

We Cannot Buy Our Way To Sustainability.

The works I contribute for Iwpa; Sustainability, are based on the quote by Celine Semaan ' we can't shop our way to sustainability'. Some months ago I was unpacking my new eco, bee waxed, non plastic food-covers when it hit me hard: I was doing it all wrong, another product wasn't going to save the world. I need to connect again and truly acknowledge that Less is so much More.

My passion is locative collage. I _make small paper collages and photograph them in an outdoor setting that reinforces the story I wants to tell. I photograph my collages on location under adverse conditions. I do not use any form of digital editing. In an urban environment I leave my papercuts behind. Leaving bits of sanity for others to reflect upon. And that is what I did for this series too. I do hope by drawing peoples attention to our waste, they might reflect on their environment and their way of taking part in it.

The following text by Liina Klaus was an eye-opener for me:

'Do we even recognise how addicted to consumerism, to buying stuff we are? It's like we are on auto-pilot;let's go shopping and be good guys, so let's buy some 'green' products, let's buy carbon off-set miles, let's buy 'sustainability' so that basicly OTHERS do the job for us. You cannot buy sustainability. It is our job to be sustainable!! WE ARE RESPONSIBLE. I AM RESPONSIBLE. I NEED TO RESPOND. There are two things fundamentally wrong with the approach of shopping our way to sustainability:

1. first we have to recognise we are addicted, we are addicted to consumption. Is consumption is the drug, what are we yearning? Addiction is yearning for something that's missing in our lifes, it is a substitute, a substitute for experiences. Experiences that have gone missing in our modern society. Like deep feelings of connection to nature, experiences in the spiritual realm. Deep, honoust and loving connections to other human beings. You can know that but knowledge actually DOES NOT DO THE TRICK. We need more experiences of connection, not more stuff.
2. The second point is YOU. You need to make that experience, you can pay someone to plant trees, to seperate your waste, to use less carbon, but it won't change a thing. YOU need to get out of your comfort zone and into the actual experience. YOU NEED TO RESPOND: I NEED TO RESPOND, this responsibility isultimately connection to self, to others, to nature. It will change the way you spend your time, it will change your perception of what you think is important. It will change your perception of what you think you need, is important, what is value. It will infiltrate your life, changing your habits, resulting in the most connected version of yourself. And how beautiful this connection will be! Connections means you care, it means you are willing to pay for it, not with your money, but with your time, effort and your love'.