

SIBILLA PAVENSTEDT



"DISCOVER THE STRANGER IN YOURSELF"

Sibilla Pavenstedt is a society darling. The fashion designer can often be seen shaking many hands at very exclusive events. Her creations can be seen even more often on red carpets when film, music and nobility make their grand entrances. Her outstanding career began 20 years ago.

The creator of fashion ranging between Pret-à-Porter and Haute Couture, received her first awards very early and became more and more sought-after as a designer, lecturer and creator of style. Resting on her laurels is the last thing she wants, the Hamburg resident says, "I hate boredom. I never do the same thing. I once had a real 'bore out'. Everything just kept coming up again; I was only seeing the same faces every day. I don't want to go through that again."

Her materials are light, her cuts are sophisticated and her colours are intense. Nevertheless, Sibilla Pavenstedt does not want to renounce gravity and depth. At the beginning of 2009, she was a co-founder of the project Made auf Veddel ("Made in Veddel"). The Veddel, a part of the city with a high proportion of foreigners and low incomes, is considered one of the grubby urchins of Hamburg, to which many inhabitants of the "City of Millionaires" turn up their noses. This is where it all started with eight migrants. Women from Turkey, Afghanistan, Chile and Iran learned the basics of knitting and crocheting, and had jobs for the first time in their lives; jobs outside of their own families - out of isolation and into the world of fashion. Meanwhile the handmade clothes Made auf Veddel are very sought-after, and are even turning heads in Tokyo. Sibilla Pavenstedt: "For me, as a fashion designer and of course for the women, it is a special honour."

Why does a successful and internationally renowned fashion designer do something like this? The project which she founded together with an association, takes up lots of time, energy and money. Not everybody is in agreement with the fact that the migrant women choose the course of their own lives. However, this interests Sibilla Pavenstedt, who is half Italian and half German, very little: "I have always felt that foreigners are a huge enrichment to society." The idea for the label with the social background along with its own collection, arose through something that happened in Pavenstedt's company, says the designer: "I had an employee who came without any real previous training from Russia to us. She started as a seamstress. After five years she was so good that she was headhunted by Jil Sander. Her history was the model from which Made in Veddel was based. Women from other cultures who live in isolation in this country should be assisted to become part of society through their own efforts. Besides, it is not a matter of alms, but about being convincing through success. Things are produced which contain social sustainability - without generating pity. I hope that this project finds many imitators."

In times of the crisis, the experienced fashion designer believes in the power of authenticity and quality: "Good craft, combined with good design are the perfect example of true luxury." In the future, Sibilla Pavenstedt wants to begin new projects, beside her actual work and bring together creative heads more intensively: possibilities where artists can be complimentary to each other. The main thing is that it does not become boring.



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