

B L E S S



DESIREE HEISS AND INES KAAG MIGHT WELL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SURVIVAL OF POPULAR WORDS ENDANGERED BY INFLATIONARY USE SUCH AS "INTERDISCIPLINARY", "CONCEPT" OR "COLLABORATION". AFTER ALL, THESE TWO DESIGNERS MANAGE TO RECALL THE TRUE MEANING OF THOSE OVERUSED NOTIONS. AND THEY'VE BEEN DOING SO FOR FIFTEEN YEARS. BE IT TEAM-UPS WITH COMPANIES FROM WRANGLER TO LONGCHAMP, OR THEIR LEGENDARY ERAM KNIT-

BOOT: WHATEVER BLESS PUT THEIR HANDS TO BECOMES A WORK OF ART. WHERE THE CUTTING EDGE BORDERS ON THE AVANT GARDE THESE TWO AUTEUR DESIGNERS HAVE KNITTED THEMSELVES INTO A VERY SPECIAL POSITION WHICH BY FAR TRANSCENDS THEIR PHYSICAL LOCATIONS IN PARIS AND BERLIN. REASON ENOUGH TO ASK THEM FOR A RETROSPECTIVE THAT SHOULD CAST THE MILESTONES OF THEIR CAREER SO FAR IN AN APPROPRIATE LIGHT.

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Furwig N°00



COLLECTION
1996
B L E S S



Jersey dress and fat knit boots N°28

COLLECTION
 2006
 BLESSES

Sakkconnection / 2010 N°42
 Shoes / 2012 N°47



COLLECTION
 2010 & 2012
 BLESSES

If you look back ten years from today, who and where were you back then, personally and professionally?

The first thing that comes to our minds is that ten years back we had no children yet. Our lives were certainly less structured and defined. Most probably, we were more dedicated to BLESS and defining the meaning of BLESS as a project. We had just started with regular clothes production and eagerly learned Italian to be able to communicate with our Italian producer. Also back then we didn't teach product design in Karlsruhe, which we have been doing for seven years now, and which we enjoy quite a lot, apart from the heavy travelling.

Ten years ago we were looking for answers where we would not even see questions today.

The connection between fashion and design has always played a big role in your work. Has the emphasis shifted within the last ten years? Is the wearability of your pieces of any more or less relevance now than it was before?

Back then we had more of a feeling that we wanted to be part of the system in a sense that people would accept "our" way as a serious option and alternative alongside the existing fashion shows that were going on. By now we are so much more relaxed and laid back. We don't care at all anymore about the system as we feel very well anchored in a net of extremely faithful clients and followers. We feel completely independent from the main currents appearing in design and fashion weeks.

You have collaborated with many great labels and artists. Was there one you enjoyed particularly or are there any anecdotes worth sharing?

It's often the bad stories you keep in mind – the moments we felt uncomfortable, out of place, where you shake your head looking back and say "It's unbelievable how incapable, unexperienced and naive we were". But we would definitely blame ourselves more than the collaborators. The goals we are looking for in collaborations are classic win-win situations, which always have to be defined individually.

People change, circumstances change. Is there anything that in your opinion hasn't changed for the better?
Speed is too prominent.

Conversely, which are the things that have improved for you?
In Paris definitely the ecological conscience, in Berlin the internationality.

Which experiences as young designers lead to where you are today?

First of all, the fact of not finding a job and the anything-is-possible jungle asking us what we could add to the variety of products. Later it was the disenchantment of realising how impossible it still is to work hard, establish a company and a structure and get any acceptance and understanding from the state, especially the tax authorities.

Where would you like to see yourselves ten years from now?

Having built a house, designed a car, still being in our relationships, contributing to social issues, collaborating with our kids.

Is there a recipe for timelessness or a specific attempt in design history to create a truly timeless piece that you appreciate, such as the white cube as ultimate exhibiting space or the little black dress as the ultimate piece of clothing?

It is part of the magic of timeless pieces that there was never an intention to create a timeless piece. But each of them is very much based on a very honest attempt to create the ideal piece for the very moment, which then over time becomes some sort of standard, and the designers become kind of the masters of their category in a compact and dense personified sense. This makes it quite hard to reach a similar level for any subsequent attempts in design.

By the way: the black dress is the ultimate piece of clothing for a female way of dressing, but we would say that the biggest classic for us are Levi's 501s. We can't present a recipe at all, but our most secret wish is to create a product that people might someday talk about like this: "Could you please hand over the BLESS?" ‡



Reversdress and shoes N°43



COLLECTION
 2013 & 2012
 BLESS

*Carpet lining and longpleat / 2013 N°48
 Shoes / 2012 N°47*



COLLECTION
 2013 & 2012
 BLESS

*Down sweater and
 pleat bermuda / 2013 N°48
 Shoes / 2012 N°47*