

GEORGE



Nighty Okot is
growing the
Seed Network

Tamara Leacock is the
Queen of Zero Waste

To 'dupe' or not
to 'dupe'

Meet the Fashion
Show Entrepreneur

Expert's Top Tips
for Working
in Fashion

COLLARTS
FASHION
MAGAZINE

ISSUE ONE



Photograph: Aya Kajewski

From the Team

GEORGE is for the students, by the students. GEORGE is an opportunity for our students who want to write about fashion, photograph fashion, think about fashion, examine fashion, create fashion, market fashion and work in fashion.

"GEORGE mag is everything I love about Collarts — a blend

of fashion, creativity, and community," says Fashion Sustainability student Milla Muntz.

Choosing the name, designing the logo and the layout, picking the stories, sourcing the images ... was all done as a team. Everyone listed in our Contributors box had some sort of input into our final product.

This is Issue One of GEORGE magazine but more are on the way.

"It has been exciting to be a part of the design process and working with other creatives to build a magazine showing the talent here at Collarts," says Photography student Dulcie May.

COLLARTS AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

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Nighty Okat shot by
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COLLARTS X MFW MARKETPLACE



[RE:Fashion Market at Spring Place](#)

Spring Place, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
Saturday, October 26 @ 12:30pm-2pm
Drop-off @ 9:30am

It is time to swap, NOT shop! Join us at Melbourne Fashion Week for the RE:Fashion Market at Spring Place. Refresh your wardrobe by swapping gently used clothing and accessories with fellow fashion enthusiasts. Bring your pre-loved, quality items and receive tokens to exchange for items of similar value, or exchange/barter your fashion service.

[Fashion Rediscovered: To Have and to Hold](#)

Spring Place, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
Saturday, October 26 @ 10:30am-12pm

The aim of this workshop is to empower participants to explore their own personal expression and relationship with fashion through an interactive discussion on body positivity, individual style and self-expression. The workshop will also provide tips on how to audit your wardrobe and reimagine and restyle a garment from your own wardrobe.

[Beyond the Hanger: The Lifecycle of Your Clothing](#)

Spring Place, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
Thursday, October 24 @ 7:30pm-9pm

This interactive workshop aims to educate and discuss alternative ways to shop and end-of-life solutions for the clothes you no longer feel joy from or want to wear. In this workshop a range of guest speakers will discuss alternative retail business models (resales, rental, subscription) and the options we have to sustainably clear out items that no longer have a place in our wardrobes.

[Behind The Seams Featuring HoMie](#)

Spring Place, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
Wednesday, October 23 @ 6pm-7pm

Marcus Crook, the Co-Founder and Creative Director of HoMie - a fashion brand and social enterprise supporting young people affected by homelessness and hardship - talks with COLLARTS to analyse the anatomy of their products, from concept to completion. Followed by a Q&A session.

[Threads Regenerated](#)

Spring Place, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
October 23-26 @ 11am-3pm

Collarts fashion & Sustainability students are collaborating with Thread Together to create exciting, new, sustainable fashion. Students will be creating and selling garments made using Thread Together's excess stock, with 50% of proceeds donated back to Thread Together to help provide people with clothing.



QUEER BY DESIGN



Don't miss the first collaboration between Revival Runway and Queer Connect, Queer By Design, the largest Queer fashion show in Melbourne. Featuring two runway shows, exciting local queer designers and an all queer model cast, all guests get a front row seat and a free drink on arrival.

WHEN: Thursday 24 October 2024 7pm – 9pm

WHERE: North Magdalen Laundry, Abbotsford Convent, 1 St Heliers Street, Abbotsford

TICKETS: \$67

from www.trybooking.com/queerbydesign

[The Healing Stitch](#)

Spring Place, 50 Lonsdale St, Melbourne
Saturday, October 26 @ 2pm-4pm

Our jumpers are some of the most valuable pieces in our wardrobes. In this workshop we will share how we make these heirloom pieces that have seen a little too much action, or had a run in with a moth, into pieces we love even more. Join us to learn how to darn, patch, embroider and celebrate knitwear. Join our Fashion Revolution team to learn to make garments more valuable, not just repair them. The workshop will be 2 hours and participants will need to bring their piece of over-loved knitwear.

Lights On

INDUSTRY NEWS & OTHER UPDATES

OUR ALUMNI

The Fashion Show Entrepreneur

Collarts Fashion Marketing graduate Julz McBain has taken her training and created something that was missing in her hometown of Toowoomba.

“The Toowoomba Fashion Festival was founded in 2023 along with my business partner Christel Ryley,” explains Julz.

“We found that despite a keen interest from the community, there was a lack not only of fashion events but of resources and opportunity for fashion designers and creatives in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region.”

According to Julz, Toowoomba in Queensland, has recently seen a major attitudinal shift: “Toowoomba has recently witnessed a shift in its culture with a more progressive and vibrant scene emerging, and so with this in mind we saw an opportunity to establish a fashion scene with the aim in producing a fashion festival that not only provided a platform for emerging and established creatives within regional Queensland but to also boosted local tourism.”

The March 2024 festival received an incredible response from attendees and media alike, says Julz.

“In my role as Creative Director I not only created the vision and

branding for the festival and its runways but I also coordinated designers, models, and volunteers. We had over 25 collections showcased over three runways including from emerging and student designers.

“We had 35 models and over 30 volunteers help to bring the festival together and it was also estimated that the festival brought approximately \$50,000 in tourism revenue to the city. On top of these results, by working alongside our sustainability partner, we were also able to produce one of Australia’s first sustainability minded fashion festivals.

“We are now currently in the depths of planning the 2025 festival, to be held on March 22, 2025 and have partnered with other fantastic organisations such as Mind Your Fashion, to create pathways for designers and models to appear on the runways in New York and Milan,” Julz says.

Julz graduated from Collarts in 2022 with a degree in Fashion Marketing, completing all her studies online.

“My time there as a student was truly incredible. The teachers and the curriculum were fantastic, and I gained valuable knowledge while making numerous connections.

“After graduation, I moved to

Toowoomba, where I live with my partner and our five children. I took on the role of Studio Manager at Ryley Jewellery Creations, a luxury boutique jewellery store, focusing on sales and marketing. During this time, my boss Christel and I decided to launch the Toowoomba Fashion Festival.

“In just six months, we brought our vision to life, showcasing a high-end fashion runway event featuring over 25 designers, 35 models, and numerous collaborations, volunteers, and corporate partners.

“We not only achieved our aesthetic goals but also established one of Australia’s first sustainably focused fashion runways, significantly reducing single-use plastics in both the event and its marketing materials.

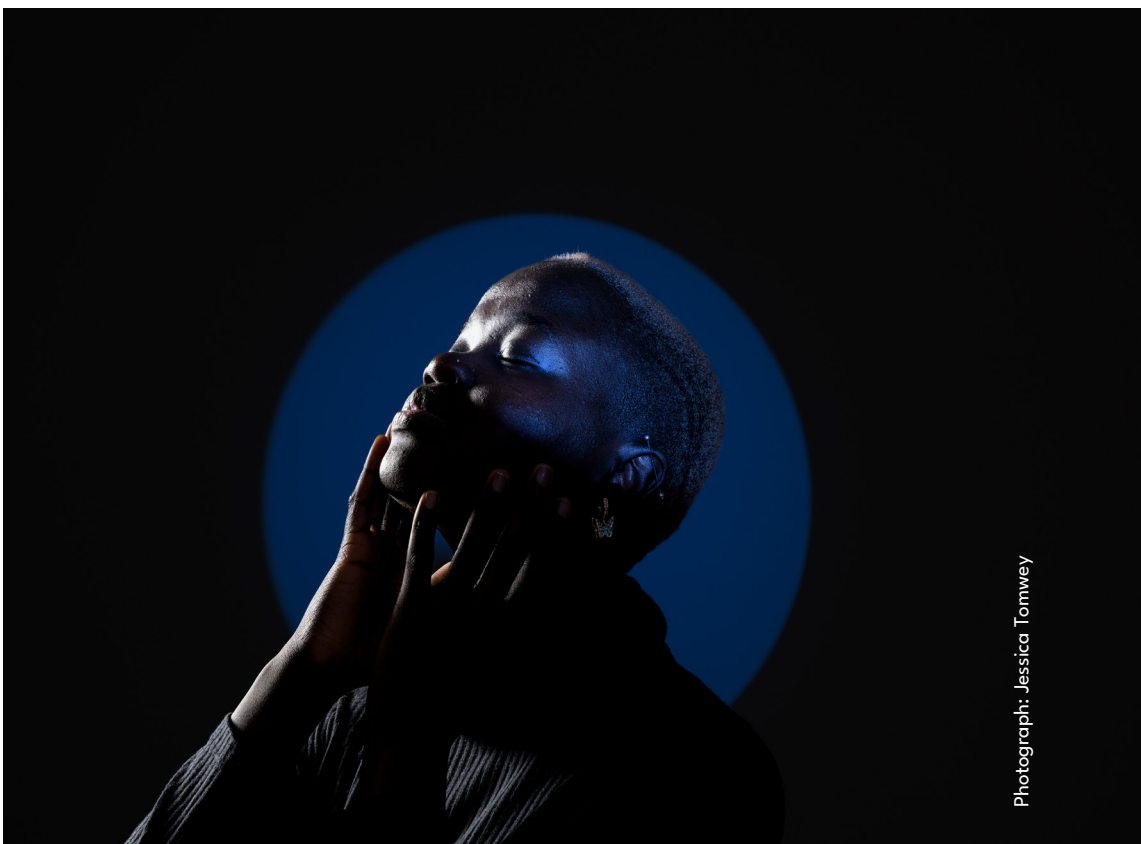
“We recently learned that our festival is a finalist in the Australian Business Champion Awards in the event category. Additionally, I’ve since secured a column in Style Magazine and created opportunities for our models and designers to participate in international festivals such as New York Fashion Week and Milan Fashion Week.

“It’s been an exhilarating journey with much more in store and we’re aiming for even grander heights.”

You can follow Julz’ career at [@toowoomba_fashion_festival](https://www.instagram.com/toowoomba_fashion_festival)

Photograph: Corde Couture
Photographer: Theresa Hall for
Toowoomba Fashion Festival





Photograph: Jessica Tomwey

COVER STORY

Planting the Seeds of Tomorrow, One Photograph at a Time

AUTHOR: Mary-Ann McCall

Nighty Okot's community-driven outlook leads her to collaborate on photography projects with The Seed Network

If there's a hidden message in Collarts Photography student Nighty Okot's photographs, it would be that collaboration is key. Behind the lens, you'll see the 25-year-old with a beautiful smile and a sweet demeanour, but what began from her pure passion has quickly solidified into a distinguished career as portrait and wedding photographer.

This year, Nighty has teamed up with the community-based social platform The Seed Network, allowing her to be in front of the lens to create more of her own storytelling. Her project, 3 Photographers 1 Model, is the latest collaboration with the

organisation that empowers creativity through a lens. But the most invigorating part of all this? Nighty needed her own story in photography after seeing the seeds of the community planted behind her.

Nighty encountered The Seed Network at an event she was photographing at. A couple of interactions later, she joined the team to capture unforgettable memories for the organisation.

The Seed Network, at its core, is providing a space for the Black experience in Australia. No achievement is too small to be celebrated, from capturing soccer programs to skating clubs. Most notably, their social media series has been hitting topics like Ramadan and mental health, gaining traction for its relatable perspectives.

"The Seed Network is essentially giving people of

colour a platform to showcase their talent,” Nighty explains. “We work with anybody and everybody. We have photographers, we have videographers, filmmakers and even skateboarders.”

The network specialises in the creative storytelling of African Australians, and that’s exactly what Nighty intends to do with her photography. It allows mentorship, building up the community and “showing the ropes” as Nighty says, to endless possibilities. One could even say it’s planting the seeds for the community.

“We’re people of colour and we live in such a diverse country. It’s important for us to give people of colour that platform to be themselves.”

Through The Seed Network, Nighty found a driving force for her photography - the community she’s been flourishing in. “Coming into photography, I never thought my community would be one of my biggest motivating factors, but it’s so important to me.”

But in her career, she’s learned that other people also thrive in the community that she’s guided in. So many experiences have made her realise that it’s more than photography.

“I photographed a family photo session. It was a South Sudanese family and the mother reached out to me later that night and said, ‘My daughter loved the photo session. She’s never seen somebody that looked like her holding a camera.’ People don’t know that there are Black photographers out there.”

Her role merged into an educator, a mentor and so much more from the light she’s provided in the community as a photographer. Having a photographer who connects on a cultural level and understands the vision helps immensely with the process. Nighty explains that taking the photo is just a small part of the job. It’s the post-production where she sees the vision come into place.

“I’ve had so many people reach out to me specifically because I’m a Black photographer and I can either speak their language or I can understand why they want their traditional prints or why they want this style.”

“It’s so important to me that I continue to foster that relationship on a cultural level because I want my clients to feel comfortable that there is somebody that understands.”

Nighty’s project 3 Photographers 1 Model came about

as a challenge in the photography community, but she hadn’t seen it in Melbourne. This photo challenge consists of three photographers shooting the same model at the exact location.

Each photographer had five minutes to style and 10 minutes to shoot at Parliament House and Fitzroy Gardens, providing different directional actions and camera equipment to highlight their creative expressions.

“I think as photographers, because it’s such a creative craft, everyone’s unique in their own way,” Nighty emphasises. “Nobody’s better than the next because that’s not what photography is. Photography is unique to everybody.”

It was a collaborative project with The Seed Network tagging along, documenting the series for social media and getting behind-the-scenes shots and interviews where you can feel the excitement brimming through the screen.

It doesn’t stop there. Nighty plans to expand her project into a series. “We want to invite different photographers on board to showcase the uniqueness of everybody’s creative approach.” While it is currently in the works, she can’t reveal too much.

Nighty also sees herself expanding her repertoire, with skills like videography that help tell engaging stories through a lens. Nighty exclaims, wanting to emphasise everybody’s uniqueness. After studying, Nighty looks to explore the horizons. “I would love to be a travelling photographer. I would love to travel the world and photograph people in different environments and different countries.”

As of right now, she’s fulfilled with capturing pure joy and celebrations wherever she goes and wants to hold on to that forever. “There’s nothing that I enjoy more than photographing people in love, whether that be families or weddings. I see myself being a wedding photographer forever.”

With the camera in her hands, the sky is the limit to Nighty’s abilities in the creative space as she plants her seed. “I really do love working with my community and I think as long as I’m attached to my community in some way or another, I’ll be content.”

To follow The Seed Network go to [@the.seednetwork](https://www.the.seednetwork.com) and follow Nighty at [@nightyokot.photography](https://www.instagram.com/nightyokot.photography)



[3 Photographers 1 Model](#)



[Meet Nighty Okot](#)





PHOTO STORY

Chromatic Expressions: An Analysis of Primary Colours in Contemporary Fashion

PHOTOGRAPHER: Lindsey Demyan

"Having my work featured in GEORGE feels like a full circle moment because two years ago I didn't even know how to operate a camera and now I can call myself me a fashion photographer. It feels great to be acknowledged for my work," says Lindsey.



Photograph: Dulcie May

FEATURE

Think Local: How Ethical Australian Brands Are Navigating The Fashion Industry

AUTHOR: Milla Muntz

Australians have lost touch with the intergenerational significance of cloth and the value of garments that extend beyond mere practicality. Indigenous peoples in Australia spent generations practising regeneration and holistic care, cultivating a deep relationship with the land. This balance between nature and community laid the foundation for prosperity and longevity, creating a sustainable local ecosystem.

Today, Australians are the largest consumers of clothing waste in the world per capita, with only 3% of clothing sold in Australia being locally made (Tonti, n.d.). Many Australians no longer feel they have a meaningful connection to cloth and craftsmanship. In contrast, various cultures are accustomed to heirlooms and handmade garments that represent multigenerational ties, with each piece linked to a person or a place.

The style of stitching and the type of fibre reminiscent of its birthplace, while the wear and tear of the fabric tell stories of where it has been since. The ability to recognise the unique intricacies of a garment has become rare. As clothing becomes cheaper, its literal and emotional value diminishes. Heirlooms are not meant to be created by children under forced labour conditions, nor are they intended to gradually harm future generations as they wear them.

Global supply chains now dominate, with 75% of Australian clothing imported from China (Fulloon, 2021). Manufacturing abroad compromises quality, transparency, and ethics in favour of lower costs. While China produces many high-quality fabrics and

offers sustainable manufacturing options, it also provides the opportunity to produce clothing quickly and cheaply — unlike Australia.

Waste Colonialism

Localism addresses employment inequality by requiring leaders to focus on their communities, encouraging neighbours to maintain social cohesion, and holding everyone accountable for the waste they produce. The current globalisation of supply chains has led to a disconnect between Australia's fashion industry and the waste it generates.

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2016-17 revealed that Australia exports 93,502,966 kilos of second hand clothing to the Global South (Gbor, 2022). Australia is amongst a handful of nations that use their waste colonialism to dominate other countries' homelands. With the means to handle its own waste, Australia instead burdens other countries with dealing with their literal mess. Sure, Australian summers are getting hotter and the winters are more erratic, but Australians aren't really seeing the extent of how harmful their overconsumption habits are.

Australia's waste pollutes the air, poisons the waterways, and destroys the local environments of other countries; not its own. What began as a wealthy nation sharing its surplus clothing has evolved into a modern form of colonial dominance, undermining local textile industries and traditional craftsmanship. Just as offshoring has reduced the need for Australian manufacturing, waste colonialism has similarly damaged the Global South. Fast fashion

has created a destructive global cycle of destruction and disposal.

Embracing Localism

How do brands embrace localism and move away from globalism? Globalism is built on the premise of expanding into other countries in order to grow and compete. Sufficiency opposes expansion as the idea of success. Sufficiency describes a focus on wellbeing rather than monetary outcomes (Hertantyo, 2022). While growth is necessary to thrive in an economy that favours accumulating profit margins, sufficiency demands controlled growth that avoids the excessive use of energy and resources.

Growth and expansion is not the Australian fashion industry's only connection to brands, designers and creatives overseas. Tamara Leacock, director and designer of Melbourne based brand REMUSE and lecturer at Collarts, has a strong connection with local fabric sources and even uses local, native flora to naturally dye her garments. Although she does not manufacture offshore, her vision and inspiring values resonate with audiences internationally. In fact, Tamara's next collection will be showcased at New York Fashion Week in September 2024.

What does localism offer to Australia?

Localism may not be able to offer efficiency and inexpensive manufacturing, but it does create an avenue for innovation, greater collaboration and exploration of what consumers need. Because at the end of the day, the wearing and maintaining of clothing takes place locally (Haberdashemergency, n.d.). Reforming the fashion industry calls for brands to make purpose-driven choices over profit-driven ones. Brands choose to expand, they choose to exploit, that means they also have the opportunity to choose substance and sufficiency, craft and creativity. Localism does ask fashion designers and entrepreneurs to question their core values and purpose. In doing so, creatives are able to find meaning in their work and how it may benefit their community.

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BUSINESS

Meg Parry's Top Tips for Working in Fashion



Tell us about your fashion brand - how did you get into the industry?

My brand Meg Parry Studio handcrafts one-of-a-kind pieces made from consciously sourced materials. As a small, multi-faceted business we also offer design and manufacturing services which reach both local and international clients. Each product is carefully designed and created in our Melbourne studio, where we encourage both designers and consumers to care for, enjoy and cherish their carefully made pieces.

What's your top tip for being successful in the fashion industry?

Stay open to collaboration, learn as much as possible about the people around you, work hard and be kind.

What's one thing people don't know about working in fashion?

I think some people underestimate how much work and process goes into creating garments from scratch.

What are your 3 top tips to dressing more sustainably?

Learn how to repair your clothes, start simple with a needle and thread; sewing a button, a hole in a seam. Read the care labels for your clothing to understand how to look after the fabric. Challenge yourself with the garments you already own - how many different ways can you style one piece?

Tell us one thing you wish you had known before you started working in fashion.

Take every challenge as a learning opportunity.

Meg Parry is Program Leader - Fashion and Sustainability at Collarts. You can shop her brand Meg Parry Studio at www.megparzystudio.com and follow her at [@megparzystudio](https://www.instagram.com/megparzystudio)

PHOTO STORY

The Fibonacci Project: Where Timeless Style Converges with Innovative Design

STYLIST: Natalia Theodorou PHOTOGRAPHER: Alec Bellos

"I am honoured to have been featured in the new Collarts magazine, providing me with an opportunity to showcase my work and creative vision to other highly skilled and talented students," says Natalia, a Fashion Marketing student.





small businesses and promote slow fashion, which prioritises quality, ethics, and sustainability (Schwenke 2023). Shopping with intention — opting for fewer, high quality pieces — not only reduces waste but also supports ethical creators. Brands like Scarlet and Sam, which have faced design copying from fast fashion giant Glassons, are examples of why supporting local brands matters. By choosing these authentic, homegrown labels, consumers contribute to a thriving Australian fashion ecosystem that values innovation, sustainability, and fair practices (Bramley 2023).

In summary, while dupe culture may offer consumers an affordable way to stay on trend, it comes at a significant cost to small Australian businesses. Brands like Baia Swim and Tribe Tropical face economic losses, diluted brand identities, and the frustration of seeing their ethical, sustainable designs mass-produced with cheaper, harmful materials. The creativity and innovation of local designers are stifled by the fast fashion machine, which prioritises profit over originality. Ultimately, Australians have the power to combat this by supporting homegrown brands that value sustainability, originality, and craftsmanship, making a positive impact on both the fashion industry and the environment (Peet, 2024).

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What We Wear

THE 'FITS WE LOVE

PHOTOGRAPHER: Jessica Tormey

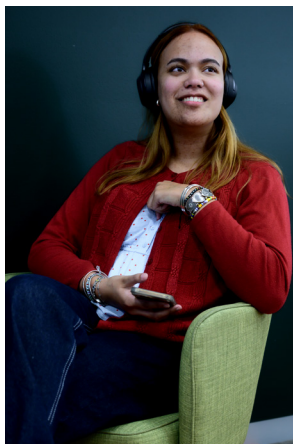
KIRI Digital Social Media

Kiri is wearing a thrifted cardigan, a Cotton On cami, Asos jeans, and Rebok sneakers. With every outfit, Kiri loves to layer secondhand jewellery. A lot of Kiri's wardrobe is thrifted, she likes to combine pieces she finds at her local op-shops with first-hand pieces. When Kiri is not shopping secondhand, she tries to be mindful about the items she chooses and will always try to get as much use out of her first-hand purchases. Other than shopping at her local Savers, Kiri will sometimes look for second-hand or vintage pieces on Depop. Kiri loves how her Social Media Degree interconnects with fashion and hopes to explore this connection further as she continues to study with Collarts.



MILLA Fashion Design [Sustainability]

Milla is wearing a thrifted cardigan from the Brunswick Savers, as well as second-hand Uniqlo jeans and vintage loafers from Goodbyes Prahran. Most, if not all, of Milla's wardrobe is either second-hand or hand-me-downs clothing. Milla has always loved to shop secondhand, maybe a little too often. She has been trying to invest in more staple pieces from second-hand boutiques such as Secondo and Stop Staring Boutique. Although she enjoys shopping at local Savers and Red Cross, she finds that investing in higher-end labels has helped her curate a more timeless wardrobe.





OUR EYES ARE ON

Dulcie May
Photographer



“This image is part of a series of work which conveys a deeper meaning behind the fashion industry to express issues of sustainability. The use of semiotics and juxtaposition as visual elements replicates the admiration and idolisation of a traditional editorial photoshoot in contrast to the model wearing an outfit completely made from plastic bags.”