



Project Portfolio
Yanella Ekman

Sago-stick

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Child Culture Design
Master of Fine Art in Design
HDK, School of design and crafts
University of Gothenburg
Supervisor – Anna Eklind
Examinator – Johnny Friberg
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Abstract

Sago-Stick is a collection of patterns for hand knitted children's sweaters and pocket toys. Every sweater pattern is connected to a pattern for a knitted pocket toy and a children's storybook. The product is presented as a knit-kit, along with yarn. Three kits were made. This product is for people who love knitting. These knit-kits require different levels of skill. To knit a sweater, you should have some experience. But for the pocket toys it is ok to be a beginner.

These garments are a counter-weight to fast fashion trends. They will take time to make. Knitting takes time, one stitch at a time, repeatedly. But this is also the reason they become attached to us like old friends. They are valuable and appreciated. And they are made to last over generations of children. These sweaters tell a saga even before they have been made. Along with the storybook they are stories to be worn.

Keywords: *Knit, sweater, child, storytelling*

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1.1 Purpose

1.1 Purpose

I wanted to make an attractive product and by doing so contribute to slow fashion (Menkes, 2011, March 6). We are constantly hearing about climate change and how we should change our life style, buying less and recycling more. Slow fashion is appreciating that things take time to make, and should last long. We feel good when things go slow in contrast to the stress many of us experience in our every day life. To knit takes time, and it is also very popular at the moment as you can see in blogs, knitting café and new books etc.

When you knit, you get aware of the time it takes to make a garment. This is could be one reason you feel attached to a garment, because you know what time it took to make. Hopefully this will make you take care of your clothes so they last longer. The plan was to make patterns for a few sweaters. They would end up as knit-kits with patterns and yarn.

1.2 Aim

1.2 Aim

I had several goals with my project.

1

One was to make a good product that someone would buy and value. The big question during this work was – *how does one increase the value of a product?* When I write value, I mean in the aspect of feeling *attached* to a garment. Making it important and valuable for the owner, even if the value in money is low. Even a piece of paper can be worth gold if it comes in the form of a handwritten letter from a friend. And people can sell you air if they just pack it right, telling you the right story. The part of telling a story was what I decided to use. Filling my product with value made my project become more than only knits, when adding storytelling in the form of pocket sized storybooks.

Also, the product had to be as sustainable as it could be, kind to both nature and people. The materials for it became very important. I spent a lot of time searching for the best choice of yarn for this product. I came in contact with several yarn stores and got good advice from several.

2

And *two*, was to explore and learn how to apply graphic patterns into knitting. Pretty fast I understood that the framework for my patterns would be quite narrow. Early in the process I had to decide what kind of garments to work with. I decided to make patterns for round knitted sweaters. This was because they are fairly simple to make if you have some knitting experience. You basically knit a tube and knit in two

arms also tubes. This means that you only have to sew one small hem under each arm finishing up the garment.

Most sweaters knitted in the round only have color work around the yoke (the part of the sweater from shoulders and up). There are good technical and practical reasons for putting the color work there, as it balances the sweater, and you rarely want double fabric anywhere else. The yoke, became my work sheet along with the technical boundaries round knitting brings. Working with the graphic patterns I made many knitted swatches to try out my patterns.

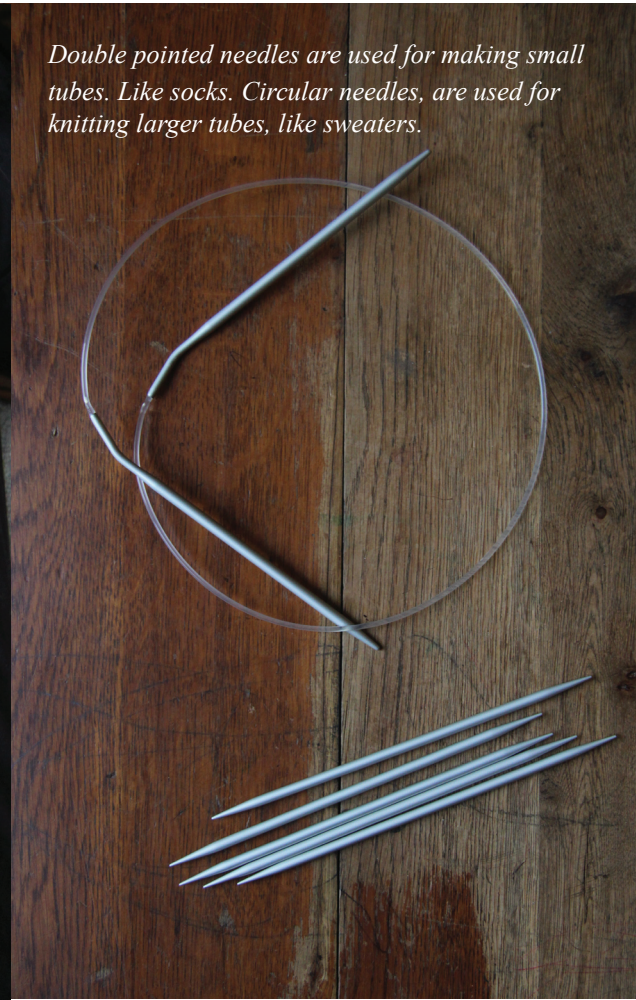
3

My *third* goal was to mark the beginning of my own brand of knitting kits. Marking the beginning was the same thing as beginning my work. In the back of my head I was thinking that I wanted to know how far I could take this product. How real can I make it, would someone buy it for real? What I have learned during my research period is a base for building my own brand. With this knowledge I have made myself a clearer picture of what I want to accomplish making this product real. Also, I have seen possibilities for me to create a platform in this business that puts my skill in illustration, education and graphic form together. This product can expand in many directions. It can be books about knitting, children's story's and new garments. Or even as a platform for teaching knitting to children and others.

Knitting in the round. That means that the arms and the body of the sweater are knitted as tubes. Then you join them from the upper arms, and you knit the yoke of the sweater.



Double pointed needles are used for making small tubes. Like socks. Circular needles, are used for knitting larger tubes, like sweaters.



2.1 Research analysis

2.1 Research analysis

During the last two years I have been, without knowing it, laying the foundation for my exam work. I have been studying knitting techniques, learning about fibers and yarn, the market and consumers habits. I know that during lunchtime the yarn store, Deisy Design, around the corner from school will be crowded with wonderful blabbering woman and that it is a bad idea to try purchasing or getting any service there then. I made myself a good picture of the blog world of knitting, both in Sweden and abroad.

And I have seen what books you can buy if you'd like to study knitting techniques. But I have also seen gaps, searching for literature and yarn that was nowhere to be found. My opinion is that there are many beautiful books about knitting with an appealing design for a younger audience, both in graphics and in pattern. But still, many of those free online libraries like jarbo.se and garnstudio.com appear like they turn to a much older audience. In contrast I found a Norwegian online library pickles.no who has a really fresh and young approach. Visiting one of those popular knitting cafés at Kulturhuset Kåken in Gothenburg, I got some of my prejudice confirmed in the absence of knitting men. Although I have seen some efforts in different ads to make knitting cool even for men.

I am also a frequent buyer of yarn from stores online. You can buy yarn any time of the day, from where you want in the world. If I order from the online store Kaki.se placed in Åre, I have my yarn the next day. Time is valuable. These are things to take in consideration in the future if I set up my own online pattern store.

Searching for old Swedish patterns I came across a wonderful knitting heritage in Bohus Stickning. This company helped women during Second World War to earn money by knitting sweaters at home and selling. These sweaters are known worldwide. Digging deeper in our heritage of patterns I came across both old and new patterns and techniques. An old technique like *two-end-knitting* makes thick durable garments perfect for cold winters. I tried it out, and now it is a piece of my swatch library.



Two-end knitting is knitted with two strands of yarn twisted on the back for every stitch.



You can make beautiful patterns and effects on the fabric. This is a typical "krus."



2.2 Conclusions

Most interesting, was to see what kinds of knit kits the market already had to offer. I could see, that it is mainly just a pattern, yarn and maybe knitting needles. Not much of a story included other then were the yarn comes from and maybe something about the patterns. Sago-Stick, is more then that. It gives the garment more value bye connecting the piece to a story.

In addition to the question of sustainability, it is also very important when you design a knitted garment, that you know your yarn. So I spent a lot of time researching this. The process of getting to know the fibers you are working with includes many time consuming steps. You have to make swatches (small knitted squares) and measure them after washing and treating them, as you would do with the finished garment. This is to understand how the fibers react when handled. Counting stitches and rows to get the right gauge (in this case, how many stitches and rows per 10 cm). These steps (and more) all to avoid surprises in the end result. Because of the time it takes to get acquainted with a yarn, I needed to get it right from the beginning.

I wanted an ecologic yarn. I would have preferred to keep working with the alpaca, but could not find an ecologic alternative. The alpaca is strong and soft and makes non-itching clothes. I found an eco wool from Marks & Kattens. In the attachment there is a colour map of the yarn. There are also five natural colours, meaning the colour the wool has when it is cut from the sheep's back.

2.2 Conclusions


Conclusion from the research period was that there is a big market for knitted products. Everything from yarn, patterns, needles and everything else you need to knit. There is also a big interest in different knitting techniques, both old and new. But it is easier said then done to find good books in the technical parts of knitting in Swedish if you are searching for old techniques.

I also state that there is an explosion of craft inspiration with knitting cafés, blogs, books, clips on you-tube, online-help and so on. Knitting is hot! Many of these knitters dig deeper in the craft. I have red many stories about how knitters made their own yarn, wanting to be part of the whole process, from animal to knitted garment. For one year I have myself collected dog hair with the intention of spinning it! Many knitters, because of the time it takes to knit a garment, only work with yarns from natural fibers. Sustainability is a big issue.

3.1

The product and its parts

This chapter is about the product and the final results.
The pictures are mainly from my final review.
Text has been added to explain.



**This knitted piece won't blend, with fast forgotten fashion trends.
A hand knitted piece will mend, a brokenhearted friend.
Each stitch is full of love, that's why I wrote the things above.
From eleven to seven, wear this piece of heaven.
And know that this is made, from a friend who wants to see you saved,
From winters cold, and fabricked fashions mould.
Wear this proud.**

The essence of the product and project. Something becomes valuable when you become attached to it. As when a gift is given with a lot of thought. I wrote this thinking it would be included in every kit.

*Sago-Stick is different from other knit kits on the market.
You receive yarn, two patterns and a storybook.*



*This is what it
could look like
in real life.*



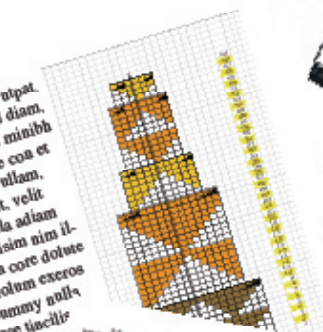
This is an example of what the folder could look like. On one side you have a pattern for a sweater and on the other side the pattern for the pocket animal. It needs to be easy to follow with clear text and pictures.

Folder



tröja
SOLROS

Storlekar tröja: 1 (2/3) 4/5 (6) 8 (10) 12 år
Garn: Eko Ull
Garnåtgång:
200 (250) 300 (350) 350 (400) 450 g av huvud färg
90 g av de tre olika mönstersågar
Sticks: 2 mm rundsticka 60 cm och 3 mm rund-
sticka 60 cm
Sticksfästet per 10 cm
Sticksfästet: 37 m/26 rader
Bröstvidd mätt plant: 31 (34) 37 (39) 41 (42)
Längd: 37 (42) 45 (47) 50 (52) 56 cm



mönster
HARE



Liten kantz: höjd 6 cm
Stor kantz: höjd 8 cm
Garn: Eko Ull
Sticks: 2 mm rundsticka
Styckets och dykarnas värde



Facil uttata utpat.
Ut inisisset diam,
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utpatat nllam.
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The result will end up in a sweater with a pocket animal.



Sunflower sweater

Above, Hugo Ekman

The process.

Model, Hugo Ekman.

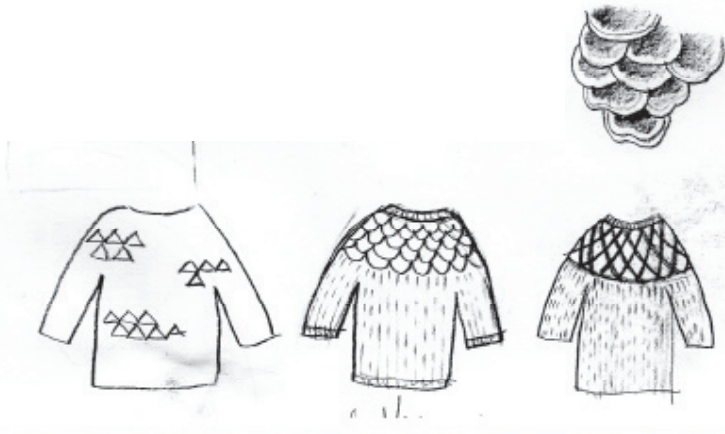
Before I started my project I knitted a sweater with pattern from the Norwegian online store Pickles (Pickles, u.å). This is made in alpaca yarn.

This pattern I used as a guide for my own patterns. I did this because it would cost too much time to invent my own pattern. Better to tweak an already existing one. It is a sweater knitted in the round. That means that the arms and the body of the sweater are knitted as tubes. Then you join them from the upper arms, and you knit the yoke of the sweater.

There are some limitations knitting this way. You need to let the pattern for example follow around the whole garment. Or else you will end up with a lot of misplaced ends. And because you are knitting with two threads, you have to consider that the fabric is double.

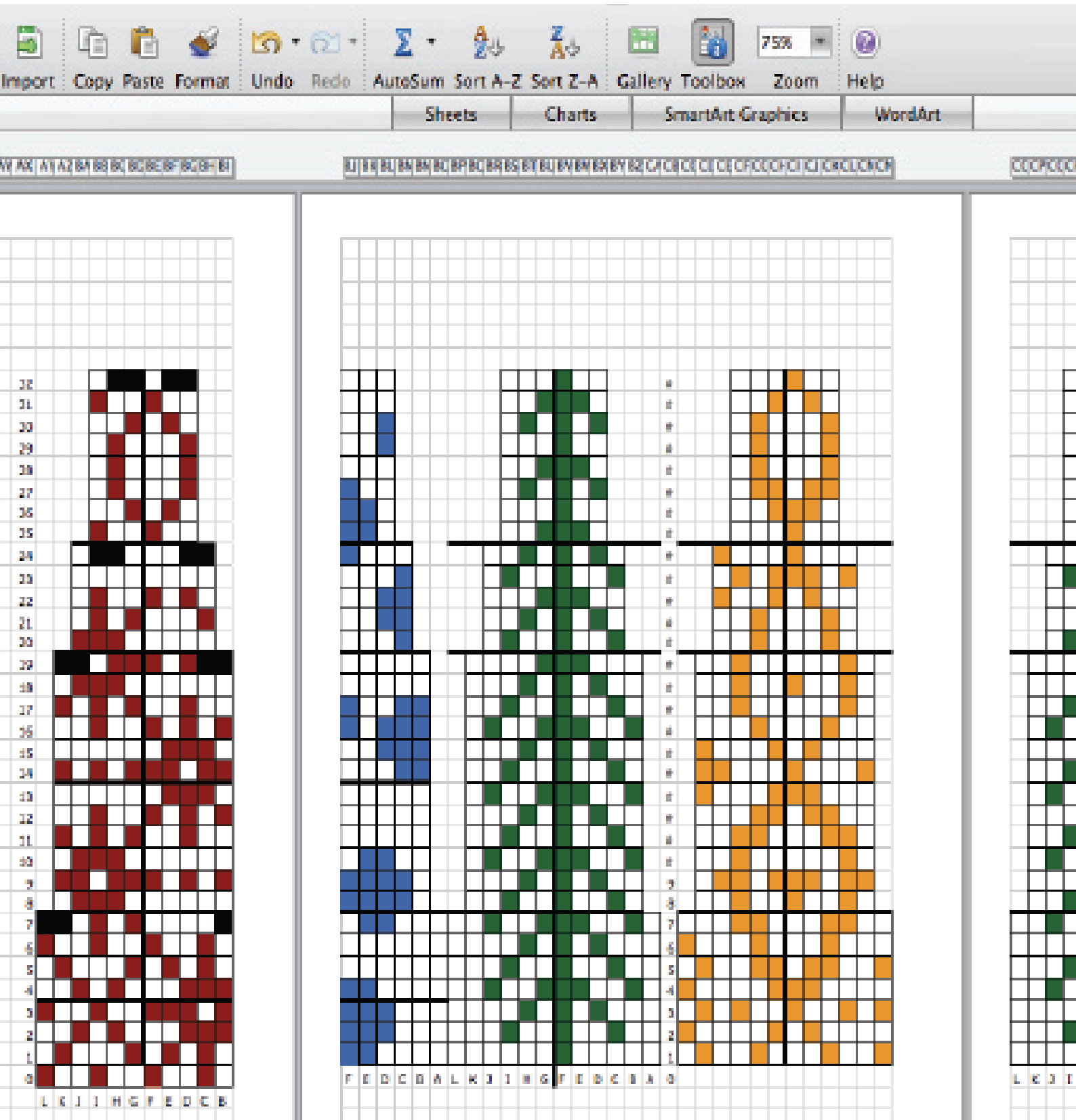
The process.

Inspiration comes from sketching and taking photos. A moment in the beginning I thought it would be nice to work with 3-D forms, like the mushrooms. But I left that idea for more graphic work, and decided to work with colour and pattern.



The process.

Inspiration also came from watching other knitters work. I saw that patterns could be written easily in Excel, so I did so too. One square represents one stitch.



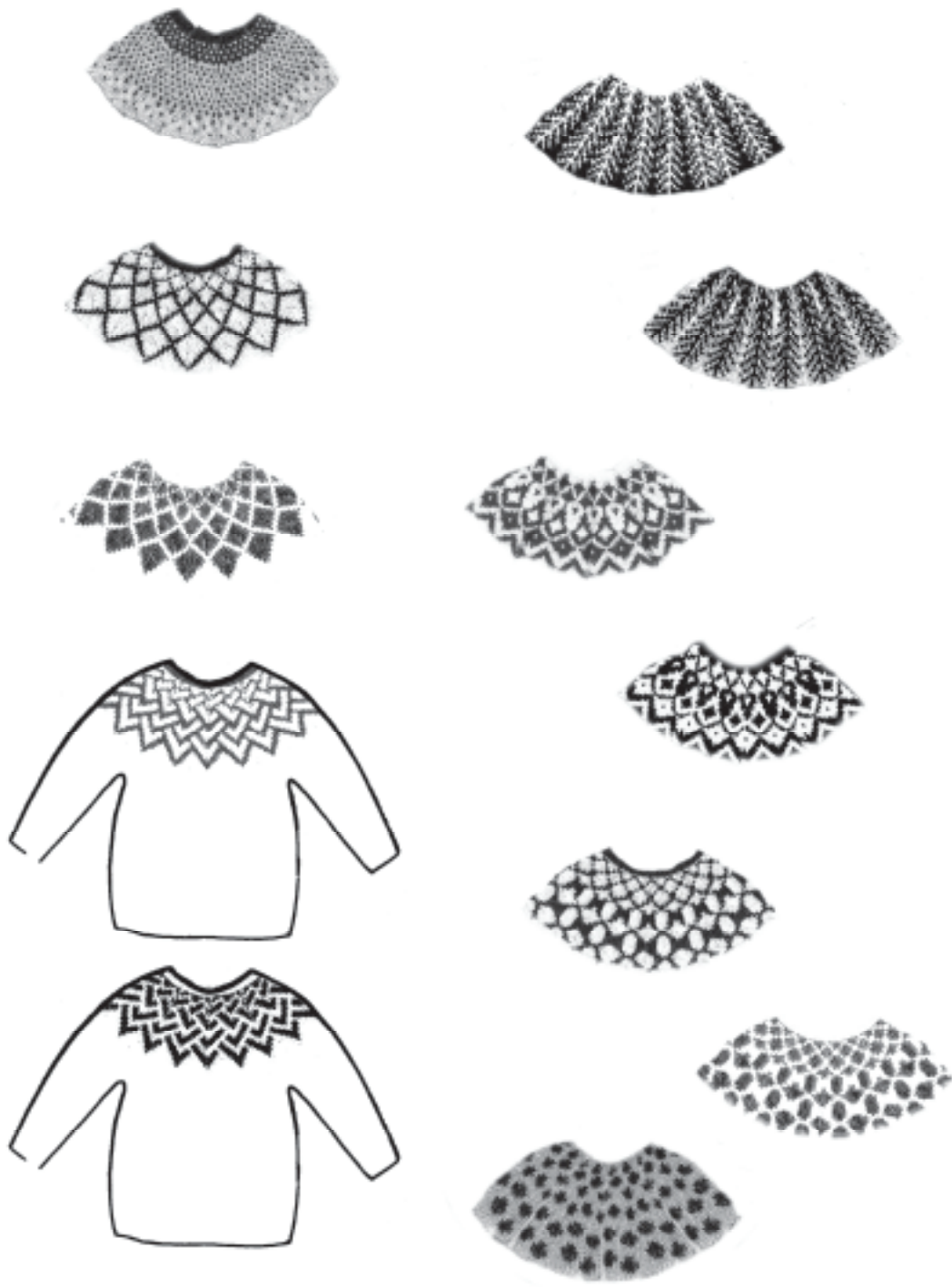
The process.

Then I knitted my samples. I tried different colours and different techniques. This took a lot of time! And I let it do so, because this was one of my aims – to learn how to apply graphics in to knits.



The process.

Then I scanned my knits and worked with Photoshop to repeat the patters. In this manner I could get a pretty good picture of what the final result would be. From these sketches, I choose three patterns and made a collection.



3.3 The collection

COLLECTION

Sunflower
sweater



Pine
sweater



Blue Pine Cone
sweater



Sunflower sweater



Every sweater pattern is connected to a pocket animal.

For the Sunflower sweater, the pocket animal is a hare. The story is about a hare that loves flowers. The pocket animal fits in the pocket, and the book do too. I made three triangles on the sweater slightly bigger with the intention of making it look less traditional.

Sunflower sweater



When my son had his sweater on, the arms got dirty first. So instead of having white arms, I coloured the ends of the arms. This will make dirt show less. Although wool is quite resistant to dirt, I know that won't bite on a playing child. The Sunflower sweater was already knitted when taking this decision though.

Sweater details



Pocket fits fox.

Pocket animal. The tale of the hare isn't done yet. I am also writing every story in both English and Swedish to reach a wider audience.

The tale of the Hare.

*Deep in the darkest corner of the forest.
Lived a hare that was a florist.*

*He had a big problem though.
One that could destroy, his wonderful flower show.*

*This rabbit loved to eat.
And flowers were his favourite treat.*

*Red and yellow flowers on his plate.
Every single one of them he ate.*

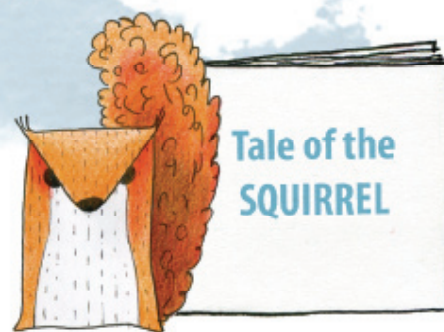
*But his favourite flower,
Was the one high as a tower?*

*But who is him to blame?
When sunflower is her wonderful name!*

Above, picture of pocket animals.

*Every story is connected to a
pocket animal and the sweater.*

Blue Pine Cone sweater



This is my favourite pattern. I was surprised over the result when I multiplied the rapports in Photoshop. They looked like the scales of a cone.

Blue Pine Cone sweater

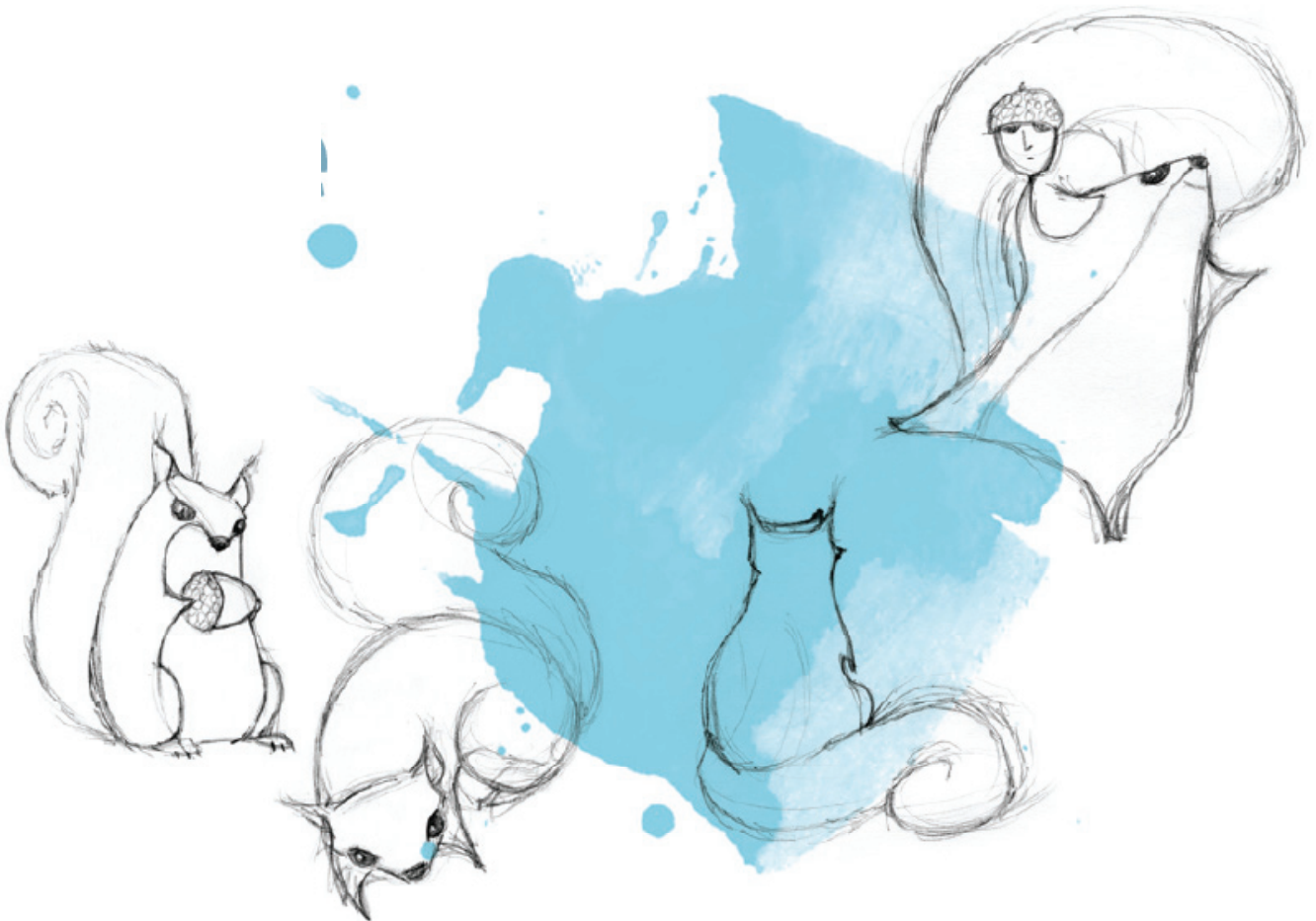
*Sitting on a branch, the squirrel and his mate,
are contemplating though it is very late.*

Everything beautiful is blue, don't you think that's true?

*The sky is blue, and the sea is too.
Blueberries are blue, and sweet as you.*

*The squirrel thought that "maybe it would be best,
if everything was blue in my nest. "*

*So now you will have a garment too,
that is – as you already knew, oh so very blue.*



The pocket animal, the squirrel has a tail made in a loop technique. I searched long to find a structure to fit my needs. Finally I found a pattern with this technique.



Above, pocket animal.

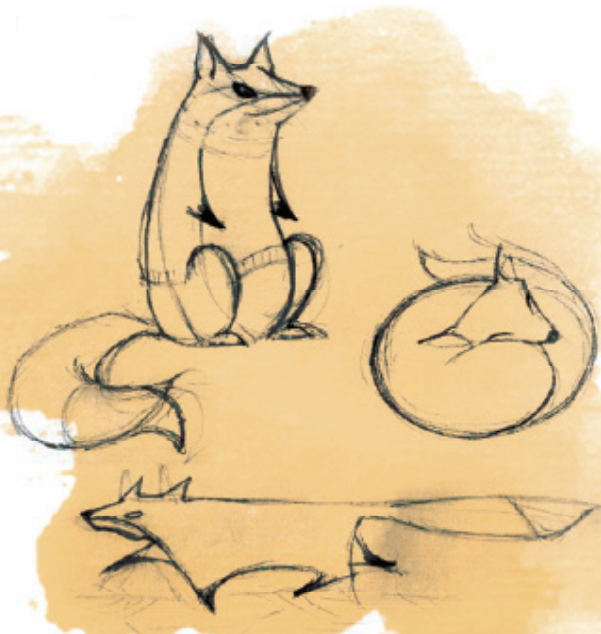
Pine sweater





Above, pocket animal.

3.4 The Fox Tale



*The Fox Tale is the only book I had time to make.
The illustrations are mainly made with pencil.
It is a good choice for control, unlike the aquarelle.*



The book is made with paper in 300 g and 170 on the inside. I have sewn it together to get that hand made feeling.

This story is still only written in Swedish.



The Fox Tale

*En tidig morgon i december,
ligger en räv och hackar tänder.*



*Att frysa och ha det kallt,
tyckte räven inte alls var ballt.*



*En granrisbädd ska jag nog ha,
där jag kan mysa och ha det bra.*

*Efter frukost med varm choklad,
kände sig räven både stark och glad.*





*Räven satte av i full galopp,
upp mot bergets branta topp.*



*Där uppe fanns det många träd,
som passade i granrisräd.*



*Men trots att räven stod på tå,
var grenarna för högt upp för att nå.*



*Lite hjälp behöver jag,
av någon som kan ta hårda tag.
Som tur var kunde räven ringa hem,
till en vän med både såg och rem.*



*Några grenar som de ser,
mäts nu upp och sågas ner.*

*I granrisbädd ligger räven nu och ler,
för han behöver inte frysa mer.
Men se vad är det som har hänt?
Något som räven inte känt!*





*På berget när räven stötte på patrull,
fastnade riset i tröjans tjocka ull.*

*Och tänk! En granris-tröja som värmer gott,
det är ju just precis en sån som du har fått!*



*On the last page there is a
spot where you can write for
whom it is and from who.*

feed- back

I got good feedback from both children and adults reading the story. Writing I worked a lot on the melodies. They were created after I had chosen the patterns I would work with.

Above, Hugo Ekman

3.5

Logotype.

Parallel to the story's I worked with the logo for the company. I had a name – Sago-Stick, story and knitting in one. Works best in Swedish though. This was more of a project name, but I used this for the logo to. I made some different variations of the logo.



A cursive logotype for 'Sago Stick' written in a fluid, handwritten style on a grid background. The letters are connected and feature elegant flourishes, particularly in the 'S' and 't'.



Logotype.

This is the one I decided to go with first. Because it felt retro and the knitted hat was original. In one of my sketches, I made a hat that looked like this on one of the characters in my stories. There was a plan to incorporate the story and a main character with the logo. That never happened because I in a later stage made a u-turn concerning the logo.



Logotype.

*It looks best monochrome, feels more held together.
But the colours aren't written in stone yet.*





Sago Stick

Surprisingly, this is final version of the logotype! This is made after examination and listening to good advice. Obviously I took another path to make it fit with the style of my illustrations better. Also, the softness of the yarn is there. The strokes around the text are built like a cloud. Yarn and clouds have the fluffiness in common. Clouds often symbolise higher thoughts and dreams. It is simple, but still has the handmade feeling. This was important because everything else is to be handmade in this project. This is also the reason I did not work with an already made font, but made it myself.

3.6

Packaging.

At first I decided to do a package that was more on the theme of the knitted sweaters. This is the symbol of a knitted stitch that I have worked with.



Packaging.

I tried different variations.

Different scales.

Different colours.

Different rhythms





This is the final version of the packaging that will be seen at the exhibition. I kept the stitch I used on the other bags, but now to give the background a live feeling. Although I think the style is the same as in the books, using a different medium, black ink, makes a big difference in form.

When printing, the more colours used, the more expensive. Using few colours and simplifying makes the bag less messy. The back includes a text in rime to explain what the bag contains. Logo is placed on both sides. It can be scaled down very small and still be read.

I am happy with the end result because it is linked to the illustrations in the storybook. The bag becomes more interesting and fun. Especially seeing the animals play with the balls of yarn. I think this will appeal to both children and adults.

< front



< back

Med garn, för barn.

Och för naturens skull,
Är jag full av ekologisk ull.

I mig ligger något mer på lur.
Det är mönster till tröja och sagodjur.

En bok kommer också med.
Så du kan läsa om sagodjuren och
glädjen som de spred.

Att sticka ger lugn och frid.
Och små tröjor kan ta tid.

Ja därför hand om tröja och sagodjur.
De bör tvättas i 30 grader och sedan sköljas ur.

**Varje tröja är full,
av omtanke och ull.**

Key design issue(s)

4.1

How make a product valuable?

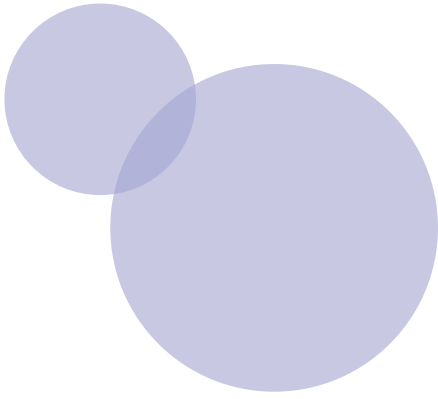
There were two design issues. The first question was, *how to make a product valuable?* The other question was of a more practical nature – *how do I apply graphics to knitting?*

4.1 How do I make a product valuable?

How do I make a product valuable? This question is one with many levels. What is value in the first place? What we perceive valuable is different depending on where we live in the world you live. It is dependent on different contexts as psychology, sociology and economics. I have not made a deep study in the subject of value. My intention was to make a product and fill it with as much value as possible. In this project the meaning of *value* is in the sense of making a product you feel attached to. It is the feeling of attachment that makes the product valuable. It has nothing to do with material value. But with emotional. Conclusions are made of interpretations of everyday life, and especially in the area for knitted craft. These are conclusions made based on my research.

Does it make a difference? Yes it does! If you value a garment, if you feel attached to it you take care of it. This means, that the garment will last longer. Maybe we keep it for a long time or maybe we give it away for someone else to use. Children often grow out of their clothes before they are worn out. So their clothes can often be inherited to a sibling for example. But things we love, we don't throw away. And if you did get tired of it, and if you did throw it on a pile of leaves, this sweater would turn to compost, harmless to nature.

Exclusive. Looking at last years exam exhibitions there is a clear trend towards the exclusiveness of things. Meaning – products are intended to be made in a small scale, maybe only one example of a table, chair or hand embroider pillow. This is surely the result of a bigger awareness of climate issues, but can also be a result of customer's request for something no one else has. So we can state – owning something that very few others have, increases value. Sago-Stick is not made for everyone. This product is targeted for those who are interested in knitting. This means they'll have a garment very few others own. That makes it *exclusive*.



Home made time thieves. To knit takes time. Creating a garment is an effort. Receiving what someone made only for you is a very special thing. Something made of a natural material that cannot harm you, and was made by hand. As a knitter I love the repetition, and find it very calming to knit. Despite of the enjoyment of the process, it still takes time.

To get the whole picture and understanding of the knitted garments process from thread to finished wearable garment it was absolutely necessary for me to make all of the knitting myself. Several times during my work I got the advice to give the knitting part to someone else. If I had done so I would have lost the experience. Also, I would not have seen what fails needed to be corrected in the patterns. For my exam-work I have just knitted one sweater. The others are still on paper. But because of the time I took to make the first one correct, the others will be a lot faster to make. In other words, let it take time. The process of something taking time makes it valuable. If you put time and effort into a garment, you will take care of it, because you feel attached to it.

Storytelling. This is a good way for companies to leave a mark. By adding a story to their products they can increase the value of it. Take McDonalds for example. As a child, with no refined taste, I was a happy customer of not so fancy culture. Plastic was fantastic, as long as it came in bright colours, quality was not an issue. I remember those few times my parents took me to McDonald's, as happy times. Not only because I spent time with my family, but because of the stories. The restaurant was filled with stories, all from the play area with the strange animals drawn on the walls, to the ads. Everything was telling a story about happiness, good food, happy families and adventure. Even the food was packaged like present, no wonder I liked it! I absolutely loved the TV-show "The Storyteller" with Jim Henson from 1988 and the movie The Never Ending Story. Think of it, the best times of my childhood was in connection with these stories. So I state – *adding a story to a product increases value, increases attachment.*

In Sago-Stick you receive a storybook with every sweater pattern. The saga is connected to the sweater. This gives every sweater its own story and makes it more valuable. Every storybook fits in the pocket on the sweater, which makes the wearer able to bring the story along in their mind as well as in their pocket.

To add a storybook was not something I intended from the beginning of my work. Some kind of storytelling would be included, but I was not sure in what form, until late in the process. I chose to add this because of the response I got when reading the stories for critics. It felt like there was a lack of pictures. Adding a storybook added the value of the product, especially for children.

4.2 How to apply graphics into knitting?

4.2 How do I apply graphics into knitting?

The other question was of a more practical nature. Could I, as a designer leaning towards the graphic or more artistic side, apply my form to knitting? Using yarn as my pen and having the garment, as my blank sheet. This required knowing the new material. I have dug up fantastic knowledge searching resources online. Many kind knitters share their knowledge. This has helped me, especially in the technique of stranded knitting, when you knit with two colours.

Keeping track of two strands of yarn can be difficult, but there are a lot of tips on how to do this. But also, because the yarn floats double on the inside of the garment, this technique is to be applied with consideration of what is practical and fashionable to wear. Things I learned during my process was that for example, most women do not want a lot of fabric around their hips, because this will make them look broader (TECHknitting, 2007). So stranded knitting is not applied there. In the pages for my projects result I describe how my process of applying graphics to knitting worked hands on.

Relevance

5.1 The “it-factors”

Reflection on the relevance

5.1 The “it-factors”

Storytelling – this is what makes the product stand out from other knit kits. Most knit kits are sold with only patterns and yarn. But the value of a product increases when applying a story. It will be better remembered and even when the garment is gone, the book will be there, the story remains. Illustrations make the stories come to life and the text is easy to remember when it rimes. The pocket toys are there for the child to play and invent their own stories.

Slow fashion, is an expression meaning clothes good for you and everyone in the chain of production. This expression was born out of an awareness of climate issues and the need to slow down the pace of our consumption. These questions become more important every day and we are constantly fed with news about climate change.

The idea is that less clothes are produced, but with better quality. Making durable clothes, both in esthetics and material choices. The chain of producers is scaled down, meaning shorter journeys, less carbon dioxide. When you knit these sweaters instead of buying another in the store, you chose slow fashion. My kits encourage people to knit more and to choose the greener alternative. Sweaters take time to make. They will be well looked after, because they are valuable. Maybe they will pass from one child, growing out of it, to another. They last longer and are a contrast to use and toss. If you lay them on the ground, they will in time become part of nature.

Knitting is hot! The time is right for this product. There is an explosion of interest for knitting. This is manifested with blogs, websites, books, stores and knitting cafés. Knitting has been around for a long time, but now I more often see people knitting in public, both young and old. Last years knitting has also become a political question when different groups have used knitting as a tool for expression. We have all seen knitted poles at different places. This phenomenon is called graffiti knitting and is started as a way to reclaim and personalize public spaces.

It can grow! This product has great potential to grow in several ways. It can grow when making new designs for new sweaters. But it can also be other garments like hats, mittens, socks and so on.

Another interesting way to expand is the pedagogic way. The craft of knitting could be taught in courses online or in real life. It could turn in to books. I know that teachers have used knitting as ways of introducing children to mathematics. But maybe this tool also could be used for improving fine motor skills, or calming worried minds?

I learned, as most, to knit in elementary school. A skill I soon forgot. But about five years ago, I took it up again. This time with help of free knitting recourses online like knittinghelp.com or knitpicks.com. I call myself an intermediate knitter. I know more then the basics, but there is still a lifetime to fill with new techniques. Watching clips on you-tube, seeing the techniques has helped me improving my skills, so it works. Unfortunately I find most good clips to be in English. There is a gap to fill for the Swedish audience.

5.2 Target groups

5.2 Target groups. Who is it for?

- This product has two target groups *from the aspect of using and buying it*, *one* - all those people who knit. And even those that don't knit, but knows someone that does (they could buy it as a gift for a knitting friend). In this group there is young and old, men and woman. You will have to have some experience to knit these garments, but you do not have to be an advanced knitter. It is good if you have tried stranded knitting before for it can be a hazel to work with two colored patterns. I can see the target group to be somewhat of a do-it-yourself person. Probably people aware of climate issues.

The other target group is *the children wearing* the finished garment. I have made several decisions concerning design, with this group in mind. Decisions made to increase the value of this garment for my young wearers.

- Second target group, is *from the aspect of displaying the product*, are yarn stores, stores that sell children's clothing or knitted garments. But it could also be sellers of sustainable and ecological products. These displayers can be both physical and online stores.

Jumperfabriken in Gothenburg is a company that sells knitted garments for woman. I contacted them because my project and what they do - knitted collections - have many of the same ingredients. They have shown an interest in my idea. But they have not been a part of my project other then one meeting when I had the opportunity to describe my product. Some years ago they had a knit kit with one of their designs, pattern and yarn. They would be interested of collaboration



This is what stranded knitting looks like on the wrong side of the garment. Long floats of yarn.

if I made a pattern with a combination for both child and adult garment. Meeting them I understood that this project could result in a real product and that there was an interest from the market. This made me strive even more to make my own brand of knitted products.

- The third target group, *from the aspect of putting the product together*, are suppliers of yarn. It has to be yarn made with considerations of sustainability. For the moment one brand, Marks & Kattens, is used. I have had some contact with the supplier regarding design applications and collaboration. With office in Gothenburg, they make many types of yarn. But I am only interested in their Baby Eco Wool, because it is ecological. This yarn comes in natural colors and dyed colors. I am still searching for a supplier of alpaca yarns, because this yarn is stronger, softer and warmer than wool. Ecological alpaca yarn has proved to be difficult to find, although I have heard rumors in local yarns stores that something will show up this spring.

Then we also have suppliers of everything else like bags, cards, websites, prints and so on. I have made myself a general picture of it, but I left it there because most of that effort is not in the frame of my exam work. It is in the work that comes after, realizing my project.

6.1 Societal & ethical

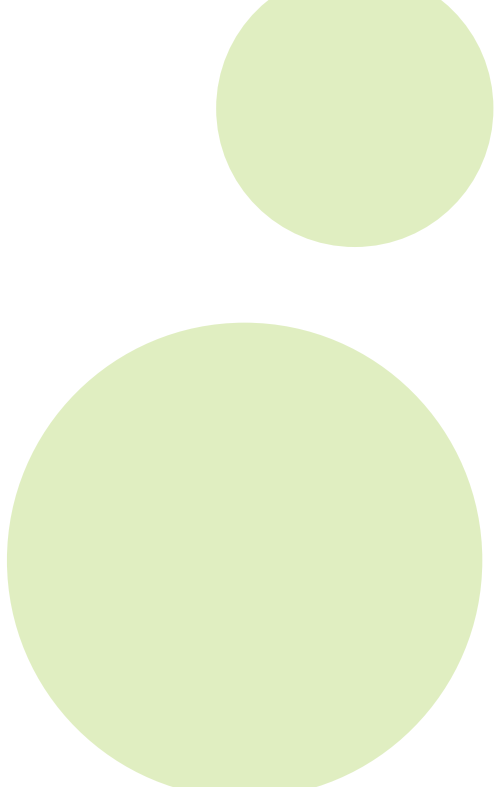
The base for my project was to make something that would bring a change to our habits of consuming. My product still uses resources - it was difficult to make something that didn't. The intention was to give costumers an alternative to fast fashion trends. Maybe so appealing that even a non-knitter would be interested. We all have a responsibility to use fewer resources. It is such a big question the ethical part of the project. It is all about people and nature. Using not more than we need, understanding that someone is paying the price for us having inexpensive clothes.

During this project I had many questions regarding wool and its market. In Sweden we waste a lot of wool, wool that is cut, but not treated for many reasons. This is sad because wool can be used for many other things than yard. For example as filling for pillows. Some wool is of course worth more because of its quality. In Sweden the market for wool from Gotlands sheep is regarded as valuable. And there are not many producers of it. I read in an article from Djurens rätt (2012) about breeds of merino sheep, and how producers have manipulated nature so the animals have to much skin. This makes it able to produce more wool. Great for producers, but not for the animal who often get diseases and inflammations caused to this unnatural overflow of skin. I did not want to be part of this.

Another thing that made me worried was that most yarns, do not tell where they come from. It should be in the label, were from and what breed, because different breeds has different quality's. I found a yarn, a eco wool, with all the right stamps, but even this yarn, doesn't say were it is produced. Therefore I have been searching local farms with the intention of using local producers for my knits, if quality is good. This work is also to be done outside of the frame for exam work.

6.2 Technical & ecological

During my maternal leave I had the need to be creative, witch in my case meant drawing. But I had no strength to do so. So I began taking photos and knitting. I knitted a lot! The monotone repetitions of knitting, seeing a garment grow, knowing you can't hurry the process, making something with your hands out of natural materials, made me both happy and calm. That is why I choose to work with yarn in this project. The technical part of the making of the product demands two needles, yarn, a lot of imagination and patience. And two hands of course.



My knit kit also contains ecological yarn, recycled paper for the patterns, the printed storybook, and some kind of container to place everything in. This can be a paper bag or a sewn bag. I am still searching for the right thing. It is important that it comes out practical and sustainable. I mean for the product to be decomposable and harmless to nature.

6.3 Economical

Economical part of this project can include what the product will cost to produce and what the customer pay. But there is also economics in how well the customer takes care of the product and if it is long lived. There is money to save.

If I were to make an educated guess I would say that every kit costs around 1000 Swedish crowns. More or less, depending on what size, larger sizes include more yarn of course. I have not made any calculations regarding the cost for printing the books and patterns. My estimation is based on what I gave for the yarn. The second smallest sized sunflower sweater has a yarn cost of 600 Swedish crowns, including the pocket animal. Patterns are sold in stores for 20 to 200 crowns depending on design and brand. Add up cost for storybook and packaging. Another version could also be to split the parts of the kit. Maybe you could buy only the pattern for the pocket animal and the book. This would of course lower both cost and level of skill from the knitter. It could be a way to get more customers.

6.4 Physical production and use over time

The idea is based on the customer producing the garment. My part, other than shipping it and finding good places to display the product, is designing garments, making patterns and books, story and illustrations. I have to find work with a supplier of yarn of course, because I will not spin my own.

Designing the garments I would like to see a traditional garment with a modern twist. But I will keep the sweater design simple and practical, because this is always fashionable. Because of the simple design knitters will be able to adjust patterns themselves to fit their wishes. For example, the parts that are in stockinette stitch can be given a twist with structure knitted to it. The pattern itself will come in at least five different sizes, so you can knit a new sweater when the child grows out the old one.

6.5 The effect on people's behaviour

I am member of a knitting community named Ravelry.com. This year in May they had 3,5 million users. This is one of many places where people can display their designs and knitting projects. It is also possible to connect to other users, especially if you join one of the various groups made under different subjects. Here you can ask for advice if you get stuck in your knitting, or just admire others work. If I were to sell or just show my designs on Ravelry I would have a big audience! Knitters can connect to anyone anywhere in the world. And they can socialise over the Internet. This is also a way to find friends nearby and meet in real life.

Knitting in it self can be very calming with its many repeats and monotonic way. It depends on what level of difficulty you are aiming for. Simple knits can be done watching a movie, others demands more concentrations. Some projects are very frustrating. Especially if you have to rip something up because you read the pattern wrong. Knitting can really cause an emotional stir!

6.6 The effect on cultural values and perception of identities

Knitting it self has old roots. Many patterns and techniques are connected to specific places in the world. Scandinavian knitting for example has a long tradition of two-coloured knitting. Norway has their famous "lusekofte" and Icelandic has their sweaters knitted in the round.

Clothing has always been part of our identity and our history. Clothing can show your origin, what economical status you have, civil status and so on. People who make their own clothes make a statement – "I go my own way." This can be grounded in political views, a lack of economical funds or simply for loving the craft. Because of knitting in the round and focusing the colours only on the yoke, the sweaters I have design may appear traditional. This is what I wanted, but with a modern twist to it. Comparing a traditional sweater to one of my designs you'll see difference in both patterns and colours.

It is important not to forget these old techniques and traditions, because they all serve a purpose. In Sweden, they have found mittens in two-end-knitting from the 17th century (Dandanell, Danielsson & Ankert, K, 2010). Mittens made in this technique are especially durable and holds out the cold due to double twisted strands on the inside. To knit in the round, as my sweaters, is also an old tradition. It is very practical because there are no long hems to consider, and you keep the work tidy and organized on your circular needles.

7

Reflecting process, methods and learning results

7. Reflecting process, methods and learning results.

At first, I intended to get a picture of what the market looked like. Knitting has for a couple of years been a great interest of mine. So in this area I had some insight. Because I had set my mind on making a knit kit I focused on this. Searching I found a gap in the market. Most of the kits only contained patterns, yarn and needles. I wanted to make something more than that.

One of my intents with this project was to place graphic form on a knitted garment. Since I haven't done my own patterns before, I had to work through this carefully. First, I dug into every piece of information I could find about knitting with two colors. And then I made several knitted samples. Knitting with two colors was a hazel. Even after some practice. It is tricky to hold two strands of yarn and keeping the tension good. That means, that you want the two strand of yarn to flow not to tight, not to loose, on the back of the work. Or else the result could end up to small or to big. With some practice I got it right. In the end I had knitted 33 samples before starting with my sweater. The best help came from different videos on you-tube (youtube, 2012). It is so much easier to understand the technique watching someone else doing it, instead of just reading about it.

In the beginning I bought a lot of different yarns to better understand the difference between them. Many of these came in skeins. To be easily handled I had to make them into balls. I didn't want to spend money on a yarn winder. So I actually build one myself with some help from my husband. It really makes it so much easier. Keeping things tidy and organized in boxes and covers, also made my work easier.

One of my big obstacles was to putting it all together. The product included many parts. I was to knit sweaters, but first after making patterns for them and the pocket animals also. Then I had to do write and draw illustration for the storybook. And beyond that, invent a presentable packaging. I realized after my midterm presentation, that I did not have to make a finished product, but present more of a concept. This eased my mind. I got a lot of questions regarding my packaging. Buying a lot of yarn over the Internet I often get yarn in plastic bags. Not so fancy. So I understand that the need of a nice packaging is only interesting if I display product in a real shop. This part of my project is not finished. This is because it took more time than I intended for it to do. I made a packaging, but it didn't come out great. A couple of more rounds with this are needed.

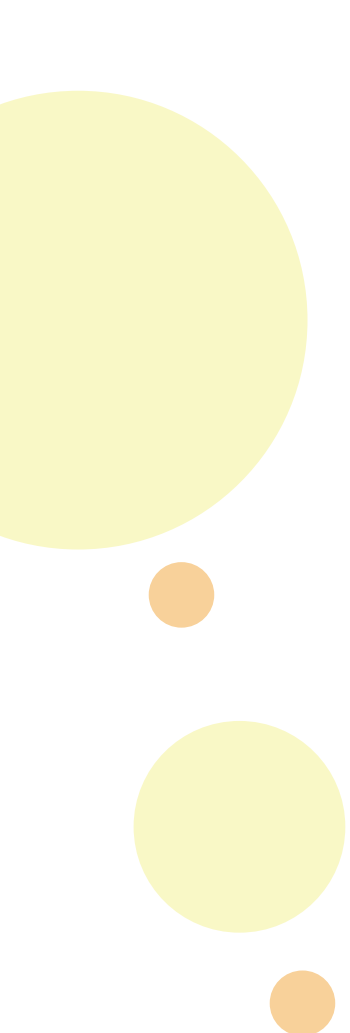
During last examination of my project, I got critics concerning graphic design applied on the packaging, logotype and typographic. It was right on the spot, because I did not give that part enough time. I decided to focus on everything around sweaters, pocket animals, illustrations and story, and that was quite enough. After writing my rapport I have worked out a logo and packaging that works better then the first one did. They fit the concept better. These are added to the rapport.

“You have to own it,” my external opponent told me during examination, meaning - show only the good parts. I doubted I would have something good and presentable for exhibition regarding packaging and logotype. The graphic design and should be more united then it is now she said, and I agree. I think my new logo and packaging fits well.

Also, external opponent thought my logo could be improved, and that the name – Sago-Stick – would not work abroad. It has to work abroad because I think most costumers are outside Sweden. I am satisfied with the first logo I made regarding being a nice logo. But I still agree that it is not a graphic design aligned with my illustrations or sweaters. But does it have to be then? No, of course not. Maybe better if it is not. Then I can feel free to work with different esthetics in this project. Anyhow, the logo will have to be redone when I have worked out a good name. Sago-Stick is the name of the project and not necessarily the company. I’ll keep this open for a bit longer. I then did a second logo that worked better.

I never felt stuck in this project, but I had other issues. For example, soon I understood that increasing the value of my sweaters would be done greatly if I added a book with illustrations. I always try to avoid writing because that’s new ground. And I had decided not to illustrate for this project, because I’d done that in recent projects and felt tired of it. But when I red my first stories to people, they felt that they lacked illustrations. So I made one book. It turned out nice. It can still be improved, but for now, it will stay this way. I would like to improve the heading and there is a few illustrations I’d do better with more time.

Some of the patterns I designed, and later knitted in small samples with only one report of a pattern, did not turn out great. But that didn’t matter so much. It was just a way of leading me to the right patterns. I made a little library of my samples, and from this I took three patterns that I wanted to work more with. It was also very frustrating not to find the right yarn. In that process, of finding the right yarn, I was stuck for a while. I am not totally satisfied with the yarn. An ecological alpaca yarn is what I am searching for. But this I will give



more effort when schools out. Finding the right yarn is important but it was not absolutely necessary to get a result.

Making those knitted samples, I discovered a pattern that surprised me. When you only see one report of a pattern it is hard to get the full picture of what the whole pattern will look like. But importing it to Photoshop and duplicating it, gave me a nice surprise. Like the scales on a cone the pattern was overlapping. It is the pattern for the Blue Cone Sweater.

Another thing that surprised me was the writing. I try to avoid any form of writing, especially stories. I don't think I have the skills to write and I have no practice doing it, in other words, it is out of my comfort zone. But I had to find a way to overcome this. I actually solved this by humming short melodies in non-sense language. My idea was, that if I could find a melody, I "just" had to add the words. And it worked for me. The stories are all in rime. This frame was comfortable and sometimes also determined what way the story would go. I mean, there are only so many words that rhyme on squirrel...

My intention with this project was to create a base for my own company. Even writing the project portfolio has helped me to get a clearer picture of my work ahead with this company. There is still a lot of work to do for my part. My project has ended as far as the examination work goes. But I will keep on working with this to see how far I can push it. Creating something to take its place on the market.

What have I learned besides all I have already written?
I learned a lot about yarn, its use, the different quality's and the process from sheep to yarn. Many techniques I did not know about earlier, especially two end knitting, so this was something new, and Excel to of course. I also learned that there is a lot of work behind a sweater concerning making a pattern that works in different sizes.

Many times we use words we do not fully understand. This was maybe the case with the word value. It was not until my examiner said that it had to do with the attachment that it really clicked! Another thing is that making a product from idea to finished article includes a lot of steps I was not aware of until I started working. It is one thing to have a good idea, and another realizing it. There are many non-conventional ways of solving a problem, like me not wanting to write, I used humming. During my examination my opponent said something that made me forgive her for every disagreement. "In the end it is you that has to love it, so go your own way." And that is exactly what I'll do!

Yanella Ekman

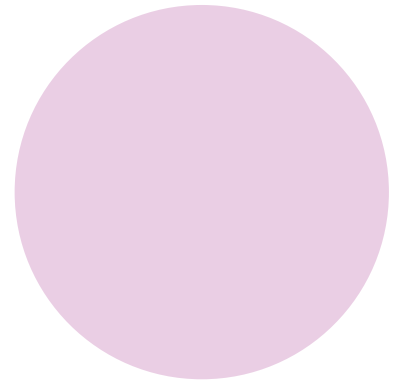
8. Attachments:

8.1 Final version of project plan

8.2 Time Plan

8.3 Books and links

8.4 Photos during process



8.1 Final version of the project plan

30 January 2013
Yanella Ekman

How do I design an attractive product (for knitters)?

>Purpose/Background

I want to make an attractive product and by doing so contribute to “slow fashion.” We are constantly hearing about climate change and how we should change our life style, buying less and recycling more. Slow fashion is appreciating that things take time to make, and should last long. When you knit, you get aware of the time it takes to make a garment. Hopefully this will make you take care of your clothes so they last longer.

My plan is to make graphic patterns for a few sweaters. This will end up in a knit-kit with pattern and (hopefully) yarn.

>Aim/Issues

For myself the goal is to learn how to apply graphic patterns into knitting. But also to make a product that someone would like to buy. And maybe start my own brand of knitting kits. And zooming out on climate change issues that affect us all, I want to make a product that is as sustainable as can be. That will be kind to nature resources and to the people who wants to own them.

>Target group

Everyone can learn how to knit. This time around I want to make patterns for children. Therefore my target group will be men and women who like to knit or who knows someone who does (you can always buy a knit-kit for a knitaholic friend). Age span from 20 to 100... I can see my target group to be somewhat of a do-it-yourself person, someone aware of climate issues.

>Process

I have contacted two companies. One of them, Jumperfabriken, was interested in collaboration towards a knit-kit. I would very much like to have someone on the outside that knows about the market and can guide me when in need.

8.2 Time Plan

- Tutorial with supervisor.
- Meeting with Jumperfabriken.

Writing Project portfolio, working on logotype and Pine sweater.

Research period. Mood board. Taking photos, sketching.

Research packaging. Prepare mid project seminars.

The stories. Writing Fox tale and illustrating. Knitting pocket animals and pattern.

Knitting Sunflower sweater.

final review individual project

project portfolio*

start practical work and research

mid project seminars presentation and critique of work in progress

project result seminars

reflection seminars

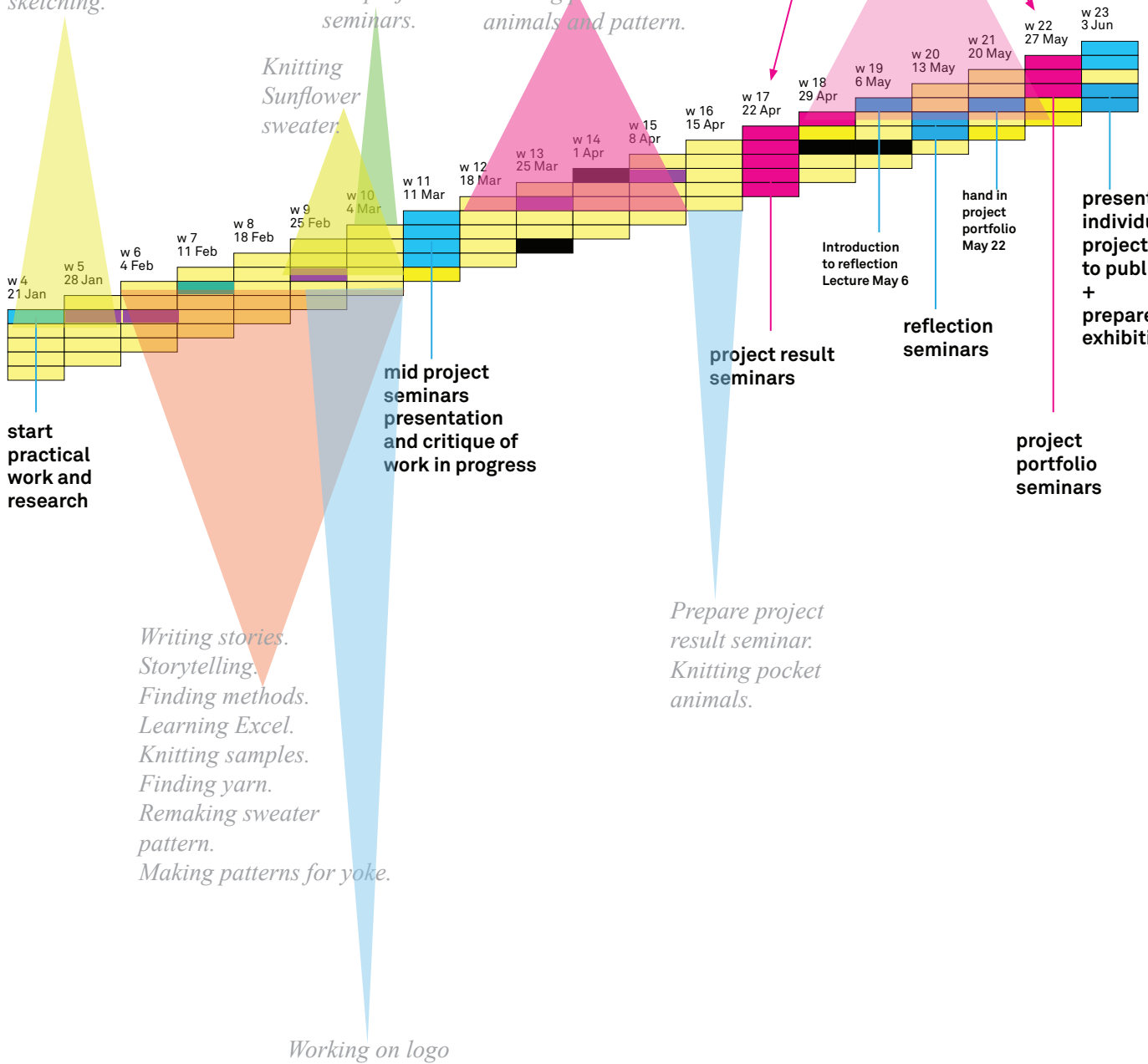
project portfolio seminars

present individual projects to public + prepare exhibition

Writing stories. Storytelling. Finding methods. Learning Excel. Knitting samples. Finding yarn. Remaking sweater pattern. Making patterns for yoke.

Prepare project result seminar. Knitting pocket animals.

Working on logo



8.3

Books and links

*All links available
2013-06-08.*

Books

Dandanell, B., Danielsson, U., & Ankert, K. (2010). *Tvåändsstickning*. Värnamo: Dalarnas Museum
Gilette, C. (Ed.). (1989). *Vouge Knitting: the ultimate knitting book*. New York: Pantheon

Links

TECHknitting. (2007). Brought 2013-06-08 from techknitting.blogspot.se/2007/04/how-to-knit-with-two-or-more-colors.html

Djurens rätt. (2012) Brought 2013-06-08 from www.djurensratt.se/vara-fragor/djurvanlig-konsument/ull

You Tube. (2012) Brought 2013-06-08 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2mUIVOn3uA>

Marks & Kattens. Brought 2013-06-08 from www.marks-kattens.se/stickat/garner/mk-eco-baby-ull-color

Resources online:

365sakerdukansticka.blogspot.se

sticka.org

hemslojd-tidningen.se/zickermans/

knittinghelp.com

knitpicks.com

knitty.com

ravelry.com

knittingfool.com

tekstiiliteollisuus.fi

marks-kattens.se

Online shops:

garngladje.se

shop.kaki.se

garnkorgen.se

Free patterns:

pickles.no

garnstudio.com

vogueknitting.com

malabrigoyarn.com

Fun blogs and pages:

Jumperfarbiken.se

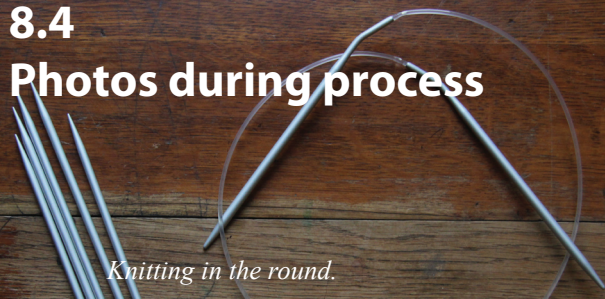
sillenstickar.blogspot.se

tinyowlknits.wordpress.com

Words about slow fashion:

Menkes, S. (2011, March 6) In praise of Slow Fashion at Hermès. The New York Times. Brought 2013-03-15 from nytimes.com/2011/03/07/fashion/07iht-rhaider07.html?_r=1&

8.4 Photos during process

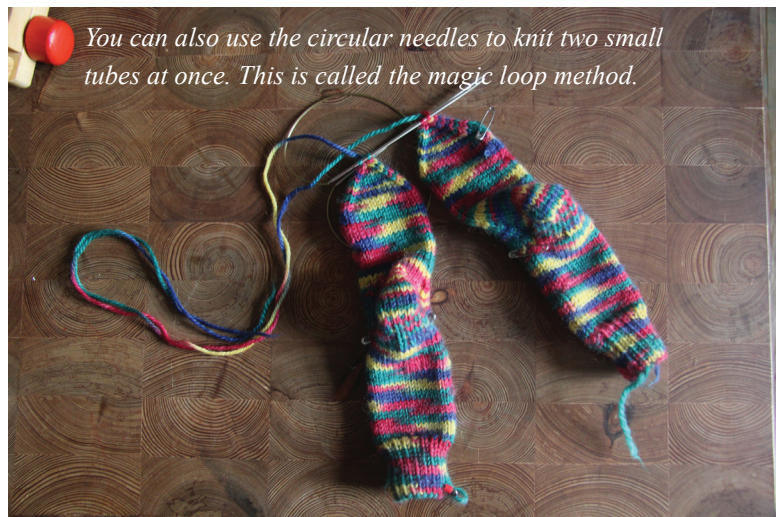


Knitting in the round.

Double pointed needles are used for making small tubes. Like socks. Circular needles, on the right side, are used for knitting larger tubes, like sweaters.



The yarn winder I built.



You can also use the circular needles to knit two small tubes at once. This is called the magic loop method.



Knitting with colours. Right side.



Wrong side.



Right side.



Wrong side.



Pocket animals.



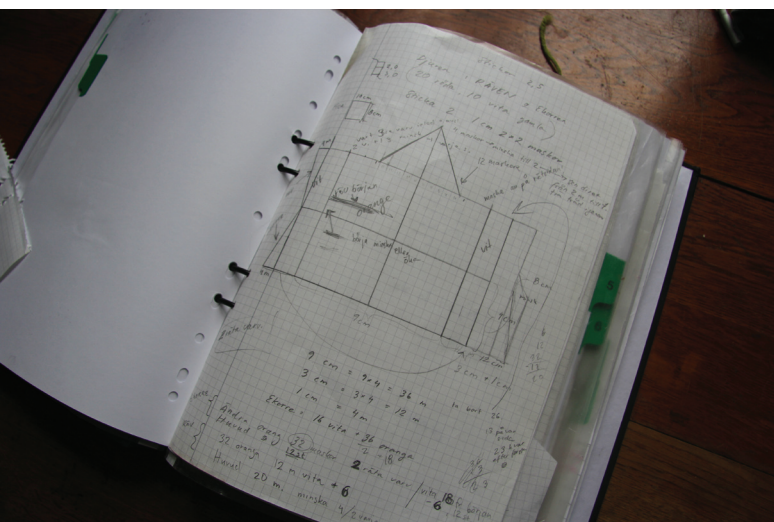
Blue squirrel.



Knitting on straight needles with two colours.



Sewing it up.



Making pattern.



Blocking. You damp the wool and let it dry. This makes the stitches more balanced and the animal gets a better finishing.



Crocheting fungus.



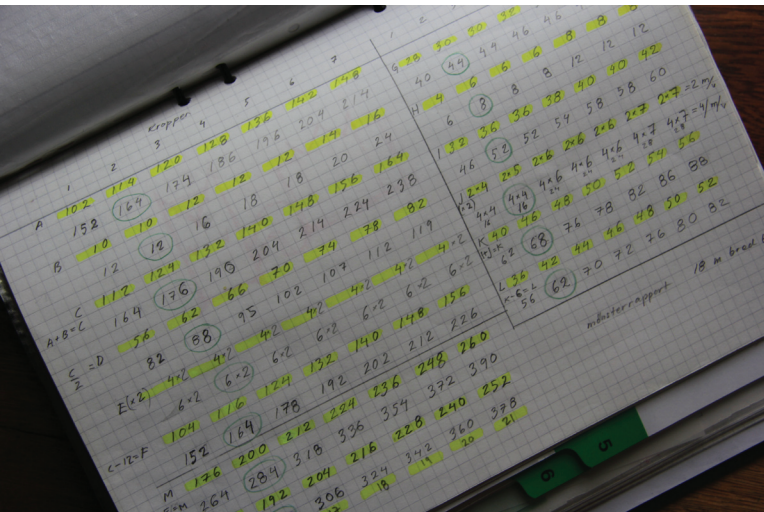
The Crocodile stitch.



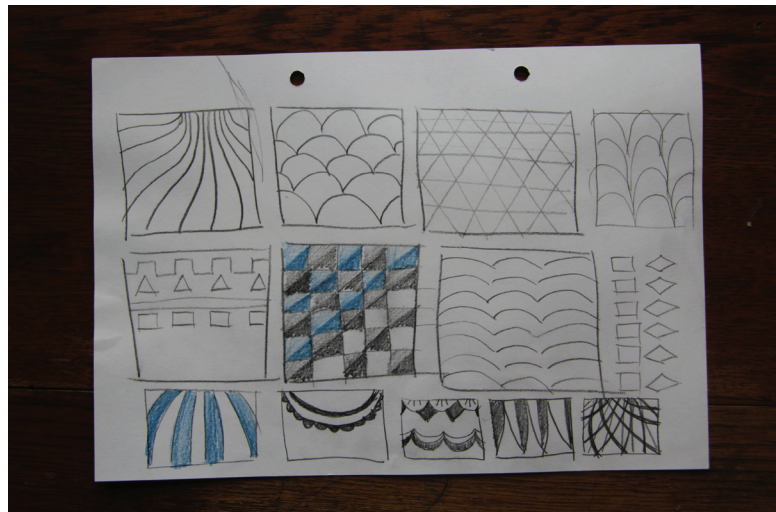
Pattern and sample.



Samples. White – the Brick stitch.
Blue – Honeycomb stitch.
Green – Crossover stitch.



Counting to get gauge right for different sizes of the sweater.



Sketching patterns.



From Marks & Kattens

