

NordiCHI 2022 Critiques (Pictorial)

Visible Mending

Shunying An Blevis & Eli Blevis

Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering

Indiana University Bloomington USA

{san, eblevis}@indiana.edu

Accessibility

The texts on these slides is the same as the text we will speak. The images are fully described in the text. The slides are designed to work properly with PDF “read aloud.”

Motivation

Can making repair visible in the physical world and virtual worlds promote sustainability?

Method

We present carefully curated and edited photographs by the authors to consider the implications of making repair visible rather than invisible. Our photographs are critical in the sense of “things that make you think.”

The collection balances examples of non-digital and digital artifacts.

Note One

Here, we present only the gallery of images and explanations relating to visible mending. The pictorial includes additional commentary and discussions of related work.

Note Two

Not certain how much time is allotted to this presentation, these slides are available here:

<https://eli.informatics.indiana.edu/indexfull.html#neworawarded>

Visible Mending in Nature

Visible Mending in Nature

The authors' lithops plant was left outdoors where it was partially eaten by birds.



Visible Mending in Nature

The damage can be seen in the base of the plant with visible scarring. Rescued and set indoors, new growth emerges from the top.



Visible Mending in Nature

Life in the natural world features many capacities for repair and regrowth.



Visible Mending as Re-Fashioning

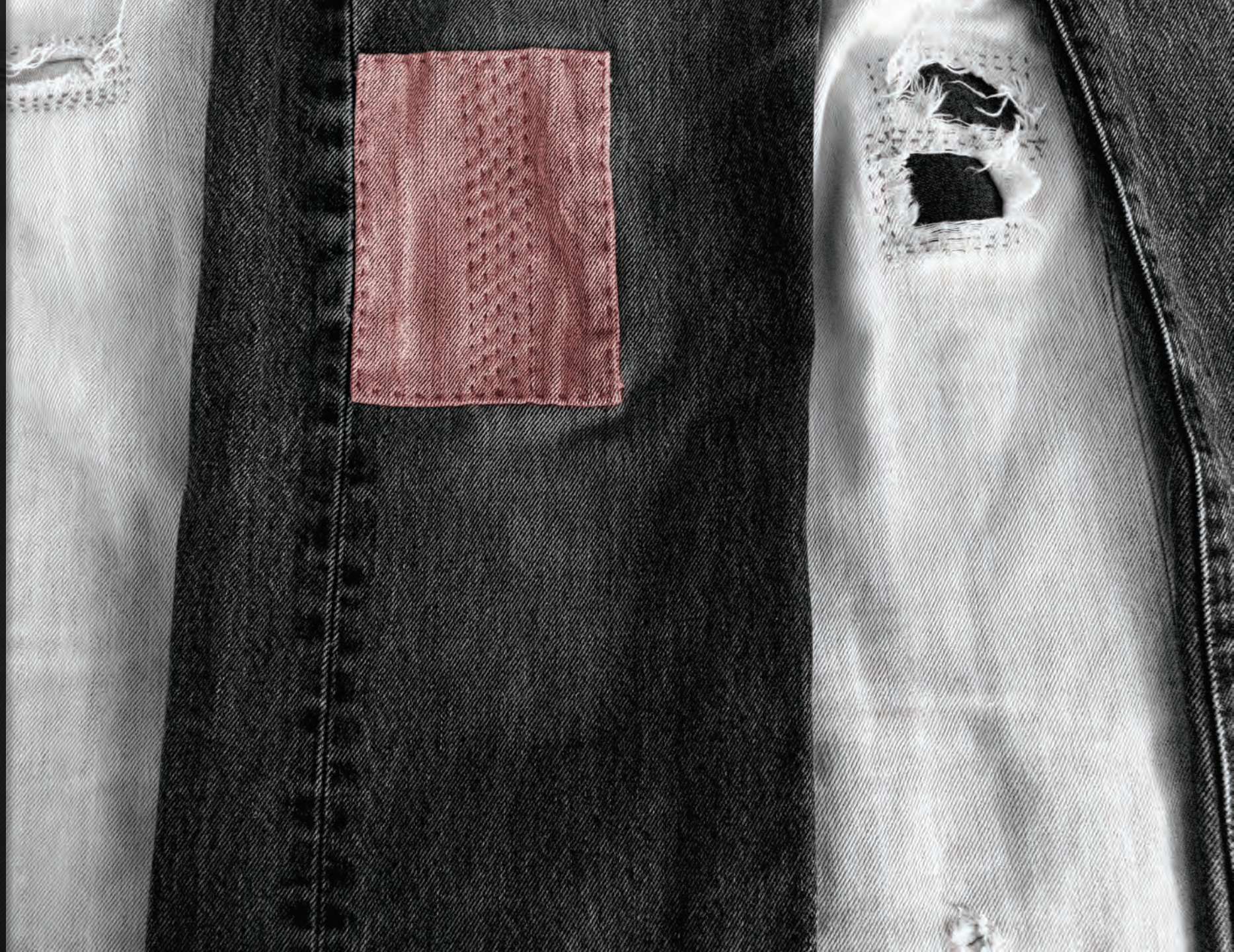
Visible Mending as Re-Fashioning

Nowadays, clothing items like jeans may be purchased new distressed or pre-torn as a fashion of faux-patina. The light-coloured jeans pictured here were purchased pre-torn. With wear, the pre-torn holes became too large. The patches are a form of re-fashioning.



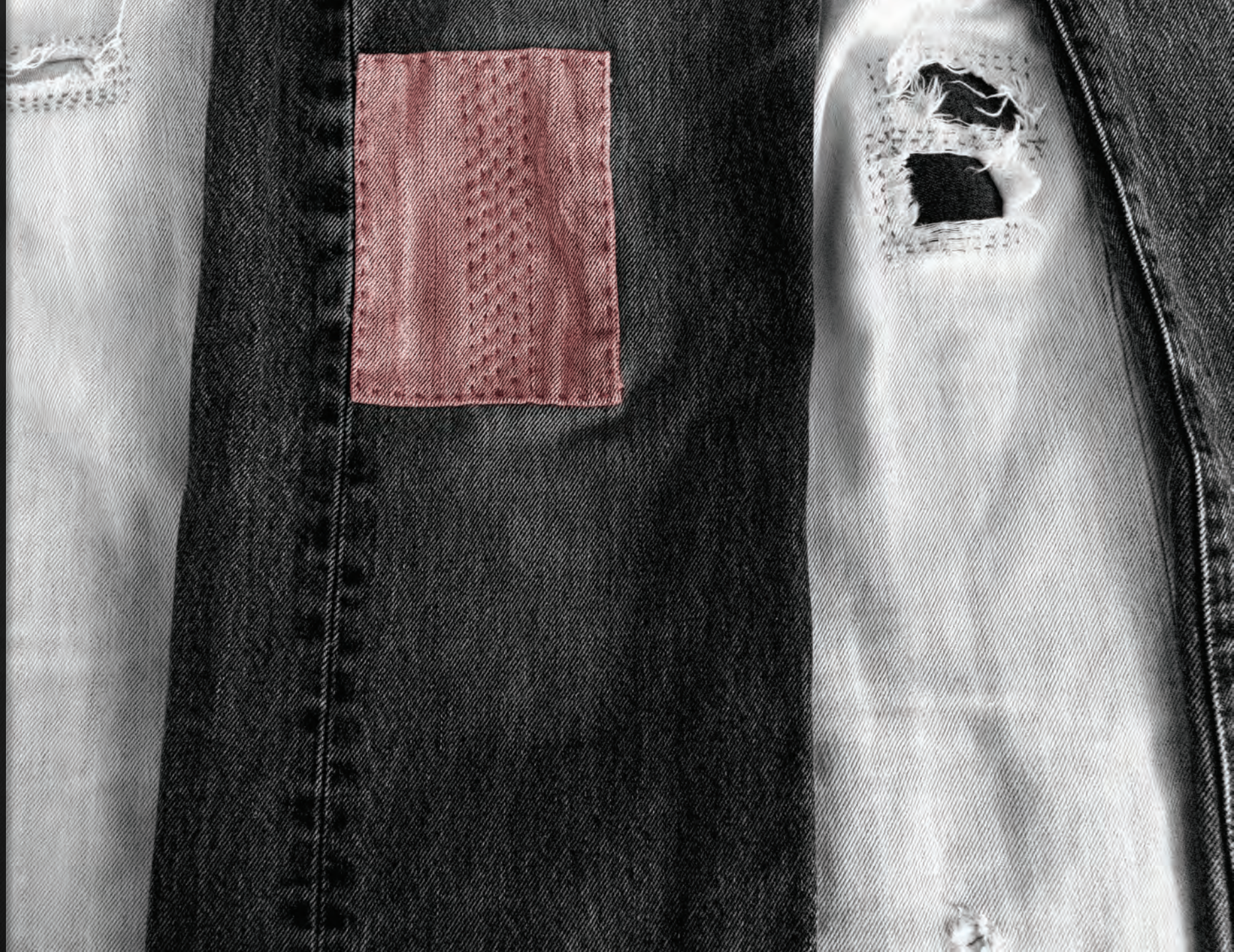
Visible Mending as Re-Fashioning

The dark-coloured jeans pictured here are patched as a matter of re-fashioning by the authors. The stitching is deliberately decorative as a way of reclaiming durability and proclaiming repair as an aesthetic of frugality and fashion.



Visible Mending as Re-Fashioning

The notion of making mending visible as a matter of re-fashioning does not map onto the digital world in an obvious way. By selecting this photograph for this pictorial, we are raising the question of what would visible mending mean in the digital world.



Visible Invisible Mending

Visible Invisible Mending

Pictured here is another pair of jeans with a tear that arose naturally from use over time. Here the repair stitches are deliberately as subtle and small as possible as an attempt to make the mending invisible. In this case, the repair was made by one of the authors' parents. For them, trying to make the repair invisible is a matter of association of torn clothing with poverty.



Visible Invisible Mending

For us, the mending is more a matter of celebration. This repair preserves the torn patina while preventing further tearing. The colouration in the photograph makes the repair more visible than it actually is. The photograph's post processing makes invisible mending visible.



Locked Out of Mending by Obsolescence

Locked Out of Mending by Obsolescence

The installed car phone in this
twenty-seven-year-old car still
works, but service is unavailable.



Locked Out of Mending by Obsolescence

A onetime object of great luxury,
it nowadays serves only as a
holder for a smart phone.



Mending by Modular Addition

Mending by Modular Addition

Another old car—a thirteen-year-old car—is updated by the addition of a satellite navigation device. The box on the power cable is a receiver for a backup camera that is also a form of update.



Mending by Modular Addition

Updating old things to integrate new technologies is a form of mending.



Mending as Preservation

Mending as Preservation

An analog radio tuner is still in service as part of a system of components in an audiophile high-fidelity system. Listening to the radio in an age of streaming content may seem anachronistic to many nowadays. Notwithstanding, there are many benefits to a broadcast model when compared with streaming.



Mending as Preservation

Unlike the installed car phone pictured above, broadcast radio is still very much available. Will broadcast radio become obsolete? Probably not. At the very least, broadcast radio provides a level of resilience in the event of loss of internet connectivity.



Mending as Integration

Mending as Integration

A digital music streamer component allows an audio system to be updated to access content on-demand. The larger part of this content newly available would not be wholly available with an analog radio tuner. In the photograph, the signal is set to the BBC World Service News internet radio station. This signal is broadcast model in the sense that it is not on-demand, even though it is still streaming. That is, to listen to the 8:00 PM news listeners need to “tune in” at 8:00 PM just like the analog counterpart.



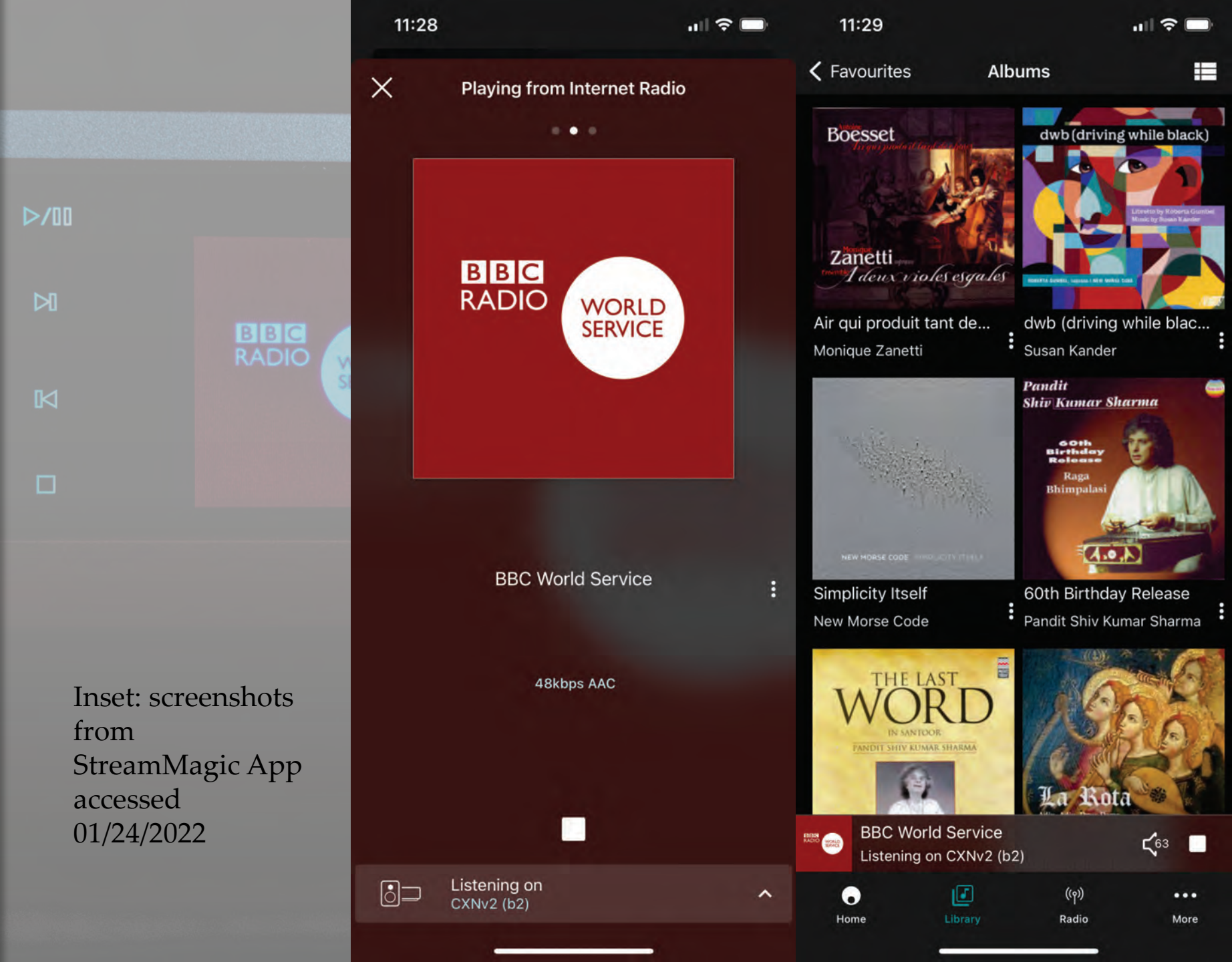
Mending as Integration

The integrated audio system is augmented by the digital music streamer in a number of ways. Coupled with an App and subscription service, the system supports access to a variety of content both broadcast and streaming at a scale never before possible. The audiophile qualities of the older audio system components is preserved. In this system (not pictured), some of these components are 60 years old. The sound is impressive—but that is difficult to show in a pictorial.



Mending as Integration

The integrated audio system also permutes listener experience in ways that are not so clearly improvement. The streamer can be used without an App or subscription service as an internet radio, but it requires these to fully enjoy the system. The quality of the physical controls on the streamer are poor compared with the analog radio tuner pictured above. Indeed, the quality of the sound from the analog radio tuner is also superior to the streamer, but just in the case that the local broadcast signal is strong. Finally, the energy use of on-demand streaming compared to scheduled broadcast is an additional environmental cost.



Inset: screenshots from StreamMagic App accessed 01/24/2022

Shashiko Embroidery

Shashiko Embroidery

Shashiko embroidery (e.g., Hayes [4]) is a Japanese practice of visible mending that has evolved into an Art form.



Shashiko Embroidery

In this case, the embroidered fabric is a gift to the authors from a friend, Shaowen Bardzell, who is an aficionado of the form.



Mending as Decorative Re-fashioning

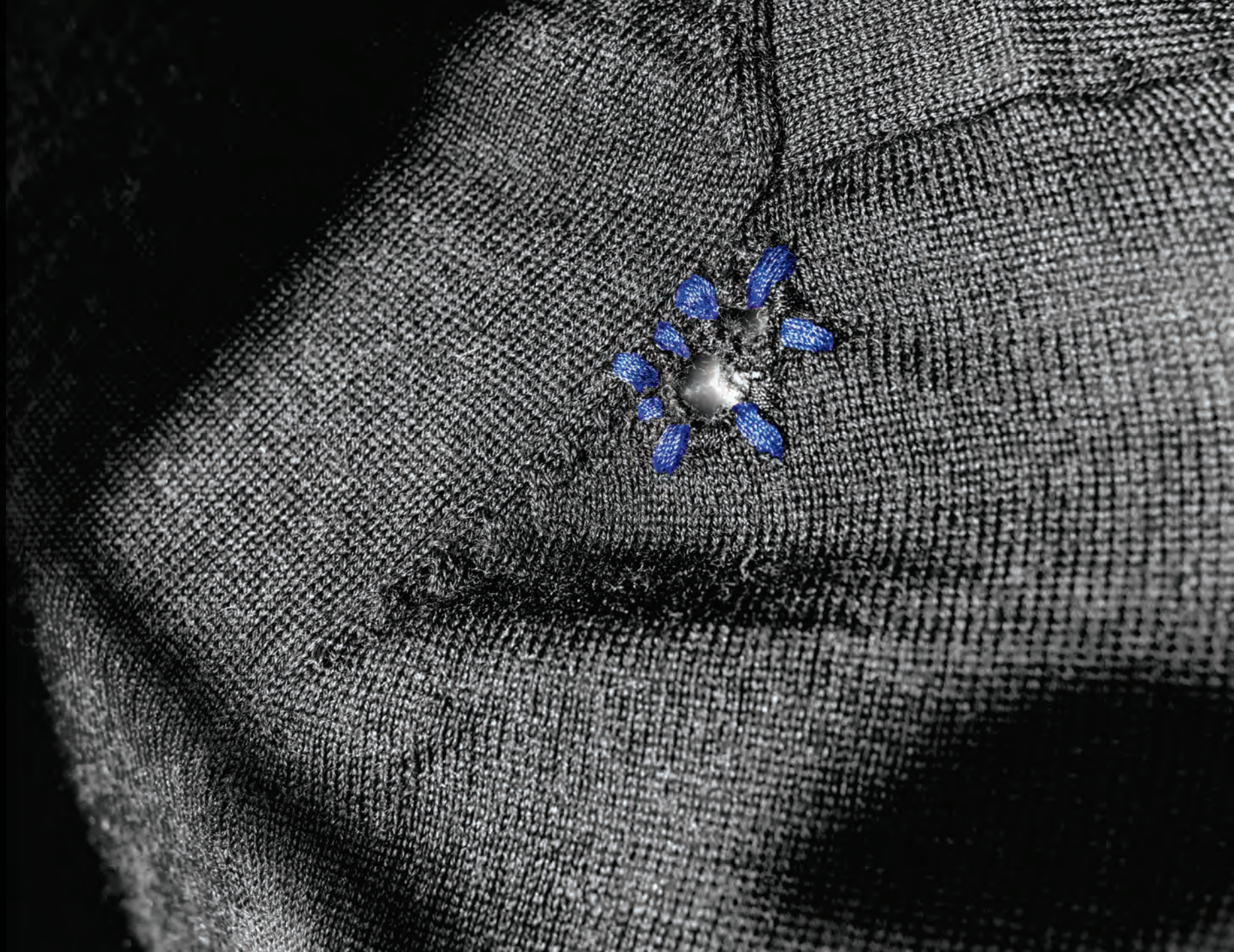
Mending as Decorative Re-fashioning

A hole in a sweater is taken by the authors as an opportunity to repair rather than a need to discard.



Mending as Decorative Re-fashioning

The colour of the threads is in fact similar to the colour of the sweater. They are contrasted here as a matter of editorial photographic making. Although subtle, the repair is meant to add to the aesthetic of the sweater.



Mending as a Service

Mending as a Service

A customer shows newly repaired shoes at a shoe repair kiosk in a mall. Real world shoe repair shops are hard to find in many places nowadays.



Mending as a Service

Nevertheless, there are many online services that offer shoe repair. The inequality of access to these services in some or many locations is mended by these online services—a hopeful sign that the virtual world can participate and promote visible mending.



Mending as a Service

Inset: screenshot from
www.cobblersdirect.com
accessed 01/24/2022





[Quick Order](#)

 [Text Us: 512-871-8097](#)

[WOMENS REPAIRS](#) [MENS REPAIRS](#) [BAG & BELT REPAIR](#) [WATER DAMAGE](#) [SHOE CARE PRODUCTS](#) [ABOUT US](#) [SUPPORT](#)

SAVING MOTHER EARTH ONE SOLE AT A TIME

Online Shoe Repair by Mail

HIGH HEEL REPAIR

GET STARTED



Tak!

Thank you!

谢谢!