

Transcript of Nicole Robertson's interview with Gary Anderson
 'The Recycling Symbol Designer Gary Anderson'.

The Swap Society. YouTube/Podcast, 18 May 2023. 55.04

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWPqgJ-qmfk>

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A transcript of Nicole Robertson's video interview with Gary Anderson of 18 May 2023, in which I have corrected minor errors in the (automatic) transcript and removed many "um" and redundancies in natural speech. The transcript on YouTube was not particularly reader-friendly and so I decided to compile this document. However, what was planned as a minimal 'copy, paste and print', was not as straightforward as first envisaged! The transcript came with time stamps, whilst the text was in one- or two-line segments which greatly bloated the piece, resulting in a 24-page length, and so a little inconvenient. Although not unreadable, it was far from ideal, so I decided to remove these impediments, resulting in a document of a more convenient length, of just eight pages. A further problem was the lack of punctuation thereof. Examining the online transcript was judged too tiresome, so I used my judgment for the punctuation in the text, although much was left open. 'As usual', all this editing took more time than anticipated, taking the best part of an afternoon into the next morning for a final 'tidy-up'! However, it was judged that the interview content justified the extra time, and so I do not begrudge the time spent on it unduly. Indeed, much more has come to light, or more exactly my memory, since the initial viewing. One of note is that the 'Möbius poem', which I was recently directed to, was mentioned here (and indeed elsewhere)! I had completely forgotten! In my defence, perhaps understandable, given the nature of it, a brief mention in a 55-minute video. Other references are of a like manner.

I have not differentiated between Robertson's and Anderson's lines, as ideal as it would be. It is judged too tiresome for the benefits gained, although ideally I would do so.

Even with great care, the text is not ideal but is more than sufficient to make sense. To have a 'perfect' text would be disproportionate to worth.

Some of the (mostly American) references in the discussion were new to me or I only had a faint recollection, so I added footnotes to better understand the premise.

[Music] You're listening to the Swap Society podcast and I'm your host Nicole Robertson¹. I interview thought leaders and change makers who are working to create a more sustainable and equitable world through fashion art and activism. Join us for a dose of climate optimism as we envision a brighter future. Hey everyone welcome to the Swap Society podcast today designer of the recycling symbol an architect and an urban planner hey Gary welcome to the show. Hi Nicole how are you doing. I'm doing very well thank you. It's great to see you. Yes nice to be here. Well I'm talking to you from Baltimore. I've lived here I don't know somewhere more than 50 years I guess off and on and but I was I'm from a couple of different places actually. I was born in Honolulu but I grew up mainly in southern Nevada and I went to school in Southern California. The origin story for the recycling symbol yes it was the University of Southern California so man there was a poster that was up in our School of Architecture that advertised this competition. It was sponsored by The Container Corporation of America which made a lot of cardboard boxes. So by container they didn't mean like container ships or container trucks they meant cardboard boxes and they had actually done some pretty remarkable work hiring graphic artists to do work for them and they had a very good reputation in that area. This competition was to design a recycling symbol for use on their products that were recyclable or had been recycled and it was meant to be paper products because that's what they dealt with. Plastics weren't used nearly as extensively as they are now for packaging and so I saw that and I thought well this is something I could do you know it's not going to take a lot of equipment or a lot of money or any assistance I don't need to be on a team. I could probably do this all by myself and so I did I came up

¹ Nicole Robertson is the Founder and CEO of Swap Society

with several ideas that were all very similar I submitted them all just to maximize my chances and they selected one of them and that essentially is the symbol that you see now. Preparation behind your design. I mean obviously it's iconic today and everybody sees it everywhere. Tell us a bit about the inspiration behind the design all right [Gabby to Nicole just share my screen] this was this is coming from a little show that I put together a couple of years ago but it has all the basic information about just that question and I won't go into all of this I won't repeat things but one thing that had just happened and that was on a lot of people's minds really a lot of people I think was this book that Rachel Carson had written a few years earlier [1962] called *Silent Spring* and it was I think that probably did more than anything else in that period to make people aware of how fragile the environment is and how easily man can damage it mankind can damage it. So I had not read this book but I was very much aware about it and about the basic things that it talked about so that was in my mind the other thing is that Earth Day was being discussed. The first Earth Day was going to be in 1970 and this is and the company The Container Corporation wanted to merge the announcement of their this new recycling symbol with Earth Day and so that again that was all of these things were quite topical I mean things like this. I think would kind of just come and go unnoticed today but back then people actually you know it was there was news cartoonist² from the *Los Angeles Free Press* had designed this ecology symbol and so everybody was familiar with that was for ecology in general and so that was kind of in the back of my mind definitely. I mentioned that this or printed media I think again was you have to remember this was over 50 years ago so the printed media was much more important than I think and the idea of having posters and having things printed on posters was still very important. That's how you know I was made aware of this competition that was being held. It wasn't on TV it wasn't on social media it was on a poster that was that was hung in the school and so and then and graphics are so important to posters and again it was kind of this way of handling information so that you can get a lot of information across after grabbing somebody's attention and that was something that we had discussed in school a lot too how to how best to do that there were limitations there weren't really there wasn't much in the way of computer graphics at the time so everything was really hand-drawn and that's what I had to work with. I had tools like the ones that are shown here and I knew that that was going to I mean I was just taken for granted that that's how that's how this symbol would be developed using those technical drawing tools in a school that I went to at USC at that time the Bauhaus was like the model for design all of the instructors that I had were very familiar with the Bauhaus and the principles that were taught there and some of the staff at the School of Architecture had actually attended the Bauhaus or knew had worked with some of the people who had been in the Bauhaus. Bucky Fuller Buckminster Fuller was very active at this point his idea of spaceship earth was very was current and people were talking about that the fact that we've only got one planet and it's a closed system and we can't go destroying things without rebuilding things and expect the planet to survive this was it seems strange now but back then it was it was forward thinking at that time hippie style graphics were very important again using posters primarily to advertise events, rock concerts and so forth and this guy Wes Wilson³ that you see down in the corner was one of the most active and one of the most sought-after graphic artists I think for you know the psychedelic style that was used for these rock concert posters paper the symbol was meant to be used for recycled or recyclable paper the thing that brought to my mind was a field trip that I took with my class in elementary school to a printing press and I just remember it being so fascinated by the movement and form of these big rolls of paper which were actually being fed into printing presses. I didn't really have anything to do with recycling but presumably when paper is manufactured some of this type of movement on rollers and would be happening also and so that was very much foremost in my mind. When I was thinking about how to how to show the concept of recycling with the graphic symbol very specifically the Woolmark which had just recently been designed by this graphic artist [Franco Grignani] was one that I admired a great deal and I wouldn't say that it that I was copied it there that I lifted too much from it but it was something that was in the back of my mind as a symbol that was

² Ron Cobb was a news cartoonist for the Los Angeles Free Press who designed the ecology symbol

³ Robert Wesley Wilson was an American artist and one of the leading designers of psychedelic posters

abstract in a way but because of that abstractness it carried a lot of information. I thought I mean to me this looks like a skein of wool and I just I felt that as a symbol that worked very well the Möbius strip. Another thing that I had learned in grade school just kind of by happenstance was the concept of a Möbius strip which was first described by this mathematician Mr Möbius. Basically it's a flat strip of paper that is twisted once and then joined and in the by doing this there's only one surface on this object there aren't two sides like a sheet of paper because the one side is feeds into the next. This little poem was how I found out about it. For some reason I had gotten my hands on in the school library I guess and a book of scientific scientific poems and so this little bit of doggerel here I just was fascinated by it. For those of you who are listening and not watching the video on YouTube the poem is Hickory Dockery Dick, the mouse on the Möbius strip, the strip revolved, the mouse dissolved in a Chrono dimensional skip. I didn't know what a Möbius strip was but I looked it up and I didn't know what a Chrono dimensional skip was and probably didn't figure that out for a while but just the idea that that there was such a thing was fascinating to me. I used that then because the idea of recycling is something that's continuous that the material may morph from one form to another but it's always there it's you don't really destroy it turns back on itself and that was also on my mind. What is a Chrono dimensional skip? Basically it's you know space time so it's a space-time skip a space time gap but it doesn't I mean the poem doesn't really mean anything at all it's just kind of like an abstract thought you know that because of the strange properties of a Möbius strip maybe if it moved and if something was on it it might disappear because there's because of this fact that there's only one side to it if somehow it might go into another dimension because it wasn't able to okay or it went to the other side which doesn't exist I don't know but it was. I just was always fascinated by this and of course there was a little illustration that went with this that showed a mouse on the strip. So it sounds like there were a lot of different artistic influences that kind of got you going. How long did it take you do you remember how long how much time did you spend working on your drafts and your designs? I like to so that I don't so I don't make it sound too trivial I probably exaggerate toward a longer period of time than it actually took I'd say a couple of days. I'd say the main idea I had pretty much before I sat down to my drafting table with those drafting instruments and started drawing it up. I'd say the main part of it was probably done in an afternoon but I kept tweaking it and I made different as I mentioned earlier. I made different versions of basically the same symbol and each one got more and more simplified more and more abstract closer and closer to just the line drawing that you see now and that's I submitted. Some of the others that had a little more detail but it was in the end it was the the simplest one that was chosen. The symbol had to be recognizable if it was reproduced at a quarter of an inch. That was one of the rules of course the simpler it was the easier it was to reproduce and have it be legible and it was for a contest so you did win some money back then. Back then it was what I won was two thousand dollars. It doesn't seem like very much although I mean I think even now I think a student would probably be happy to get two thousand dollars for designing something when they were still in school and also 2000 dollars. I mean the value of two thousand dollars isn't worth much now but this you know in 1970s here in 2023 dollars we'd probably be talking about somewhere between seven and ten thousand dollars so it wasn't as trivial as it might seem now. So that must have been very exciting. I assume at that time you had no idea what the symbol would ultimately become and how widespread it would become. You are absolutely right in fact I just assumed that it would come and go you know that maybe the company would use it for a while and promote it but then when the whole kind of environmental ecological [Music] idea blew over then it wouldn't be very useful anymore and I really did I really did think that this whole idea of environmentalism would you know it was not going to be something you know that lasted a long time. I think I thought it was kind of a fad frankly so well I yeah I was happy to have won the prize I was happy but I mean I wasn't ecstatic. I think you know when you're young you just you just think well of course I want it yeah and you know I wouldn't feel the same way now of course. I'd feel very privileged that that my design was chosen first over others and but then I don't know I wasn't was very happy I was happy that I got the money it didn't occur to me though that it would be a symbol it would be around for a long time that probably sounds to me it makes me seem very arrogant but it's but I think when you're younger you are kind of arrogant yeah I know I think that's real hopefully I've outgrown

that but back then that's the way it was yeah no I mean I think that for a college student yeah I mean that's part of how we get through those years right you have to have some kind of self-confidence yeah especially in design school where you know every week practically you've got some kind of critique of your work going on and so you have to kind of you have to kind of get in the mood. Well you know it doesn't really matter what they think I know it's good so it's they can tell me how terrible it is and it's still what I came up with and I like it and you do I think especially. I don't know what it's like nowadays maybe it's different but back then you really had to kind of be in that frame of mind when it came to your work and how you felt about it yeah well I think that even just watching there's so many reality shows out there of different contests for potters and glass blowers and fashion designers and you know bakers or whatever and I think that judges often demand that of the contestants right it's like they might pick it apart and not like it but they want to hear the contestant back it up and explain why. You know defend their work and explain why they think it's great and so I think that that's still true today. When did the symbol start to be used beyond the Container Corporations paper products do you recall when that started happening and when did you become aware of this kind of mass adoption of it? The first couple of years I very rarely saw it. I saw it on the obviously companies out other than the Container Corporation knew of it and did use it. I remember the statements that I got the envelopes that contain the statements from my Bank America account had the recycling symbol on it and we produced at a quarter of an inch and that's about really the only place that I remembered seeing it for a couple of years. At least it wasn't long after that that I got a job overseas and so I was away outside of the country for a while. It was in the Middle East and where at the time again things were very different and not very developed and so I didn't I didn't see things that would have the recycling symbol on it and so you know I went for several years without seeing it. One thing that I did though when I was working over there for summer vacation I would always come back to the States by that time I'd kind of developed a base in Baltimore and so I'd come back here but in coming back I'd stop in Europe which was kind of a nice perk from working overseas and on one of those trips I happened to choose Holland as the place that I wanted to visit and see and so I was in Amsterdam and I just walking through around that charming city through some other neighborhoods and I turned a corner and there in front of me were these three big recycling like igloo-shaped containers metal containers that were you know they probably were eight feet tall and they were like hemispheres with a place to to dump in recycling one for glass one for plastic one for paper. I think that in and of itself didn't really well actually didn't strike me that Amsterdam would that Holland would be so into recycling already that obviously they had systems developed for yeah or collecting recycling and taking it to the plants that recycle but when I turned that corner on those on each of those recycling bins. The recycling symbol had been reproduced and it was the size of a beach ball. I like to say and because of the tight streets and you know the proximity of the buildings I was right on top of a when I turned the corner so this big image of the recycling symbol was just right in front of my face that probably struck me more than when I learned that I had won the competition. To know that that it was being used some place outside of the United States that it must be taken seriously there and yeah and that was much bigger than a quarter of an inch and it still worked so that was sometime in the 70s yeah probably mid to late 70s. I imagine that must have been kind of invigorating and exciting right to just stumble upon your design in a completely different context than what you had designed it for and completely not expecting it either. Yeah that was that made an impression on me and you went on to become an architect you were in architecture school when you know when you entered the contest was there ever a moment when you thought oh should I be a graphic designer yeah sometimes but I there was never I was always more interested in architecture and you know graphics can be an important part of the architectural profession of course but I was interested in many things in addition to to to graphic design and so I didn't really have the idea that I had made the wrong decision and that really I should have been a graphic artist or a graphics designer so but as strange as it may seem I I've done things again that I myself think are important in architecture and particularly in planning and yet none of that work has the people are not aware of that work nearly as much anywhere nearly as much as the recycling symbol so what you I guess what you want to do and what you're interested in and what you enjoy doing is not necessarily what pays the bills or all the recycling symbol didn't pay

any bills it's so strange you can really be passionate about something and it and other people don't appreciate your or at least not consciously appreciate maybe what you what you're doing so that that is that's enough to keep you humbled I used to I always used to preface I would I still do sometimes I don't understand why people when they are recognized for some important achievement say that I'm really humbled why I mean it's like if you're defeated yeah then you'd be humbled I think what they're trying to say I would like to think what they're trying to say is that I'm really happy about this. I'm really proud about this I'm glad that that people like what I've done but I would like to be humble in the reception of that recognition so but that's not the same as being humble to I don't know it's hard for me to explain maybe but I just it kind of makes me wonder when people are recognized for something and they say well this really humbles me hmm yeah so I'd like to think I accept things with humility but I'm I don't understand it when people say they're humbled by by an achievement yeah hmm yeah that's interesting to think about sometimes language evolves so much that people will use a word in a way that isn't what it technically means but it starts to change its meaning or so on which I think can also happen with design like the recycling symbol I mean it has been some people change it a little bit and make it look different but you some people use it in ways that have nothing to do with recycling or you know people sometimes use it as a broader stamp of like this is eco-friendly or or whatever you know it's it's really and I should mention for anyone who's watching or listening that the symbol did become a part of the public domain I don't recall exactly when that happened but it did become it became so used so much that it just it had to become a part of the public domain because it was just the usage of it was so widespread I'm a little confused about my that myself I wish I could come across a copy of that original poster because that had of course all the rules about the competition and the rule that I seem to remember was that it would automatically be given over to the public domain oh but apparently it wasn't apparently I don't you know either I misunderstood or somebody went back on their word but they I think it was The Container Corporation was actually charging a very small fee for for using the symbol and it's amazing that anybody used it under those circumstances but that my understanding is that there was a court case then maybe in the late 70s mid to late 70s about you know that that since it was used so extensively it de facto was part of the public domain and it needed to be recognized as part of the public domain but there was if there was some kind of a class action suit from what I understand and yeah I wish I knew more about it okay and everything and I think that I mean from my perspective I think you know that is it's an incredible design and I think that the design itself it it was so successful right it communicated so much information so quickly to your point at all different scales from you know your bank statement to these giant domes in Holland and so I think that you know that's gotta I mean if I had designed that I would feel really proud about that so I would asse that you have some pride in that has it how has that impacted your life I mean it seems from from my memory of the of the story that it was kind of a not a lot of people knew about you specifically writer about the story behind it and that was kind of something that emerged later was it something you talk about at cocktail parties. I try not to because there are a lot of interesting things to talk about at cocktail parties. I'm really more interested in finding out about other people at cocktail parties but I think part of the fact part of the reason was that since I was overseas the connection between me and as a person and the designer of the recycling symbol was kind of lost I was over there for seven years. I think off and on coming back and so yeah that was kind of lost in fact somebody else was taking credit for it and I came back and just continued with my work I didn't realize what had transpired while I was overseas I didn't had not heard about the class action suit I had not heard that somebody else was taking credit for it. I just you know I was I was working at a company here in Baltimore and suddenly at one day out of the blue I got a telephone call from a nice lady Penny Jones in New Jersey and she worked for the Morris County Recycling agency Department and she had been trying to locate the designer of the recycling symbol and apparently had not been not been easy but then she found me [c. 1999] and she somehow got my telephone number and I guess by that time there was such a thing as LinkedIn⁴ but I don't think at the time I had mentioned anything on my LinkedIn profile about designing the recycling symbol but she was able to contact me through LinkedIn. I think that's how she found out and then she was very excited to have found me

⁴ No. LinkedIn was launched on May 5, 2003 (by Reid Hoffman and Eric Ly).

and I mean I didn't realize I was lost but she was just yours she was excited and she wrote an article in a trade magazine about you know the magazine was about recycling and she wrote an article about me and had got in that in that magazine and that was really that was quite a bit later that may have been in the late 80s or early 90s and that was when it became more generally known that I designed the symbol but if it weren't for her I might still just be plugging away or retired without anybody knowing that I that yes the designer is alive and well and living in Baltimore [Laughter] well and we cross paths you know I think it was 2010 for [Music] a project that I was working on where you know you know I had sought you out as well which is how we met originally but it's cool I mean I think that ever since I've known you even I feel like I've seen some magazine articles that have come out and different different interviews and I just I think it's fun to see from my perspective because it is such an iconic design and symbol and something that's become such a big part of pretty much everyone's life everywhere in the whole world I mean everybody knows the symbol and so I love seeing the accolades. I think it's cool I think I probably over all those years I think I I hope except for my little tirade about humble I hope I've become a little bit better about talking about it I was so I was a shy kid to begin with and I had a hard time knowing really how to talk about the symbol and my relationship to it our the symbol and my lives kind of went in different directions for a couple of decades it was we were like a married couple that separated and so it had a life of its own and so did I and it's it's just interesting that you know maybe 20 or 30 years after the fact you know we're more closely related the symbol and I now one interesting thing I've found is that yes I you know every once in a while they'll they'll be something in a newspaper or a magazine or something or somebody will ask for an interview and I am always very grateful for the opportunity to talk about this anymore and but one thing that I never experienced until the last couple of years is fan mail who knew I mean somehow people usually young people are kids find a way to send me a letter and they will they'll send me a fan letter they very often send an image of the recycling symbol and asked me to sign it and send it back there's always a self-addressed envelope inside so I don't know I don't have to pay anything but that's really been that's heartwarming. I mean I really I think almost more than anything else I appreciate that when a letter shows up in my in my mailbox it's not like you know I'm inundated with it but it happens just often enough to give me a little boost usually oh it's so fun. I remember you know we became Facebook friends you know this was a long time ago but so we're connected and I remember we were chatting about something on Facebook and I have a private account over there but friends can see friends comments kind of a thing you know or whatever and I remember somebody said the Gary Anderson and I was like yes that's the Gary Anderson. I mean it still seems remarkable to me that somebody would know my name even recycling nerds environmental nerds yeah certainly not everybody knows my name although it was on *Jeopardy*⁵ once not *Jeopardy* [Laughter] I think I probably would have been I mean my I have the mind of a 75-year-old which just doesn't require doesn't recall things like it used to so I'm not sure I'd be very good on *Jeopardy* I think I may have been at one time but not now so yeah a while ago that was I won't say the answer that was on *Jeopardy* it has to be a question that was the question my I think that's the way I work my name was the question who was Gary Anderson was the was the appropriate response for did anybody get it I think they did I didn't happen to be watching it but I it was they have all those things online so well I guess I did go back and watch it but I don't recall I think they did I think somebody got it impressive I don't have a memory like that I mean I don't retain stats and facts and names like that I know some people have those brains mine yeah even if I knew something once like if I were on *Jeopardy* I would probably not recall it in that moment on that show I know I know that feeling Okay so you know we always like to bring it back to clothing a little bit because you know we're we're focused on sustainability in general here on the show but also sustainable fashion in particular and even if you don't consider yourself a fashion lover you wear clothes obviously we all do to make choices every morning about what to put on have a favorite piece of clothing in your wardrobe and if so what is it and what do you love about it I'm wearing it it's well actually both of these things I like a lot and there's

⁵ Jeopardy! is an American television game show created by Merv Griffin. The show is a quiz competition that reverses the traditional question-and-answer format of many quiz shows in which three contestants try to win money as they are quizzed on all types of trivia.

another thing that's close to this but not exactly it so here's the whole scoop so this is a linen jacket it's from H&M and I've just grown to love linen it takes so few chemicals to produce it it's just basically water and the flax fiber and yeah it's it's long lasting it's fun to wear it can the the flax fiber can be recycled also without using again without using a lot of chemicals so although I'm not aware of any recycled flax that or linen that I have in my wardrobe I do enjoy enjoy wearing it the shirt is a hand-me-down it's a Tommy Bahama⁶ shirt and I never buy Tommy Bahama but since a friend offered this to me I thought sure I kind of like the the the color I've always liked blue it's got it's got synthetic fiber in it but it's soft and wonderful and I figure well why not I mean if I'm wearing it twice that's better than just throwing it out and it's already been manufactured and somebody's already bought it and worn it so that's probably better than just throwing it away so I yes it's it's my way of recycling and then this t-shirt the a while ago someone contacted me from a company called Everlane⁷ and they recycle clothing and I guess not clothing but fabric and so they sent me they asked if it would be okay if they produced a t-shirt with that famous image on it even I still had hair and I said sure it's in the public domain as far as I'm concerned all of that stuff is in the public domain because it was in a press release from Container Corporation and the press release said for immediate distribution or promulgation or whatever and I just I took that to mean that anybody could use any of those photos or images that they had in the press release so that that image that you see sometimes is was part of that press release package so I tell anybody I'm a lawyer but I tell them to sure go ahead and use it and so they printed that on on t-shirts and then they sent me one and this is not it because it's well I my I have some nieces and nephews that were very interested in it and I sent them the shirts that I received but apparently cotton is not as easy to recycle as linen but it is it is recyclable so so I knew you were going to ask that question so I so I just thought well rather than talk about it why not just wear it I love that a lot of people do that really good days what's inspiring me well probably not much to do with design I just have really gotten into genealogy and it's just so fascinating to me and with all of these apps that are available which are not foolproof but they're to me it's just very intriguing and fun to look into where I came from. I mean I have roots from all over and just learning whatever there is to glean about these ancestors how they lived where they came from has been very fascinating and so last year I went to Sweden to meet some people that I had actually met that was some relatives whom I had actually met through my genealogical work and this summer I'm thinking very seriously although I haven't bought the tickets yet to go to Denmark and and Northern Germany and I don't I don't know I'm almost positive there must be some living relatives fourth or fifth cousins there but I haven't been able to identify any but just I have been able to identify where these people lived and even some of the houses where they lived so yeah I would just kind of like to go and look that up I get into that sometimes too I get in a mood and then I'll dive really deep into family history and all of that and and I appreciate that I feel the same way it's fascinating and it's kind of fun yeah and you meet interesting people also it turns out that my fourth cousin in Stockholm is a theatrical director and who knew he knew he knew Ingmar Bergman⁸ so it just it's so fun fascinating stuff so I know we talked about kind of the birth of the ecology movement in the United States and the original Earth Day and what things were like back then which you know obviously people talking about how humans are impacting the planet has been going on for a long time evidence has come forth that the fossil fuel companies knew what they were doing decades ago but continued to do it for profit so you know there's been a lot of push and pull in this area you know for many decades which you've you know been around to kind of see this evolution but today I feel like and and and I know that I have experienced this and a lot of people that I know have experienced this a bit of climate anxiety right this notion that you see all of these scientific reports that are coming out like the most recent IPCC⁹ report

⁶ Tommy Bahama Group Inc. trading as Tommy Bahama, owned by parent company Oxford Industries is an American multinational lifestyle brand, manufacturer of casual men's and women's sportswear and activewear, denim, swimwear, accessories, footwear and a complete home furnishings collection (Unknown to the UK)

⁷ Everlane is an American clothing retailer that sells primarily online.

⁸ Ernst Ingmar Bergman was a Swedish film and theatre director and screenwriter.

⁹ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change.

that say we aren't making enough changes fast enough you know there are these dire warnings going out there which impact me I know that I have my own fair share of climate anxiety here and there and part of what I love to hear from people is are you experiencing any climate anxiety and what's making you feel hopeful about the future yeah I have to say I am I wasn't a big recycler until actually it was after I was discovered by Penny Jones I've been since she was you know she actually dealt with recycling day in and day out that kind of made me think twice about the way my approach to waste and recycling but yeah beyond that yeah I do have some climate anxiety and recycling isn't going to be the answer to all of it either I mean there's only so much that recycling can do but I'd say what makes me optimistic is just having been around since the 70s and to see how much most people's attitudes have changed about sustainability and the environment and to know that we have made some really significant strides like you I mean what I'm hearing is telling me that it the greatest those strides may have been they're not enough and you know the rate at which we change our approach to sustainability really has to increase so I yeah it gives me some anxiety but I think again and looking forward can be scary but looking backward it can be maybe too comforting but recognizing what has changed from the 1970s to now makes me hopeful that we will be able to step up the pace at which we approach solutions to climate change. I think you know I mean we talk about 1970s as though nobody even thought about it before then but of course I mean there have been people who have been seriously concerned well before the 70s and I so I think people will continue to be I was completely wrong about environmentalism it's just being a passing fad and so I you know just that in itself gives me hope that it wasn't just a flash in the pan and that people by and large are responsible and are and do are concerned about the environment and you know the future of our planet so I don't know if that's enough to make me feel good about what's happening but it gives me some optimism well and I think that looking back can be a guide for appreciating how much progress we have made I think that that's absolutely legitimate and it's a good reminder to say okay well yes we still have more work to do but we've also already accomplished a lot there is much more widespread awareness about sustainability and the need for sustainability and our practices around the world and so yeah hopefully more and more people get on board and we'll be able to you know make enough changes that we can at least you know keep the planet habitable for humans that would be nice yeah it would be nice. It has been such an absolute pleasure chatting with you if somebody wanted to find you or reach out to you do you have an Instagram or anything like that. I'm on LinkedIn I don't use it nearly as much as I used to well. Thank you so much for taking time to talk with us and sharing the history of this quilt that you designed and it's such a pleasure to know you and also just to see your face and catch up a little bit with you and I hope you have a beautiful rest of your day well too and I know your son had a little mishap and I hope that he gets better real soon thank you. Thank you I think he'll be back to normal in a jiffy thanks so much [Music]