

Extinction Rebellion: Climate activists glue themselves to London Fashion Week venue



Several Extinction Rebellion protesters glued themselves to the door of a London Fashion Week venue

Activists from the Extinction Rebellion campaign group have glued themselves to the entrance of a key London Fashion Week venue.

They were protesting against the fashion industry's impact on climate change.

Samantha Smithson used to be a fashion designer and stylist but joined Extinction Rebellion because she decided her job and the companies she worked with were toxic for the planet.



Activists lay outside a London Fashion Week venue

She told Sky News: “We have to disrupt business as usual in order to get people’s attention.

“We’ve proved that disruption does work and so we will continue to do that until everyone - all industries, not just the fashion industry - gets on board and starts acting accordingly to the climate and ecological emergency we are in.”

Whatever you think about Extinction Rebellion’s tactics, its fashion-focused members are right about their target industry.

It is responsible for around 10% of global carbon emissions.

It produces almost 20% of global wastewater, and often uses chemicals that are bad for the environment.

And as consumers, we don’t help either - it has been estimated that around 85% of all clothes are thrown away rather than donated, recycled or reused.

But young consumers are increasingly driving a shift in thinking.

Michael Kobori, the head of sustainability at denim maker Levi Strauss and Co,

told Sky News that Generation Z (born after 1995) are going to become a target consumer, and that meeting their demands isn't just the right thing to do but simply good business.

He said: "They are activists, they care about the future of the world, they care about the environment.

"These consumers not only want sustainable products ... but what we see is that they are starting to be willing to pay a premium for those sustainable products."

But there is resistance to change too.

Some of the world's most famous brands send their textiles to Fabscrap recycling center in Brooklyn, but half of them want to remain anonymous.



Activists poured black liquid on themselves in protest against the fashion industry using leather

Fabscrap executive director Jessica Schreiber said: "In some cases, I think brands really see the marketing potential right now and want to put a lot of resources behind (sustainability), and in some cases, while it may be happening internally, it's not something they want to talk about publicly.

“In some cases, I’ve had a brand say ‘sustainability is not part of our image’.”

Sara Kozlowski, an executive at the Council of Fashion Designers of America, is pushing her industry to do more.

She told Sky News that the council is working on a set of binding sustainability standards for its members that could be introduced in the coming year.

She said: “I do think there’s been a key acceleration of awareness and consciousness in our community.

“But are we working fast enough? I think we have to work faster. Absolutely.”

Source:

<https://news.sky.com/story/extinction-rebellion-climate-activists-glue-themselves-to-london-fashion-week-venue-11808714>

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