

THE VINSON VIEW

Quality maniac and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



TAKE CARE

The specialist repairs department at shoe brand Church's in Northampton can make use of up to 60 processes to repair and refurbish a shoe. I once sent them a 25-year-old pair to fix. church-footwear.com

Shirts by Pink are built to last, and will look and feel better after the 250th wash. thomaspink.com

Loro Piana provides care products and instructions for its cashmere sweaters, and will send items for a complimentary cashmere spa treatment in northern Italy, if necessary. loropiana.com

Hermès will not only repair its products but can also take care of specialist cleaning for its leather goods. hermes.com

Savile Row tailor Anderson & Sheppard offers a comprehensive after-care service, including steam cleaning and invisible mending. anderson-sheppard.co.uk

Based in Hawick, Scotland, Cashmere Care Services provides professional cleaning and repair services for cashmere, wool and other natural fibres. cashmerecareservice.co.uk

01 Long may it last

Taking care of the planet means taking care of what we wear

I am constantly bombarded with information about new 'sustainable' and 'ethical' ranges of clothing and accessories aimed at 'conscious' shoppers. Some initiatives are valid; others – like one that claims to be 'ethical, earth-friendly fake fur made from sustainable materials' that turn out to be polyester and acrylic – are less so. It's not actually possible to make or sell anything that is totally carbon neutral, zero impact or sustainable, so much of this greenwashing is about offering customers a guilt-free way to continue overconsuming, and for producers to sell more.

According to Dana Thomas, author of *Fashionopolis*, we presently produce 100 billion garments per year, purchase 80 billion of them and wear them an average of seven times (only three in China). That figure is mainly made up of fast fashion; my wardrobe is much slower – it's not exactly compact, yet there are pieces I have been wearing for 20 years. As no product creates zero pollution or waste, the only way forward is to buy less, buy better and use longer. That means makers engaging with clients on how to take care of products, and both clients and makers embracing repairs. Two of my most worn cashmere sweaters (one from Hermès, bought in 2010, and one from Malo, bought in 2003) need elbow replacement surgery, and I am currently

looking for someone to do visible darning rather than patches. A Loro Piana sweater is just back from a cashmere spa service provided by the company, while my Bassam Fellows Alpine zip boots, bought in 2004, have had their zips replaced. My bespoke shirt from Pink, made in its new London workshop, came with extra 170s superfine poplin in case I ever need to replace the cuffs or collar, even though they say it will actually get better after 250 washes.

Makers should enable clients to make long-term use of their products, and offer to repair them when necessary. Clients should pay for this service, and this new revenue stream can help brands rethink their manufacturing strategy. The value of pre-owned items is already being recognised in the world of watches. In 2018, Richemont, owner of Cartier, Jaeger-LeCoultre and Piaget, acquired Watchfinder, the platform for buying and selling pre-owned watches. And for the first time, you can now buy vintage Cartier watches at the maison's New Bond Street store; the selection is small but includes the Tank, Tonneau, Pasha, Tortue and Cloche, with each piece restored in-house and sold with a warranty.

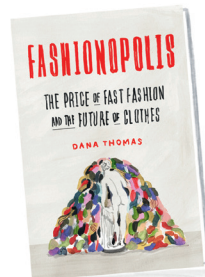
Longer term stewardship of products by makers is the way forward; just producing more stuff is not. Good design is durable and desirable for decades, not days. ★



02

Vintage gold

Designed in 1922, Cartier's Cloche watch could also be placed on its side to act as a mini clock. This version, produced in 1995, has been restored in-house. cartier.com



03

Not so fast

Dana Thomas' *Fashionopolis* is a well researched read about fast fashion and why we all need to change our habits. penguinrandomhouse.com