con textile 2026

TEXTILE TALKS

6—7 SEPTEMBER

Textile Talks

6 — 7 September
Small Auditorium
Centro Cultural Vila Flor (CCVF)
Guimarães, Portugal

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:
Susana Milão (CIAUD-UPT)
Lala de Dios
Ricardo Gil Pereira
Isabel Cabral (2C2T-UM)

Sunday 6 September

10:00 | Greetings
Presentation of Textile TALKS, its objectives and methodologies. Presentation of the Contextile 2026 concept, "BY A THREAD / Por um Fio".

10:30
KEY CONFERENCE
Ai Weiwei / Rute Ventura / Susana Milão

11:10 | coffee break

THEME 2
NARRATIVES OF POWER
Mod. Ricardo Gil Pereira

11:30
Digital Sovereignity and hand-crafted Data Reservoirs
Camilo Sandoval, Germany

11:45
Against forgetting: fashion systems, textile systems, and the politics of social memory
Lucia Cuba, USA

12:00
Textile and politics
Maud Kotasová, Czech Republic

12:15 | DEBATE

12:30 | Lunch

THEME 1
CHANGE IN THE WEATHER
Mod. Lala De Dios

14:30
KEY CONFERENCE
Janis Jefferies

15:00
Cochineal, Care and Collective Action: Textiles in the Midst of a Plague
Liz Kueneke, Spain

15:15
By a thread - dead end or a going to nowhere
Elżbieta Kuźniar, Poland

15:30 DEBATE

THEME 3
TEXTILE WASTE AS ART
Mod. Susana Milão

15:45
Lazo - Lasso
Lucía Scarselletta, UK

16:00
Fort Commons 122: From Sacred Textile to Collective Infrastructure
Dominika Krogulska-Czekalska, Poland

16:15
Veils, Rebirth, and Material Transformation
Jess Self, USA

16:30 DEBATE

16:45 | coffee break

17:00
Weaving the Green - Presentations of the artist residencies
Alan Hernández, Mexico
Guillaume Brisson-Darveau, Canada
Idoia Cuesta, Spain
Lara Salous, Palestine
Mathieu Fecteau, Canada
Yen-Yu Tseng, Taiwan

17:50 DEBATE

18:00
CLOSING SESSION – CONCLUSIONS / SUMMARY OF TEXTILE TALK

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Monday 7 September

10:00 | Greetings
Presentation of Textile Talks.
Textile Talks Commission

10:15
KEY CONFERENCE
Bienal BAT – Chile

10:45
KEY CONFERENCE
China - Growing House - Satellite Exhibition

11:15 | coffee break

THEME 5
Working Slowly and with Care
Mod. Lala de Dios

11:30
KEY CONFERENCE
BILP-nouveau programme de médiation culturelle avec communauté de Deschambault-Grondines
Laurie Béland

12:00
Anywhere from Anywhere: Thread Thinking: Textiles as a Relational System of Knowledge
Maaike Gottscha, The Netherlands

12:15
O gesto de fazer o ninho: o têxtil como matéria de cuidado, escolha e poder
Ânia Pais & Carolina Batalha, Portugal

12:30
Threads of Catharsis: Textile Practices as Emotional and Symbolic Repair
Aura Chavarria, Spain

12:45 | DEBATE

13:00 | Lunch

THEME 4
Dynamic / Changeability
Mod. Isabel Cabral

14:30
Dynamic Relationalities in Light-Textiles on the Body
Barbro Scholz, Germany

14:45
OUTSPOKEN QUESTIONS: LOUD TEXTILE. Lithuanian case.
Barbora Gediminaitė, Lithuania

15:00
Security Blanket: Adaptive Textile Systems for Collective Survival
Sophie Foster, Germany

15:15 | DEBATE

15:30 | coffee break

THEME 6
More Than Human Approaches
Mod. Susana Milão

15:45
Material Narratives: The Agency of Textiles
Franziska Seehausen, Germany.

16:00
Colours from Living Lands: Learning to Dye with Local Ecologies across Finland, Colombia, and Japan
Leonardo Hidalgo Uribe, Finland

16:15 | DEBATE

16:45 | CONCLUSIONS / TEXTILE TALKS SUMMARY

17:00
Guimarães 26 – European Green Capital

17:15 | CLOSING SESSION

contextile 2026

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TEXTILE TALKS
Themes and Programme

A key element of the Contextile programme centres on reflection and the exchange of ideas, placing textiles and their growing importance and prominent presence at artistic events within the context of international contemporary art.
Textile Talks provide an opportunity for artists, creators and researchers to present their artistic and/or research projects focusing on textiles, art and other disciplines. The Textile Talks will feature Contextile 2026 partners and guests, artists and guest speakers, and speakers selected through an international call for applications.
The encounters and conversations in 2026 will revolve around six sub-themes based on the concept of the 8th edition of Contextile: BY A THREAD / Por um Fio.

THEME

BY A THREAD / Por um Fio

The fabric of the world, once thought to be solid, is now revealed as vulnerable. The threads that compose it have been stretched to their limits by successive ecological, political, economic and social crises, appearing to be about to snap. We are approaching systemic breaking points as ecosystems collapse and livelihoods are threatened.
However, it is precisely in this thread – minimal unity, sensitive and open to transformation – that a regenerative power is inscribed. It is in this thread that possibilities for resistance, reparation, and reconfiguration of the future are intertwined.
This current edition of Contextile calls upon this ambivalence as a horizon: thread as a sign of urgency, but also as an instrument of invention, mediation, and proposal.
This is the thread that sews the Biennial in 2026, spanning artistic practices that problematize the devastating effects of the fashion industry, the accelerating consumption, and the extractive logic of textile production.
This reflection is not limited to merely denouncing: It acts as an affirmative gesture, proposing alternatives, designing possible trajectories, and summoning other materialities, whether they are ecological, sensitive or relational, repositioning the artistic creation at the centre of an ethic of care and sustainability.

SUBTHEMES

1. **Change in the Weather**
   In a social context characterised by the backtracking of governments, oil companies and the financial sector on their climate commitments, a critical reflection on the present and our collective future is essential. In light of the Land Ethic® concept, there is an urgent need to broaden the notion of community to include soil, water, plants and animals as an integral part of our ethical responsibility. Reimagining horizons and creating new narratives means recognising that caring for the Earth is inseparable from caring for humanity.
2. **Narratives of Power**
   Textiles embody memory, resilience and violence. Contemporary textile art challenges dominant narratives and reimagines silenced stories, reflecting on agency, authority and voice. The relationship between textiles and technology not only enables personal empowerment and the ability to adapt to a changing environment but may also be linked to new forms of social control and authoritarianism through digital communication.
3. **Textile Waste as Art**
   Contemporary art allows us to reimagine sustainability not as a constraint, but as an opportunity for formal and material experimentation. Giving new life to clothing by drawing on the emotional and identity-based connections we have with it, thereby reducing consumer pressure; reusing and reinterpreting the meanings of textile elements in new contexts; or utilising the industry's waste and production scraps – these are all expressions of the same act of caring for the planet as our shared home.
4. **Dynamic / Changeability**
   Artistic narratives featuring dynamic expressions explore changes in the qualities of textiles—such as their colour, texture and movement—emphasising their capacity to transform over time. These practices reflect the notion of the thread in motion, in which textiles function as expressive and temporally situated systems. From this perspective, textiles adapt to contexts of social and climate change, seeking responses to new collective political and environmental challenges and to the need to create spaces for individual expression and self-affirmation.
5. **Working Slowly and with Care**
   Art as an experiment in collective textile practice, built upon history, local communities and ecosystems, as opposed to extractivist practices that undermine social cohesion. An analysis of industrial heritage and its deconstruction, exploring the potential of pre-industrial forms of production, craftsmanship and small-scale manufacturing as more sustainable modes of production, made viable by democratic access to contemporary technology.
6. **More Than Human Approaches**
   Shifting the focus beyond human needs. Contemporary art becomes a tool for coexistence, recognising the wisdom of animals and plants as active agents in creation. Textiles as a restorative practice in harmony with living things. It moves away from an anthropocentric, industrial or purely aesthetic approach to collaborate with nature, living organisms and traditional knowledge, creating eco-regenerative, biodegradable and symbiotic materials, promoting coexistence between species and treating materials as active agents rather than passive resources.