



**The Coronovarius pandemic has hit all business owners – small and large – with full force. Over the past week, the world has witnessed the temporary closure of stores across different sectors, including fashion, with efforts to reduce social contact that might spread the disease**

Anaria has spoken to independent brands and designers on how they are dealing with the uncertainty of running a business amidst this crisis.

Florence Cools (@florence.cools) a co-founder of Damoy Store, Damoy Showroom and designer at La Collection, shares her insights:

**1. What impact is the pandemic having on your business/work-life?**

To be honest, during the first days I didn't notice a lot of changes since I work from home most of the times when I am not travelling to our showrooms or ateliers.

We had just arrived back from Paris Fashion Week, where we showed our fantastic Winter20 collection, received all orders, started up production when the news of a possible lockdown hit Belgium.

Since most of our production happens here we didn't have a lot of things go wrong until that moment.

Also, all of my Italian fabric suppliers were still doing everything in their power to get our fabrics delivered. But then, of course, we had to shut down our store in Antwerp. Our Showroom also immediately slowed down since everything was closing down one by one.

**2. How are you coping with the uncertainty that is affecting almost every area of life, particularly work?**

We are not the kind of people to just sit back and hope things will brighten up soon.

We are working hard on new ways of showing our collections at the showroom. Hopefully, soon I can share more on this because it is a super exciting project!

It's important not to panic too hard and find positive ways to react to situations like this. Everything that will happen in your business in the next coming months or maybe years, will depend on how you react in the present time to this crisis.

**3. How can we all support each other through this?**

I think a very important way of supporting each other is to continue life as before. If you can't reach your favourite store, go online and see what they are offering.

Most stores have found very creative ways to still offer customers the same products. As a customer, it is important to support your favourite stores if you want them to keep existing after this crisis.

You have to realise that a lot depends on the behaviour of you as the customer.

Also, it feels so good when you are sitting at home in your sweats and your silk spring dress gets delivered to the door, then summer dreaming can begin.

And where would we all be without dreaming?