

# Fair Fashion Affair Berlin 2007

## Ethical fashion arrived in Berlin! Really?

Just two months ago we, two crazy creatives, decided to organize this non-budget Fair Fashion Affair as an invitation to fashion scene, designers and consumers to get more involved in the topic of ethical fashion. It is a hot topic, and there is a boom of smaller and bigger labels using organic materials, organizing their production under a fair trade or sweatshop free label, or searching for a way to clean up their production process in order to achieve a sustainable and socially just production chain.

The actual presence of ethical fashion in Berlin is small but growing. For a consumer it is still very hard to find her way to it. It is the right time to change this, and with this event we show you some potentials and possibilities for ethical fashion and provoke you to get an opinion about it. Because global awareness *is* fashion.

For this event we choose for smaller labels, most of them German, with a mix of streetwear and designer labels. The labels are not all organic or certified fair trade, though they engage themselves actively in creating a sustainable product or make strong statements on the topic.

This is just a start, an expression of possibilities and hope, and you are warmly invited to get involved in this affair...revolution...call it what you like...

Cecilia Palmer & Frans Prins

[www.grass-routes.org](http://www.grass-routes.org)



## THE PERFORMANCES, AN IMPRESSION

The dark factory basement of ZurMöbelfabrik, a smokey, underground atmosphere with groovy music and a mix of dandys, punks, and fashionistas. The show starts. A man in a red suit guides the crowd. Wonder, excitement, a little discomfort. There is no podium, no stage, no benches for the audience. People stand side by side, behind each other, on a chair or table, to get a glimpse of the performance.

**Chapter 1: The dreamset.** Mysterious sounds, a voice: "We could be heroes!" A man with black dreadlocks enters, in T-shirt from Pamoyo and underwear. He falls asleep behind an antique sewing machine. He starts dreaming: A man, walks in, slowly. The man could be the alter ego of the man sleeping, a projection of his dream. He wears a red dress with a long, red train sweeping behind it. Dress and train are made from old clothes. On his chest a golden angel from Armedangels. He faces the audience, throws off the dress and disappears. The dress transforms into catwalk.

The music changes, a dramatic mix of chorus, Indian chanting and fast house beat. A woman enters, wearing a dress with Spiderman motives, another woman walks in with a blue dress. Both are made from H&M baby clothes, with the price tags still hanging (Lisa D. Boatpeople). Then a woman in Batman dress enters, looking angry and suspicious. The dress is made from recycled bedlinen by the label Ketchup&Majo. Another woman comes in, in a semi-transparent dress, a childrens drawing sewn on the front. Looking for a second time, one figures out, it's a child carrying a stone. Another dress comes in, with the same color and another childrens drawing. The dresses are thematizing childlabour, and are made by Lisa D. for her label Global Concern.

**Chapter 2: Waking up.** Birds singing, soft, gentle music. The man wakes up and walks away. A parade of sleepy, awakening people follows. Eating muesli, brushing teeth, teddybear by the hand, reading a newspaper... All wear T-shirts from Fairliebt, Armedangels, Slowmo, Pamoyo, THTC and Mr. Poulet, and underwear from Senseorganics and American Apparel. Slowly rising from their sleepy state into the day.

**Chapter 3: Fruits.** A woman comes in, wearing trousers from Senseorganics and shirt from Pamoyo, with a trench of bananas as if she was carrying her handbag. She sits behind the sewing machine and goes to work. A man comes in, stiff and arrogant, with pants from Slowmo and shirt from Pamoyo. Under his arm a white laptop and in his other hand an apple. In front of the audience, he bites the apple, and stands still behind the girl sewing, as to strengthen his image of power. But another woman comes in, wearing Senseorganics pants and a Pamoyo top, just smiling with in her hand a pineapple. Her appearance breaks the tension.

**Chapter 4: Flowers.** A man comes in with a mysterious package, stops in the middle. Two different women enter after each other, looking at the man. No response. All three wear streetwear with subtle prints from Berliner label Slowmo. A third woman comes in, wearing a dress from TudoBom?. She catches the attention from the man, he gives her the package and leaves. She opens the package, and gives it on to the next man (shirt from Epona, pants from Slowmo). He starts spreading leaves and white flowers on the ground. A woman in Epona shirt and Slowmo pants, follows.

**Chapter 5:** The dream goes on. A man comes in wearing a Pamoyo shirt and underwear. He falls asleep behind the sewing machine. At first he was the man inside the dream, now he is the one dreaming. The rules have been changed, and the dream goes on. Four ladies come in after each other. They are self-confident and mature. They embody emancipation and abundance and come with grace. Dresses from: Magdalena Schaffrin, Senseorganics, Lisa D. and Ketchup & Majo.

**Chapter 6:** The end. A woman comes in, wearing blue knitwear; dress, cardigan, gloves and hat by Caro E. She wakes up the man behind the sewing machine and gently puts her cardigan around him. "While you were dreaming..."

## **“MODE MACHT MENSCHEN” (“Fashion Creates People”) Discussion and Showroom in the fashion school Esmod**

The forum was curated by Alexandra Perschau from PAN Germany (Pesticide Action Network /Pestizid Aktions Netzwerk). After a short introduction by Frans Prins (organizer Fair Fashion Affair), she held a speech on the effects of pesticides for humans and environment. She showed examples of alternatives, spoke about organic cotton and ways of labeling, showed examples of different projects and discussed good example companies like Kuuyichi. She also addressed to the MadeBy label, a shadow label from The Netherlands, which helps companies to ‘clean up’ their production process.

After her speech, the forum opened with around the table: Mathias Ahrberg from the fair trade T-shirt label Fairliebt, who told the public how they started just selling through the internet, and how successful they became especially because they are fair trade. Also present was Johanna Cochems from Initiative Naturtextil e.V., who emphasized the difference in feeling between conventionally produced clothing and ‘natural’ clothing. Later also LOHAS-expert Christoph Harrach entered the podium. He proclaimed the new era of eco-fashion, and explained the difference between the ‘eco 0.1’ and ‘eco 0.2’. Where the first generation lived a sober, anti-consumerist lifestyle, the new eco generation finds it important to enjoy and meanwhile consume in a responsible way. He also underlined the marketing possibilities for producing in a responsible way, something not for deaf ears in an audience of mainly future fashion designers. When one believes Harrach, we are in the middle of a revolution. His enthusiasm definitely reached the public. After the speeches about three quarters where spend for asking questions and discussing topics from the audience.

There were about hundred twenty people present, of which about seventy students and teachers from Esmod, and a good mix of fashion designers, marketers, creatives and journalists. After the formal part, there was time to take a look at the showroom, where the clothing from the performances was shown. We noticed there was a strong demand for practical information, as where to find organic cotton or textiles, and the information material on this topic was away in just a few minutes. In general there is a great interest for the topic of ethical or fair fashion. Now where to get the materials and where to find the clothes, is still another step to take. As one looks at the international developments of ethical fashion, for all in the USA; UK and The Netherlands, it has the potential to become a fundamental change of fashion production worldwide. And we just hope this event brought the Berlin fashion scene a small step closer...

## THE ORGANIZERS

### Interview with Cecilia Palmer, project designer

*If you look back to the Fair Fashion Affair 2007, what's your impression?*

I am enthusiastic about the event. It was something in the atmosphere that you feel that's just the beginning, that there is something special happening, that there is a need for more, for likeminded projects. Interested visitors, people who want to know more. I am also happy to have noticed in the process of realizing this project, that there are actually already quite a few labels in Germany, that there are already things happening and there is already a scene, a fair fashion scene.

*A scene?*

Small, young labels, spread over Germany, that have started during the past couple of years. They are innovative, trendy and sexy. Fashion from streetwear to couture, its all there, you know! The people behind these labels combine vision and creativity, they design fashion with a vision. They engage their creative work with social and environmental issues. These people don't have anyone to follow, they do their own thing, they have to find out themselves how to realize their ideas. And the result is creative fashion with social attitude.

*What was your idea behind the project?*

To give an impulse in Berlin and Germany, in the consuming and the making of fair fashion, and make people realize that a lot has happened, that the times of the old nature textile era is far back, and that the meaning of fair fashion today is something completely different. You don't have to compromise your ideals and your looks. How we designed the project and why we made the project is that we wanted to reach fashion people, but just as well the consumers. Because they are the ones that create the demand. Most often fashion events are something exclusively for fashion people. We wanted to make an open access event, so that we could reach consumers as well. We want to give an impulse to get more things happening. We did not organize a Fair, we have organized a smaller event, an Affair, to cause a snowball effect.

*Why did you choose for an underground atmosphere for the performances?*

The choice of organizing this event with a certain underground atmosphere was that it suited the labels that we had collected as well as the whole grassroots concept, it is already there but you have probably not seen so much of it yet. It is small scale but growing. And starting to influence the mainstream.

## **Interview with Frans Prins, project coordinator**

### *What is your impression of the Fair Fashion Affair?*

It was inspiring and creative, also for me personally. During the performances I realized that what started as a one time event is something we will do more often, combining art performances and fair fashion, to make the statement that fair fashion is innovative, something connected to the future. Ethical fashion is not a trend, it's a revolution of our consciousness, and influencing style. That's why Kuyichi call themselves 'style conscious'. This is important because in Germany organic, ethical clothing has a bad image, which is completely unnecessary as the ethical fashion revolution is actually one of the most important innovations in the fashion industry of our times.

### *Can you give an image of the performances?*

There was the visual part, the clothing, the fashion show, which looked great with its mix of street style as from the Berlin label Slowmo and designer statements like the child labour issue sewn on dresses by Lisa D. under her label Global Concern. The atmosphere was exciting, an old factory with people standing side by side. It had something avant-garde. For me, the most important was the unconscious aspect, to influence the mind by subtle symbols, the language of music... This gave the performance a direct connection to the soul of the audience. That's why I found it so important to work with "normal people", young people without experience, no professional models. Because of their personal presence and their tension. They were no models, not ready-shaped for the role, just people. The image of a person sleeping behind the sewing machine says more than the slogan "Stop child labour". Because it makes us feel we are humans, we all are, and the clothing I wear was made by another human. That's something radical because the images spread by fashion brands are often dehumanizing and proclaiming the human body as a pure object, an object of lust, of desire, of aggression. In this way our performance could be called postmodern activism. Also the way we present fair fashion is open, it is a research on what could be fair fashion. I don't want to give a dogmatic vision on the subject, it's open for forming your own opinion of it. Ethical fashion means, let's think about it!

### *What do you think is the influence of the Fair Fashion Affair?*

To be honest, I think this is just a small push, there is much more needed! On the other hand, we showed with a very small project how big the interest is for the topic. Both for designers and consumers. This is something important for the deciders in the fashion industry to pick up. Where are the stores for ethical fashion? Where to get organic textiles? I want to stumble over these shops. We reached a lot of young fashion designers and fashion students, our main target group. Say we reached about 300 young and future fashion designers and 5 % would decide to seriously do something with it, that would mean 15 new ethical fashion labels in Berlin. That would be already a great success. I believe in the small steps. It's also nicer, because the way we worked, we had good, personal contact with almost everyone we worked with.

### *Do you have plans for the future?*

The coming time we will put more time in the launch of our own ethical fashion label Pamoyo. Then, I would like to give more pushes in Berlin and Germany, organize creative actions, maybe a guerilla store. But we need more partners to make this happening. We work on a ethical fashion brand database, also. And we discuss to organize the Fair Fashion Affair again next year as a bigger event, a Berlin concurrent to the Ethical Fashion Show in Paris. But actually personally I like working on small-scale projects more. The mainstream fairs and brands will take it up anyway. Yeah, we have a lot of crazy ideas to realize...

## **THE LABELS**

### **KETCHUP&MAJO**

Ketchup&Majo began a few years ago, in fact when Janina found some cute apple bedclothes on the flea market at the age of twelve, and wished nothing more, than to own a skirt made from this bedclothes. So grandma let it go and soon at school Janina was wearing the unique. 2001 Janina, by that time a fashion and photography student, picked up the idea again as an art project. But this time the materials weren't only bedclothes in various styles, but rather money bags or air plane blankets, which are getting worked up into clothing in a social institution, Werkstatt Frankfurt e.V.. Right from the start, Ketchup&Majo had a playful consort with fashion, a pullover from Ketchup&Majo is not just a pullover, it's designed e.g. as a face which communicates of its own volition. The fashion of Ketchup&Majo has something to say, one communicates just by wearing it.

[www.ketchupundmajo.de](http://www.ketchupundmajo.de)

### **LISA D.**

For Lisa D., fashion has to do with the desire to jump out of the skin that has never been her own. From the very beginning coded by society - with regard to social status, sexual attractiveness, group affiliation -, this skin constitutes an interface between herself and her environment. It is the site of a continuous negotiation about how others want to see her and how she wants to be seen by them, a stage where the drama of a society with its hopes and anxieties, its projections and repressions gets staged in its most up-dated form and in which she seeks to prevail as a protagonist. She does not start from a model body, trying to shape and heighten it according to fixed aesthetic ideals, some ostensibly eternal criteria of beauty and elegance. Nor is she concerned with creating exclusive markers of distinguished taste, whether glamorous or minimalist. Rather, she is interested in the second skin as a crumple zone where different dress codes, role models, desires meet, communicate with each other, polemicize against each other, and comment on each other.

[www.lisad.com](http://www.lisad.com)

### **MAGDALENA SCHAFFRIN**

Magdalena Schaffrin is a young label from Berlin, founded by Designer Magdalena Schaffrin in 2007. It stands for classical, qualitative and modern clothing. If one looks at the fashion industry and how it functions, it is quite clear that can't go on like this with a clear conscious. The price for the people in poor countries and for our nature is too high. Therefore it is a logical and future minded step to create something different, and start a fair and ecological label. For Magdalena Schaffrin, ecology means, using ecological textiles from natural fibers and to create high quality, sustainable products. That counts for cloth materials, processing, production, for the whole chain of design. The collection is characterized by classical cuts, often translated from men's wear and with a special attitude to surfaces and details.

[www.magdalenaschaffrin.com](http://www.magdalenaschaffrin.com)

## **BLACKSPOT ANTICORPORATION**

The mission of Blackspot is to establish a worldwide consumer cooperative and to reassert consumer sovereignty over capitalism. They hope this Blackspot sneaker venture is the beginning of a new era in ethical, worker-friendly, environmentally friendly production. Adbusters' experimental shoe business is the first stage of the Blackspot campaign, which is an effort to use the power of branding for the benefit of citizens rather than for the benefit of corporations and their owners. The Blackspot name and logo are "open-source", which means they are trademark-free. Anyone may use them. The eventual goal is to form a loose alliance of Blackspot co-branded, indy, grassroots businesses. The Blackspot shoe is made in a safe, comfortable union factory with environmentally sound, all-vegetarian materials, including 100% organic hemp uppers.

[www.blackspotsneaker.org](http://www.blackspotsneaker.org)

## **CARO E.**

Caro E. means ethical modern knitwear and accessoires out of high quality natural materials such as silk, cashmere, merino, cotton. Manufactured with a lot of time and heart in new interpreted techniques. Caro E. is working only with natural fibers and transparency of origin and production as well as social responsibility play a leading role in the collection. They take it as a great advantage that from material to design to production, every step is located in Berlin or the rest of Germany. Short ways of trade for them means a great way to be responsible for what they do. They also have parts of their production made at workstations for handicapped people in Berlin. Caro E.'s design is timeless yet modern and sexy. Every item is handcrafted with a lot of time and heart as a contrast to the violence of our urban life. Poetic design for natural and feminine women, where every piece tells its own personal story and impresses with visual artisan work.

Carolin Graening, dipl. fashiondesigner and founder of Caro E. has experimented with needles and yarn since her early childhood at the instigation of her always and everywhere knitting mother, who taught her knitting and crochet. Based in Berlin since 2006, and since 2007 also head of Fashion Journalism at the Academy for Fashion and Design (AMD) in Berlin.

[www.caro-e.de](http://www.caro-e.de)

## **SENSEORGANICS**

Senseorganics cooperates with two Fair Trade projects in India. First a project that is run by Franciscan nuns, that work on a non profit base. Secondly, just lately, they have committed for active support for a project that aims in helping the poorest of the poor. In addition to using organic cotton and blends of environmentally friendly fibers, Senseorganics supports farmers who are in the transition from regular commercial farming that uses chemicals to organic farming methods. Senseorganics is responsible for every aspect of manufacturing, from growing the cotton, spinning the thread, and making the fabrics, to the low-impact dyeing processes, and employment practices that exceed strictest world standards.

[www.senseorganics.com](http://www.senseorganics.com)

### **FAIRLIEBT**

Beginning 2006 Wiebke Hövelmeyer and Mathias Ahrberg started the fashionlabel Fairliebt to create something new and different. A label with products created in a socially responsible way. The idea behind the label is to realize graphical ideas and to print them on ethically produced clothing and accessories. For Fairliebt this means fair wages, the possibility to form a union, no child labor and no use of pesticides. For all their products they care in first instance that they are produced in an ethical correct way.  
[www.fairliebt.com](http://www.fairliebt.com)

### **SLOWMO**

Slowmo was launched 2006 in Berlin-Friedrichshain. As brother and sister they decided to establish a brand which could build a platform for creativity on the basis of respect towards humanity and nature. They solely use organic cotton, certified and fair traded. They dye our fabrics following strict directives for the protection of environment, employees and consumer. All colors are toxicologically harmless, heavy metal free and have no additives that can cause cancer or allergenic affects. The colored fabrics are being transformed into garments and accurately printed by hand in Berlin. Their name was created out of slowmotion, in consideration of the fact that quality needs time. Their designs are calm and clear. "Look lovely... smile beautifully... stay open minded and... keep it slowmo."  
[www.slowmo.eu](http://www.slowmo.eu)

### **ARMEDANGELS**

The Armedangels came to involve themselves. A brand that has a clear connection to its production. A community grew out from the club-underground. A statement that creates new contents in street fashion. All products of Armedangels are made under the fairtrade-label in Portugal with pesticide-free cotton and fair prices for the producers. Armedangels is founded in 2007 by Anton Jurina and Martin Höfeler, who know that their collection is just a first step to give ethical consumption style and joy. They are on duty to heat up the fashion industry. And the revolution has just started.  
[www.armedangels.de](http://www.armedangels.de)

### **PAMOYO**

Pamoyo is a new ethical fashion label with Berlin roots. Clothes and accessories are produced under fair circumstances and with care for nature. Every piece is hand made and unique. Integrated recycled materials and a rough sewing style make them feel authentic and exclusive. Pamoyo stands for encouragement and doing things with your heart. Their clothes express creativity, engagement and a nomadic attitude. Pamoyo clothing and accessories are made from high quality organic cotton and recycled materials.  
[www.pamoyo.com](http://www.pamoyo.com)

### **TUDO BOM?**

Tudo Bom? Is Portuguese and means "everything alright?". Their credo is: optimism and energy, justice, respect and transparency. Tudo Bom? Is based in Paris and produced in Brazil under fair circumstances.  
[www.tudobom.fr](http://www.tudobom.fr)

### **EPONA**

Epona From London was one of the first companies to produce hoodies from fair trade certified cotton. Their products are aimed at a fashion-conscious generation that demands style, quality and value, but who also want to ensure their clothing has been ethically produced.

[www.eponaclothing.co.uk](http://www.eponaclothing.co.uk)

### **THTC**

The Hemp Trading Company is an English shirtlabel and has a strong connection with the music scene from the start. From HipHop to Reggae, Breakbeats to Drum'n'Bass, THTC connects conscious consuming and music culture. Known artists like Morcheeba, Asian Dub Foundation, Goldie, Mad Professor and Inspectah Deck from Wu Tang Clan support the label to bring their publicum closer to the fair trade, organic hemp shirts of THTC.

[www.thtc.co.uk](http://www.thtc.co.uk)

### **MONSIEUR POULET**

Monsieur Poulet come from France and connect fair trade with an open design project. Visitors of their website decide which designs are printed in limited editions. The shirts are from fair trade labeled cotton, and currently their production is switching to organic cotton too.

[www.monsieurpoulet.com](http://www.monsieurpoulet.com)

## THANK YOU



**EU Youth Program** for financial support

**Gepa the Fair Trade Company** for accessories and fair trade juice

**FairWear.de** for the labels *Tudo Bom?*, *Epona*, *Mr.Poulet*, *THTC*

**Veganladen** the only Berlin Retailer for *Blackspot Sneakers*

**Trippen** for shoes

**Linkle Nähcafe** for the “Recycle fashion” workshop

**PAN Germany** for the discussion forum

**European Justice Foundation** for the film “White gold”

**ZurMoebelFabrik** for the performance location

**Karmakonsum.de** for enthusiasm and audiovisual output

**Hiphonest.com and yoi** for inspiring us

**All participating labels** for input, trust, and great clothing

**Linnea, Lena, Nina, Puriya, David** for being great models

**Sofie** for styling