

GALERIE
MICHELINE
SZWAJCER

ATELIER E.B.
(Lucy McKenzie & Beca Lipscombe)
The Inventors of Tradition II

June 12 - July 25, 2015

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Atelier E.B. is the company name under which the designer Beca Lipscombe and the artist Lucy McKenzie sign their collaborative projects. The group was formed in 2007 by Lipscombe and the illustrator Bernie Reid, who are based in Edinburgh, and McKenzie, who is originally from Glasgow and lives in Brussels. Since 2011 the pair have operated as a fashion label, and this June at Galerie Micheline Szwajcer they present their third collection, The Inventors of Tradition II, for sale direct to the public from a custom-built boutique installation.

Art's fascination with fashion rarely penetrates beneath its glamorous surface, seemingly content to perpetuate its contradictions without critical analysis. Atelier E.B., by placing both practices on an equal footing, combine art and fashion to explore many complex themes, including alternative forms of commercial production and distribution. Their designs are produced, sold and promoted ethically, yet are too idiosyncratic to be easily marketed as an 'eco brand'. Atelier E.B. recognise that clothes are sophisticated tools for empowerment and pleasure.

Sportswear has been acting as a modernizing influence on fashion since the nineteenth century, and continues to be at the forefront of how people express their cultural allegiances. In 2014, with the referendum to leave the United Kingdom, Scotland was asked to reflect on its identity, and Atelier E.B. is the only label explicitly to address this through fashion. For IOT II they combine exquisitely woven or knitted cashmeres and silk lingerie with neo-classical nylon 'cosplay' tracksuits. Hand intarsia Scottish football tops in cashmere have nationalist logos appropriated then pixelated. Silk and lace football shorts, oversized polo shirts, a football hooligan paisley shawl, fake Charles Rennie Mackintosh jewellery, counterfeit Bennetton, a trompe-l'œil zip brooch, and fictitious sponsorship from the Clydesdale Bank. Other highlights include a wool mix school-skirt, an Ivan Lendl picnic blanket, the perfect artschool-girl coat, cashmere leisure suits in Black, Derby grey, Blackcurrant and Rum and Eastern European gym shoes.