

GO YOUR OWN WAY

Because every great journey takes a detour

#2 Kerry Murphy

Seeing double? A pioneer of digital haute-couture envisages a huge market

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As lines continue to blur between our digital and physical worlds, the ways we engage with art, culture and industry have also begun to shift. At the 2019 Ethereal digital technology summit, 'Iridescence', the world's first digital-only blockchain garment, sold for US\$9,500. While high-end digital 3D couture can be used to dress a virtual avatar of yourself, blockchain technology enables its encryption with a unique set of code, like cryptocurrency. This creates a true one-off – a digital collectible. "We don't create physical clothing at all, only clothing for our virtual identities," says Kerry Murphy, co-founder (with Amber Slooten and Kevin van Kleef) of digital fashion house The Fabricant, which collaborated with Instagram filter artist Johanna Jaskowska to create Iridescence. "Our customers want the ability to wear these clothes digitally, and content they can put on their Instagram," he explains. But there's another vital angle to virtual fashion: sustainability. Murphy, who grew up in Finland, recalls the impact a T-shirt-making workshop had on him: "There must have been ten kilos of textiles thrown in the corner. I asked, what's going to happen to this? And they said, 'Oh, we're just going to throw it away'." Digital clothing can shape the fashion industry by helping to combat the creation of waste. Curating yourself for the digital age has never been more purposeful. ■

