WEARABLE LAB CONFERENCE: ACCOMPANYING FASHIONTECH INTO THE FUTURE.

Launched last February, Wearable Lab is a platform for innovation and forward thinking, asking questions and accompanying FashionTech into the future.

Presented during the previous edition of the show as a physical area that would renew itself each year within Première Vision Paris, during this September’s edition, the Wearable Lab took the form of a round table led by experts in this subject matter.

While new technologies have transformed our relationship with the world, each other and the environment, in the last fifteen years we have seen the emergence of a new creative and economic territory that merges the worlds of Fashion and Technology. This thriving trend is still difficult to analyse and understand.

Although start-ups have colonised the area of Wearables and Fashion Tech, they are not finding it easy to scale up, due to a lack of resources and scope. In turn, the major fashion brands are showing increasing interest in this area, as a hotbed of innovation. Through this conference, the aim was therefore to explore the possible synergies between start-ups and fashion brands in order to encourage the growth and success of this territory midway between Fashion and Technology known as FashionTech.

To this end, a discussion was organised on 21 September between start-ups, which are flourishing on this market but have an instable and fragile economy, and established brands who are interested in the exciting possibilities of FashionTech but are still rather wary of it.

Four recognised and diverse experts in this area shared their points of view on the subject, including a frank discussion of the difficulties and what was holding them back, with Noémie Balmat, founder of Clausette.cc magazine in the chair.

The round table opened with the presentation of a dress that Marlène Dietrich dreamt of 25 years ago, the Marlène Glows, a dress adorned with electric lights to that it sparkles. Too ambitious and complex, it could not be produced during her lifetime. Today, the studio ElektroCouture pays tribute to her by creating the extraordinary dress she had imagined. A beautiful example of an encounter between Fashion and Technology.
FOLLOW EXPERTS CAME TOGETHER TO CREATE A MOMENT FOR INTENSE AND PERTINENT DISCUSSIONS, WHICH FOCUSED ON THE REAL POTENTIAL OF THIS SUBJECT.

KELLY KRAUSE
CONFERENCE PROGRAMMING MANAGER FOR THE SXSW FESTIVAL

Kelly has seen the technology revolution in fashion with her own eyes, since the creation of the Style circuit at SXSW, an American festival that combines music, cinema and interactive media. There can be no doubt, the relationship between the designer, the product and the client has changed hugely. When evoking the “born digital” generation, she explains that this revolution goes way beyond the product itself and is disrupting the entire ecosystem.

LIZ BACELAR
FOUNDER OF DECODED FASHION AND THECURRENT

With TheCurrent, Liz helps young brands and luxury brands to create new connections with technology thanks to her vast network, her knowledge of the ecosystem and her visionary capacity with regards to identifying new successful partnerships. Liz brings real knowledge of the FashionTech ecosystem and the levers for collaboration, namely the new and emerging areas.

MARIE LIÉTARD - MONTIGNY
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & PR MANAGER FOR PYRATES SMART FABRICS

Her start-up, Pyrates, is committed to creating the textiles of the future using PYRATEX technology, a guarantee of superior quality, softness and sustainability. Marie shared her experience as a new start-up. She highlighted the advantages of collaboration between the various players in the Fashion Industry and the importance of building digital communication.

JAN ZIMMERMAN
HEAD OF FORSTER ROHNER TEXTILE INNOVATION BUSINESS UNIT

Jan’s company is specialised in the development and production of innovative and intelligent e-textiles (electronic textiles). Jan emphasised the lack of agility from certain suppliers, who are struggling to adapt to the demands of brands. In his opinion, technologies are developing very fast and suppliers have to listen to their brands and their teams in order to best meet their needs.
WHEN TECHNOLOGY INFLUENCES FASHION.

We have entered a new era where Technology is now influencing Fashion. The Fashion Industry is rich, full of resources and has great potential.

These days, the value of a product is formed by the brand and the innovations it develops. And yet, many brands have not integrated an innovation department into their development and expect their suppliers to provide this service, as part of product development.

One of the major problems that has been seen is manufacturing in a FashionTech context. The lack of agility from suppliers can hold back the development of brands and products. This is because technology changes very fast and the manufacturing processes for materials and threads are very long. Some manufacturers with new and innovative production machines close their doors to many brands and start-ups because producing small quantities is very expensive and it is often very difficult to obtain samples or prototypes. However, there are suppliers who are ready to adapt to the needs of brands and accept to produce small quantities of items.
The solution is to be found in human connections, the idea of working together. We must rehumanize the relationship between brands and suppliers, which means working in a spirit of collaboration, hand in hand, sharing experiences and bringing together a variety of expertise in order to achieve the best results. It is important and essential that suppliers work better with all the professions that make up a brand (buyers, designers, product managers, etc.).

New technologies have truly disrupted our ways of communicating and our relationships with each other. Indeed, it is not always easy to get to grips with these new technologies and new communication tools. However, it is essential for brands to use all of the technical and innovative resources at their disposal. Digital platforms (such as social networks) and the creation of “ambassador” programmes, are excellent means of connection between the brand and its community.

Brands that want to be part of the development of an ethical, high-tech fashion must act, according to their level of development, to give life to fashion that is innovative and aware of the challenges of its time.

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