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DEMOCRATIZING WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY SEEMS LIKE A TALL ORDER DO YOU THINK IT CAN BE DONE?

Yes! What 3lectromode aims to do is to combine the DIY (yet very stylish potential) of the sewing pattern with computational and electronic components which are suitable for an entry-level "wearables" maker. This "democratizing of wearables technology" - and our by line is "3lectromode holds the vision of innovating in the field of wearables by combining technology with customisable prêt-â-porter fashion. We aim to inspire a future where wearables are democratized, aestheticized, and performative." - has presented us with a number of exciting challenges and future goals which we believe are very attainable.

WHICH GARMENTS IS GAINING MORE MAINSTREAM EXPOSURE ILLUMINATING OR SHAPE CHANGING?

I would say the general pulse is going toward illuminated garments. The LED is a very stable technology and was originally built into circuits as an "on/off" indicator, so it is great for an immediate visual feedback. Other kinds of illuminated wearables include fibre optics, lasers, and a while ago Chanel put out a shoe with an incandescent light bulb as the heel. We are definitely going to see new and evermore innovative ways of making our clothing *twinkle*. But, I would also keep my eye out for shape-changing wearables utilising 3D printing, origami, and materials such as shape-memory alloys, a metal which can be "programmed" into a specific shape as these technologies are rapidly evolving.

IS CLIMATE CHANGE A FACTOR FOR WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY?

"Wearable technology" and "sustainability" do not necessarily go hand in hand. Technology, though having the potential to be very beneficial to humans — with new ways of harnessing energy, and protecting us — is corrosive to the planet as it creates a great amount of toxic waste. To seamlessly integrate technology into textiles is to

potentially condemn textiles as a non-recyclable material. The challenge with main-stream developments in “smart” textiles will be developing sustainable ways of integrating electronics.

HOW IMPORTANT IS WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY TO THE FUTURE?

Wearable technologies have a great potential to act as second skins and can become a mediating membrane between our bodies and the environment. As a society, anything which can be beneficial in terms of medical and safety practices will be embraced. Monitoring technologies for the sick and elderly and reconnaissance technologies for those working in high risk environments are sure to be a key way in which wearables technologies contribute to this future. Technology which enhances and saves lives is technology at its best. However, the entertainment and communication industries are sure to harness the potential of wearables in some equally captivating ways.