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*The Hundreds*  
SINCE 1980







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# SENSORY





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HYPEBEAST  
18

KEVIN WONG  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

SENSORY  
ISSUE  
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IN

HB 18  
Editor's Letter

Having only ever lived in metropolitan cities where the only solace from the constant noise is—under the head of a shower, I've found it nearly impossible to process all that comes my way throughout the day. What's proved even harder, is retaining the ability to stay engaged with what's in front of me.

The constant competition to capture attention has resulted in an unbearable overstimulation of our senses. This rings true both in the digital realm—across the rapidly increasing news posts, and ever-expanding social media platforms—and in the material world with sweeping billboards. Traditional companies and established brands alike are taking on new identities in attempts to remain visible to consumers and stay in the race.

Hence the decision to focus on the concept of Sensory for this issue was a defiant one. The challenge, though counter-intuitive, was to think in terms of how we feel, concentrating on our senses—on how we see, hear, smell, taste and feel things. While

hunting for the different segments and stories to be explored, with the intention of discerning the truly significant sensory experiences from the obnoxious ones, we were in turns equally intrigued and disgusted.

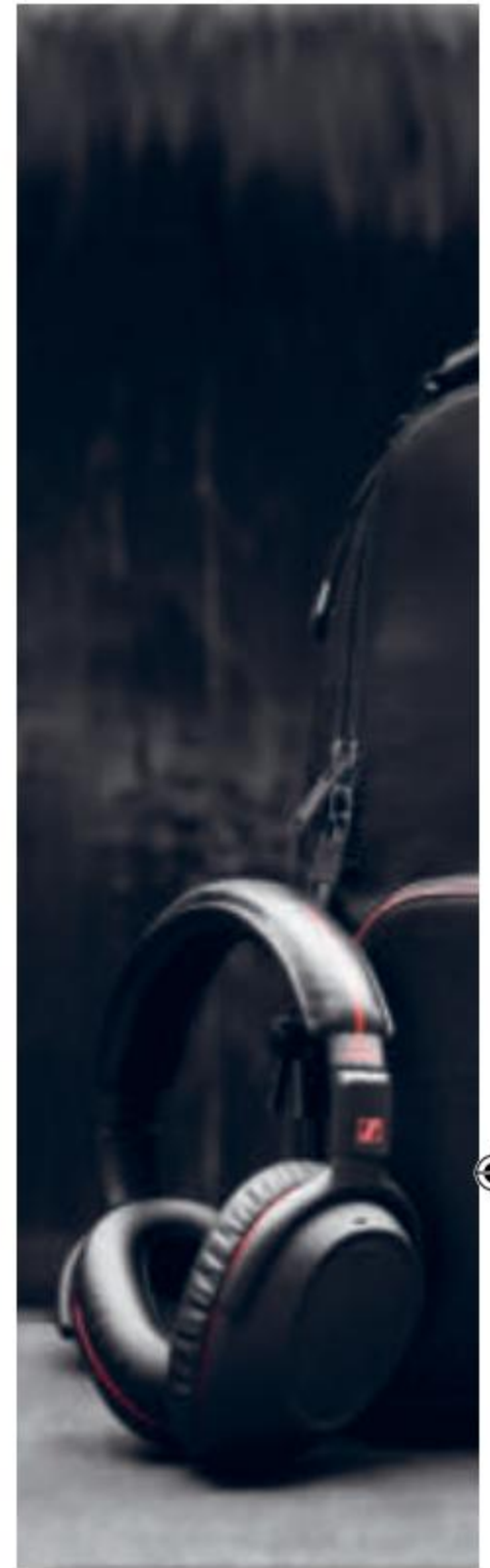
The creative minds we've selected for The Sensory Issue are the ones who have successfully translated the superficiality of physical input, to change the ways in which we become aware of the world. These elements form the groundwork for the parts of consciousness that seem unique to humans—a sense of identity, time, limits, similarities, differences—the components of self-awareness which simultaneously serve to drive us apart and make us indistinguishable from one another.

Hopefully the following pages will succeed in presenting our guests in their true colors, as they repackage the world's white noise to not only rouse the senses but to regain our confidence in a landscape which so often sees us living detached and desensitized.





# DIOR HOMME x SENNHEISER



Dior's Kris Van Assche-headed menswear offshoot, Dior Homme has the final word on the hybridization of high fashion and tech accessories in its latest collaboration with Sennheiser. Rendered in a predominantly black color scheme with muted red accents, the noise-cancelling Sennheiser PXC 550 Wireless headphones are paired with the Dior Homme Mini-Backpack in scuffed premium leather for the jet-set sophisticate. Released alongside the Sennheiser HD 800 S headphones, the HDVD 800 headphones amplifier, the IE 800 ear-canal headphones, and their accompanying leather carry pouches, the Dior Homme x Sennheiser collection is now available from select Sennheiser boutiques worldwide.







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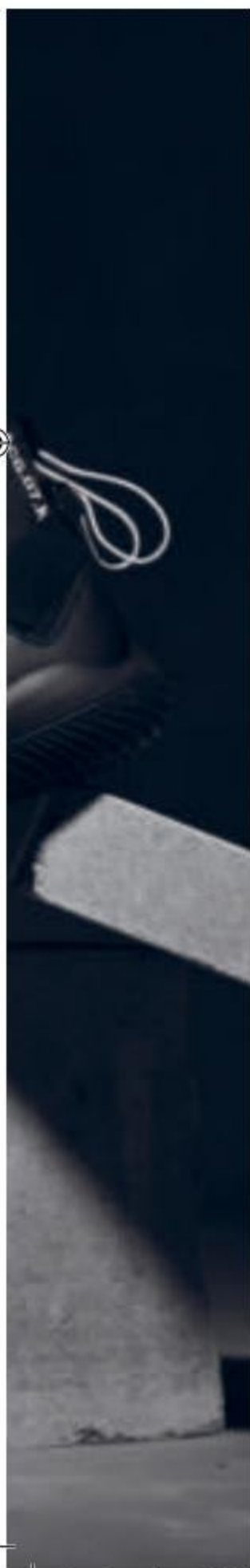
  
*Tanqueray*  
— NO. TEN —







ACRONYM founder Errolson Hugh's first original sneaker design has been unveiled under the NikeLab ACG banner in the form of the 07 KMTR. The mid-top silhouette sees the use of a water-resistant textile upper, while a magnetic midfoot strap and bungee cord heel toggles provide double the lockdown. Reflective detailing and a distinctive ribbed outsole provide the finishing touches to this urban commuter-oriented sneaker. The NikeLab ACG 07 KMTR is now available in an initial offering of colorways from NikeLab locations worldwide for \$150 USD.



# NIKELAB ACG 07 KMTR





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**single** song in  
any **single** room.



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# BALENCIAGA TRIPLE-S



Enfant terrible of the fashion world, Demna Gvasalia has never been one to shy away from making the ugly beautiful. His latest object of fixation is the clunky sneaker, transmogrified to new heights in the Triple-S sneaker for Balenciaga. Here, its silhouette is artfully ballooned to Gaudi-esque dimensions thanks to a triple-stacked sole unit featuring wavy motifs. Not inclined to stop at its grotesque proportions, Gvasalia has also pre-distressed the Triple-S with broken-in calfskin leather and suede accents and blatant yellowing on the sole. The Balenciaga Triple-S is now available from select retailers such as Neiman Marcus for \$795 USD.



**TV, movies  
and ~~if only there~~  
~~was a way to~~  
~~play~~ music too.**



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Father-and-son designers Toshikiyo and Kazuhiro Hirata of Kapital have penned an investigation in cloth into the kachina tradition of the Hopi Indian tribe of northeastern Arizona. Kachinas are the spirit beings of the mesa-inhabiting people, who routinely embody them in religious ceremonies to invoke everything from rainfall to fertility. Kapital's wearable interpretation of this ritual takes the form of a crew sweater that is imbued with powerful supernatural symbolism and filtered through a contemporary Japanese lens. This clothbound allegory is constructed from 7G cotton knit to depict a sensory pantheon of motifs, from where the thunderbird deity peers back out. Now available from select retailers such as delstore for \$462 USD.

KAPITAL THUNDERBIRD X  
KACHINA SWEATER





# Wake up ~~The Silent~~ ~~Home~~



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# MAD ET LEN ASPHALTE CANDLE

Founded by Sandra Fuzler and Alexandre Piffaut in 2006, Mad et Len is a small perfumery-slash-lifestyle company whose repertoire ranges from fragrance to furniture. Their latest offering comes in the form of soy-based candles in their Asphalte scent, wrapped in towering candleholders made of hand-hammered iron in a black fumé finish. Encased within handcrafted brass, the Asphalte scent is inspired by the saccharine smell of pavement after a hot summer rain. Mad et Len's creations are concocted in the small village of St. Julien du Verdon in the south of France, their iron vessels hand-forged by local blacksmiths. A marriage of avant-garde olfactory formulas and artisanal craft, the candles are available in 19cm, 24cm and 29cm models for \$211, \$245 and \$279 USD respectively.





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SENSORY

# BLAISE MAUTIN FRAGRANCE



The private label of Blaise Mautin, the mastermind behind all of visvim's fragrances, has an inimitable reputation as one of the best in the perfume business. With made-to-measure scents starting with a four-digit price tag, one would be lucky to come across his work, strewn in very specific locations such as visvim flagship stores, certain Park Hyatt locations, and on individuals in possession of relatively deep pockets or a very deep commitment to smelling the best there is. Fragrances by Monsieur Mautin that are accessible to members of the general public do exist, but are extremely elusive. This vetiver begins with notes of Italian bergamot, accompanied by a heady dose of neroli and floral notes of rose and jasmine. The intoxicating package is grounded by hints of cardamom and thyme. The formula's more than 45 ingredients make it heady in complexity yet light on the wearer. Fragrances are available at [blaisemautin.com](http://blaisemautin.com), prices upon request.



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# THROUGH THE EYE

## Needles

WORDS  
**CALUM GORDON**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**KO TSUCHIYA**

INTERVIEW  
**HASSE LEMOLA**





# OF A NEEDLE











Just months before the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, a peculiar-looking group of teenagers descended upon the streets of Tokyo. As W. David Marx's book, *Ametora*, recounts, they were unlike anything anyone had ever seen before—they wore wild madras checks, button-down shirts, slicked their hair away from its parting, and would stand outside shops smoking and chatting long into the night. The local shopkeepers were perplexed, politicians were spooked. And with the games just a short time away—an event which was supposed to showcase a new, reformed post-war Japan—a series of late night raids were carried out by police, bundling sharply-dressed teens into the backs of vans before issuing them with a warning not to return. For the authorities, there was a genuine fear that this new, subversive-looking youth tribe would impact visitors' impressions of the forthcoming event.

In hindsight, this group was perhaps the first large-scale visual manifestation of Japanese obsession with American style—one which continues to this day. It coincided with the release of *Take Ivy*, a seminal book which documented the Ivy League style of American

students and would later inform the sartorial choices of swathes of Japanese youths in the months and years to come.

Keizo Shimizu was not part of the group that was swooped upon by local Tokyo police—he grew up in Kofu City, around 80 miles west of the Japanese capital—but in many ways, his story follows a similar arc. As a young teenager, he became obsessed with all things Americana. It is a fixation that still informs his work today—Shimizu is the founder of the Japanese company Nepenthes, which acts as a retail store in several locations (including New York), as well as an umbrella group for labels such as Engineered Garments, South2 West8 and Needles.

Needles is Shimizu's own personal project, a label which he founded over two decades ago specializing in weird, fantastic reworkings of archetypal American menswear. Think classic flannel shirts, spliced and torn, patched up and dyed; or a notched lapel jacket crafted from panels of multiple old U.S. army parkas, with varying hues of olive green that create a strange

**AS A YOUNG TEENAGER,  
HE BECAME OBSESSED WITH  
ALL THINGS AMERICANA.  
IT IS A FIXATION THAT STILL  
INFORMS HIS WORK TODAY.**









FEATURE





camouflage-like motif; or mohair cardigans, which channel all the effortlessness of Kurt Cobain's thrift shop aesthetic in the most subtle way possible. While stylistically different, each item evokes the same spirit of those 1960s Tokyo teenagers in taking classic elements of American style and reimagining them in a way that blends exuberance and attention to detail—through the eye of a needle, if you will.

“It was a time when there were only a couple men's fashion magazines, one of which was *Men's Club*,” says Shimizu, recalling his first introduction to American style during his teenage years. “They had an issue that focused on Ivy League fashion. I looked through it a bit and American Ivy League students were featured on the pages. It was after the *Take Ivy* book that was largely responsible for the explosion of U.S. collegiate style amongst Japanese youths at the time.” From there, *Men's Club* became a “bible” to Shimizu. He would devour each issue as soon as it hit newsstands, memorizing the brand names and each of their nuances.

Growing up, his father owned the local movie theater and would often travel to Tokyo to seek out imported U.S. films for his cinema. Consequently, Shimizu developed a taste for the West from an early age, playing baseball and soaking in movies like *West Side Story*. After leaving high school, he set off for Tokyo to study at the city's renowned Bunka Fashion College, which has produced such avant-garde luminaries as Yohji Yamamoto, Junya Watanabe and UNDERCOVER's Jun Takahashi. It was at Bunka, Shimizu said, where he learned the “fundamentals of clothing.” And like many of his fellow alumni, his work has largely focused on breaking those very rules ever since.

Upon graduating, Shimizu's journey to founding Nepenthes saw him initially working at a store run by an American-focused import clothing company. It was there that he first met Daiki Suzuki, the future founder of Engineered Garments and someone who

was instrumental in the early years of Nepenthes. “Suzuki was into COMME des GARÇONS and other Japanese designer brands, and I was the only other person he could really talk about them with. If he talked with other people about domestic designer brands, they would respond with things like ‘oh that's not even for men,’” he recalls, illustrating the conservative nature of Japanese society during those years in a way that almost seems paradoxical, considering much of Rei Kawakubo's later gender-defying work. “Sometimes people would even cut the tag off of his COMME des GARÇONS shirts. It was that kind of a time.”

Shimizu founded Nepenthes in 1988 at the age of 29, and Suzuki later joined him to work as a buyer. Together, the duo would regularly travel to the U.S. to seek new labels for the store in Tokyo, often finding themselves scanning the Yellow Pages in motel rooms looking for local factories that might lead them to discover an unheard-of brand for the Japanese market. And while they succeeded—they pioneered labels such as Tod's driving shoes in Japan—Shimizu soon felt the urge to augment these products with those derived from his own vision, eventually founding the label Needles.

The brand was not an instant success. “I think it was a little bit difficult for the customers to understand,” reflects Shimizu. “At the beginning it was more about deconstruction, simple silhouettes, using alternative materials and dyeing wools into different colors. It was a little bit more avant-garde and design oriented.”

According to the designer, the turning point was establishing Rebuild by Needles, a line which deconstructs flannel shirts and military garments before patching them all back together, creating unique pieces where no two are the same. “I think that was about six or seven years ago,” he says. “Needles started really early, but the Rebuild line was when I think people began to understand my personal aesthetic and vision. Back then it cost me





FEATURE

EACH ITEM EVOKES THE SPIRIT  
OF THOSE 1960S TOKYO  
TEENAGERS, RE-IMAGINING IT IN  
A WAY THAT BLENDS EXUBERANCE  
AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL.







“\$1 USD for three shirts so I could buy as many as I liked. It was difficult to find my size because most of the time the pieces were a little too big, so I decided to remake them.”

Between Needles’s main collection and Needles Rebuild, Shimizu’s brand began to gather steam, garnering a loyal band of consumers in the past five or six years. For some, like myself, his vision was the perfect antidote to the years of increasingly stale heritage-led menswear which had preceded it. While some had sold off their Red Wings and beard oil in favor of technical sportswear labels, others saw a devilish subversiveness in Shimizu’s bastardized

American classics, as if someone had torn up their old wardrobe and decided to start again. And up until recently, that would neatly conclude the story—a small, independent brand making great clothes in Japan, with a sizeable group of followers.

But Shimizu has since hit upon a newfound—and perhaps unforeseen—source of success. A quick Google search of Needles today is less likely to throw up images of the brand’s quirkily-styled lookbooks, but rather that of ASAP Rocky or Tyga draped in their wares. As a result, the brand’s track pants—a simple poly-cotton pant with a striped panel that runs down each leg—have begun to sell out almost instantly,







with New York's Nepenthes store struggling to keep them in stock and reseller websites like Grailed seeing prices for them pushed higher and higher.

Of course, all the hype could simply be the result of celebrity endorsement, particularly by A\$AP Rocky and his crew of well-dressed cohorts, which has led to this phenomenon of a relatively niche Japanese menswear label being coveted in the same way as Gucci or Raf Simons. However, it is just as likely that this success can be attributed to Shimizu's unique eye for style and his ability to create items that walk a tightrope between avant-garde and archetypal Americana. "It's not a real surprise for me. Needles purposefully blends in subtly showy and seductive

items to its collection," he shrugs matter-of-factly, then adds: "ten years ago when I introduced them I couldn't sell them at all. I just liked them so I continued making them... Even if something sells extremely well, the concept that informs the brand won't be affected."

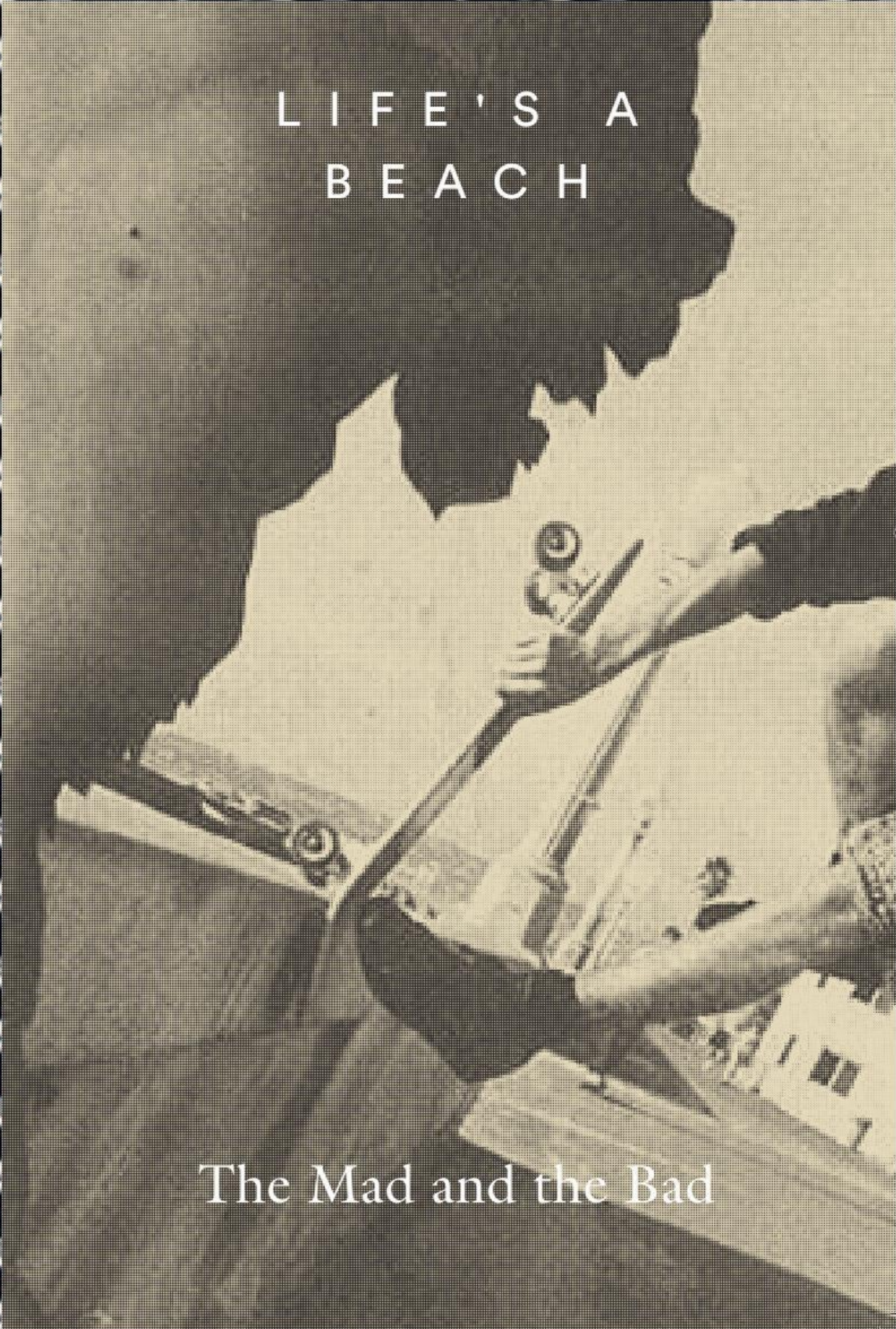
That concept, of taking the understated—some might say banal—wardrobe of the American male and making it into something unique, better or even slightly peacocky, has pretty much existed within Shimizu's psyche and those of his peers since the 1960s. Few have executed it better than Shimizu himself. The irony is, that after years of westward-looking obsession, it is now being mirrored back.







L I F E ' S A  
B E A C H



The Mad and the Bad







WORDS  
ARTHUR BRAY



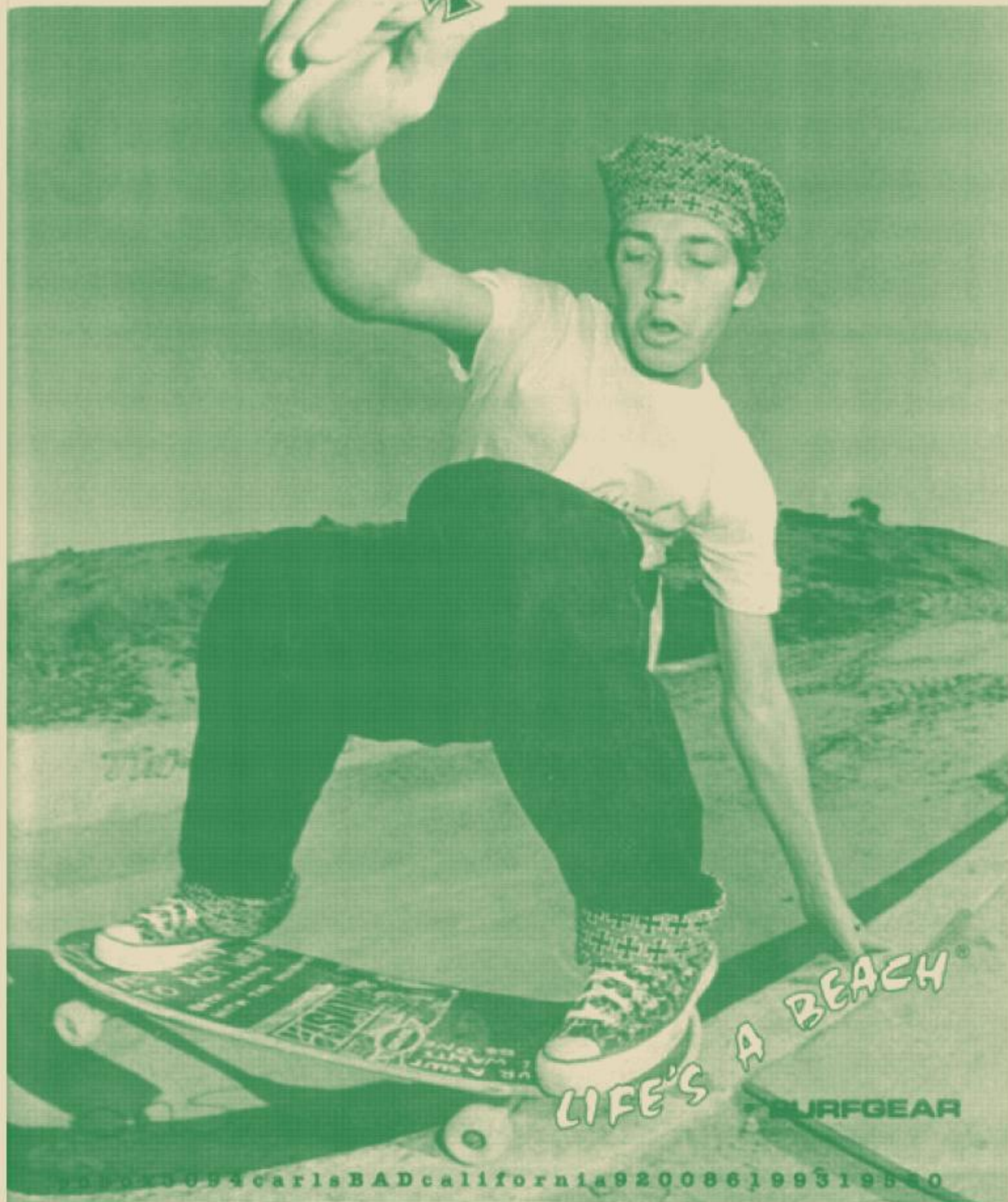
IMAGES  
LIFE'S A BEACH







# grind mit GONZ at der bank





London's skate scene is maintained by stalwarts working against the odds to protect their craft. The wolf pack at the South Bank's Undercroft and its sister Shell Center are among the devotees, yet the most influential is Slam City Skates, a store-turned-institution that not only attracts skaters of all pedigrees but also breeds creatives who take the tenacious values of skateboarding to art, fashion, music and design.

Greg Finch, a well-known name to those who follow the output of the shop's prodigies, has played a key role behind the scenes since moving from Johannesburg to London in the mid-'90s. Finch is part of the mighty Palace Skateboards family; he ensures that the brand's tongue-in-cheek designs are crafted with utmost quality. Previously, he was the owner of the now-defunct London skate store Cide (which subsequently launched Larke, its in-house England-made skatewear label) and founder of understated streetwear brand Orsman. He's also delved into footwear with Pointer, and even had his own pro model.

Taking what he's learned from the ramps to retail, Finch creates apparel that transcends past clichés and times. The British references in his label, Orsman, appealed to both the dapper skater and the common pub bloke for its low-key sportswear styling. His latest brand, Life's a Beach (LAB), brings the essence of '80s SoCal to the forefront of fashion today.

Life's a Beach was founded in 1984 by Chicago motocross riders Jeff Theodosakis and brothers Mark and Brian Simo, before being resurrected in 2013 by Finch and his partner Melvyn De Villers. The brand quickly gained traction for joining the dots between motocross, surf and skate at a time when mixing of subcultures was still unheard of. Designed by the legendary New York graffiti writer Doze Green of b-boy crew Rock Steady, each item was subversive, loud and unapologetic. Its avant-garde gothic bone print became a trademark on the shelves of Florida surf stores and spring breakers' wardrobes.







Like Stussy's International Tribe and its gang of tastemakers who represented each regional chapter, LAB had its own sponsored cohort of creatives. Rick Johnson—motocross' answer to the skate world's Christian Hosoi—was the first to join. Then surfing expert and troublemaker Sunny Garcia came onboard sometime between a scuffle with the law and his cocaine addiction. Judo champ-turned-boxer Pierre Marchand was on the roster alongside Mark Gonzales, a team rider for the brand's skate subsidiary Bad Boys' Club (BBC). He was often found in *Thrasher Magazine*, lit in colorful skull-patterned pants and a BBC cruiser deck. At a time when a perfect image of health and vigor was encouraged by corporate sporting brands, LAB represented a tribe of rule-breaking athletes who had injected a surge of style to the sports long before the X Games. Elsewhere, punk band The Accused and New York-based heavy metal outfit Anthrax also donned its wares, tying the knot between polar opposite realms which nonetheless adhered to a shared rhythm of defiance.

LAB's whimsical prints and torn vests catered to a generation of surf teens and free-spirited skaters akin to Dogtown and the Z-Boys. Yet, the '90s saw chinos and oversized logo tees flood the malls, and the brand failed to evolve. The infiltration of the skate world by corporate entities changed the economics of skateboarding by shifting team riders' perceptions of how much they ought to be paid. The dominant ideology behind skateboarding began to shift, fracturing the foundations of independent brands.

LAB fell off the map for two decades, forgotten save for documentarians such as Fergus "Fergadelic" Purcell, who headed the brand's designs when it was resurrected. The British graphic designer responsible for Palace's Tri-Ferg logo and visuals from his own Aries imprint even has three LAB tattoos. We caught up with Finch to learn about how LAB is revisiting the nostalgia of backyard pool-skating in the modern day without skewing the brand's core vision.





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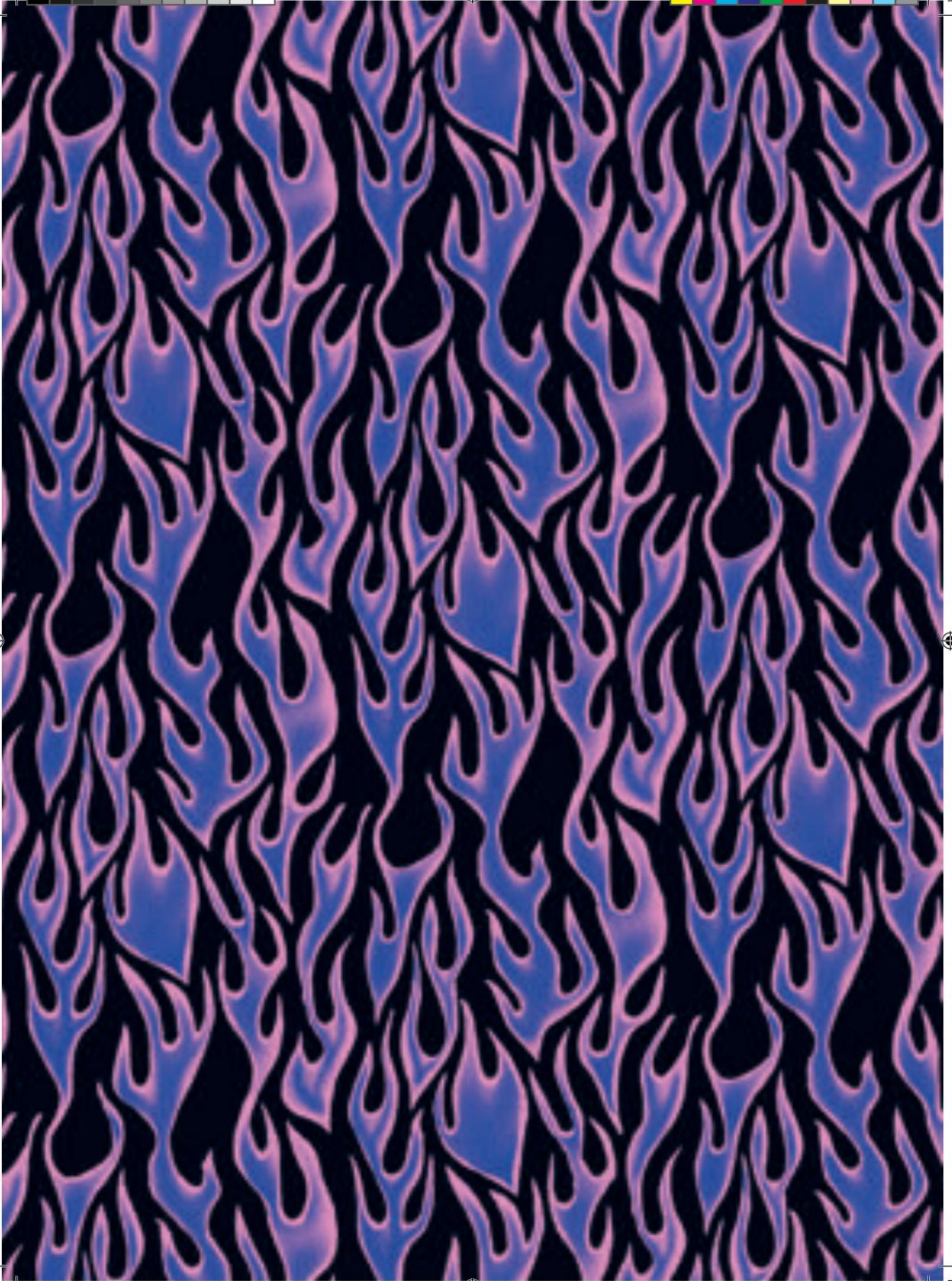
BEACH II.













## Q & A

### **You've worked on various skateboarding and fashion projects. How do they fit with each other?**

I started skating at the age 11, and never really stopped. Back then, subcultures were more defined. What you wore and what music you listened to said a lot about who you were. I grew up in Johannesburg, South Africa, which was incredibly conservative. Skating and the culture around it gave me a way to escape. Through magazines and videos I could see a much bigger picture. Fashion, art and music have always played a huge role in skating.

I arrived in London with Gareth Skewis (co-owner of Palace Skateboards) in the summer of '96. We felt that Jo'burg was too tough, and we wanted to see and skate more of the world. A few years later, I started work at Slam City Skates where I met people like Ben Sansbury, Fergus Purcell, Sofia Prantera and Russell Waterman from Silas. I also met a host of incredibly interesting people connected to the skate, art, fashion and design worlds.

A couple of years later I opened my first business, Cide Skates and 88 Art Gallery on Lower Marsh Street in London. Skate shops are hard businesses to run. You're selling expensive gear to folks that have no money, and it was short-lived. Towards the end of the shop, I started trying to make our own products, having been given a strong lesson in margins, cash flow and boring but necessary things. We printed our own tees and hoodies, and I started looking for manufacturers of caps and jackets.

### **How did you get the opportunity to resurrect LAB?**

I was talking to a friend about producing footwear for him and he let it slip that he had just acquired the license for Life's a Beach. He asked if I was interested; I remembered LAB and BBC from the '80s. I knew that Ferg was a massive fan of the brand's graphic history, so I asked his opinion and we both decided to get involved. It was a no-brainer for Ferg. As you know, he's got three LAB and BBC tattoos—he instantly understood what it was about.

### **Where did LAB sit in the street and surf fashion landscape in the '80s compared to Stussy and Freshjive?**

It began in motocross and moved into surf, skate and BMX in the very early '80s. Bad Boys Club eventually moved in that direction through the '90s and '00s, but LAB stopped trading in the early '90s and was completely untouched until we found it around three years ago. That, to be honest, is a relief. I think towards the end of its life it could have been sold off for the low-end mass market, but because it had been forgotten about, all the good things about LAB remain unscathed.

LAB definitely had a different but strong identity due to its motocross roots. The advertising was subversive and humorous, and the super strong graphic element set it aside from Freshjive and others. It managed to move through surf, skate and motocross cultures, which was special because the subcultures didn't really mix at that time. I guess it sat somewhere between Stussy, OP and Vision.

### **How did BBC differ from LAB? Why did you have two different divisions?**

I don't know what they were thinking back then. I can only imagine that decisions were fueled by excess. There really isn't a lot of info on the company. I guess it ceased trading before the internet was a thing, and these folks probably weren't thinking of archiving. We had to redraw everything from scratch, referring to the '80s *Thrasher* magazines and Ferg's personal archive. At one point BBC appeared on adverts alongside LAB, and then it separated. I couldn't tell you why they did this.

### **LAB seemed rebellious from the start, and the campaigns went against the norm. What was the brand's reputation?**

It had a hard initial reputation. The team mostly comprised 'the mad and the bad' of the surf and skate world. I really loved that element. Everything about it was way out there. In the '80s the team included surfers like Johnny Boy





INTERVIEW

**"SKATING AND THE CULTURE AROUND IT GAVE ME A WAY TO ESCAPE. THROUGH MAGAZINES AND VIDEOS I COULD SEE A MUCH BIGGER PICTURE. FASHION, ART AND MUSIC HAVE ALWAYS PLAYED A HUGE ROLE IN SKATING."**





Gomes and Sunny Garcia, and skaters like Mark Gonzales, Bill Danforth, Ron Allen and Mike Vallely. They were all notorious, and the brand's adverts were super subversive. The "Gonz needs a shot" ad, for example. I feel that the approach to advertising and the graphic element had a huge influence. The attitudes and approach resonated in magazines like *Big Brother* that came years later. The mad graphic element that was uniquely LAB in its time can be seen in various guises. It was also adopted into the metal scene at some point. The history is a bit hazy, but Anthrax had some association.

**How have you and Fergus Purcell managed to revive LAB's fun and loud aesthetic without losing the nostalgia?**

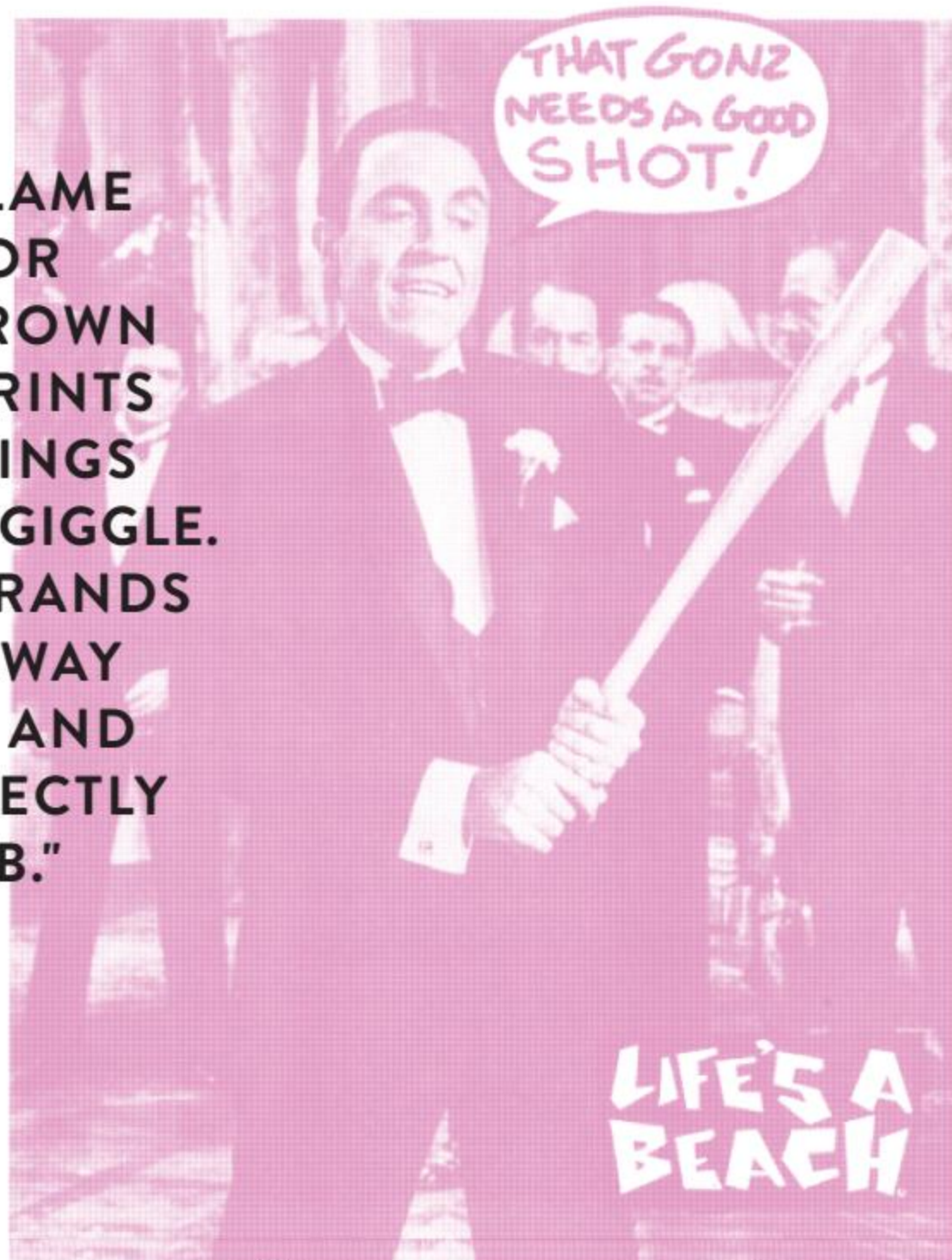
LAB was known for its all-over prints and motocross style of branding, and we didn't want to lose that. Ferg understood this perfectly. LAB is timeless due to its madness. It's not for everyone, which I really like.

The understanding that you can always go wild with swimwear was the starting point. Developing it into different categories is the trick. I've always liked the trashy high-end Italian fashion of the '80s, which seems to be back in vogue. LAB sort of runs a similar line, which helped us launch.

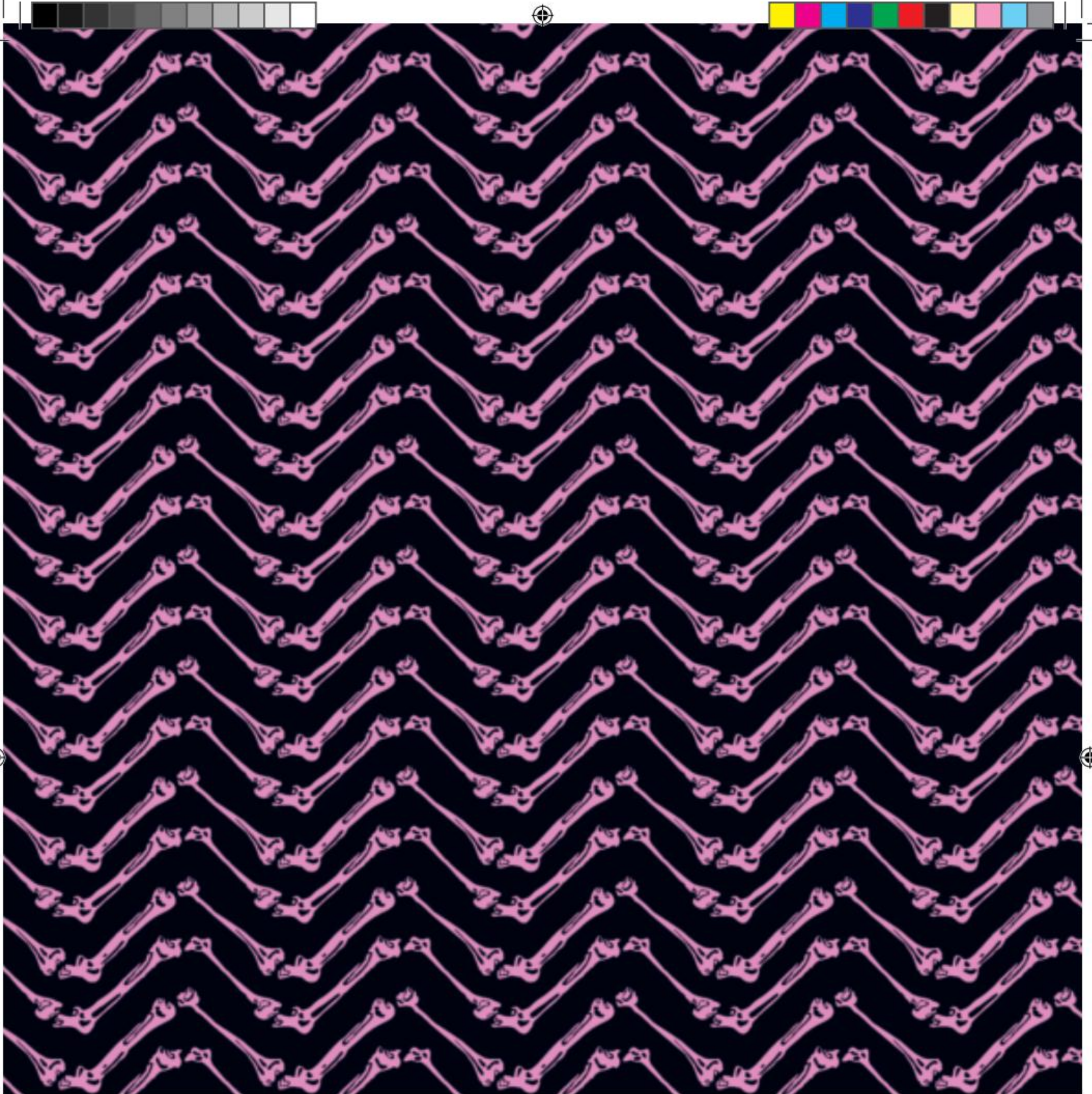
**What have you kept or altered from LAB's original line?**

We've redrawn some of the old prints, but we've come

**"PURPLE FLAME  
PRINTS OR  
RED AND BROWN  
LEOPARD PRINTS  
—THESE THINGS  
MAKE PEOPLE GIGGLE.  
NOT MANY BRANDS  
CAN GET AWAY  
WITH THIS, AND  
IT FITS PERFECTLY  
WITH LAB."**







up with many new ones. It's more the application than the actual print that keeps the LAB aesthetic. However, I have altered the approach to the product. I want to elevate the quality and work the aesthetic into new categories like knitwear. I'd like to move it away from being solely associated with the beach and turn it into a lifestyle approach. Purple flame prints or red and brown leopard prints—these things make people giggle. Not

many brands can get away with this, and it fits perfectly with LAB. I don't want to lose that element, but it still needs to work for the current times.

**LAB recently released a skate clip dubbed "LA Playas." Is a skate team being put together?**

I really enjoy the surprise, so I'm not going to give anything away.



WORDS  
**VANESSA LEE**

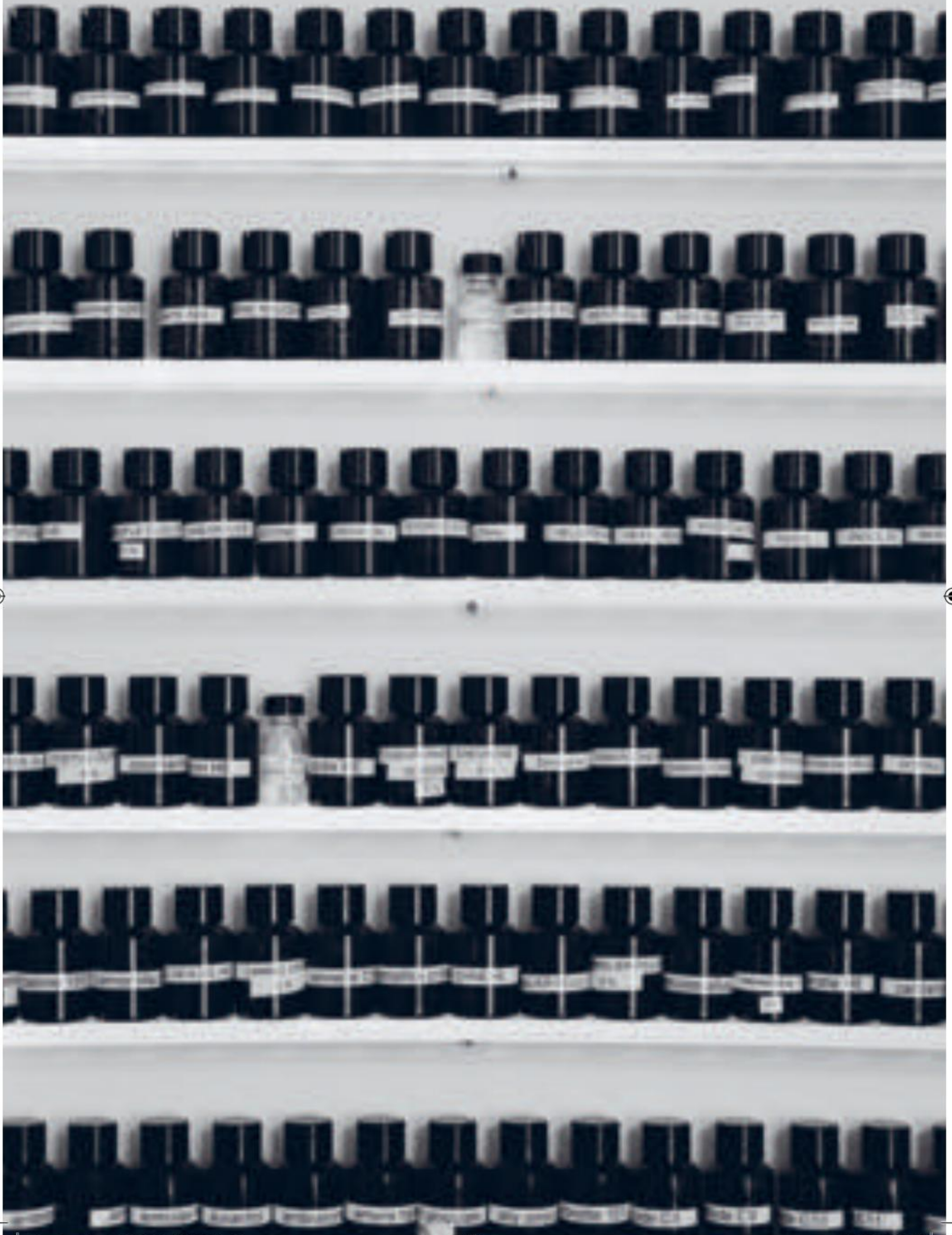
PHOTOGRAPHY  
**DANIEL MICAH COX**

**BLAISE MAUTIN**

**Mood**

**Factory**







Your nose is a time machine. It may be the most nostalgic organ in our possession: instantly, irrevocably and sometimes forcibly evoking flashbacks of past homes and holidays, childhood, former flames, even the vagueness of memories we don't remember. Mated for life with physiology, olfactory déjà vu occurs regardless of whether the event itself has long been erased from our minds. The human nose can register approximately 1 trillion different smells, and the smells we encounter are automatically stored within long-term and emotional memory—allowing scents to linger for much longer than their short life spans seem to allow. The pull of scent has a visceral power often overlooked until the moment it's encountered—hitting this subtle sweet spot is the specialty of Parisian perfumer Blaise Mautin, who, after an intense conversation, has us justifying 4,000 € and upwards for a single ounce of perfume: he dubs the olfactory sense “immortality.”

The repertoire of Blaise Mautin ranges from made-to-measure scents with a four- to five-figure price tag (“It depends on what you want,” he chuckles) to visvim's signature store scents, perfumes and room sprays, to exclusive scents for top luxury hotels such as Le Bristol and Park Hyatt Hotels which permeate every corner of the venues—toiletries, candles, even rooms and hallways sprayed with the perfume. He's done the same for private homes, and on one occasion, a helicopter—since it's common knowledge private helicopters don't smell great on their own. Blaise cheerfully flits from topic to topic in rapid French-accented English, bursting with afterthoughts like a hurricane whirling in blistering disarray. The sole person to whom notorious perfectionist Hiroki Nakamura trusts with the smell of visvim's products and store interiors, Blaise is charged not with simply creating fragrances but is responsible for crafting the olfactory identities of individuals and prestigious brands. Such is the venerable professional we sought for advice on the clandestine one-fifth of our consciousness, as omnipotent as it is invisible.







FEATURE











Blaise began our conversation by describing the relationship between a mother and baby. As it turns out, it isn't the awkward half-cradling by an errant aunt or uncle which sets them wailing—it's because the baby detects the missing smell of its mother. As we learn to rely on other senses to navigate the world, our noses turn in frivolous pursuit. "You'll remember the smell of your first girlfriend, first love—if they wear a certain perfume—oh, you'll remember for the rest of your life. It's cut into you forever." Verbatim, the words seem menacing, but he sounded as if he couldn't imagine a fate more beautiful. For most of us, remembering an ex for the rest of our lives is a commitment best politely refused; alas, we have no choice. Scent memory is carved into every other corner of our brains—acutely poignant, yet rarely respected save for the times they herd us unwittingly down memory lane without warning nor ceremony. These corners are the bread and butter of Blaise Mautin Parfumeur.

The perfume industry, there's so much emotion in it. It's not like a normal business." His fascination with perfume began with *Au Nain Bleu*, one of the

most renowned toy stores in France replete with price tags only for the bold and opened in 1836 by his great-grandparents. Witnessing dotting families everyday inspired him to create something for the children to remember the moment long after they outgrow their gifts. The store itself never got its own scent, but 20 years of training later, the world gained a self-taught perfumer who masterfully bottles people and places into unforgettable sensibility. A client's outfits, their home, a painting they may own, or even the dishes they use—anything is fair game. "When I see a customer [I look at their possessions] and try to imagine the whys: why is it here, why has it been chosen? Nothing comes out of the blue. You try and understand what it wants to express."

Blaise Mautin's dedication to his profession is a direct reflection of visvim founder Hiroki Nakamura's borderline obsession with flawlessly handcrafted objects. Their shared mantra is why the two have been working together for a decade and counting, creating the scents which envelop each store and all of the brand's perfumes, room sprays and candles. Hiroki Nakamura discovered Blaise Mautin's wizardry

**"YOU'LL REMEMBER THE SMELL  
OF YOUR FIRST GIRLFRIEND, FIRST  
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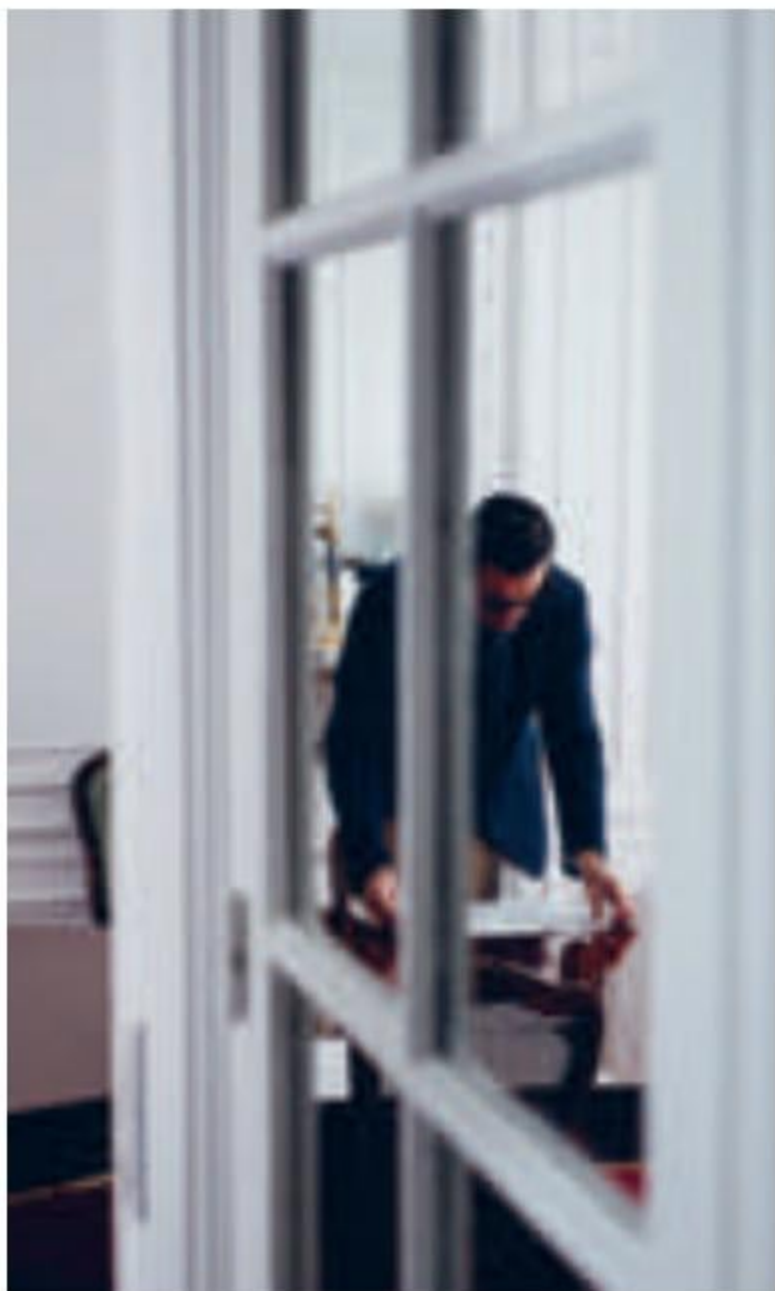












**SCENT MEMORY  
IS CARVED  
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RARELY RESPECTED  
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UNWITTINGLY  
DOWN MEMORY  
LANE WITHOUT  
WARNING  
NOR CEREMONY.**





at the Park Hyatt Vendôme in Paris, and fell in love with the hotel's scent, working with the perfumer on visvim's scented products since. "Hiroki has a real vision about the know-how, the products, and the vibes of many cultures—he travels so often, and everywhere, so he has this really unique sense of internationality."

Blaise's products arise from authentic, organic experiences with his clients. He travels extensively with Hiroki to "get the vibes." He recounts, "We went to [southern Japanese island] Yakushima together, and we tried to do a very old honeyed wood scent that we launched three years after the trip. We went to America, we went to quite a few places. This is the only brand that's doing it—you feel like you're part of the brand itself, part of the experience. All my customers try to do this with me—they give me experiences, they give me emotions, and I reciprocate everything with product. None of that is going to change." Blaise has even gone so far as to capture the "vibe" of having a firstborn child. Created in honor of Hiroki's first-born, Blaise created the scent to capture the elation of becoming a father for the first time. As Monsieur Mautin went through "Newborn" in minute detail (apparently, fatherhood smells quite smoky), his manic words redline to display in unison just how much he out-classes his peers in the perception of human experience—almost as if he's privy to a fourth dimension, emulsifying the instinctive nuance of memory into physical awareness.

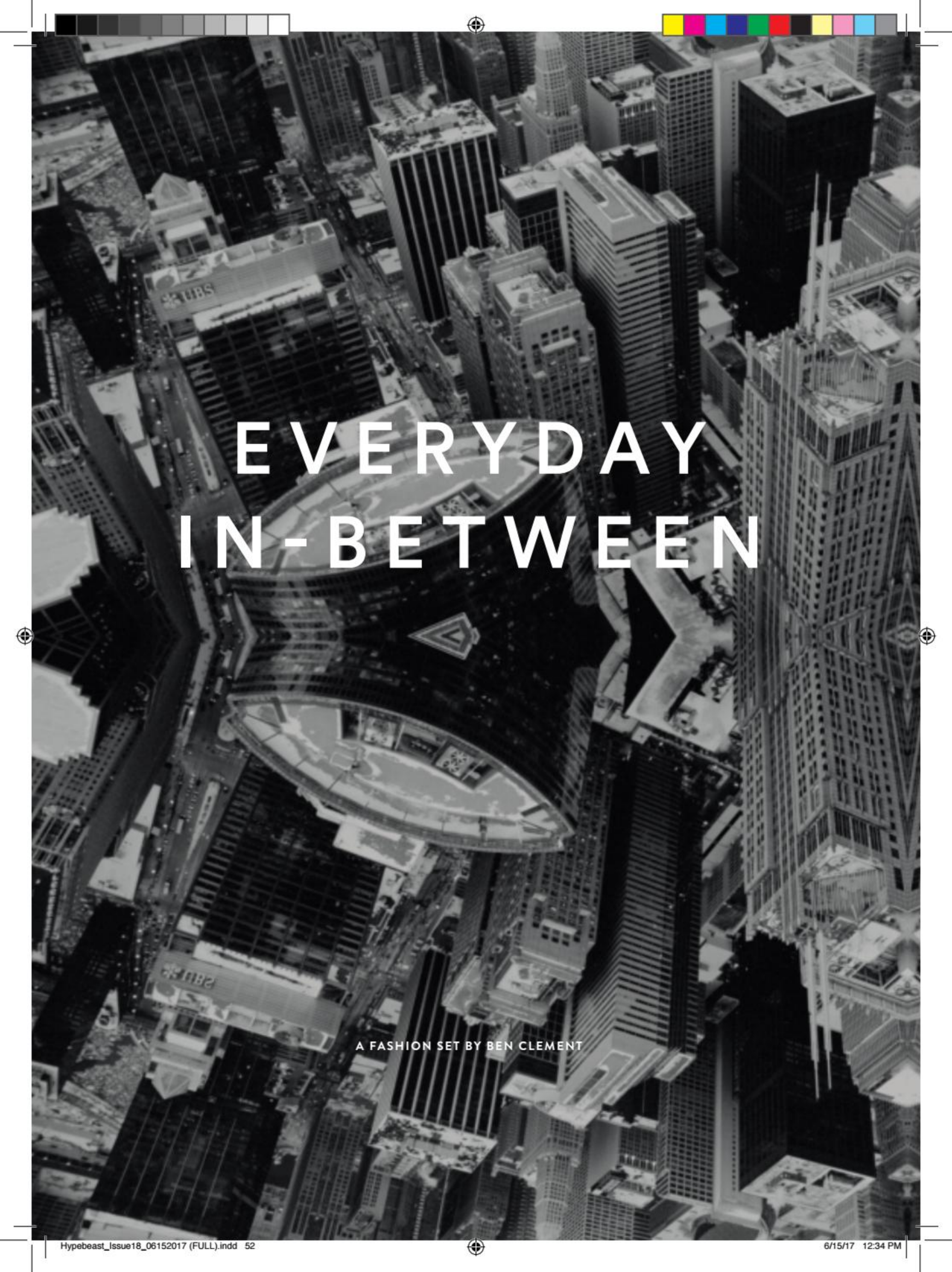
Blaise's clients want olfactive monuments—be it for a home, an experience, or themselves—allowing him to commandeer the most primal, vulnerable parts of our subconsciousness. His perfume isn't the kind to be switched out a year later, but rather that which irascibly becomes synonymous with personal identity—similar to how a pack of wolves identify each other, only with better top notes. "You will have this perfume for the rest of your life," Blaise exclaimed as we grilled him on why his work is so expensive. It all comes down to sourcing extremely rare ingredients

and the attention he lavishes upon every formula. Regardless of whether a scent is meant to be washed with and walked into every day by hundreds of people, or to thrum a scant few inches from one's skin into the hazy psyche of another person, it's composed with the same meticulous research. This means that somewhere in sunny California there are 22 liters of Blaise Mautin's best, quite literally worth more than its weight in gold, dedicated to the innards of a private helicopter.

Blaise Mautin fragrances commonly elicit an innate frenzy not unlike blood to sharks—but how? The magic lies in an unblinking commitment to identity and individualism. He tells a story of mid-20th century Japan when Marilyn Monroe reigned supreme. After she claimed to sleep in nothing but Chanel No. 5—to this day, still one of the most effective celebrity endorsements in history—the perfume was promptly bought by hordes of Japanese men who wanted to simulate being in bed with Marilyn Monroe (whether accompanying accessories were employed or not remains unclear). Generations later, Chanel No. 5 is still unremittingly associated with the Hollywood icon. Her films and pictures are easily procured, yet her perfume is the only remnant which contains the rub of physical experience.

Nobody has ever uttered the words "It's like you're really here," in response to a photograph or with FaceTime, Skype, and the like—high-tech digital renditions still fail to reproduce the deceptively primitive sense of physical presence. But with a whiff of perfume? "You become immortal," Blaise summarized with an audible flourish. The way our memory can be summoned from a bottle with such eloquence is an immensely provocative, yet humbling piece of knowledge. He continues, shimmering with an artist's fever and a chemist's precision in roiling balance: "You exist in a way that people will never forget. And isn't it more powerful, more profound, when nothing else in the world is like what you're wearing?"





# EVERYDAY IN-BETWEEN

A FASHION SET BY BEN CLEMENT





**JACKET & PANTS:** PRADA  
**SHIRT:** SOULLAND  
**BOOTS:** DR MARTENS







054

BELT: CHRISTIAN KIMBER  
OUTFIT: PRADA







SHIRT: OH DAWN  
KNITTED VEST, JACKET: PRADA  
PANTS: RED CLOUD

SHOES: CONVERSE

055







056

**T-SHIRT:** DOOMSDAY STORE  
**SHIRT:** PRADA **HOODIE:** WAYWARD  
**PANTS:** ISSEY MIYAKE

**SOCKS:** DIANE **SHOES:** CHRISTIAN KIMBER  
**SUNGLASSES:** CELINE  
**CAP:** P.A.M.











058

COAT: P.A.M.  
VINTAGE JUMPER: COMME DES GARÇONS  
PANTS: RED CLOUD

BELT: CARHARTT  
SHOES: VANS



















062

**JACKET:** PASSPORT  
**T-SHIRT:** PARLIAMENT  
**PANTS:** DICKIES







**SWEATER:** PENFIELD  
**PANTS:** NORSE PROJECTS  
**BELT:** CHRISTIAN KIMBER

**BAG:** DIANE

**063**



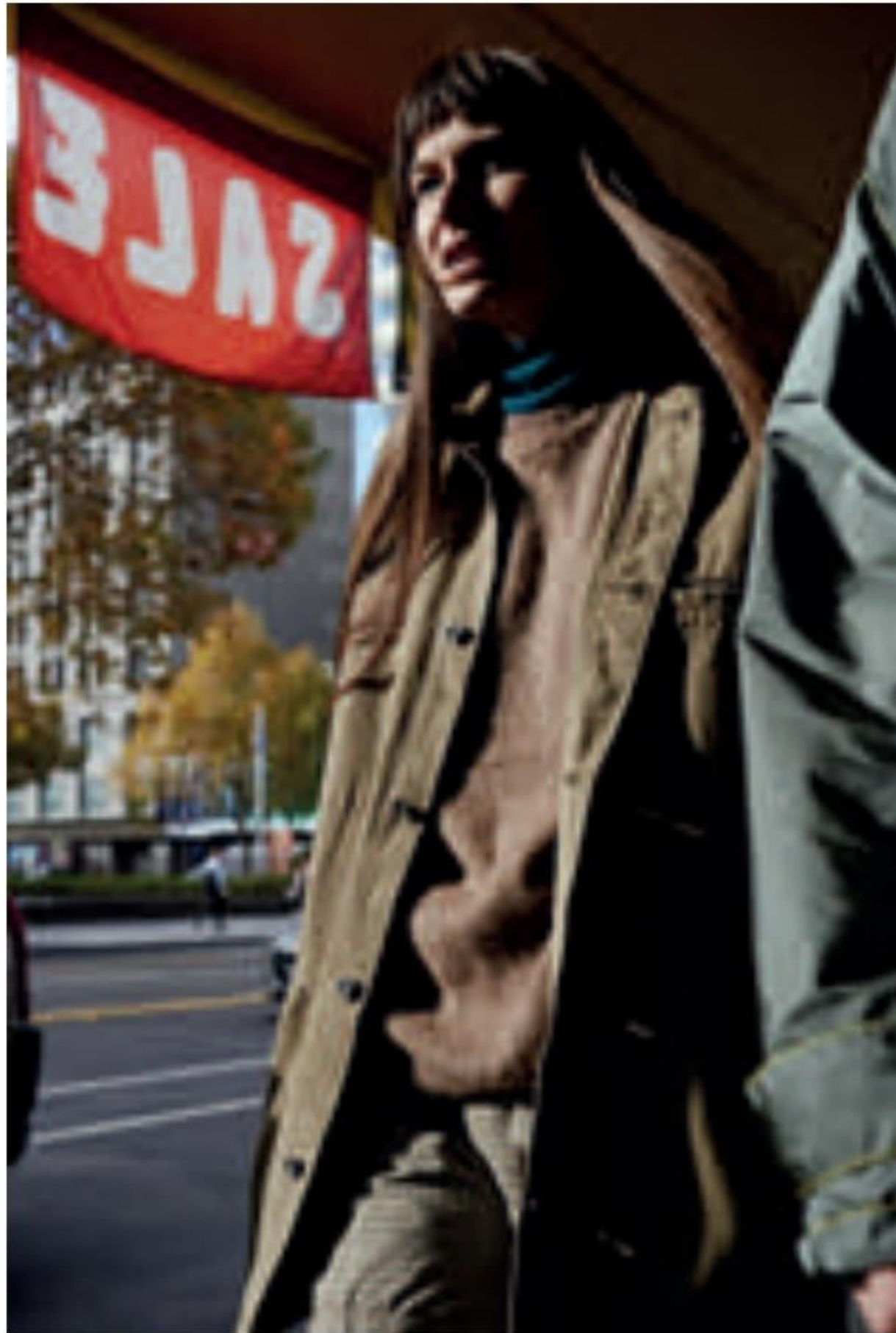




064

COAT: PASSPORT  
JACKET, PANTS: PRADA  
T-SHIRT: PARLIAMENT





**JACKET:** ROUGH AND RUGGED  
**TURTLENECK:** UNIQLO  
**SWEATER:** MAIDEN NOIR

**SHORTS:** PRADA

**065**







066

**BOMBER JACKET:** COMME DES GARÇONS    **PANTS:** MONCLER  
**TURTLE NECK:** PRADA  
**SHIRT:** PASSPORT











**068**

**SHIRT:** OH DAWN  
**KNITTED VEST, JACKET:** PRADA  
**PANTS:** RED CLOUD

**SHOES:** CONVERSE





Abby Bennett

STYLING

Ben Clement

PHOTOGRAPHY

ROB POVEY

HAIR & MAKEUP

MODELS

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LEON RICE-WHETTON

SABINA MAMMARELLA

STYLING ASSISTANT





# HAJIME SORAYAMA

Ne Plus Ultra

©HAJIME SORAYAMA. COURTESY OF ARTIST AND NANZUKA







WORDS  
**GAVIN YEUNG**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**YOSUKE DEMUKAI**

INTERVIEW  
**SAORI OHARA**





Nothing quite defines the desires of the modern man as succinctly as the curve. In the haunches of a race car, it alludes to held energy and dynamism; and yet it also delineates those moments in a lover's presence where sexual desire collects in the dips and swells of a woman's body.

Hajime Sorayama has built a four-decade-long career on curves and their sensual potency—they populate his trademark portrayals of biomechatronic women, combining mechanical perfection with the mystique of the female body to embody the apex of beauty. Floating against a twilight background and removed from any earthly frame of reference, these “gynoids” have had carnal flesh replaced by adamant chrome, simultaneously becoming immortal goddesses yet reduced to material objects to be examined and owned. As prolific fashion photographer Helmut Newton intoned, “I think the woman who gives the appearance of being available is sexually much more exciting than a woman who's completely distant. This sense of availability I find erotic.” Sorayama's creations are at once available, legs splayed in compromising poses—yet entirely impenetrable given their cold, ungiving armor. It's that middle ground that both empowers and emasculates the male gaze, imbuing Sorayama's work with its unique brand of eroticism.

A legend in Japanese erotic illustration circles, Sorayama, 70, has something of a stranglehold on the niche of fembot art, having spent close to four decades honing his technique of perverse superrealism. Born in 1947 in the southern Japanese shipbuilding city of Imabari, Sorayama's unusually fervent sex drive emerged at a young age, spurred by the mid-century American import of the pinup girl within the pages











of *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. Graduating from Chuo Art School in 1968, Sorayama began his career as a graphic designer at an advertising agency before striking out as a freelance illustrator four years later. It wasn't until 1978 that he painted his first robot—a pastiche of *Star Wars*'s C-3PO modified just enough to avoid any copyright issues. His watershed moment came in 1983 with the publication of *Sexy Robot*, a collection of his gynoid art that solidified his reputation worldwide in this niche. Since then, the likes of Nike and Disney, Stussy, and XLARGE have come knocking on Sorayama's door for his deft interplay of technical mastery and constant dalliances with taboo. His collaboration with Sony in 1999 produced the iconic AIBO pet robot dog, which has since been enshrined in the permanent collections of the MoMA and the Smithsonian Institution.

Upon meeting Sorayama for the first time, one is immediately struck, past his amber-tinted glasses, by the glint in his eye—that of a wily mad scientist

who has chosen to forgo the scalpel to lovingly piece together his unholy creations with an airbrush. He inhabits a studio space in Tokyo's Gotanda district where, in another lifetime, he lived with his family and raised his two kids. Today, every spare inch of surface area has been covered in successive layers of curios and drawing instruments, much like the way sediment accumulates on the ocean floor over millennia. The studio walls heave with bookshelves threatening to burst at the seams, while loose sketches hang haphazardly from a clothing line. Pointing to faded photos wedged into the frame of a painting propped against his fridge, Sorayama says, "All my friends in those photos have passed away. Every time I pass by, I say hi to them." Then, remembering his manners, he tells us to help ourselves to a drink from his fridge before launching into a discussion about skirting what's socially acceptable, and the unabashed hedonism of his work.

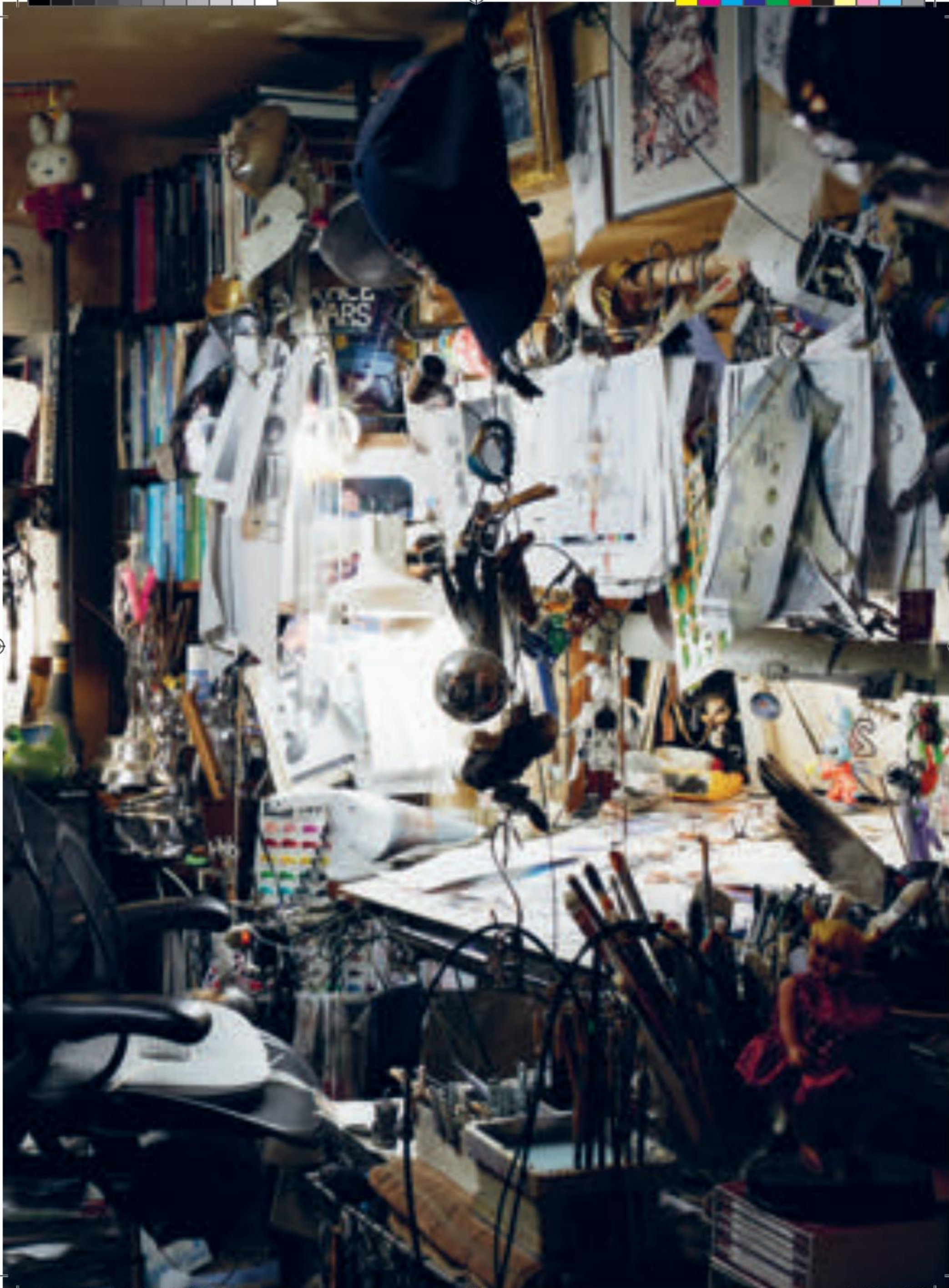
















"THERE'S A LOT OF TABOOS WHEN BEING CREATIVE, SO IT'S ABOUT FINDING WAYS TO INCORPORATE THESE TABOO THEMES WITHIN THESE SOCIAL CONFINES OF OURS."







## Q & A

### **You don't have a computer at home right?**

No I don't. I think you can only get some surface information from there. I think for the real core themes and information, it's best to get it from fanatics. For example, I draw a lot of airplanes and for more information I get it directly from aviation heads. Sometimes it's too much information though. Once I was even sent information that was actually confidential. Things are more interesting that way. I like including things even industry people would be surprised about. That way they also think my other works are that crazy (laughs). There's a lot of taboos when being creative, so it's about finding ways to incorporate these taboo themes within these social confines of ours. The people who can't find a way to do this often end up going to jail or being sent to a mental hospital. It's about finding out the boundary of when you get thrown into jail or sent to the hospital. You can kind of see when a person did too much. The "pioneers" are usually the ones who face the consequences, so I try to be a little behind them.

### **That's deep.**

That's not deep. Around the world it's different as to how far you can go, and where the limit is. That's important to know. There's no real average across the board.

### **So do you calculate the balance by yourself?**

Sometimes I get it wrong, but overall I'm okay.

### **What happens if you get it wrong?**

You get ganged up on. I've never experienced it, but just before crossing the limit I change it up and go the other way around when I work, and as a person in general. Even those writing about me, the best interviewers are always thinking about how to piss off the interviewee.

### **I think in foreign countries there are interviewers who do that on purpose to agitate.**

Overseas, there's a big pool of people to interview so you can just move onto the next. Here it's tough because if you piss somebody off, word gets around.















**What inspires most of your work?**

All things in nature. Everything that happens in my life. When I take the time to do my drawings, my brain starts wandering by itself. I can't really distance myself from the style of drawings that I do right now. Sometimes people ask me how I change my pace, but in truth I can't do it. The drawings that I'm working on now, it doesn't matter if I'm taking a shit, in an onsen, or eating dinner with a girl. I'll always have that feeling. In order to change it, I need to change the actual thing that I'm drawing. Maybe when I'm sleeping my brain is a little more free, but otherwise it's in the same mode.

**The fact that you can continue that level of drawing must require a lot of mental strength.**

I don't think so because it's something that I like to do. If you're doing something you love, why would it be tough? It's not practice or anything. I've never even put any effort into drawing. I just enjoy what I do. If there's something that I can't draw at first, the pleasure that I get in completing it is like a drug. If you don't feel like that you shouldn't even do it in the first place. The people who feel like they're doing

work, and are putting a lot of effort and training, they should probably stop right there. You don't like doing hard things, right? I don't either, that's why I don't do anything that's tough. You can't do something tough constantly. I was even told by a dentist to stop using an electric toothbrush because it was tough. It made me feel sick. So he said if it was too tiring, just stop it right there. Of course there are times when I feel troubled and there isn't an immediate solution.

**Do you spend most of your time drawing and making sculptures?**

I only draw, I don't make sculptures. There are people that I know who are good at making sculptures so I let them do it. If you spend money, you can use people. Not only money, but if there is a win-win situation you can use them as well. There has to be merit for the other person as well, otherwise they won't put in their full effort.

**You have probably been able to accomplish these things because you're brutally honest and direct.**

I think you have to be honest and also encouraging





"THE DRAWINGS THAT I'M WORKING ON NOW, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I'M TAKING A SHIT, IN AN ONSEN, OR EATING DINNER WITH A GIRL. I'LL ALWAYS HAVE THAT FEELING."

towards your family, even your cats and dogs, otherwise they aren't energized and will have no motivation. Most people don't do that, even the [journalists] who come to cover me for a magazine. They always ask me the same things, so for me I feel like that won't even become a good article. I don't understand why people aren't more direct. Isn't that weird? If you choose between health or sickness, it's health, right? If it's between beauty and ugliness, it's beauty, right? If it's rich and poor, it's rich, right? People who can't admit those things openly have a weird philosophy and start saying twisted things. I just don't get it.

*At this point, Sorayama stands up and walks over to a dish containing an assortment of gold and silver nuggets. They are, he explains, his metal-plated feces. Our photographer snaps some photos on his film camera.*

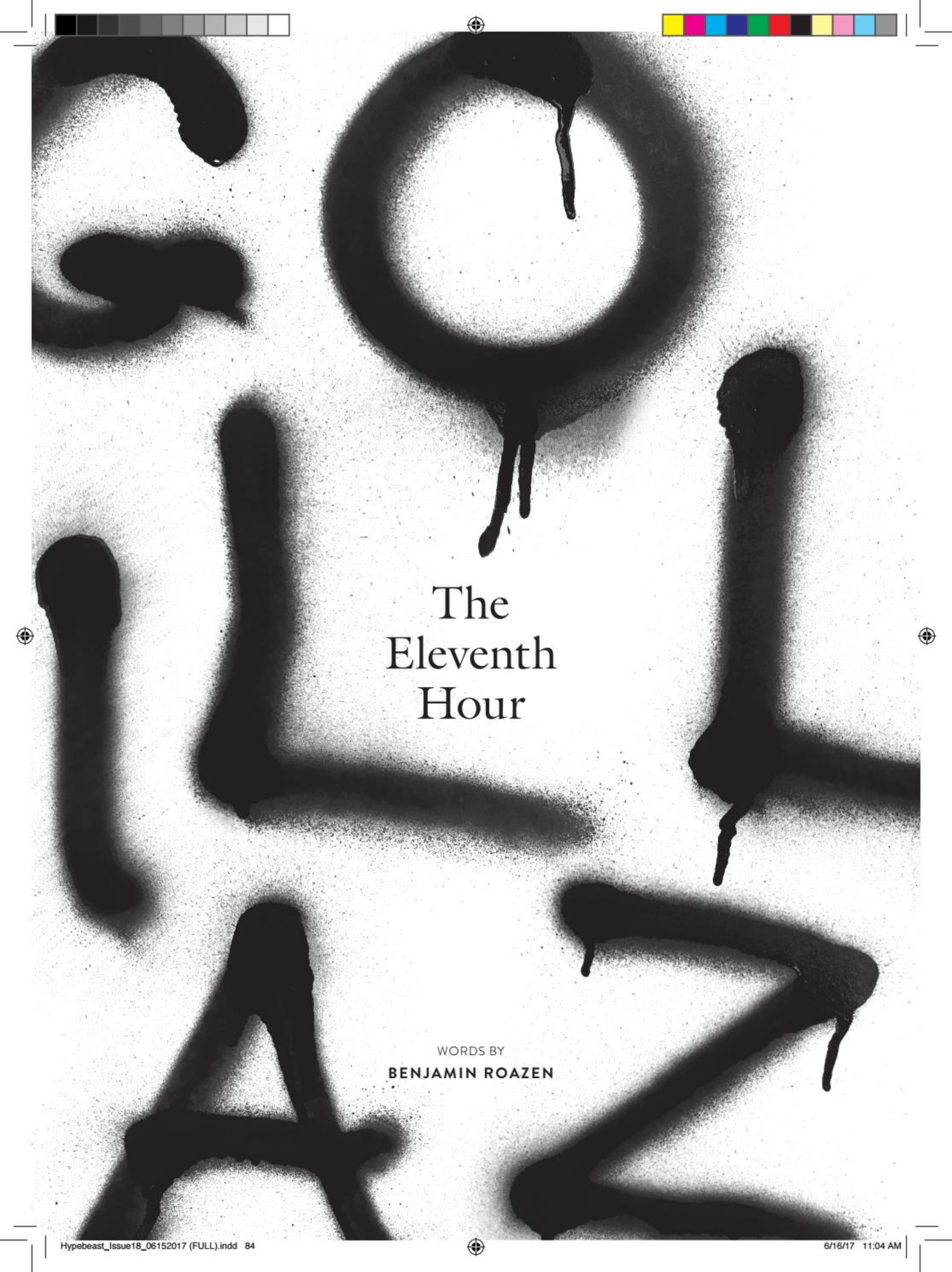
**Can you explain why you chose to work with chrome?**

I'm trying to portray women through this medium. Do you know the difference between humanoids and androids? Humanoids are made of flesh while androids are metal. I try to portray some female aspects using this metal even though it's not real. For example with a perfume, your memory will remind you of a woman in a nice way. Also, smelling her cooking may remind you of home. In this way, you might already begin to like a woman just off of these things. This filter of your personal experience that stands between reality and your imagination allows for a lot of interpretation. In the same way, I think people can experience feelings of eros and ponder the value of life while looking at my pieces.

**What is your ultimate dream?**

I can't say. I really like tropical plants so I want to turn the island of Madagascar into a botanical garden. Get rid of all the people there first. I can't say these kinds of things in public.





The  
Eleventh  
Hour

WORDS BY  
**BENJAMIN ROAZEN**







INTERVIEW











## HUMANZ IS THE PROVERBIAL PARTY PLAYLIST AT WHAT FEELS LIKE THE LITERAL END OF THE WORLD.

Interviewing a band of fictional characters is an absurd assignment. But in the age of Trump, the premise seems a little more believable, almost hyperreal. No group better encompasses this idea of hyperreality than Gorillaz. The band has never looked, sounded and felt more solid since their re-emergence in promoting their latest release, *Humanz*. Vocalist 2D and bassist Murdoc have sat for live interviews and built facsimiles of their Spirit Houses across the United States; not to mention the myriad billboards, installations, VR experiences, apps, filters, widgets, pop-ups and pop-unders that accompanied the album's seemingly all-encompassing rollout.

Far from shying away from close inspection, Gorillaz had been teetering on the brink of the uncanny valley. Not the real-life blokes, Damon Albarn and Jamie Hewlett, though. The cartoons had all seemingly taken a more corporeal shape: 2D (vocals, keyboard, “fuck all else”), Murdoc Niccolz (bass), Noodle (guitar, keyboards, “other sounds,” briefly replaced by an android doppelganger, but more on that later) and Russel Hobbs (drums and riddims). And to be quite honest with you, reader, the prospect of interviewing cartoon characters left me, for lack of a better word, starstruck.

Researching fictional characters sounds like a nerd's dream job: getting paid to deep-dive through graphic novels and short films, videos and shimmering holographic live footage. But even with an extensive knowledge of the band's canon, it felt mad—like studying to interview Bart Simpson, Jake the Dog, or Beavis and Butthead at the same damn time. All in a day's work, really.

So I typed out a string of questions that, when read aloud, makes me sound like a madman. I clicked “Send” and exhaled for the first time all day.

Then *Humanz* dropped and Gorillaz went ghost — well, on our questions, anyway. “How crowded could a cartoon's schedule be?” I wondered. It makes sense, though: even animated rock stars are busy.

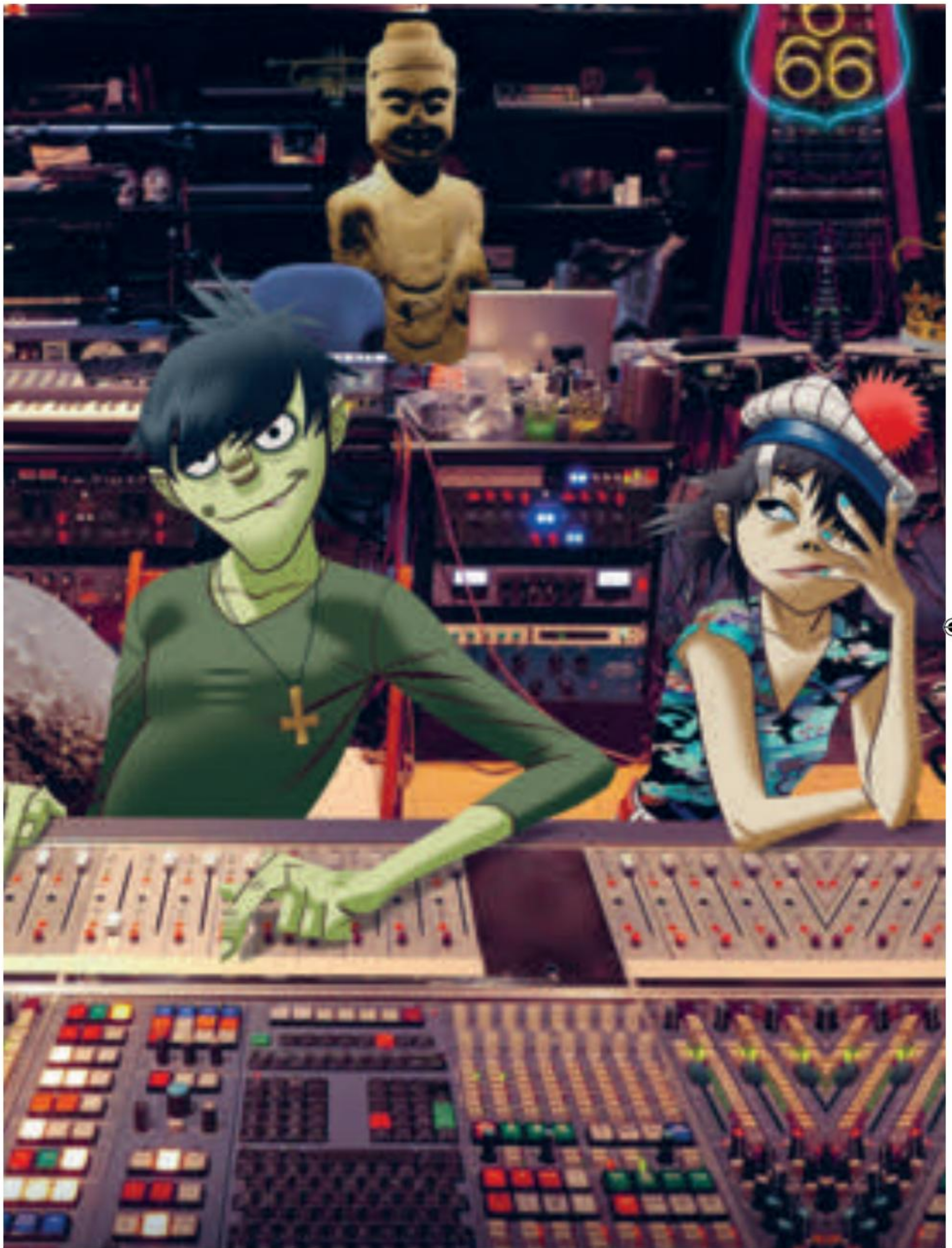
There is an undeniable sense of urgency running throughout *Humanz*. The album's opener “Ascension” pits a frenetic Vince Staples against a storm of tornado siren synths. “The sky's fallin' baby, drop that ass 'fore it crash!” repeated ad infinitum until it becomes a mantra of sorts. Frantic gospel abuts psychedelic Britpop and chiptune dancehall. *Humanz* is the proverbial party playlist at what feels like the literal end of the world.

The group had been working with a star-studded ensemble cast, including star turns by Pusha T, Vince Staples and Danny Brown. Mavis Staples, Carly Simon and Grace Jones bring an operatic grace to the project. Others still were tastefully curated close to the chest, like D.R.A.M.'s melodic cameo on “Andromeda” and an uncredited Noel Gallagher on the triumphant “We Got The Power.”

When you've got names such as these in your phonebook, an email from a sneaker magazine might fall by the wayside. But lo and behold, a response: Gorillaz had come through in the 11th hour.

















## Q&A

**Let's start with the basics: how is everyone doing? I've been reading up on your exploits, but I wanted to know: what have you all been up to since we last heard you on *The Fall*?**

Murdoc: The usual cocktail of chaos and depravity, really. Russel got harpooned by whalers and banged up in North Korea, 2D got himself marooned on a tropical island, Noodle went on a quest and beheaded some evil demon, and I did hard time in a maximum-security prison where I mastered cross-stitch and wrote a lot of hate mail.

2D: Oh, were all those letters from you?

Murdoc: Yep.

2D: Even the embroidered one?

Murdoc: Of course. Took me bloody ages to knit the words "purpled-haired wanker." But you're worth it. Plus, in thousands of years' time, people will be worshipping that like the Bayeux Tapestry. So everyone's a winner.

**Murdoc mentioned that he was locked up in a secret prison underneath Abbey Road Studios, but where have you been recording all of this material?**

Russel: All around the world. Especially Chicago. That place is the soul of the record. Pevan, Tone, Pusha T, Jamie Principle. He's like the crown prince of Chicago house, y'know? Imagine all the guests on the album, on one flyer, in one warehouse, for one night. That's sure as hell a party I wanna be at. That's the record right there. Y'know, these days folks are livin' it up in fancy converted warehouses. But back in the day, they were broken and decayed—corpses of a dead industrial age. But from those forgotten shells, something beautiful emerged. Like a sweet, funky-ass butterfly. You could say hip-hop started in New York, but house? That's Chicago. And so is *Humanz*.

**Is Kong Studios back up and active?**

Noodle: Not yet, but I would like that. I miss that place. Apart from a few zombie outbreaks and weak phone reception, it was a very good studio. We might use the insurance money to rebuild it.

Murdoc: Ah, yeah. I actually spent all that. What a fucking great night that was.

**Murdoc, what did you learn from your fellow prisoners in *Dungeon Abbey*? What were the conditions of your release?**

Murdoc: I was in isolation, wasn't I? Although having said that, the only person I ever learned anything from is myself, so I imagine I learned fucking loads. The conditions of my release? Well the music industry was going down the toilet like an unloved goldfish, so they came crawling to yours truly to save the bloody day. They let me out on the condition I banged out another hit record. And whaddya know—wallop! *Humanz* is born. And it's only another SMASH. You're all very welcome.

**Noodle classically handles guitar duties for the group, but this album's futuristic sound doesn't feature much guitar work at all. Is this because of Cyborg Noodle's absence?**

Noodle: We evolve, or get left behind. Gorillaz are like sharks—if we stop swimming, we die. There are some guitars, but I also worked on a ton of other sounds. Cyborg Noodle—she's still with us. I now use her head as a plant pot in our living room. A visual reminder that, for now, 'Humanz' are still in control. Just...

**Noodle, how have you adjusted to your new role in the group, sonically?**

Noodle: Please see previous answer.

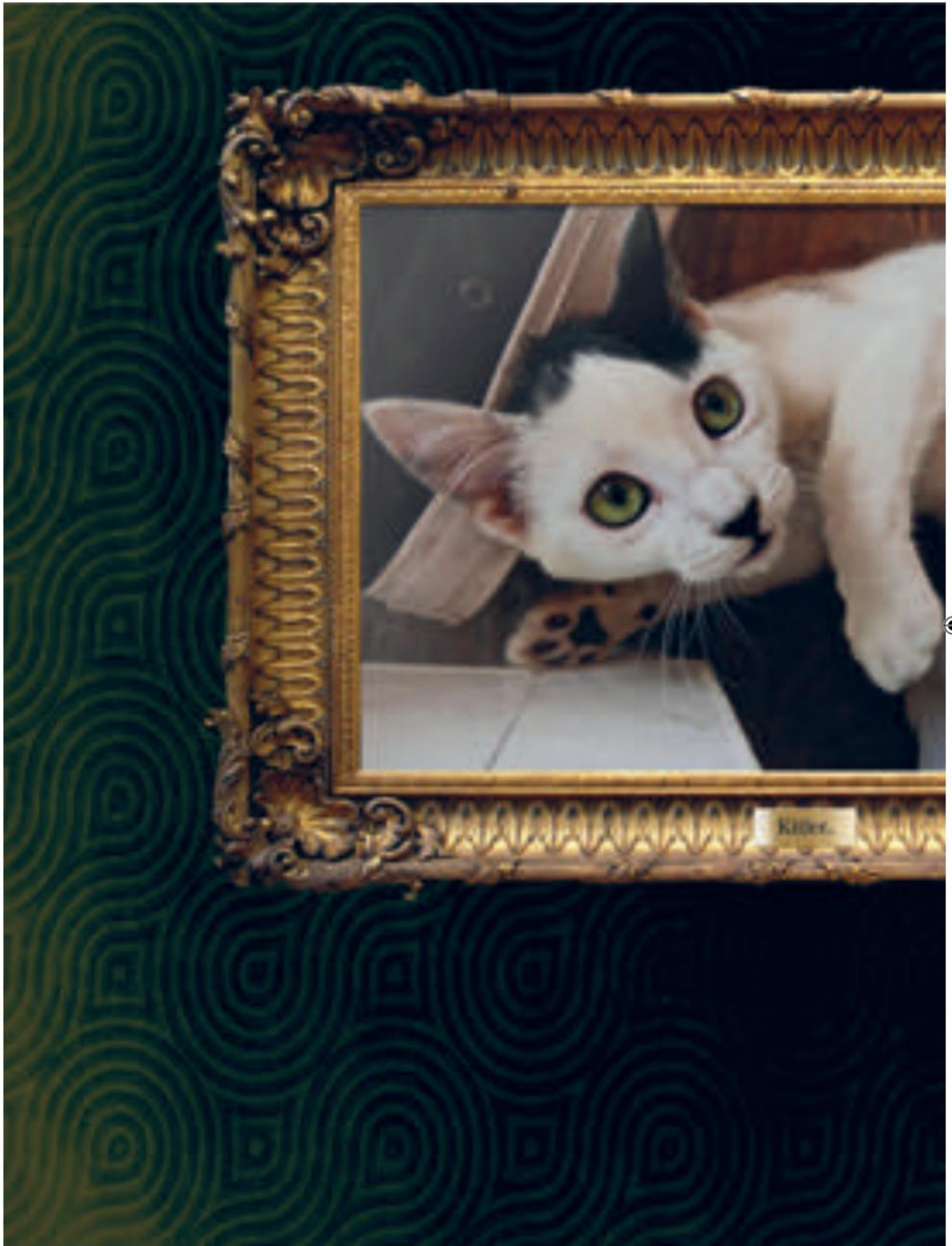
Murdoc: Sorry about her, she's in a stinker of a mood today. Probably all that talk of Cyborg Noodle. It reminds her of the time I apparently tried to kill her and replace her with a robot. Still, we're all friends again now.

Noodle: I hate you.

**2D, I wanted to ask about your gap year in Mexico. What was that like and what sort of hijinks did you get into?**

2D: It was a great experience. Being stranded on a tropical island taught me lots of survival skills. Like how to run away

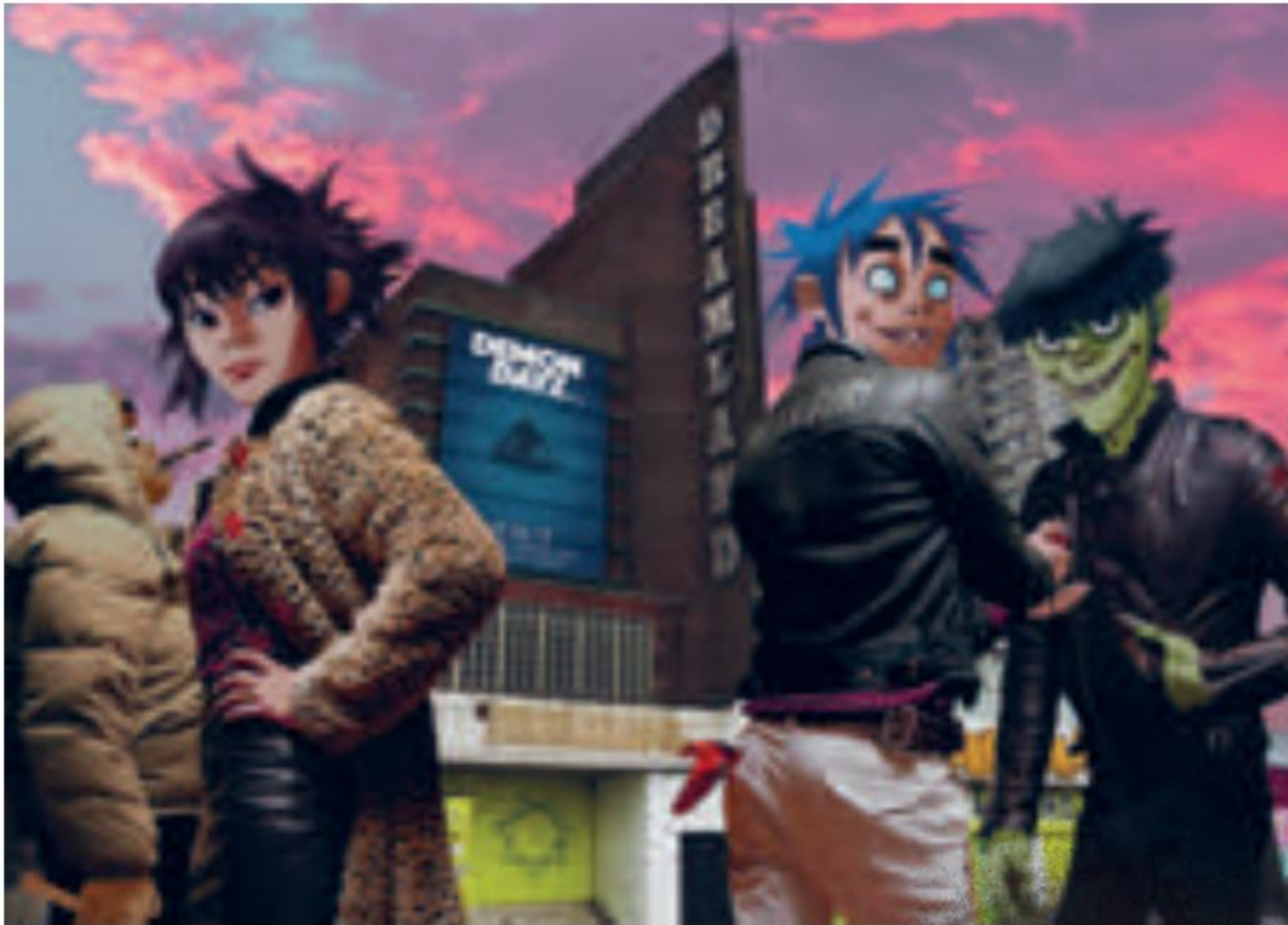












from crabs (sideways), and how to stay alive by eating your own clothes. Actually, when I was down to just my underpants, I learned my most important lesson—we don't need all the things we think we do, like massage chairs, Capri Sun and *2 Broke Girls*. We just need fresh air, sunshine and *2 Broke Girls* (I really love that show).

**Your music videos are always media events and your visuals have always pushed conventions—from AR to 360 video. What's your on-set craziest video story?**

Russel: The "Saturnz Barz" video was a great shoot. Until Murdoc insisted on having a bath and stripping down to his nuts 'n' bolts.

Murdoc: What are you moaning about? That was the most successful VR YouTube video ever. And that was WTH my crown jewels pixelated! Fans were furious about that actually. Someone called MadMurdy69 wrote loads of hate in the comments box, demanding my dragon to be released.

2D: Isn't MadMurdy69 your YouTube name?

Murdoc: We're done here.

**" WE DON'T NEED ALL THE THINGS WE THINK WE DO, LIKE MASSAGE CHAIRS, CAPRI SUN AND 2 BROKE GIRLS. WE JUST NEED FRESH AIR, SUNSHINE AND 2 BROKE GIRLS..."**







# ALWAYS BE INDI- VIA EXA- MPLI- FIED





**IN CONVERSATION WITH  
ALEXANDER WANG**

INTERVIEW BY  
**KEVIN WONG**



**You've recently taken on the CEO position. What's it like balancing the creative side and business side?**

Obviously, the creative side is what drove me here. It was never really a choice—of course I had my sister-in-law who helped me from the beginning as CEO, and we were both so new to the industry. So a lot of it was learning as we go along, but really, it drove us to make decisions based on instinct. It forced me to think in a 360-degree spectrum. From day one you kinda had to make it or you were out of business. My family's always said to me: "When the day comes when we feel that the business is ready to take a life of its own, we'll bring in outside expertise or executives—family comes first," and now we're gonna separate the two.

**What was the motivation behind unifying the men's label back to one name?**

It was actually T by Alexander Wang's menswear that we started first, and then we launched the [mainline] men's collection about maybe a year afterwards. For men's, you know, it's always been a casual, undone approach even though we've evolved it, but it just didn't make sense to have two lines to have so many crossovers in product and price point. We've been talking about it for a few years now and finally it was just like, "Okay, let's just do it." I didn't know what we're waiting

for—it was just kind of something that created much more productivity and less cannibalization.

**Speaking of naming—from the get-go you named the brand after yourself. Having an Asian name within fashion was pretty rare, how did you come to that decision back then?**

Yeah, it wasn't the first idea I had. I mean, there were some possibilities that I'm not even gonna mention. They're pretty ridiculous now that I think about them [laughs]. But nothing really felt right, and finally I was like, "I guess—my name," you know? That's the only thing I can't really argue with. But I didn't feel like it was based on being Asian, it was just that I couldn't come up with anything better [laughs].

**Did you think your name affected anything with the brand when you started releasing or is it just the products spoke for themselves and the name didn't really matter?**

Being born in San Francisco, I never had those feelings of "Oh, does my name or my background have an effect on this or that?" I would probably say it amounts to more of our customers or fanbase knowing my background. My mom moved over to China over 30 years ago with my dad, and I've been going back there for a very long time. And then to go back for business, opening our second store in Beijing, it was nice to have an audience which I connected with on a different level.



"I DEFINITELY FEEL THAT  
IT'S MORE ATTRACTIVE  
WHEN SOMEONE'S  
A BIT MORE UNDONE.  
WHEN THEY DON'T LOOK  
LIKE THEY TRY THAT HARD,  
OR THEY'RE A LITTLE

BIT LAIDBACK"





SENSORY





**So do you think your reception in China was any different than, say, for other brands coming from the West, without an Asian background?**

To be honest, I wouldn't know apart from my own situation. But I do know that if I do an interview with a Chinese magazine, editor or journalist, sometimes they'll start asking me questions in Mandarin. I'll try to respond if I can or do a little lip service, but I can only speak in Mandarin, I can't read or write. But I've never really thought you know, "Oh, do they only wanna interview me because I'm Chinese?" It's not something I even have in my mind.

**The theme for this issue is "Sensory." This might be a more abstract question, but within the Alexander Wang brand and its identity, what kind of things do you associate closely with across the different senses. For example, visuals and feelings or smells and sounds.**

Got me thinkin' about that one. Uh—New York City? That's an important one. We are south of Canal Street, so the smells, they come and go, as you can imagine. Let's see, let me think about one more. God, I'm trying not to just use adjectives—

**Kind of hard, huh? For visuals, maybe colors or patterns?**

For men's, I do things that have more character and are worn-in. Obviously I use black a lot, but

it's textural, there's a lot of different shapes. With something dense like black leather, or materials like terry or jersey, it's important that they are more broken in. I like things that have a pre-existing life. I wouldn't say so much vintage, but more so that you can sense a character behind it versus just feeling pristine and new and lifeless.

**What about in terms of sound? Any soundtracks to the A. Wang brand?**

Definitely a lot of hip-hop [laughs]. I just like things with a really strong beat, and bass and high energy—or even low energy, but that has a lot of soul. I do like a lot of R&B as well.

**Yeah, I definitely see hip-hop and R&B. Shifting gears here a bit, let's talk about sex appeal.**

**What do you consider as "sexy" in your eyes?**

I definitely feel that it's more attractive when someone's a bit more undone. When they don't look like they try that hard, or they're a little bit laidback. I mean the first visual you get is from the clothes, the outfit, how they're put together; but you can tell from how they do their hair, or how they shave, or whatever it may be—that kind of undoneness, that slightly "off" marking, is more attractive. I think about all these iconic couples when I was growing up, whether it was Johnny Depp and Kate Moss, or Carolyn Murphy when she was dating Brandon Boyd—the way



the girl's always a little more dressed up and the guy's more undone, that's always been my way of looking at a power "Wang" couple. Even if they are in a two-piece suit or whatever it may be, there's always something a bit broken, and that's what I think is the most seductive about a man's character.

**Speaking of the pairing of men's and women's styles—there's a lot of brands now exploring the idea of gender fluidity in their collections and having both male and female models walk on the same runway. What's your take on that?**

I feel like it takes an especially confident person to look at clothes and see a genderless way about it—even if it's heels or when Kurt Cobain used to wear slipdresses or things like that. It takes those provocateurs to break the mold.

**Do you think it's a progression of culture and society, or something that's popular at the moment?**

I definitely feel like it's progression of culture—and it'll just keep moving in this direction. I do feel that the archaic ways of looking at gender—especially within this past year—have been challenged to the highest degree.

**Do you see fashion as a way to push boundaries, or is it more like fashion follows what people doing out on the streets?**

A bit of both. I think one influences the other, but it takes an audience and it takes someone to do it, you know what I mean? Yes, designers can show a male model wearing female clothes, but I feel like it takes a strong individual to wear it on the street or to wear it in front of the public eye for people to see it as something that feels activated.

**Definitely. Touching on Wangfest and bringing that festival mentality into fashion, have the reactions been really positive? Are there any people who think of it as too unconventional of an approach for fashion?**

Yeah, I mean—hey, I love it. It's our time to be a larger part of culture and to interact with whoever wants to be a part of the events and things that we do. A lot of the times I do feel a bit bored just speaking to the fashion industry, and I love it when I can do things that are entertainment, music, fashion, sometimes it's food, whatever. I have such a good time when we get together and put on our events. It's our Coachella, it's our EDC, it's our Lollapalooza, it's our version of bringing people together to celebrate things we enjoy.

**It's great to see your approach to infusing even more diversity into fashion. You've been in the industry for over a decade now. Do you feel any added responsibility or pressure to**



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**shake up the state of fashion?**

Maybe it's a responsibility to myself, because I'm always looking to challenge myself and the status quo and do things that are a bit more out of the box. Especially today—as a fashion brand—when you think about it, there's always going to be the Chanel, the Hermes, those high-luxury brands. But I feel this is an opportunity to think about who we are and where we stand, as part of the generation and movement of where fashion is today. I say opportunity because I try to always look at things as a creative challenge to redefine ourselves and the values that we share with our audience. It's no longer enough to just be a brand that sells clothes and has a fashion show. If you just need things, there are obvious options for that—you have Zara, Uniqlo—so I do feel that I have a responsibility to rethink who we are, what we do and the conversations that we want to be a part of, that they aren't just contextualized in a fashion format.

**Is that how you stay motivated to keep things fresh after a decade of designing and doing shows and events season after season?**

Yeah, I think so [laughs]. You know, I always try to find an excuse to do something that's a little bit different. Fashion is something that changes every 6 months—the exciting part is that you get to reinvent yourself every season. I take it as an invitation to do so.





INTERVIEW

[REDACTED]







# NEW







# A Malleable Maelstrom



# AND DO

WORDS  
**GAVIN YEUNG**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**DAIGO YAMAMOTO**

INTERVIEW  
**GIADA TINELLI**







A table that tenderly entwines a leg around that of another table. A cabinet that traces out all the possible ways its doors and drawers open up. An umbrella that stands on its own foot. Delicate Escher-esque formations made, of all things, out of chocolate. All are mundane, everyday objects that wouldn't elicit a second glance were it not for a signature flourish—though while the word 'flourish' typically implies flair and showmanship, these particular accents are subtle, eliciting a brief moment of reverie and a glimpse inside the mind of their creator: Oki Sato, founder of Tokyo-based design firm nendo.

'Prolific' is a word that has been used to the point of exhaustion when referring to Sato—and with good reason. His company, a mere 15 years old, has accrued a client list and portfolio of work that rivals some of the world's top design agencies in both breadth and depth. At any given moment, nendo is processing some 400-odd projects for a smorgasbord of clients across every design category, all of which must be personally approved by Sato himself. New projects are unveiled almost every week—a breakneck speed that does little to dilute the originality of each concept. And while he has

**"DESIGN IS NOT THE GOAL. DESIGN SHOULD BE THE GLUE TO LINK PEOPLE WITH PEOPLE, OR PEOPLE WITH OBJECTS, OR PEOPLE WITH SPACE."**

**NENDO**  
TANGLE TABLE  
for CAPPELLINI  
2016.4

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
AKIHIRO YOSHIDA







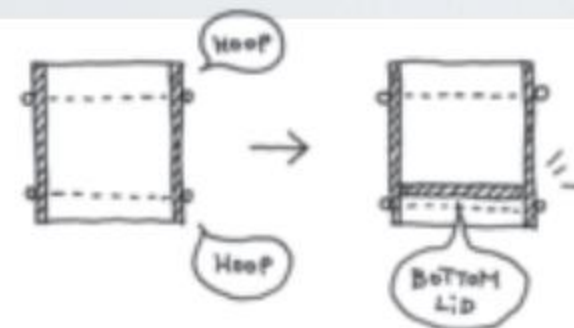
**NENDO**  
TRACE CONTAINER  
for COLLECTIVE  
DESIGN  
2016.5

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
AKIHIRO YOSHIDA



**NENDO**  
OKE CUP / OKE  
CARAFE  
for NAKAGAWA  
MOKKOUGEI  
2015.04

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
AKIHIRO YOSHIDA



helmed projects for Louis Vuitton to Häagen-Dazs and KENZO Parfums to Baccarat, every outcome is still unmistakably his, branded by pared-back whimsy. Even these lofty accomplishments, meeting Sato in the flesh is a pleasant surprise. Sporting a youthful side-swept fringe, Sato, 39, carries an air of boyish exuberance into Jil Sander's Milanese showroom which he has filled with a miniaturized mountain range for Milan Design Week 2017, its topography traced into being by successive whitewashed wire frames. Born in Toronto where he lived his first 11 years, Sato's Canadian English accent has stayed largely intact which, when paired with his animated demeanor, creates a rather more amiable impression than his Japanese peers in design. Indeed, his upbringing between Canada and Japan has lent him a pliancy lacking in the oft-impenetrable design circles of the latter. "Design is not the goal—design should be the glue to link people with people, or people with objects, or people with space," he recognizes. "I want a pinch of humor, of friendliness, sometimes of surprise. It's like the spice on my food, and that's what creates a link between my designs and people."

Taking its name from the Japanese word for children's modeling clay, nendo is the encapsulation of this philosophy. It is through nendo's kaleidoscopic portfolio that Sato expresses an irreverent brand of minimalist mischief, a none-too-serious take on this haughty realm. One of his most well-known pieces, the Cabbage Chair, took industrial-sized rolls of pleated paper—a byproduct of collaborator Issey Miyake's famously pleated designs—and peeled back layer after diaphanous layer until a chair materialized, in a move that in retrospect seems both off-the-cuff yet entirely self-evident. While most approach an object or a moment at surface value, Sato has a certain 'sense'—which in the Japanese meaning of the word equates to good taste—that comes from a place of childlike innocence which views an object without any preconceived notions, consequently allowing him to see all of its possibilities.

He treats his designs, he explains, like pets. "The job that I'm doing at the moment is kind of like a pet shop owner. You come up with your babies—your ideas—that you give to your clients, and then you let them grow together, develop into something else."



In a way it's like a childhood dream come true," he chuckles. Sato's pets first begin as fleeting moments of inspiration, what he describes on nendo's website as moments of "!" that flit into his day. These may arise from the way sunlight filters through the canopy of a tree, the gaps between floorboards, or the way a wobbly table is made stable by stacking paper underneath one of its legs. "It's like breathing," he says of his inexhaustible ability to find inspiration. "The more you exhale, the more you inhale. You just keep on designing as if you are breathing."

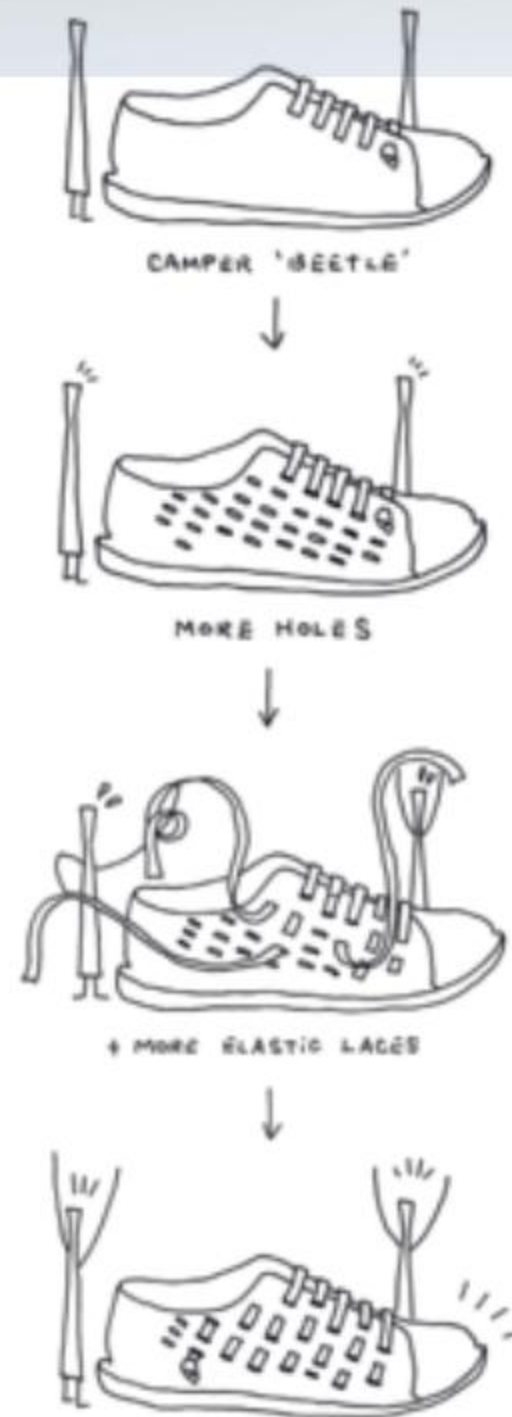
With an idea in mind, Sato puts pen to paper in the most important part of the process. Shorn of any technical notation, his "stupid sketches" feel more at home in the sketchbook of a first-grader. "Sometimes I feel like a bad sketch works because it doesn't define the object itself too much, and it leaves you some flexibility to go in different directions as well," says Sato. A stick figure often inhabits these doodles—lifting, walking, sitting, staring—in the process denoting the essence of the object's function while never spelling out its final design. That task is left to his team of 30 designers, who interpret and translate this concept into real-world designs (stick figure sadly absent) which are then keyed into nendo's arsenal of five 3D printers and rendered as a physical mock-up. The process remains the same, regardless of whether the object in question is a shopping mall in Bangkok or a saltshaker. Speed is key—Sato has previously likened his method to that of a sushi chef, in that they must both serve their clients in the timeliest manner to retain the freshness of their respective goods.

However, amidst the undulating, mountain-like waveforms of his "nendo: invisible outlines" exhibition in the Jil Sander Showroom, where we met him in the ethereal light of its whitewashed interior, nendo's frenetic pace was entirely lost on us. In a neighboring room, jellyfish-like vases fabricated from membranous blue silicone had been submerged in a fish tank, fluttering languidly in invisible currents



**NENDO**  
CAMPER TRIBUTE  
for CAMPER  
2014.03

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
AKIHIRO YOSHIDA











**NENDO**  
*50 MANGA CHAIRS*  
*IN MILAN*  
for FRIEDMAN BENDA  
2016.04

**COLLABORATOR**  
NIS

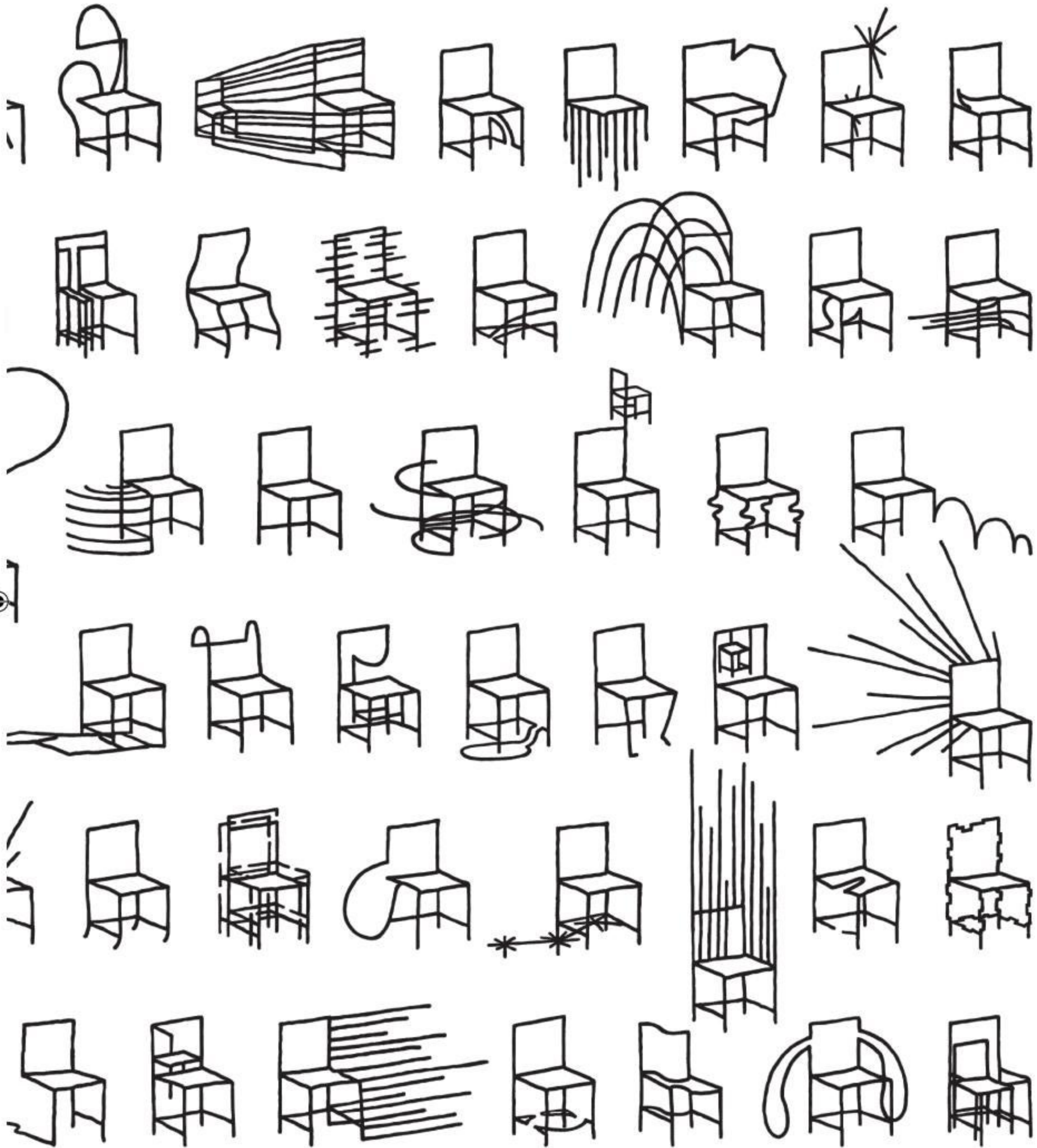
**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
TAKUMI OTA







INTERVIEW







SENSORY

**"IT'S LIKE BREATHING.  
THE MORE YOU  
EXHALE, THE MORE  
YOU INHALE.  
YOU JUST KEEP ON  
DESIGNING AS IF  
YOU ARE BREATHING."**



and blurring the line between art, design and biology. Just the previous year at the same event, nendo had populated a historic Milanese palazzo with his "50 manga chairs" installation, comprised of dozens of stainless steel chairs incorporating prominent motifs found in Japan's most widely-consumed art form, the manga. Across both his commercial and artistic projects, Sato appeals primarily to wonder and humor—emotions prevalent in young and old, which explains his widespread demand across a variety of sectors.

This commitment to populist design is one of the pillars of nendo's success. "Their work has a simplicity and a clarity that everyone can understand," says Marcus Friar, editor-in-chief of online design publication Dezeen. "Their designs are like diagrams; they contain no superfluous information and express exactly what they are in the most efficient way. So people who usually have no interest in avant-garde design are drawn to the work and feel they understand it. They're not intimidated."

Outside of the only job Sato has ever held (nendo was founded soon after he completed his master's degree at the prestigious Waseda University), he translates the same strict editing and efficiency of his work into an austere—some would say ascetic—lifestyle. Everyday he visits the same nendo-designed café before work, eats the same dish of soba noodles for lunch, and is often the last to leave the nendo office, which occupies two floors in the imposing Sogetsu Building in Tokyo's upscale Akasaka district. A divorcee, he spends the two weeks out of every month that he's not travelling with Kinako, his 8-year-old chihuahua-pug mix, in a one-bedroom apartment that he morbidly likens to a prison cell. His closet is stocked with identical white shirts, black trousers, and the same style of socks and underwear. His only vices are 10-minute-long showers on the weekends (as opposed to the usual five minutes) and indulging his sweet tooth, so much so that he seriously worries that he will die of diabetes one day.





**NENDO**  
*JELLYFISH VASE*  
 for MILAN DESIGN  
 WEEK  
 2017.04

**PHOTOGRAPHY**  
 AKIHIRO YOSHIDA

To Sato, there is no divide between work and play. “I feel very relaxed when working and designing things because I really enjoy what I’m doing,” he explains. “When I have a little bit of time, I take my dog for a walk. Since I have less time now, my dog is getting fatter. I have a very fat dog.” He lets out a mirthful laugh, unfazed by, or perhaps unaware of the strangeness of his monastic routine. Sato is equally oblivious to his impact on the public perception of Japanese design both domestically and abroad. “If I gave some influence to the Japanese design scene, it would be something like, ‘OK, if this stupid guy can do something like this, we can do it!’ So all the young designers will feel very confident.”

Self-effacement aside, two nendo retrospectives in 2016 at Tel Aviv’s Design Museum Holon and the Taiwan Design Museum have squarely placed Sato within the pantheon of modern design greats. Sato has also been gravitating back towards his architectural training with large-scale projects, from envisioning

concept cars to designing the interior of a deep-sea fishing boat. nendo recently completed its largest and most ambitious project yet—a 6,000-square-meter park in front of a train station near Nara, Japan that will encompass a cafe, an outdoor theater, and an information center—while the studio has also been designing the props and set pieces for a TV drama series loosely based on Sato himself.

In spite of nendo’s unbroken upward trajectory, Sato remains as freewheeling as ever towards the future of his design practice. There is, he insists, no premeditation and all serendipity: “It depends on my clients, I guess. If one day a person wants me to design a piano, I might get famous designing them and I’ll end up with 100 pianos. My clients define my future and I have no idea. I just enjoy whatever comes to my desk.”





# Comic Conception

WORDS  
**KEVIN WONG**

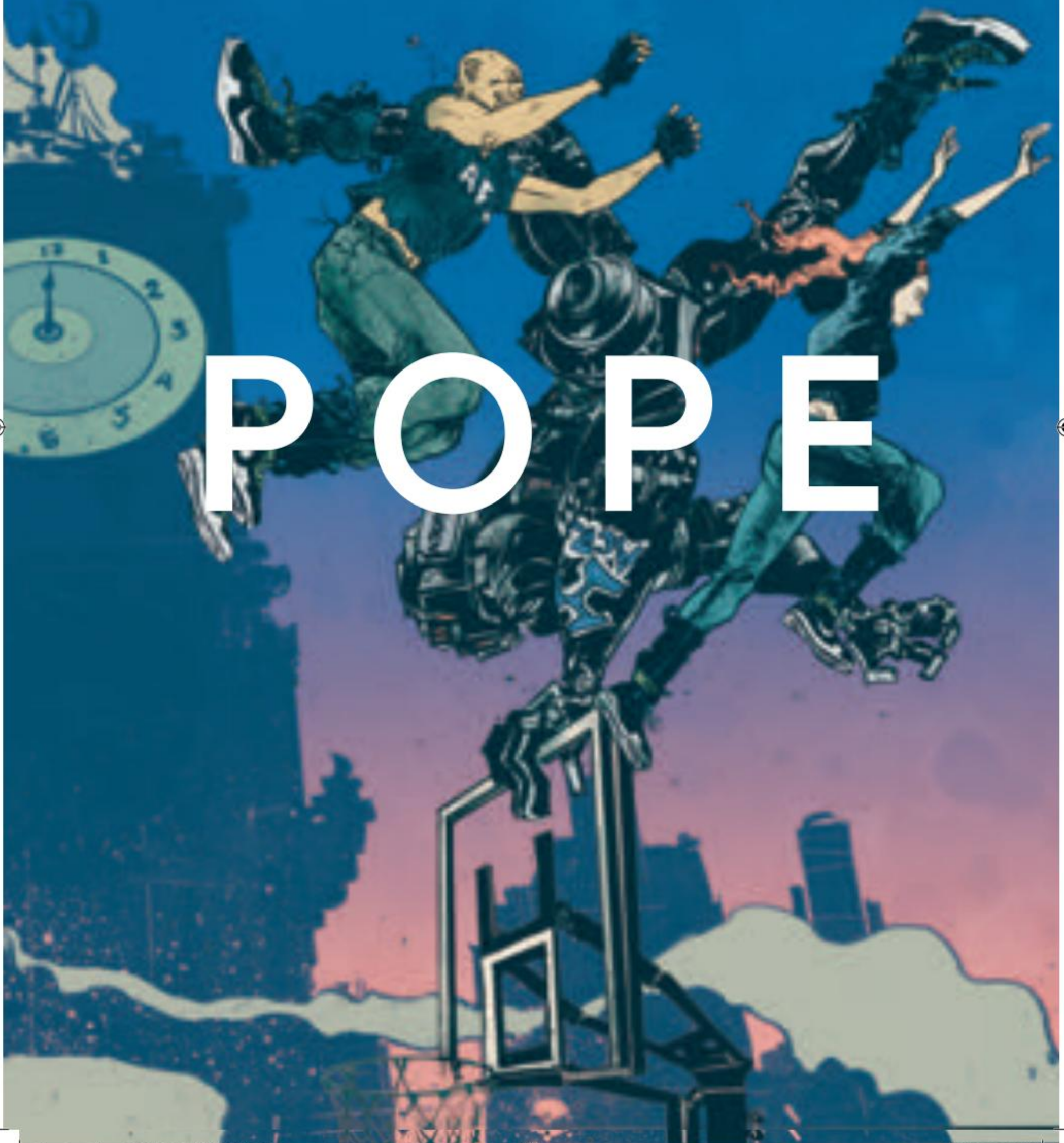


# PAUL

IMAGES  
**PAUL POPE**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**ANDREW T. FOSTER**





# POPE







“My spidey senses are tingling.” It’s a pretty good bet that people of all ages across the world are deeply familiar with this phrase—singlehandedly coined by a fictitious, red-and-blue-clad spider bite victim and today one of the most universal expressions within popular culture. The masterminds behind *Spider-Man* should be proud. Stereotypically reserved for young boys and often considered by the haughty art world as juvenile at best, comic art has conversely held a triumphant grip on the public consciousness, much more so over the works of their more “serious” peers. Over the last several decades, these fantastical storylines inked by comic artists have permeated popular culture and are now firmly ensconced within our everyday lives—for adolescents and adults alike.

The work of American comic book artist Paul Pope stands as a prime example of comic art’s cultural pervasiveness. Pope’s work spans multiple industries—he began his career publishing graphic and comic novels such as *The New York Times* bestseller *Battling Boy*, and working on established series like

*Batman*. His talent has made headway into the fashion world with Diesel, DKNY and most recently Nike, painting Errolson Hugh as a high-flying superhero for the brand’s collaboration with ACRONYM. To understand why a footwear titan would tap a comic artist for such a high-profile endeavor, one must take into consideration the unique creative process of a comic artist—especially an award-winning one like Paul Pope.

While the consumption of comic books and comic art may seem rudimentary, creating it is quite the contrary. It is, in actuality, an all-encompassing production that requires an artist to pursue aspects of storytelling that escape even the most experienced of storytellers. A comic book artist is an entire production crew packed into one person. “It’s equivalent to being a director, just that you’re doing it alone without production teams, editing, actors... and an accounting department,” Pope trails off, laughing. Beyond the immense talent and skills required to design the scenes, conjuring concepts, characters,





ANTMAN-14-15



















***"DARTH VADER. THE LUKE SKYWALKER STORY. THOSE THINGS—IT MIGHT JUST BE UPDATING STORIES WE'VE HEARD BEFORE. BUT I THINK PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE WORLD IN METAPHORS."***

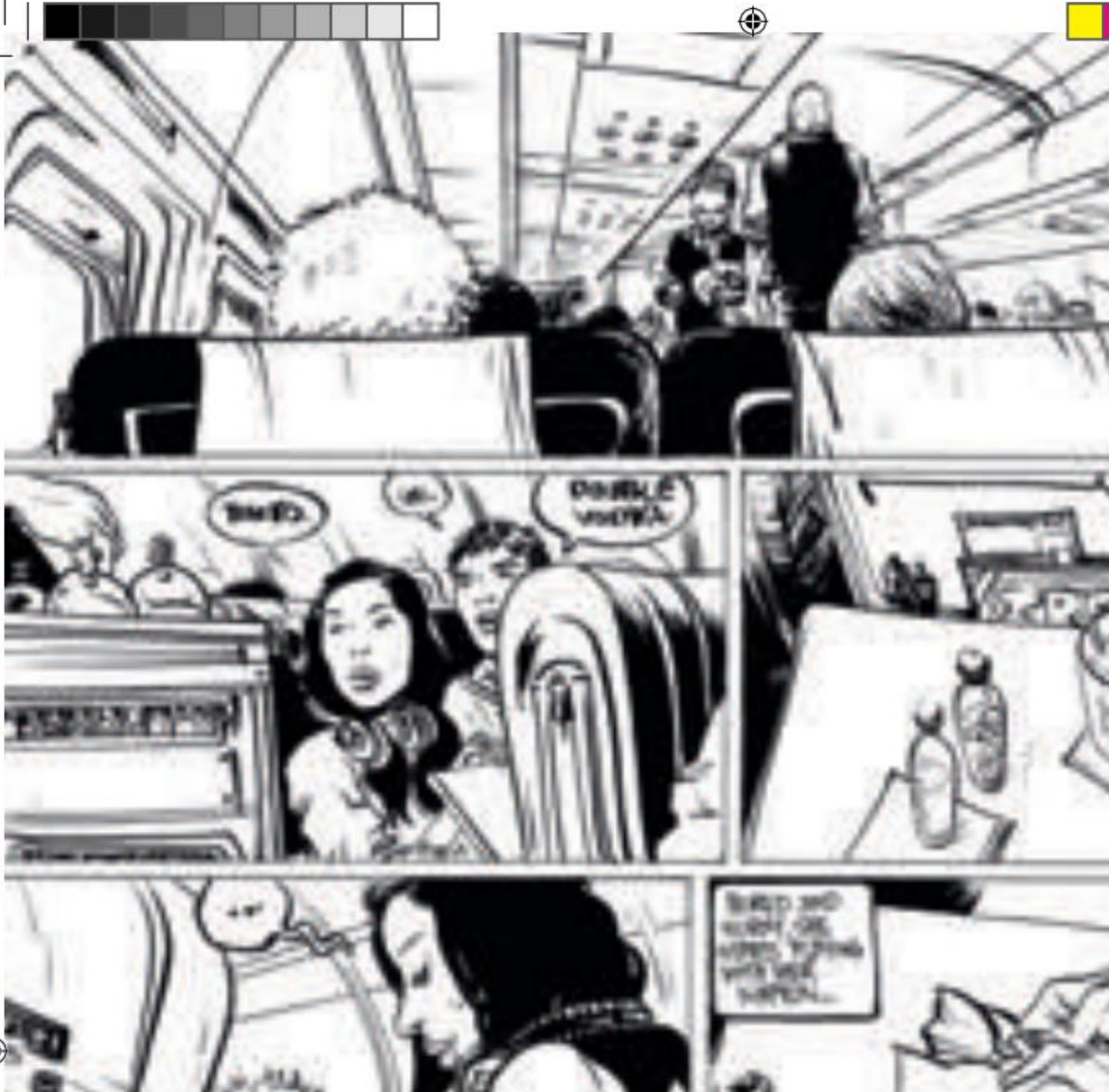
and settings takes conclusive anthropological and near-encyclopedic knowledge of the subject at hand. For his work with the likes of DKNY and Nike then, Pope consequently serves as the director, actor, product designer, graphic designer, marketing team—the list goes on.

Comic art is deceptively frivolous, yet the minds whirring behind each flashy scene are in fact more akin to discerning academics than the Lost Boys of Neverland. Paul Pope himself studied studio arts and art history for eight years before moving onto several more years of studies in philosophy and theology. Pope is unabashedly, undeniably a scholar by all accounts, bolstered by a dexterous imagination and philosopher's soul. Though his work has experienced countless reincarnations by way of publishers, entertainment companies and brands such as LucasArts, NBC and Disney, the core of his work remains unchanged. To create alternate universes from scratch, one's knowledge of existing reality must be infallible. Paul Pope approaches each project with an inexhaustible desire to delve into his understanding of the world and his subject matter, ultimately resulting in work that has subtle but deep inflections of worldly perspective.

Like any great storyteller, Paul Pope's work doesn't merely entertain, but serves as a commentary on our society and the human condition through the decidedly less hefty medium of mythological villains and heroes. We spoke to Paul about his personal process with comic books and graphic novels over the past 20 years of his career, and how he went about turning the ubiquitous Errolson Hugh into the comic hero of the Nike campaign.







## Q&A

### **As a comic artist, how do you approach working with big companies or brands like Nike, as opposed to your own comics or graphic novels?**

I always think of it in terms of biology. You need to unravel the DNA of whoever's calling you. With Nike, they're like, "We want you to work on this project." You know, Errolson is a good friend of one of my best friends, and he's in this rock 'n' roll circle of dudes that know musicians, artists and fashion designers. That was exciting, right there, because I just wanted to spend some time with Errolson. And then seeing the shoes—man, I thought that was really interesting. I did some research on Nike, and the way the company was built through persevering, and through all the hardships that went with becoming a global company. That was sort of the different protein bonds of the DNA structure. Nike wanted these science fiction images, which are kind of my specialty, so I tried to find a way to bring something new to it, something

honorable to add to the projection to make it cool. That's what I try to do every time I work with a new client. If it's adidas, it's gonna be something totally different.

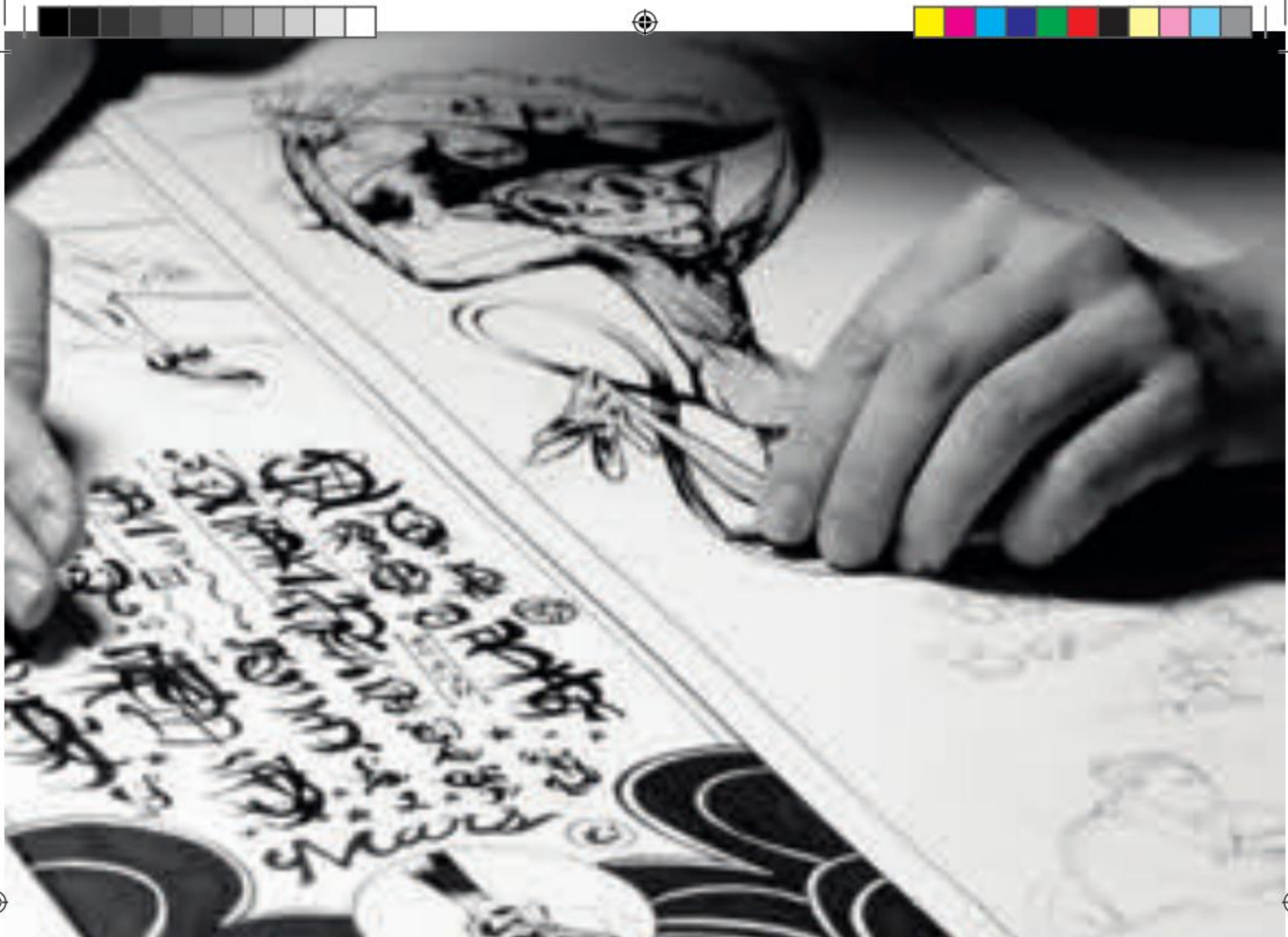
### **How did your artwork first expand into the fashion world?**

My crossover with the fashion world and how I got started with shoes began with Diesel, and working on a capsule line with DKNY—I've done Fashion Week openings and store installations with Diesel.

### **With no previous background in fashion, why do you think a brand like Diesel enlisted you?**

The team at Diesel found out a lot of my art comes from Italian comics in the '60s, especially Guido Crepax, and I'm also really into Japanese pop art and stuff like that, so I think there's an interesting multidisciplinary background for them. I lived in Japan in the '90s, so I kind of have





an international background in that sense. They liked that I could work in that kind of mid-century high Italian style, so at the time they wanted to channel a bit of it.

**Is the process different when working on commissioned pieces with companies and brands?**

Oh yes, it's totally different. There's the discipline—you're an author, basically. You live a Spartan lifestyle, and your days are repetitive. It's kind of a monkish thing: stay in, work certain hours, sleep certain hours, don't go out. Hopefully get some exercise, because your body needs stamina. Working in fashion or advertising, it's really the branding thing. You have to really identify what the client needs and figure out what to contribute out of your skill set that benefits them the most. I think the reason I get brought in on these things is that I've developed a good way to come up with really sharp visual concepts that I can communicate in a certain style. And major brands

like Nike or adidas, they're pretty recognizable entities. You're trying to bring in something new, to make it different and fresh and rewarding—I think it's just sort of what I do.

**I definitely think that's the most interesting part—the way you depicted Errolson and his clothes in a different light.**

Yeah. The real Holy Grail is, if you look at like the great tradition of illustration in the 20th century—the one thing the masters, the old dogs, talk about is if you're gonna draw fabric, you gotta know what fabric it is, you have to know how the fabric folds, how it falls. When it comes to fashion, we all have a dog in the fight. You know, I don't want to draw something that's supposed to be like high fashion or something street-cool, and it just doesn't look cool—you can tell when the artist is faking it.



***"I DID SOME RESEARCH ON HOW TO BUILD A  
TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. BECAUSE I THINK IN  
SOME WAYS BATMAN'S SORT OF A TERRORIST."***

**Seeing that connection from a footwear perspective and then from an art perspective like you, seeing all the themes you can build off of is so interesting—the art of designing footwear and comic art put together is definitely a treat for viewers.**

Y'know, I had eight years of studio arts, art history training, and spent a few years studying philosophy and theology, and then got really into pop art: everything from Warhol, to Tadanori Yokoo and the FLUXUS movement. Between stuff like that and loving jazz and rock 'n' roll, seeing the relationship between album design and music, and the way you can create iconic images married with the music—this kind of thing is super fascinating, you know? So I think [the key is] applying those pop art rules and comic book storytelling rules to brand identity, with the awareness that I as an artist have my own brand and style. That's what makes it fun, putting all these components together.

**How much pre-production and planning goes into starting a new series or comic?**

When you're a graphic novelist, it's equivalent to being a director, just that you're doing it alone. I've shot some short films before. You work with hundreds and hundreds of people and all the psychologies of these different people. But working on graphic novels removes the fact of working with a very large team. You could do it at Kinko's [copy shop] or at your computer; and you're thinking about casting, lighting, composition, depth of field. You think about editing, title credits, end credits, the poster, the cover for the film, all of that.

**What interests me is the idea of constructing characters, such as Batman. There's such an**

**elaborate thought process behind the psychology and the personality of a certain character. Can you explain that process a bit?**

In the case of Batman, I started studying theater production, everything from Broadway to small-theater black box stuff and Japanese Puppet Theater. I did some research on how to build a terrorist organization, because I think in some ways Batman's sort of a terrorist. There's a really good book breaking down secret organizations—how to get a terrorist organization to work—that was written by Robert Heinlein called *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*. If you want to be serious about writing and say something that has perspective, I think you need to do the research on that thing.

**Batman and these characters have become so prevalent in our society that in the future, these characters will probably become the mythological figures equivalent to how we see Greek mythology in today's culture.**

Yeah, definitely. Batman is gonna last. He's gonna be around for a long time. I think Darth Vader, the Luke Skywalker story, those things—it's amazing that people are able to create these characters. It might just be updating stories we've heard before, but I think people understand the world in metaphors. Storytelling is important because there's so much information that we don't know how to filter everything. I think people can relate to a story. It has universal elements in that everyone's a father, everyone's a mother. That's also why I think Hitler remains the villain that he is. Outside of the horrible facts, he represents the human embodiment of evil. In that sense, he's an archetype. People admit that.





Batman  
 © DC  
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 Comics  
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BLIND  
ASSEMBLY

A FASHION SET BY HARRY FISHER



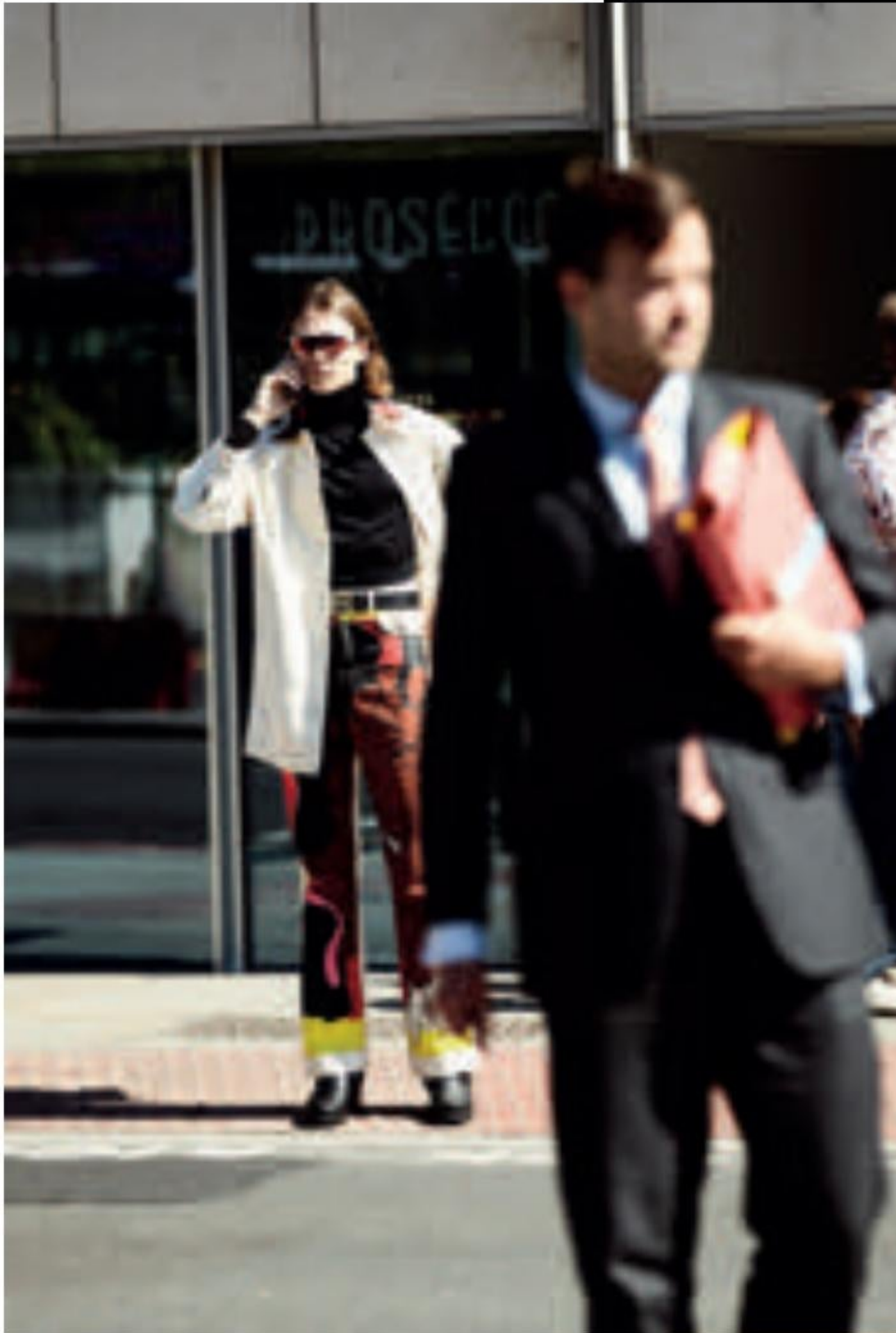




OUTFIT: JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN







130

**SUNGLASSES:** OAKLEY  
**JACKET & TROUSERS:** ALEX MULLINS  
**SHIRT:** VERSACE

**BELT:** AUREO WORLDWIDE  
**SHOES:** JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN















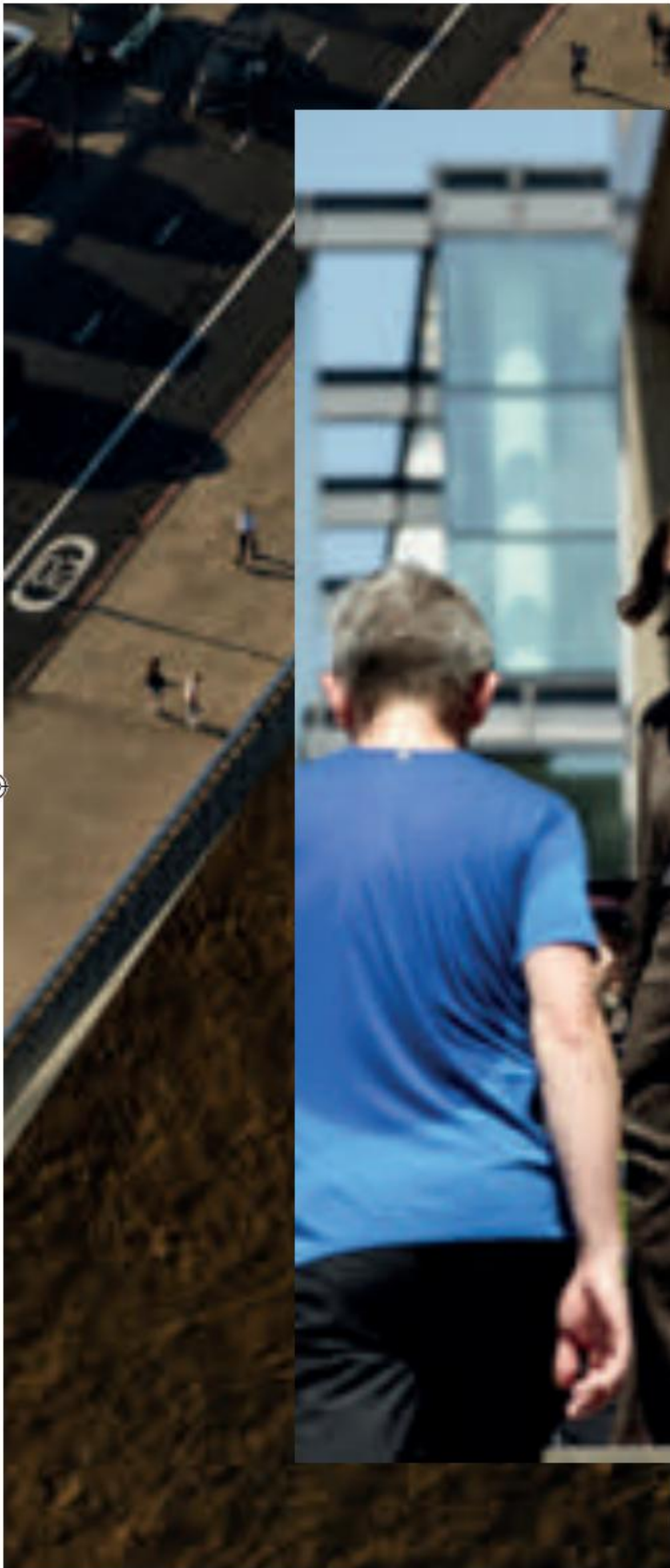
OUTFIT: VERSACE











**SUNGLASSES:** OAKLEY  
**OUTFIT:** JOHN LAWRENCE SULLIVAN



















**OUTFIT:** XANDER ZHOU  
**PANTS:** LIAM HODGES







140

**OUTFIT:** DIOR HOMME  
**SHOES:** RAF SIMONS X ADIDAS





Jake Hunte STYLING

PHOTOGRAPHY Elliot Kennedy

MODEL | LUKE HARRIS





NOVO



KAI



BYUNGKWON JANG



KYUHEE BAIK



JAERYONG KIM



EDDIE SANGMIN YOO

JUNGKAB CHOI



MINHYE CHOI







JIWON LEE



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# The Evolution of



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HANYOUNG SEO

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PHOTOGRAPHY  
CHO GI SEOK

PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT  
HYEIN LEE



JANGSUB YOON

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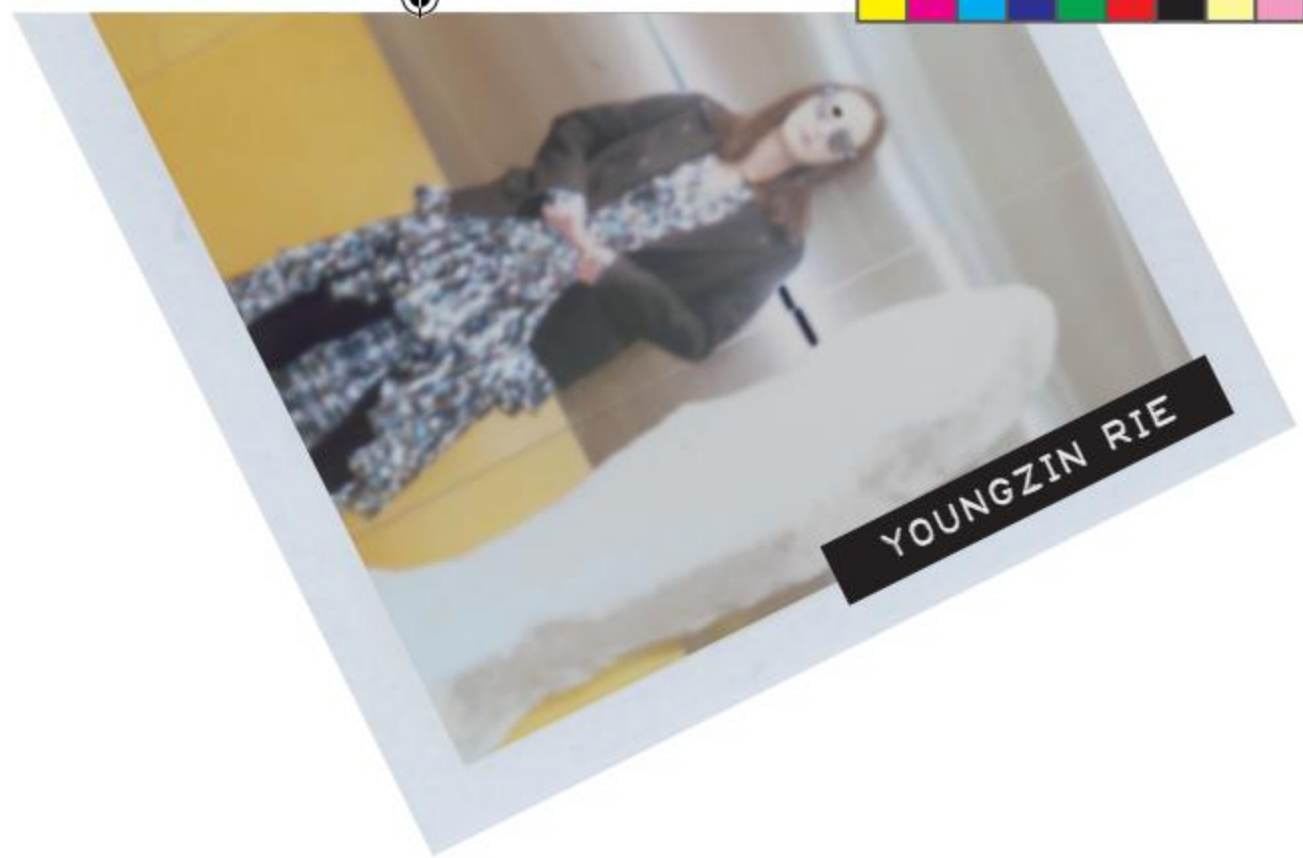


**"PEOPLE HAVE THE  
TENDENCY TO HIDE BEHIND  
GENTLE DEMEANORS  
EVERY DAY, BUT WE BELIEVE  
EVERYONE CARRIES  
A CONTRADICTIONARY  
DUALITY ON THE INSIDE."**



**FHIFAN**





As children, we were taught to be afraid of monsters. We may not have known exactly what or why, but we know monsters are feral, violent and neither kind nor gentle. Hankook Kim, founder of eyewear brand Gentle Monster, would agree. The term “Gentle Monster” is an unlikely dichotomy. “I want people to be surprised,” Kim tells us when we meet in Hongdae, Seoul’s hub for young creatives where the brand’s headquarter offices are located. Our meeting is to discuss how to celebrate the renewal of his flagship store. “I want people to experience the unexpected,” he says with staccato-ed hand gestures to emphasize his point. He’s wearing clear spectacles from his own brand paired with an unassuming grey suit jacket, lending him a scholarly appearance. It would be impossible to spot him on the street as the founder of such a buzzed-about eyewear label. His resemblance is of a Steve Jobs or Mark Zuckerberg, in the way of reserved leaders who express their creativity through their product in lieu of themselves.

“People have the tendency to hide behind gentle demeanors every day, but we believe everyone carries a contradictory duality on the inside,” says Najung Shin, Gentle Monster’s brand manager, explaining the naming behind the brand. “We want our products to allow each person to express what’s inside them.” Founded as a one-man brand inspired by Warby Parker, Gentle Monster is now credited as Asia’s top fashion eyewear manufacturer, with 12 flagship stores

globally including one in New York and not including boutiques within Asia’s most premium department stores. Since its inception in 2011, Gentle Monster has tripled or quadrupled in revenue every single year, surpassing those of luxury eyewear brands. This is partly driven by smart product placements as well as bold collaborations with a roster of names which includes Opening Ceremony and Hood By Air.

Since last April, even LVMH has been in talks with Gentle Monster for a speculative \$180 million USD in investments. If the deal executes successfully, it would be the conglomerate’s largest investment to date in South Korea—surpassing the amount it spent on YG Entertainment, the K-pop agency that represents performing artists such as G-Dragon and PSY, by more than 100%. From the perspective of LVMH, the decision to invest so much in Gentle Monster is not only extremely daring, but also seemingly backwards. The reason is twofold: first, South Korea’s pop music and beauty sectors are significantly larger than that of eyewear and therefore would be much more sensical investment subjects; second, the eyewear market faces heavy competition from luxury brand licensors who are extremely popular to logo-loving Asian consumers. Eyewear is one of the two main points of entry into a luxury brand, the other being cosmetics. Chanel, Fendi, Dior, Prada, and the like most often license their eyewear production and distribution to companies like Luxottica or Safilo. However, even though a pair of









**KEUNNAM OKEH**



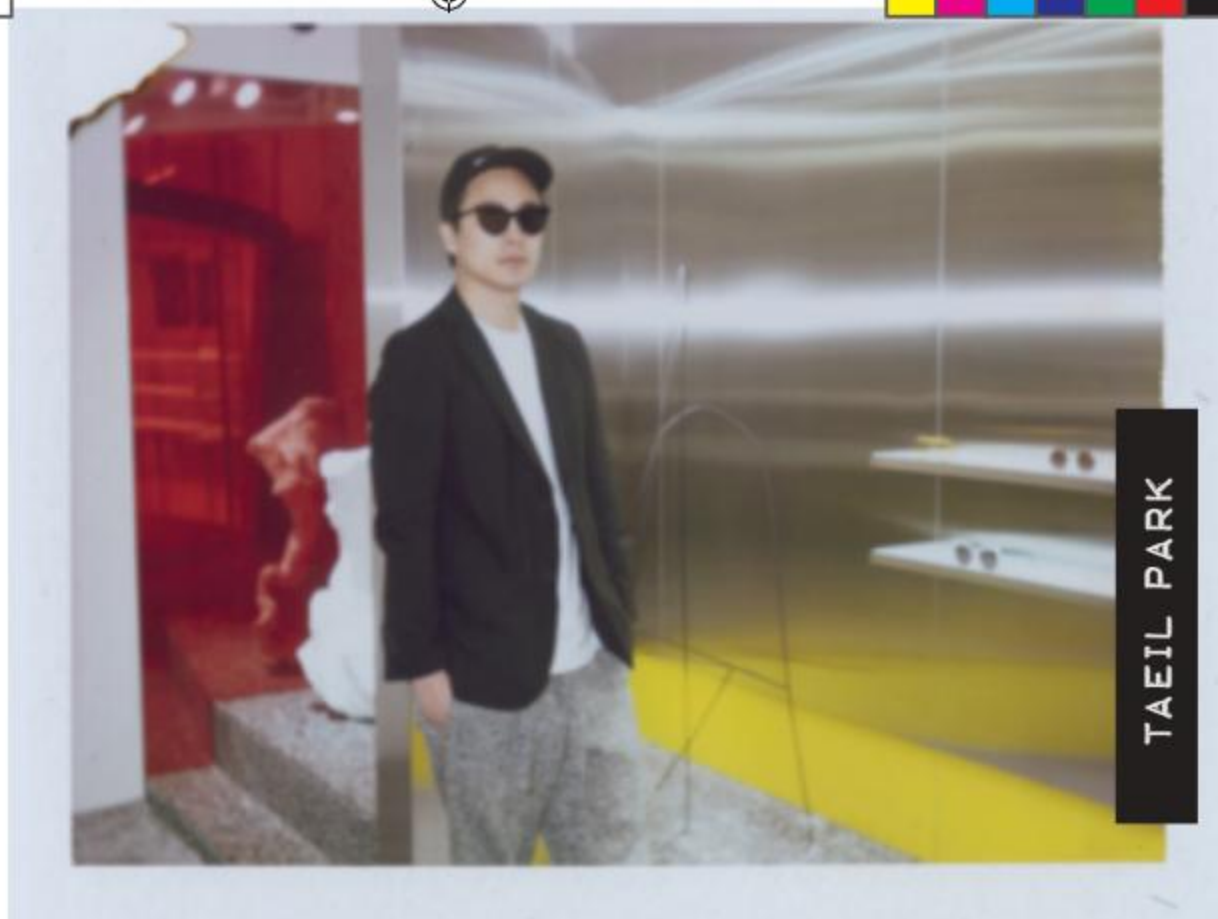
**MIJIN KIM, HEESOO PARK**



**DOYEON RYU**







Chanel sunglasses may cost significantly less than a Chanel purse, the price of a pair of Chanel sunglasses is still well above that of most premium and contemporary sunwear. This is where Gentle Monster's competitive positioning shines through. At similar levels of quality as high-end sunglasses, they offer everything within the \$200 USD range.

But even so, the question remains as to just how Gentle Monster became so successful. "Korea was our biggest market in 2014 and 2015, then Gentle Monster ate us all up," says Sean Michael Beolchini, creative director of Retrosuperfuture. When Gentle Monster first launched, it was a sensation to Koreans. Someone had finally figured out that Koreans needed sunglasses which fit their Asian face shapes. Gentle Monster hit the spot with glasses that didn't slide down a lower nose bridge or give temple-squeezing headaches. But the brand would not have come this far with a single strategy. "We need to be different," Kim stresses. Beyond competitive prices and market-tailored silhouettes, Gentle Monster's strongest point of differentiation is its undefined brand universe. Unlike luxury brands who pride themselves in their heritage and history, or fashion labels who strive for one certain aesthetic or lifestyle, Gentle Monster is constantly evolving. The brand is truly like a monster, always morphing based on its needs; its flagship stores stand testament to its shapeshifting mentality.

While Gentle Monster's in-house eyewear design team is comprised of only six designers, the company employs 10 times that number for its visual merchandising teams—a staggering 60—made up of 20 space designers and 40 visual directors. "It's crazy," says Retrosuperfuture's Beolchini upon visiting one of Gentle Monster's Seoul flagships. "They've got five floors with only two actually selling product." Beolchini's referring to the fact that Gentle Monster's Sinisa store only displays sunglasses on the second and third floors, with the fourth and fifth being customer lounges. Upon entering the first floor, visitors are greeted by scented tree branches fastened on spinning metal wheels. The Sinisa store actually counts six stories including the basement level, which houses eyeglasses and a one-man speakeasy bar.

Situated in Hongdae along with the brand's headquarters is another flagship conceptualized as an olfactory lab; another store is a renovated public bathhouse and others are inspired by a laundromat, a play theater—the list goes on. Gentle Monster products are exhibited more like pieces in a museum than consumer goods. The 60 visual team members travel all over the world to source props and artwork to ensure a stunning and jaw-dropping interior. Gentle Monster's decision to invest so much to its retail spaces speaks to the brand's goal to deliver an immersive and experiential offline shopping experience. It's a bonus that photos of its offline spaces spread virally online, which creates a virtuous cycle of exposure. Thanks to social media, visitors young and old come from all over the world,





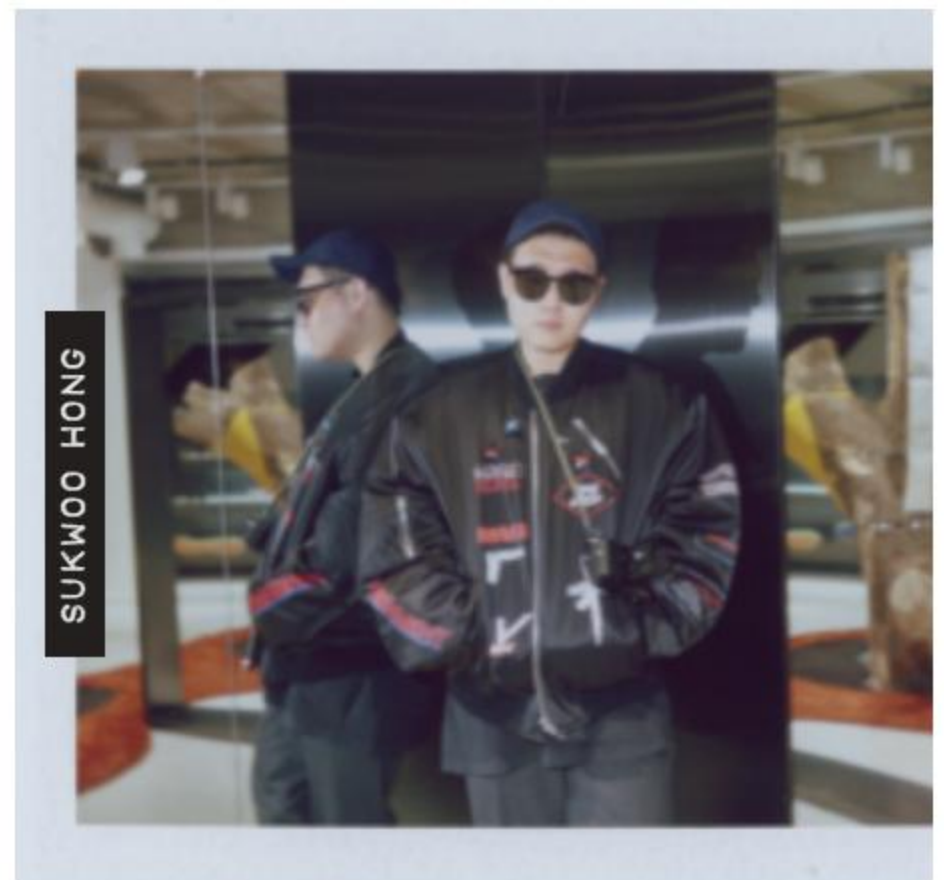
**THE BRAND IS TRULY LIKE  
A MONSTER, ALWAYS  
MORPHING BASED ON ITS  
NEEDS. ITS FLAGSHIP STORES  
ARE PHYSICAL PROOF  
OF THIS, ITS BORDERLESS  
MIND MANIFESTED.**



**YEUNJAE LEE**



**NY.GENIUS**



**SUKWOO HONG**







**SONGYEE KOO**



**JOOYEON KIM**





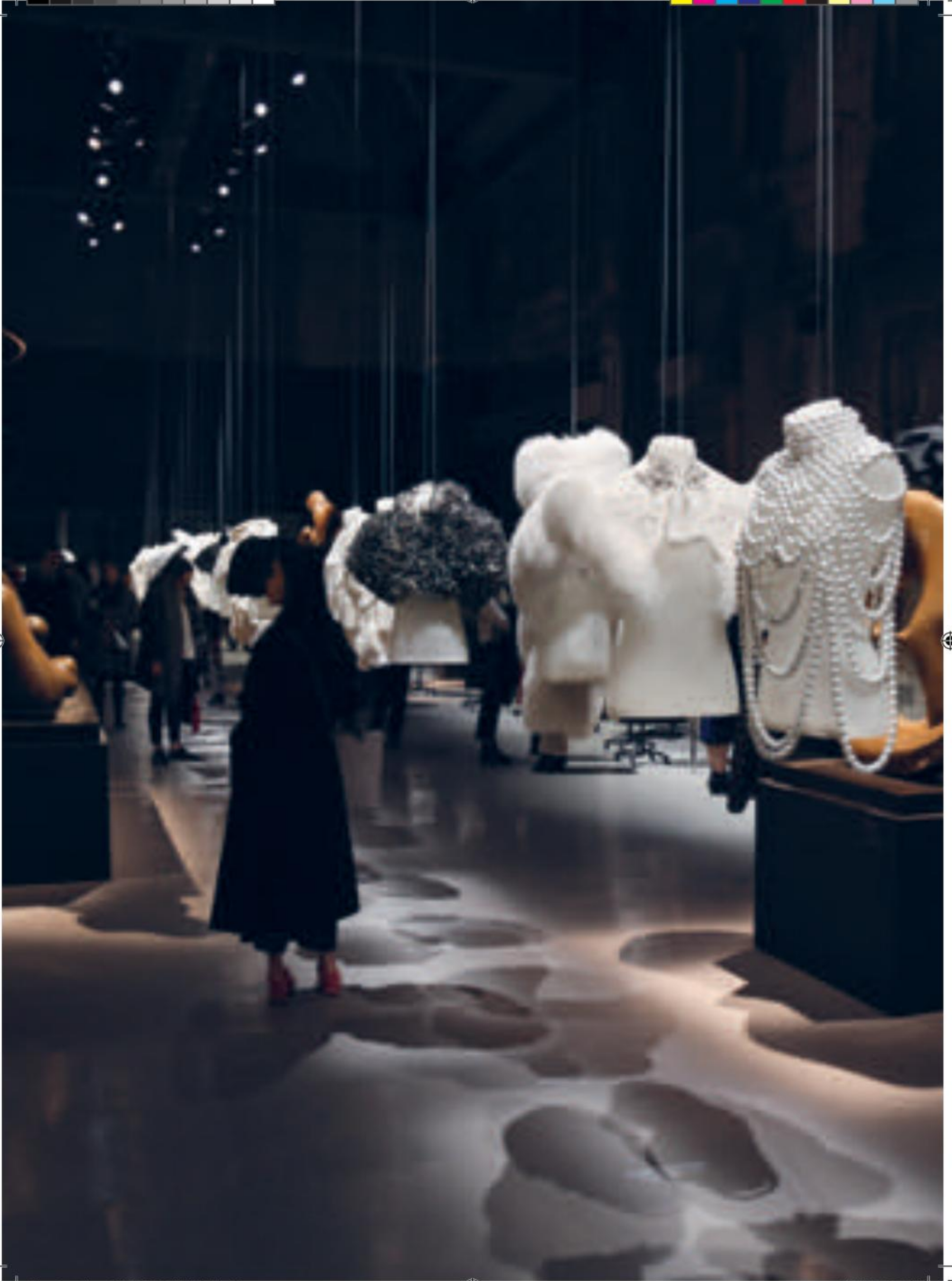


putting Gentle Monster stores on the top of Korea's must-go destinations. When discussing the renewal of the six-story Sinsa store, Kim proclaims, "People need to be wowed the moment they set foot inside. We need to be on a different level." By placing no limits on the concept and use of physical spaces, Kim establishes a new and ever-changing world through his label every time.

What is just as important as Gentle Monster's self-created world is who lives in it. To celebrate the Sinsa door's renewal, dozens of the brand's friends and family gathered one night in March, eager to see what the flagship had in store. In the crowd were tattooists, graphic designers, magazine editors, buyers, stylists, models, photographers, designers and DJs. Gentle Monster boasts a wide network of people from all over the spectrum, who are associated with the likes of Boon the Shop, Samsung, Chanel, Stussy and more. Gentle Monster proves that the same pair of glasses can fit just about any and all personalities in different shapes and sizes. With retail presence currently in Korea, China, Hong Kong and most recently, New York, Gentle Monster seeks to expand further to North America and Europe. This August, which would be 18 months after the opening of its SoHo store, the brand will see one more open in downtown Los Angeles. Other cities in talks for expansion are Miami and Dallas, with the eventual goal being 10 stores in the western region by 2019. At the moment, there are a lot of unconfirmed plans for the brand, like its aim to file for an IPO through South Korea's KOSPI by next year, or a potential collaborative project with 032c. What is sure, however, is that whatever the brand does will disrupt the industry. Gentle Monster has broken down its cage, and it is ready to take over.











WORDS  
**VANESSA LEE**

PHOTOGRAPHY  
**JOSH OLINS**  
**ALEXANDER MILLER**

# BURBERRY

The Art of Tenacity



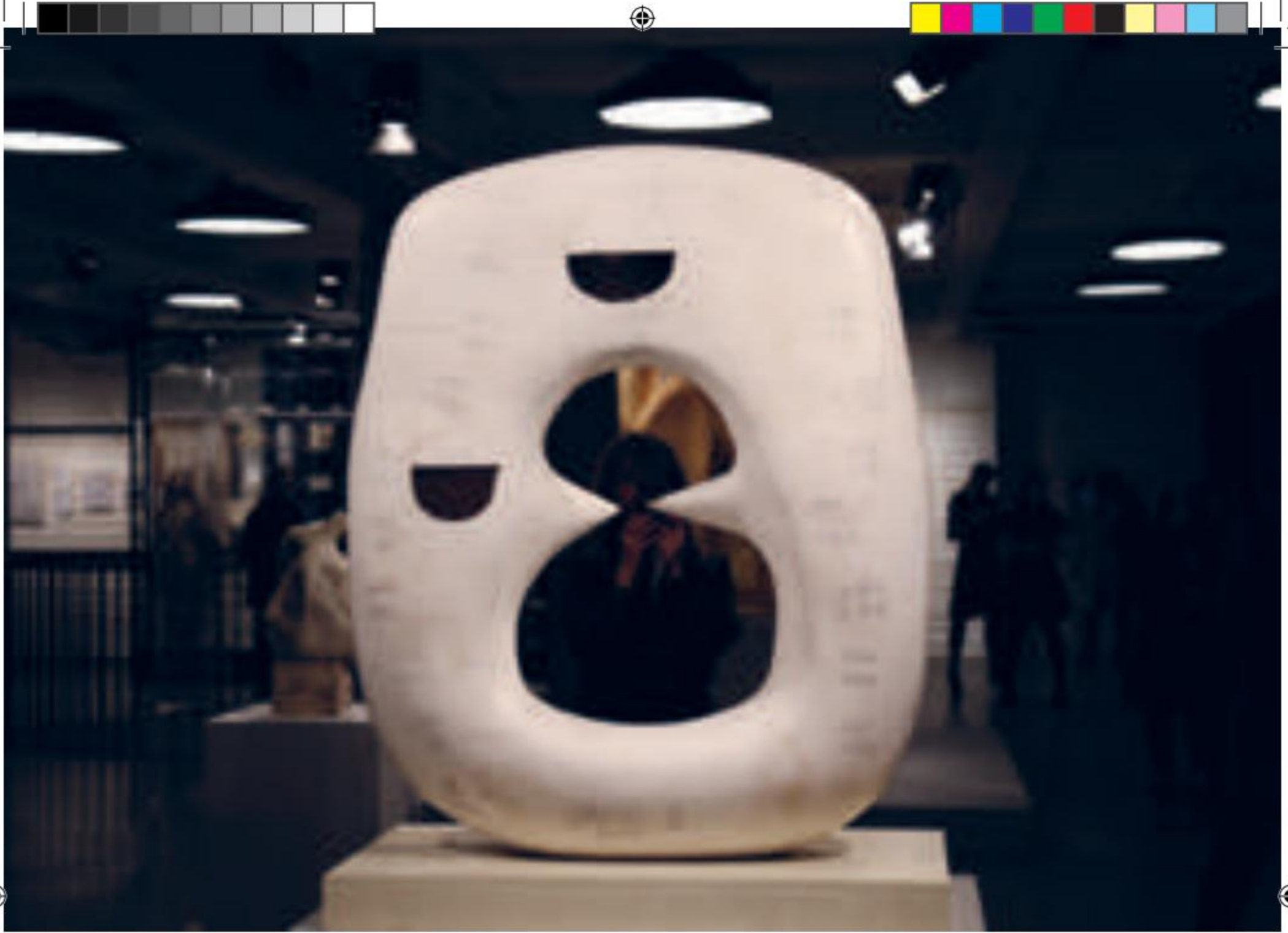


**"WE WANT TO GET BEHIND SOMETHING—WE WANT TO UNDERSTAND IT MORE; WE WANT TO ASK WHY. WHY THIS FABRIC? WHY THIS CONSTRUCTION? WHAT WAS THE INFLUENCE? RATHER THAN BUYING IT JUST FOR THE SAKE OF BUYING IT."**

The images which come to mind when confronted with the household name Burberry presumably don't vary much from person to person—the brand enjoys its continual success due to an acutely honed aesthetic borne of British heritage and tradition. At the forefront of the British luxury giant is Christopher Bailey, who has been at the reins for the past 15 years and is responsible for the brand's current position as a leader in digital luxury. The chief creative officer, now 46, sports boyish, mossy hair and an easy disposition not unlike his designs—elegant, yet effortless; charismatic, yet familiar. True to Burberry's history of backing British talent, Bailey has chosen to pay homage to Henry Moore with his latest designs, a sculptor often regarded as one of the founding fathers of modern art. We took the opportunity during their joint exhibition at Maker's Place London to speak to the industry veteran about neo-consumerism and what it means to be conscious in the digital age.

For a house whose DNA is stolidly grounded within British tradition, Bailey's artist-inspired collection uncharacteristically leaned towards the whimsical. Draconian curves in Rococo textures appear simultaneously heavy and buoyant, sharp and soft—sculptures in their own right set beside Moore bronzes slick with the unctuous glow of poured honey. Burberry's fashion-slash-art exhibition was a flawless marriage of process and product, as much about Moore's artwork as it was about clothing. Despite the combined price tags of several multi-million dollar Henry Moore sculptures displayed alongside the full looks and 70-plus couture capes from Bailey's latest collection, the exhibition was intended to be experienced, not merely seen. It was easy for attendees to palm the mammoth curve of a sculpture or run an errant finger along the cold ridges of a cape rendered in cast iron. Nary a velvet rope hung in sight, and only a marginal number of glass displays encased priceless sketches from the late artist.





The exhibition reflects Burberry's current philosophy: commitment to the increased need for transparency from the brands consumers choose to support. Christopher Bailey emphasizes the importance of going beyond the product in order to show his ever-savvy customer base the hows and whys. "Take food, for example: we're all interested today in where it comes from, who's the chef, who's the farmer—not something industrialized through a machine." He continues, "It's the same with fashion, architecture, music, everything." Burberry was one of the first fashion houses to embrace social media and digitalization, quickly establishing itself as an e-commerce giant, and even reincarnating their latest show into a live screening-and-sales event. "The lines are just becoming more direct with what we create and what somebody sees," Christopher explains. "The people that love fashion, they want to know what lies behind a finished product." The Burberry and Henry Moore exhibition at Maker's Place was

an open house into the studio processes of both Burberry and the late sculptor; research, inspiration, samples and sketches that have traditionally stayed inside the studio put to use in fostering a greater understanding of the finished product.

The recent renaissance in consumer consciousness manifests itself as a need for lucidity and informed choices. "People have changed a lot, the way they interact with fashion and with any other medium. We want to get behind something—we want to understand it more; we want to ask why. Why this fabric? Why this construction? What was the influence? Rather than, 'I'm buying it just for the sake of buying it.'" We live in a time of blurred boundaries where corporations and individuals enjoy direct channels of communication, urging businesses to show what—or more importantly, who—lies behind their products. The consumers of today are connected, engaged and educated within both virtual and physical spaces. As a













**"SOMETIMES I THINK CHANGE  
ISN'T ONLY IN THE ACTUAL PRODUCTS  
WE PRODUCE, BUT IN THE WAY WE  
PRODUCE THEM AND HOW WE ENGAGE  
WITH THE WORLD."**







result, they're less likely to blindly buy into dogmatic trends when influencers, independent designers, and other established brands all have access to platforms to engage consumers in their narratives in addition to products. "It's important we break traditions, that we're not afraid to try new things." His brisk, sunny tone slows to a thoughtful musing. "Sometimes I think change isn't only in the actual products we produce, but in the way we produce them and how we engage with the world."

"Streetwear has always been a big part of fashion," Christopher waved his hands as if the fact was obvious. "It's a push against policy, politics, government—and I think we're living in a period now where there's so much change in the world that streetwear has become more influential." If streetwear is a metaphor for going against the grain, it's often in deference to underground subcultures which developed from challenging the status quo. Given our world's current state of affairs, it's little wonder we're seeking ways to struggle west while the world spins east on its axis—luckily, there's more than one route to get there. While Burberry has been one of the most appropriated brands in street culture since the nineties—or simply one of the most appropriated brands, period—its unshakeable British sensibility also places it far from the regulars who currently occupy center stage in streetwear. When we mention the possibility of Burberry's involvement in streetwear, Christopher

replies, "We're all multidimensional—and I don't rule anything out, ever, because everything is possible." He goes on emphatically, "But it's what resonates. It's what feels right. It has to be deep, authentic, meaningful—not just a commercial proposition." Burberry's commitment to authenticity reads like another part of their reputation as a cheerful perpetrator of nontraditional methods, being among the first to adopt the see-now, buy-now model and show menswear and womenswear together. Often one of the first to break free of the rigid operational models of the fashion industry, the house of the ubiquitous check is, deep down, something of a rebel spirit.

Somewhere inside the hype-machine flash and fury, there will always be fixtures like Christopher Bailey who don't seek to pacify demand but aim instead to refine it. When we briefly touched on his position as a supremely accomplished industry figure, awarded Menswear Designer and Designer of the Year at the BFAs not once nor twice, but five times in total—effectively shaping fashion as we know it today—he only laughs. "An oldie," he says amicably, "You can say an oldie." The pedigreed, old-school charm of both the fashion house and its creative director balances against an aggressive loyalty to authenticity and to the shifting values within consumer culture. Christopher's latest may not be another proponent of today's innumerable designer-rapper-athlete-model collab frenzy—but strangely enough, that in itself is already something new.



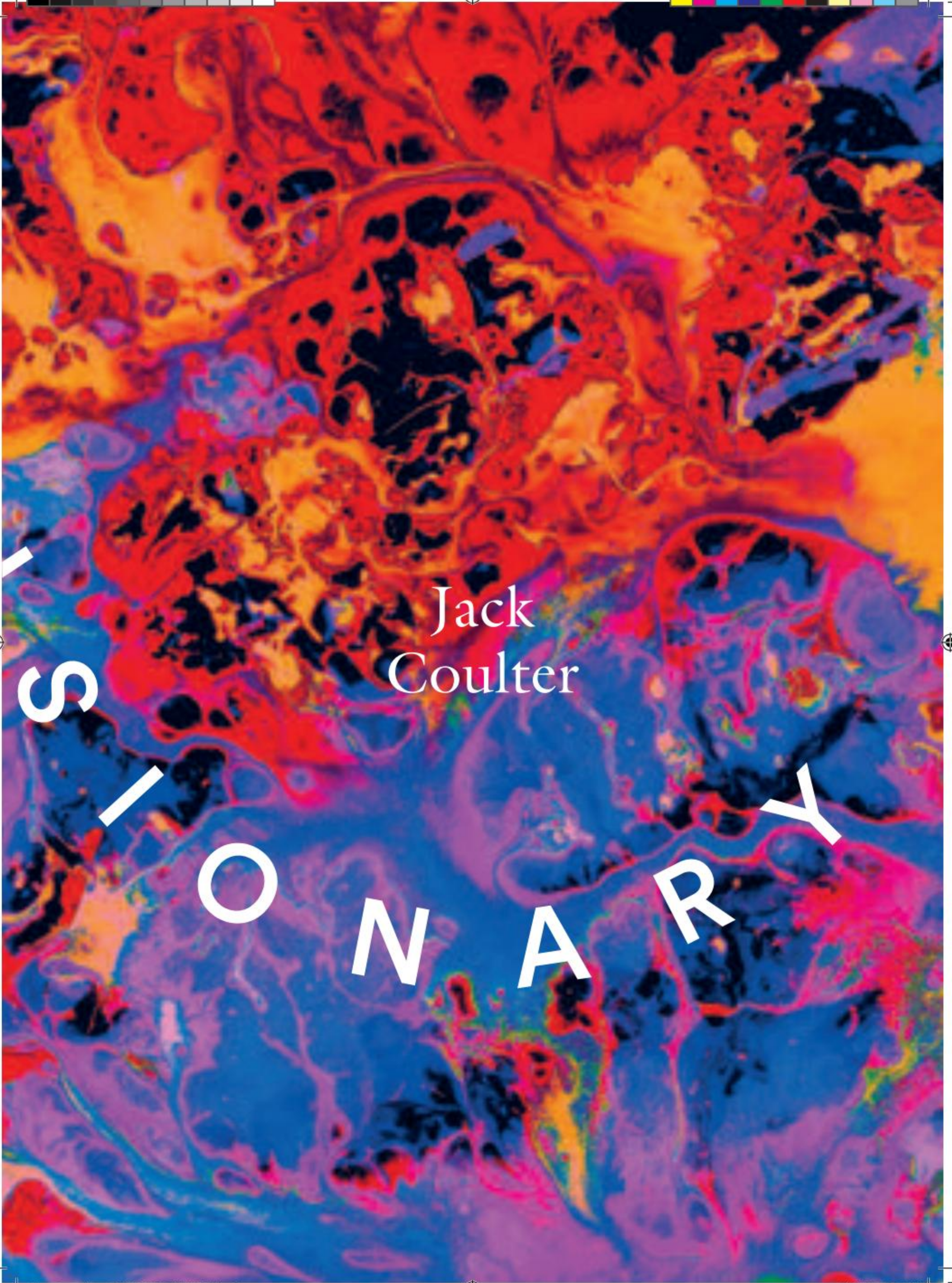


# AUDIO

WORDS  
VANESSA LEE

IMAGES  
JACK COULTER





Jack  
Coulter

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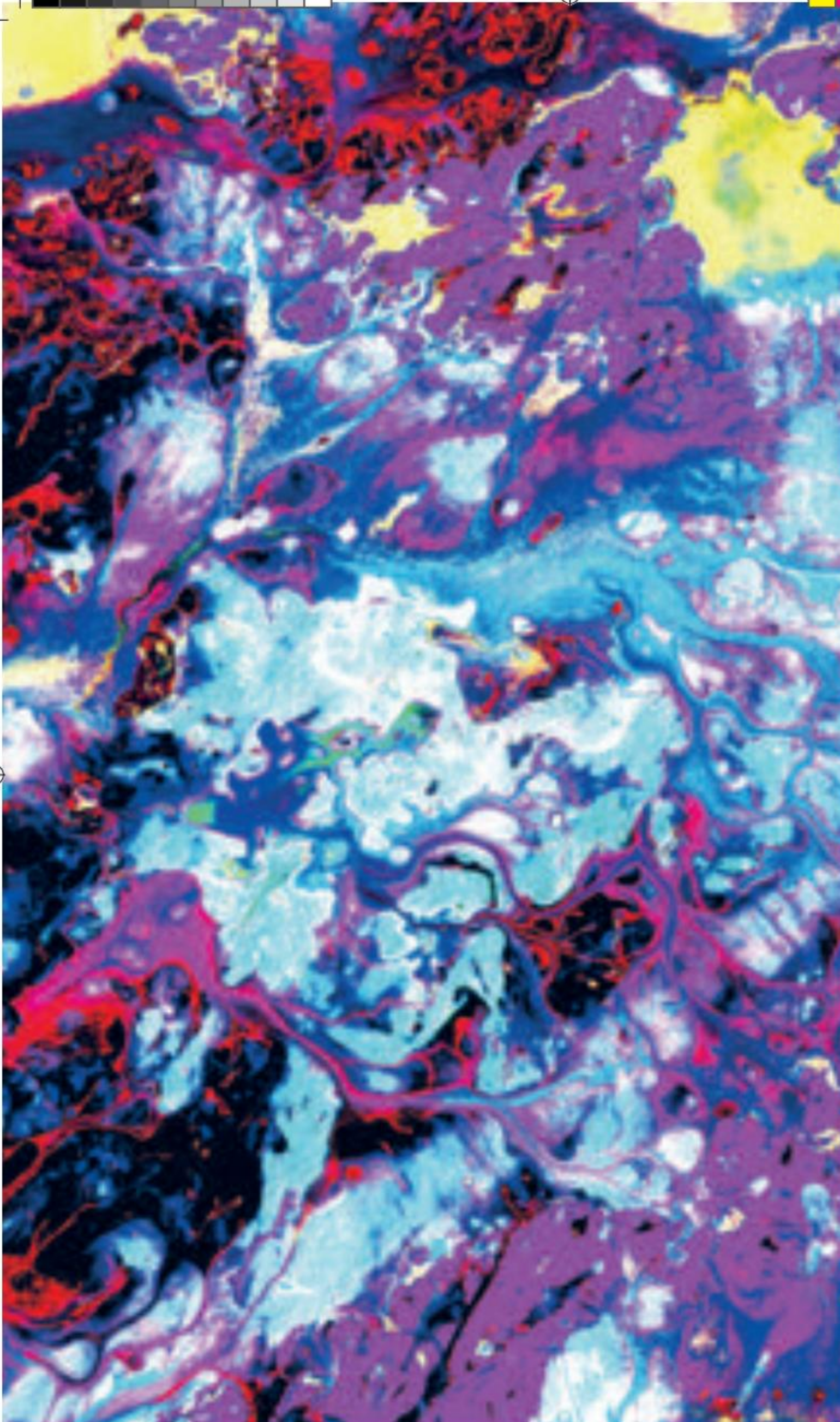
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(PREVIOUS PAGE)  
**JACK COULTER**  
*TRYPTAMINE*

**JACK COULTER**  
*ANESTHESIA*







“The boy with the kaleidoscope eyes, that’s what my mum calls me,” Jack Coulter says with a wry laugh. “I should get it on a t-shirt or somethin’.” The 21-year-old is currently perched inside a cemetery in his hometown of Belfast, detailing a life lived beyond the ordinary limits of imagination. Though it’s mid-afternoon, he describes Ireland’s burgeoning spring weather as “freezing”—still he sat in the graveyard for over an hour, chatting about what it’s like to see things like his heartbeat. His lilting Irish accent has a teenager’s cadence, peppered with the word “like” and statements posed as questions, but with the soft-spoken address of someone much older.

Those who thrive in creative pursuit are undoubtedly the ones in solid possession of a vision—some, like Jack, are born with one. He sees the world in Technicolor as a result of the neural crossover of his aural and visual senses—a phenomenon known as synesthesia. He sees bolts of color from everything he hears, even sounds as simple as rainfall. A self-described abstract-expressionist, the painter’s works hang in the homes of people like Samuel L. Jackson, Keith Richards, Stella McCartney and Cara Delevigne. His paintings are like violent geysers of neon oil slicks frozen in time, whittled from impossibly intricate shards of color inspired by his mind’s reaction to sound. An everyday, simple act such as listening to music creates an entirely new genre of experience for synesthetes, impossible to replicate to anybody else—but who would blame Jack for trying?

It’s rare to encounter a synesthete in real life though the crème de la crème of creative fields is teeming with kaleidoscope-eyed humans—from chart-topping musicians like Kanye and Frank Ocean to legendary artists like David Hockney. Pharrell’s 2008 album, *Seeing Sounds* was named for his synesthesia; the color-sound association is so specific in his case, he uses it to check whether songs are in key. For singer Charlie XCX, having synesthesia aids with her songwriting and music videos: “I associate certain sounds with different color palettes. Like a very warm bass sound would be a deep purple or dark blue. And then there’s genres. EDM I always see as green.” In Jack’s case it’s almost dangerously intrusive: “I was walking, listening to music, and what with the signs, the traffic, the sunset—I almost got hit by a bus, ‘cause I was blinded by all the colors. It’s like I’m constantly on LSD. Seriously, I can’t get rid of it.” Jack also experiences emotion with seeing color, rendering simple visual experiences such as an art gallery visit more intense than perhaps even the showing artist had intended. Whether we call it a trifecta of sensory wealth or a three-headed beast, these heavily intertwined senses often trigger one another, resulting in a toppling domino effect where he would be “just sitting there, listening to the paintings” and being moved to tears at the same time. The ability to see sounds reads like a relatively tame X-Men character, but having rainbow vision isn’t, so to speak, all sunshine and rainbows. Jack scores his own music specifically to avoid sensory overload,

**HE SEES THE WORLD IN TECHNICOLOR  
AS A RESULT OF THE NEURAL CROSSOVER  
OF HIS AURAL AND VISUAL SENSES—  
A PHENOMENON KNOWN AS SYNESTHESIA.**

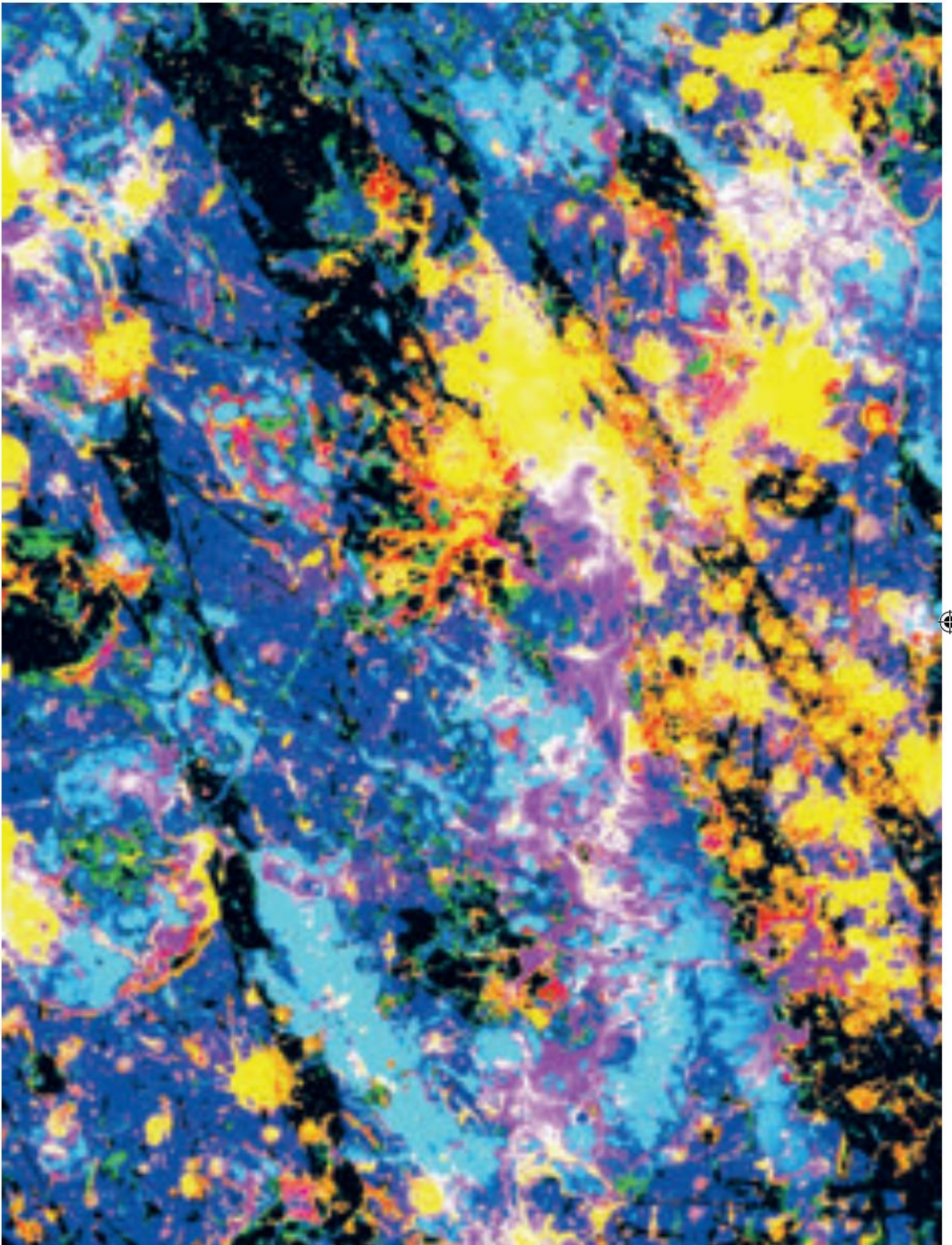




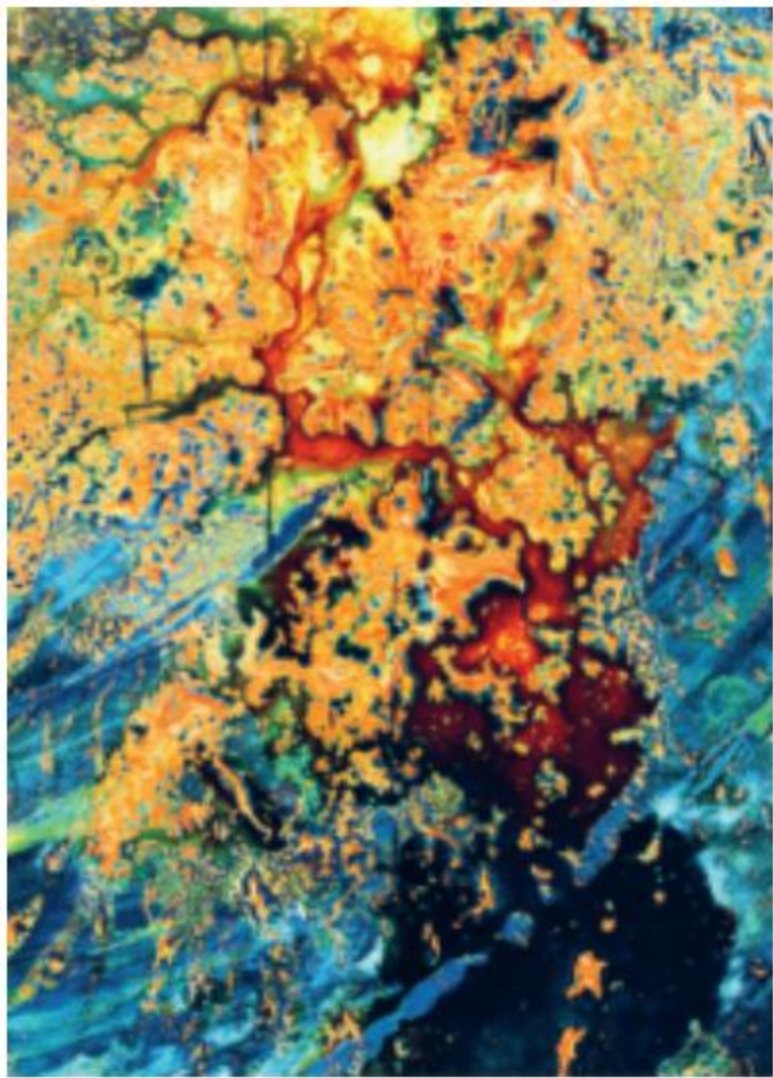
which often occurs in the form of splitting headaches that have required medication since his childhood. He composes soft, ambient scores out of necessity—they sound something akin to a quiet day on very low-dosage steroids: “Just the other day there were children laughing in the park—it looked a bit weird—but I went and recorded them for a score.” These ambient tracks provide just enough auditory stimuli for him to paint in his garage-turned-studio—which on its own, is arguably already enough to cause sensory overload. A lawnmower, amongst a myriad collection of inherited objects, hangs from the ceiling over collections of books, records and graveyard flowers. His vintage typewriter is surrounded by art books,

desk piled high with cigarette butts alongside skulls and dolls’ heads, nestled amongst the organized chaos reminiscent of a particularly morbid magpie. But what looks like a definitive mental breakdown to someone with OCD, is an oasis to Jack—as long as the music isn’t too loud, and that it’s the right kind. He explains, “There’s two sides—when I put on jazz or something mellow, the painting will come purely from me. But if I wanna paint to a certain track, then I paint directly what I see and feel. That’s why a lot of people ask me for album artwork.” He once painted Glastonbury Fest—every performer’s set at the organizers’ request—on a single canvas. Imagine what that must have felt like.





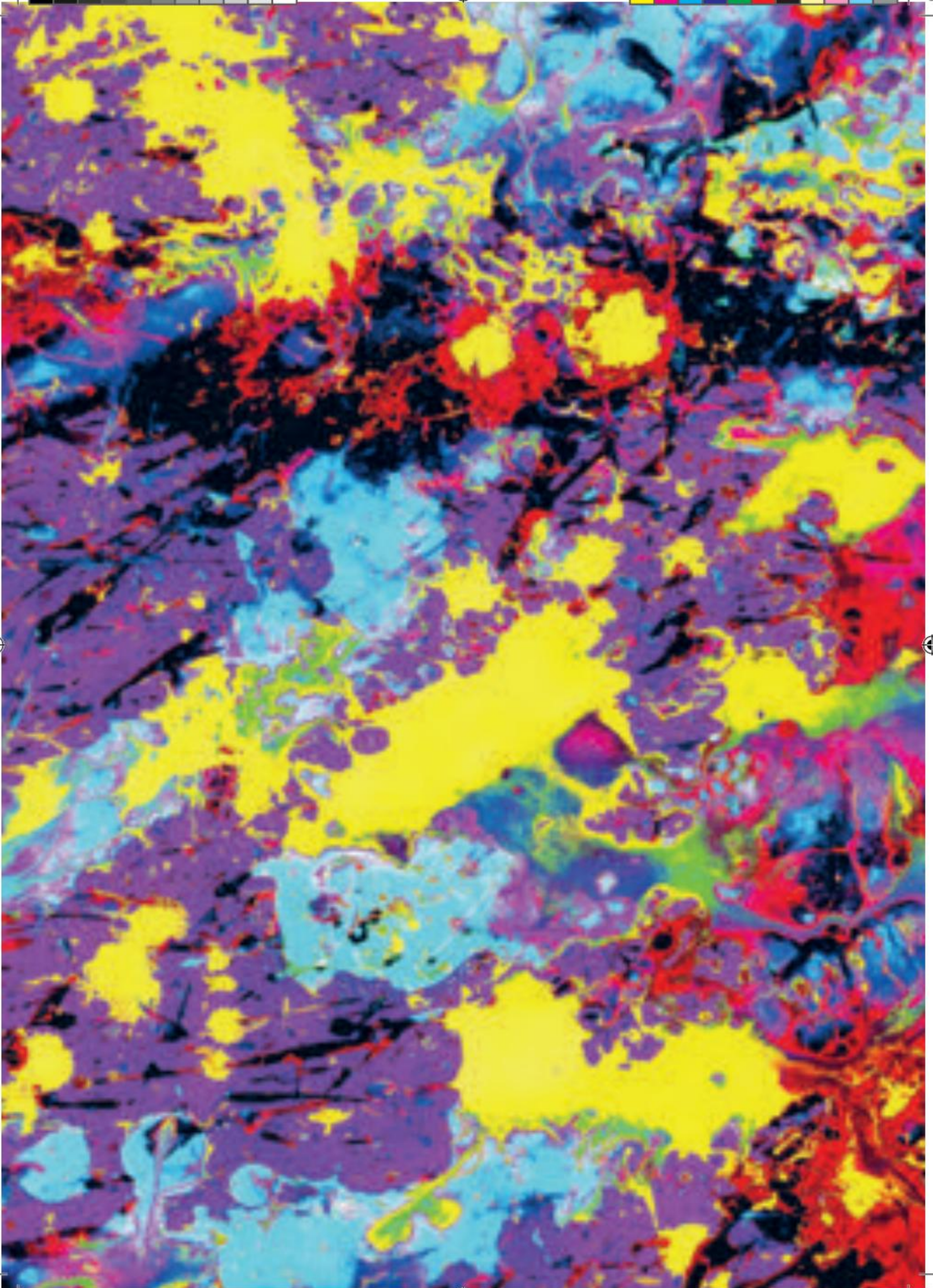




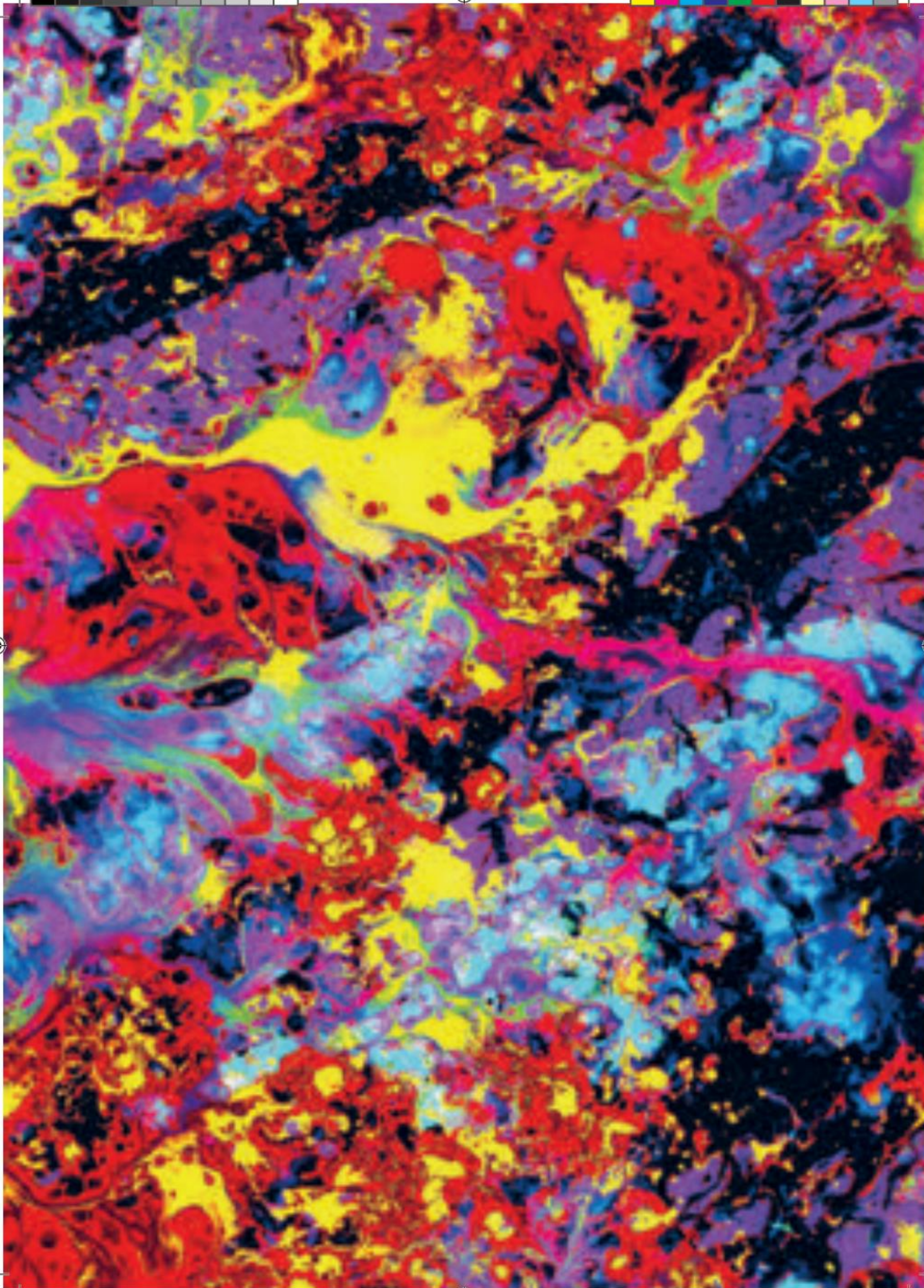




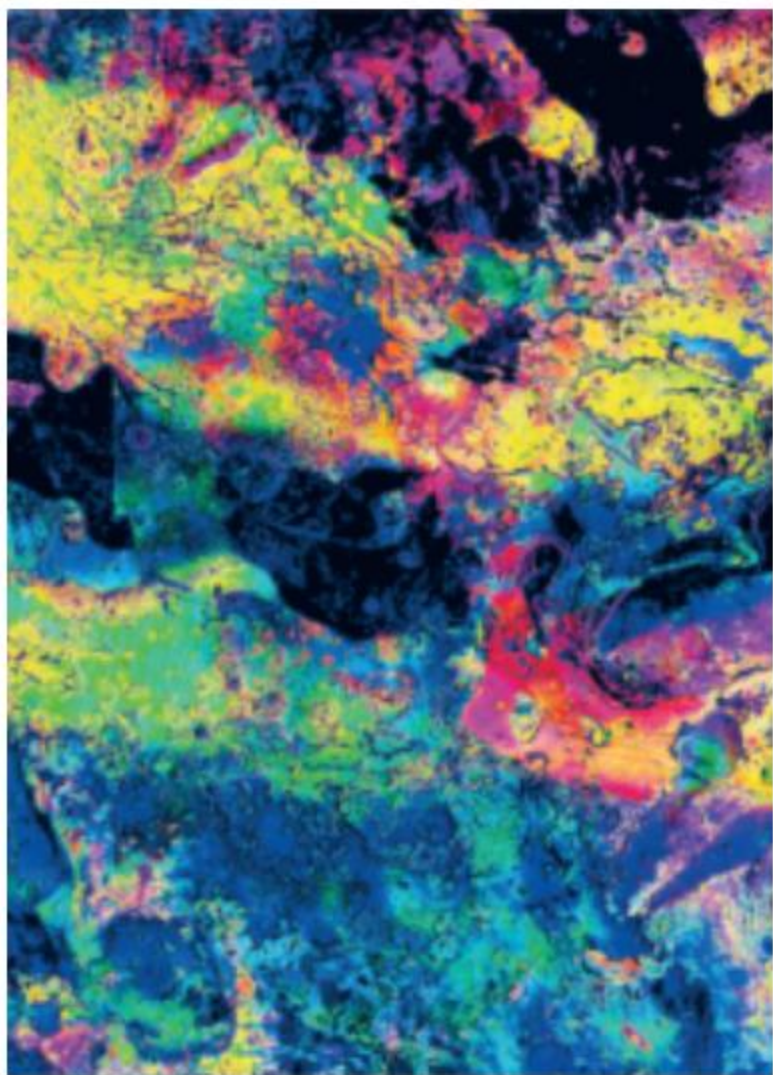




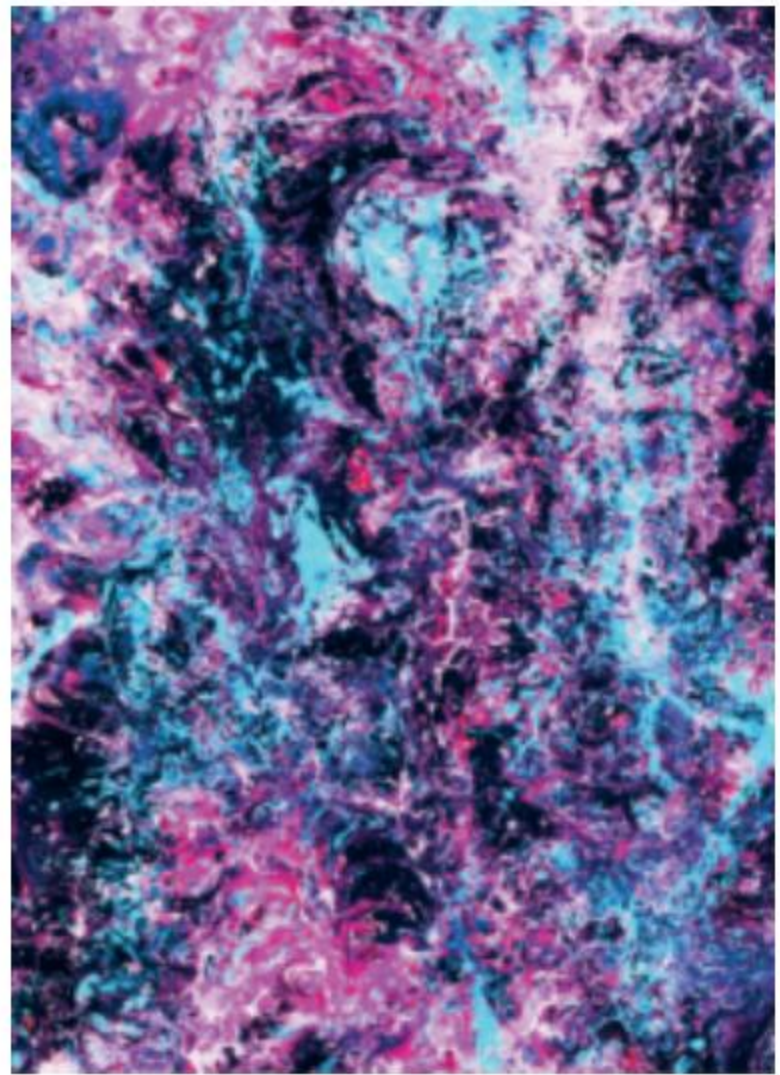




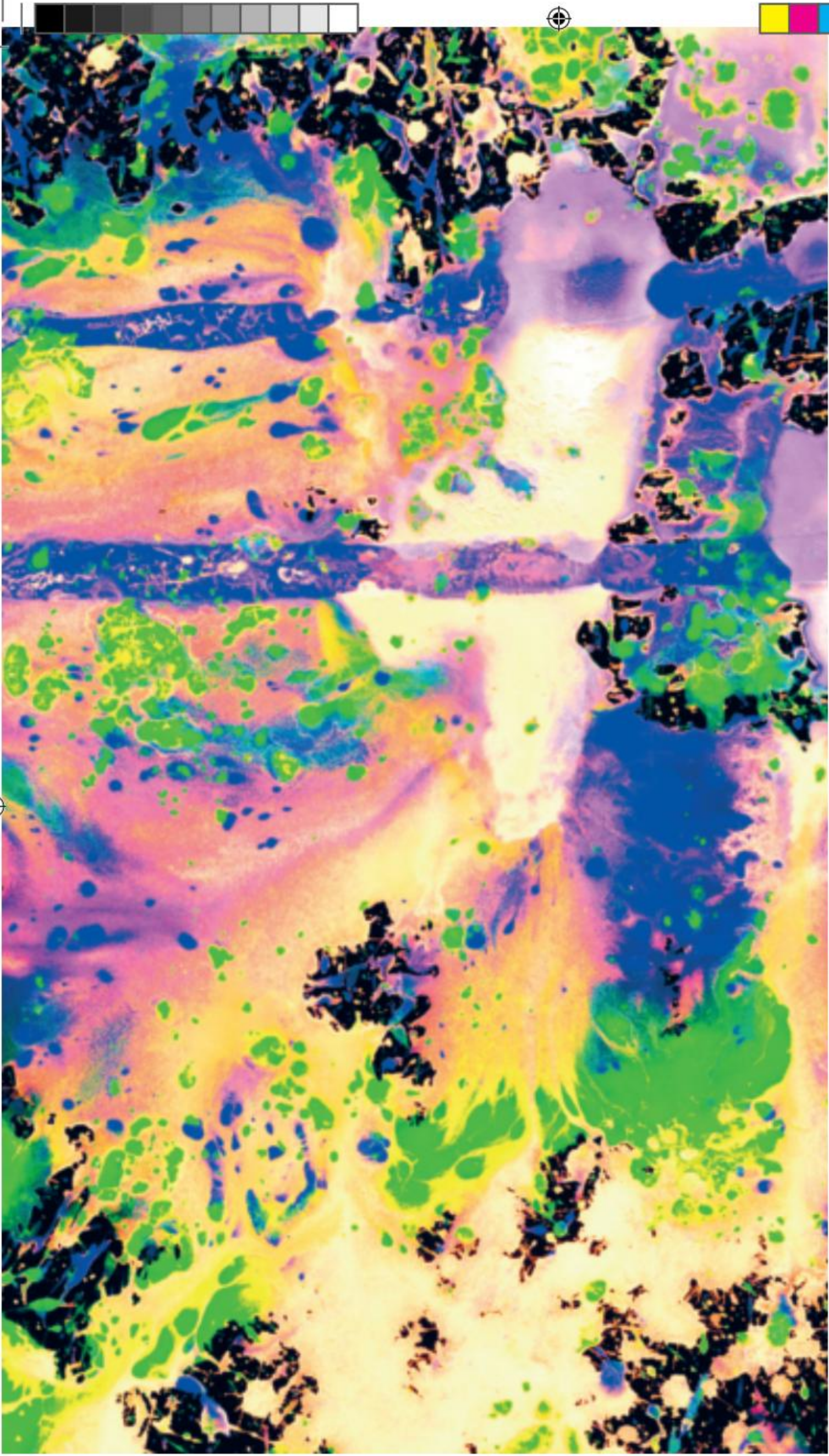












IN ORDER OR  
APPEARANCE  
**JACK COULTER**  
*PSYCHOSIS,*  
*NARCOTIC,*  
*CANCER,*  
*CONSCIVIT,*  
*ECLIPSE,*  
*NEUROSIS,*  
*CICATRIZE,*  
*CELEXA,*  
*OXYTOCIN,*  
*IRIS,*  
*SOMATIC*





"I ALMOST GOT HIT  
BY A BUS, 'CAUSE I  
WAS BLINDED  
BY ALL THE  
COLORS. IT'S LIKE  
I'M CONSTANTLY  
ON LSD.  
SERIOUSLY, I CAN'T  
GET RID OF IT."

Perhaps a bit surprisingly, Jack's love of art doesn't stem from the way he was hardwired to experience it. Instead, he cites his upbringing as the reason for his devotion. "Because of my exposure to various painters and because of my aunt, who was an artist herself, I always felt as if I knew what I was doing, painting." He cites his late aunt, who was also an abstract artist, as his mentor growing up and a chief influence, especially since her suicide in September of 2012. "Because of her, I'm an artist—I remember going to the psychiatric ward to show her my paintings and she just always believed in me. She was doing abstract art when nobody was doing it." It's easy to see the close bond they had, as we heard him struggle

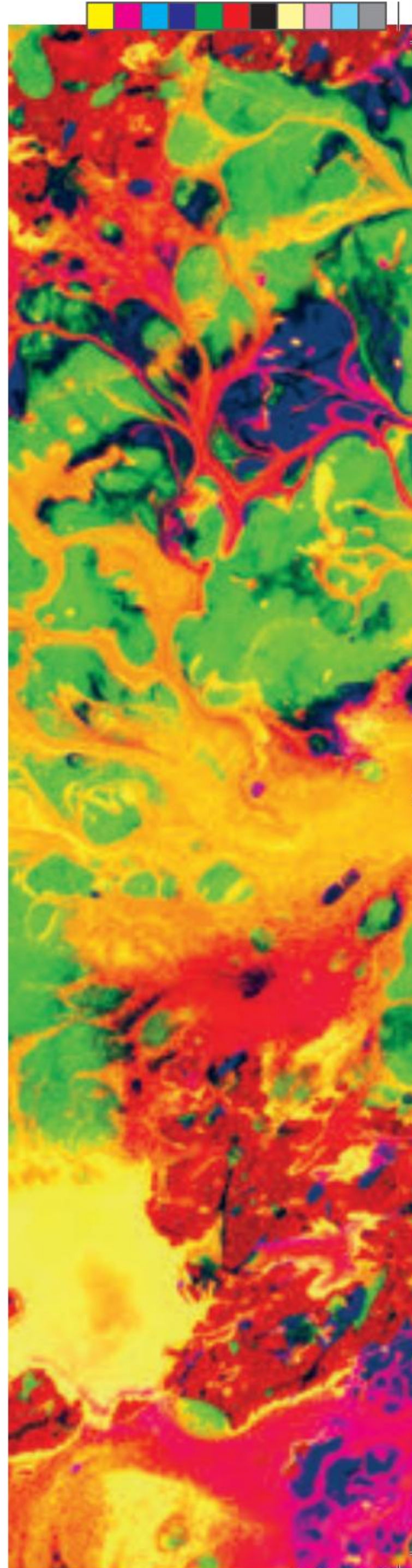
to find the right words. "It's a weird thing to say—but because she was such a tragic person, it's almost like she knew [what her death would mean for me]. No one could save her. So she just left me everything she had, 'cause she knew that I was almost going to be her. She just wanted me to learn from her."

It's almost serendipitous that someone who lives in color like Jack, would be surrounded by artists and artwork his whole life, culminating in achievements like being the youngest artist on record to gain acceptance into his art college, being featured in the GQ Awards, Glamour Awards, and being the youngest artist to have his work in The Art of Elysium

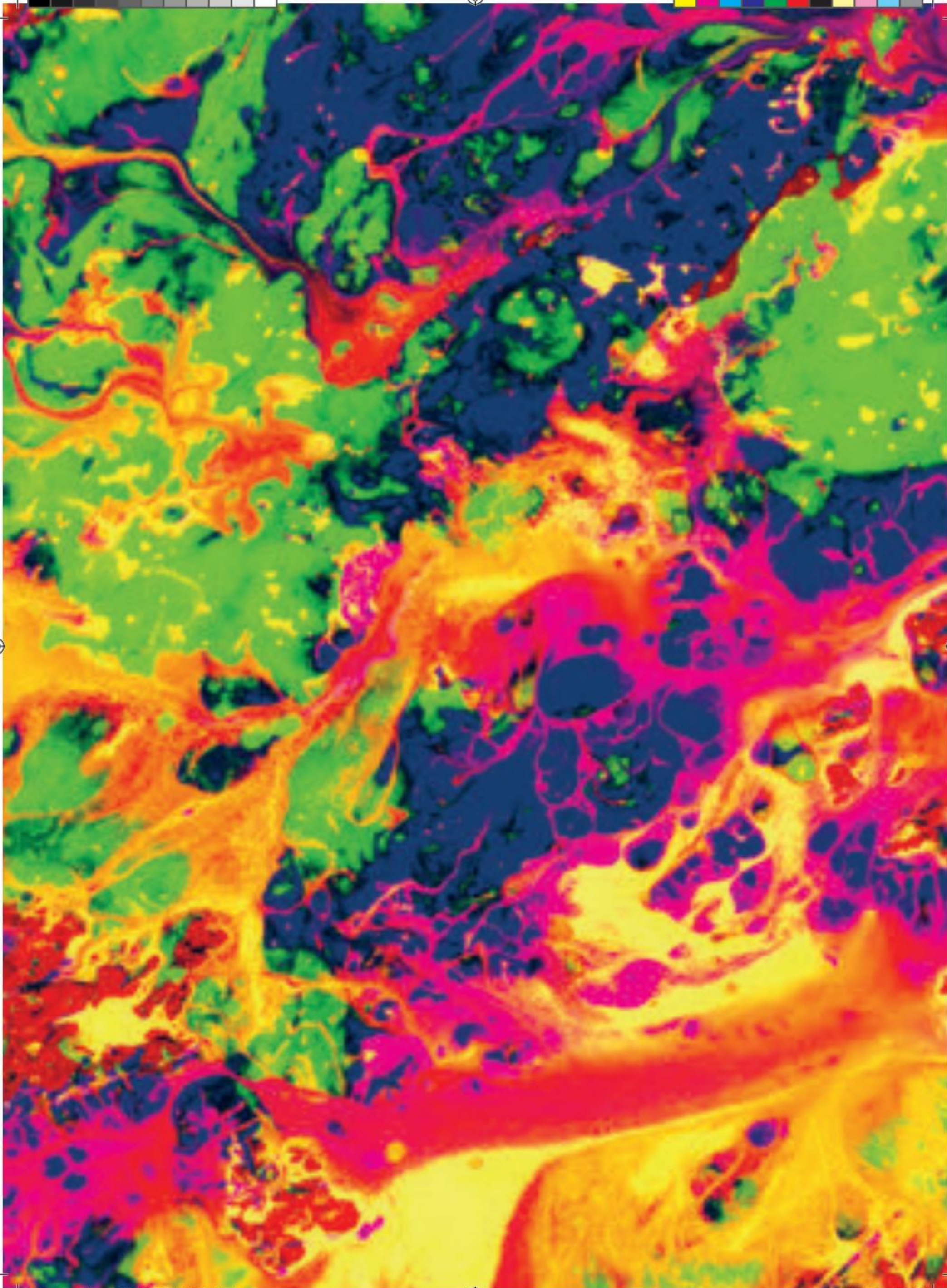


in LA and Goldsmiths University of London beside the likes of Damien Hirst, all starting from his late teens. With these accomplishments in mind, along with some of the most respected creatives in pop culture purporting to be synesthetes, one begins to wonder whether all synesthetes enjoy such levels of success in their chosen fields. Though their unique perspectives comprise a large part of a synesthete's artistic identity, Jack doesn't equate synesthesia to creativity. "It's almost like a ridiculous 27 club, all these great musicians and people dying at the age of 27—but it's just an age. I mean, lots of great people died when they were 26," he said half-jokingly. There's a slightly self-prophetic element to synesthesia when posed as a causal factor of creativity. This is evident in Jack's absolute devotion to art, the reasons for which lie vehemently outside his physiology. To prove his point, "There's lots of artists with synesthesia who have no technique," he laughs. "Seriously! I don't feel anything towards [their work]. But if I walked into a gallery and saw a painter without synesthesia, like Rothko or Basquiat—I mean, [whether they had] synesthesia wouldn't matter. You wouldn't think about it with those guys."

Jack explains his painting style, abstract expressionism, in a way which clearly parallels his synesthesia: "It just means emotional expression. Being able to create something previously non-existent is, I think, pretty special." Approximately one in every 2,500 individuals can potentially relate to what it feels like to see sounds—but even with the already-low odds, no two synesthetes see sounds the same way, creating a disparate sense of reality. Privileged in how they see the world in ways no one else can, they are simultaneously isolated as synesthesia makes shared experiences virtually impossible. "I met this girl—on the first day I saw her, she was leaving trails of color in my eyes. I tried to explain it to her, and she thought I was insane," he says breezily. "But she's with me now, which is cool."





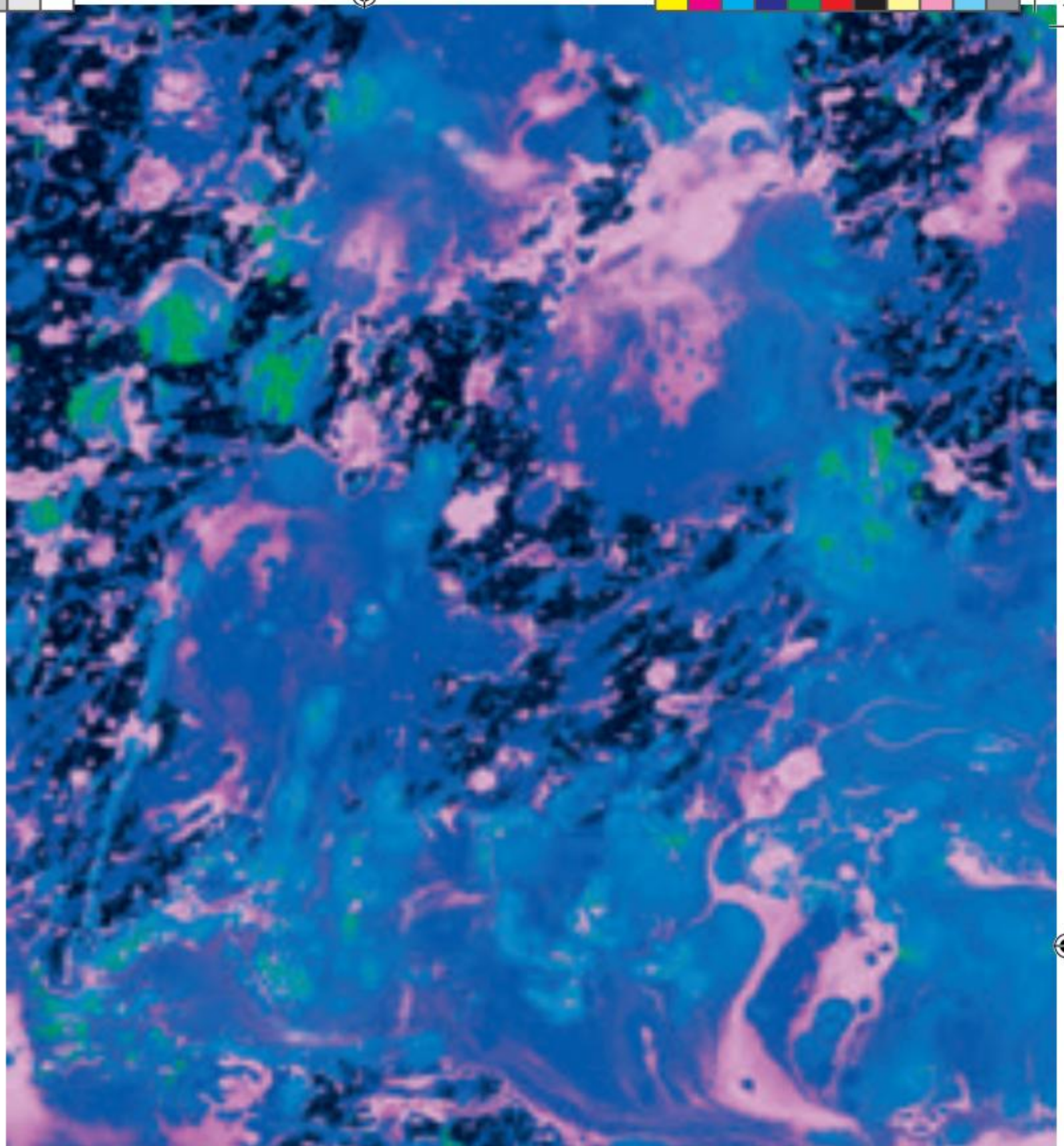




SENSORY

(PREVIOUS PAGE)  
JACK COULTER  
*MORPHINE*

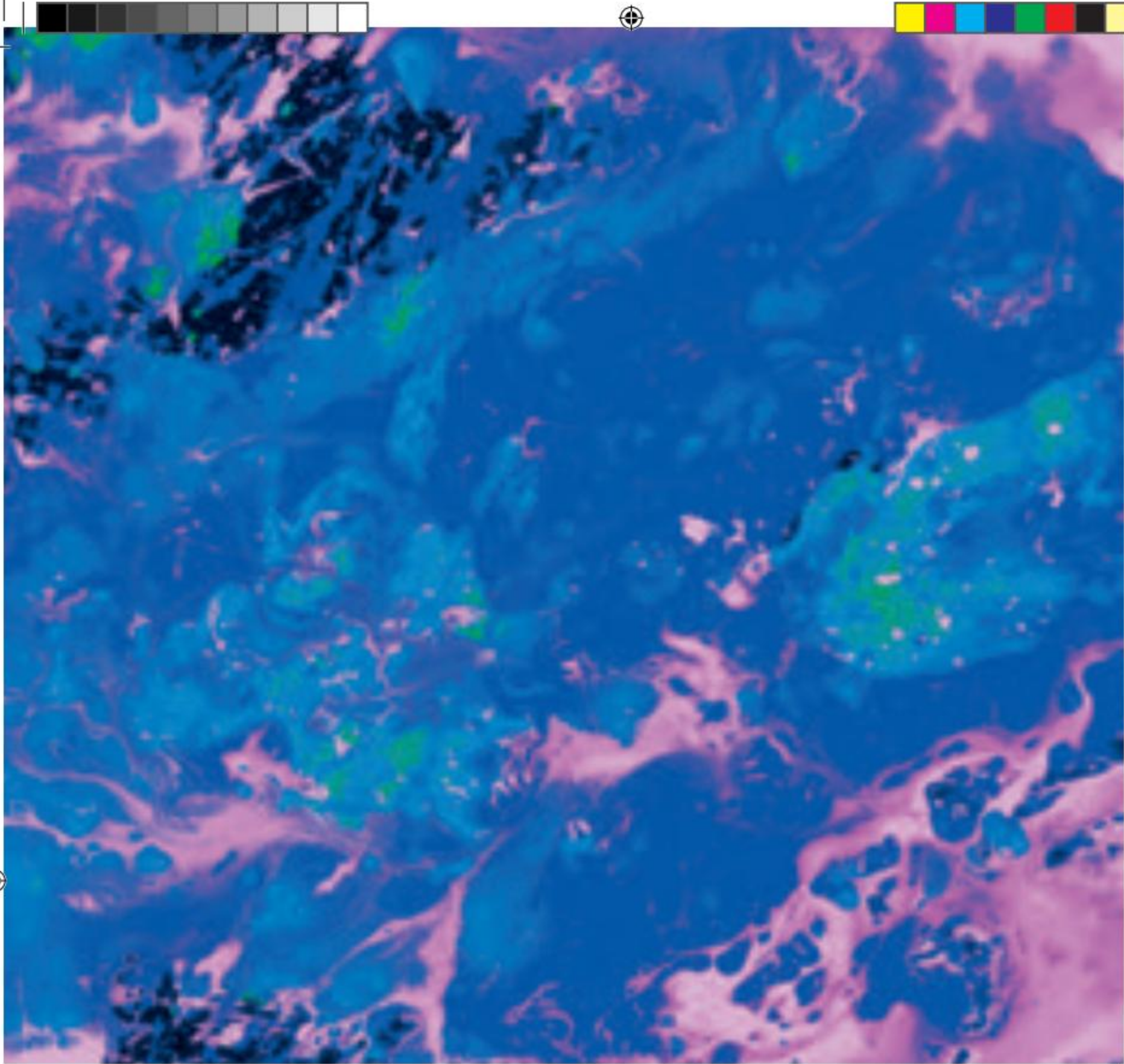
JACK COULTER  
*DELIRIUM*



Portraying alien territory is a daunting endeavor in all respects, but to Jack, it's also the most essential. Without a mode of expression, synesthesia is simply an inert viewpoint, trapped inside the mind instead of being splashed onto canvas, or set into chords—and unexecuted ideas are exponentially more common than people with synesthesia. The conversation which continues for those who do leave their idiosyncracies on our cultural zeitgeist, synesthetes and non-synesthetes alike, is one of creative expression. “The synesthesia’s just gonna die with that person if they don’t leave it anywhere,” Jack warns. “It’s just about expression, inspiring others and finding people in our society who can add something beautiful to the world.” Replace “synesthesia” with a word like “talent,” and things start to look quite familiar.

“I live, sleep, breathe, fall in love in color,” Jack says emphatically. Synesthesia is a huge part of Jack’s life, but the times when he speaks with rock-solid conviction isn’t about how it affects his daily life, or even how it shapes his work—it’s when he speaks about art itself: “Art is the most important thing in life. We’re living in a universe that no one can explain. That’s the greatest piece of art, ever. The only time I feel fulfilled is when I’m painting.” Jack’s studio floor is coated inches-thick in paint from working there since he was a child—it’s evident his profession defines him more than his condition. From producing music, to being a violinist-guitarist-pianist, to poetry and art, to his massive collection of gold-cured graveyard flowers—there’s more than enough evidence to prove





Jack would remain a creative soul if one day, he woke up to see and hear the world as most of us do. “If your art is great and you have synesthesia, they’re just really special things—but you have to be able to express it.” Where synesthesia is a literal, involuntary form of abstraction—one thing represented by another unrelated thing—creative work has always been metaphorical: ideas brought to life via different mediums, scores and forms.

The life of a synesthete is filled with things which shouldn’t be linked together, but are anyways: idea abstraction distilled into instinct. Even though studies have shown that synesthetes are better at associating unrelated ideas (of which they do have

daily practice), they’re the same as non-synesthetes when it comes to creating novel ideas. Since antiquity, there have been those who possess a set of senses which echo an equally extraordinary mind—however most creatives simply land, with singular aplomb, into the latter category. A closer look at the creative fields reveals a motley diorama of characters—blind, deaf, separated from an ear, joined at the eyebrows—who, despite (dis) similarities in how they’re wired to receive the world, brilliantly manage to hand it back to us on a new platter every time.





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READYMADE

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OLD  
MADE  
NEW

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WORDS BY  
HASSE LEMOLA







ARTICLE F100 JACKET

ORIGIN VINTAGE US ARMY  
DUFFLE BAG

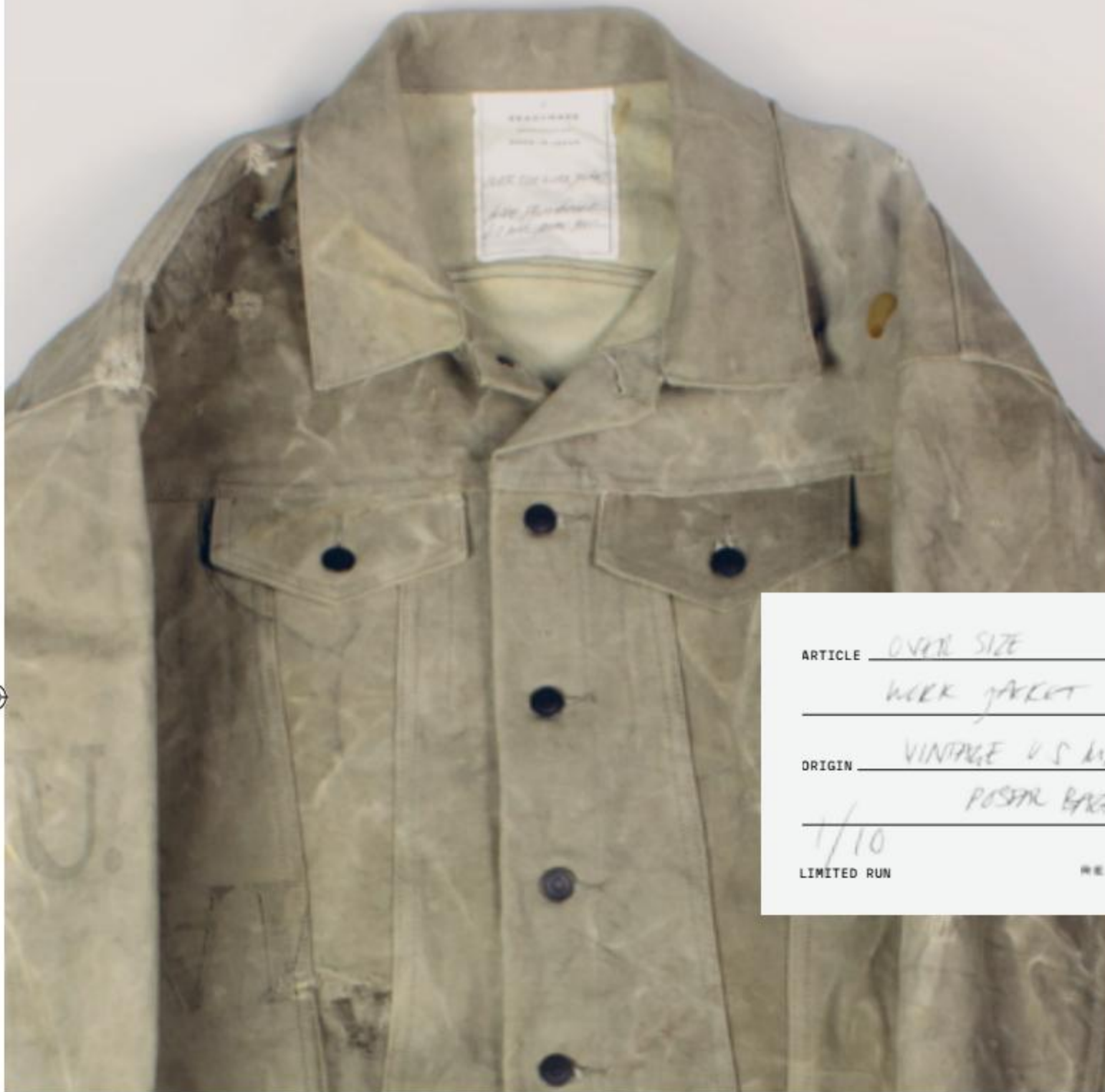
4/20  
LIMITED RUN

READYMADE

SUPPLY NO. **00126**







ARTICLE OVER SIZE  
WEEK JACKET

ORIGIN VINTAGE U.S. MILITARY  
POSTAL BAG

1/10  
 LIMITED RUN

READYMADE

SUPPLY NO. **00354**

It's no secret that vintage culture in Japan is one of the most vibrant in the world. But how exactly did an island nation, better known for its eloquent artisanal craftsmanship, become a global hotspot for rugged army surplus and military wear? To find the answer, one must go back as far as the 1940s. Japan's postwar period was really the first time the nation's people were subject to such drastic American influence, having previously marched to the drumbeat of nationalist imperialism since the turn of the century. Stationed

American soldiers, draped in rugged field-ready attire and smoking packs of Marlboro Reds became a common sight in the rubble-strewn cities, bringing in a new conception of what it meant to be "cool." This period was also the first time the Japanese were exposed to denim as well. This overwhelming influx of Americana captivated a new generation, but it was not without its challenges. The biggest obstacle the many admirers of the movement faced was how to get their hands on these American garments,





let alone in a size that would fit them. Purchasing them in a market was too pricey for most, and the country's factories were simply not equipped to meet the freshly-minted demands of the Japanese market.

It wasn't until the 1960s that domestic brands began to try their hand at manufacturing Americana styles with minor structural revamps, engineering a better fit for Japanese proportions. Slowly but very surely, Japan's flourishing fashion scene began

to get flooded with American influences, spanning from vintage military, classic sportswear to Ivy League aesthetics. It didn't take much longer for word of Japanese Americana to circle back to its American originators some 6,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean. Accounts in the States began to import "back" the styles they had come up with in the first place, but with superior construction and attention to detail. This ironic role reversal signaled the very early beginnings of a fascinating





dialogue in fashion between the U.S. and Japan that still dominates much of the landscape today. Now, that tradition is beginning to infuse portions of the luxury market as well—a trend that must have been inconceivable to those original American G.I. soldiers during the Occupation of Japan.

At the very forefront of this luxury-military union stands Yuta Hosokawa, whose burgeoning label READYMADE is the embodiment of military wear in its most extravagant form. After officially launching in 2013, the Osaka native's creations took over high-end streetwear by storm, gaining cosigns from music industry royalty including Rihanna, Jay Z, The Weeknd and Travis Scott. The Houston rapper in particular has proudly flaunted his affinity for Hosokawa's creations, often carrying the label's signature gym bag when hopping on flights between shows. Notable heavyweight names such as OFF-WHITE and Fear of God have also been quick to associate themselves with READYMADE, enlisting

Hosokawa's expertise to craft exclusive collaborative items. However, the label's journey to the shelves of RSVP Gallery, Maxfield LA and UNITED ARROWS & SONS have been all but meteoric, instead taking more of an incremental evolution of his first label S'exprimer. Launched in 2004 in his home turf of Osaka, the city in which he still bases his day-to-day operations, the S'exprimer took a much more avant-garde route, often settling for demure unisex silhouettes that embodied the label's mantra of "non-decorated elegance." Those streamlined notions have been replaced by a much more rugged flair, one that utilizes hand scribbles, vibrant patches, and as many as 100 individually sourced pieces in a single garment or accessory.

We caught up with Hosokawa to learn more about the intricate process of garment sourcing and repurposing, and the deeper message that he aims convey through his creations.

**STATIONED AMERICAN SOLDIERS, DRAPED  
IN RUGGED FIELDS-READY ATTIRE AND SMOKING  
PACKS OF MARLBORO REDS BECAME A  
COMMON SIGHT IN THE RUBBLE-STREWN CITIES,  
BRINGING IN A NEW CONCEPTION OF WHAT  
IT MEANT TO BE COOL.**





ARTICLE DOWN PARKA

ORIGIN VINTAGE US ARMY

SLEEPING BAG

6/120  
LIMITED RUN

READYMADE

SUPPLY NO. **01457**





## Q&A

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**Japan's fascination with military wear extends back to many generations. What was your first exposure to military goods?**

When I was in middle school, vintage clothing was really big. I remember saving up money and going to a vintage shop, not really knowing anything, and picking up a flight jacket. I actually ended up working at a vintage store for a little while, and got exposed to a lot of military clothing at that time.

**Where did your initial inspiration for repurposing goods come from?**

I always appreciated it and was interested in the idea of remaking something. There's a lot of remake/repurpose brands out there, and I wanted to approach it from a different angle.

**Given the varying conditions of military garments, how do you maintain a supreme level of quality throughout the range?**

I touch everything that comes through my atelier, every piece of fabric. We pick and choose which fabric looks best on which piece, and pattern each piece of fabric specifically for that item.

**You've tried your hand at bags, clothing and accessories. What is your favorite piece to express your vision through?**

I think bags are probably my favorite, if I had to choose just one. More than accessories or clothing, it allows me to stay focused on my take on remake and my approach to my brand and the message I'm trying to convey. In terms of accessories, we worked on a special dog art piece for Yohji for three months. I can also recall taking a week individually sewing beads into the eyes for the Felix the Cat doll we did.

**The majority of your items are repurposed from the U.S. Army. Are there any other countries that you like to source materials from?**

We look at other countries, but there's a reason I use U.S.







INTERVIEW

ARTICLE NANO TRUNK

ORIGIN VINTAGE US ARMY

DUFFLE BAG

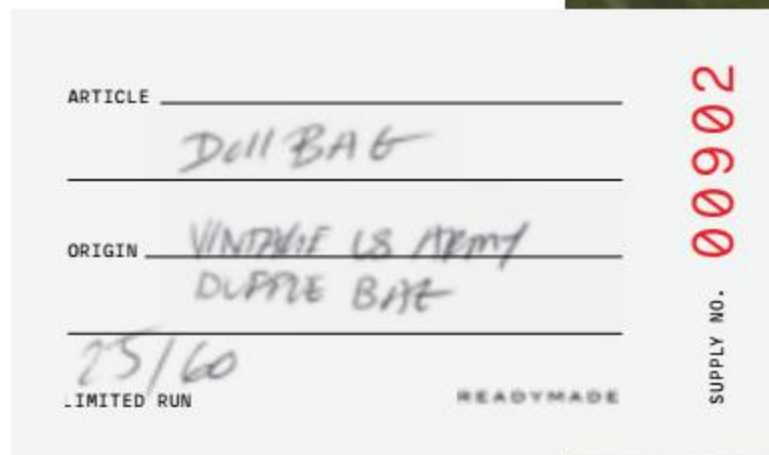
50/125  
LIMITED RUN

READYMADE

SUPPLY NO. **00085**







military items. The theme behind READYMADE is one of peace, taking items made for violence and conflict and changing them to something to be used for pleasure, something to bring you joy. What better way to convey that message to the world than from using items from the world's biggest, strongest military? Obviously, there is a history between the U.S. and Japan, and the idea that we can change enemies to friends is one I really hope the world can pursue, especially in these times.

**How are you able to elevate rugged military wear into coveted streetwear items?**

I focus on making basic shapes as perfect as possible, looking at small details and accents. I also have the help of great team and friends. I don't know how coveted they are, but I am proud of the pieces we make and hope people enjoy them.

**You've collaborated with a lot of American brands. How were you introduced to the overseas market? What's your relationship with the designers?**

You know, we started in the U.S. For the first months

READYMADE was being sold, we were exclusively at Maxfield. Sarah, the buyer there, really helped me and my team in a lot of ways, and that was the springboard. I love fashion and art, so I'm always on the lookout for new and exciting people to work with. Obviously my team plays a big part in helping our brand grow. I think a lot of designers/creatives are the same at heart: we just want to make things we think are cool, whether those things are popular or not. That is true regardless of whether you're Japanese or American, and I think that helps me when contacting other designers out there.

**Attention to sustainability is at an all-time high. How do you see the role of repurposing goods in this environment?**

To be honest, READYMADE was not started based on the idea of sustainability or anything like that. It's a great benefit, and the chance to convey my message while upcycling is a bonus. But honestly, it's a constant worry sourcing material for my pieces. There are times when we run low or have to improvise. But the material is essential to the message.





**"I TOUCH EVERYTHING THAT COMES THROUGH MY ATELIER—WE PICK AND CHOOSE WHICH FABRIC LOOKS BEST ON WHICH PIECE, AND PATTERN EACH PIECE OF FABRIC SPECIFICALLY FOR THAT ITEM."**

**What makes a good vintage piece to use as a base for your designs?**

There is a lot of military influence in my clothes, particularly because I want to get people to associate the styles more with pleasure than with pain, but my overall design is based on the entire world around me. I'll really look at the material and what it says to me. It's so important to touch, feel and smell what each vintage fabric is like. That will lead me to ideas of what can I make.

**Why is there such a demand in this era for repurposed vintage clothing? Is there something lacking in clothes produced today?**

I think vintage offers a chance to be different, to tell a better story. You can make unique items from vintage that perhaps you can't from manufactured fabric. In a big way, there is too much of everything now, too much information, too much technology, so much progress that originality is lacking. But I think a different perspective on existing art/fashion can create new perceptions of design and approach to fashion.



# GUIDE

FEATURED

ALKIMIA

HOTEL MONO

DR WOO HIDEAWAY STUDIO

MR. SIMON

STUSSY

TETCHAN



Travel: an activity rife with novel experiences, with only a few unifying factors to its name. There's nothing quite like the feeling of treading upon foreign soil for the first time, whether it's in the form of a country, city or a humble establishment such as a new bar or restaurant. The following locales bring the essence of travel to the forefront of our consciousness, deftly interweaving the histories of their respective (sub)cultures with the ineffable appeal of exploration.







# Alkimia

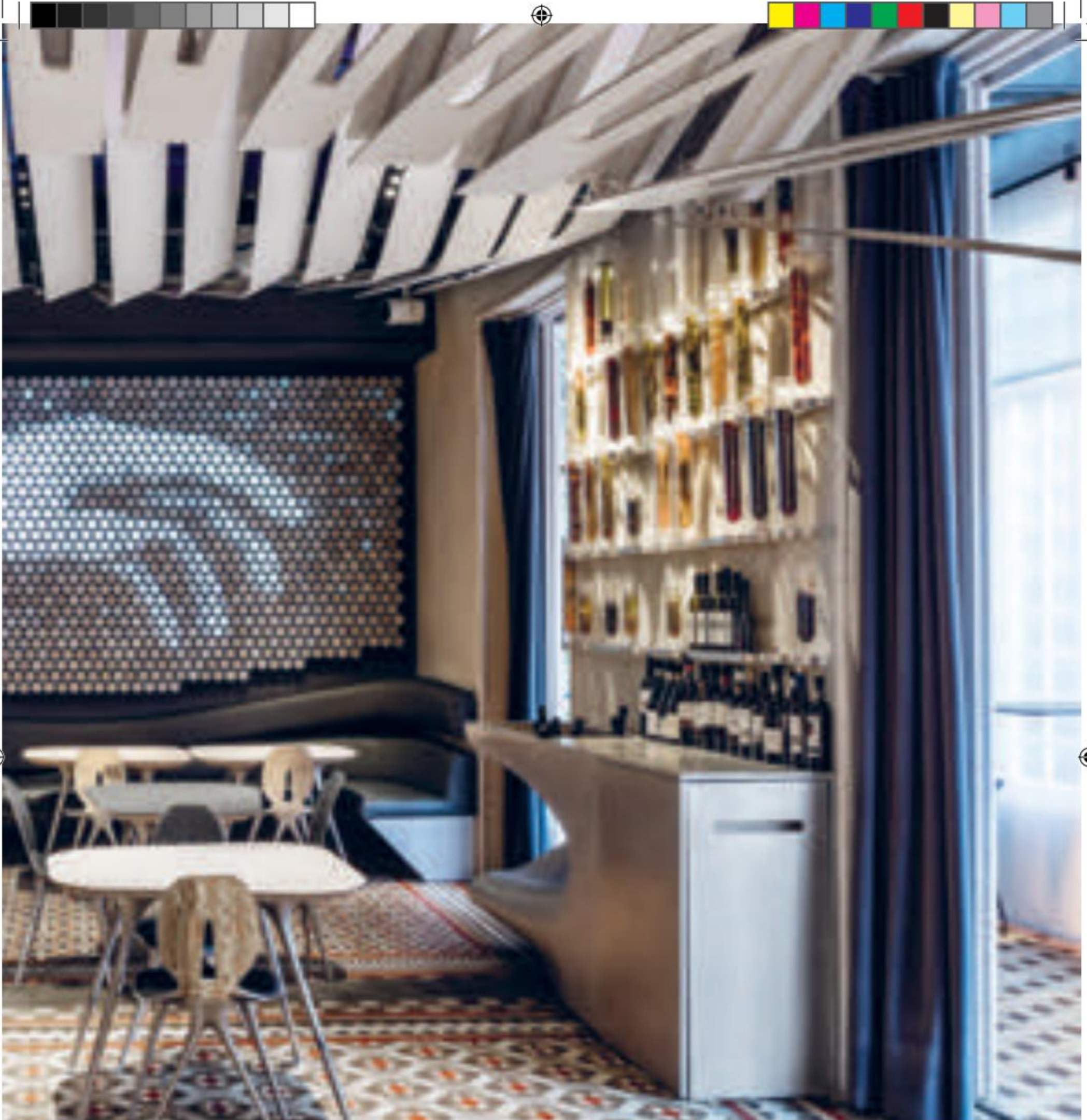
RONDA SANT ANTONI 41 PRINCIPAL  
BARCELONA, SPAIN



In the middle of Barcelona is a small restaurant whose marine-based, Michelin-starred menu serves as the main inspiration for the restaurant's design. Nothing is neglected; every aspect of the space is metered in subtle doses of aquatic life. The custom furniture is 3D-printed and hand-finished; tables and chairs feature elegantly elongated legs like the

rays of a fin, and a structure shaped like a piscine spine cages the ceiling from the entrance hallway to the dining room. At least three different iterations of fish scales adorn the walls, and the entrance features an installation of glass vials reminiscent of a glowing laboratory—a symbol of Chef Jordi Villa's experimental culinary spirit.





The old-world charm of the building's 19th century architecture fuses with light, video, and sound to surround patrons in an environment inspired by Oceania and Spanish history. Alkimia was conceived as a scenography, a term usually reserved for stage design, and focuses on an integrated sensory experience between the space, dishes and diners. A series of art

installations and modern design features seem at peace with the original architecture; the building's traditional Spanish roots reimagined with modern design elements serve as a subversive complement to the restaurant's plated offerings.





# Hotel Mono

18 MOSQUE STREET #01-04  
SINGAPORE



The numerous three-story shophouses which line the streets of Singapore stand as a reminder of the country's history as a former British colony. It's rare to witness traditional elements of colonial architecture alongside an enthusiastic commitment to a modern aesthetic—something the folks at Hotel Mono have done with aplomb under their philosophy of providing a five-star experience within a unique historical context.

The boutique hotel, located in Singapore's Chinatown district, is settled within a mixture of traditional Chinese medicine shops, eateries, temples, and mosques mixed with new-age bars and restaurants. The surrounding neighborhood is much like the hotel itself, a seamless integration of timeworn fixtures and slick modernity. The hotel itself is comprised of six refurbished shophouses, easily distinguished from surrounding structures by the





all-black paint job on the ground floor combined with whitewashed exteriors above.

The rooms of Hotel Mono defy any misguided assumptions of “mono” being an abbreviation of “monotone”—each room has a different orientation due to the buildings’ unique architecture. A unifying feature between the rooms is a black steel bar which hangs from the ceiling, serving

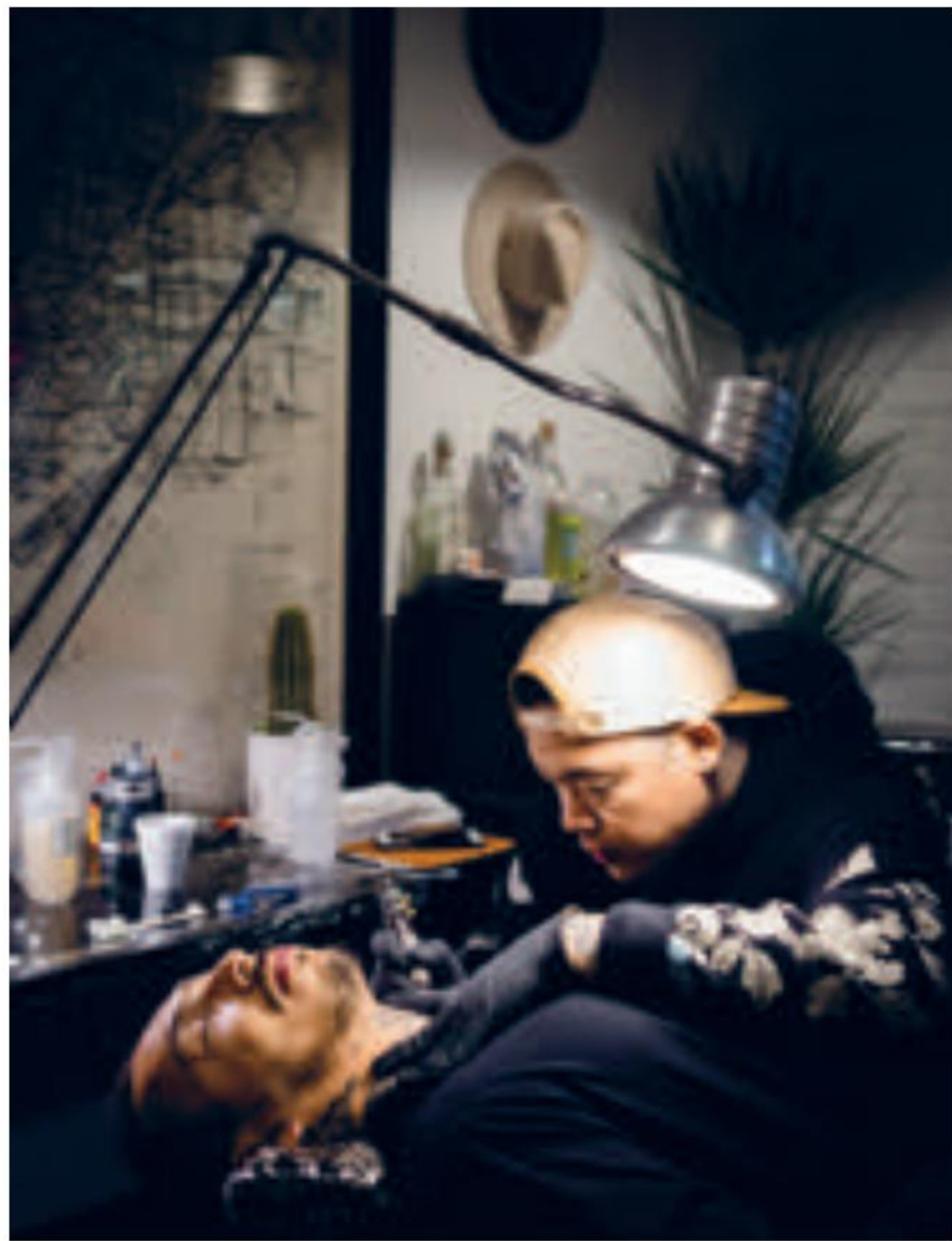
double duty as light fixture and clothes hanger while also functioning as a main feature of the room décor. Clean lines and—as the hotel name actually suggests—a monochromatic theme prevail throughout the establishment, providing unabashedly sleek accommodations inside a building and neighborhood full of tradition.





# Dr. Woo Hideaway Studio

SUITE X  
HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL  
LOS ANGELES, CA,  
USA



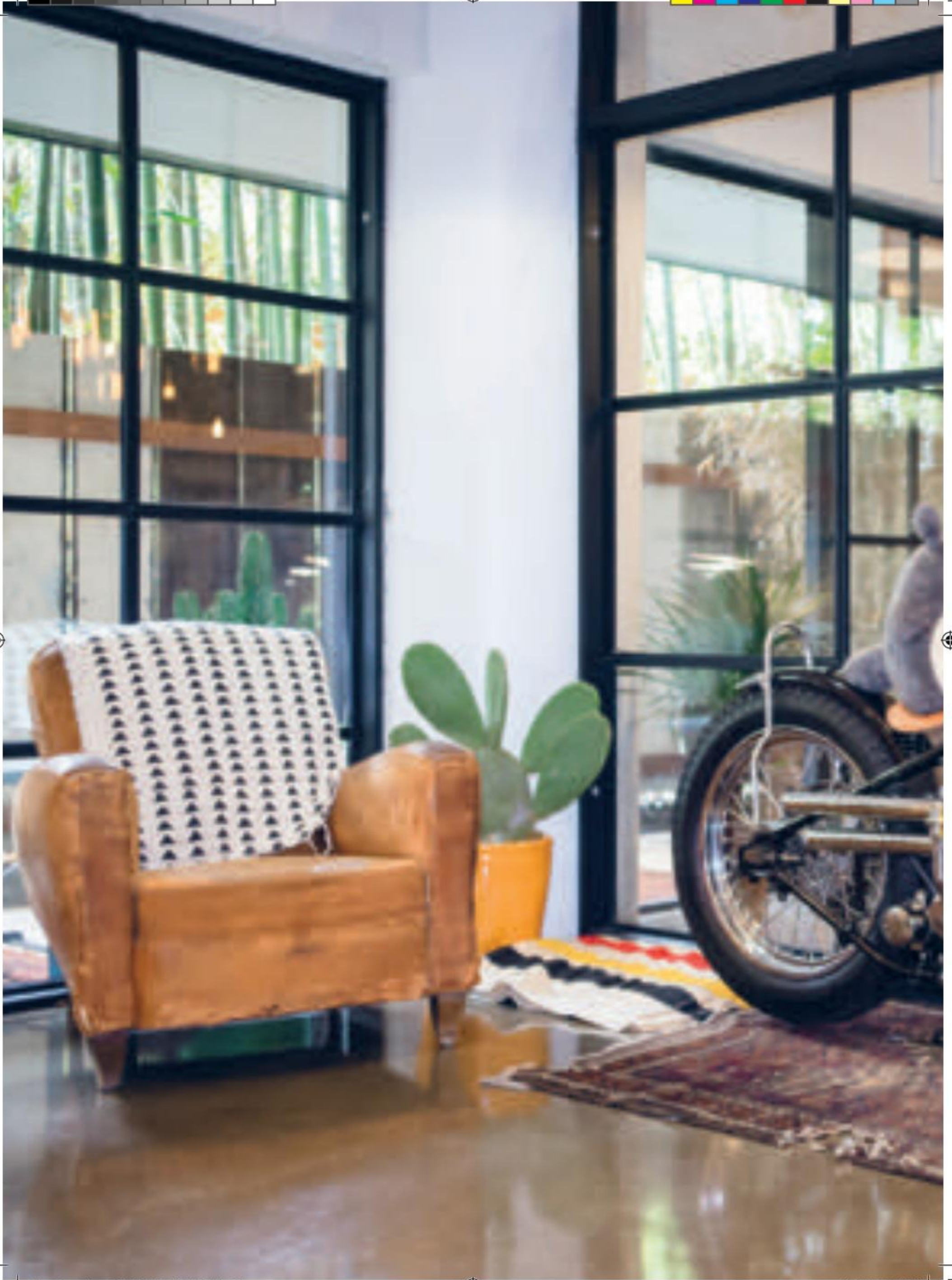




Tucked away behind the historic Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, the personal studio of renowned celebrity tattoo artist Dr. Woo recently opened its doors to the public... sort of. The studio, appropriately named the Hideaway at Suite X, exists inside a hotel, yet is completely hidden from plain sight and only open for appointments. Having spent his early career at Shamrock Social Club, one of Hollywood's most renowned tattoo studios, the new space is a departure from the bustling studio on Sunset Boulevard. To Woo, this new location not only serves as a physical workplace and a creative space to further grow his projects, but also as spot for friends and family to just come and hang out. "I feel like a kid who finally has a clubhouse to

hangout in and do whatever," he explains. Inside this "clubhouse" is an eclectic mix of furniture, art and collectibles including a fully-functioning Harley Davidson Panhead, a Vitra Eames Elephant, multiple NEIGHBORHOOD incense chambers, and a gang of KAWS toys. Of all the interesting additions to the Hideaway studio, Woo admits his favorite is a hanging art piece by Canadian artist Terence Koh. While the location is admittedly quite difficult to find, the embellished yet unassuming studio provides the perfect setting for Dr. Woo's high-profile client list. When asked about his future plans for the development and expansion of his studio, Woo hints at the potential of Hideaway pop-ups around world.











# Mr. Simon

SECRET LOCATION  
UDINE, ITALY



A shopping mall is a place which often conjures images of chain retail stores and unforgiving fluorescent lights, neither of which are conducive to the one-of-a-kind experiences sought by most seasoned travelers. However, there's one mall in northeastern Italy that might be worth a washroom visit. Inside this shopping mall there is a restaurant, whose bathroom stall serves as the only entrance to a notoriously exclusive bar known as Mr. Simon. Modeled after the private home of one fabled Mr. Simon, a botanist-slash-chemist who collects various oddities from around the world, the bar is decorated with all manners of knick-knacks and

vintage items, and boasts meticulously-crafted cocktail menus inspired by different countries around the world.

A visit to Mr. Simon is much like visiting a private home: by invitation only. Only invitees receive the address and an access code which changes by the day—the location of the mall and host restaurant are scrupulously kept secrets. Mr. Simon is clearly a hermit-esque kind of gentleman, but if one were truly so inclined, it may be of some assurance that there are only so many shopping malls in the city of Udine—and only so many washrooms.



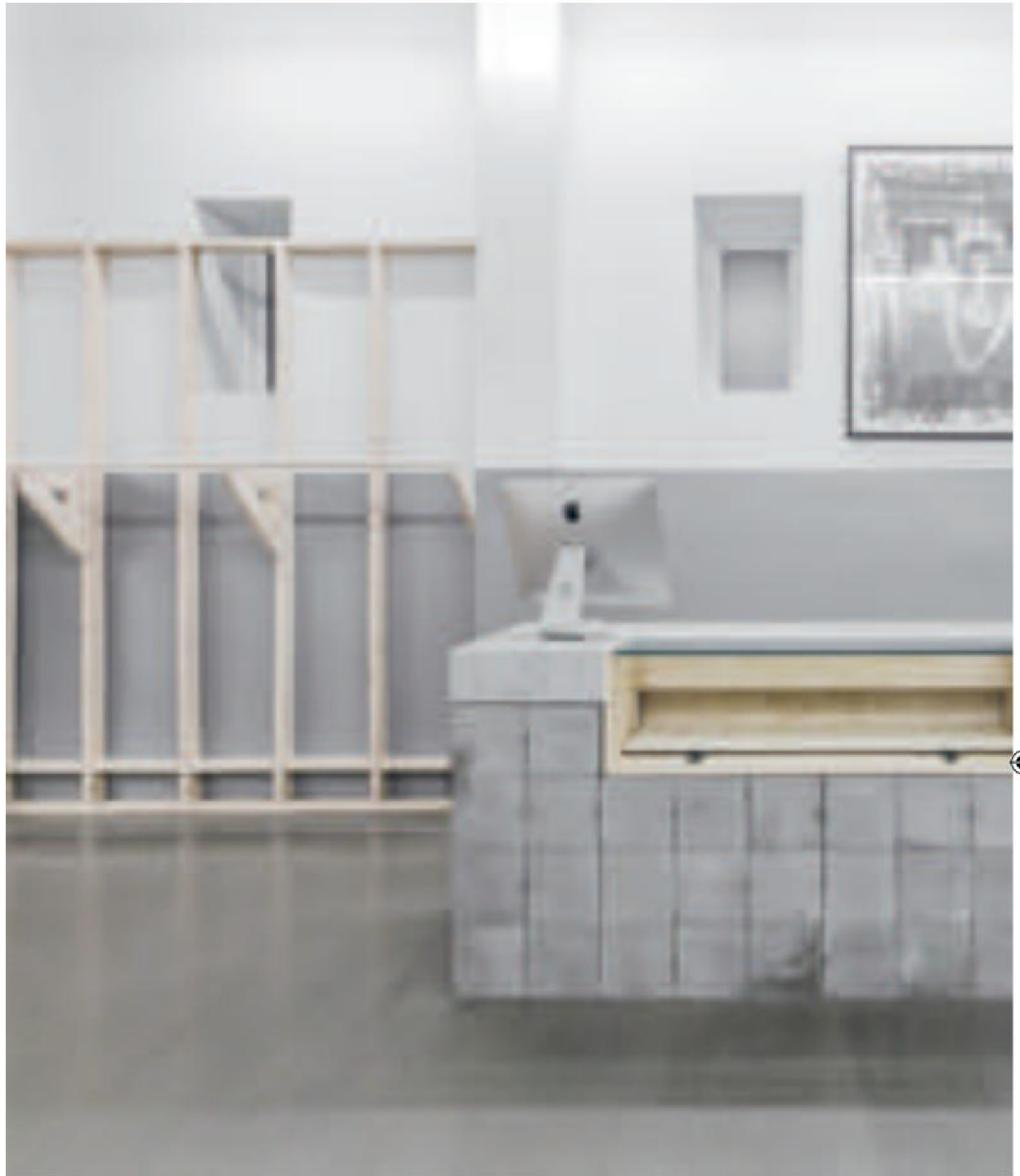






# Stussy

241 SPADINA AVE #100A  
TORONTO, ON  
CANADA



Canada's largest metropolis sees the prodigal return of its own Stussy flagship store after more than a year in hiatus. Previously located at Queen and Ossington until Detroit brand Shinola took over the space, Stussy Toronto has re-emerged in Chinatown, bringing back a sorely missed focal point for the city's skate and surf community. Building on the already pared-back aesthetic of

Stussy's chapter stores, the spartan, industrially decorated interior was designed by Willo Perron—stage designer for the likes of Kanye West and Rihanna—who opted for a mix of strip lighting, exposed PVC pipes, plywood and raw concrete fixtures between steel-clad walls. The back wall curves to meet the floor, alluding to the form of a skate ramp. Meanwhile, the front of the store is







also home to much-loved local fixture Sam James Coffee Pocket—the city’s fifth outlet—which also shared an adjoining space with Stussy in the latter’s previous location. Look for the reductionist theme established here to roll out across Stussy’s other North American locations in the near future, refreshing the label’s entire store lineup.





# Tetchan

1-1-2 KICHIJOJI-HONMACHI  
MUSASHINO CITY, TOKYO  
JAPAN



Tetchan is a small yakitori bar nestled within Harmonica Yokochi, a maze of alleyways in Kichijoji, a western suburb of Tokyo that used to be a collection of black market vendors during post-WWII Japan. These narrow streets hawked food and wares when the populace endured strict food and supplies rationing under the watch of the American occupation. Today, they form a labyrinth of (now fully legitimate) shops and eateries that still

reflect the chaos and randomness of this particular period in Japanese history.

Kengo Kuma and Associates reworked the 325-square-foot, dual-level space almost purely with byproducts of modern technology, set in resounding contrast amongst the dark wood furnishings and zero-fuss décor of the surrounding izakaya bars and shops reminiscent of Old World Japan. One aim of the architectural firm was to





explore industrial waste in its original form—directly recycling materials for use without breaking them down or processing them into another form. The ground level features tables and stools made from slabs of clear acrylic, set against a slightly NSFW, punk-inspired red-and-white mural by Teruhiko Yumura.

Upstairs, the room is dripping in recycled Ethernet cables, rendered by Kuma and Associates into an

unrecognizable shag carpet which covers the chairs, walls and light fixtures like the coat of an especially colorful, wiry-haired animal. The two levels of Tetchan are so divergent in appearance that they may as well belong to different establishments. Surreal though it may be, the source of Tetchan's charm doesn't fall far from the intimate wiles of its history, while simultaneously managing to provide a tongue-in-cheek respite from its traditional peers.



# Directory

**ADIDAS**  
ADIDAS.COM

**ALEX MULLINS**  
ALEXMULLINS.CO.UK

**ALEXANDER WANG**  
ALEXANDERWANG.COM

**AMBUSH**  
AMBUSHDESIGN.COM

**BALENCIAGA**  
BALENCIAGA.COM

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BLAISEMAUTIN.COM

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**COMME DES GARÇONS**  
COMME-DES-GARCONS.COM

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DICKIES.COM

**DOOMSDAY STORE**  
DOOMSDAY-STORE.COM

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DIOR.COM

**DOT COMME**  
DOTCOMME.NET

**DR. MARTENS**  
DRMARTENS.COM

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GENTLEMONSTER.COM

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GODSPEEDSTORE.COM

**HAVN STORE**  
HAVNSTORE.COM.AU

**ISSEY MIYAKE**  
ISSEYMIYAKE.COM

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JOHN-LAWRENCE-SULLIVAN.COM

**LIAM HODGES**  
LIAMHODGES.CO.UK

**LIFE'S A BEACH**  
LIFESABEACHBRAND.COM

**MAD ET LEN**  
MADETLEN.COM

**MAIDEN NOIR**  
MAIDENNOIR.COM

**MONCLER**  
MONCLER.COM

**NEEDLES**  
NEPENTHES.SHOP-PRO.JP

**NIKE**  
NIKE.COM

**NORSE PROJECTS**  
NORSEPROJECTS.COM

**OAKLEY**  
OAKLEY.COM

**OH DAWN**  
OHDAWN.COM

**P.A.M**  
PERKSANDMINI.COM

**PENFIELD**  
PENFIELD.COM

**PRADA**  
PRADA.COM

**RAF SIMONS**  
RAFSIMONS.COM

**READYMADE**  
READYMADE-OFFICIAL.COM

**RED CLOUD**  
REDCLOUDCLOTHING.DE

**ROUGH AND RUGGED**  
ROUGHANDRUGGED.JP

**SENNHEISER**  
SENNHEISER.COM

**SOULLAND**  
SOULLAND.COM

**VANS**  
VANS.COM

**VERSACE**  
VERSACE.COM

**WAYWARD**  
WAYWARDLONDON.COM

**XANDER ZHOU**  
XANDERZHOU.COM