The Mending Jacket was made with sustainable resources. The fabric is repurposed old curtains, and the dyes are natural: indigo, madder, weld, and rust. After working on an indigo farm this summer, I became concerned with the impacts on our environment by the growing use and acceptance of fast fashion. Fast fashion is the system many clothing retailers run their business by. Designs move quickly from the drawing board, through the factories, to the stores, and then to the consumer. Due to the speed of this process many compromises are made at the expense of sustainability. Hazardous chemicals are used in the dyes, synthetic fibers are preferred over natural ones, and the clothes are worn for a short period of time. When new designs hit the stores, consumers purchase these cheaper clothing items, and the clothing they already owned ends up as waste. This is the circle of fast fashion.

As I worked with natural dye processes this summer, I realized that not only are natural dyes environmentally safe, they are also beautiful. The Mending Jacket was created to showcase these aesthetic attributes of plant based dyes, in order to start a conversation about the value of sustainable fashion, and to direct people to companies that are aware of textile waste, and make sustainable choices accordingly.

One way to take a stand against fast fashion is to mend the clothing you own, instead of throwing it away. I created holes in the jacket made of repurposed curtains that were mended with naturally dyed fabric, to express how the textile industry has wounded the environment, but through awareness, sustainable choices, and simple human actions, these wounds can be healed.