



# KALTBLUT

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**COLLECTION 4**  
*THE NORTH*



# Spotlight on Upcoming Designer Anna Gregory

By Biki John

*Anna Gregory's eponymous label, 'Anna Gregory Designs' is greatly inspired by the Nordic countries, and her collections are said to be marked with a, 'distinct Scandinavian mood'. As such, her naturally sourced pieces have a rugged and yet gentle beauty. Her collections which are sourced from natural fibres such as silks, cottons, wools and linens have recurring themes of rustic texture, fullness and wood; and in her words, 'nature' remains her primary inspiration.*

Photography by Gokhan Goksoy

[www.vragency.co.uk](http://www.vragency.co.uk)

Models: Emilia Samelsson and Leanne

**KALTBLUT:** Tell us about your background, how did you get into fashion design?

**ANNA GREGORY:** My mother is an interior designer as well as an artist, so growing up I always wanted to be an interior designer. However when I applied for the University program in Poland, I was unsuccessful. You see in Poland, the competition for universities is extremely high- you can only apply to one university at a time, which leads to thousands of applicants vying for one spot. So instead of wasting a year because I didn't get the place I wanted, I decided to go to a fashion design school. After my first year, I loved the courses I was studying so much within the program (which included fine art, drawing, painting and interior design) that I decided to stick with fashion.

**KALTBLUT:** Where did you go after your fashion design course?

**ANNA GREGORY:** After doing that program in Poland for two years, I then did a BA (Hons) in Fashion Design at the University of East London, BA (Hons).

**KALTBLUT:** How would you say your art background has influenced the pieces you make today?

**ANNA GREGORY:** Well, my old professors in London who see my work today say that my pieces have an artistic edge, so this is probably because of the Fine Art subjects I studied when I was in Poland.

**KALTBLUT:** Currently, you have designed two collections- S/S 12 and A/W 12. How would you describe the aesthetic of your designs?

**ANNA GREGORY:** All my designs are hand-made and I label each and every one as, 'Scandinavian' because my inspiration comes from there. This is why I only use natural fibres in earthy colours and oversized, cocoon shapes. Also, I made the wooden jewellery you see in my first collection.

**KALTBLUT:** Oh, really? I assumed that the wooden jewellery pieces were made by a jewellery designer who collaborated with you for that particular collection.

**ANNA GREGORY:** No they were all made by me, I decided to make chunky, wooden jewellery because they really fitted the natural vibe of that collection, and it made sense to add pieces that had been sourced from nature. With the wooden pieces, I was wholly inspired by my trips to the Fjords, Norway and as a reference I used the pictures I had taken in the forests, paying particular attention to the tree patterns I saw. Every piece was painted, hand-dyed and dip-dyed, meaning that each piece is unique.











**KALTBLUT:** Is there anything in particular you remember about those trips?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Yes, how magical the waterfalls and mountains were and how eerily quiet the Fjords were; it has a special kind of silence. Also in relation to my work, I remember how dedicated I was in ensuring my pieces reflected as much as I was able to capture during those journeys. For example, I would lift a wood pattern from a tree and put it on a dress, and for a whole week I photographed the stones on the pavement, in order to imitate the patterns on my fabrics.*

**KALTBLUT:** Could you tell us about one of your earliest, most memorable Nordic trips?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *That would be the summer when I was ten years old. I went on a road trip with my parents where we started in Bergen, Norway and travelled along the coast, all the way to the North Pole. It was such a magical trip! I'll always remember being fascinated by witnessing the Sami people first-hand. Even from the car, I could tell that they were a strong community of people who lived a life that was totally dictated and inspired by nature.*

**KALTBLUT:** If I had to use two words to describe your clothes, I would say- textured shapes. I like the way you play with different lengths, volumes and silhouettes with your pieces- a straight fitting waistcoat there, a ruched, puff skirt there- is this a reflection of your own personal style?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Well, the oversized pieces in my collection are definitely a reflection of my style. If you open my wardrobe, it is crammed with oversized pieces. My own personal style is understated and yet distinct and this can be seen in my pieces.*

**KALTBLUT:** As of now some of the recurring themes in your work are milk-paint, sustainable, wood, hand-made which are all said to be marked with a distinct Scandinavian mood'. How do you see this evolving in the future?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *I see myself being even more inspired by Scandinavia and continuing my design explorations in that area. I will also continue to be faithful to my use of natural fibres.*

**KALTBLUT:** So far in your current base- London, you have shown your pieces at London Fashion Week (Off-Schedule) as well as Alternative Fashion Week and Graduate Fashion week. How much do you think London supports emerging designers?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *I believe that as a city it supports emerging designers very well. You can see this from the fashion week it hosts where the city pays special attention to new designers like LFW, Off Schedule, where I've shown my work. Also from my personal experience, there are boutiques that have approached me because they want to promote new designers; so I assume that if I am getting this assistance, then other emerging designers are too. There are also many London- based online stores that cater to selling pieces from new designers.*

**KALTBLUT:** Which public figures would you most like to see wearing your clothes?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Oh my God, Sienna Miller! I also love the Polish model, Anja Rubik.*

**KALTBLUT:** What kind of woman do you think you design your clothes for?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Stylish, relaxed women who are able to combine luxury with second hand clothes effortlessly. So for example, she can wear Yohji Yamamoto with pieces from a fabulous retro shop.*

**KALTBLUT:** Is there any designer you would like to collaborate with for a one-off collection?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Stella McCartney, I love the cut and lines of her pieces. Also I admire the stance she makes against fur, as I am anti-fur as well.*

**KALTBLUT:** What kind of music do you play in your studio to stir your creative juices?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *I tend to listen to a lot of classical music or Jazz which used to confuse me because normally, I listen to Hip Hop which is weird.*

**KALTBLUT:** Why is listening to Hip Hop weird?



**ANNA GREGORY:** *Well, people say it doesn't suit me...*

**KALTBLOT:** If you don't mind me saying, that's a very silly thing to say. Music is universal, that's the whole point of it.

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Well, the thing is when I listened to Hip Hop in my studio, I just couldn't concentrate. So I began to listen to classical music and I discovered that due to the rhythm and pace that comes with that style of music, my design team and I was able to concentrate more.*

**KALTBLOT:** I can imagine... The theme for this issue is Ice.Land, Myths, Legends and Nature- what imagery do you conjure up when you hear those ethereal words?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *I actually think of a mood board I made in university a few years ago where for inspiration I used those exact words!*

**KALTBLOT:** Really?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Yes, the mood board borrowed from themes and subjects that were derived from childhood tales like the Ice Queen and 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe'. Really, when you say the theme words of the magazine, my imagination goes straight to these tales.*

**KALTBLOT:** As you know, lots of fashion businesses are driven by social media. How have you found balancing promoting your brand through social media and creating your designs?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *I find it very difficult to keep the balance because even though I use social media platforms like Facebook to engage with my market- it does not come to me naturally. Also, I am an artist and as such, I would rather use my time designing than sitting in front of a computer.*

**KALTBLOT:** What are your dreams for the, 'Anna Gregory' brand for the future?

**ANNA GREGORY:** *For the future, my dream is to have my own boutique in an area like Islington or Shoreditch. In this store I would be in charge of everything from the visual merchandising to the design of the shop. It may sound like a small dream but in London, getting those locations is very difficult.*

**KALTBLOT:** I am intrigued, I expected you to say that you would want Anna Gregory stores around the world!

**ANNA GREGORY:** *Yes that would be great but I feel to achieve something so formidable, you need a lot of help or contacts in the industry. Take Stella McCartney for example, she is undeniably talented but having the surname that she has helped to open a lot of doors for her. So for me now, I want to dream small before I dream big.*

[www.annagregorydesign.co.uk](http://www.annagregorydesign.co.uk)



“I want to  
dream  
small  
before I dream  
Big”







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# Deine Idee für Berlin

beBerlin sucht neue Berlin-Souvenirs. Bewirb Dich bis zum 29.4. mit Deinem Design und zeig der Öffentlichkeit, wie ungewöhnliche Hauptstadt-Souvenirs aussehen können. Eine renommierte Jury prämiert die besten und marktfähigsten Ideen mit bis zu 5.000 Euro. Die nominierten Entwürfe bekommen außerdem eine Ausstellung und stehen mit etwas Glück schon bald als Berlin4U-Kollektion in den Läden der Stadt. Alle Infos auf [www.sei.berlin.de/du](http://www.sei.berlin.de/du)

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