**First brochure of the Network (1991)**

**Foreword**

The European Textile Network is an organisation which accompanying the political and economical integration undertakes supplementary tasks on a cultural sub-sector.

The Network associates scientists, experts, artists and technicians across professional, geographical and social borders to achieve united action.

The ETN members are aware of the necessity, considering the accelerated processes of civilisation, to strengthen modern cultural developments in Europe and to preserve and increase life’s quality through textiles.

**Why Textiles**

Textile is a structural principle borrowed from nature. Textile forms draw their inspiration from comprehension of the world. They are changing and developing within the process of civilisation.

Textile is not a fabric, but a necessary human repertoire in the metabolism of nature; such as agriculture and architecture - a medium of human life organisation, such as language, music and mathematics. Its forms and contents, its technical and ritual use reflect like them the level of development of a culture.

With increasing civilisation the cultural meaning of textile has decreased. Textile is not a discipline of science and art - and is, despite of its fundamental cultural importance, only handled like substance for technical and artistic processing.

After thousands of years of human experience we are again at the threshold of new textile developments and openings of the world. On the eve of the third millennium we experience a further revolution in the application of textile techniques: The so-called "technical" textiles today are the most important growth factors. Thanks to intensive studies of nature, of the abundance of the forms and functions of its microstructures, highly innovative and useful products are being invented. This field which within a few years to come, will be covering worldwide half the industrial textile production, is one of the hardly disclosed cultural fields of design. - In fact, there are neither "technical", "decorative" nor "artistic" textiles, but only practical applications, accordingly motivated.

In order to ensure that in the textile field the innovative forces may act for the welfare of humanity and for the adaptation of civilisation to the natural environment, all technological and economical developments must be culturally processed, as the ecological crisis brought about by modern civilisation reflects the crisis of human culture.

To accentuate textile more distinctly as a constitutive element of human existence, to work out its characteristics more precisely and to bring to consciousness more clearly its fruitful interactions with other cultural fields, can be furthered by an interdisciplinary and international effort. Expert judgement assembled out of science and practice, art and technology, historical knowledge, regional, ethnic and ideological forces must work in unison, so that there may be possible textile impulses for modern cultural development.

That is why textile - because the development of textile-cultural consciousness is helping to find understandings and ways for a livable future.

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