

## **Cover backside text TC#4**

Future's beneficial interconnectivity of craftsmanship and virtual spaces: This brochure brings together study projects, research papers, and theses from Hochschule Niederrhein, revealing how diverse the engagement with craft and new technologies has become.

At its core lies craftsmanship itself: natural fibres like hemp, kenaf, linen, and flax become textiles, furniture, and objects; automotive wool is upcycled into fashion; traditional techniques like the hand spindle sit alongside contemporary design - works rooted in patience, knowledge, and heritage.

Alongside this, digital approaches emerge: AI-driven design, VR/AR learning spaces, and cross design engineering between workshop and virtual environment - raising questions of ethics, sustainability, and technology's role in creative work.

The collection is enriched further by welcome addresses, interviews, impressions, and an excursion on "preserving craftsmanship" - locally and globally.

What emerges is not two separate worlds, but one continuous practice: the hand that spins thread and the mind that trains an algorithm, both shaping material with care and intention. Craftsmanship has always evolved alongside its tools, and today's results are no less rooted in tradition, no less human. What lies between hand and machine, workshop and screen, is not a gap to be closed, but a space to be explored.

***Between Craftsmanship and Virtual Space - that is where the future of design is being made.***

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Picture headline:

Nina Becker at the VR glasses Meta Quest, supported by Wilhelm-Lorch-Foundation Funding 2026, at the MXR Lab – Hochschule Niederrhein – University of Applied Sciences, Foto Wachs / Heise, 2026

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