MODEM Dialogues - In conversation with Tasha Liu

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Tasha Liu, Founder of LABELHOOD
Portrait Tasha Liu ® Labelhood

Questions conceived and hosted by Florian Müller

MODEM:
Having grown up in Jiaxing, a city with a distinguished heritage in silk and textile production and located within the dynamic Yangtze River Delta region, in what ways has this environment shaped your approach to fashion and influenced your current creative and professional endeavors?

TASHA LIU:
My upbringing in Jiaxing had a profound influence on me. I still remember going to the silk fabric shops with my mother when I was a child, where I was first fascinated by the richness of colors and textures. Every summer, my grandmother would make me a new silk dress, and those moments of care and craftsmanship became my earliest lessons in fashion. These family experiences rooted me in an appreciation for materials and making, and though I later chose my own path, those early memories continue to shape how I see creativity and beauty today.

MODEM:
After studying finance, you chose to establish an innovative concept store rather than pursuing a conventional career in the finance industry or corporate management. What inspired you to take this entrepreneurial and creative path instead of following a traditional trajectory?

TASHA LIU:
I chose fashion because of my passion for marketing and branding, and my deep interest in creative individuals. Finance gave me a structured way of thinking, but I wanted a path that allowed space for imagination and dialogue. Fashion provided me with a platform where creativity meets strategy, where storytelling can shape culture, and where entrepreneurs can build communities rather than simply companies. For me, it was less about rejecting finance and more about pursuing what felt authentic to my own curiosity and energy - fashion was the arena where I could contribute most meaningfully.

MODEM:
Labelhood now functions as much more than a store - it has become a cultural meeting point and a springboard for young avant-garde talents in China. Which elements are most essential in building such a vibrant and creative community?

TASHA LIU:
It is not only creativity but also trust, shared values, and openness. At Labelhood, we prioritize authenticity over trend-chasing, and we give young talents the freedom to take risks and experiment. More importantly, we build bridges - connecting designers with audiences, other creatives, and even industries outside fashion. These dialogues are what keep the community dynamic. Fashion here is not just clothing, but a medium of exchange, inspiration, and growth. What sustains Labelhood is not simply showcasing talent, but nurturing the conditions for collective creativity to flourish.

MODEM:
Early recognition and promotion of trends require a certain vision and instinct. Can you describe the origins of this sharp intuition - and has it always been part of your creative process?

TASHA LIU:
My intuition comes from a mix of observation and empathy. I've always been curious about people - how they dress, why they choose certain pieces, and what it says about their identity or mood. I naturally pick up on subtle changes in cultural expression, whether it's in behavior, conversation, or even social media habits. Over time, connecting these small signals has become second nature. This is not about predicting trends as a forecast, but about deeply listening to the present. For me, intuition is less about guessing the future and more about recognizing what is already emerging - respond meaningfully to the times.

MODEM:
Your personal style blends Chinese and Western influences. To what extent do your own tastes and life experiences shape the designers and projects you choose to support?

TASHA LIU:
My personal style reflects both roots and dialogues. It is grounded in Chinese culture yet constantly reshaped through global encounters. This balance deeply affects the designers and projects I support. I am drawn to creators with a strong worldview, who have clarity in what they want to express. For China's younger generation, this often manifests as a blend of Eastern and Western perspectives. Their work speaks fluently across cultures while staying authentic to themselves. Supporting them is not just about promoting design but amplifying diverse voices that can resonate both locally and internationally.

MODEM:
In March 2025, you presented fashion labels that embodied a distinctive spirit - “swift as the wind, steady as the forest, fierce as fire, and unwavering as the mountain.” What is the origin of these symbolic expressions, and how do they help shape the identity of contemporary Chinese fashion?

TASHA LIU:
At the March 2025 Labelhood Pioneer Fashion Art Festival, we used the concept of Jianghu as a way to frame the gathering of over 30 brands. In Chinese tradition, Jianghu is a symbolic arena full of different characters, schools, and values - sometimes in harmony, sometimes in competition. It represents diversity and coexistence. Labelhood mirrors this by providing a stage where brands present themselves in their own unique ways. Rather than enforcing a single style, we encourage multiplicity. This creates a living fashion vocabulary that is both rooted in cultural tradition and outward-looking toward the global stage.

MODEM:
Diversity and inclusion are central to your philosophy. What concrete actions do you take in your daily work to translate these values into practice?

TASHA LIU:
We make sure diversity and inclusion are not slogans, but real practices embedded in daily work. This begins with casting models of different backgrounds, genders, and body types, showing beauty in all its forms. It extends to collaborating with brands of varied styles and perspectives, ensuring that the stage is never one-dimensional. Curating with this awareness means actively breaking stereotypes and making space for overlooked voices. Inclusion also means providing platforms for dialogue, so participants feel safe to express themselves and be heard.

MODEM:
During Shanghai Fashion Weeks, the Labelhood Pioneer Fashion Art Festival transforms the Rockbund District into a vibrant space for fashion, art, and emerging creators. What was the motivation behind expanding Labelhood into this multidisciplinary event, and how does it fit into the broader Fashion Week context and the social environment?

TASHA LIU: Fashion has never been isolated - it exists within a larger cultural ecosystem. When we expanded the Labelhood Pioneer Fashion Art Festival, the goal was to create a space where fashion could interact with art, music, performance, lifestyle, and dialogue. This transformed the festival into a cultural hub that is alive, dynamic, and accessible. Within Shanghai Fashion Week, it adds depth and immersion, offering audiences more than runway shows. It makes fashion part of everyday life rather than a distant spectacle. It offers audiences a richer, more immersive experience, making fashion a real part of everyday life.

MODEM:
Regular collaborations with international creatives have positioned you as a key voice in China’s next-generation fashion. How has this exchange shaped your vision and self-understanding as a curator?

TASHA LIU:
Collaborating with international creatives has broadened my vision by highlighting both differences and shared values. Working with others in diverse contexts revealed that while

cultural references vary, the desire to innovate and express is universal. These exchanges challenge me to rethink how Chinese voices are presented, making sure they resonate globally without losing their unique identity. Over time, this dialogue has sharpened my perspective as a curator, allowing me to situate local creativity within an international conversation. It is a process of mutual growth - learning from others while finding new strength in one’s own culture.

MODEM:
With a keen eye for new trends, which major or subtle developments in fashion do you think will attract the most attention in the coming years? And what changes have you noticed in how the fashion industry addresses mental health?

TASHA LIU:
Solely from the perspective of the influence of Chinese designers on both domestic and even overseas markets, Chinese brands are achieving an integration of individual cultural roots and a collective international language. This will be realized through overall advancements in fabric, manufacturing, and storytelling, ultimately reshaping the market's perception of "Made in China" and "Design in China."
The fashion industry has always been about unleashing the self rather than suppressing it. Good design encourages extreme self-expression and serves as an effective tool for enhancing self-awareness, from designers to consumers.