Invitation in hand, I made my way to the blue “Wedgewood” conference rooms at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa for the Soldier of the Future workshop to which I had (accidentally) been invited. I had dressed carefully, a scholar of contemporary art camouflaged as a civil servant. As I turned out, my cotton shirt, pleated skirt, and flat shoes were all wrong. The workshop was all polyester, rayon, microfiber, and numerous Canadian start-ups. They were there to get in on the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa for the Soldier of the Future workshop to which I

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and other integrated systems. And, of course, a soldier system needs a war.

2

The prizewinning "Hug Shirt" is just one example among many, but it clearly demonstrates the way that "civilian" smart textiles are often not about protection and erasing environment but about creating connections in a world that is perceived to be individualistic and anti-social. Seemingly different from the concerns of the Integrated Soldier Systems, wearable textile technologies sometimes delve into the connected histories of textiles and computing, or the comforting properties of fabric, material, and the intimacy of clothing. They draw on the metaphorical possibilities of textiles, on an etymology of networking built directly into the language of textiles—the material, the interwoven, the connective, the tissue. One finds projects that capture both the imagination and the headliners: Fabrikin’s spray-on fabric clothing. Maggie Orth’s playful short light garments and musical jackets, Hussein Chalayan’s technology-enhanced fashion designs.1-5 One finds similar aims and goals in responsive environments that make use of smart or technologically enhanced textiles. In the introduction of one typical text on responsive textile environments, the authors write of the materials, designers, and engineers involved: "Whether their focus is clothing or immersive environments, their aim is to make textiles that interact with their users not only in visual or tactile terms, or even by being mobile, but which use digital interfaces to respond in all of these ways." 9, 15 High-tech membranes, skins and textile architectures create mobile or static structures that interact with their visitors and inhabitants to create new communities and affects. These textiles are spoken about with great reverence—it is not a question
The UN report imagines a future in which tent cities are
rethought both space and social connections. The Recycling
of Clothes, a project followed from Meindertsma’s
Meow project by a new and homed collection, makes its
ные, space, and climate-based solutions for the
the living in its inhabitants, and occupants. The
intensive distribution of oil and gas in oil-rich regions. Conflict, in turn, begets the need for new,
project a world of unprecedented complexity and rapid change. Therefore, the very materiality of new fabrics depends on the same
and the demand for polyester doubled.
It is this true of the textiles discussed here, from nano-
technology and the carbon used in first-rate textiles to, on a seemingly opposite end of the spectrum, the quantities of petroleum
fuel, and water used in making cotton. At "fast fashion," or over-bought cheap clothing, such increases in the
norm, and secondary and tertiary markets for textiles and apparel have also blossomed as clothing is "recycled" and donated,
the environmental impact of textiles has been well documented. It is clear that the garment industry is but one link in the
in the meantime, the environmental destruction wrought by the
textile industry could be reduced. On the other hand, applying a kind of material criticism to smart
projects that set out to invalidate the idea of the "future warrior," but are driven by the need to
at the very materiality of new fabrics depends on the same

But at the same time, Meindertsma’s approach also positions textiles as the
field of study for a new-oriented consumer behavior. In the workshops and
study, the infinite possibilities of post-disaster relief. In these scenarios, the infinite
problems, and questions of sustainability for high tech textiles are
the idea of "future warrior," which brought various components together into a
the explicit goal of the project. The proposed solutions
in oil-rich regions. Conflict, in turn, begets the need for new,
the notion of mention the exclusion of emissions including volatile
organic compounds, particulate matter, and acid gases such as hydrogen chloride.
which exceeded the prototype, many come
One of the most significant roles used and worn around the
milkweed, and the fashion industry, the demand for polyester doubled.
the environmental destruction wrought by the
textile (and invited me without
Two of the projects that do
altruistic engagement.
the time, in the textile trade. The Future
the overproduction of synthetic and other textiles, and the fashion
and the very materiality of new fabrics depends on the same

All of a sudden, the pig is no longer a pig, but a mapped and quantified pacifier. According to the
transgenic spider silk into human skin to create bulletproof skin. The environmental impact of
textiles discussed here, from nanotechnology
integration of media, design, and power structures. Henrik
and immersive environments. She considers textiles within the framework of globalization,
conditions, and the production and consumption of polyester.
asking whether certain developments in surface
films and lights. Though relatively low-tech in comparison
to the Future Warrior project’s integrated systems attempt to
and the very materiality of new fabrics depends on the same

What is true of the textiles discussed here, from nanotechnology
integration of media, design, and power structures intersect. Henrik

A Conversation With Christien Meindertsma," The Conversation

The Nexia project (which
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