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<p>Sustainability has always been called a wicked problem and gender inequality is one too (Rittel and Webber 1973). Both require systemic transdisciplinary and collaborative approaches by designers who are creative and powerful beyond what they currently believe and feel. This talk was an opportunity to bring some of my thinking together about methods, tools and the way we can enact change towards new systems. At CCD we've always been a predominantly female team and the values in the Shemakes project are aligned with what has been embedded in our work. It's been very much about building a community of change-makers in an academic setting, to tackle climate issues through textile research projects.</p> <p>Systemic design is the space where we can take a systems practice - let's say as a textile designer - and use systems thinking to create a picture of broader change. Systemic design is an orientation - not a discipline. You go in as the expert in your area - natural dyeing, wool, heat transfer printing - you are the expert in that area and you work with the creation of the systems, the sharing of the knowledge in order to understand the interconnectedness, the flows. (Meadows 1999; 2008)</p> <p>Participatory design and co-design (McKercher 2022) are approaches that Shemakes has excelled in. Instead of designing <i>for people</i>, you have been designing <i>with people</i>. When we design <i>with people</i>, we stand a chance at arriving at products systems and services which are more useful, needed and maybe more equitable too. In transition design (Irwin 2015) we work more in line with the location, community, and natural world. We may do scenario development or speculative design (Dunne & Raby 2013) because it is important that as designers and creators, we show what currently isn't possible or happening. We need to show new futures to speculate - to imagine and dream - to show how things <i>could</i> be; because we can't accept what we've got. We all still need textiles and clothes but there's a space for female designers where speculative design can be powerful. I think we are on the cusp of a moment where this is going to become more and more important. Some brilliant work to look at is <i>Fashion Fictions</i> – a project where you can take part in designing future worlds (Tigger Holroyd 2021).</p> <p>I believe that Shemakes has shown us that there's a real potential for a female-led systemic theory of change. Theory of change is about single and subsequent actions we might take as designers, and the resulting impacts and structures we might go on to create. Systemic theory of change takes this further – beyond a series of isolated boxes - individual actions - and recognizes and values the interconnections and intersections (Murphy & Jones 2020).</p>	<p>Picture</p> <p>Becky Earley CCD</p> <p>Brief summary of main areas of interest</p> <p>Professor of Circular Design Futures</p> <p>Co-founder of Centre for circular design</p> <p>Co-founder of World Circular Textiles Day 2050</p> <p>Advisor to the Shemakes project & Transfer Lab Lead</p> <p>Profile of CCD</p> <p>Research Centre established in 2017 and based at Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London. CCD focuses on design research for circular materials, models and mindsets and aims to accelerate the transition towards designing for a circular future where textiles, materials and 'things' are designed, produced, used and disposed of in radical new ways.</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Complexity, Compassion and Courage: towards a holistic systems model for female-led design for change</p>  <p>Figure 1 : Gender Visions, Shemakes workshop at CCD, London (April 2022), led by Sanne Visser and Marilena Georgantzi</p>  <p>Figure 2 : Who is in the Circular Design Team? DRS workshop, Bilbao (June 2022)</p>

I believe that female designers have strong natural curiosity and skills in exploring these interconnections and intersections. I firmly believe that as female designers and makers we have a set of underused skills which I think are key to creating the kind of change that the industry and culture needs.

Complexity – *understanding the intersections at the beginning of a process*

At CCD, Dr Rosie Hornbuckle focuses on *complex design collaboration* - her job is about understanding the ecosystem of the project or the ambition that we've got, how materials can make a difference - like a boundary object – and where the blackspots of knowledge are, who's not involved, who's not drawn in or we're not noticing them, and how do they need us to talk to them. (Hornbuckle 2021) For our work in Shemakes we were able to look at the circular wool potential in the UK and draw together diverse perspectives from academia. We also took the ideas to the Design Research Society (DRS) event in Bilbao, where we did a workshop which was about bringing diversity and inclusivity into future circular fashion textile design projects.

Compassion – *seeing and caring about all intersecting perspectives*

Put simply, we can't put the same expectations and measures on everybody. The way in which things are set up - the key performance indicators and the evaluation of different scenarios that people have in terms of careers – needs to shift. We need to redesign the way the funding and the projects and the job descriptions work; and I think we need more women involved in rewriting this; bringing compassion and community back to the heart of the work that needs doing.

Courage – *making change happen when forces may be against you*

We're often not recognizing the fact that we really need to be working more with women and girls on being more courageous. It's about understanding that it's okay that you feel unconfident - but it's not your fault. It is the context, and for lots of reasons we all need to become more courageous. I'm choosing my words really carefully here! Ask yourself, in this project what fears did you overcome, and what fears do you still need to overcome? I think we can all be leaders in our own way and if we can just understand what's holding us back and what you're frightened of, you will actually unveil all the real opportunities for growth and change, and your own idea of success.

CCC model

The Design Council's **systemic design** framework is really useful. It notes systems thinkers, leaders and storytellers, designers and makers, connectors and conveners. That's what Shemakes was full of - so you truly fit into this paradigm of systemic design. So, if we also factor in *complexity, compassion* and *courage* it will give female flavor to systemic change; we can use our skills of making, creativity and the beauty of textiles to drive and enforce change.

Key figures to illustrate text

Figure 1: Gender Visions, Shemakes workshop at CCD (April 2022), led by Sanne Visser and Marilena Georgantzi.

Figure 2: Who is in the Circular Design Team – DRS Workshop, Bilbao (June 2022)

Figure 3: CCC model – integrating complexity, compassion and courage into the Design Council's systemic design model.

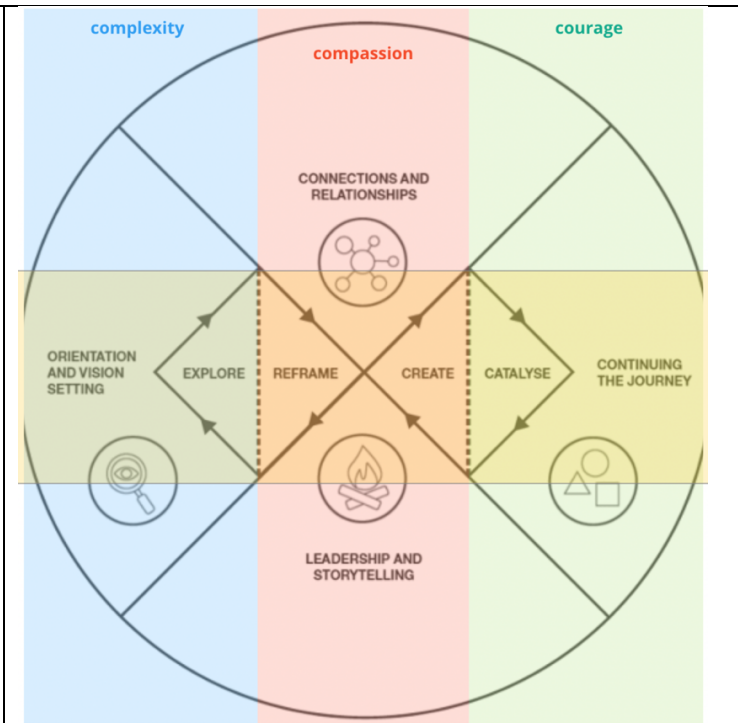


Figure 3: CCC model – integrating complexity, compassion and courage into the Design Council's systemic design model.

We urgently need complex, compassionate & courageous system thinkers, leaders and storytellers, designers and makers, connectors and conveners, who put people and planet first. We need them to work in inclusive and welcoming ways, through collaborating and creating connections – proposing, making and iterating reflexive solutions - whilst seeking to give back and support others.

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