

KALTBLUT

BY AMY HEATON / OCTOBER 20, 2014 /

BRIGHTON FASHION WEEK : DARING TO BE DIFFERENT



Between the 8th and 12th October KALTBLUT spent a few days exploring Brighton Fashion Week checking out the collections on show and meeting with new and upcoming designers from all corners of the globe as well as local UK-based artisans. Having never visited the seaside town of Brighton until last week's Fashion Week proceedings I found its laid-back, quirky atmosphere instantly charming. The small independent boutiques, cosy cafes and vintage clothes shops provided the ideal backdrop for the Brighton Fashion Week event, and having rearranged my locks after a windswept morning on Brighton Pier I threw myself headlong into the networking event at Funfair Club, and took part in what I can only describe as a whirlwind interview marathon held in our very own KALTBLUT press room.



Ensnared within the mirrored mosaic walls I chatted with a number of designers taking part in the various events being held across the weekend, quizzed them on their inspirations for joining Brighton Fashion Week and the kinds of collections they planned to show.

Yet without a doubt the most enchanting creations of the evening came from Vienna-based interdisciplinary artist Patrizia Ruthensteiner, whose work centres around costume design and fields of dancing/movement, she is interested in the relationship between everyday fashion and stage costumes. Testing, stretching and questioning the borders between on stage and off stage, official and private, natural and artificial, she aims to blur and combine the boundaries. Whilst also questioning the claim of subject and object through her creation, as often they are transformable. The possibilities of clothes can vast, as they can be used as a static object, but also can be worn and used in a different context whilst inviting the wearer to not only wear the clothes but to interact with it. In her collection, 'The Folly of Mankind' she showed a selection of pieces which veered from the extravagant to the sublime with costumes made from all manner of unusual materials.



KALTBLUT: What draws you to create costumes as opposed to traditional means of fashion design or clothing?

Patrizia: I see myself more as an sculptural artist than as a designer and it's more of a revolutionary anti-fashion what I'm practicing because it's not supposed to be worn out on the street it's more wearable objects, like anachronistic objects I find on the flea market and I transform into wearable statements. It's more theatrical and the choreography is in those pieces, they transform your way of moving or you can interact with them in a way. The materials I use to construct those pieces of are often natural materials like birch bark, or grasses. I don't think a lot about fashion when I do that, it's more like questioning the borders of theatre, life and art.

KALTBLUT: Your designs are interacting with the body in intriguing ways, how do you set about shaping them into wearable forms?

Patrizia: I see the human frame as a method of transporting my designs, I find it difficult to design for something that's only static, and it's the movement that makes it interesting for me — you never have “it” as the piece is always changing with the movement within it and I think that's more a philosophical view of designing—not accepting the idea that people always want to have something fixed.



KALTBLUT: Where are you usually sourcing your materials from?

Patrizia: I'm mostly drawn to old objects and things that look

really precious, when I go to the flea market and I find something then I think about how to make it into a shape that nobody else would have thought of, they just would have thrown it away. One of my costumes is made of deer bones I've been collecting since I was 14, around 5 different deers fallen in the forest. It's a long term process sometimes, you have to be patient and wait and my process kind of forces me to wait, which is something which you can't usually do in the fashion industry. That's what I mean when I say it's anti-fashion—everything needs time to come to fruition and you can never have the answer all at once. The spinning wheel design is questioning the very nature of the catwalk as a whole, as in fashion it's all about easy solutions, fast outputs and I feel like I like to make a stand against this whole idea.

KALTBLUT: If movement is such a big part of your design concept you must find it quite difficult to photograph your pieces, how do you go about capturing them?

Patrizia: I think you have to work with people who really have a feel for what you're doing and then you will find a way together, they need to have a certain feeling of what the project needs—because every piece is completely different—and you need to work with someone who can understand the essence of the piece before starting to shoot it. There's a whole story inside of my pieces, I made one costume which is basically shoes made of wheat but it looks as though the model would be standing in a corn field, so I make the field portable to wherever—whether you have it on a catwalk which is actually questioning the whole field (I hope!) or if you stand it in a particular setting and take a photo to make some kind of statement, so you can really use it how you choose.

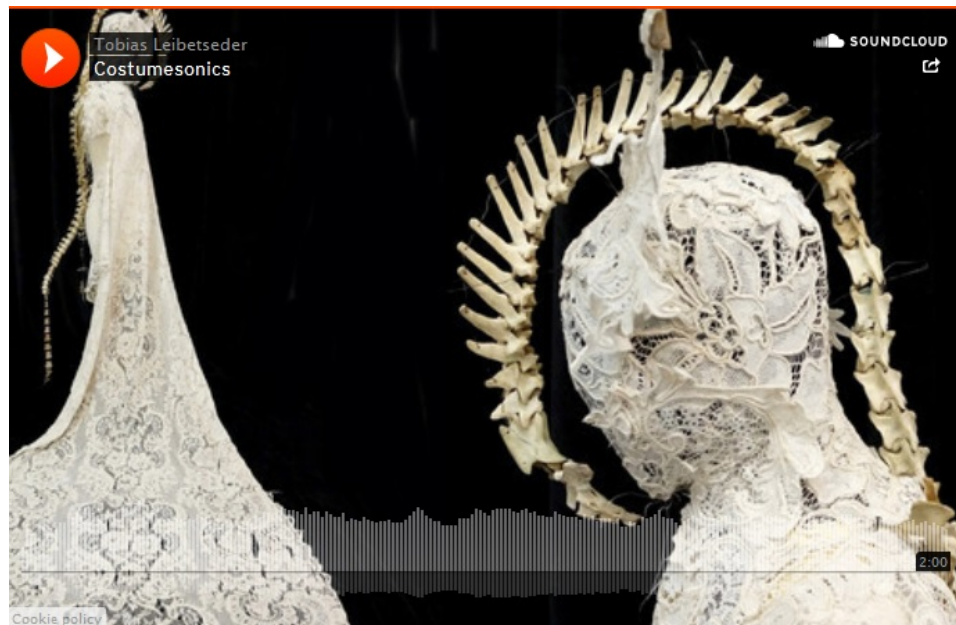
KALTBLUT: You're based out of Vienna, how do your roots influence your story?

Patrizia: I was born in Vienna and that's where I grew up, I spent a lot of time out in nature—my grandmother had a kind of castle surrounded by the forest and that's why I think my connection to natural materials is so strong. I have to keep moving a lot, and I like to get out of the city, so I make these

like long intense trips into nature, and that's often where I find a lot of my materials. I really don't like to be static and I think that's something I put into my work.

KALTBLUT: Do you prefer to work alone on your designs, or do you like to collaborate with other artists?

Patrizia: It really depends on the people I'm collaborating with, because for me it's very interesting to find out how the people I'm working with will reinterpret the concept in question. I have collaborated with a very interesting audio composer called Tobias Leibetseder for the project and we recorded the sounds of the costumes because each material makes certain specific sounds and we have made a piece for each of those costumes and combined it will make up the soundtrack for the show on Sunday. It sounds like noise music, and I really like to cross borders with what I'm doing whether that be music, performance or dance.



<https://soundcloud.com/tobias-leibetseder/sets/costumesonics>

Overall the eclectic and expressive nature of the event was refreshing and—in all honesty—not at all what I had expected from an experience of this nature.