

Featured Librarian

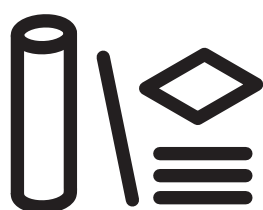
Each month a new “librarian” shares their favorite fixing publications and remembers their proudest fix...

My Proudest Fix...

In the simple sense of fixing, I don't have a proudest fix. My proud fixes are, I hope, all still to come. All the tricky fixes, I get others to do – like the cobbler who is constantly sewing my shoes. All the lifesaving emergency fixes – like scaling a 3 metre wall to reach our water tank and fix it with one hand while the thumb of the other hand plugs the leak, in the dark – are well above my capability threshold. All the most impossible-seeming fixes – like the liquidiser jug which snapped in two at the base with a sizeable piece missing from the screw-thread part at the bottom of the jug, which, despite my disbelief, was fixable by finding resin in the shipyards and making a mould to fit the shape – are of a genius level I can only aspire to in awe. My fixes are the non-headline-grabbing material interventions that humbly keep a holey sock out of landfill and on a foot for longer; the stitches that stop my daughter yanking the stuffing out of her panda through the eye socket; the ongoing mends and alterations that keep a dress decent despite fraying and fading and staining and tearing. I counter material fatigue, I work with matter to help it stay good for as long as it possibly can. Every one of my mends is a vital act of material politics, but no-one gets excited and I can't say I'm proud. Mending has become a natural thing to do, a series of everyday actions which keeps my world together, keeps us all hanging on. Mending affirms my reactivated relationship with matter. Mending performs my world.

I am most proud to have fixed my relationship with consumerism and the productivist economy. Except for foodstuffs and very basic toiletries, I rarely buy any new material goods at all. My tactic was to stop buying clothing, or rather to wear only the clothes already in my wardrobe for the rest of my life, and the change was far more wide-reaching than I anticipated. My relationship to consumer culture changed overnight. I walked past High Street window displays like a vegetarian walks past a butcher's shop. That is no longer my world. It was the beginning of a gradual and ongoing departure from the global capitalist economy. To the greatest extent possible, in all aspects of my life, I reject the 'normal', unquestionable options of how to live in a world and am building up new habits and dependencies in a non-capitalist framework. This means living with the matter that already exists, because, if only we can let ourselves believe it, we already have pretty much all we need.

December: Jonnet Middleton



Maker Library