

Zimmermann: Entrepreneurship in Fashion

Saturdays spent sorting through racks of clothes at local markets whilst eyeing what others are finding is a quintessential experience for young women in Sydney. However, it is rare to be flicking through the designs of two locals whose work, 3 decades later, would be shown off at Paris Fashion Week, the pinnacle of global fashion success.

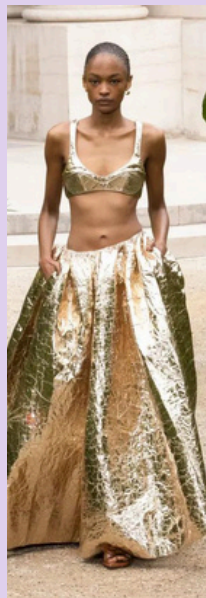
Founded in 1991, the Zimmermann sisters combined their skills to sell Nicky's unique designs at Paddington markets, whilst Simone was keen to put her computer marketing degree into something more creative. The label was picked up by Australian Vogue, who featured the sisters in a two-page editorial piece, skyrocketing them to success resulting in the opening of their first storefront in Darlinghurst, and soon many more.



In 2011 growing international demand saw the brand expand into the US, UK, Europe and China. Giving rise to now over 50 Zimmermann stores worldwide and many local boutiques still carrying the Zimmermann label. Their success is evident in their participation in New York and Paris Fashion Weeks alongside renowned European brands like Chanel and Dior.

Advent, an American private equity firm, recently purchased a majority stake in the company, whereby the total evaluation of the business exceeded more than \$ 1 billion US. The capital investment will help fund the expansion of the brand into the Asian and Middle Eastern markets.

Nicky Zimmermann, the current creative director, told Vogue in 2023, “We have never had anyone to follow, so we have always had to forge our own path, and that has been good for us”. Their persistence, coupled with humble beginnings, grounded them to confidently adapt into international markets, both in the business and design sense. The journey of the Zimmermann sisters shows us that passion can lead to success in the most unique and unpredictable ways.



-Ness Lee &
Alison Chung