

Deadweight

SHORT DESCRIPTION

Inspired by the creative exchanges with the Belgian team, this neckpiece translates the "darkness" of the collection into a brutal, warlike collar. Constructed entirely from industrial waste streams, the design relies on manual engineering and hand-knotting rather than adhesives or stitching. It serves as a stark, structural representation of resilience within the MUSE Project.

ARTISTIC INSPIRATION

Our initial workshops focused on providing a safe space for participants to share their narratives as migrant and refugee women. We drew primary inspiration from traditional head, neck, and chest coverings across various cultures. This piece evolves that concept into a protective adornment for a resilient "warrior"—a figure capable of overcoming the systemic adversaries faced by refugees.

SUSTAINABILITY

Material is reused, recycled and sustainable. The Bicycle Tubes are salvaged from local rentals; diverted from landfills where they are typically non-recyclable.

The pallet Ties are foraged from local hardware stores.

The cable ties are sourced from retired industrial deadstock; selected for their ability to be unlocked and reused.

"Eco-responsible Methods:

The construction required zero energy-intensive tools, glues, or chemical stabilizers. By utilizing manual knotting and forged industrial waste not typically marked for recycling, the project demonstrates a high-impact, low-carbon approach to garment engineering.



PARTICIPANTS



Tonya Lehtinen

Tonya Lehtinen holds a BA in Graphic Design and is the founder of Vogue Xchange, a social enterprise dedicated to circular fashion. Her work centres on the intrinsic value of textiles as a catalyst for social and environmental change. As an activist, Tonya exposes the inequities of the fast-fashion industry through community-led education. She manages the resale of pre-owned clothing and facilitates creative workshops specializing in upcycling, botanical dyeing, and other regenerative practices.



Users Participating in the project

Migrant and refugee women

Deadweight
/ finished garment



Deadweight

METHOD AND PROCESS

The collar's structure is engineered by binding salvaged pallet ties with cable ties to form rigid rings. These rings are then layered and secured manually. The "feathers" of the collar are made from bicycle tubes, cut into strips to mimic leather, and secured using nautical half-hitch knots. This ensures the piece is stable yet fully deconstructible. The process was entirely manual, requiring no specialized tools beyond scissors, and emerged from experimental iterations with various plastic and other waste streams. The objectives of Task 3.1 have been met by the collaborative search for design solutions for the construction without minimising the deliberate brutalist aesthetics. By engaging with the Belgian team's visual references, participants learned to apply visual language and composition to non-traditional materials. This process enhanced their awareness of how visual storytelling can transform raw, industrial waste into a contemporary artistic statement that aligns with the "Darkness into Light" theme of the capsule collection.

CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Rather than frivolous decoration, this piece references the significant neck adornments found in indigenous tribes and cultures worldwide. The choice of rubber is intentionally symbolic; the history of rubber production is deeply intertwined with colonialism and geopolitics—forces that remain direct drivers of global migration and the displacement of people today.

Deadweight
/ design process

