



STYLE

EXTEND YOUR FANTASY **WITH AVAVAV**

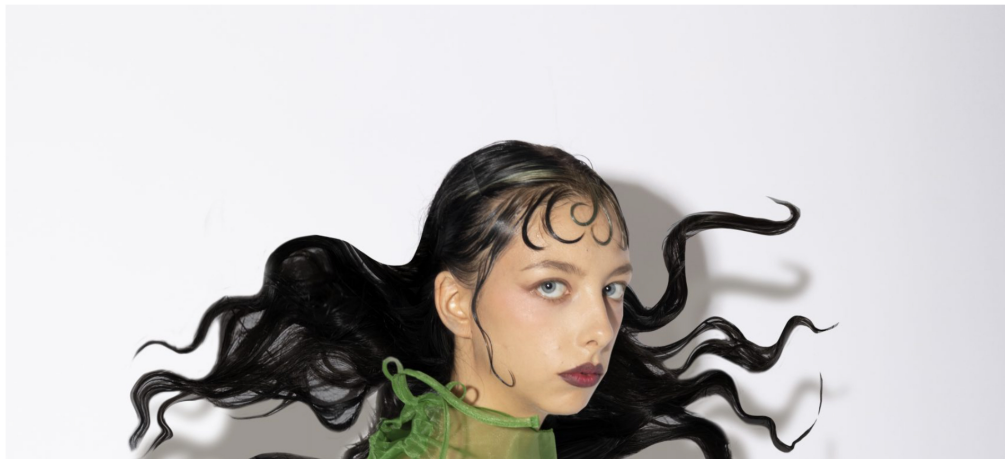
by [Alex Brzezicka](#)

From Kim's butt to Doja Cat's chicken claws, Beate Karlsson always serves extraordinary.

Beate Karlsson believes only in an extreme kind of beauty. Whether it is Kim Kardashian inspired wearable latex burns, the claw shoe or sculpture-like silhouettes, her designs always go beyond. Beyond fashion, traditional forms and common sense. Remember Doja Cat's chicken boots at VMAs? Exaggeration is a norm in Beate's world. No wonder that even Rick Owens got obsessed with her four-toed finger [shoes](#). These innovation-ridden ideas in terms of aesthetics are what a lot of sustainable brands often lack. Nothing wrong with minimalism but why not mix it up a bit. It's what the founders of AVAVAV thought. The brand had already established an eco-friendly and ethical chain of production but needed someone who'd give it a creative push. That's where Beate Karlsson stepped in.

"It's quite a good time to come in as a creative to get to do something different with the brand. Since January this year, that was the first collection that we released together that I designed. Since then, it's just been changing a lot. This is the first time that we do a seasonal collection," Beate explains. In three years of AVAVAV's existence, they've worked with luxury deadstock only, producing everything local and very small quantity.

As proud it sounds, it's nearly impossible to survive as a small business outside of the fashion circle. After operating as quirky outsiders, they've decided to try to disrupt the toxic fashion patterns from within. "It's just it's been difficult for us too to make AVAVAV available for more people with this structure that we've had. It's an experiment but we want to see where we can go with joining the cycle. We might have even more creative freedom. We just want to be in it to make a change and not stay behind and do our own thing," Beate says.





Beate doesn't only want to secure AVAVAV's spot on the calendar but make it stand out. "I do feel that we have to earn our place in the industry through coming up with new designs, interesting things and something you haven't seen before," she says. In SS22 'Underwater Harmony', just debuted during Milan and Paris Fashion Weeks, Beate deep dived into the wicked Disney meets Miyazaki submarine realness and sculpted a human-size, wearable coral reef. It features blown-out plant-like dresses, jellyfishes-inspired organza tops and iconic fingers shoes, also available in flip-flop variation. "I want this to be based on intuition. I want to have fun with it. I don't want to overthink it too much. I have been for the past few months very inspired by this childish vision of underwater aesthetics," Beate shares.

Bouncing off this playfulness and nature-oriented attitude wrapped in a sheer of mystery, she created a wet and wild fantasy that we can't wait to dip into. "It was an interesting take to also think about how plants and everything living underwater is frictionless. The movements are very floating. There's no gravity to push it down. I wanted to bring that into the textures and the fabric that we've used," she says. To achieve these harmonic and smooth silhouettes AVAVAV's team tapped into new techniques and materials, from wet melding with felt to draping organza pieces.

AVAVAV vision is set in a utopian fashion future when sustainability would be a part of the status quo. Sadly, it's not the case yet. For now, they've decided to take a step back to survive and hopefully grew greener in the next few years. "Up until this collection we made essentially everything with deadstock but what we have developed into doing now is that obviously, deadstock has its limits," Beate explains. "What we are doing now is that we want to be fully transparent, talk about how we work and not pretend that we're something that we're not." In the sea of brands who claim to be sustainable while putting a bare minimum of effort to do so, there's nothing more important than honesty. AVAVAV sees the bigger picture and won't claim the title they don't deserve yet. "We don't want to call ourselves sustainable if we don't feel like we can be fully that. Right now, we're in this phase where we just want to make the most reasonable decisions in everything that we do," Beate explains.





Sustainability is often painted in bright colours through social and alternative media's lenses as quick and easy to accomplish. In reality, being eco-friendly is a privilege not everyone can afford, especially if you're swimming against the current of commerce. "You also realise that the industry is very systemised to not be sustainable," Karlsson adds. Knowledge is key here. Though many new materials are being introduced to the public spotlight now, most of them aren't as eco-friendly as we'd want them to be. "For example, vegan leather it's mainly plastic which isn't great and also fruit leather is a lot of plastic in it. There's really not an amazing option right now in the industry. That's why we want to be able to still grow," Beate says. "We just want to be open about that so our customers or anyone who's looking at our way understands". The customers now are more aware of their surroundings and better educated than ever. With the constant online surveillance, that the internet makes possible, brands just can't escape the ethical questions that the new-gen is posing before them. You'd either comply or come to nothing.

"There's this new interesting 'wave' or whatever you want to call it, especially Gen Z or younger people who are driving it. There's this new idea of self-expression. We are obviously living a lot online. We just have come into this new world where the finger shoes for a lot of people, are just interesting shoes," Beate shares. Following youth's newfound obsession for absurd aesthetics, she's fascinated by the merge of caricature and functionally. The beast is the beauty. It's all started with the iconic claw shoe that Beate took with her and refurbished through the years. "My creative vision is very sculptural and that works quite well with shoes if you are talking about wearable artefacts. The finger shoe is a commercialized, more wearable version of 'the claw' that we also made an updated version of now. That one is big and brutal. You can walk in them but it's difficult," she laughs.





The shoe symbolizes a spark for a revolution that's to come for the brand. "The whole idea of it, the creative part of AVAVAV, there's like a spectrum of something that we call 'extended fantasy' where the claws for example belong. Then there's the foundation that is more wearable and the little bit more of commercial silhouettes but they both need to correlate with each other which is something new," Beate paints the picture of a platform where common and crazy clash to create hybrid garments. "I still want this to be progressive. I want to think about the future. The most interesting part is when you as a designer are able to bring something new that might be a little bit uncomfortable for some people but that some people also love. Then give this opportunity to level up in what do we view as wearable shoes for example," the designer shares.

Buzzing after the success of their newest SS22 showroom, the AVAVAV's team is already prepping for the next seasons and dreams up a new chapter for the extended fantasy realm. After completing one quest, Beate is more than ready to jump into another dimension. Head on. "You mature as a designer with each collection that you make. I'm really excited about the next collection as well because that's going to be more progressive in terms of gender equality and bringing that into the clothing. It's gonna be fun," she promises. "I want every piece in the collection to feel like it's something that you don't see somewhere else".

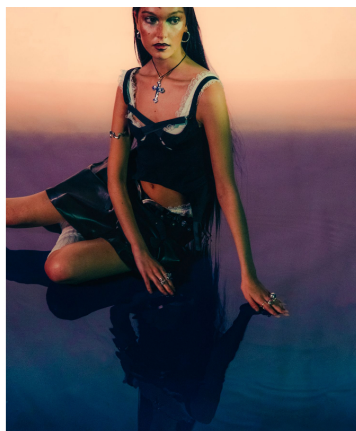
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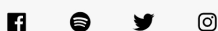
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