

## **PURIFIED Launch the ABACA: the Breakthrough Zero Plastic Shoe Crafted with Leading Next-Generation Biomaterials**

*The ABACA – the world’s first shoe created with a Bananatex® upper and NFW’s PLIANT™ sole – is the debut shoe from PURIFIED, the new London-based brand championing a return to earth.*

**April 22, London:** Today, on World Earth Day, PURIFIED launch ABACA, the zero-plastic shoe designed to exist within the earth’s natural cycle. Following a four year research journey exploring materials from the Filipino highlands to the biotech labs of America, the London-based brand founded by designer, Will Verona, has created bionutral shoes proven to enrich soil at end of life.

Over 25 billion shoes are produced each year. Almost all unrecyclable - and destined to spend generations in landfill. PURIFIED’s debut shoe aims to address the environmental crisis perpetuated by the modern shoe industry, without sacrificing style or comfort. Crafted with the help of sustainable canvas cultivators, [Bananatex®](#), plastic-free pioneers, [NFW](#), and artisan shoemakers in Portugal - who co-developed a new glue-free binding system - the ABACA was designed with the entire product life cycle in mind.

The shoe’s upper material is made of **Bananatex®**, a textile canvas woven from fibres derived from Abaca plants; a type of banana plant native to the Philippines. Abaca plants are self-reliant, requiring neither watering nor the use of pesticides. Once harvested, fibres from their stalks are woven at source to create Bananatex®, a naturally durable, tough and water-resistant material with a luxury feel. **Bananatex®** is a Cradle to Cradle Gold Certified® material.

**PLIANT™** is a latex sole material produced by Natural Fiber Welding (NFW). In a process that encourages forest regeneration, the latex is extracted from the hevea tree to create PLIANT™. The inner sole of the ABACA features a comfort system inspired by the motion of waves, designed to adapt to the natural movement of the foot. The tread is inspired by patterns found in brain coral, which reduces the shoe’s weight while enhancing its grip.

[SATRA](#), an independent research body, tested the shoe’s impact on soil health under ISO 20020:2015. For 90 days, the shoes were exposed to soil, which was later tested for toxicity. Tomato and barley plants were then exposed to the remaining shoe matter in an OECD 208 plant response test. It was discovered that under certain conditions the plants grew better than compared to regular compost.

While PURIFIED shoes safely degrade at the end of their useful life the ABACA meets - and surpasses - industry benchmarks for shoe durability. Abaca fibres are some of the strongest found in nature, while the shoe’s innovative construction is designed for longevity.

“On a factory visit to Sri Lanka, I saw the ugly reality of the landfill crisis up close, chancing upon a toxic heap of waste known as ‘trash mountain’” PURIFIED founder Will Verona explains. “I knew something needed to change, and in 2020 I began this journey to rethink the way shoes could be made. Thanks to the help of our partners in Portugal, at NFW and at Bananatex®, we are now launching a product we are incredibly proud of. At PURIFIED we aim to inspire a return to earth with our shoes, but also by championing a wider philosophy inspiring connection and care for our planet.”

The ABACA is available to purchase on the [PURIFIED website](#) or in The Mills Fabrica building next to King’s Cross Station in London opens on May 12th. PURIFIED and NFW will also be hosting an event, ‘The Anatomy of a Plastic-Free Sneaker,’ at London Craft Week on May 17th.

Follow PURIFIED’s [Instagram page here](#).

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PURIFIED is a London-based shoe brand creating 100% plastic-free footwear, solely from natural materials. 25 billion shoes are produced each year. Almost all are unrecyclable, destined to spend generations in landfill. The shoe industry’s reliance on synthetic materials and toxic glues doesn’t only lead to waste and environmental degradation - it compromises shoe quality and comfort. PURIFIED’s 100% natural shoes enable you to “Return to Earth” with every step, before they safely rejoin the natural cycle after years of wear.