



ELEGANCE &
BEYOND

September 2016



Bohemian Babe

An ode to the rebellious spirit of the 60's with Mister Zimi





ALL AROUND THE WORLD

*"A truly authentic look in fashion and print." – Andrea Zapp
By Bianca Alcaide*



Midday Sleep in Gujarat

“The AZ. Woman comes from all ages and ways of life, is equally culturally inspired and inspiring, worldly and contemporary, confident in her style and interested in garments or accessories that are special, yet subtle and sophisticated.”

this interview with EGO, Andrea proudly shares her continuing secret to creating a inimitable style of clothing.

Tell us how you set forth to pursuing fashion.

The predecessor of our launch collection was a dress exhibition and art project that used Google Earth imagery for the fabric pattern – it was called Third Skin – and it discussed the Internet and its social networks as a new electronic skin that has become part of our existence. Made wearable through the garment metaphor. Still a media artistic approach at the time – but driven by a growing passion to work more sensually and not just with virtual media contents. The art collection was very successful in international exhibitions, so I started thinking about building a label. I had experimented with textiles and media artefacts in this context before and it kind of had a snowball effect from there to explore fashion design – but with the aim to produce conceptual and contemporary garments, that are fashion but at the same time tell a story. Hence, I started using my own photography to create distinct fashion items, but equally share memories with the wearer about the places and spaces the garments are relating to. We launched with a solo exhibition at Manchester Art Gallery, which is in link with our brand profile, and then moved on to showcase at the large Fashion Weeks, Singapore, Paris and Scoop at the Saatchi Gallery in London. Our concept has proved successful since also as a site-specific method: We have developed wonderful limited editions with museums for instance which are then becoming part of our offer; with striking

Before venturing into fashion, Andrea Zapp studied film and French and Russian Literature during her University days. She also worked as an installation artist exhibiting in museums and galleries across the world. With Andrea’s narrative and academic influences, she shares that she has “always personally loved fashion from a creative point of view of making and experimenting, of constructing meaning as a fusion between art and design and as a unique fashion concept.”

Distinctive, notable and unparalleled are a few of the many words that one can use to describe her style. Andrea’s approach is not only focused on the season’s trends but with the way the world works. Her photography skills has left her to produce an outstanding, one of a kind womens wear that is filled with inspiration from natural landscapes and even everyday finds captured in transit to produce intricate designs that stands out from the crowd. In

The designer
Andrea Zapp



Le Corbusier in India

results in fabric design the garments visualized my particular view of the space we were working with. So while we are a new fashion brand, we are still true to our origins in art.

Waldemar Januszczak, the art critic of The Sunday Times, has dubbed us the most exciting fashion brand for art lovers via Twitter, “the Balenciaga of the Digital Age”, that was lovely feedback!

Describe AZ. in your own words.

A truly authentic look in fashion and print.

Andrea Zapp’s distinct photography is augmented by linear block colour elements, to create sharp and minimalist patterns. Story and specifics of the image lead to textures, shapes and forms, the design process being influenced by media, architecture or modernist art. As a constant feature of design, unaltered and photo-real imagery is carefully mapped onto patterns with striking and visually intriguing results. AZ. stands for a highly accessible fashion concept with purist and classy garments that stand out from the crowd but are easy to wear on any occasion.

Who is the AZ. Woman

The AZ. Woman comes from all ages and ways of life, is equally culturally inspired and inspiring, worldly and contemporary, confident in her style and interested in garments or accessories that are special, yet subtle and sophisticated.

I noticed that most of the printed designs on your dresses are attributed to architectural designs; what is the story behind this?

Architecture and cityscapes offer wonderful found footage for what we do. Our eve-



ryday environment is full of hidden shapes, lines, angles, colours and forms. Each location across the world then has its own special aesthetics and surfaces. I also often abstract from a wider view of this, by using particular sections of an image to accentuate a garment's shape. The world around us captured in an image and softened on silk reveals so many layers, which creates that multiple depth and almost 3D effect for the fabric design that really inspires me. At the same time the world is full of curious objects, window displays, nostalgia and personal attributes. This often adds a

strong visual narrative and in turn a colourful contrast to the more modernist architectural patterns of our collections.

You are also a photographer; what is the best part about being both a photographer and a designer?

The best part is about why being a designer is by being a 'fabric photographer' - a new and different kind of job! I am tak-

ing pictures by now with a pattern and textural idea in mind. But still intuitive – driven by observing what surrounds me as interesting motifs that can be turned into striking garment ideas. I look at photography from a design perspective and as a potential theme running through a collection whilst still capturing a snapshot, a moment in time. It is about highlighting particular details, in nature, objects, land



Dinner at Pam & John's

or cityscapes, that provide a visual framework for designs. Some garments can come across as a more picturesque 'nature morte' in their final look, while others borrow more fragmented elements from the realities that surround us – and exploring photography more abstract for the fabric design. Which I then map onto a created style to communicate the visual - the fabric in that sense is providing a screen or canvas for an inherent artistic voice next to the fashion idea. And we are consistent in our authentic photographic approach - instead of distorted hyper-real prints we are building our signature look on carefully positioned photo-real contexts. In other words, I would rather choose another suitable image than force it through digital manipulation to achieve a result.



Dream muse?

They change, there is so many interesting women! Very contemporary at present, Amal Clooney for intellect and fashion sense.

Fashion philosophy?

Conceptual, artistically motivated and experimental, but highly wearable. Luxurious but informal at the same time. Taking the wearer through the day with ease but uniqueness.

What's next to come for you and the brand?

We are preparing for a fashion and design exhibition in Tokyo on the end of February. We define our brand more as season spanning and are looking into more designs for this year, adding skirt and tops for instance, which we aim to introduce at Paris Fashion Week in autumn. After a great start retailing with Selfridges last summer, design stores in the UK and in Singapore, we are further building retail channels and we are working on more collaborations with museums and public clients in the UK. We also offer bespoke ideas for individual commissions and stories to be told.



Afternoon Sun in Mumbai