

The selfie shapes monolithic fashion

By Jessica Taylor

2 Mar 2015

"... Me and the beach, me and my food, me and my shoes, me and my boyfriend, me and Li taking lots of selfies."

"This [the selfie] is such a cute, interesting new domain, where people narrate online their whole existence. They put themselves on a pedestal; make themselves super glamorous. So I felt it was time to look into ecology, fables, all sorts of stories where people become elite," explained Dutch trend forecaster Li Edelkoort in presenting *Vanities - The Mythology of Self* at Design Indaba 2015 on Saturday, 28 February.



As an extension of last year's *Gathering*, the Vanities is "gathering to be continued" so to speak. Gathering is now seen as a social symbol of how people are getting together, collecting information and sharing content. Textile, she said, is like a pictogram of time and sort of exemplifies what happens to us in a given moment.

Edelkoort's interpretation of the selfie has given shape to a very interesting set of archetypes to marketing. "It's an interest in monolithic fashion, so suddenly you're crazy about shirts or printed skirts, you just go for one idea and you stock up on this one favourite item ... The sweat shirt becomes almost like a piece of couture."

But if there's one thing Edelkoort hoped to get across, it's this: "Let's stop dividing this world and let's start thinking of this more as a holistic idea."

Anti-fashion

The second part was labelled "Anti-fashion", a manifesto of ten points why fashion is obsolete.

Ultimately, though, designers are no longer modifying the body, so there's this lack of conceptual innovation. "There's a lack of knowledge. Sort of a dream of knowledge. A wish for innovation, but also a knowledge of things past. All the archives are really in Europe. They've all gone to waste. So we are facing the possibility of a world with just busy fabrics without Italian finishes, without French silks, without Belgium tunics, without English classics, without Irish tweeds...and so on."

With this said, "The world is losing the idea of fashion ... It's not fashion really, it's really just about clothes." Edelkoort blames the perversion of marketing for killing the industry.



Li Edelkoort

Mourning, Edelkoort said we're back to the beginning, and this she believes is actually something to celebrate. It presents a new challenge. "Maybe the ashes will culminate another fashion in the future, or we will call it another fashion. But I think for now, it's important that we give up this charade, calling something fashion that isn't."

ABOUT JESSICA TAYLOR

Jess is Senior Editor: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com. She is also a contributing writer. marketingnews@bizcommunity.com

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