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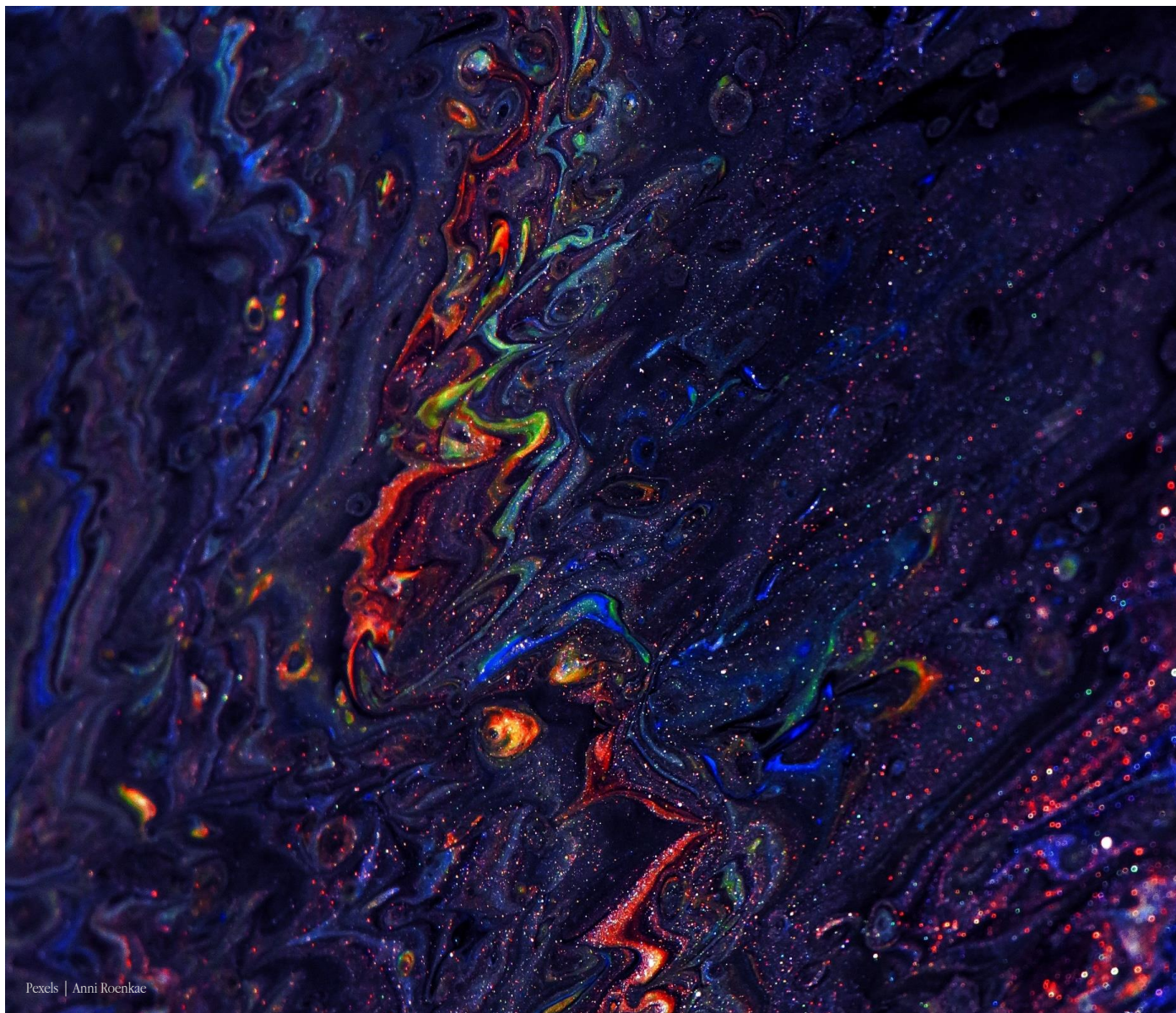
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
BLUVELVET FASHION CONSULTING

VELVET *edge*

Pexels | Anni Roenkae

the Creative inc.

As the large luxury brands at the top echelon of fashion continue to entrench increasingly powerful global structures; and lower production costs & automation drive down prices at the lower end of the market, there is pressure for new entrants in fashion to differentiate themselves in a progressively crowded marketplace.

Today, niching down has become fundamental to be differentiated as is creating a unique brand identity, telling a compelling brand story, and leveraging digital marketing strategies to reach target audiences. But these, no matter how well engineered, can not take the place of a good fashion product. The question is, how do startup fashion labels innovate designs that differentiate them in the marketplace?

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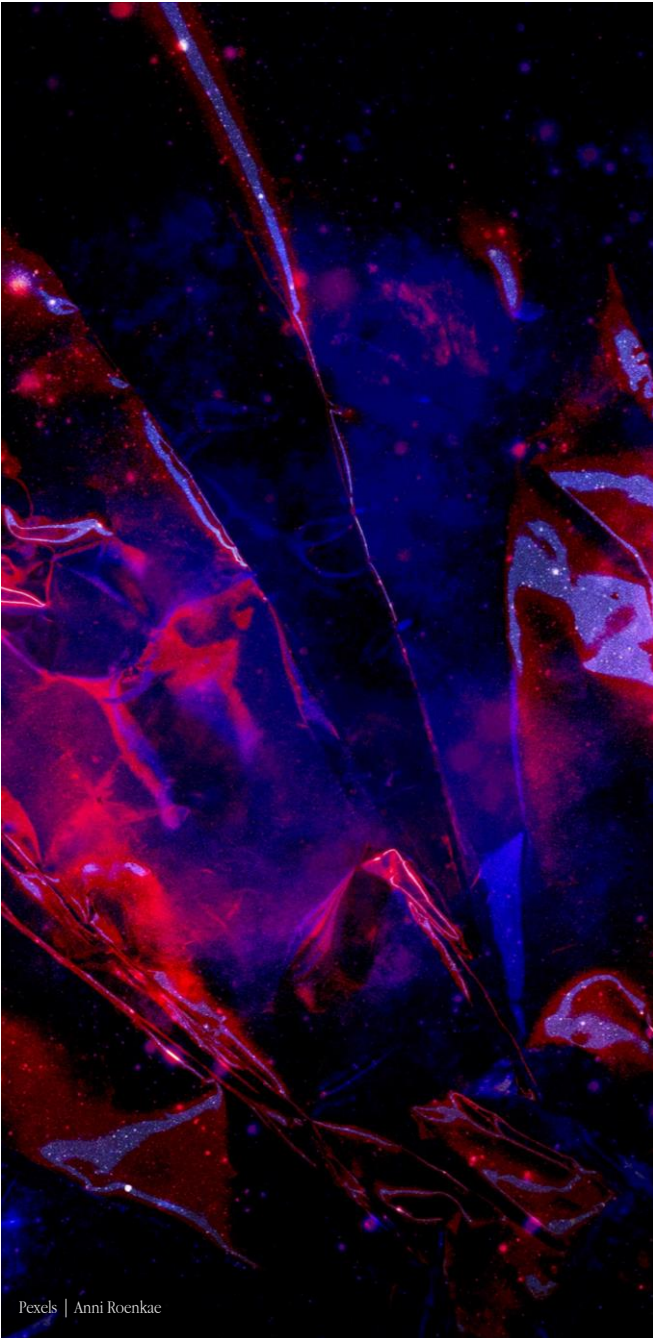
To succeed in fashion, even the most intuitive marketing campaigns and brand stories must be backed by innovative designs and best-in-segment product quality that keep customers coming back. News around innovative design that meets the customized needs of any niche travels fast and establishes market credibility.

How do fashion start-ups achieve this kind of innovation that spurs brand loyalty? For one, **research**. Identifying gaps in consumer preferences and melding inspiration from various sources, such as art, culture, nature, and technology, will shape new ideas and concepts. Also, as in the case of QWSTION's work with Bananatex, **experimentation** with fresh materials and **collaboration** with other creatives stimulates innovation. The former challenges the norm and takes the risk to stand out from the competition. The latter brings fresh perspectives and co-creative possibilities with the potential to excite the market.

As well, a plethora of **AI and 3D printing tools** exist to be leveraged for creating innovative designs and enhancing customer experience. These significantly elevate visualization and overcome challenges too complex for traditional design methods to surmount.

Then there's **problem-solving**. A super skill explored by few. Creative leads need to focus on crafting designs that not only succeed aesthetically but have unique features that solve a specific problem for targeted consumer niches.

The design problem to be solved could focus on: *comfort* (breathable and stretchy fabrics, adjustable waistbands), *mobility*: (using stretchy materials, heat-retaining technology, moisture-wicking fabric, ventilation features similar to Uniqlo's AIRism technology), *weather* (such as Lululemon's waterproofing and wind-proofing outwear, and use of UV protection features for sun exposure), *versatility* (designs that can be worn in multiple ways or worn all day or all trip) *durability* (use high-quality materials and reinforced stitching to ensure longer lasting products) and *accessibility* (incorporating features like adaptive closures, magnetic buttons, or adjustable hems for people with disabilities).

Innovative design doesn't always have to break the bank; But when well executed with the customer in mind, it should create a smile on the way to the bank.

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