

**Magazine: Noblesse**

**Issue: November**

**Editor: Jae-suk Kim**

### **ZEITGEIST OF SOPHIE HICKS**

**Acne Studios Seoul store that is opened in Seoul is like a spaceship that came from Sweden. This store that has totally opposite atmosphere between interior and exterior is completed by architect Sophie Hicks's perfect calculation. The tension that stands against tightly between restraint and modesty, impulsion and freedom look alike to Acne studios itself. Fashion and architect are perfect form of art that reflects Zeitgeist said Sophie.**

Sweden is a land of the light and the air. The light that is full with vitality is clean and pure and the fresh air induces reality and unreality at the same time. "The atmosphere of the store is unrealistic and there is a rupture from the scenery of Seoul". This is the statement of Sophie Hicks who designed the Acne studios store in Seoul. As she intended anyone who visits the store will throw a question, "Where am I now?" The building that is made of half transparent polycarbonate reminds us a spaceship that is accidentally landed in Seoul. Followed by the concrete stairs and open heavy entrance door, you get overwhelmed feeling by rough and heavy concrete inside. The four concrete columns support this two story building. Acne studios's unique metal shelf and hanger, the contrast between polycarbonate panel and concrete, the light that lied down over the whole space reinforce unrealistic atmosphere. Sophie Hick is also expert in fashion. Besides Acne studios Seoul store, she designed stores for Yohji Yamamoto, Paul Smith and Chloe. Sophie has strong fashion background and this is how she freely goes through between fashion that is changing always and the architecture that needs to last long which have nothing in common.

Sophie started her career as a guest editor at Harpers and Queen for an article featured on teenager when she was 17. Then she continued working as a fashion editor at Tatler and British Vogue. Her mannish style is almost iconic of European culture and art industry. Short hair that she accidentally got when she was a child, sailor suit of Claude Montana, wide white linen shirt is the image that comes is mind when we think of her. She has been in the cover if i-D magazine and also been in the film L'intervista directed by Federico Fellini talking male role between many women dressed up in gowns. We can say there are many experiences in her background.

There is a simple reason why she left her career as a fashion editor and stylist for Azzedine Alaia then went to study architect at her 26. "I wanted to create something all my own by being an absolute creative person". Without any portfolio she got the entrance permit to AA, one of the most reputable schools of architecture globally. Soon she got a project to design for 'Pop art' exhibition that was held in Royal academy of arts. And she was also in the

center of the exhibition "Sensation" which gave a birth to YBA by designing for the exhibition. She planned also many of fashion stores such as Paul Smith, Yohji Yamamoto and Chloe. How come these fastidious fashion houses want to work with Sophie? It is not just about her clear philosophy and her outstanding sense of visualization on brand's vision. It is more an achievement that she gained after constant research on the brands. "No matter what kind of project it is, understanding the brand well is the most important thing. It is like a research on characters. I visit their office to see how they work, what they have in mind, and what kind of effort they make. It was same for Acne Studios". When she got this project, the first thing that she did was packing her luggage for Stockholm. "The Swedish people who I met were bit conservative, tried to be self-controlled, modest and put emphasis on democratic equality, while Acne studios is strong. It breaks the wall and speaks out loud to give a highlight on the brand. For Acne studios Seoul store, she wanted to bring a slight tension between the Swedish mood and Acne studios itself. Calm and elegant exterior represents Swedish mood while rough concrete inside represents Acne studios. It is like a monster being in a box.

She seemed very satisfied with the result. Before finishing our meeting I asked about her dream project and she answered right away without any hesitation. "Hotel, I really like to design a hotel. I want to design everything that exists in hotel". We might be able to have opportunity to see a hotel that is designed by Sophie. Let's look forward for this.