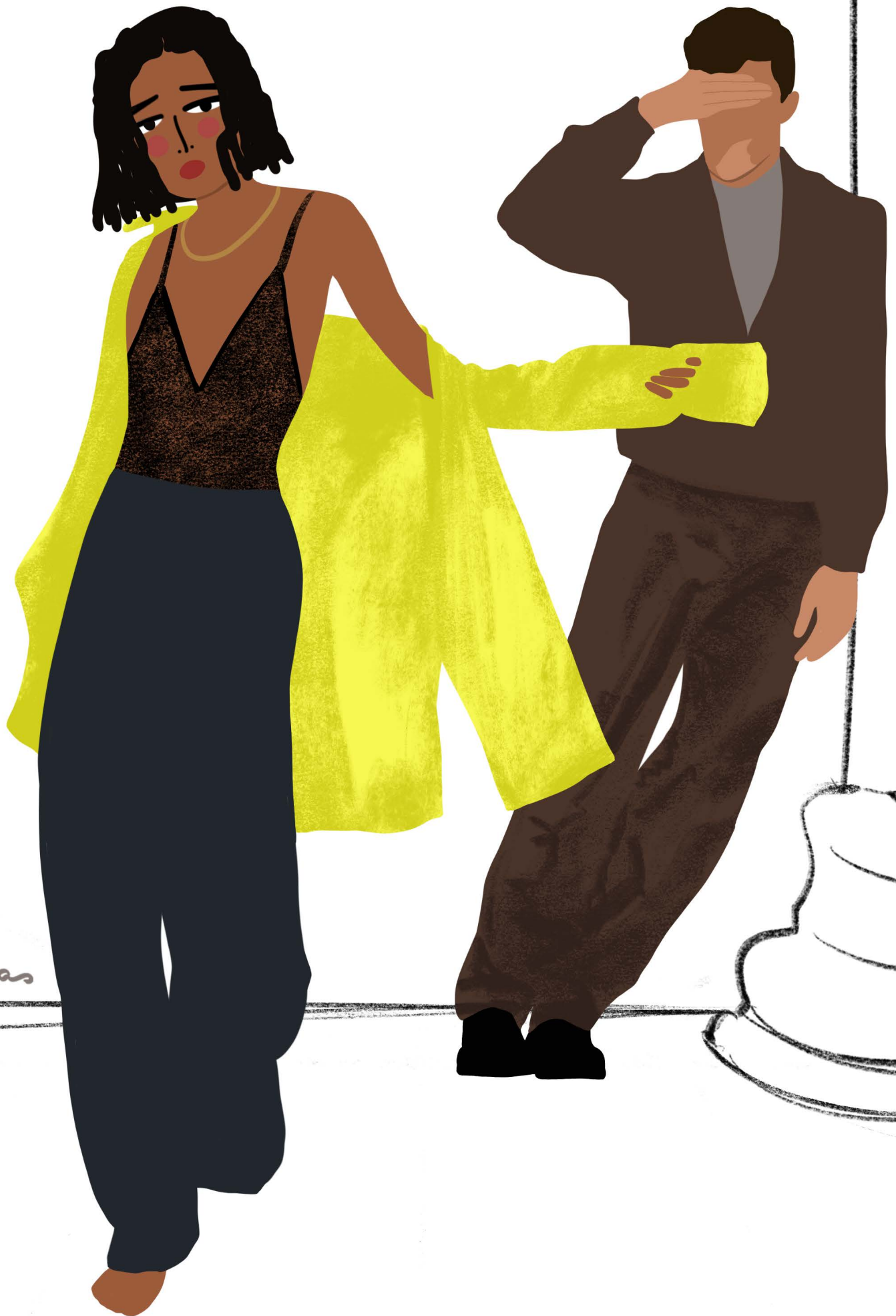


THE LOOM



Riopele



m. dimas

PATHS TO THE FUTURE

At Riopelle, we are leading the transition to a far greener textile industry and 2022 represented a historical landmark for the company with its turnover reaching around 92.6 million euros, reflecting the recognised growth and market appreciation of our investment in innovative and sustainable fashion products.

The urgency of this structural change should not, however, be underestimated. The environmental impact of the textile industry, from its excessive water consumption to the waste generated, is very significant. Nevertheless, there is now a broad awareness that has stimulated collective efforts to reimagine practices to reflect positively on the planet.

In this third edition of *The Loom*, we plunge into the fascinating future of the textile and clothing industry. We thus explore the perspectives and innovations that are shaping the sector, unveiling the trends that shall profoundly transform the ways we think and do fashion. We discover some of the state-of-the-art technologies that are driving sustainability as well as highlighting the significant progress hitherto made.

With the capacity to understand the moment that surrounds us, we shall continue to lead by example, with ambitious targets aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, thus opening up a new era in the development of our national textile industry.

José Alexandre Oliveira,
Editor-in-Chief

WHAT WILL THE INDUSTRY OF THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?



Future. “Adjective. What is to be, what is to happen or what is to come. What is forecast for a determined state or quality in a proximate time”. There are various facets to dictionary definitions for the word future. They all point towards a destiny, to the infinite or even to some Brave New World. In business activities, planning the future, pre-empting scenarios shall always represent an exercise taking place within the scope of encountering new formulas for competitiveness.

The Loom challenged three specialists to sound out the pulse of the textile and clothing sector in Portugal, analysing the recent past and projecting some futurist scenarios. These are their visions.

Rui Lopes Miguel

University of Beira Interior

Rui Lopes Miguel perceives the “textile and clothing industry in Portugal has risen its value on the supply chain to the international fashion sector. Companies have gained greater internal competitiveness in terms of their technological and productive versatility and efficiency”.

The Associate Professor at the Department of Textile Science and Technology of the University of Beira Interior recognises how, in the current scenario, “geopolitics, digitalisation, sustainability and circularity are conditioning industrial activities”. At the business level, there is the need to focus on developments in “green energies, eco-materials and production processes with low resource consumption are the consequence of the high price of fossil energies and strategically sustainable options, such as designing for circularity and eco-engineering”.

Rui Lopes Miguel accepts that “there are signs of a regionalised version of globalisation in keeping with the new trade policies of the major powers and as a defence against geopolitical uncertainties”. To this end, “the new EU legislation on sustainability and product certification for textile and clothing products may leverage the entire European sector. Recycling clothing on a mass scale in order to achieve circularity will generate opportunities”.

According to Professor Lopes Miguel of the University of Beira Interior, “Portugal has a textile and clothing cluster with factors of differentiation and uniquely competitive: the regional concentration of companies producing a great diversity of products”. Nevertheless, “to add value, the third competitive factor shall involve raising the level of company knowledge across the fields of management, technology, design, innovation and creativity, marketing and international partnerships”. Finally, it is important to attribute priority “to sustainability and circularity, to act in both the fashion markets and the functional and technical textile markets”.

Joana Cunha

University of Minho

An identical diagnosis is put forward by Joana Cunha, Assistant Professor in the Schools of Engineering at the University of Minho. “In my view, the Portuguese textile and clothing industry has evolved very positively over the last 15 years, not only in terms of quality, innovation, design and technological development but also as reflected in the global turnover of businesses and their exports”.

In practical terms, “since 2010, we have witnessed the sustained recovery in industrial activities. We have today better-qualified companies that invest more in innovation and in developing products with higher added value, hence also better placed to deal with the challenges”.

After two years of the pandemic and amid the Ukraine war, the scenarios currently contain some uncertainty. Joana Cunha points out that the major alterations from the industrial point of view are “at the level of demand for alternative renewable energies that enable the reduction in the high energy costs, the development of processes for tracing products and ensuring transparency to clients and the adopting of the principles of sustainability and especially circularity”. According to this University of Minho professor, “there will be changes in terms of the materials used, the productive processes, the technologies and the organisation in addition to the need to develop new professional skills in the industry”. Additionally, “there will be the need to implement new management models to make organisations still more flexible and more sustainable not only from the environmental point of view but also economically and socially”.

Joana Cunha defends how “in this new paradigm of sustainability and circularity associated with the European directives for the sector, advancing down this path will require taking advantage of the existing knowledge in the industry and in academia as well as the applied research ongoing in universities and the specialist technology centres”. As regards the development of new professional skills in the industry, we shall witness the development of new teaching and training models based on digital tools and simultaneously more closely focused on life-long learning within the logic of updating knowledge.

According to the Joana Cunha, “Portugal is one of the few European countries that still maintain a complete textile chain, right from spinning through to the finished product and thus meets all the conditions necessary to working for a circular economy and positioning the sector as a benchmark reference partner in Europe”. The professor furthermore highlighted the “strong know-how based on a network of companies and knowledge centres that have everything to gain from working together”.

Albertina Reis

Riopele

The Portuguese industry has evolved in a positive way over the last decade and has won over new geographies. Albertina Reis termed that “this evolution is significant whether in technological or in knowledge terms and now perceivable right from design through to production”. According to the Director of the Riopele R&D Department, “there was the capacity for reinvention”, complemented by “investment in innovative solutions, diversifying the product lines with a focus on quality and strengthening the bonds between companies, technology centres and universities, thereby raising the competences of the human resources”.

The capacity for development “is the driving motor for companies to remain stronger in the market”, especially in a society “that accelerated in keeping with the proliferation of digital supports”. For such reason, from the production point of view, the Portuguese industry will have to accelerate “its process of evolution through diversification, innovation as a high point of the quality and always with added value”. The Director added that the importance of “working in a focused approach to excellence in every production line as well as in the efficiency and effectiveness of processes”.

Artificial intelligence may be a solution “of great support for ensuring production excellence but equally within a logic of reducing costs”. Additionally, there is underway “a great revolution in the field of sustainability”, which ranges from adopting the legislative process to the capacity to “convert excess textiles from the most diverse origins into new raw materials”. This also requires “reducing the consumption of virgin raw materials and deploying new

fibres sourced from wastes, obtaining properties such as biodegradability or fibres with new properties”. Within the scope of this Brave New World, it would be premature to “rethink the ways how we develop fabrics or how we create designs”. “We shall certainly in the future have new intelligent fibres that will enable us to help the survival of the human race and find a better balance with the surrounding environment”.

According to Albertina Reis, the DNA of the textile industry that enables the sector to grow and raise its international profile shall be determinant for its future. “According to our knowledge, our resilience and because we have been capable, competent and innovative”.

WHAT WILL WE BE WEARING IN 2030?



PHOTOGRAPHY RITA CUNHA

What does the future hold for the Portuguese textile and clothing industries? What new solutions are under testing to ensure further competitive gains in the future? What are we going to be wearing tomorrow?

These and other questions of greater or lesser complexity may be answered by Be@t, the sustainable bioeconomy project led by CITEVE – the Technology Centre of the Textile and Clothing Industries of Portugal. The name appears complex, but this encapsulates a set of 54 entities, such as companies, universities or technology centres, that are working together to transform the national textile industry. This work implies the development of new raw materials as alternatives to those of fossil origins, as well as new manufacturing and processing technologies to foster the circularity and reutilisation of fibres and wastes. At the social level, there is also the objective of raising awareness in society of the need for change.

The Be@t project holds ambitious objectives in terms of bringing about change to the paradigm prevailing in this sector. Hence, establishing “a new pace of change and accelerating the creation of high-value products based on biological resources, as an alternative to fossil-based materials, however, without ever giving up on guaranteeing, and even raising, quality standards with a strong potential for differentiating among market segments”, defended CITEVE General Director, Braz Costa, on the institution’s website.

Be@t introduces companies to creatives to make the national textile industry more sustainable. The project aligns with the European product digital passport and draws on PRR funding. The project lasts three years and draws on the participation of ModaLisboa and Portugal Fashion, the organising entities of the national fashion weeks. Be@t spans two distinct phases, brainstorming

and acceleration. Fashion, textile or product designers, textile engineers and as well as national micro-brands may submit applications and those selected will then take place in challenges set by the partner companies, Riopelle and Tintex Textiles. The five winning projects advance to the following phase, Acceleration, in which participants join an SME for five months during which the teams receive training, mentoring and personalised workshops intending to launch projects based on sustainability and circularity in accordance with ModaLisboa. With Portugal Fashion, the target audience are the designers on the Bloom platform and consists of enabling 10 to 12 of these young talents to integrate the criteria of circular design into their collection that they then showcase in a fashion show. This project also has a five-month duration.

The digital product passport

The name Be@t derives from the expression bioeconomy at textiles. The fashion industry undergoes constant evolution, and the market increasingly demands changes and respect for the environment. This project represents a total investment of 138 million euros, of which 71 million euros in funding comes from the PRR – the Recovery and Resilience Plan and has a forecast duration of three years, terminating at the end of December 2025. The purpose is that over this timeframe, change reaches out to the “raw materials for design, research and production”. The objectives also involve complying with the environmental defence goals and developing strategies to gain new markets (nationally and internationally).

Making the textile industry sustainable represents a concern at the international level and correspondingly on the agenda of the European Commission, given that the consumption of textiles represents the fourth-largest impact on the environment and climate change, behind food production, housing and mobility. On 30 March 2022, the Commission presented a package of proposals under the auspices of the European Ecological Pact designed to “make sustainable products the rule in the European Union”, said the press release. This change makes the majority of physical goods on sale in the European market more environmentally friendly and energy efficient throughout the life cycle of the product through new rules.

The target set seeks that all textile products on the market designed to last the long term are as ecological as feasible, respecting social rights and the environment, by 2030. To this end, specific measures include eco-design requirements for textiles, clear information, a chain of producer responsibility throughout the European Union and Digital Product Passports (DPPs) that shall initially focus on three sectors: electronics, batteries and textiles. In the case of textile products, this passport includes information on the circularity of the products, alongside other environmentally relevant details. The economic actor that places the product on the market is responsible for issuing this information through a free access system, provided, for example, through the QR code.



A CHANGING WORLD



PHOTOGRAPHY UNSPLASH

The United Nations declared the 15th November of last year as “Eight Billion Day”. Furthermore, India is forecast to overtake China as the country with the world’s largest population over the course of 2023 in accordance with the “World Population Prospects 2022” report.

The global population is growing at its slowest pace since 1950, actually registering a fall of 1% in 2020. Nevertheless, the latest forecasts from the United Nations indicate the world’s population is going to advance to 8.5 billion in 2030 and onwards to 9.7 billion in 2050.

The long-term estimate is that the human population will peak at around 10.4 billion people during the 2080s and remains at this level through 2100.

Also according to the United Nations, the risks and opportunities of this demographic explosion and the parallel crisis in resources depend greatly on the decisions that society shall inevitably determine. According to Patrick Gerland, “the exact impacts of human life in the future have not been determined”. According to the head of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which oversees these demographic forecasts at the international level, “thus far, in general terms, the world has been successful in adapting and finding solutions to the problems”. “We need to be somewhat optimistic”, he pointed out while accepting, in an interview with National Geographic, that climate change is a powerful threat. “Simply maintaining the status quo and not doing anything is not an option”. “Whether we like it or not, the changes are happening, and the situation is not going to improve alone. This needs present and future interventions.”

The world’s population surged by a billion in just 12 years. Since the first appearance of Homo sapiens, it took around 300,000 years for there to have existed a billion people on planet Earth, which took place in around 1804, the year of the discovery of morphine, when Haiti declared independence from France and Beethoven gave the first performance of this Third Symphony in Vienna.

Having broken the eight billion mark, the challenges are tending to deepen. Pollution and overfishing are degrading great expanses of the oceans. Wildlife is disappearing at an alarming rate in keeping with the pace that human beings eradicate forests and other habitats whether for agricultural purposes or for the production of manufactured goods. Climate changes, driven by a global energy that still remains overwhelmingly powered by fossil fuels, are rapidly becoming the greatest historical threat to biodiversity, food security and access to water, whether for human consumption or agricultural usage.

Chinese revolution

The population explosion has also triggered waves of tension all around the world. For the first time in two thousand years, China is no longer the most populated country on the planet (overtaken by India). Even prior to the single-child policy entered into effect in China in 1980, “births in China were declining almost continually”, maintained Gerland. In the 1970s alone, the birth rate dropped by half. As a result, 45% fewer children were born in 2020 than in 2015. The Chinese birth rate now trails far behind that of the United States. Even while retaining one of the highest levels of life expectancy – 85 years – the forecasts point to the 1.4 billion strong population of China to soon begin declining. The active population has now been shrinking for over a decade. At this moment, there are not even two workers sustaining each retiree or child. In the next 25 years, the country is due to have some 300 million aged over 60 with the forecast cost of healthcare corresponding doubling.

The African boom

In Africa, in contrast, the trends are to advance rapidly in the opposite direction. In the Sahel region, the population is growing swiftly. Currently standing at 216 million, the regional population may quadruple through to the end of the second century. At this stage, there may be more people in this region than in China, which spans a territory ten times larger. In the meantime, food security is already a concern. Furthermore, a third of the people across the region live in conditions of extreme poverty, a higher rate than in any other region. A third of all family households include an adult member who has to occasionally miss meals to ensure the family’s survival.

It should be highlighted that all these projections are based on assumptions, and reality may prove entirely different. According to the United Nations, “it is essential to expand the opportunities for education over forthcoming decades” so that we are able to “determine just how many of us shall be living on Earth when we approach 2100”.

EUROPEAN UNION SETS THE RULES

The European Union has already defined its strategy for the sustainability and circularity of textile products. The strategy reflects the European Union's belief in "creating a more ecological and more competitive sector, which is more resistant to global shocks". Thus, "all textile products launched in European markets should be long lasting, repairable and recyclable, manufactured to a large extent from recycled fibres, free of dangerous substances and produced in respect for social rights and the environment".

Brussels considers that "disposable fashion is out of fashion and consumers are able to enjoy for longer high-quality textile products and at accessible prices". To this end, there should "be widely available and profitable reutilisation and repair services". The textile sector is, according to European Union, "a competitive sector, resilient and innovative, with the producers responsible for their products throughout the chain of value and the existence of sufficient capacities for recycling and incineration and disposal in landfills".

Simultaneously recognising the importance of the textile sector, which integrates the commitments made under the European Ecological Pact into the new action plan for the circular economy industrial strategy, Brussels maintains that "textiles are the fabric of daily life: they are present in our clothing, furniture, medical and protective equipment, in our buildings and vehicles. However, as their respective environmental impact continues to rise, urgent measures need to be taken".

In this phase, according to data from the European Union, "the consumption of textiles in the EU is the factor with the fourth-largest impact on the environment and climate change, behind foodstuffs, housing and mobility. Furthermore, textiles are third in terms of their utilisation of hydric and soil resources and fifth in terms of usage of primary raw materials and greenhouse gas emissions". On analysing the life cycle of textile products and proposing actions to alter how we produce and consume, "the strategy defines a new approach, which deals with these questions in a harmonised fashion".

Among the forecast actions, the European Commission "shall establish requirements for the design of textiles in order to ensure they become long lasting and easier to repair and recycle. In parallel, "disseminating clearer information about textiles and introducing a digital passport for products" and the "capacity for consumers to combat greenwashing, guarantee the exactitude of the ecological claims made by companies".

In addition, "this shall bring an end to the overproduction and excessive consumption and dissuade the destruction of unsold or returned textiles", as well as "harmonising the European legislation in terms of expanding the responsibilities of textile sector producers and the economic incentives for making products more sustainable". Brussels promises to "combat the unintentional release of synthetic textile microplastics". The European Union deems it essential "to face the challenges of exporting textile wastes and will, by 2023, adopt a set of EU instruments against counterfeiting".



PHOTOGRAPHY MIGUEL FLOR

PORTUGUESE TEXTILES REACH MORE THAN 150 COUNTRIES



In spite of the war, in spite of the pandemic, in spite of the economic slowdown, in spite of the increase in inflation, in spite of every hardship, Portuguese exports in the textile and clothing industry reached 6.12 billion euros in 2022, an absolute record for the industry. In 2022, Portuguese textile products were sold in over 150 countries.

In total, exports from the textile and clothing industry grew by 17.4% in value compared to 2019 and 13.1% more than in 2021. Among the top 10 markets, all recorded increases in 2022 compared to 2021, in particular Spain (+2.9% to 1.42 billion euros), France (+20.8% to 941.8 million euros), Germany (+17.1% to 539.1 million euros), the US (+6.8% to 476.8 million euros) and Italy (+17% to 451.7 million euros).

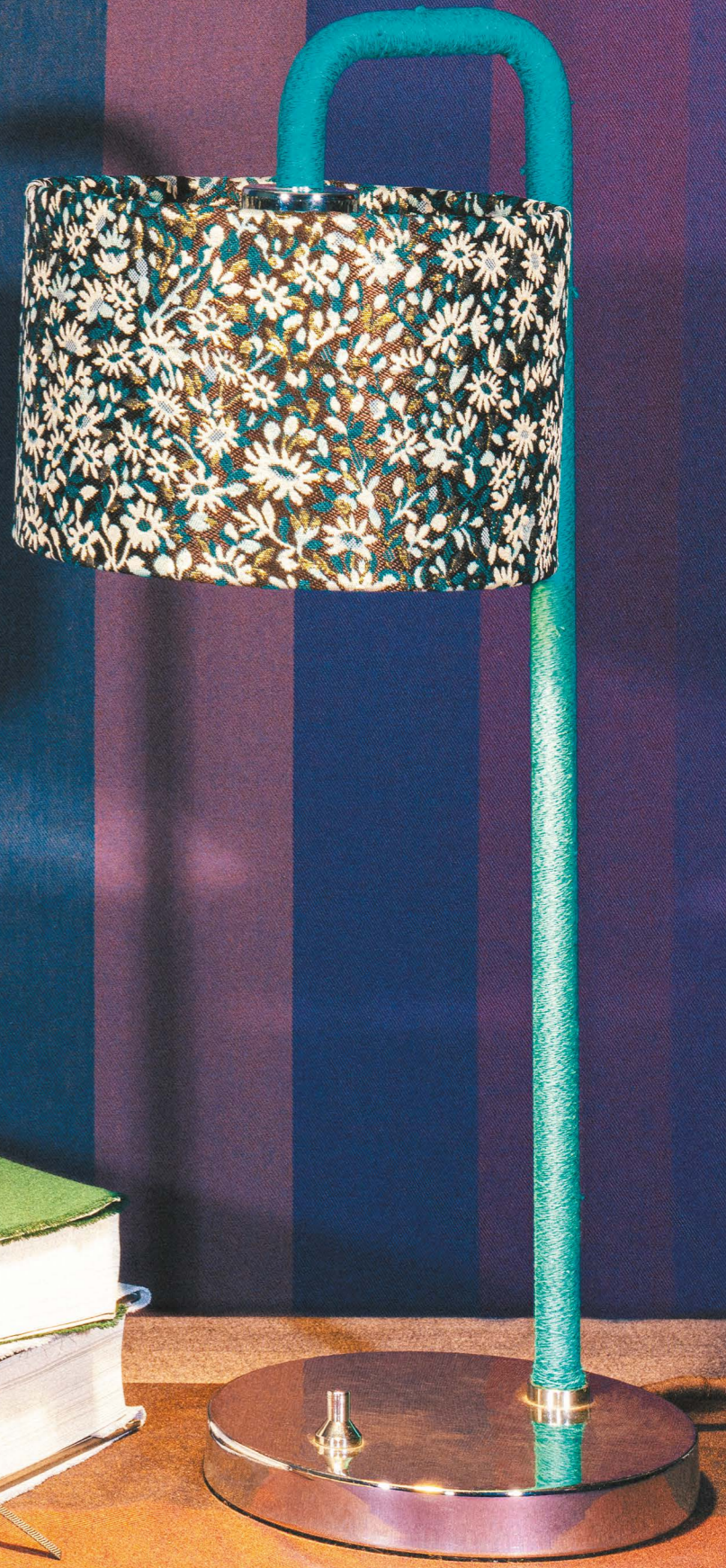
Compared to 2019, the last year before the pandemic, the industry grows in all the most relevant markets, with the exception of the Spanish market (with a drop of 10.9%, equivalent to 173.4 million euros less).

In a volume analysis, there was a rise of 3.8% compared to 2019, but a fall of 0.8% compared to 2021, for a total of 523.56 million tonnes (527.65 million tonnes in 2021).

DRESS
CODE



PHOTOGRAPHER PEDRO FERREIRA
CONCEPT ANA CARACOL



In the enchanting realm of fashion, boundaries are constantly pushed and norms shattered. Here, everything is used, transformed, repurposed, reinvented, and reimagined, as the worlds of fashion and architecture beautifully collide.

Like two passionate lovers engaged in a captivating dance, these creative disciplines intertwine to shape a world where design seamlessly merges with daily life. Fashion becomes a living canvas, where architectural elements and innovative ideas converge to create fabrics that transcend the boundaries of mere clothing.

Beyond the runways and glossy magazine covers, the intersection of fashion and architecture permeates our daily lives. The design sensibilities that shape our homes and workplaces inevitably influence our personal style choices. The fusion of form and function that architects strive for finds resonance in fashion. It is a world where architecture and fashion meld seamlessly, shaping fabrics that transcend the realm of mere clothing and become wearable works of art. This enchanting collaboration leaves an indelible mark on our daily lives, permeating our personal style choices and blurring the boundaries between design, architecture, and the beauty that surrounds us.









EDUARDA ABBONDANZA

How has Portuguese fashion been evolving? What still needs to be done for Portuguese designers to gain international prominence? What role is reserved for a player like Portugal in this global world? Eduarda Abbondanza, founder and President of ModaLisboa, answers.



PHOTOGRAPHY MARIO PRINCIPE

ModaLisboa was launched 30 years ago, what is your view of Portuguese fashion over this period?

We have witnessed a total transformation. Fashion is a field that draws on all others and the world has changed transversally — it would be impossible for fashion not to accompany and, very often, foresee such change. In Portugal, specifically, and because this is our primordial territory, Fashion went professional and also became a profession that got democratised. It is no longer just about experimentation as it was three decades ago. This is a valid business, a product of thinking that attracts attention, which has its own social and cultural relevance, which speaks to and about us all. The fluidity of the dialogue between creatives and industry is increasingly improving in the sense that collaboration has come to be seen as the only path to the future. When we previously talked about Designers and Factories, we always referenced some unbridgeable divide. Now, when the discourse around Sustainability, Technology and Innovation is increasingly part of our day-to-day reality, co-creation begins being something concrete and the language of Author Fashion and the Textile Industry converge. We may finally unite our national producer label as a responsible country with enormous creativity. And it is this union that endows our potential for infinite growth.

What role has ModaLisboa played in the international affirmation of Portuguese fashion?

As an event, ModaLisboa has built up a cultured international positioning. 32 years later, this continues to attract international publications that write about Fashion as a conceptual and not only a commercial field, which contributes to our Designers reaching specific target publics, appreciators and purchasers of Haute Couture. This has, almost inevitably, enhanced the international image of the Portuguese brand as a creative industry, allied, as I mentioned above, to the question of innovation in the manufacturing. ModaLisboa is also a founding member of the European Fashion Alliance, a European project to empower and represent the fashion industry before the structures of power. This comes in the wake of having been a member of a similar program, United Fashion, that brought together various European Designers and Creatives for presentations, networking and training. The internationalisation strategy of ModaLisboa has always been very methodical and focused to affirm Portuguese fashion internationally as a cohesive business, relevant and with high conceptual quality levels.

In particular, what evaluation would you make of the 60th edition of ModaLisboa?

I would provide a very positive evaluation. The greatest objective of this edition was to generate a productive discourse around Haute Couture and this was the challenge we set our Designers. In every communicative interaction, whether in the campaign, the Fast Talks or the interviews with the media, this was the fundamental issue. Everybody reflected on their practices, sharing their difficulties and strategies for the future, and this provided us with the ease of continuity. We think together, we implement together, and now we have plenty of input on how to build the future together.

In your perspective, what does Portuguese fashion still lack to gain a stronger profile at the international level?

The internationalisation of a fashion designer is a long process and that requires an extremely well-defined strategy, involving high levels of investment. There are various stages to this process that have been facilitated by the digital and social networks, but this also means that every designer around the world has gained visibility and, thus, there is more competition. Designer fashion is made up of micro-companies, with extremely small structures and any international positioning strategy will have to imply financial investment to strengthen these structures both in terms of human resources and productive agility.

ModaLisboa through its Sangue Novo (New Blood) initiative has sought to launch a group of new creatives. What does the future hold for them?

Sangue Novo is one of the most important platforms of ModaLisboa. We perceive this as essential and a core facet of our mission, to enable new talents. Indeed, the most relevant facet of this project is not the discovery: it is the mentoring, the accompanying and the promoting of national creative potential. Our largest investment goes into establishing partnerships — whether with textile producers, like the relationship maintained with Riopete — or the sponsors, prizes and protocols in effect with quality teaching establishments for these young Designers to be prepared for the labour market and to implement change. Therefore, we accepted new candidates in May of this year and in October we shall be getting to know another ten creatives who can make a difference.

In what way do you believe it possible to strengthen the connection between the industrial sector and haute couture?

As already referenced, I believe this connection is already increasingly strong, especially because it is mutually advantageous. The Designers require productive agility, technological tools and the manufacturing quality of the industrial sector. Simultaneously, the industrial sector needs creativity, concepts and thinking of Design and conceptual positioning. And both are focused on the commitment to responsible and more sustainable production. We will not be able to take any important steps, as the Portuguese Fashion Industry, if we do not deploy a collaborative rationale. It is essential to create still more opportunities for dialogue, developing co-creation programs and extracting profit from the already existing stimulus and empowerment programs, and very often allocated to industry, to develop relevant work in conjunction with Designers.

What is the role of the textile and clothing industry on the competitive international scene?

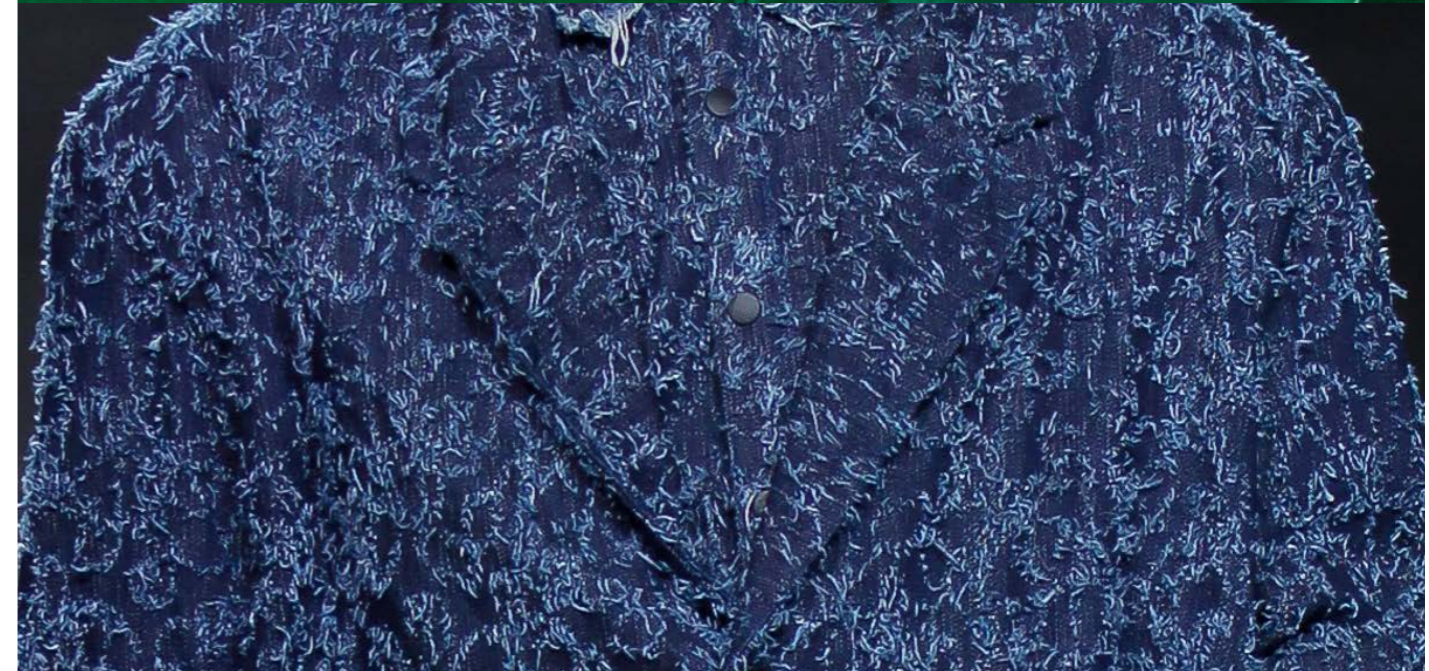
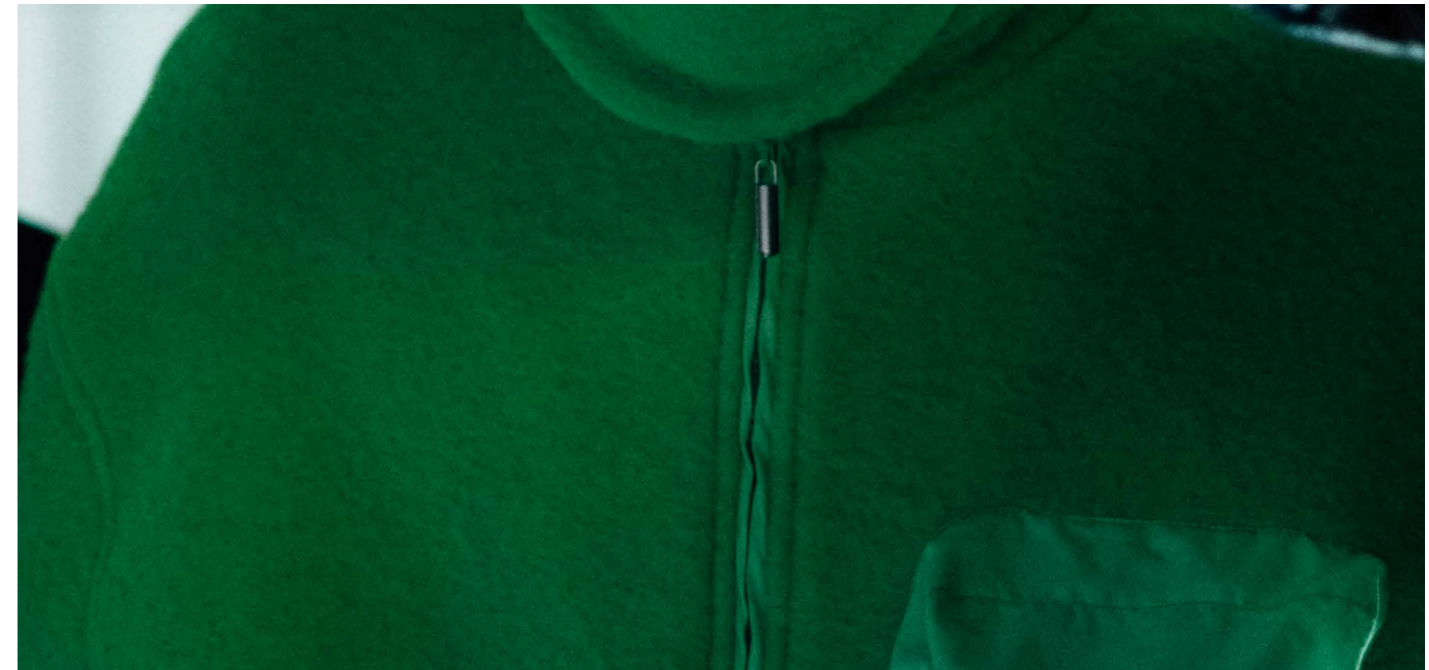
The strengthening of its positioning as a responsible, ethical, just and human manufacturing sector, allied to productive technological research and innovation. The textile and clothing industry now has all the tools needed to be an international leader and an example of the future of production, implementing the ideal that Fashion not only has to mitigate harmful actions against the planet and people, but also actively strive to create a truly positive impact.

WEAVING INNOVATION AT PORTUGAL FASHION

Porto takes center stage at the 52nd Edition of Portugal Fashion.

From March 14th to 18th, Porto once again became the stage for the celebration of national fashion. Portugal Fashion showcased 34 runway shows (including ten international ones), 4 fashion presentations, eight shows by young

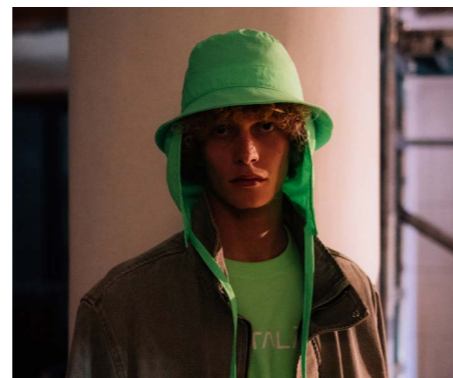
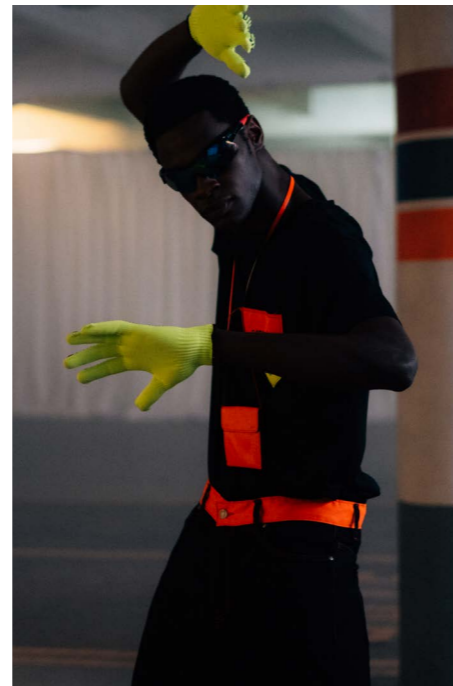
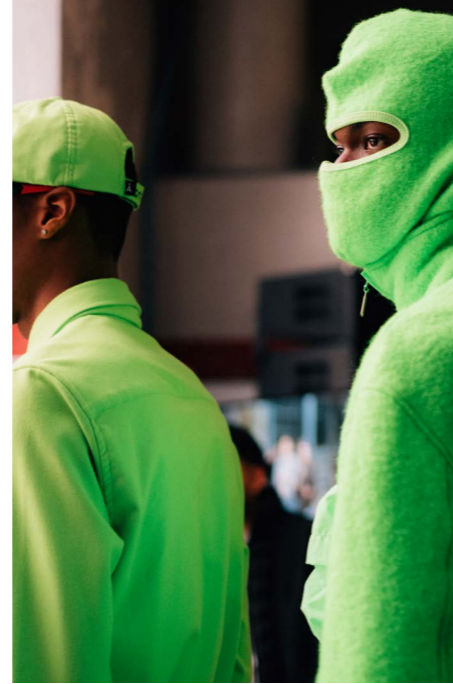
creators on the Bloom platform, and ten parallel events featuring a professional showroom, exhibition, live performance, happening, industrial tour, among others.



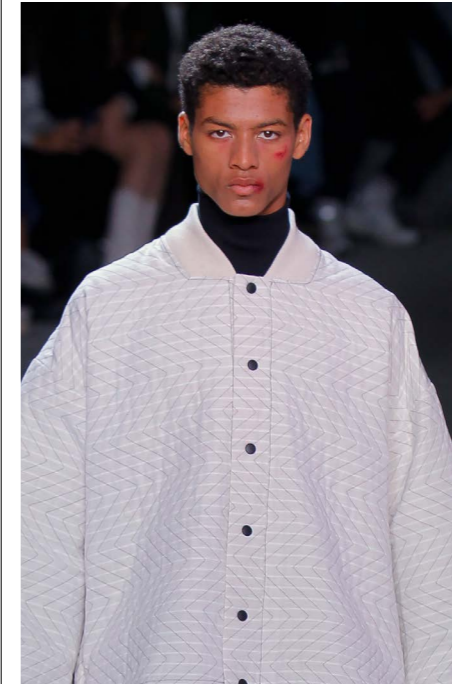
PHOTOGRAPHY PORTUGAL FASHION

Riopele has once again solidified its association with the event by establishing fruitful partnerships with a select group of extraordinarily gifted fashion designers, namely David Catalán, Hugo Costa, and Pedro Pedro.

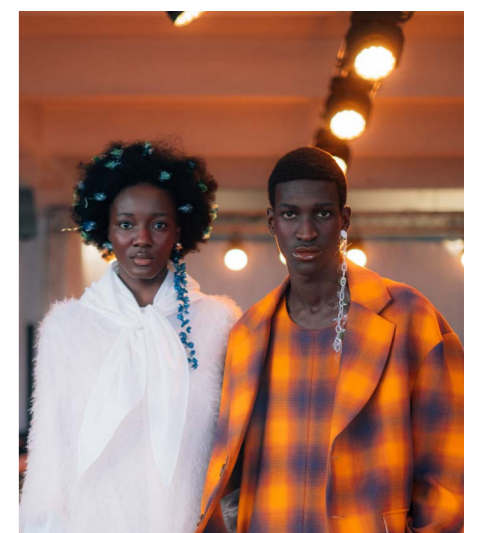
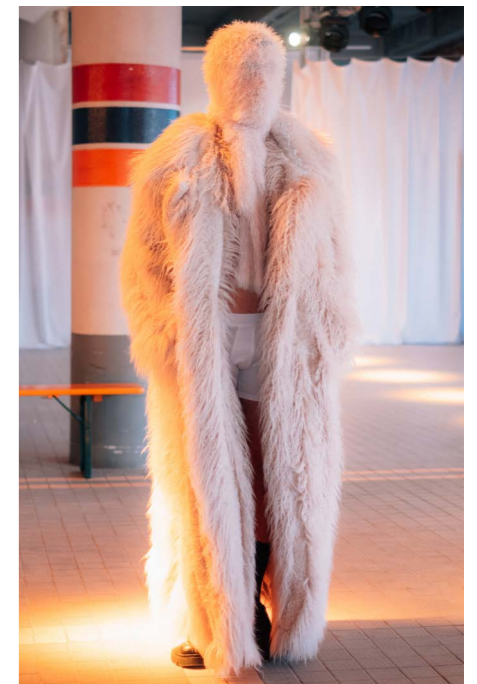
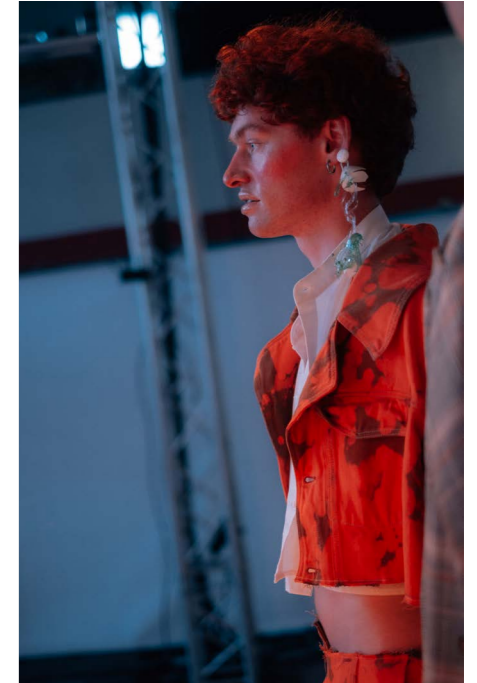
David Catalán



Hugo Costa



Pedro Pedro



LUÍS CARVALHO: BACK TO
SCHOOL



PHOTOGRAPHER PEDRO AFONSO
STYLING FERNANDO BASTOS PEREIRA HAIR RUI ROCHA MAKE UP PATRÍCIA LIMA
MODEL RITA SANTOS (KARACTER) PRODUCTION CLÁUDIA PINTO
SPECIAL THANKS TO AGRUPAMENTO DE ESCOLAS SEVER DO VOUGA



















A NEW GENERATION OF PRODUCTS IS ARRIVING

Committed to reducing textile waste and with a vision oriented towards preserving the planet, Riopelle is exploring technological solutions for transforming waste fruit into valuable raw materials, converting post-consumption textiles into new high-quality products and adopting ancestral and renewable materials and driving change in the textile industry in the direction of sustainability. At the epicentre of these innovations is the company's R&D department, where over 100 professionals daily strive to implement experimental and creative processes and approaches.

Engaged in the mysteries and promises of ancestral fibres, Riopelle is exploring biodegradable fibres such as hemp and nettles, unveiling secrets long since forgotten in the footnotes of history. "These fibres, which date back to the very origins of textile production, emerge as more sustainable alternatives in comparison to the traditional usage of cotton, which requires great quantities of water to grow and also the intensive application of chemical fertilisers that cause damage to the surrounding environment as well as human health", explained Ângela Teles, manager of product development and R&D projects at Riopelle. Within this context, "Riopelle is pushing ahead with the research and development necessary to enable the reintroduction of these fibres to the modern textile industry, through the Lusitanos Project", a consortium applying 15 million euros in investment with the objective of producing sustainable textile solutions based on natural and recycled fibres.

Riopelle is also opening the way for a new generation of "tutti-frutti" fabrics, exploring "the production of fabrics from non-conventional fibres, such as from pineapples and banana leaves, and orange skin. These fibres are sourced through valuing the organic waste of the agri-foodstuffs industry, avoiding waste and fostering a more sustainable and regenerative system", highlighted Ângela Teles. This innovative approach strengthens the compa-

ny's capacity to adopt circular economy models through alliances across different industries that thereby demonstrate the feasibility of balancing economic development with environmental responsibility.

With only 1% of post-consumer textiles getting recycled for the production of new clothes, Riopelle is committed to overcoming the challenges associated with recycling, now working in partnerships with different fibre manufacturers and technology centres on the chemical recycling of modified cellulosic fibres. Riopelle has also collaborated on projects involving the major brands in global fashion, including Infinna™ (Zara), Circulose® (GANNI) and OnceMore® (Filippa K), establishing strategic partnerships for the development of new and sustainable products that expand the boundaries of sustainable fashion and drive the adoption of recycled materials across this sector.

In a clear demonstration of its commitment to sustainability, we would recall that Riopelle set the ambitious objective of going operationally carbon-neutral and achieving a 100% rate of application of its waste textiles by 2027 while simultaneously ensuring that 80% of its products are aligned with categories and components of sustainability. These different initiatives reflect the determination of the company to accelerate the progress of the textile industry towards attaining responsible production.

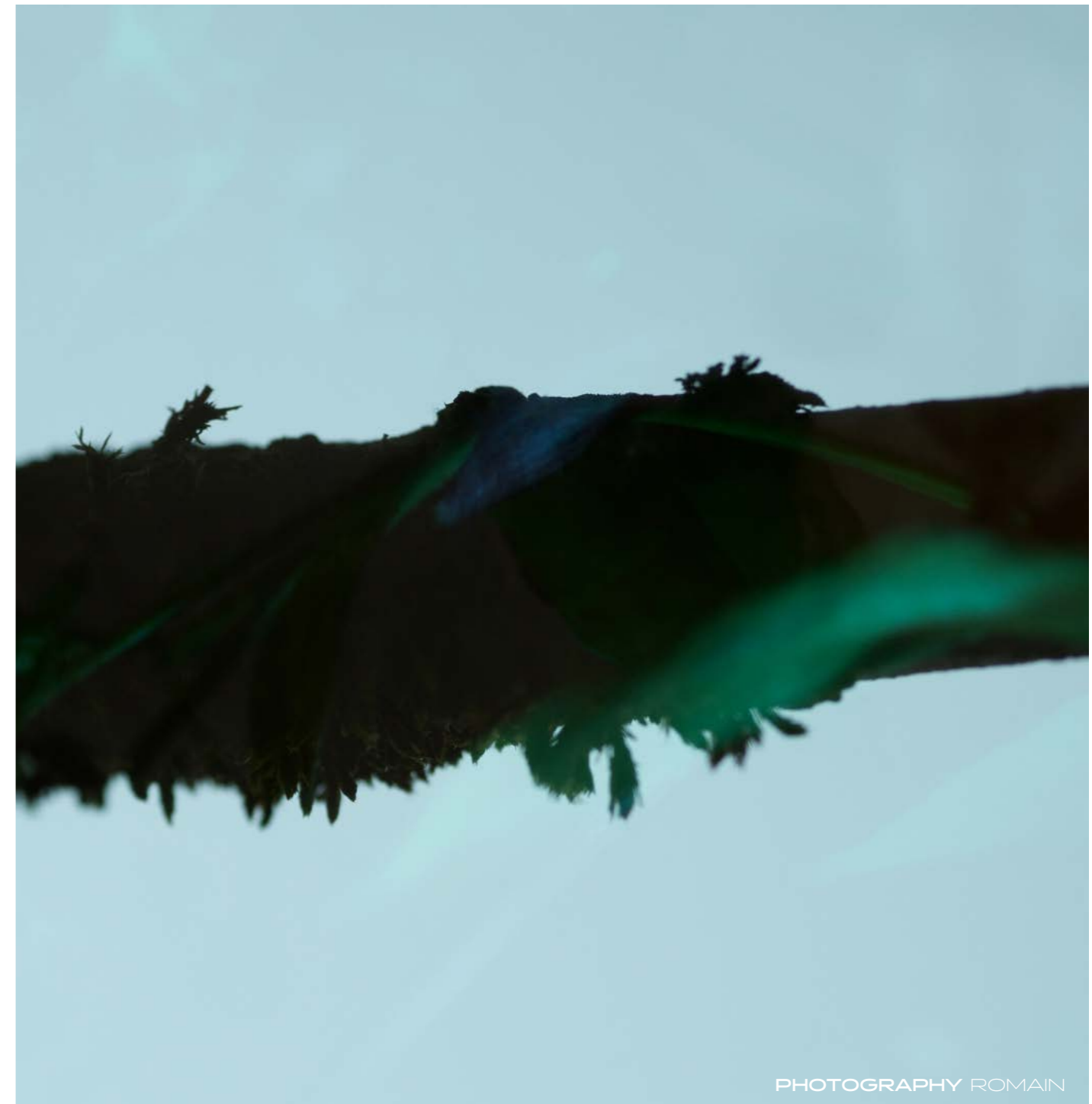


NEW BOUNDARIES OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Riopele, an international reference in the creation and production of fabrics for fashion and clothing collections, has teamed up with Lenzing and Södra to create textiles made from recycled and sustainably produced materials. The sustainable fabrics will be used in a Spring/Summer 24 collection by Swedish fashion brand Filippa K.

The collection will be the first in the world to feature TENCEL™ x REFIBRA™ lyocell fibres, based on the further developed OnceMore® brand pulp. OnceMore® pulp, which is the world's first process for large-scale recycling of textile waste from blended fabrics, was jointly developed by Lenzing and Södra. The innovative REFIBRA™ technol-

ogy is then used by Lenzing to produce lyocell fibres in a closed-loop manufacturing process. The fibres are then transformed into fashionable fabrics by Riopele before being used in the Filippa K collection.



PHOTOGRAPHY ROMAIN

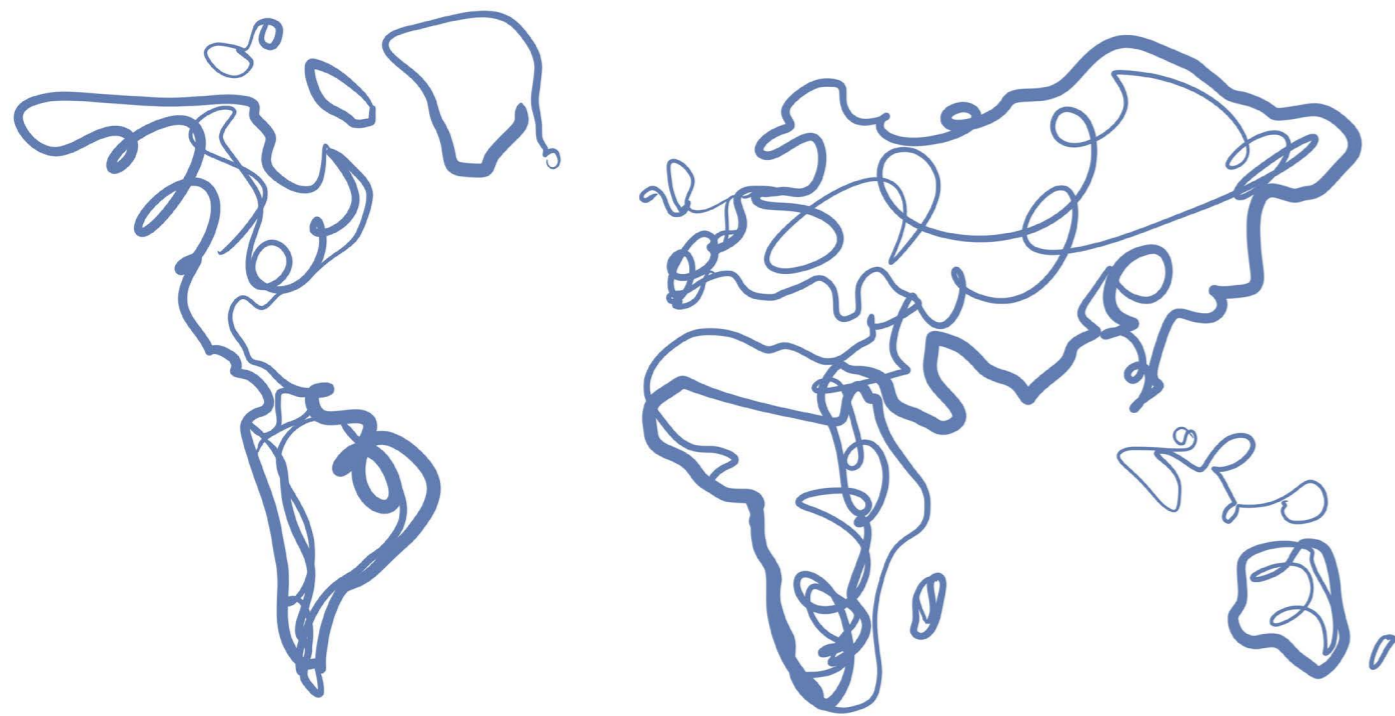
Riopele's new textile production standard, which emphasizes greater operational efficiency and sustainability, more flexible and highly digitized production, and management control based on optimized KPIs, played a key role in the partnership with Filippa K, Lenzing, and Södra to create sustainable fabrics.

Bringing together the unique strengths of each company throughout the value chain to create a better, more sustainable product, "this collaboration with Filippa K, Lenzing and Södra marks a major milestone in our ongoing commitment to sustainability and demonstrates how companies from different backgrounds can work together to create a

more circular future", said José Alexandre Oliveira, Chairman of Riopele.

This is just the latest effort by the fashion industry to find circular solutions and promote sustainable fashion. More information about the collaboration and the collection will be released in the coming months.

RIOPELE GROWS BY OVER 40%



2022 represents a historical year for Riopelle with business turnover amounting to 92.6 million euros, and almost entirely either directly or indirectly destined for international markets, coupled with a return to net positive results, around 1.2 million euros.

In a financial year that experienced major turbulence at the international level, Riopelle grew by over 40%. “The performance throughout the year was fairly asymmetric given that the margins through to and including the third quarter were under substantial pressure before experiencing some recovery in the final quarter of the year when a rise in sale prices came to take a greater effect”, highlighted José Alexandre Oliveira.

According to the company Chairman, in 2022 “it was possible to maintain balance treasury levels, with decisive support made available by the Government at the economic level, more specifically through the Gas Intensive Industrial Support program alongside the reduction in the network access tariffs”. In addition, “it was possible to remain on the debt reduction path, with the clear objective of deepening competitive advantages, improving productive and organisational efficiency, always bearing in mind the factors that enable qualitative gains and innovation as well as environmental and energy efficiency”.

Founded in 1927, Riopelle is one of the longest-standing European textile companies and an international benchmark in the design and production of fabrics for fashion collections and clothing. Over the course of the last decade, the company sought to incorporate sustainable practices across every level of its business, investing in the production of high-quality fabrics manufactured from natural, synthetic, artificial and recycled fibres.

In 2022, Riopelle announced its ambitious commitment to become operationally carbon-neutral by 2027 through the implementation of a set of measures and projects that will enable all company activities to take place with zero environmental impact. Already in operation is the new biomass unit that is cutting natural gas consumption by approximately 70%.

One of the particularities of this company stems from the vertical integration of the entire production cycle. The company prioritises the creation and production of fashion fabrics and complementarily, begins to return firm results in the mobility sector, especially following the launch of a new fabric produced from recycled raw materials with their origins in waste products and aggregating cork residues.

2022 also saw a return in strength to the main international fairs in the textile sector. Riopelle packed its bags and in just over 60 days dropped in on London, Paris, Milan, Munich and Tokyo. The company’s presence at the global textile events “already foresees a back-to-business environment” emphasized José Alexandre Oliveira.

RIOPELE UNVEILS INNOVATIVE PRODUCTS FOR THE MOBILITY SECTOR



PHOTOGRAPHY JOÃO SARAMAGO

Riopele is diversifying its areas of business. In addition to the fashion sector, the mobility sector, within the technical textiles sector, is our bet for the future. The company wants to be ready for the new TGV (high-speed train).

“Riopele, due to its size and capacity, is always looking for new business avenues,” says João Amaral. The Head of the Riopele Textile E-Motion Dept. emphasises that the company aims to “merge its long history and knowledge in the fashion and clothing industry with a creative and distinct approach in the development of new products for the mobility sector”. Riopele has worked in this segment since the beginning of 2020. “Riopele has collaborated with some major European companies and wants to be ready for the new TGV”.

Hence, “Riopele has developed two new exclusive products: cork-incorporated textiles and materials produced from textile waste, based on the concept of our Tenowa fabric brand”. Our presence in this sector “is a stimulating challenge for the company and will pave the way for new business opportunities”. The high-speed train project, currently being assessed by the Portuguese government, is one of our main interests. “We would like the new high-speed train to have a Portuguese ‘flavour”.

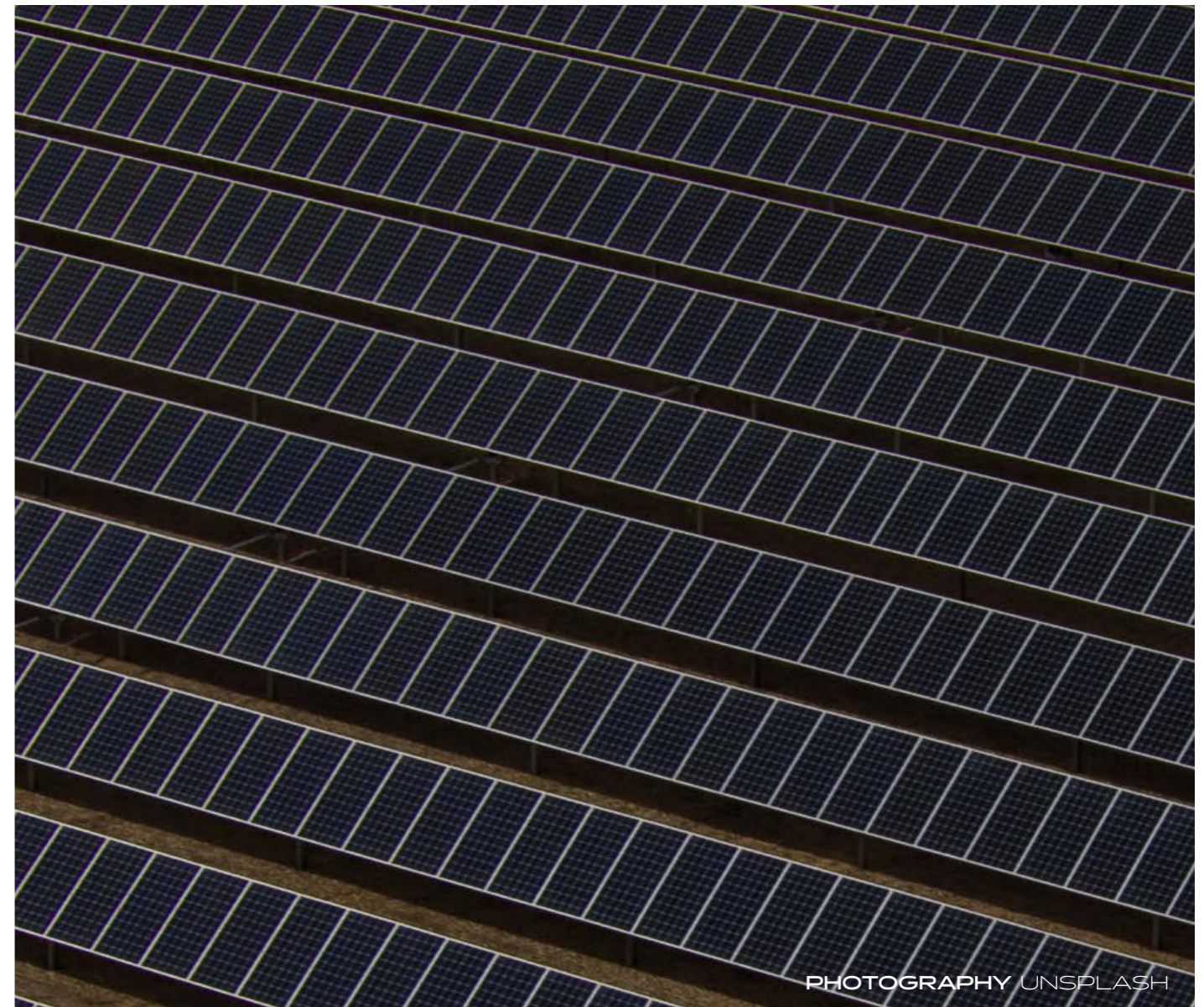
Meanwhile, Riopele is collaborating with some of the major players in the international automotive industry. “We want to introduce a fashionable vision into the mobility sector, by seeking the approval of automobile manufacturers regarding our strategy and positioning in this industry”, João Amaral concludes. Riopele wants to be one of the first companies in the European sector to be carbon-neutral by 2027.

Investment in sustainability pays off

The realm of sustainability is key to the strategic vision of the Famalicão-based company. “The automotive industry is at a crossroads in terms of sustainability. We have manufacturers announcing the end of the use of natural leather, vehicles that incorporate natural and recycled materials, concept cars that, at the end of their useful life, are 100% recyclable, so we have to identify solutions and develop actual products that will meet this new challenge”.

Furthermore, according to João Amaral, “without addressing the issue of autonomous driving, the future will involve more comfortable living spaces, acting as an extension of our sitting room, with the use of more environmentally friendly raw materials and greater differentiation”. Purchasing decisions made by consumers worldwide will be more conscious and demanding, and there will also be a radical shift by manufacturers in this regard”.

RIOPELE'S RENEWABLE SOURCES ALREADY ENSURE OVER 50% OF ITS ENERGY SUPPLY



Riopele's ambitious commitment to go operationally carbon-neutral by 2027 is now closer to achievement. By 2023, Riopele's renewable energy sources will already ensure, and for the first time ever, over 50% of its energy consumption.

"It is a significant milestone," states José Alexandre Oliveira. According to Riopele's Chairman, these results "represent a combined effort across every company sector, leading to all the company's operations returning a zero environmental impact within 4 years".

Overall, Riopele's carbon footprint receded 12% in 2022 compared to the previous year, down from 114,965 tCo2e to 101,360 tCo2e. For 2023, further reductions are forecast, this time of between 12% and 15%. Contributing decisively to this end is the installation of a new solar park, with a production capacity of approximately 6MW.

On course for its 100th anniversary, the Vila Nova de Famalicão-based textile company has been investing in the fields of digital transition and sustainability, believing that its efforts will maximise the positive environmental impact, setting out a model to be followed by other companies in the fashion industry.

"Here at Riopele, we recognise the urgent need to get rid of our carbon footprint and work towards a more sustainable future", says José Alexandre Oliveira, the company chairman. "We believe that companies have an important role to play in the fight against climate change which is why we are committed to attaining our carbon neutrality as quickly as possible, and we feel that it would be symbolic to attain this milestone in our centenary year", he concluded.

Geared towards demonstrating its commitment to sustainability, this all-embracing plan is aligned with the "Sustainable Development Goals" determined by the UN (United Nations Organisation) and it will involve major investments in the transition to renewable energy sources, as well as in the development of new products and processes to reduce emissions.

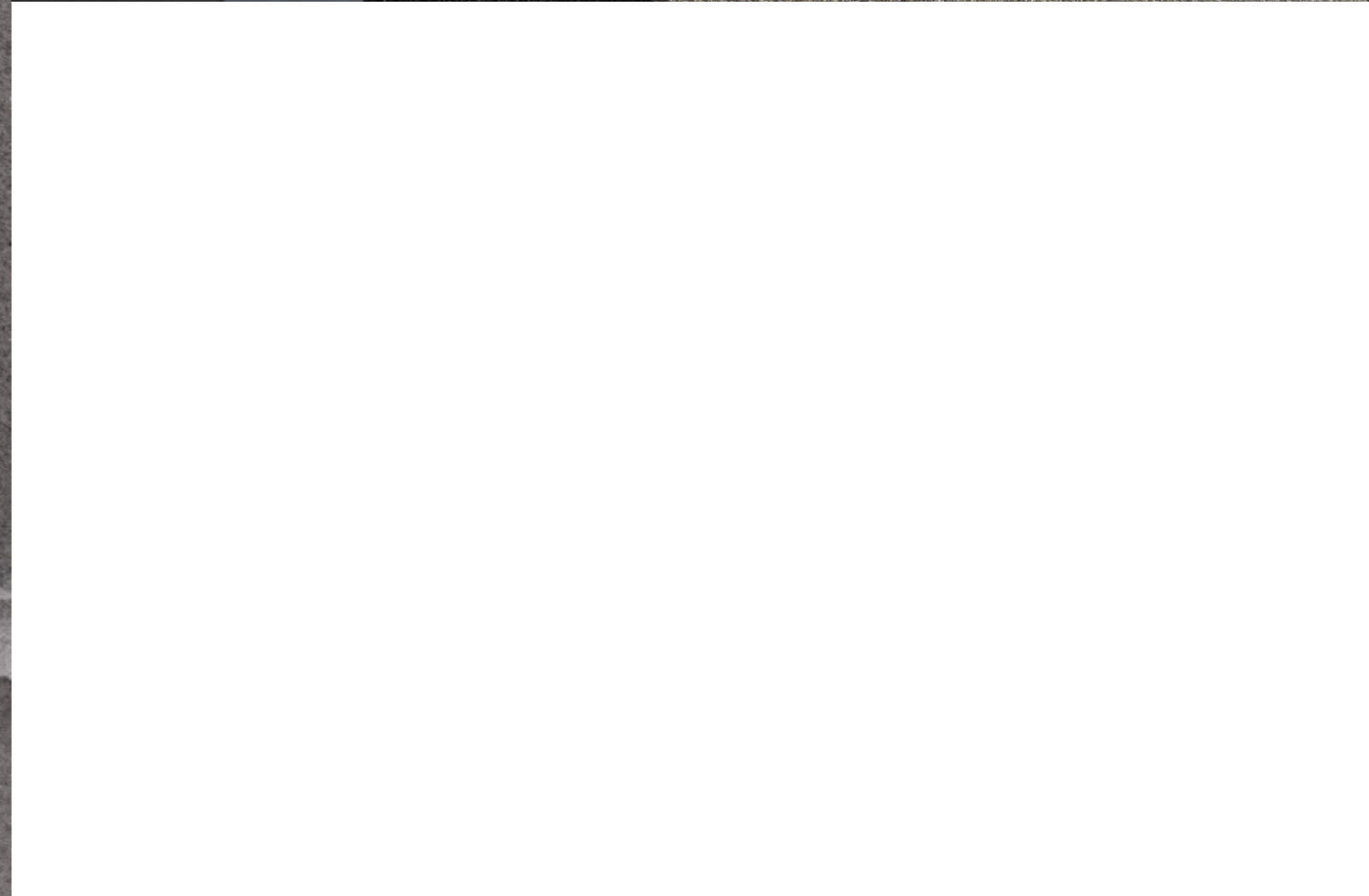
In the context of the Sustainability Road Map defined by the company, Riopele will involve the whole value chain in order to drive forward environmental progress.

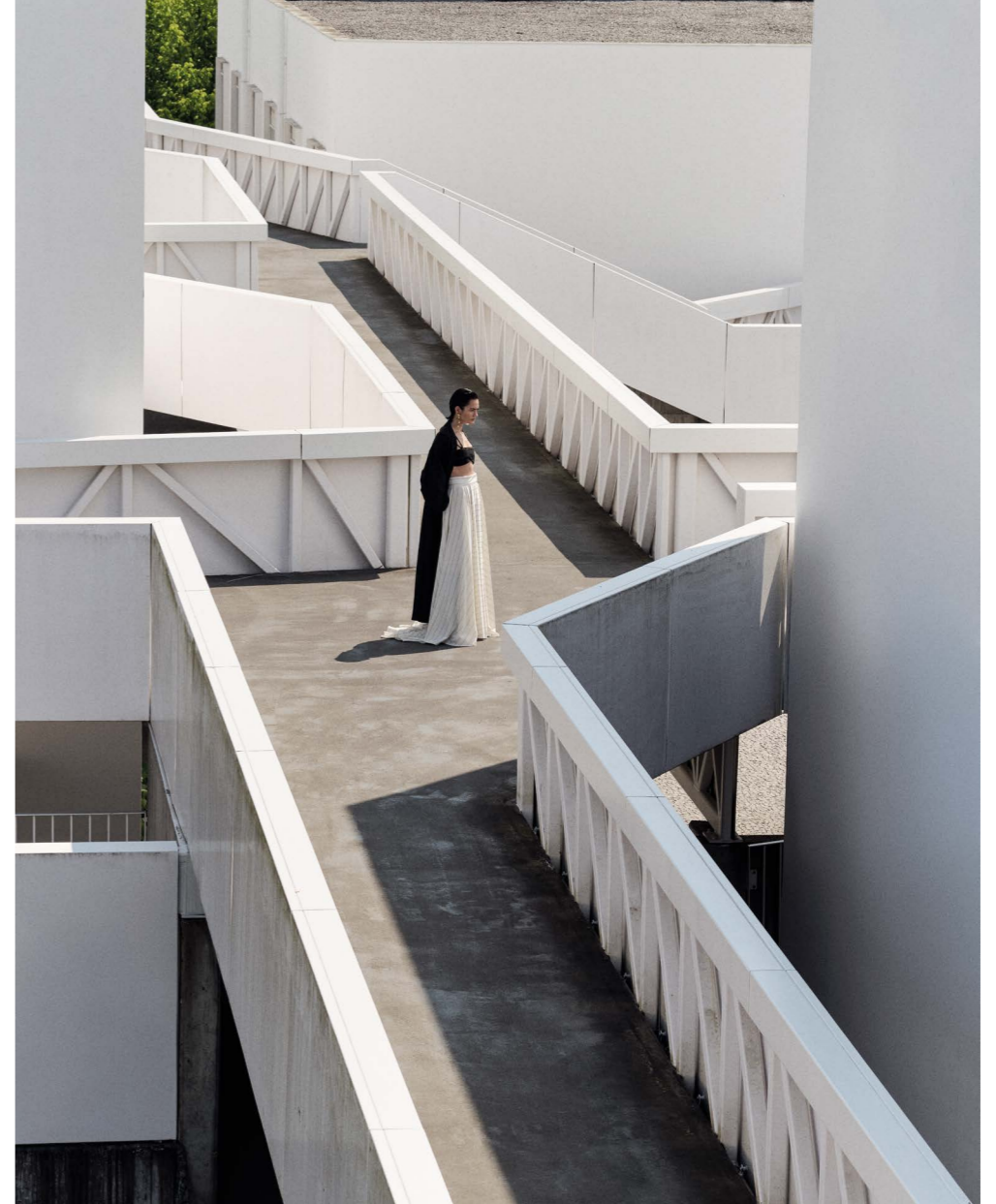
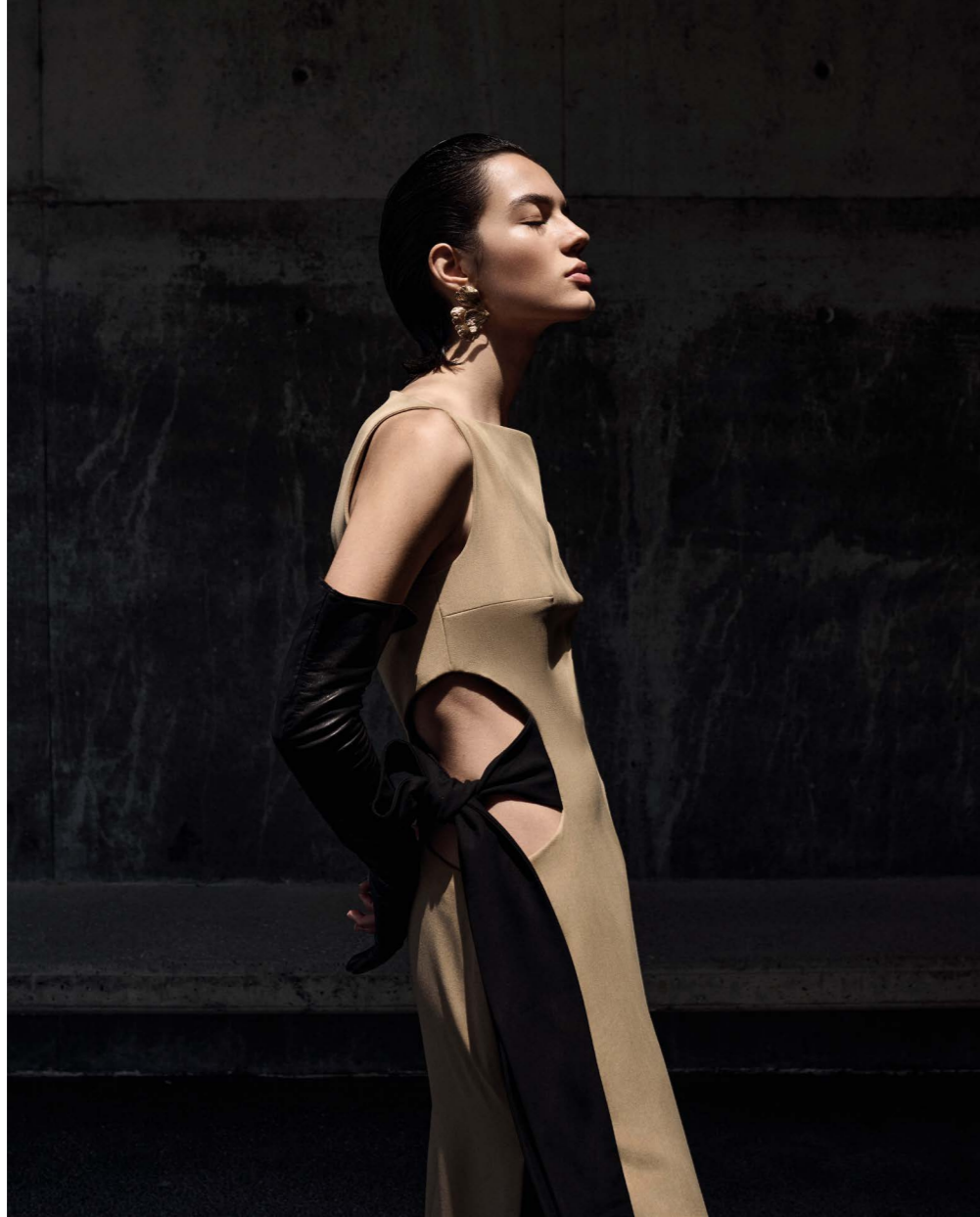
DOWNTOWN



PHOTOGRAPHER PEDRO AFONSO
PHOTO ASSISTANT HUGO RIBEIRO STYLING FERNANDO BASTOS PEREIRA
HAIR RUI ROCHA MAKE UP HELENA ALMEIDA
MODEL DILSA (DA BANDA) AND DIOGO LAPAS (FACE MODELS)
PRODUCTION CLAUDIA PINTO
SPECIAL THANKS TO CAMARA MUNICIPAL DO PORTO



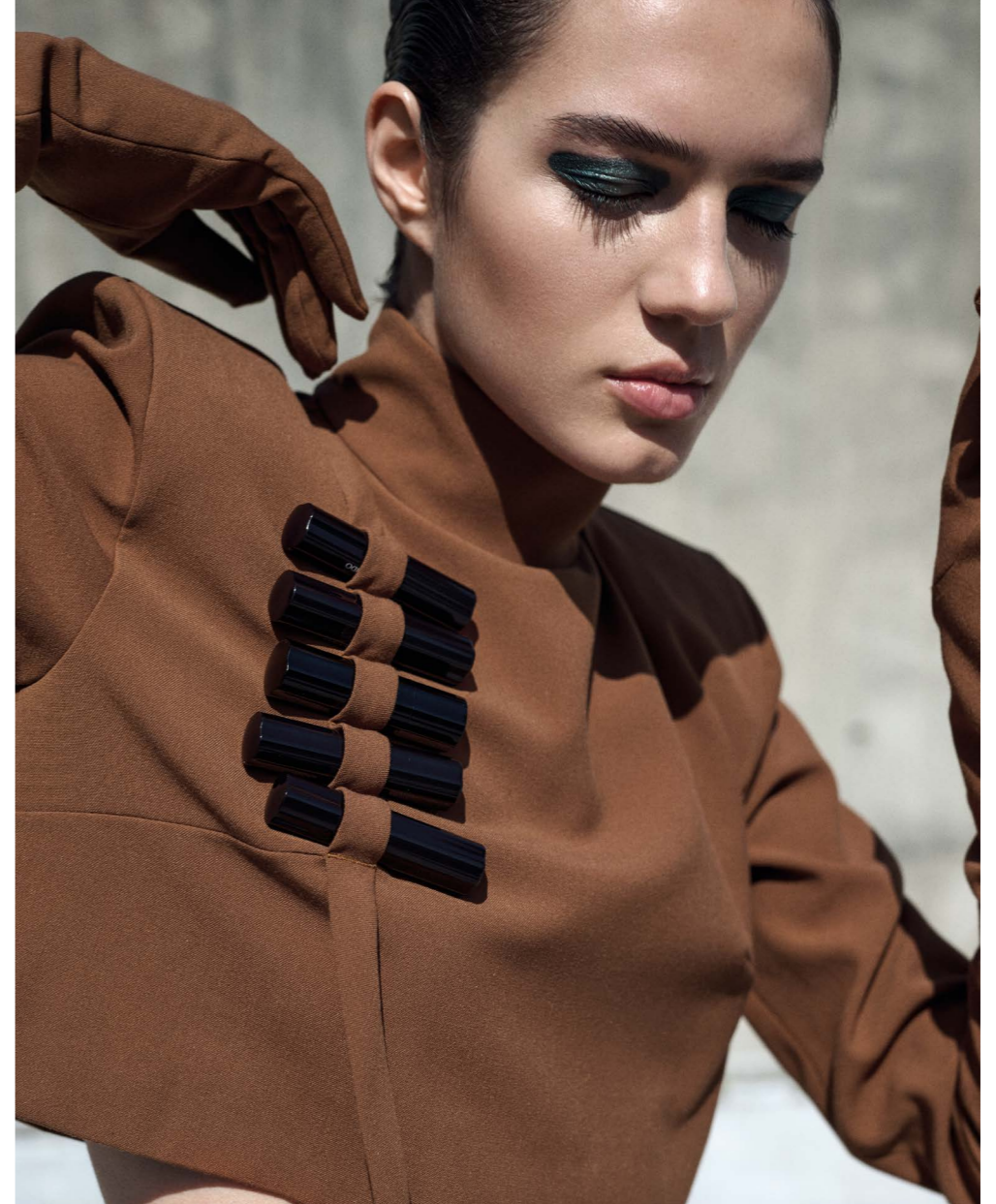
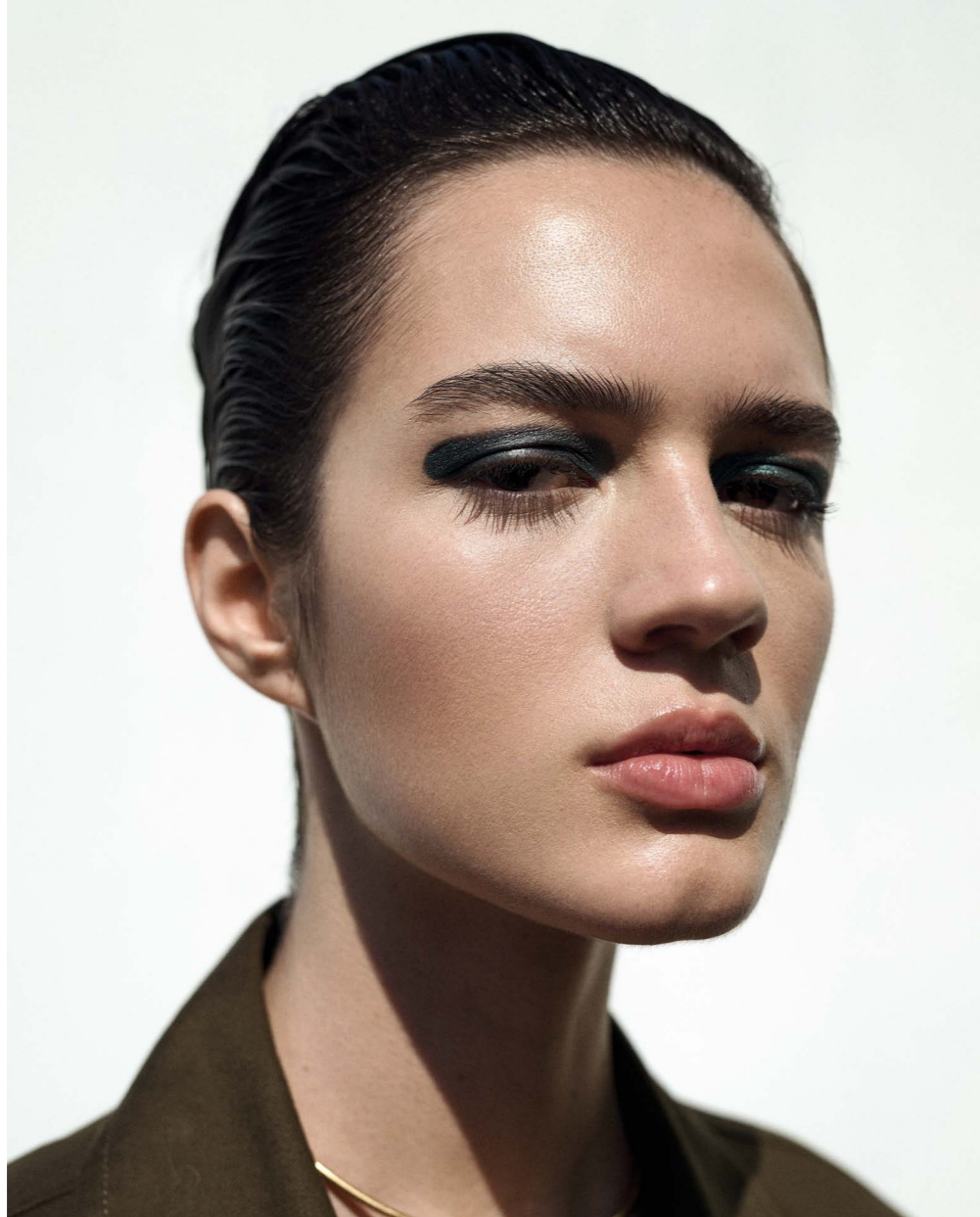










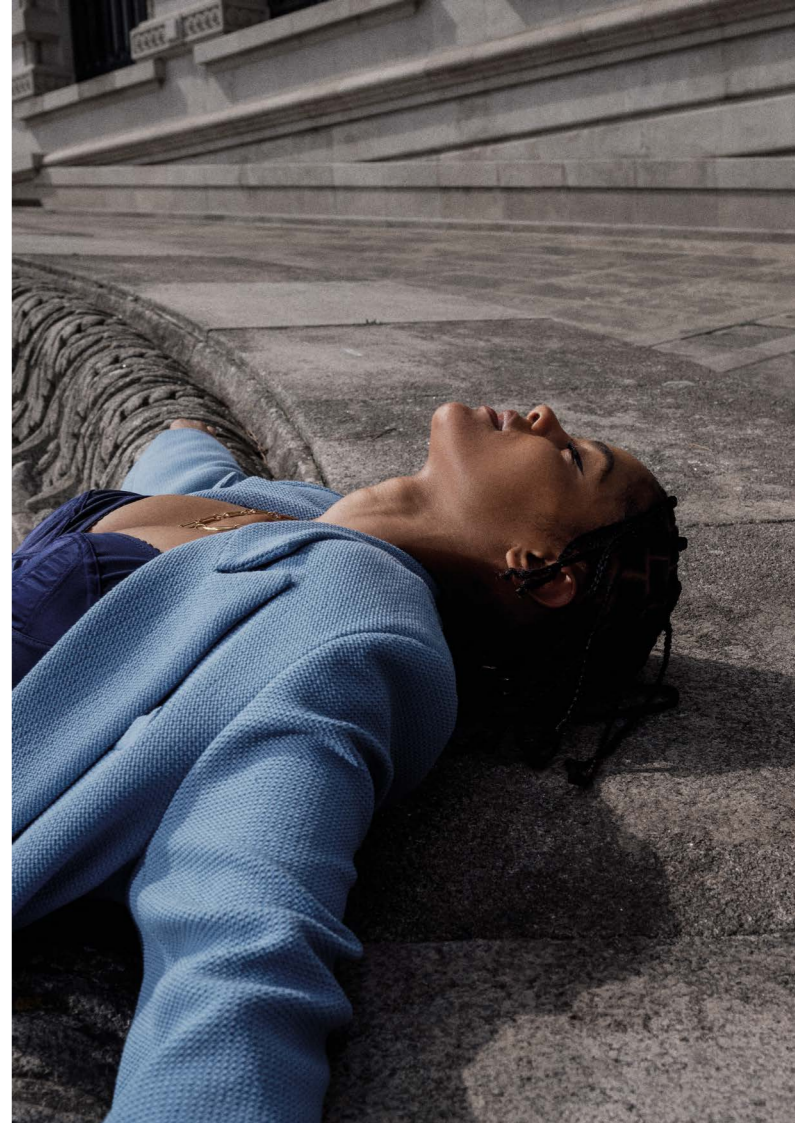
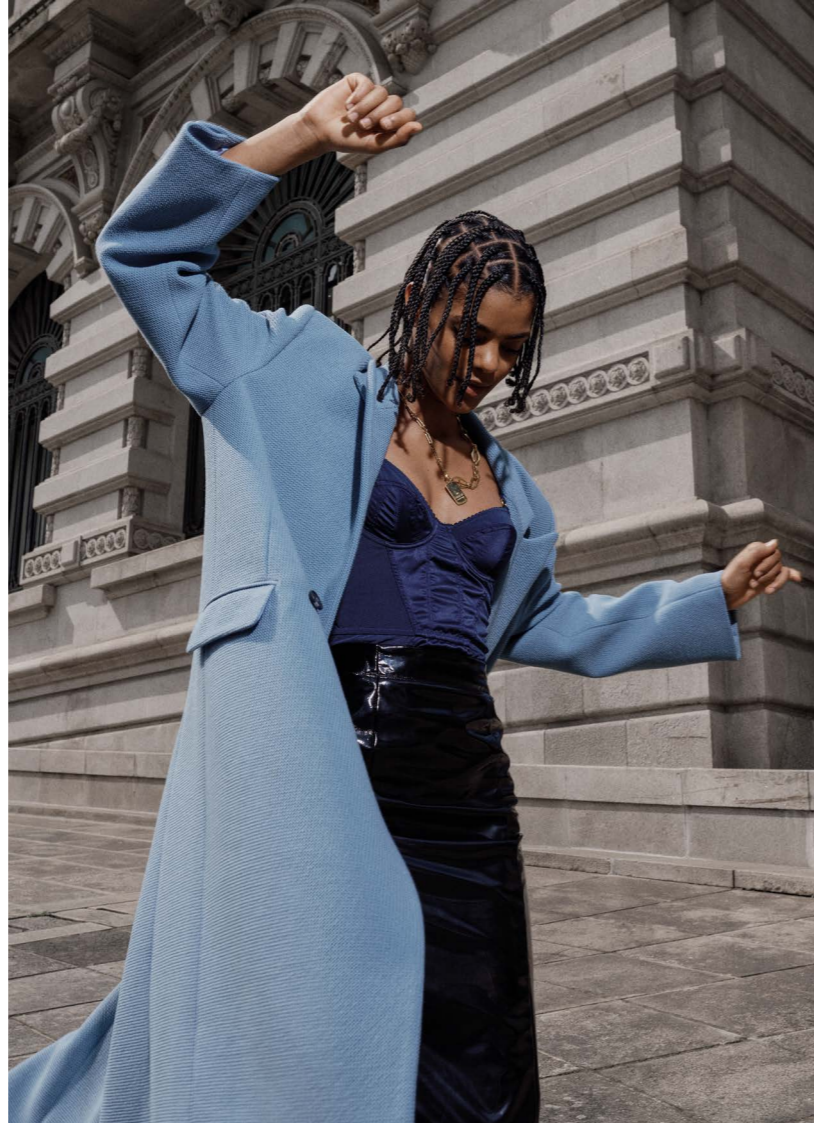














Texlene: A symbol of female emancipation

In the 1960s, the world of fashion underwent a revolution with the popularisation of the ready-to-wear concept. It was in this context that Riopele launched the Texlene brand of fabrics.

Arising from innovations in chemistry and polymers, Texlene presented technically perfect characteristics – the capacity to preserve the appearance of being new, with stains easily cleanable and ironing practically not needed.

The success came immediately, both nationally and internationally, being the fabrics widely used for the production of clothing for women. With Texlene, women were able to dress more practical, comfortable and modern clothes, without any major concerns over the constant maintenance of pieces.

This fabric thereby became one of the products unquestionably associated with female emancipation in ready-to-wear, resulting in their consequent liberation from dresswear problems in a generation shaped by the values of simplicity and challenging customs.



A concession in favour of the local community

In the mid-1950s, the village of Pousada de Saramagos still remained a fairly isolated region with few resources and scant infrastructures. Around this time, Riopele decided to invest in improvements that could help improve the lives of people in the region.

It was then that came to the idea of acquiring the terrain in front of the factory, constructing a building and donating it to CTT – the Portuguese postal service company, for the opening of a local post office. With this new post office, the inhabitants of Pousada de Saramagos and its surroundings gained easier access to postal services, facilitating life in the community and strengthening the relationship between Riopele and its region.

Today, so many years later, the post office continues to operate in the same location and Riopele remains committed to the development of the local community.



1958: The first exports

In the mid-1950s, Riopelle was already standing out in the national marketplace as one of the leading textile producers. With rising levels of production, the company began looking elsewhere as a means of further expansion. It was then that Riopelle decided to invest in exports, setting up a team with the objective of effectively running commercial campaigns in international markets.

Its first task involved identifying potential markets for Riopelle and establishing contacts with potential clients and local agents. The lack of experience and knowledge about markets, coupled with language and cultural barriers, represented significant challenges to the Riopelle export team. However, with determination and perseverance, the company managed to complete its first exports to Nordic countries in 1958, achieving significant sales levels.

Now, Riopelle is one of the leading textile companies in Portugal and exports to over 35 countries worldwide, keeping with the same entrepreneurial and strategic vision that drove its first expansion over six decades ago.



A special tradition

At the beginning of the 1960s, Riopelle started a tradition that would become the most anticipated event of the year for employees, their families and the community in general: the Christmas Party.

In a remote village where people did not have many opportunities to commemorate and celebrate together, the Christmas Party thus became a special moment for music, theatre and entertainment. Furthermore, there was a special attraction for the children: the eagerly expected Riopelle gift. This was greatly valued and gifted to every child in the village. This was a moment of great happiness for the children and a gesture of recognition by the company.

With the passage of the years, the Christmas Party became a greatly valued tradition that has survived until current times at Riopelle as an event that fills all those involved with a sense of pride and satisfaction and demonstrates the company's own commitment to its employees and the surrounding community.



THE AZORES



The following lines shall probably introduce you to one of the most special places in this world. We are always (highly) suspicious when talking about something that is so much ours but the international awards and prizes recently received can serve as better proof that we are to tell below is but the purest of truth. Get your ticket booked now. Just the one-way as well... we're not promising you'll ever want to leave. But you can still try. Welcome to the Azores.

A perfect symbiosis between water and green. Between sea and land. Between fauna and flora. Between radical sports and intellectual introspection. Between tranquillity and serenity. That's the archipelago of the Azores; made up of nine islands and located in the Atlantic Ocean.

Prior to presenting some of the characteristics of these water-surrounded lands, we first go to the past. The Azorean archipelago holds five centuries of history and tradition, customs and practices that are not to be found elsewhere in the world. Due to its strategic ocean location, this was a meeting point for vessels arriving from India, the Far East and other parts of Asia, Africa and Brazil that would pass close to the Western Group of islands, before crossing the archipelago on route to Europe.

Thus, the nine islands of the archipelago divide into three groups: the Eastern Group containing the islands of São Miguel and Santa Maria; the Central Group made up of the Terceira, Faial, Pico, São Jorge and Graciosa islands and, finally, the Western Group that features the islands of Flores and Corvo.

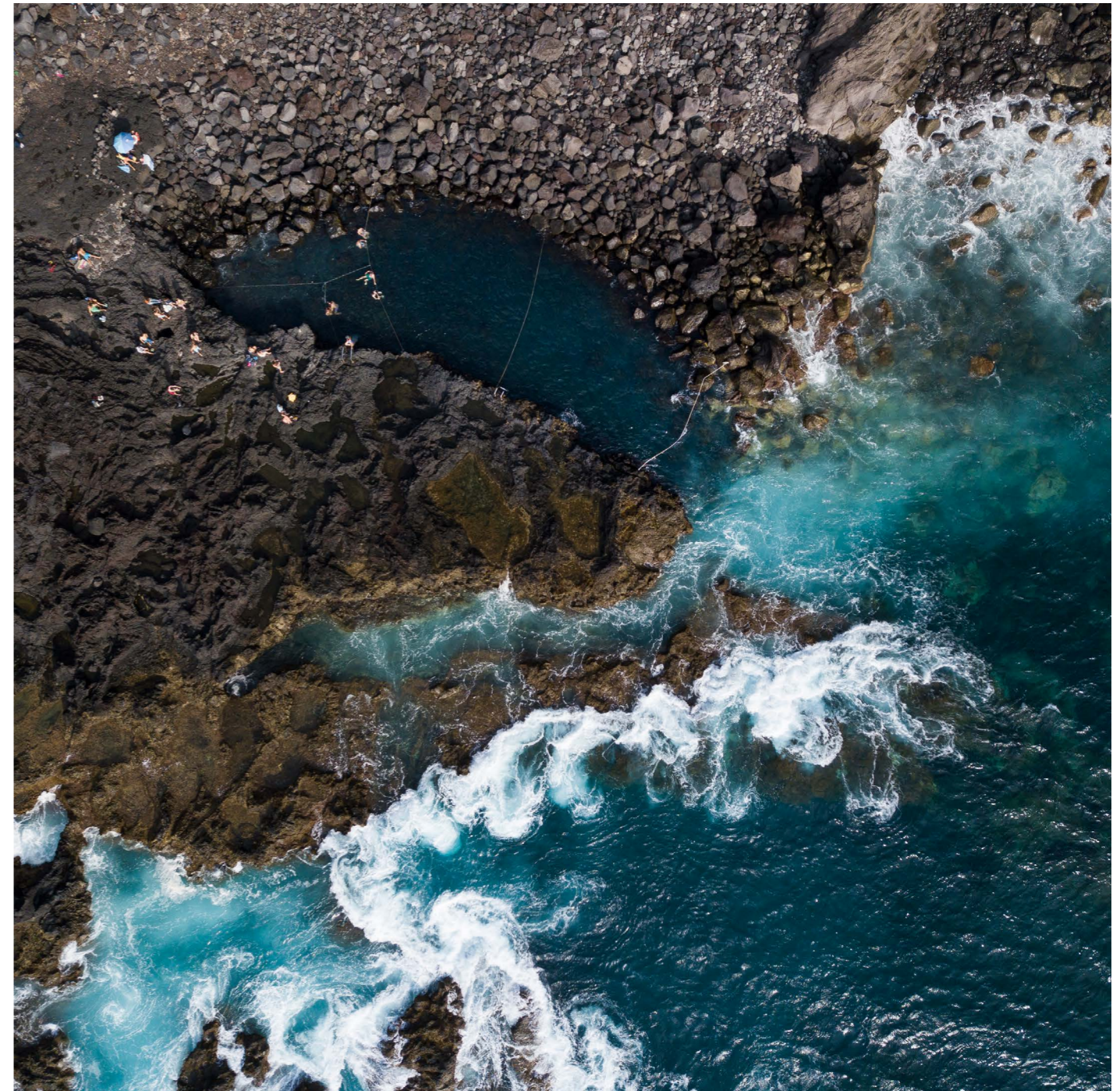
Now, we shall set about the arguments that we deploy with every conviction that this region is a must-visit destination. The Azores were the first archipelago in the world to receive certification as a sustainable tourism destination and have also been distinguished with all the classifications awarded by UNESCO. The region also hosts four of the eight Biosphere Reserves existing in Portugal: Graciosa and Corvo (classified since 1997), Flores (since 2009) and Fajãs de São

Jorge Biosphere Reserve (since 2016). The Azores Geopark is unique worldwide in containing 121 geosites across nine islands spanning the entire archipelago. The region also has 13 classified sites, in particular the lakes of Fajãs dos Cubres and Caldeira de Santo Cristo (S. Jorge), Caldeira da Graciosa, Caldeira do Faial, Caldeirão do Corvo, the volcanic complexes of Furnas, Sete Cidades and Fogo (S. Miguel), the islets of Formigas, Recife Dollabarat, the Central Plain of Terceira (Sulphur Pits and Algar do Carvão), Paul de Praia da Vitória (Terceira) and the central plains of Flores (Morro Alto), São Jorge (Pico da Esperança) and Pico (Achada). In terms of world culture and natural heritage, Angra do Heroísmo and the Vineyard Landscape of Pico have received classification by UNESCO.



Shaped by its strategic location, the archipelago also displays cultural, artistic and architectural features of various peoples. And, above all, something that stands out very particularly in the Azoreans as a people is their characteristic hospitality.

Now that we know the awards and the characteristics, let us move on to what you need to know to plan your travels. Firstly, there is the choice of island that you wish to visit, or, alternatively, the island where you wish to start. They are all particular and unique, and each is able to offer something very particular.



A note of warning: on any particular day, you can experience all the weather seasons in the Azores, which makes it perfect for exploration at any time of year, keeping up with the different experiences on land, in the air or at sea. And speaking of the sea, should there be any diving fans out there, we have good news. The Azores rank as one of the best destinations for diving. And why? Firstly, because it

is possible to dive off every island in the archipelago. And secondly, because each island provides different experiences: from coastal diving, diving down to shipwrecks, into caves, alongside sharks. It is even possible to dive in remote submarines that guarantee encounters with dozens of giant manta rays and schools of pelagic fish.

Special Places and Spots

There are some locations on this archipelago that constitute must-see destinations. Whether for the densities of their greens, the blues of their waters or particular historical landmarks, we may promise there shall be no regrets.

São Miguel, the Green Island



On São Miguel, long since referred to as the Green Island, there is much to consider. The largest island in the archipelago, visits to the centre of Ponta Delgada, more specifically the City's Gates and all the monuments that dot this central zone.

However, should your objective be to explore the greens, our advice is to get a vehicle and set off in discovery. However, this advice may be applied to any one of these islands. The Sete Cidades Lake is one of the most popular spots on São Miguel and was classified as a protected landscape under the Nature 2000 Network.

The lake – which at first sight seems divided into two – the blue lake and the green lake –, is in fact only one, but constitutes the single, largest natural freshwater reservoir in the Azores, occupying much of the bottom of one of the largest known volcanic craters in the world.

Such places almost inevitably attract a dose of fantasy and, as with almost all historical sites, there is a legend connected to the difference in the lake's colours. This holds that the colours link to the tears of a princess and a shepherd. The daughter of the king of these enchanted lands met a shepherd while out walking in the fields. They began talking each and every day and fell passionately in love. On learning this, the father, who had already promised his daughter in marriage to a prince of a neighbouring kingdom, banned the princess from continuing to meet the shepherd but did allow them one last encounter. It was then that the young princess, with her blue eyes, and the shepherd, with his green eyes, set about crying themselves a lake. In practice, the smaller green lake merely reflects the colour of its dense surrounding vegetation while the blue lake, when the weather is good, reflects the blue sky above.

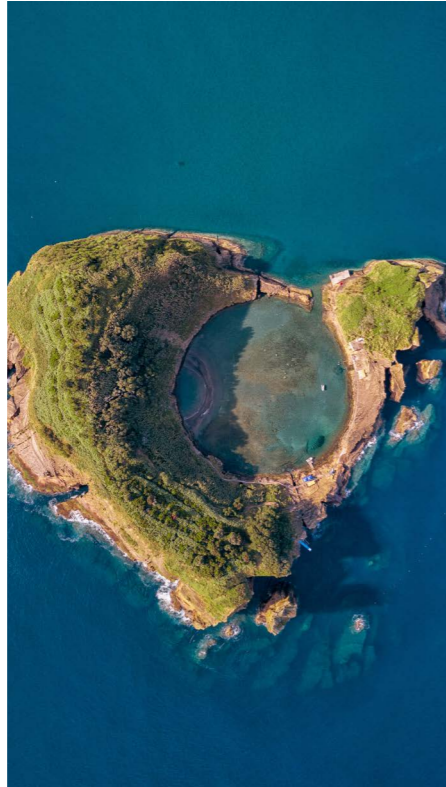
The Terra Nostra Park



Remaining on S. Miguel, the Terra Nostra Park deserves a particular mention. Closely bound up with the development of the Furnas village into a thermal spa and summer resort, this botanical garden was established in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Currently, this is one of the most popular sites on the island, drawing both local and non-local visitors, whether due to its geothermal swimming pool, magnificent surrounding scenarios or the variety and richness of its exotic vegetation.

There are two distinct zones to explore: the upper section, occupied by pathways running through denser sections of forest and the low zone between the Amarela stream and the water Serpentine, where there are more paths running between lawns, tanks and fountains. However, the iron water swimming pool, brown in colour with a temperature always coming in at around 25° C, inevitably attracts the greatest attention.

The Vila Franca islet



The Vila Franca islet, or the Princess's Ring, is located off the south coast of São Miguel, around 500 metres from Vila Franca. This islet is of volcanic origin; resulting from an extinct underwater volcano, where the flooded crater forms an almost perfect circle with a small opening to the sea.

As a protected area, visits are only available during the summer months. There are no full-time inhabitants apart from the colonies of marine birds. However, the islet provides a particularly picturesque landscape even within this archipelago.

Gorreana Tea Factory



This is not only the oldest tea plantation in Europe, but it is also the only establishment in “activity”. The famous Gorreana tea has been grown here ever since 1883. The humid and rainy island climate, the mild temperatures and the acidic volcanic soils enable the production of very high quality green and black teas and endow a landscape that borders on a fairy-tale. Currently, the Gorreana plantations cover a total area of 32 hectares, which are collectively responsible for the production of 40 tons of tea per year. A small proportion of this tea remains in the Azorean market, but the bulk is exported to mainland Portugal, Germany, the United States, Canada, Austria, France, Italy, Brazil, Angola and Japan. Due to its exclusivity, the Factory has itself become a tourism point of interest with thousands of people visiting the Gorreana plantations as well as viewing the entire tea-production process, from picking through to packaging.

Caloura



A bar, a breathtaking landscape and a private convent. The Caloura zone is highly peculiar and equally attractive to its many visitors, whether due to its outstanding views, its natural swimming pools or the delicacies on offer in the Caloura Bar.

However, there is plenty more: a few metres above this paradisaical place, there is the Convent of Caloura, its construction first began in the 16th century, making it the first “convent” of the Poor Clares of São Miguel, and the second in the Azores. Its peculiar location – perched on rocks by the shore – earned it the classification as a property in the public interest by the Regional Government of the Azores. The facilities are currently under private management.

Capelinhos Volcano



Located on the Capelo Peninsula, on the island of Faial, this formation stemmed from the lava flows from a series of aligned volcanoes. The Capelinhos Volcano, the last in this line, was active between 1957 and 1958. The eruption began under the sea alongside the Capelinhos islets and involved many violent explosions. The expelled materials accumulated around the chimney to form an islet that then became connected directly to Faial. Henceforth, its underwater characteristics have been lost.

This is a uniquely dramatic landscape in the Azorean scenario that takes on an even more striking dimension with the presence of a lighthouse and some of the homes destroyed by lava.

Pico



The island of Pico is one of the largest in the archipelago known as the Mountain island, it is home to the highest point in Portugal: the Pico mountain.

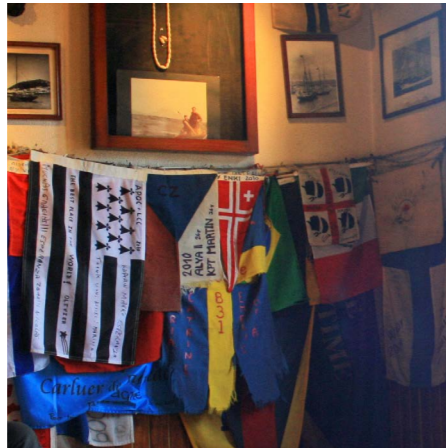
Standing 2,351 metres in altitude, Pico mountain is a volcanic cone and third-largest volcano in the Atlantic Ocean. Even while you are still only halfway up, the views are stunning and, it is possible to hike to the top and take in these fantastic and unique panoramic views which, on clear days, include views of the Graciosa and Terceira islands.

Where to eat

The Azores has a special gastronomy, with the highest quality products, in keeping with the islands being perfect locations for the cultivation of products of this level. From the fish to the shellfish and onto the marvellous cheeses, wines and liquors, and even tea. Who has not had the delight of trying one of the wonderful Gorreana teas? And there is most certainly the means and trying the locally produced rump steak is a must, and we shall include our recipe in this edition.

Before setting out a list of restaurants, we may convey a secret. It is called Queijo Vaquinha, a store where you can taste all the typologies of Queijo Vaquinha, a characteristic Terceira product. This cheese-lovers delight is located in Nossa Senhora do Pilar, on the island of Terceira.

Peter Café Sport Faial



Should your visit include the island of Faial, there is one very necessary stop off point: Peter Café Sport. The absence of this stamp on your passport is a very serious mistake but – once again – our opinion is rather slanted.

Peter is no café like so many others. In fact, its 104 years of history endow it with a mythical and mysterious aura, having for so long been a meeting point for sailors from all around the world that would seek out its hospitality. The exchanges of experiences were a constant and, due to its strategic location in the city of Horta, this has been a port of safe haven to countless seafarers. Within, there is all the authenticity of its maritime ambience along a spirit of conviviality and brotherhood. As El Monde wrote in 1982 “For the people who sail the Atlantic, Café Peter is more an institution than a café. With its brilliant blue facade and orangey lettering, this serves as a money exchange bureau, a yachting club, a recreation centre, post office, tourist attraction and even a charitable institution on so many occasions (...)”.

Where?

R. José Azevedo 9,
9900-027 Horta

O Caneta Ilha Terceira



A typically Azorean restaurant that serves up the very best of its gastronomy. This also includes what is argued to be among the best rump steaks to be had on the island. Where?

Rua As Presas 13, Altares
9700-308 Angra Do Heroismo

The Tasca Ponta Delgada



Right in the centre of Ponta Delgada, the Tasca is a world of historical flavours. From the so-typical limpets, to the salted cod, the octopus and, of course, the marvellous tuna. Where?

R. do Aljube 16,
9500-018 Ponta Delgada

Bar Caloura Ponta Delgada



The views are already worth gold, but the delicacies are the diamond in this space. Limpets, garlic prawns and octopus salad are just the beginning of the house specialities for trying. Of course, there is also the freshest grilled fish, another great choice for any visitor. Where?

Rua da Caloura, 20
9560-211 Água de Pau
S. Miguel

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THE LOOM

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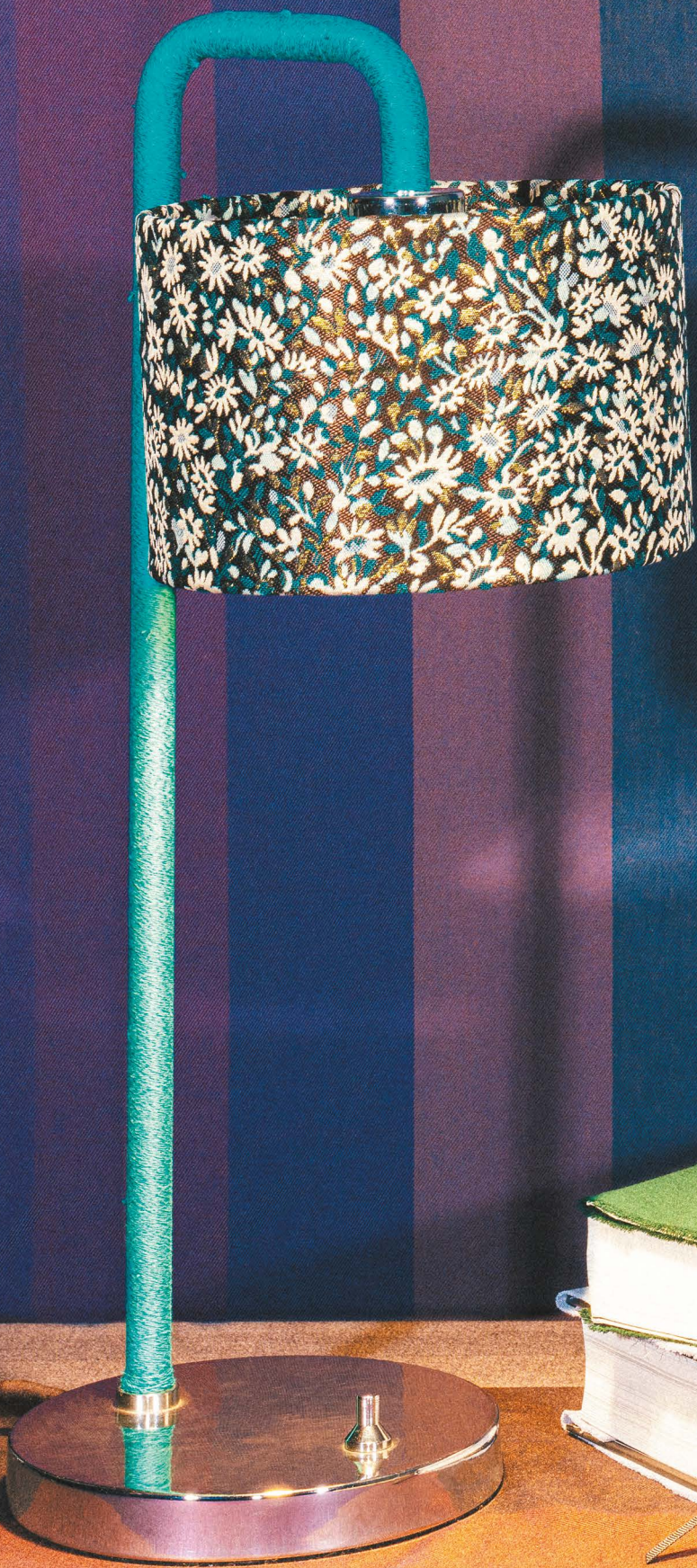
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