

Combining Art & Activism

Compiled by Hahnji Jang (장한지), April 2021

I am an activist who chose costume design and styling as my medium of expression. Achieving sustainability became a goal towards achieving intersectionality in my work. As I make efforts to decolonize the mindsets of those around me, I also needed to decolonize my personal and professional practices.

The shows I design feature marginalized creators on stage, and I wanted the same focus to be reflected off stage. If I was going to spend money on an institution's behalf, why shouldn't I ensure that spending aligned with my values. For me, this meant not only refocusing costume purchasing on shopping secondhand, as I was already doing in my personal life from a young age, but also on intersectional sourcing and spending.

I've found in my shopping that BIPOC-owned brands are almost always practicing sustainability more than corporate brands. They do this not just by sourcing locally, creating less waste, and using sustainable materials, but also, most importantly, by valuing labor and giving back to their community. These values drive the way I approach the labor that goes into the creation of my theatrical work. My other work includes upcycling garments to empower individuals to wear their existence proudly.



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