MERIDIAN

Objects of Desire

The new craft of design

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April's design issue celebrates objects with a story. It visits workshops across three continents to examine the ethics of making, the beauty of repair and the future of the things we keep.

Design | Noor Rahman

The Craft of Repair

Designers are celebrating the mend, the patch and the visible scar

In a workshop in east London, a cracked porcelain bowl is being rejoined with a seam of gold. The repair is not hidden; it is the point. Ceramicist Yuki Tanabe calls it honest beauty, and her waiting list stretches into spring.

Her approach belongs to a wider movement that reframes repair as design. Furniture makers publish diagrams so owners can fix their own chairs. Clothing brands offer mending services for life. Even electronics firms, under regulatory pressure, are making devices easier to open.

Beauty in the scar

The aesthetic shift matters. For decades, products were designed to be replaced, their flaws concealed or ignored. Visible repair reverses this logic, turning a history of use into a mark of value.

Repair cafés, where volunteers help neighbours mend toasters and trousers, now number in the thousands worldwide. Organisers say the real product is not the fixed object but the conversation across the table.

> *“A thing that has been mended has been loved twice.”*

None of this makes new things obsolete. But it asks designers a different question at the start: not how will this look on day one, but how will it age, and who will be able to save it?

Thank you for reading Meridian.