

## DANIELLE ON FIBRETRACE

LEARNINGS

Before hanging in our wardrobe, the clothes we wear pass through countless hands. Take a cotton t-shirt: The cotton is picked, ginned, spun, woven, sewn into garments, and shipped to warehouse and retail stores. It will be sold, worn, washed, repaired, donated, and most often ends its life as untraceable waste.\*

Danielle Statham wants to change this. Since the earliest age she can remember, Danielle knew that she wanted to be in fashion. "I was one of those lucky girls who always knew what I wanted to do... The love of textiles and design has been taken through the rest of my life." Having now worked within the full supply chain, Danielle is passionate about closing the loop in fashion, so we can know exactly where our clothes start their lifecycle. Alongside like-minded leaders in the global textile industry, in 2018, Danielle founded FibreTrace. This technology allows the life cycle of a garment to be traced, from farm to shelf, with full transparency.



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"My love of the raw fibre was grown from being on the cotton farm so early"



PEOPLE + PLANET

PROFIT



"Australia is seen as a golden child for many reasons, especially at the moment with the pandemic, for being able to get on with things, make great decisions, and stand on our own two feet."

**Tell me a little about your personal and professional background?**

I grew up in the racing industry in NSW, and I'm sure seeing beautifully dressed people developed my early love of fashion. I got married very young and had my first baby when I was 24. Before that, I studied fashion and textiles, but I also majored in millinery. It was a big passion of mine, I'm very tactile, and I loved that old-school, hand-stitched couture. For over thirty years, I've been a milliner. I studied under the Royal milliner in London, which was a lovely experience. He was the Queen's milliner, and had a very close relationship with Princess Diana. It was really lovely to have those stories told to me. I also owned a wholesale and distribution agency and started a denim label. I saw that an interesting marketing exercise would be to have my own cotton in my own denim. I thought that it would be a really nice experience for the consumer. But I found it very difficult to have that cotton back in my own product.

**And your husband's family is involved in farming cotton?**

I met my husband David when I was 20. He was a cotton grower, and his family are first-generation farmers. He didn't grow up on a farm, and it wasn't until the late 80s that his family saw the opportunity in agriculture and purchased Kestah, our cotton farm. David was straight out of school, no university, straight to the school of the land. We are certified carbon positive cotton.

**What was the genesis of FibreTrace?**

My love of the raw fibre was grown from being on the cotton farm so early, and the textiles it can create, and so that's where FibreTrace came into play, and the Good Earth Cotton brand as well. FibreTrace is a technology that provides the irrefutable and truthful information of a product. A luminescent pigment is put into the raw material and once that pigment has blown through that fibre, it's there for life.

This physical tracer within that raw fibre is connected to a digital blockchain platform. Essentially, the aim is to give a 20/20 vision of the supply chain, providing full transparency of the farm and beyond. This includes the emissions of the product, which is really important.

**Is there anything unique about Australia which made you believe it would be a great fit for the FibreTrace model?**

We've been seen as clean, ethical, and forward-thinking. If we can tell that story from an Australian brand perspective, from farm to shelf, with full transparency, it creates a compelling narrative for the overseas customer.

**What excites you about the current Australian creative landscape?**

We're so good at what we do creatively here in Australia. We're very methodical, detail-oriented, and I think we're naturally brought up with great morals and ethics. Because we're such a small country in terms of population, Australians have had to think laterally to succeed in business. I wish we had more manufacturing and I really hope we can onshore more in the future. I think that would be so well received in this current climate, not just for our local market, but particularly for an international market. Australia is seen as a golden child for many reasons, especially at the moment with the pandemic, for being able to get on with things, make great decisions, and stand on our own two feet. I think our small population allows us to be more nimble.

**Who are some of your favourite designers, local and international?**

We've got so many amazing labels in Australia. We've had two great launches with FibreTrace, one being the Australian brand Nobody Denim, and in recent times the LA label, Reformation. When you're on the front, you can love what you see visually, but when you start to get into the nitty-gritty working with some of these brands, you grow such enormous respect not only from an aesthetic viewpoint but from an honest marketing and business standpoint. I think digging deeper into Nobody and Reformation and meeting the people who operate them, they're doing such a great job.

**What does the term luxury fashion mean to you?**

A state of great comfort. Whether that be something that's expensive or inexpensive, it's luxurious to you and how you perceive it, your state of mind. It's something that makes you feel good.

**What do you look for in your personal style?**

Comfort. Denim and a soft jacket, a gorgeous t-shirt. Anything that goes with flat shoes because I have four kids and I have to move fast. I've really grown out of high heels. I refuse to wear anything higher than an inch. I live in Queensland, so I love a lovely pair of sandals.

**Why do you believe that transparency is so important in the fashion industry?**

Across the industry, globally, I think that supply chains have become so multi-tiered. So that's made traceability and transparency so problematic for brands. Particularly for cotton, which is one of the most used fibers in the supply chain. It passes through so many hands before it becomes fabric. When a brand is serious about the claims that they're prepared to make public, it needs to be conclusive with transparent information. They need to be able to satisfy those savvy customers, like my kids, who want an honest conversation around where their garments came from, the supply chain that it travelled, the emissions it created, and also the ethical standards, which we're seeing a greater focus on at the moment.

**How will this technology impact the industry moving forward?**

We believe FibreTrace will bring those in the industry who champion best practices forward to the front of the line. I think it will enable unique and true storytelling for brands.

**Tell me about the Nobody Denim collection you have been working on.**

John Conditis is so passionate about his Aussie-made product. He was so excited about keeping that industry in Australia and creating ethical garments with low-impact fibers. Unfortunately, we don't have any spinning left in Australia, so we did have to go offshore, but once the fabric was back in the country, everything else was completely Australian. That is something we should definitely support and be proud of. It was more about providence for John because we know in our country that we're doing everything ethically correct. He chose a great partner in Orta Anadolu in Turkey who has great ethical standards and fantastic environmental impacts in their fabric production. That was such a great starting point for a soft launch for FibreTrace. I was so proud that we could do that with an Australian brand. Nobody has just launched their second collection with FibreTrace, and I know that John wants to take this through the whole collection. We're working on that.



BY SALLY PATON &amp; SASHA WHIDDON

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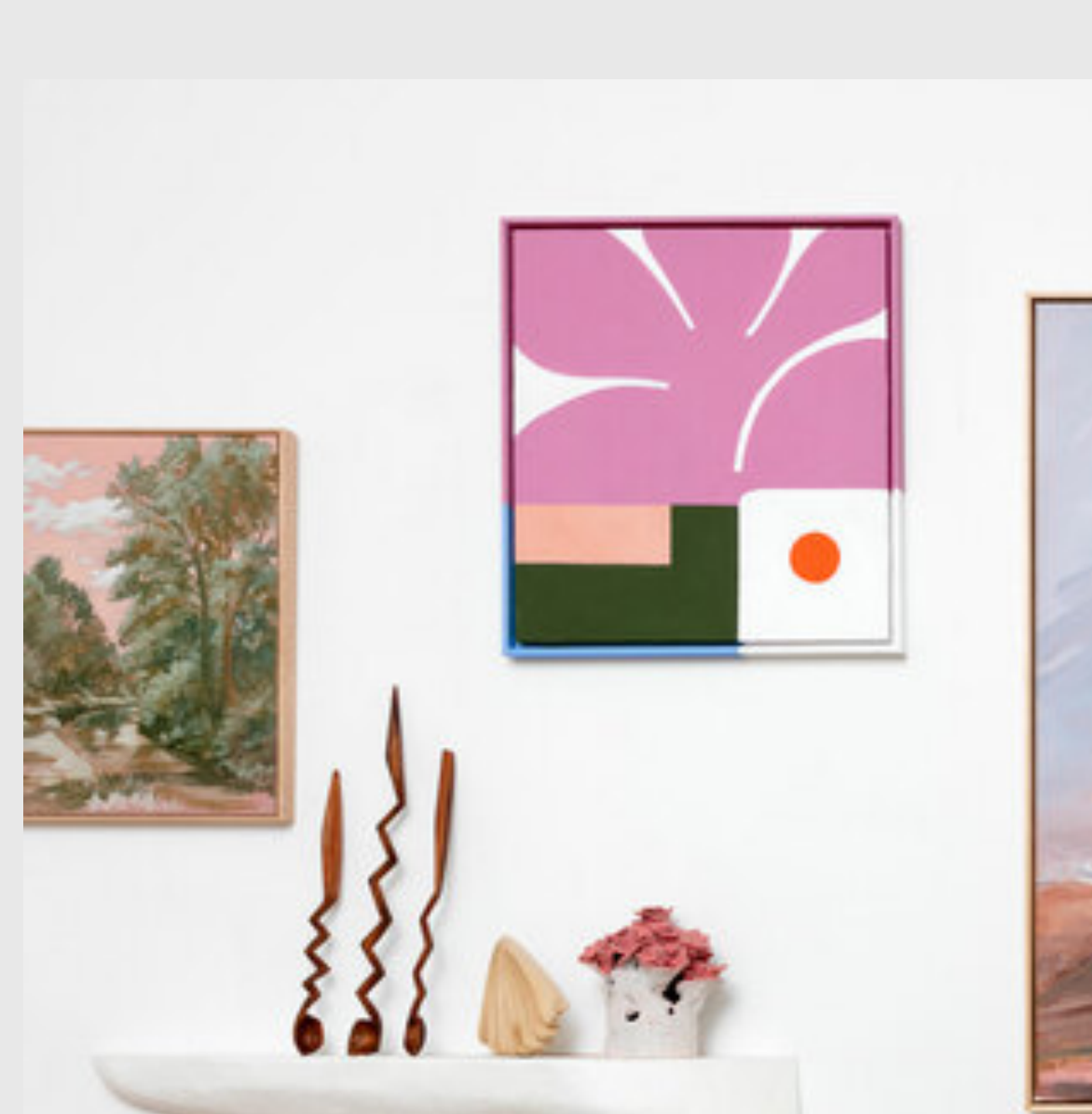


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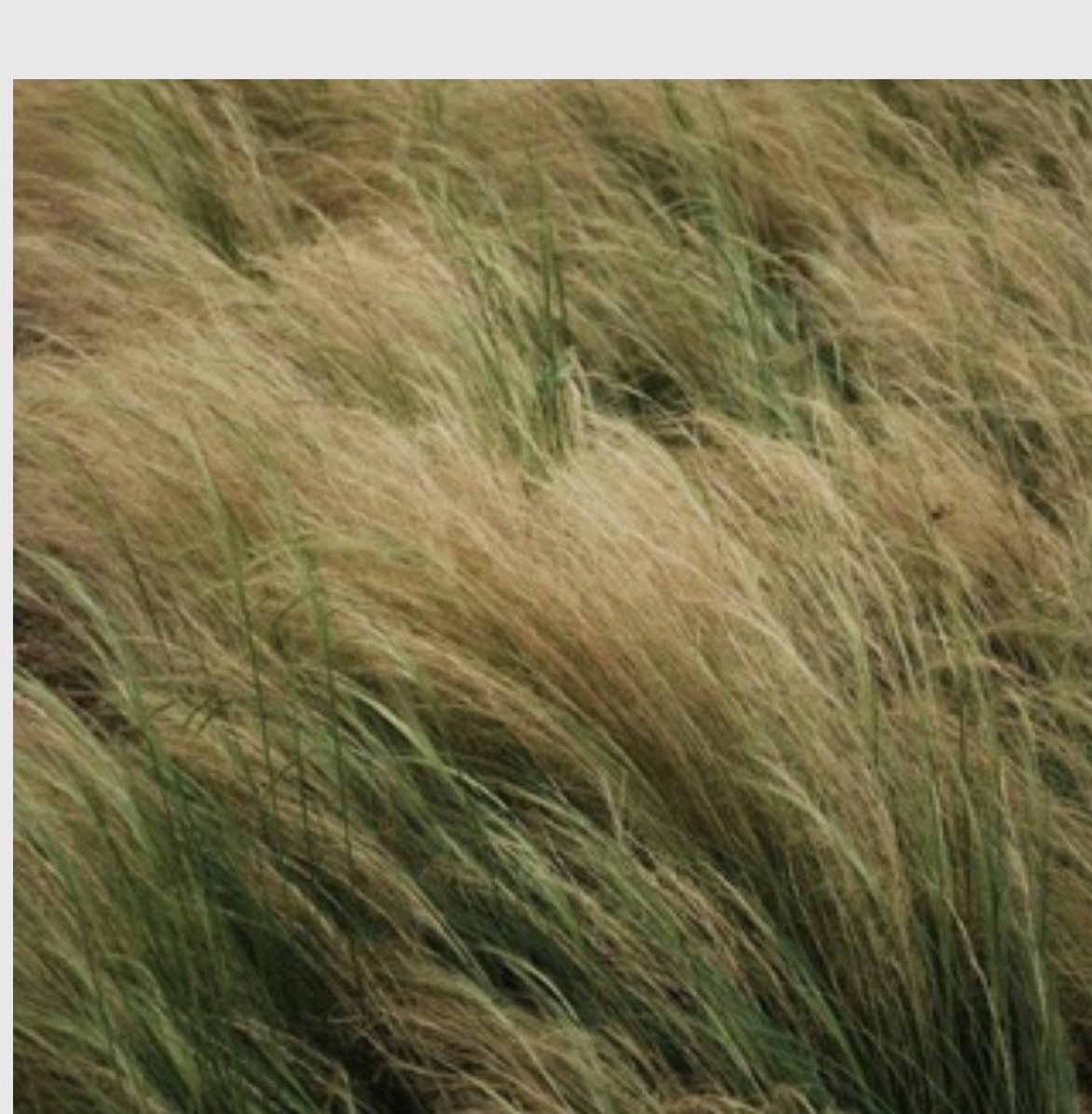
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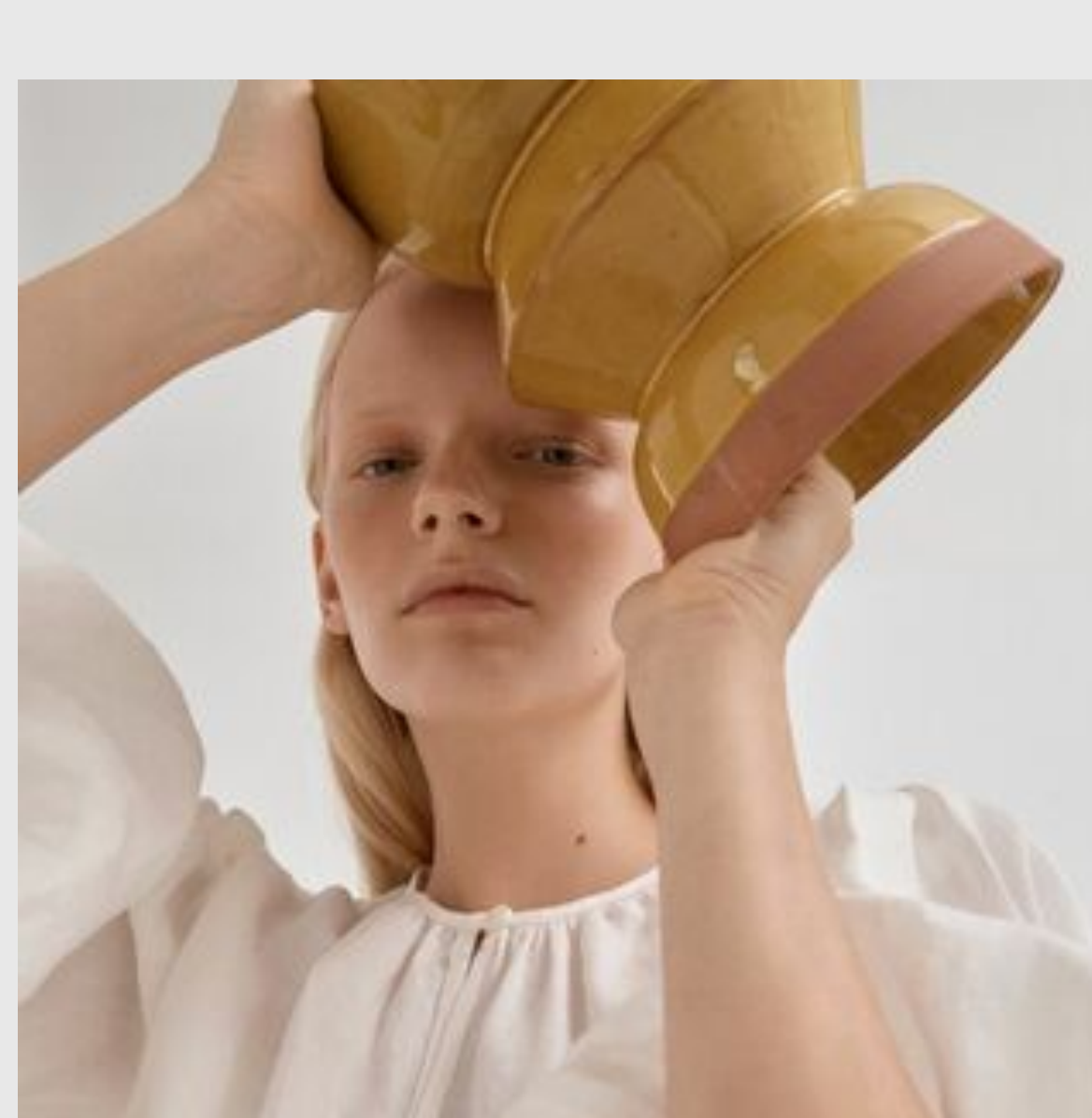
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