Books

Wild Dress: Clothing & The Natural World
Kate Fletcher

Beautifully written with evocative photographs of the hills, woods and moors of the Peak District and the Yorkshire Dales, this slim book by Dr Kate Fletcher will change how you think about what you wear forever. It chronicles how the author, born and brought up in inner-city Liverpool, came to see the links between clothing and the world around us.

Abandoning city life after more than 30 years, Kate, professor of sustainability, design and fashion at London’s University of the Arts, now lives on the Cheshire-Derbyshire border with her family. She sees the natural world as vital to health and wellbeing: ‘It is no exaggeration – the natural world has saved me. It is somewhere I exercise, for sure, but in terms of mental health, it is a place of total acceptance. I am my best self when I am outside.’

Inpired by a sailing trip around the Hebrides, Kate wrote Wild Dress, which describes how clothing can help us connect more closely with nature. ‘The clothes we wear can change our experience of the world. I wanted to write about the everyday lives of our garments and the choices we can make in the face of climate change.’

Amid growing concerns about the environmental impact of fast, throwaway fashion, Kate has good advice for those who love fashion but want to look after the planet. ‘The clothes we discard first are those we receive as gifts, buy for a future, thinner self or buy in sales,’ she says. The solution? ‘Buy fewer things and enjoy what you have to the maximum.’

This year’s London Fashion Week runs from 13-17 September.