

# DESIGNER DECODED: KOCHÉ

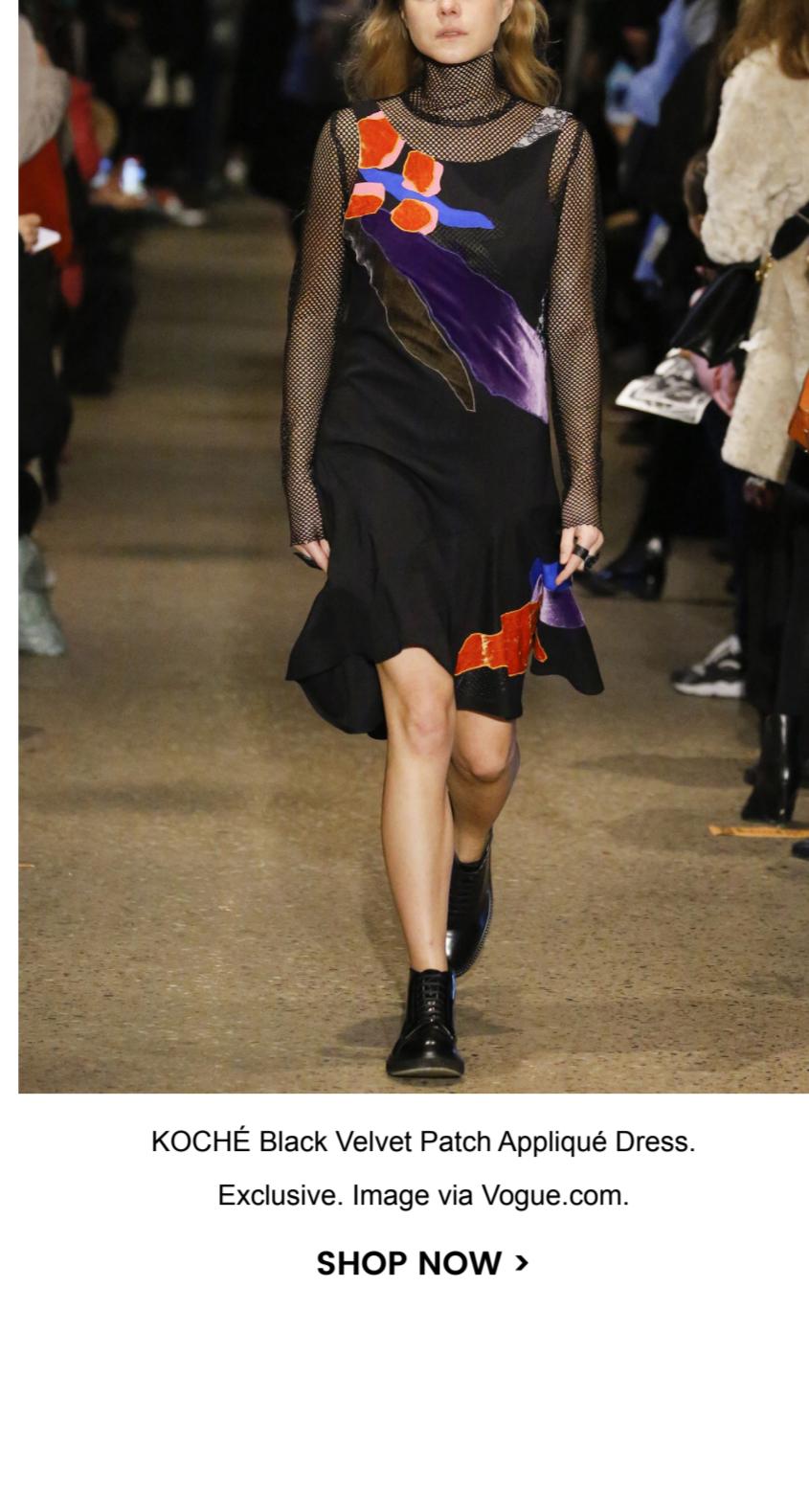
The French designer taking couture off its rarefied pedestal and placing it firmly in the middle of the street.



KOCHÉ Red Velvet Embellished Asymmetric Dress. Exclusive.

Image via Vogue.com.

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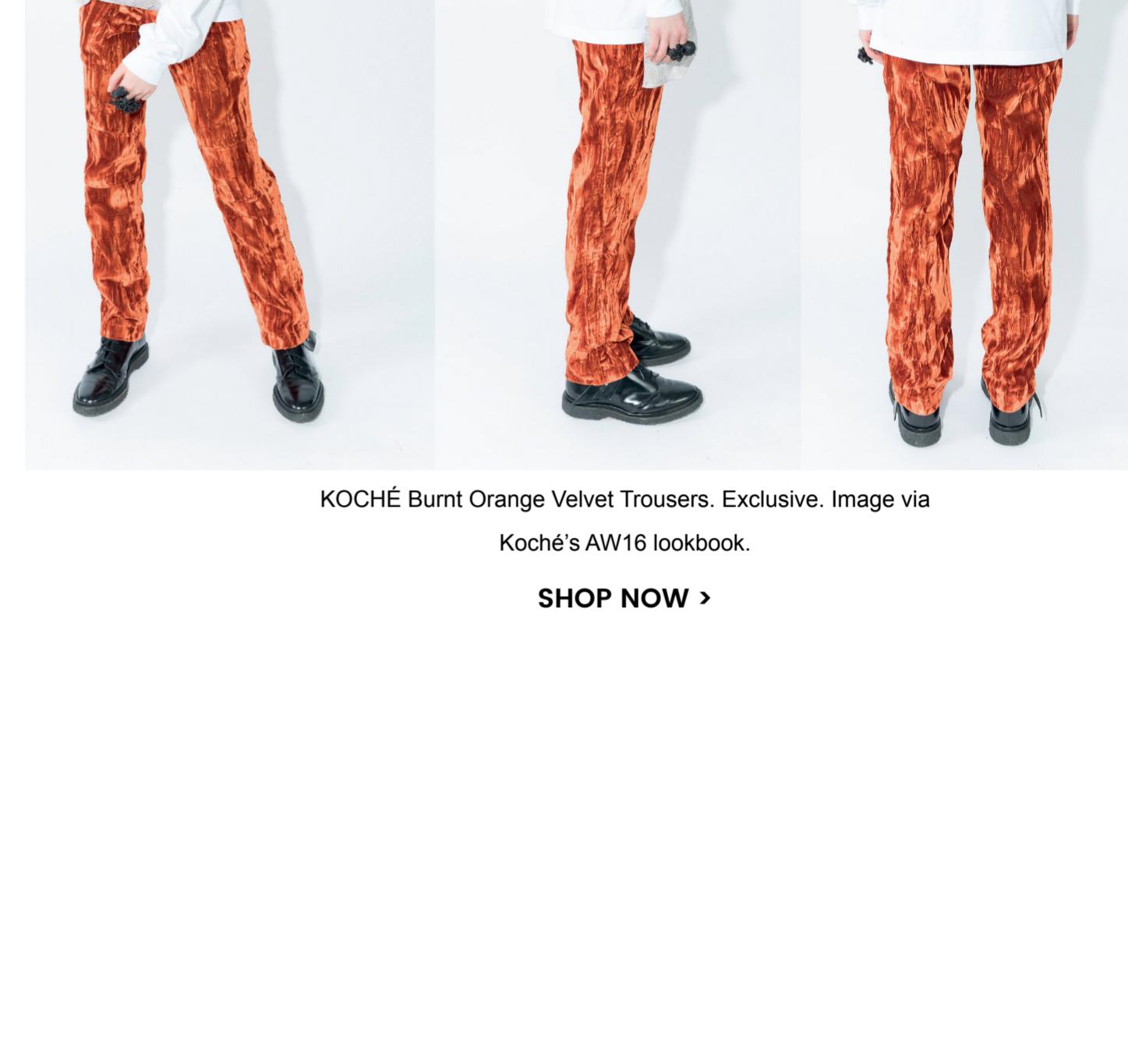
KOCHÉ Black Velvet Patch Appliqué Dress.

Exclusive. Image via Vogue.com.

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## WHO is behind Koché?

Growing up in the suburbs of Strasbourg watching fashion TV Christelle Kocher always knew what she wanted to be: a fashion designer following in the footsteps of her role models Rei Kawakubo, Miuccia Prada and Madeleine Vionnet. After graduating from Central Saint Martins, Kocher went on to hone her skills with stints at Dries van Noten, Sonia Rykiel and Chloé. When she was approached by the Chanel-owned feather specialists Maison Lemarié Kocher took up the position of Artistic Director and has breathed new life into the atelier in the six years since. 'I try to challenge them, both in their techniques and the way that they work.' But Kocher always had aspirations for a label of her own. In 2014 her first collection was presented in a shopping centre in the centre of Paris – the least elitist venue she could come up with. Her fusion of couture technique and street and sportswear was instantly acclaimed, with the international fashion press celebrating her as one of French fashion's most electrifying new talents. Places in the final for the LVMH prize followed in 2015 and 2016.



KOCHÉ Burnt Orange Velvet Trousers. Exclusive. Image via Koché's AW16 lookbook.

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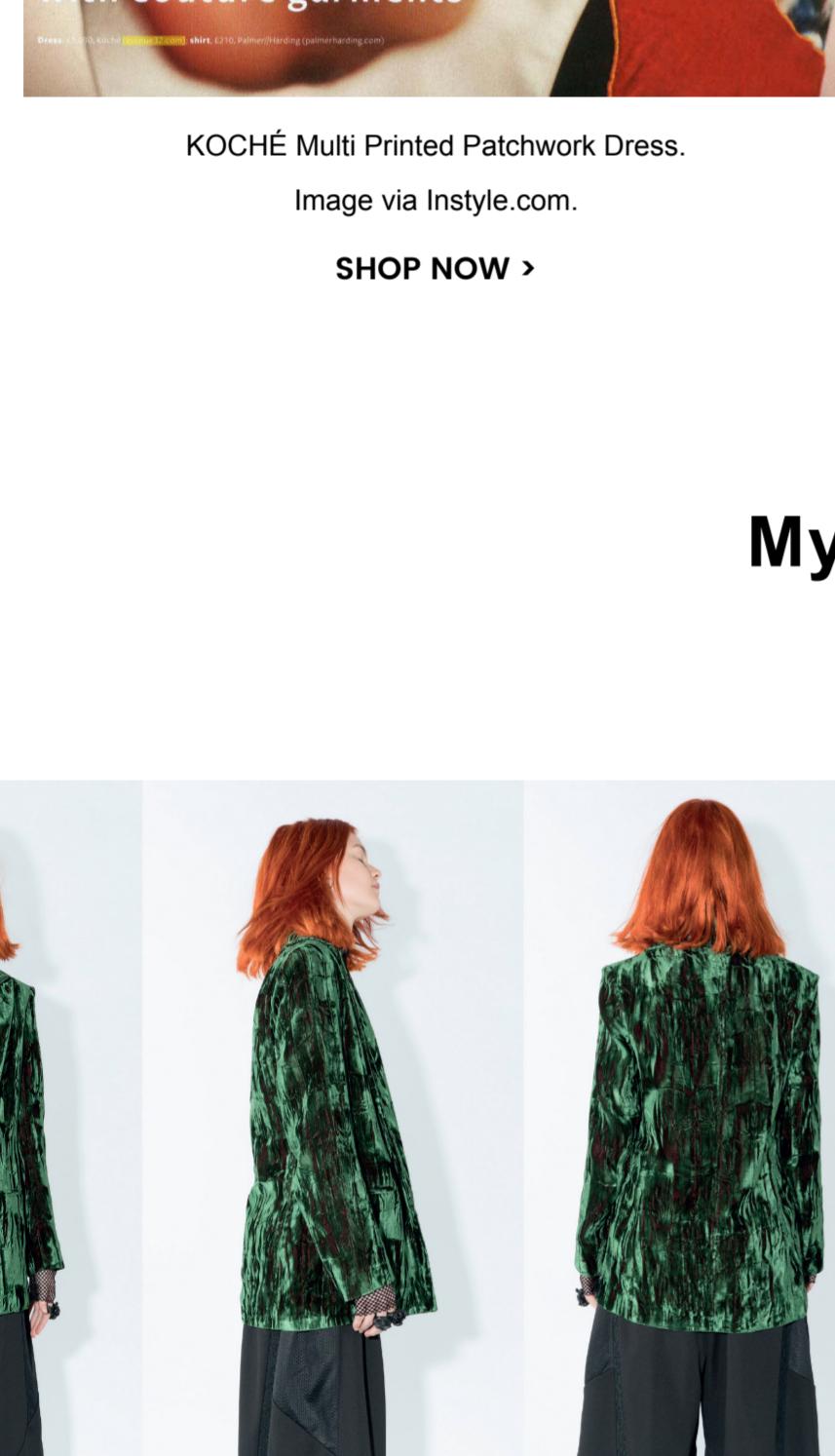
## WHAT is the look?

Applying her couture technique to everyday clothes in the most radical fashion, modelled by an intriguing mixture of runway regulars, people scouted on the street and friends, the Koché look is precious, but not so precious that you can't run an errand in it. 'I don't target one specific woman. My fashion is very open and generous,' Kocher explains. Her core ambitions for Maison Lemarié – revisiting the heritage of haute couture, and making sure the craft survives and thrives – combine with a more personal design mission. 'The idea of AW16 was to marry strong pieces in a casual outfit, while giving a rare touch to the silhouette. I love to bring new materials into play. I love embroidery on jersey or sportswear materials, to bring a comfort and sense of modernity to the clothing.' Growing up a sporty child mostly in tracksuits, Kocher was always able to appreciate the potential of these more humble garments. The inspirations for her spin? 'The street, the people, books, music, friends but art above all. For this collection, I started with a motocross picture from my brother's adolescence and some Nico Vassellari collages. I wanted to use Swarovski rocks and crystals too. But I work very intuitively, I drape a lot.'

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## WHY do you need it now?

In a word? Attitude. In another, quality. Kocher puts it best: 'For this collection I wanted a freedom of style and attitude, to be able to mix all types of codes and clothes. It's relaxed, feminine, comfortable, but with very sophisticated craft, and exceptional know how.' Given Kocher's unparalleled expertise, these are pieces you're not going to find anywhere else, produced by top-tier French heritage manufacturers, the most famous Maisons d'Arts. The hype is justified – expect these well-made pieces to last you, and the high energy colours, myriad textures and painterly patterns to elicit smiles as you walk down the street.



KOCHÉ Multi Printed Patchwork Dress.

Image via Instyle.com.

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**'I don't target one specific woman.  
My fashion is very open and generous.'**



KOCHÉ Forest Green Velvet Jacket. Exclusive.

Image via Koché's AW16 lookbook.

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KOCHÉ Beige Wool Appliquéd Patch Skirt. Exclusive. Image via Koché's AW16 lookbook.

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## WHERE next for the brand?

'A lot of work! And continued passion for fashion.' With just two collections under her belt so far, Kocher has well-justified big plans for her brand. Jewellery – a collaboration with another Chanel-owned specialist, fine-jewellery makers Goossens – and shoes made with Adieu both have bright futures, and menswear is on the horizon. In short, plenty for fans of Koché to get excited about. Our conclusion? Snap up a piece now – it's sure to be one for the archive.