

“THE MEDITERRANEAN WAVE ”

by Kussay Chi Chakly, Syrian fashion designer, living in Berlin since 2014

When I reached Berlin and moved to the “Ausländerheim” I had a small bag that had very few of my favourite clothes, my laptop, and a toothbrush.

There they had a room full of charity clothes, and much more came each week and piled up week after week.

People would pick some, but most of it just stayed there.

There I realised how big the textiles waste problem is in the first world! which started a spark between me and “recycling fashion”.

I was like everyone else looking for whatever I needed, but most of what I got was not really matching my flashy style.

So I would wait till everyone had picked what they wanted, then I would take some garments that had a nice colour or texture or were unwearable, cut them and patch them on plain T-Shirts, using my skills in evening wear couture.

This piece THE MEDITERRANEAN WAVE is one of these T-Shirts.

The T-shirt and all other materials are from what I found in the “Heim”, inspired by the stories of the countless people who have drowned trying to get to Europe since 2014.

It made me think how lucky we all are to be already here.

It made me think how far human beings are willing to go, just to feel safe and to live with dignity.

Even if they might end up in the bottom of the sea.

I wanted to tell them that you matter and I know why you did it.

I wanted to tell them that you are very brave and I will always remember you.

I wanted to tell them I'm sorry I couldn't do much to help you.

And of course I wanted one more flashy t-shirt in my collection :)

The artwork was inspired from the wave by the Japanese artist Hokusai, and the black hand represents all the African refugees.