

EMILY KELLER REVERSIBLE: SHANGHAI KNITWEAR RENAISSANCE

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In Shanghai, another Italian-instigated Renaissance is emerging. A knitwear Renaissance, which goes by the name of EK Reversible.

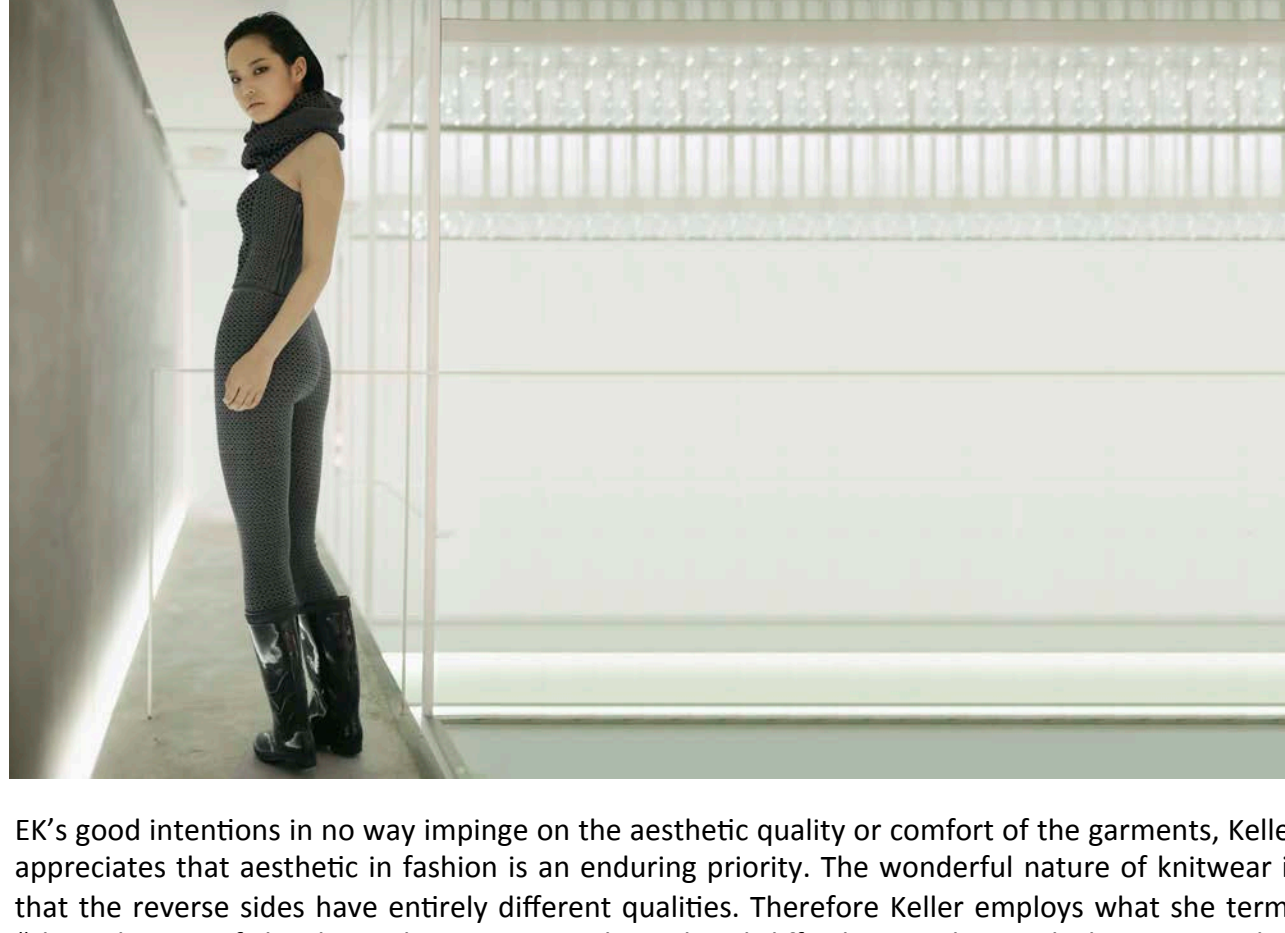
The co-founder Emily Keller is a New Yorker who grew up in a family of busy hands and entrepreneurial minds: her father built electric cars and recently started his own business in robotics, whilst her grandmother and mother are both excellent seamstresses who supported Keller when, at a young age, she began sewing her own patterns. They could hardly have hoped for such a passionate creative in the family.



Keller attended a fashion design program at The Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, affiliated with The Politecnico di Milano in Milan, Italy, where she undertook a year's knitwear study. Perhaps the famous drive of New York's streets pushed her innovative streak, for even during her student days she began to push the boundaries. A class critic and knitwear designer told her it was not possible to make a corset out of knit. She proved them wrong with a beautiful corset made entirely of knit. Whilst in school some people used to jokingly call her "the quiet storm". "I guess this name represents my quiet nature and my inspired designs" she modestly muses.



Keller admits that she and her life and work partner, Manuel Garcia, knew very little about the challenges of living in China. They decided on Shanghai as factories and resources are easily accessible. It has been three years since the move, during which, she has begun using knitwear to "revolutionize the fashion industry ... to make fashion more meaningful... As people start to care more about the environment and ethical practices, smart design will also take these things into consideration." On this basis, EK sources yarn locally from reputable mills near Shanghai, in Zhejiang Province and understands good working conditions are a basic requirement for a smart, relevant, and responsible design." More importantly, this caring attitude is embedded in the heart of EK's designs in that every single garment is reversible. This means the wearer gets two looks and more wardrobe space! This also means 50% fewer natural resources and energy are used and addresses the problems created by fast fashion. Keller explains her designs are "...making every piece more useful and meaningful and therefore encouraging people to keep their clothing for longer." Although the innovator envisages returning to NYC in the future, she also believes she has much growth potential in China and emphasizes that the brand will always have a strong presence in the country.



EK's good intentions in no way impinge on the aesthetic quality or comfort of the garments, Keller appreciates that aesthetic in fashion is an enduring priority. The wonderful nature of knitwear is that the reverse sides have entirely different qualities. Therefore Keller employs what she terms "clean design... If the design becomes complicated and difficult to understand, then we need to take a step back and revise the design. You need to see details that add to the overall function or basic aesthetic of the garment." The craftsmanship of each piece is unlike anything I have ever seen, you need only look at the detail photos on the website to get an idea of the ingenuity involved. Due to the reversibility of the collection there is no place to hide mistakes; Keller has personally developed the fabrics, details and every aspect of the design.



Is Keller too advanced in her approach to fashion for China I wonder? "There are many amazing designers in Shanghai and China. For example, I find Helen Lee and Uma Wang to be exceptional at their best" she enthuses. "In China, the middle market, between mass market and luxury designers, is virtually non-existent. Consumers sometimes don't realise the middle market can give them the opportunity to purchase products of the highest quality for the best price... Since the middle market brands are usually smaller or newer companies, they lack the reputation or image that the big brands have developed, but on the positive side, the price tag mark-ups for the middle market are usually significantly lower."



So how does this foreign innovator see the future of Chinese fashion? "Before Shanghai or Beijing can become well respected in any design field, they need to support the young design talents. China will eventually develop its own modern design language and influence the rest of the world, but without new designers this milestone will be delayed."

It was difficult to get Keller to divulge what we can expect from EK in the future but I was able to squeeze out that they are focusing on a full collection for fall 2014 that will have 15-20 pieces. Since the garments are reversible, this is the equivalent of 30-40 looks. I for one, will be waiting for nothing less than a ground-breaking wardrobe.

You can currently buy EK Reversible at AK Collection at 1285 Huaihai Zhong Lu near Changshu Lu, Suite #31 back door. (Across from #36). Call Sherry for the opening hours (+86) 139 1715 4414.

[STUDIO 5 SUMMER BAZAAR](#)

[ABOUT THE AUTHOR](#)

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Fashion is my job, hobby and passion. I have been writing for AnyWearStyle since the beginning and love that I can share my experiences and knowledge of fashion with the AnyWearStyle community. I consider London as home and my soul but I am a wanderer at heart. You can find me climbing mountains, swimming in seas and foraging in shops the world over, please say 'hello' if you spot me!

EK REVERSIBLE: 上海针织品的文艺复兴
[爱尚志 2014年5月13日 头条 资讯](#)

意大利总是以它独有的气质吸引着人们，现在一个意大利文艺复兴时期针织系列现身上海，让你不用出国就能欣赏到原汁原味的意式时尚。针织物的复兴，并且服装具有可逆性，因此取名为EK Reversible。

创始人Emily Keller是一个纽约人，她靠着自己的双手和头脑创立了EK，成为了一个成功的企业家。她的父亲经营着电动汽车事业，最近还开始研发自己的商业机器人。而她的祖母和母亲都是优秀的裁缝师，他们都很支持 Keller。她成长在一个充满激情和创意在家庭，从很小的时候就开始学习缝纫，设计自己的衣服。

Keller在纽约The Fashion Institute of Technology (时装技术学院)学习了服装设计，这个学院隶属于意大利米兰的The Politecnico di Milano (意大利米兰理工大学)。在那里，她进行了一年多的针织研究。也许是纽约街道上的名牌推动了她的创意，她在学生时代就开始进行一些针织折边设计。一些批评家和针织服装设计告诉她，针织紧身胸衣是不可能做出来的。她用一件美丽的针织紧身胸衣证明了他们的想法是错误的。难怪在学校曾经有人开玩笑地称她为“无声风暴”。“我想这个名字代表着我的安静自然，我的设计灵感便源于此。”

当Keller和她的生活、工作伙伴Manuel Garcia第一次来到上海时，他们在中国面临很大的挑战。由于资源等都很方便，他们决定在上海设厂发展。在三年的发展中，她致力于促进“革命性的针织时装业的发展.....让时尚更有意义.....随着人们开始更加关注环境和道德实践，聪明的设计也会考虑这些因素。”在此基础上，EK从上海附近的浙江省引进原纱，在良好的工作环境下发展自己的品牌。更重要的是，这种关心环境的态度嵌入了EK的核心，它的每一个设计都是可逆的。这就意味着消费者同时拥有了两件衣服。这也意味着50%的自然资源和能源的使用将被节约下来。Keller解释她设计说：“.....使每一件衣服更有用、有意义的，鼓励人们一件服装穿更长的时间。”虽然在将来她将回到纽约，但她认为她在中国有很大的增长潜力，并强调品牌始终在国内有强大的存在。EK的环保理念并未影响服装的审美和品质，相反，Keller认为持久环保本身就是一种时尚。针织服装的奇妙之处在于正反两面会呈现完全不同的时尚品质。每件作品的技艺都是从未见过的，你只需要看看网站上的细节照片便能获得智慧和灵感。由于集合的可逆性，任何一点错误都将无处躲藏，所以Keller亲自开发面料，完成每一个细节设计。

你认为中国时尚的现状如何？
“在上海和中国有许多惊人的设计师，如 Helen Lee和Uma Wang。在中国的大众市场和奢侈品市场之间几乎不存在中间市场。消费者有时意识不到中间市场可以给他们机会去用最优惠的价格购买最优质的产品.....由于中间市场的品牌通常是较小或较新的公司，他们缺乏大品牌的名气或形象，但在积极的方面，市场中间商品的价格标签往往更加优惠。”

那么，作为一个外国创业者，你是如何看待中国时尚的未来的？
“在上海或北京，年轻设计师需要更多的支持和帮助。中国最终会发展自己的现代设计语言，并影响世界其他地区。但如果一直没有新的设计师，这一里程碑将会推迟。”

Keller对于即将推出的系列一直保持神秘，但是重点是这将是完整的2014秋季系列，拥有15-20件服装。由于EK的可逆性，我们将看到30-40个全新Look。让我们一起期待一个不一样的、突破性的设计吧！

你现在可以购买EK Reversible系列，在淮海中路1285号（近常熟路），套房#31后门（穿过#36）。联系电话：（+86）139 1715 4414。