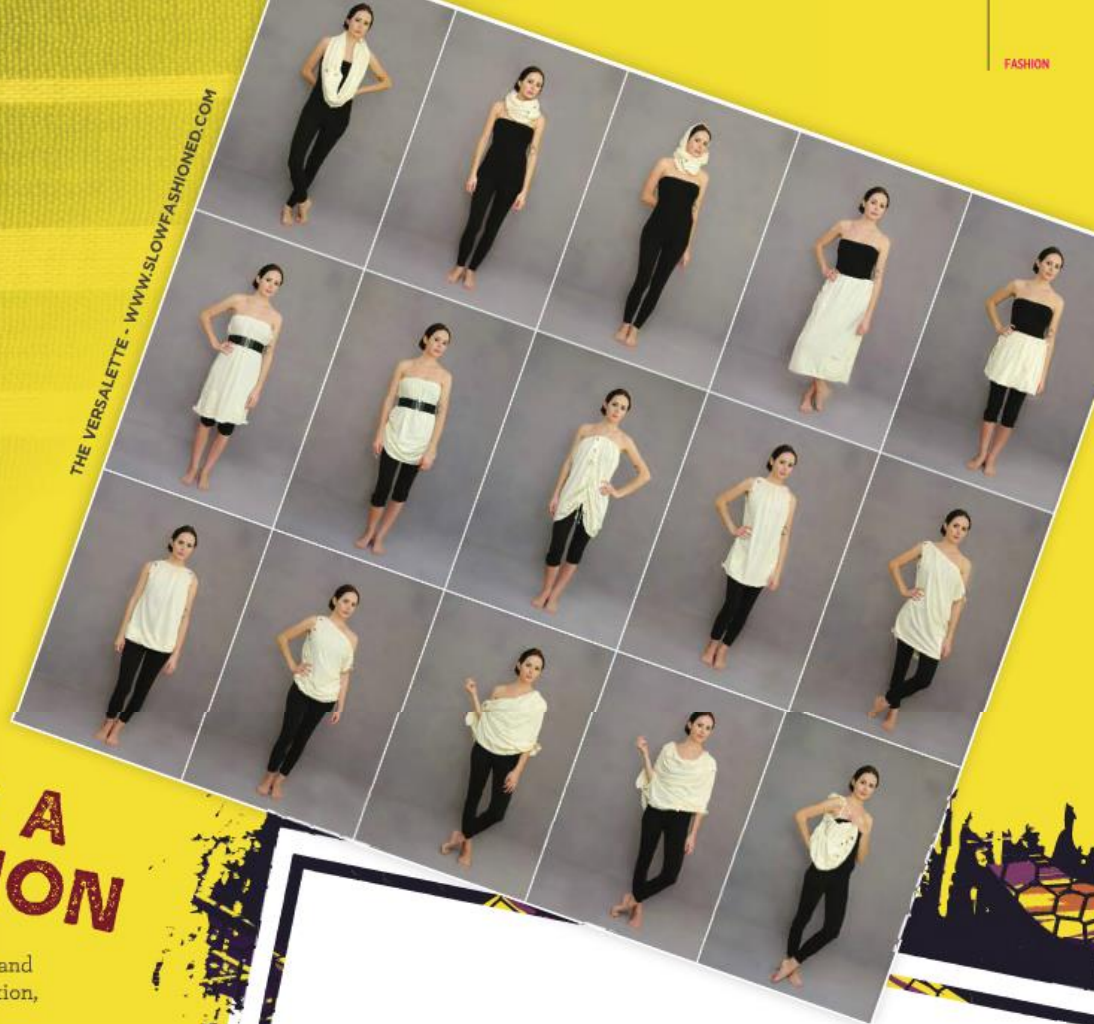
In 2007, Kate Fletcher of the Centre for Sustainable Fashion in the UK coined the term 'Slow Fashion' as an antithesis to fast fashion culture. Trends change with the seasons, and this one-in-one-out approach drives down the price and quality of garments, which might seem like a bonus, even though we often end up buying things we don't really want or need. But who cares when it's this cheap – right?

WHILE YOU MAY BE PAYING LESS, FAST FASHION COMES WITH A HIDDEN PRICE TAG, AND IT'S OUR ENVIRONMENT AND THE WORKERS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN THAT ARE ULTIMATELY PAYING THE PRICE.

Slow Fashion is a movement which, contrary to the name, is gaining momentum. It encourages us to embrace sustainable fashion solutions and eschew overconsumption, emphasising quality over quantity, and awareness of the entire clothing manufacturing process.

According to the Danish Fashion Institute, the fashion industry is the second-highest polluting industry behind oil.

THE VERSALETTE - WWW.SLOWFASHIONED.COM



SLOW IS A REVOLUTION

Fossil fuels are often used in textile and garment production and transportation, and even fresh water reservoirs are diminishing having been overused for cotton crop irrigation. These issues are leading to droughts, desertification and pollution – and human labour within the supply chain is also a contentious issue.

ON 24TH APRIL 2013, A GARMENT FACTORY AT RANA PLAZA IN BANGLADESH COLLAPSED. OVER 1,000 WORKERS DIED, AND THE INCIDENT EXPOSED HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS FACED BY WORKERS IN THE NAME OF FAST FASHION.

Each year on 24th April, Fashion Revolution Day aims to raise awareness of the Slow Fashion movement by asking people to wear an item of clothing inside out, and share a photo on social media with the hashtag #whomademyclothes.

Slow Fashion asks us to embrace eco-friendly clothing solutions, but that doesn't have to mean making socks out of your own hair or tying a belt around a bin bag and calling it an ethical tunic; it's about sustainability, ethics, the environment, and making conscious shopping decisions.

A GROWING NUMBER OF FAMILIAR FASHION NAMES ARE EMBRACING THE MOVEMENT - HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE MANY SLOW FASHION BRANDS YOU'LL LIKELY RECOGNISE FROM THE HIGH STREET, LOCALLY, AND ONLINE...

FAT FACE... Fat Face requires its producers to abide by a company-wide Code of Conduct, and works with suppliers to make sure their workers are treated fairly.

MONSOON... Monsoon is committed to ethical trading and regularly checks that factories are abiding by its minimum requirements on working conditions, pay and employment rights.

WINDSOR & WALES... Isle of Man-based Windsor & Wales sources quality materials from premier manufacturers across the British Isles, and prides itself on its transparent production process.

H&M... H&M's Conscious collection brings sustainable fashion to the high street, featuring garments made out of hemp, organic linen and organic leather.

ASOS AFRICA... ASOS Africa promotes growth and empowerment in Africa, and supports artisans and larger producers across the continent.

SHAKTI MAN... Local company Shakti Man supports aims to raise awareness of sustainable trading solutions that have a positive impact on people, places and the environment.

BUY LESS, CHOOSE WELL, MAKE IT LAST

VIVienne WESTWOOD