

## majestic disorder

majestic disorder, 18 octobre 2013

*ANNE SOPHIE COCHEVELOU : DESIGNER, PERFORMANCE ARTIST, SOCIAL PROVOCATEUR*

Written & Photographed By Kelley Mullarkey

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Written + Photographed By Kelley Mullarkey | Video Produced By Sean Stillmaker

The way in which we view fashion tribes closely resembles the concept of nations as imagined communities, a term coined by Benedict Anderson. He believed that a nation (like fashion) is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members.

The cults of both Isabel Marant and Chanel have been synonymous with French culture and identity despite the fact Chanel's reigning creative director Karl Lagerfeld is German. In an imagined anthropological spirit we've constructed our ideologies of French style based off of these fashion houses that embody a mixture of effortless chicness and bohemian superiority and the people associated with them, most of whom we'll never meet.

Like political rulers, these figures have created a desired identity, which has been bestowed upon the community. [Anne Sophie](#) is challenging just that.

Head to toe in a bespoke Lego dress, Lego shoes and the most peculiar of cocktail rings, Sophie has a *je ne sais quoi* about her that is miraculously indefinable. Designer, performance artist and social provocateur, she's in a league of her own making strides, dominating barriers.



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"I'm completely not French. I don't have the prescribed French style. I can't make coffee. I drink tea. I'm the farthest from what constitutes as minimalistic chic. I love bright colors and unexpected materials," Sophie explained.

Beauty, melancholy and experimentation all serve as the common denominator and sole ambassador of Sophie's enchanting aesthetic. A nod to childhood, social interaction and opposition her sartorial independence is a polar opposite to the constructed Parisian identity we've been force-fed through editorials and blanketed ideas. Encouraging us to examine but also look past what we think we know, Sophie is both a memory gatekeeper and cultural enticer.

Tucked away off of Brick Lane Sophie's flat seemingly resembles Alice In Wonderland meets post apocalyptic deserted toy store. Inside her room and studio bins upon bins are stacked one on top of another, joyfully overflowing with doll heads, tiny hands and Barbie limbs. The left side is home to her rolling racks of unbelievably intriguing clothes, which include a shimmering gold dress lined with plastic doll feet and a blazer covered with old pages from a disposed novel.

A far cry from fashion, Sophie was born to two math wiz French engineers and began learning about molecules instead of McQueen at age three. She grew up watching TV programs about science and reading magazines that detailed the inner workings of life's complexities, in between playing delicately with her beloved Barbie collection.

After endlessly struggling and failing to grasp the concept of mathematics Sophie found her nook as part of the literature branch inside an all girls high school. Still quite shy her parents encouraged her to try out drama and theater to help break her out of her shell.

Turning out to be a perfect seamless fit where she felt right at home, she ventured onward to Université La Sorbonne. At university in between an extremely vigorous literature course load she began experimenting with costume design. Creating elaborate ensembles for themed parties, from puzzle piece dresses to a recreation of Lady Gaga's infamous meat dress, she quickly began gaining recognition, becoming famous for designing costumes.

"I learned that you can't just work with your brain all the time. You need to use and think with your hands too," she said.

Having graduated with a B.A. in literature and drama and realizing her growing interest in performance art and costume design, she applied for an MA program in performance design and practice at central Saint Martins in London.

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"I was never good at mathematics. But I think that's an important aspect of my evolution and style. You always build yourself as a reaction to something. As an opposition, you control what you reflect to people with style. You give them information about what you're conveying."

Using her time at Central Saint Martins to exponentially explore her creativity, Sophie began playing with the concepts of costume, psychology and performance, developing an unparalleled aesthetic that referenced common objects.

Her decision to incorporate used plastic baby dolls, toy cars, lego pieces and Barbies found in flea markets and charity shops into her designs and personal sartorial expression derives from her desire to create a social impact on people through a hybrid of performance and costume experimentation.

Each one of Sophie's visually striking pieces creates a human dialogue weaving together personal stories that remind us of the power of fashion.

"I loved playing with dolls growing up. People have such strong memories attached to childhood. It's something we all share no matter what country we're from. The dolls evoke a bit of dark humor and deep emotion," she said in a pair of neon pink pants and a vintage leather jacket lined with doll heads.

After a momentary pause she continued.

"They resonate with people. Women have shared all kinds of stories with me. One woman explained her experience growing up in the Soviet Union and not being allowed to play with Barbies. Another told me that the dolls tiny hands on my jacket made her sad because they reminded her of how her premature twins looked when they were born."

With a passion to source found objects and create art, Sophie has continued to gravitate toward the community of outsider artists, a place where she feels embraced by fellow anti-fashion enthusiasts such as the fabulous past Featured Mind Sue Krietzman.

From her recent jaw dropping collaboration with Lego during SS14 London Fashion Week to her electric personality and personal style, Sophie is one of London's most dynamic creative assets. Armed with a craving and hunger to liberate fashion from imposed imagined ideologies and communities Sophie applauds the power of imagination and innovation.