HYPEBEAST

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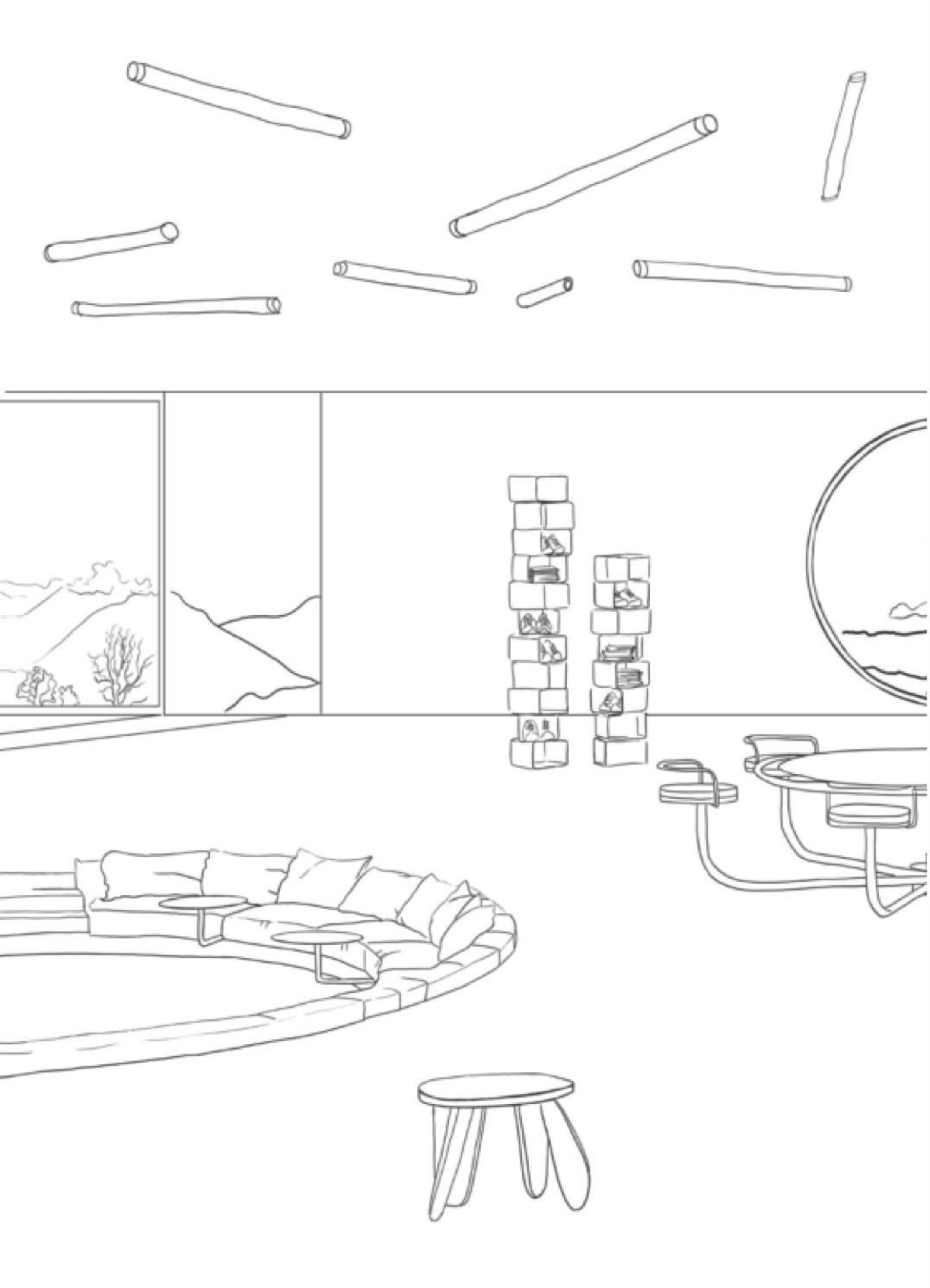

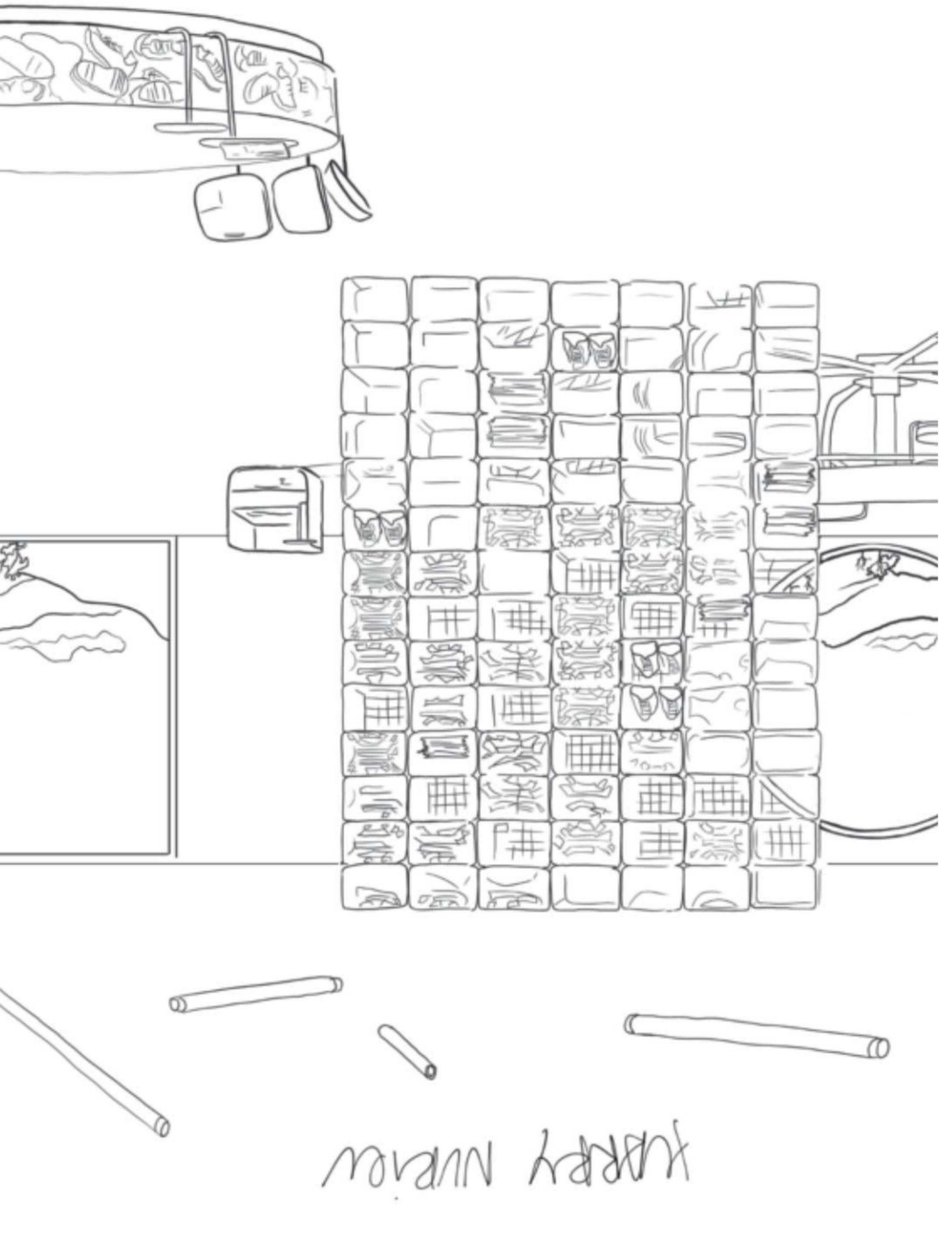
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ISSUE 28

Ignition

HYPEBEAST MAGAZINE ISSUE 28
THE IGNITION ISSUE

Regardless of where you're from, where you live, your age, your politics, or your spirituality, it seems the one point we can all agree on as we enter into this new decade is that things have got to change. The current level of friction felt worldwide isn't sustainable. With the path to desirable change still uncharted, simply having the confidence to consistently put one foot in front of the other can be a mini-revolution all in itself.

As we set out to make this issue, we began by exploring the word "ignition" and the many connotations it holds (for better or for worse). We wanted to celebrate individuals who are doing more than just contributing to important social conversations, the people who are saying "f*ck it" and not waiting for permission to act. But as I write this, just hours before we send the issue to print, I realized a more important theme has naturally emerged between our subjects: the embodiment of sustainable living.

Cover subject Harry Nuriev—the Russian designer behind the controversial Balenciaga couch that debuted at the recent Art Basel Miami—is using upcycled materials in inspired ways, giving new life to objects outside of their intended industries. He explains, "Brands have huge stocks of damaged goods that they don't know what to do with—it's a huge issue for business and also a design challenge to find a new life for these products."

Similarly, Amsterdam-based fashion designer Duran Lantink is challenging the pervasive elitism of high fashion by upcycling past-season garments from major luxury brands. This approach has been at the core of his business since day one: "I got really into this whole thing from the beginning of college, from the first year of my bachelor's degree. I just found it super weird that you had to create new materials while there are so many beautiful pieces laying around in charity shops."

To Lantink's point, living sustainably requires more than just buying sustainably; it requires understanding the production methods and means behind every interaction we have. Our time and our words are both currency *and* commodity, and where we choose to invest ourselves can say a lot about where our values lie. Several of our subjects—(Sandy) Alex G, Daily Paper, Vhils, Wretched Flowers and Botter—have chosen to root their working practices outside of the reigning creative capitals, and instead invest their efforts into bettering their hometown communities.

But enough talk, right? Let's get on with it.

Megan Wray Schertler
Managing Editor
HYPEBEAST Magazine

Issue 28

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adidas FUTURECRAFT .LOOP Phase 2

Second time's a charm.

In April 2019, adidas launched its FUTURECRAFT.LOOP recycling program with a run of 200 pairs of the Phase 1 model. Eight months later, the fully circular FUTURECRAFT.LOOP Phase 2 was born, constructed of plastic waste from its Phase 1 predecessors. The unique design of the FUTURECRAFT.LOOP Phase 2 features rich blue accents on the upper to demonstrate the design flexibility in the Loop recycling process. Phase 2 will be sent out to the same 200 testers before being ground down and re-worked once more.

"We have a lot of respect for our planet and for nature and really believe in the human capacity to innovate and find solutions," stated the FUTURECRAFT.LOOP's development team.

The recyclable FUTURECRAFT.LOOP's commercial release is expected to arrive at select adidas retailers in Spring/Summer 2021 for a yet to-be-determined retail price.

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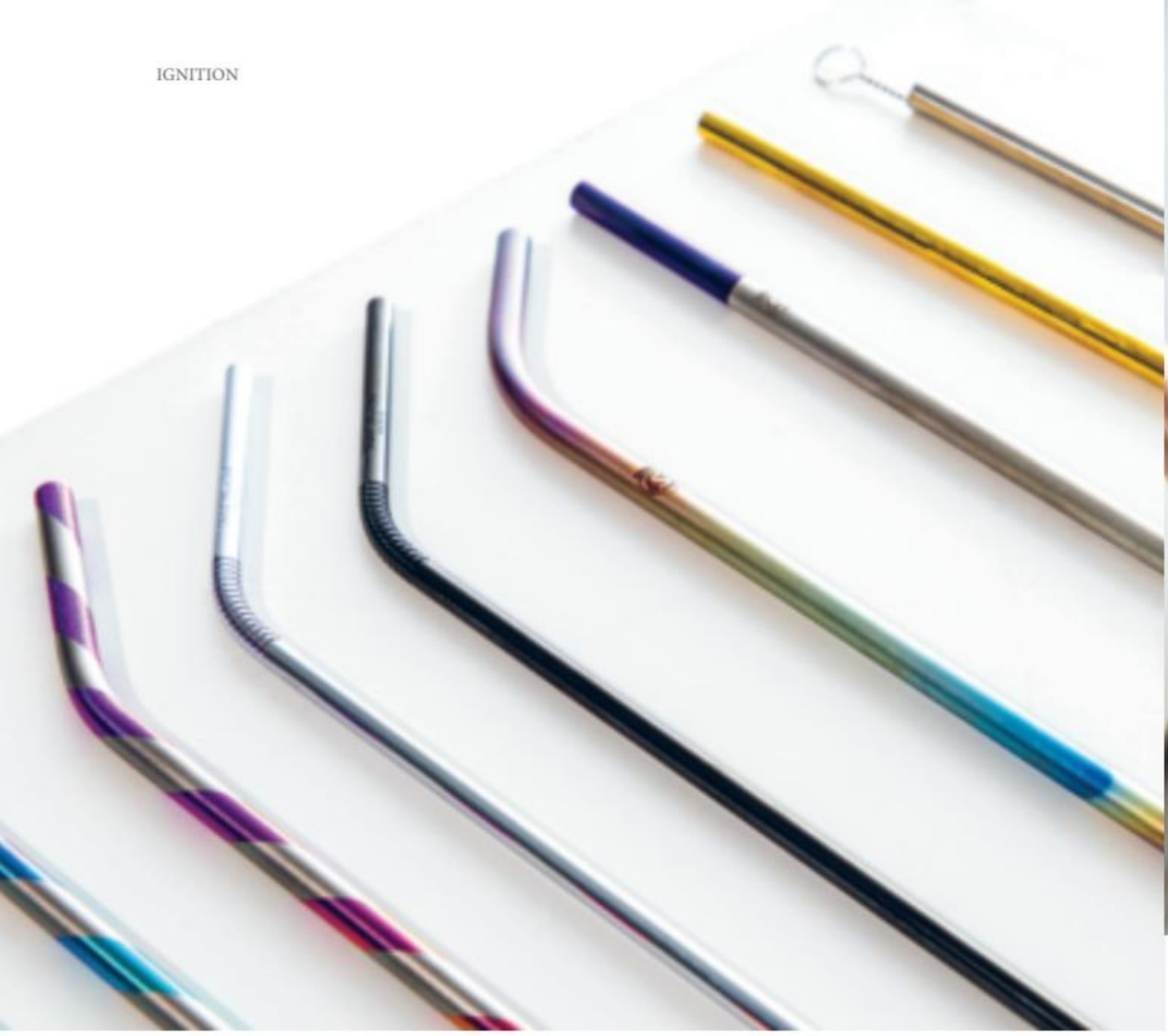
WORK IN PROGRESS



Straw Alternatives

Because paper straws were a half-baked idea.

As the interest in reducing our dependency on plastic grows, it's probably hard to find anyone in favor of using plastic straws these days. However, the current trend to embrace recyclable paper straws instead of plastic ones leaves us wanting. Luckily, there are plenty of other great options that won't dissolve faster than ice cubes.

For the more utilitarian-driven, titanium straws are your answer. Silca's titanium straws are fashioned out of production leftovers from its Sicuro titanium water bottle cages. Titanium makes for a great option since it is easy to clean, hypoallergenic and a poor conductor of heat and cold, making it the perfect drinking utensil. King Cage offers a basic titanium option, while Agave Finishworks creates custom, hand-anodized versions of King Cage's straws in vibrant green-turquoise and pink-purple colorways.

High-end alternatives are also available: Saint Laurent Rive Droite's exclusive is made from 100% brass, while Miansai's offerings include sterling silver, brass (shown here) and copper options, each packaged in a genuine Italian leather pouch for extra protection and easy travel.

Shown: YSL Rive Droite Straws in Metal; Silca Titanium Straw Set; King Cage Titanium Straws; Custom King Cage Titanium Straws by Agave Finishworks; Miansai Brass Straw Set.

100 Year Hoodie

Some say streetwear is dying, but this hoodie literally can't.

Crafted from aramid fibers—the same material found in body armor, aerospace and military applications—the 100 Year Hoodie is built to be indestructible. Having evolved through two prior design iterations, Vollebak's latest upgrade to the hoodie makes it weatherproof, meaning it can protect you against wind, rain and snow. Additionally, the abrasion-resistant apparel item is crafted from a breathable and fireproof softshell.

Each hoodie takes 28 weeks to be crafted and is designed to last the rest of the wearer's life—and then some. A full-length zip closure and four front pockets with two-way zippers compliment the hoodie's minimalist design. Internal pockets are also housed within the layering essential, in order to secure more delicate items.

The third iteration of Vollebak's 100 Year Hoodie is now available for pre-order via vollebak.com for approximately $514 US.

Feel Good Products

The ultimate in self-respect.

Clean, eco-friendly products have dominated the conversation in recent discussions around wellness. Founded by a small group of professional skaters and surfers, grooming brand Kelsen offers essentials made from 100% microplastic-free formulas that won't contaminate our skin or our seas.

Along with hand-harvested seaweed, which is the base ingredient for its whole product lineup, Haeckels has conceived bio-contributing packaging to help combat the problem of plastic packaging. Their mycelium packaging and seed paper wraps are not only 100% compostable but also contribute to Earth's biosphere: the paper houses plant seeds, which then grow as they are nourished by the broken-down mycelium.

Scents have also played a prime factor in wellness. APC and JJJJOUND's collaborative scented candle Forest is another way to help balance your life, while Haeckels' petrichor-inspired Pluviophile candle comes poured into a double-walled glass, meant to be repurposed as a cup after the candle burns its final hours.

Shown: APC x JJJJound Forest Scented Candle; Haeckels Pluviophile Candle, Skin Mixology Set and Exfoliating Seaweed Block; Kelsen Two-In-One Cleanser and Light Hold Pomade.


kēlsen
SHAMPOO &
BODY WASH
Hæckels
POMADE

Duran Lantink is a fashion designer who believes we don't need new clothes. From his studio in Amsterdam, he repurposes discarded old clothing into new, often working with items from established luxury houses like Balenciaga, Chanel and Louis Vuitton to create hybrid one-of-a-kind pieces. Hyper-focused on reducing the amount of waste in the fashion industry—the third highest-polluting industry in the world—Lantink proves that not only can the life of unwanted clothing be extended but that discarded clothing can become pieces of art in their own right.

Duran Lantink Q&A

INTERVIEW
VANESSA LEE

PHOTOGRAPHY
MARK KISZELY

How did you first get into fashion?
It's a bit cliché, but I was always fascinated by fashion from a very young age. I guess it all started with the Antwerp Six: Walter Van Beirendonck, Ann Demeulemeester, Dries Van Noten, Dirk Van Saene, Dirk Bikkembergs and Marina Yee. And my mom was also very much into fashion. I started drawing from a very young age, but I always wanted to do something in fashion.

I think I was very young—around 14 years old. My stepdad had a big pile of old Diesel jeans, and I cut the waistband off one of them really roughly. Then my grandma had a lot of tablecloths, like the red-and-white checked kind, and we turned them into this pleated skirt. I think I made about fifty of them, and a shop near my house wanted to sell them. At that point, I thought I wouldn't go to school anymore, I would just start being a big designer. A week later, all the skirts were sold out, and I spent the money on—talking about unnecessary consumerism—a Chanel beach towel. [Laughs]

How would you describe your work to someone else?
There's a lot of energy in it, a lot of variation. It's always about brands mixing together—that's the core of the process. Now, we're working with more streetwear. I recently realized I like doing all these bits. It's not only couture or high fashion or streetwear—it's a sort of vibrant mixture of all those elements. I just try to put them in one big bottle and mix them up.

What are some labels you haven't worked with yet but want to?
Oh my god, I think I've cut up literally every single label I would like to, to be completely honest. I would love to cut up some Balenciaga by Nicolas Ghesquière. I would also love to cut up some John Galliano Dior couture.

If you cut up a really beautiful piece, do you ever have second thoughts about approaching it with scissors?
My whole studio responds like that. I'm the only one who doesn't freak out when cutting something. Literally, all the people in my studio are like, "Oh no, don't cut!" Whereas I'm like, "Muahahaha!"

What's the effect that you want your work to ultimately have on others and on the outside world?
That people truly appreciate the design and start falling in love with it. I'd rather have someone not buy my clothes if it's just to wear for a party. The ultimate dream for me is a kind of co-parenting. You buy something, you take care of it, you let me know after a month how it's going with one of my babies. It's more about reusing.

That's what we're aiming to do now. We're working in direct collaboration with customers. So we go into their closet and take things they have that are ripped or things they don't wear anymore because they think it's old season. We take them back to the studio, and you get a completely new mini-collection made from the off-season things you had laying around. I think this kind of approach is the future. I just hope that people start appreciating the fact that there are people working with their hands. It's labor. It's not something where you click a button and it prints.

What happened to make you feel so strongly about overconsumption in fashion?
I got really into this whole thing at the beginning of college, from the first year of my bachelor's degree at Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. I just found it super weird that you had to create new materials while there are so many beautiful pieces laying around in charity shops. Why not do something with them? Obviously now we are more conscious about global warming, so people are also very much into transparency. I just really hope that it's not just a trend, that sort of green-washing. I'm a bit scared that sustainability is just becoming a marketing strategy.

You're after permanent progress rather than just a trend.
Exactly. These values often become a seasonal or yearly thing like, "This year, we're doing inclusivity. Next year, we're doing transparency. Then we're doing sustainability." Those things should be at the core of a business, not a trend.

Can you tell me about the first time you made a piece out of other vintage pieces?


Baler1ЛЬ

Christian Kroll founded Ecosia after witnessing firsthand the devastating effects of deforestation during his travels throughout Nepal and South America. Ecosia links reforestation efforts with something we increasingly rely on in everyday life: the search engine. Founded in 2009, the Berlin-based company uses its profits to support forest restoration. Ten years since Ecosia's start, fifteen million monthly users have helped Kroll's search engine plant 77 million trees around the world. The goal, Kroll says, is one trillion trees within the next three decades.

Christian Kroll Q&A

INTERVIEW
VANESSA LEE

PHOTOGRAPHY
DAHAHM CHOI

Reforestation and search engines aren't obvious things to pair together. How did you arrive at the idea for Ecosia?

I studied business administration, and during my studies, I also traded stocks, so I'm coming from a very different angle. I was not at all an environmentalist when I was at university. I created a little website where users could compare the terms and conditions of various online

banks, and I would earn a commission when they would sign up for a bank account. That was my little hobby business during university. I quickly realized that most of the money I was earning, I was actually giving directly to Google because I had to put up Google ads to get traffic to my website. This is how I got in touch with the search market, basically.

Then after university, I wanted to do something more meaningful than just, I don't know, working for money nine to—what is it?—nine to five. But I didn't really know what that would be, so I decided to take a long trip around the world to figure out what I wanted to do. I ended up living in Nepal for half a year. While there, I realized how lucky I was to have been born in Germany, and that I have so many opportunities that many people in Nepal will never have. I felt obliged to give back to the people who don't have the same opportunities as I do. I really wanted to help people in developing countries.

I kept traveling a bit more. I lived in Latin America for almost a year and observed the enormous destruction that we're currently doing to the world's rain forests but also just to our planet in general. Also during that time, I learned about climate change. I realized that I wanted to do something to help people, help nature and also prevent climate change from happening. Planting trees seemed like the best way to do something about this. Since I found the search engine sector very interesting, I realized I could create a search engine that plants trees. A bit of a strange idea, but it seems to work pretty well so far.

How does Ecosia work?
It basically works like any other search engine. You type in your search terms and we show you the search results, but for some search terms, we show advertisements. And when you click on these advertisements, the website that is putting up the advertisement is paying us money. And then we use that money to plant trees.

What we're currently doing is adding a little small green leaf right next to websites where we know the company is more sustainable than others. This is only a small first step. In the future, we want to give much more detailed information. Say you're looking for a flight. We could show users flight options but also tell them how much CO2 they save by taking the train instead. Search engines already have a very, very big decision power, and that's only going to get more important.

This is the tenth year that Ecosia has been operating. Congratulations!
Yes. We just celebrated our tenth birthday last week. We've seen a lot of growth in the past decade. Last year, we planted more trees than we planted in the nine previous years combined. We were at 35 million a year ago. Now we're at 77 million, which is pretty great.

You've been quoted stating that we need to plant one trillion trees in order to combat climate change. Has this number increased?
There are three trillion trees on the planet at the moment. It used to be around four trillion. We're still losing maybe 15 billion trees every year. Ideally, we need to plant one trillion trees within the next 20 or 30 years. So, currently our balance is still negative. We're trying our best, but we're only a small company. Unfortunately, we're also one of the biggest tree planters in the world.

One problem is that there are a lot of companies in the sector of renewable energy or electric cars and so on. There are a lot of marketing budgets available for these topics. Everybody's talking about electric cars and solar panels, which is great, but nobody is talking about trees. We're basically the only one advocating for tree planting. Humanity needs to take that topic more seriously.

What are your thoughts on the Amazon fires and how people are dealing with that?
It was very sad to see. Billions of trees were lost in the fires. At the same time, we saw that millions of people started using Ecosia because they wanted to

do something about it. We saw a spike in installs during the fires, and Ecosia was suddenly listed number one in the app stores in many countries, even on top of WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and so on.

Do you think tech companies have a responsibility to help combat climate change?
Tech companies have a huge obligation to do something for the climate because many of the companies are very, very profitable. Also, they attract a lot of young, smart people who care about the future of society and the planet. There is no reason for tech companies not to make climate change their top priority. But unfortunately, most tech companies are not really free to do whatever they want. They have to generate profit, and that basically keeps them from doing what we are doing. If we were as big as Google, over the next two decades we could easily plant the one trillion trees we'd need to solve a large part of climate change.

Where do you want to see Ecosia in the next ten years?
Personally, I want to contribute to changing our current system where profits take priority over the environment or people. This is basically the cause of climate change and many social problems at the moment. Things can be done differently.

Essentially, profitability is killing the planet.
It doesn't have to—we're also profitable. The way we think about business at the moment doesn't serve us in the 21st century anymore. What I got told in university is that businesses exist to maximize profits—everything else is secondary. Then you have nonprofits who try to repair some of the damage that businesses have done. This is how our economic system works at the moment.

We need to redefine what "business" means. A lot of businesses are not really transparent at the moment, and we're trying to be a role model in that regard. We make all our financial numbers public. Our users can see how much money we earn and how we spend that money. If we had more transparency about the real impact of businesses, especially the negative impacts, along with higher standards for what businesses should be doing, then I think our planet would be in much better shape.

Hussein, Abderrahmane and Jefferson—the Amsterdam-based trio behind Daily Paper—have been working together since 2008, growing their online streetwear blog into an internationally recognized clothing label. As third culture kids, they strive to make their African heritage an intrinsic part of their design language. In addition to their charitable initiatives in Africa, they also hold yearly pop-ups in Johannesburg and Accra to sell dead stock to local youth at affordable prices. The idea, they say, is to give back to the many places they call home.

Daily Paper Q&A

INTERVIEW
VANESSA LEE

PHOTOGRAPHY
TOMEK DERSU AARON WHITFIELD

Tell me about your roles and how you work together at Daily Paper.

Abderrahmane: Hussein's main role is marketing and strategy. He gives his input on all the shoots, on what next steps we should take. He's the one that was responsible for the New York store opening in March. Jeff's main role is sales. He has an overhead on all organizations, so whenever Hussein and I are gone, he protects the base and makes sure everything goes well. When we started

with just the three of us, my main role was designer. Now I'm not really designing anymore—it's more coordinating creative direction. It's easier because now we can travel more for inspiration.

Jefferson: We see each other as family. This comes with mutual respect for each other. We hardly fight or have heavy discussions.

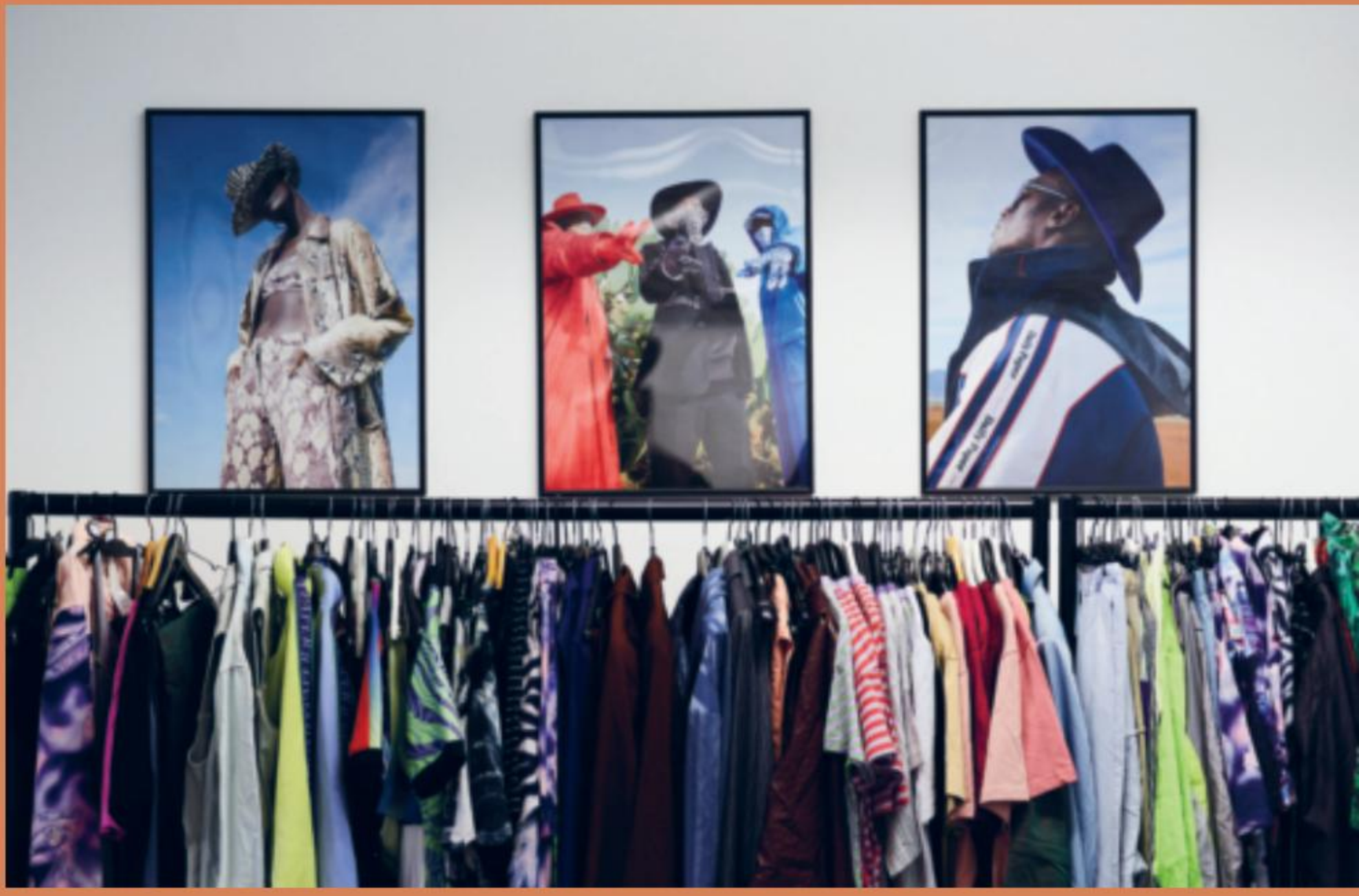
What kind of clothes do you want to make?
Abderrahmane: We try to push our boundaries and try crazier stuff, innovative stuff, stuff that's maybe a little bit too crazy for people here [in Amsterdam], but in other regions they're standard.

We still offer easier styles to please the people that like them. But you also have a group that likes the more innovative styles, things like detective jackets or puffer jackets, crazy materials like fake snakeskin. We don't use real snakeskin.

What is Daily Paper to you?
Hussein: A company founded by friends. We represent the DIY generation. A global movement of underrepresented individuals that is making efforts to break stereotypes, especially those that are assigned to Black and African people. It's a vehicle where we get to learn more about ourselves and our own history and at the same time speak to third culture kids that grew up in metropolitan cities in the West.

Jefferson: This platform represents more than just clothing. It represents a message, a community and a global family of like-minded people who are active in fashion, music and sports.

How did Daily Paper get its start?
Abderrahmane: Some people don't know this, but Daily Paper started as a blog in 2008. We covered new age fashion, events, things like that. To promote the blog, we went to American Apparel and printed our logo on a t-shirt, then sold it to a friend. Slowly people became more interested in our merch than the blog. In 2010, we were sitting together, and we realized we had an interesting opportunity. Jeff, Hussein and I had all already been to Bread and Butter, been to Paris Fashion Week. We met such cool guys from such cool stores. That's when we decided to do it. We released our first collection of five t-shirts in 2012.



What's changed since the beginning of Daily Paper the clothing brand to now?
Hussein: The message has always been the same. The audience got bigger. We grew from a local Amsterdam-based brand to being sold in 29 countries in over 200 multi-brand stores. We are more traveled than before, and thanks to the Internet, we get to communicate on a global level.

Abderrahmane: We're also doing a lot of giving back. For example, the first thing we did when we had the opportunity was to build a football court with Puma at an all-girls school in Accra. After that, we collaborated with Elmon Peace, a charity that gives art therapy to war children. We chose a few of those drawings, put them on t-shirts, and all the profits went to Elmon Peace. We're currently finishing a football court there with that money.

We're also trying to produce sustainable clothing. All our handbags, labels and poly bags are all from recycled material. So our main labels are from recycled polyester, our handbags are from bamboo and our poly bags are made from corn starch that's 100% biodegradable.

What is something that you keep coming back to for inspiration?
Abderrahmane: I think our brand aesthetic for sure. As in, what the brand stands for. I always say if Daily Paper doesn't represent Africa anymore, it has no meaning anymore.

Hussein: Africa and youth cultures in metropolitan cities. I love how the mixes of different cultures in big cities create new cultures. That's where I believe the future lies—where we educate ourselves about the origins of the culture and never forget to pay homage.

Jefferson: We get inspired by the people around us: our friends, our colleagues who we see as extended family, our global community who live in major cities across the globe. All these people are active within the youth culture platforms which inspire us a lot. But our main inspiration will always be the continent that represents our origins: Africa.

MUAY THAI

WORDS
JACK STANLEY

PHOTOGRAPHY
PICZO

Pushing Nostalgia Forward

> Guernsey isn't the first place that comes to mind when we think about a potential A$AP Rocky, Ariana Grande and Stormzy collaborator. The small British island is closer to France than the United Kingdom, and its population of just 60,000 makes London feel a long way away, both geographically and culturally.

"I don't think there were any people making electronic music when I was growing up," Mura Masa recalls of his youth on the island. Mura Masa (real name Alex Crossan), grew up in Guernsey, with his musical involvement beginning with a series of punk and metal bands in his early teens. Eventually—through producers like Mount Kimbie, SBTRKT and James Blake—Crossan became more interested in electronic music.

"It forced me to learn about popular and underground culture from a distance," continues Crossan. "In a way, it was isolating, but it also gave me an interesting outsider's perspective. If you're outside, looking in, you're going to have a warped view of what it really is. You might be able to come up with some outside-the-box thinking because of your strange, warped perspective."

Crossan's outsider perspective has steadily broadened over the past six years. At the age of 17—not yet out of Guernsey—he uploaded his first tracks to SoundCloud. Then he moved to Brighton to study English literature, where he began to play his music live and develop his craft in a more culturally connected city. "I was in a place where I could understand more of the British music culture that I'd read so much about and listened to so much of. Now I was actually being immersed in it," he recalls. "But I was careful not to lose my original streak, not to get brought into the local scene too much. I was an observer, and definitely an outsider, in that scene."

After he dropped out of university, Crossan, following a well-trod path, moved to London. The city was another catalyst to his burgeoning career: his first EP arrived in 2015, with his self-titled debut album following two years later. *Mura Masa*, featuring guest spots from A$AP Rocky, NAO and Desiigner, cemented Crossan as an electronic music wunderkind. He was expanding his songwriting and production portfolio at the same time, including credits on Stormzy's *Gang Signs and Prayer* and Ariana Grande's *Dangerous Woman*.

Now, Crossan is preparing for the launch of his second album. Titled *R.Y.C.*—taken from Raw Youth Collage—the project marks a new direction for the artist. In addition to taking center stage and taking on lead vocals, Crossan uses the album to address themes and issues relevant to the youth of today's world. "The first one was an exploration of a musical idea, this weird idea of pop music, but *R.Y.C.* is definitely more of a thematic exploration," he says. As the name suggests, the new album sees Crossan and his collaborators examining different elements—nostalgia, mental health, politics—of what it means to be young in 2020.

Ahead of his album release, we sat down with Mura Masa to discuss his journey from Guernsey to the center of the music industry, how the Internet shaped his sound, and what we can expect from his second album.→

Q & A

What was it like growing up in Guernsey, a long way from the music world?
It forced me to learn about popular and underground culture from a distance, via the Internet. In a way, it was isolating, but it gave me quite an interesting outsider perspective. If you're not in London, you are never really going to understand the mechanics of the grime scene. If you're outside London, looking in, you're going to have a warped view of what it really is and you might be able to come up with some outside-the-box thinking because of your strange, warped perspective.

What was it like to be experiencing these things through the Internet?
I was quite an early adopter of things like YouTube and SoundCloud—I had a YouTube account in 2005 or 2006, when it first launched. I was always fascinated with unearthing things in your own world, going down little rabbit holes and exploring the unknown via this weird digital telescope.

It must have created quite an eclectic mix of reference points.
Definitely. There's no constraint to what you feel you should be listening to. This is happening a lot in popular music at the moment. There's a new generation that isn't so concerned with fitting into one type of music or having too many genre boundaries thrust upon them.

I think that's a wider cultural thing.
The world we're living in is a big sort of amalgam. We get our news from a lot of different sources; we're constantly looking at different news feeds. Everything is pulled from a lot of different sources and there's no one right thing anymore. There's no certain answer to any question anymore. Even the truth is being brought into question.

The new album references a lot of bigger themes that talk about what's going on in the world.
I didn't want to be overly preach on the album, but I think it's definitely a subject of our times. Are we just going to continue barrelling towards the same destination as we are at the moment, or is there going to be any upheaval and change?

Were you worried about addressing that?
No. I don't think I set out to talk about it particularly, but it so pertains to my life and the lives of people around me, that I couldn't help but write about how I was feeling.

On the single "No Hope Generation", you repeat the phrase "I need help."
I think we all do.

When you were in Guernsey, you mentioned that you were in different types of bands—punk, metal—what was it like going from that world into the electronic scene?
Maybe it's cliché to say, but I think there's a lot of links between extreme forms of music. Punk, metal and the harder end of electronic music like techno, they're all extreme forms of expression and extreme forms of emoting. At the time, it didn't feel like that much of a leap. Looking back, it is a bit odd that I was in really heavy metal bands and then I started making pop music. But to me, there are universal things that link all types of music and that's what I'm attracted to. →

"HUMOR IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF TALKING ABOUT DIFFICULT SUBJECTS AND IT'S AN IMPORTANT PART OF HOW MY GENERATION PROCESSES GRIEF."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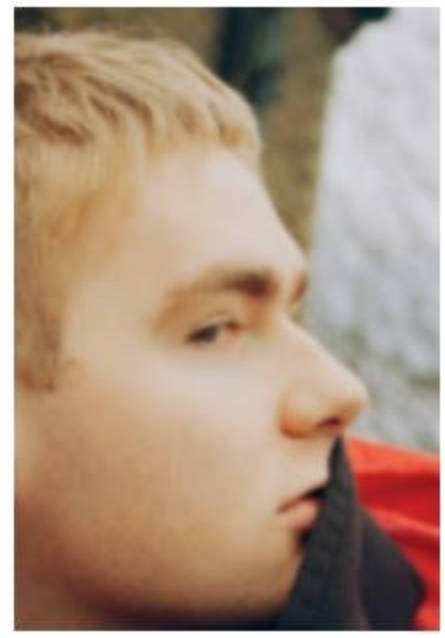


Why was moving to Brighton for university such a big catalyst in your career?
It was the actualization of a lot of the things that I'd been looking at on the Internet. Suddenly I was in a place where I could go to gigs, see DJs, go clubbing, and understand a bit more of the British music culture that I'd read so much about and listened to so much of. Now I was actually being immersed in it. It was exciting; it was very stimulating. But I was careful to not lose my original streak, not get brought into the local scene so much. I was an observer, and definitely an outsider, in that scene.

Was it a similar experience when you moved from Brighton to London?
It was just stepping stones along the same path. London is an even more extreme version of that, where suddenly you're at one of the cultural epicenters of the country. That was really exciting. I was exposed to a lot of underground grassroots stuff that I wouldn't have been able to glean from the Internet.

Did that change what you were doing at all?
It definitely informed how I was thinking, where I was spending my time and the music I was listening to. It was discovering how a local scene functions, because that's not something that I was exposed to. I was learning that process and learning how underground stuff grows into being influential within the industry at large.

Did it affect the music you were making?
Only in surface ways. I was being exposed to new genres and things like that, that would have been influencing me. It's like osmosis.

The new album is very different from what you've done before. Why did you want to change things up?
I didn't intentionally try and change direction in a massive way. I wanted to write an album that reflects a lot of music that feels nostalgic to me, and a lot of that music is guitar music. That was just the natural way of making music that sonically reflected those themes. It just happens to be completely different from what I was doing last time.

A lot of those nostalgic references are things that you didn't necessarily experience firsthand.
No, it would have been trawling through the Internet and trying to learn about those things from a distance, and either forgetting or misapprehending how close I actually was to those scenes. I might think I was really into emo music when I was growing up, but the reality might have been that I was really into three emo bands that I managed to find on the Internet and I felt that was all there was to that scene. I was lacking deeper knowledge of that music.

What was behind the decision to sing lead vocals on this album?
I think it's because this album is about quite a personal subject, and it felt right to express those views myself. Part of the difficulty of being a producer/artist, or whatever they're calling us nowadays, is that there's a lack of your own literal voice on the record, even though your voice is all over it. That can be quite hard for people to understand. I felt like singing on the album was essential to getting the message across directly.

One of the things I thought was interesting about the album was the balance between humor and darker themes.
I definitely wanted that tongue-in-cheek attitude. Humor is such an important part of talking about difficult subjects and it's an important part of how my generation processes grief. It's the reason why we have so many memes about depression. If we can all admit that the world is shit, then there's some sense of community there because we're all feeling the same thing.

Where does the name of the album come from?
It's just some words that came to me two years ago. I thought it was a cool name for something, and after that, I decided I wanted to write about nostalgia and people's dependency on looking backward. Those three words felt like they fit perfectly into the patchwork of happy, sad and imagined memories. That's what I think of as being this "Raw Youth Collage."

Did you find it difficult to move to a more thematic album?
I'm a big fan of narrative albums; it felt like something natural that I'd wanted to do anyway. It was just making sure that I explored the theme deeply enough and came at it from a number of different perspectives so that it was a complete work. That was the tricky part, but I think I got there in the end.

Did the collaborations allow you to get a wider look at those themes?
That's why I love collaborations so much and why it's so difficult for me to make an album without collaborating. It's because there's only so much that one perspective can offer. When you're talking about something that's so universal, sometimes it's better to listen to different opinions and experiences.

You've always worked with a diverse range of collaborators. What is it like working with such a wide range of people?
I think what's good about it is that everybody I've worked with, I'm dragging into my world, and they're dragging me into their world. We're meeting each other halfway. It doesn't really matter what kind of person they are, where they're from, what kind of music they make. What matters is that we genuinely appreciate each other's work and the rest can work itself out. The last thing I want to do is a collaboration that feels obvious or prescriptive.

Are you apprehensive about how people will react to a more guitar-driven album?
Not really, just because I feel so strongly that it's the right thing to do. Even if nobody likes it, I'll still feel vindicated that I went with my gut. I think people are really receptive to guitar music. I think it's going to be a really important part of music next year, this idea of "the band." We've had a good decade of clean, produced music now. People are desperate for some sort of honesty or emotional vulnerability. Guitar music is at the center of that. If you look at someone like Gunna or Travis Scott, a lot of those beats have old school, rock n' roll guitar riffs. It's obviously in a different context, but that's guitar music.

EXPLODING IDENTITY

WORDS
KEVIN WONG

PHOTOGRAPHY
EDDIE LEE

Today, the person responsible for all the noise in the area is hometown hero Alexandre Manuel Dias Farto, better known around the world as Vhils.

Home to his 15-person team, Vhils's studio is situated between overgrown train tracks and rusty, hollowed-out warehouses. It resembles an airplane hangar lined with walls of stacked wooden crates and an assemblage of materials usually found on a construction site or in a scrapyard. On one side of the studio are gigantic floor-to-ceiling blackout tarps that serve as walls to separate the different stations where his handiwork comes to life. Each mini studio is fit for a different set of tools; gas masks and an assortment of chemicals can be found in one while another houses woodworking tools and an industrial-sized air purifier.

While Vhils felt a call to be "closer to the roots of where his work started," his choice to base his operations in Barreiro wasn't solely rooted in nostalgia (the 33-year-old artist began as a graffiti artist in the area). Today, Vhils's work is almost exclusively made out of found materials from around the city. From his "Camadas" (2018) billboard series to his "Dissecção" (2014) series using train carriages, using reclaimed surface is his way of "giving dignity to materials left behind."

Vhils's paintbrush of choice is a highspeed wood cutter, the Dremel 3000. Dozens can be seen visibly worn down, stacked up in his storage closet like a power tool graveyard. Next to them sits a collection of visibly decomposing doors. These locally "sourced" doors, along with rusted car hoods, salvaged blocks of cement and sheet upon sheet of old signs and posters serve as the canvases for much of his work. All of Vhils's materials come directly from the city.

The surging hum of power tools can be heard coming out of the old industrial suburb of Barreiro, located on the outskirts of Lisbon's city center. However, the portside town lined with factories no longer manufactures metals, oils, soaps and fabrics as it once did.

A few hundred feet away from Vhils's studio is his testing ground, where he works with a method he developed around 2012 using explosives to forge images onto the walls of abandoned buildings. "Sometimes you just need a spark, an ignition for it to explode, and suddenly the layer you're seeing is not 2019 but from a century ago. It makes us reflect and think about how society can evolve."

Vhils's work peels back layers of identity, portraying faces—sometimes of prominent figures, but often of anonymous city dwellers—that confront us with how subjective the construct of identity is within our globalized society. Here, Vhils speaks to us about his ambitions to carve his way around the world.→

“WHEN I CARVE THE WALL I NEVER KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DISCOVER. THAT'S WHAT COMPOSES THE IMAGE. INSTEAD OF USING A PALETTE OF COLORS, I USE THE PALETTE OF THE CITY AS IT IS EVOLVING.”

Q & A

We're here in your studio outside of Lisbon, in the older industrial area. It seems very fitting for the work that you do. Tell us a bit about the space and how it resonates with your work.
I was born on this side of the river. It's a place that has an industrial past and working-class neighborhoods. For me, it made sense to come back and bring the whole studio and the energy to this side of the river, and to be closer to the roots of where I started. I try to give dignity to these places that were left behind. The doors that I pick up, the billboards, the walls... I try to give them a new life with my work and as well with the studio.

Another really important component of your work is location, particularly with your site-specific installations. How do you find these locations?
Lisbon has changed a lot. Five or ten years ago, it was decaying—a lot of abandoned buildings, crumbling walls, and so on. When I started to do what I do 15 or 20 years ago, there was a lot of layering on the walls with everything from old political murals to billboards, advertisements and graffiti. The walls reflected what the city was going through. Everyone was just adding to the walls. That's how I came up with the idea of, instead of adding, going to a wall and extracting the layers that were underneath, and essentially painting with those layers. I tried to look for places that have these kinds of layers of history, so that I can play and paint with those layers. I might have an image in my head, but when I carve the wall I never know what I'm going to discover. That's what composes the image. Instead of using a palette of colors, I use the palette of the city as it is evolving.

What do you think it is about seeing yourself or seeing a human face that evokes feelings or emotions? What is it about that interaction with a face that dictates a lot of your work?
What I'm trying to do is reflect on identity, and how subjective identity has become with globalization—all the transformations that the world is going through. I think there is a worldwide crisis of identity. We achieved a lot of things that were great in the last 20 or 30 years, but people are now feeling overwhelmed. All your dreams and expectations of life, or expectations of happiness or freedom, they're shaped by everything that's around us. All of the layers in my work were a part of someone's life before. This building up of layers, especially as the pace of information is getting faster and faster, is affecting us as humans and as citizens of the world. When you carve a portrait of someone in the city, you humanize that city.

A lot of your working methods are pretty intense, from finding a lot of the materials out in the city to using power tools and explosives. Can you talk a bit about that intensity and what it means to the work itself?
I think a lot of the message is in the process. If the history of the planet can be seen at ground level, the different layers tell you the history. Fifty years ago, there was a dictatorship here. In the cities and urban areas you can see it through the walls, because they absorb all these different layers of paint, of billboards, of things written on the walls. You can really tell the story of a city through their walls.→

Are we a chaotic product of the cities we live in?
I'm trying to reflect on that, because the world is becoming a place of separation, division, and partition—digressing back to some of the same discussions of 30 or 40 years ago.

I saw the collection of the doors your team is gathering from around the city. How does they fit within your practice?
I like to work with this kind of debris that the city leaves behind as it evolves. They are perceived as garbage. I really like to bring new life to them and call attention to the pace of development that we are currently subjected to.

That's a good segue to something that you've mentioned a lot, which is that nothing really lasts forever and neither does your work. Most artists want their work to be everlasting, but you're using decaying materials that don't last forever.
I started to do graffiti almost 20 years ago, back in 2001 or 2002, so I've gotten used to the idea of ephemerality.

Things that are ephemeral live for that moment and then they eventually evolve. For me, I'm just a part of the work. When I do a wall, the wall evolves and changes—people tag over it, people paint over it and it's subjected to humidity. That's part of the process of working in a public space. I prefer art that evolves as we evolve, rather than something that stays the same forever. It makes the artwork more human.

You have talked about your work evolving and also how street art is classified within the larger art market. Would you say that you are invested in evolving that term? Do you still consider yourself a street artist? What is the line between street art and fine art for you?

I have a big problem with the term "street art." Artists are usually a reflection of the times they live in, so labelling all artists that work in a public space with the tag "street art" is reductive. I think the movement is much broader than "street art." There is a new wave of artists that grew up exposed to information and are interconnected like never before. The Internet is connecting everyone. Banksy, of course, but also Shepard [Fairey] have been doing it for a long time now. All of us, we're connected online and distributing images through the Internet. That changed the game.

What is it that you desire for people to feel, or be sparked by, when they see your work?
You just reminded me about the works of the explosives, where I started to work with small charges on a wall and blow them up. That was in 2011 or 2012. If the walls of a city are the testimony of history and time, those layers are maybe a hundred years old. Sometimes you just need a spark for it to explode. That's how quickly a set of actions can bring back the past, and we don't even realize. I hope the work I do prompts reflection. In pushing things forward, it's important to be conscious of the past. Mistakes can be repeated, not just by people but by governments, by how things are set up. I think disruption and how things evolve in the world are very important.

WRETCHED FLOWERS
EARTHLY DELIGHTS

WORDS
JAKE SILBERT

PHOTOGRAPHY
EDDIE LEE

Enter Wretched Flowers, an anonymous artist collective tackling some of the floral industry's deeply rooted issues. Hot topics include unsustainable practices, a singular focus on conventional (read: utterly bland) appeal and a limited selection of uniform plants, all of which stand in stark contrast to Wretched Flowers' earnest DIY application. A dynamic array of oft-unloved plants foraged by hand in and around New York, like Morning Glory, Devil's Snare, kelp and various mushrooms, informs the group's arrangements.

Ostensibly, their mission is to upset the floral industry's narrative of beauty through conformity, with an added edge of sustainability. By sculpting arrangements primarily consisting of invasive species from the local ecosystem, Wretched Flowers is tidying up local plant life while offering handcrafted arrangements and sidestepping the often harmful activities necessary to offer ordinary flowers on demand. "For us," they explain, "beauty is a leaf that's been half-eaten by a caterpillar, not a pristine rose that's been fumigated and covered in pesticides."

Wretched Flowers seeks to uncover ephemeral, uncommon beauty. One angle of the project is to subvert their prior sculptural practice with organic resources, transforming invasive species of plants into living botanical artworks. Simultaneously, their aims to invite its growing fan base to reconsider the flower market, inviting them to review the industry's sustainability and ethics.

A willingness to get down and dirty in New York's oft-unappreciated ecosystem speaks to Wretched Flowers' readily apparent love of plant life, but the group's willingness to discuss the effects of capitalism and colonialism on the floral industry at large shines a light on the project's humanitarian considerations. The collective isn't out to change the world necessarily, but changing even a few minds is a noble goal in and of itself. Even without lofty aspirations, Wretched Flowers' irresistibility can be boiled down to a single rhetorical aside: Who doesn't like flowers?

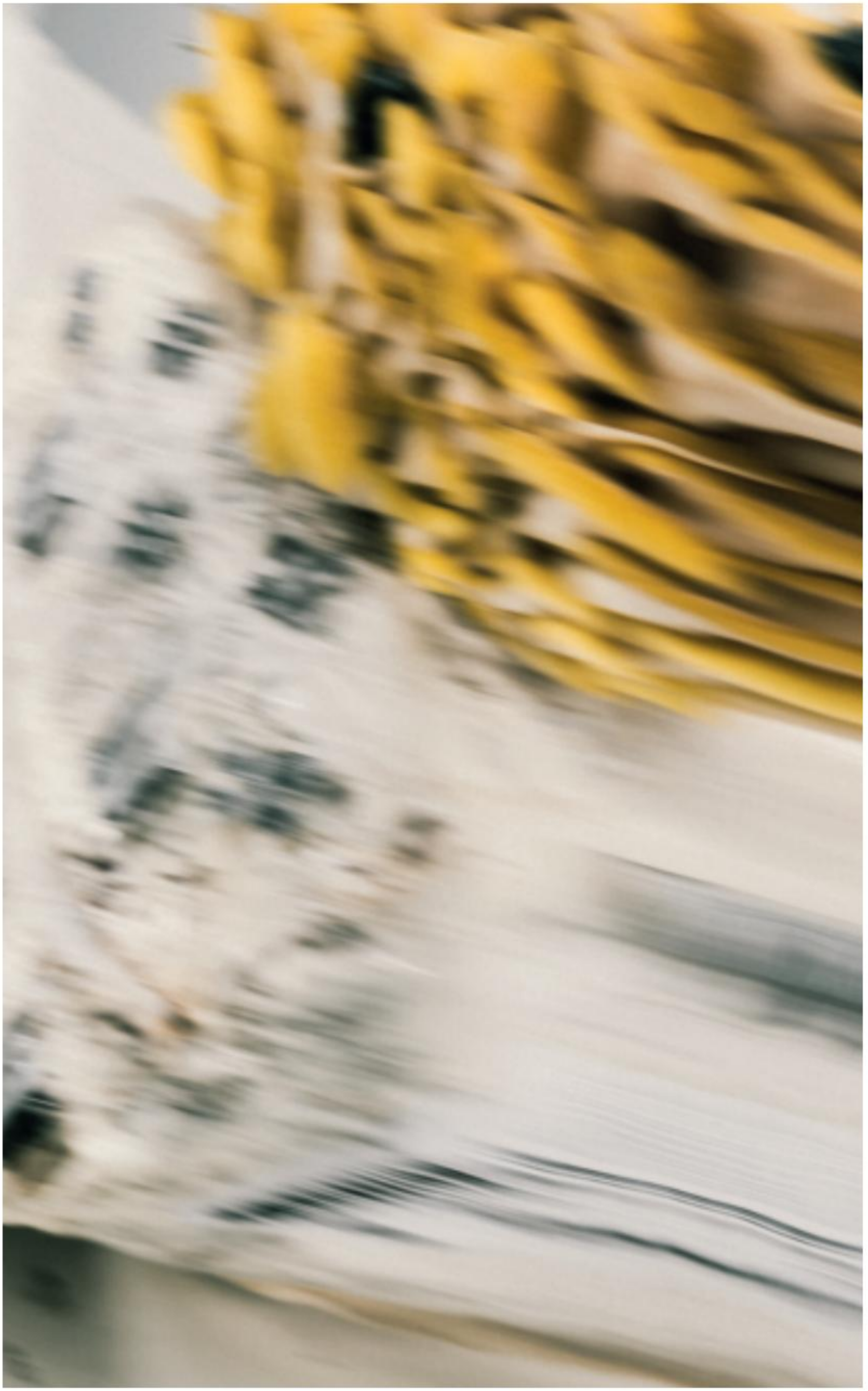
> Western society automatically stigmatizes that which is not typically beautiful. This is less a shocking realization and more a common truth, one that's continually undermined by activists introducing alternative beauty into mainstream culture. The leaderless movements aren't reclaiming "ugliness," per se, but rather looking beyond the vanities that have been baked skin-deep into our capitalist civilization.

Q & A

To start, how did you go from your previous artistic projects to this floral project?
There were a couple of different things that we were doing before this. One was a curatorial project called Hotel Art Pavilion, where we were curating these gallery exhibitions in our space in Brooklyn, and guerrilla-style installations elsewhere. Simultaneously, we had our own collaborative artistic practice. That's still going on, but it's morphed into Wretched Flowers.

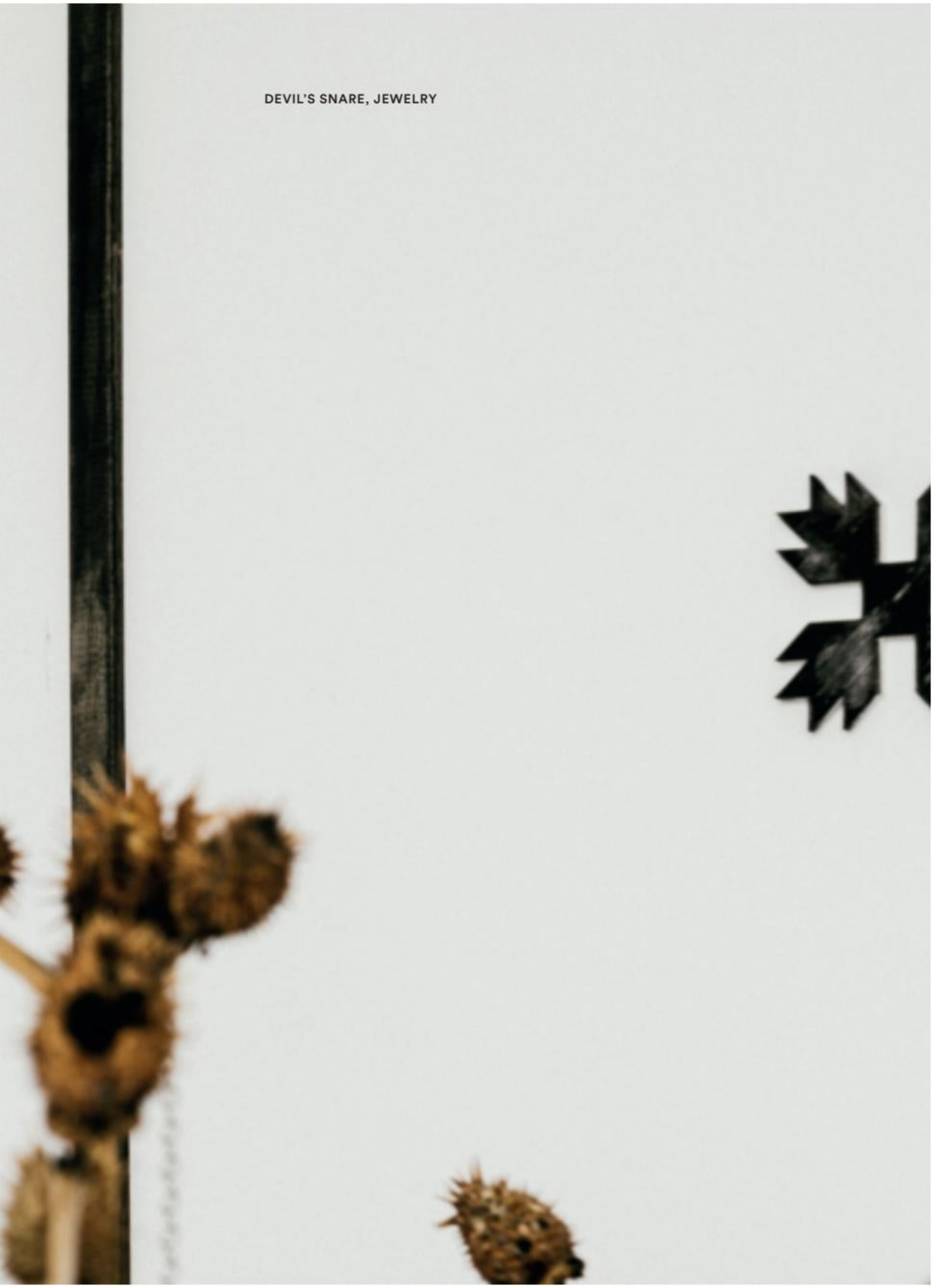
We had already been working with these ideas of what is natural, what is artificial and humanity's relationship to the environment. But one of the things that we kept returning to was botanical sculptural arrangements, not necessarily using actual plant material, but casting plants in other materials.→

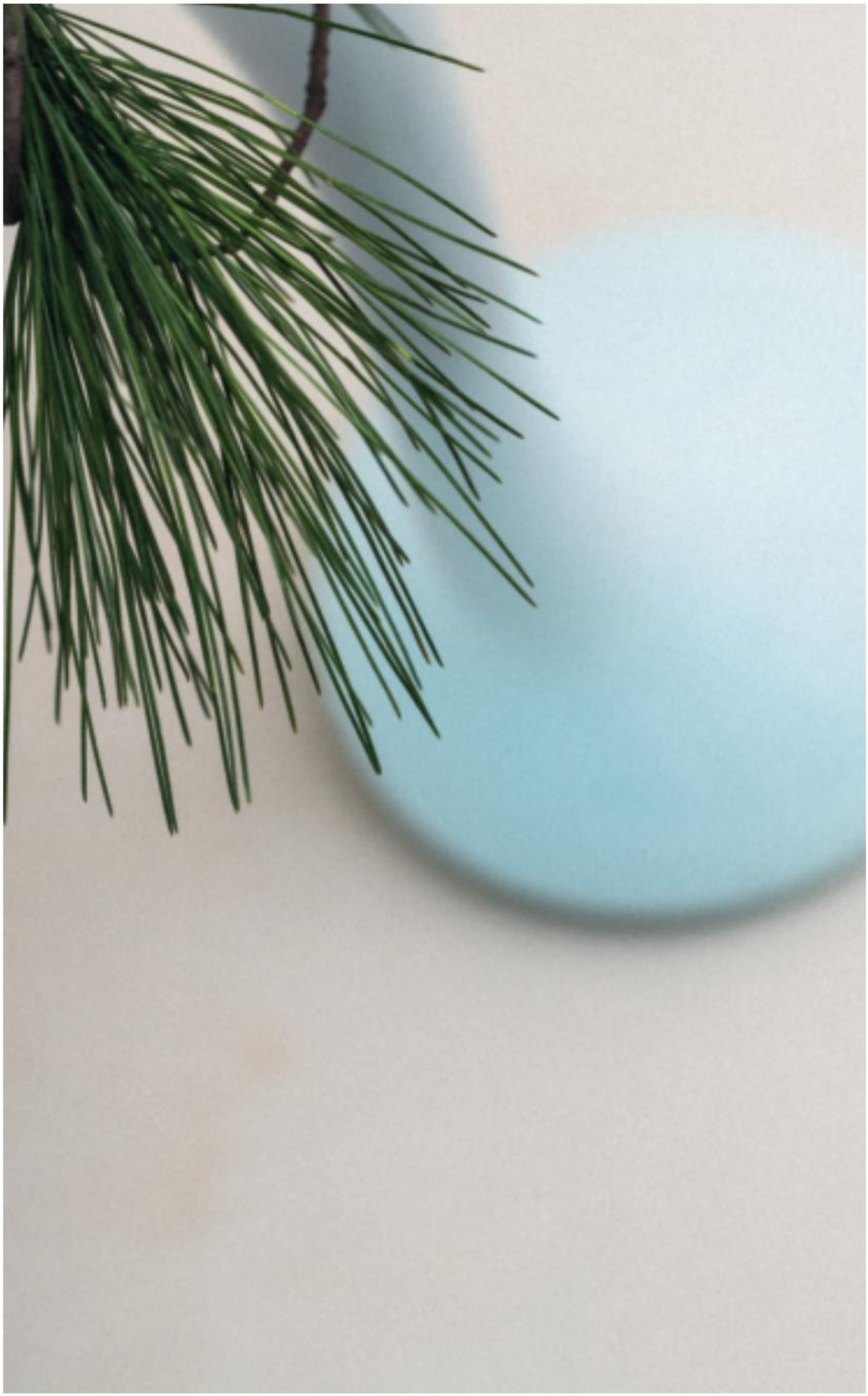
LION'S MANE MUSHROOM, METAL STUDS,
3D-PRINTED BIOPLASTIC



GOLDEN OYSTER MUSHROOM,
PIERCINGS, 3-D PRINTED BIOPLASTIC,
WATER CALTROP SEEDS

DEVIL'S SNARE, JEWELRY





WINTERBERRY, HIBISCUS, EASTERN
WHITE PINE, SWEETGUM FRUIT, WAX,
3D-PRINTED BIO-PLASTIC

Can you explain the origins of the name Wretched Flowers? And what is the mission statement, so to speak, of the project?

"Wretched" gets to this idea of being an alternative to the conventional flower industry, which is so gendered and centered around perfection. We sustainably source and forage everything we use here in New York. We're really about celebrating plants for what they are. For us, beauty is a leaf that's been half-eaten by a caterpillar, not a pristine rose that's been fumigated and covered in pesticides. So we've been using "wretched" as a positive term. People might think of a decrepit, decaying or dying plant as wretched, but that's the ecosystem that we're really celebrating.

Can you explain how your artistic background informs this new project?

We've been spending the past almost-decade learning some things. First, the art world is a terrible place to be an artist. Any emerging artist will tell you that there's a lot of unpaid labor that goes into it. You're at the bottom of the totem pole unless you start off very privileged. Second, we learned that you're beholden to very wealthy collectors, i.e. the one percent. You're limiting who your audience can be and how many people can relate to your work in a meaningful way. Third, we learned it's hard to find a broad audience while also making something that is political or meaningful without coming off as gimmicky.

Through floristry, we found a new financial model, where we're essentially making ephemeral sculptures but at the prices of a boutique florist arrangement. Your average boutique florist in Manhattan probably starts at $120 for an arrangement; ours start at $95. We're finding that we're able to be not only more financially sustainable but make our work more accessible to a larger amount of people. We're also able to exemplify a sustainable practice and share information about conservation, environmentalism, climate change and New York's local flora on our Instagram @wretched_flowers_.

When does a plant speak to you? When do you think, "This is one that we need to pick up"?

We started it at the end of spring in 2019, so every season has been new for us. We're utilizing whatever the season brings, letting that set the boundaries and trying to break some of those rules. One of the plants we have now is devil's snare, which is extremely toxic if you smoke it or eat it, plus the seeds are hallucinogenic. But they grow wild all over New York.

"FOR US, BEAUTY IS A LEAF THAT'S BEEN HALF-EATEN BY A CATERPILLAR, NOT A PRISTINE ROSE THAT'S BEEN FUMIGATED AND COVERED IN PESTICIDES."

Do smells ever play a role in your arrangements?
A lot of the plants we use aren't necessarily fragrant in the way that you imagine nice smelling flowers. For instance, devil's snare smells wild. It's offensively weird. We just did this collaboration with Anicka Yi for the launch of her new fragrance "Biography" that was really specific. We wanted the arrangement to smell earthy and dirt-like, the exact opposite of smelling a big rose. We created a concept around what's hidden beneath the surface, using seaweed from under the ocean and roots, clay, and dirt buried underneath the ground.

How do you choose the vases?
We like thinking about the vase as part of the sculpture and how it can be a lot weirder than most people expect. For a while, we were going to vintage stores, thrifting and finding things. Now we're firing some ceramics ourselves, as well as 3D-printing bioplastic. We're also thinking about objects that can be a little higher value.

One of my favorite photos on your Instagram showed a bouquet jammed into a plastic cup that was holding a drink.
It's funny that you reference that. It ties into another reason why we started Wretched Flowers. When we were

doing our sculptural thing, it was just taking so damn long to make anything, waiting for things to cure. Then we figured out that being a florist is this quick, ephemeral gesture. You can make a sculpture within 20 minutes and be more intuitive about it. Sometimes those have the best results. I'm sure a real florist looks at our project like, "These fucking people have no idea what they're doing."

How do you approach the eco-conscious angle of Wretched Flowers so that it's an earnest push instead of a mere trend?
The conventional flower industry here in the United States imports about 80% of its stems from other countries, mainly Colombia. Those flowers are grown on huge farms that use tons of pesticides and fungicides. Labor conditions are not great, to say the least, and it's mostly women working there. So, the growing process is toxic. Once they're grown, the flowers have to be refrigerated the entire time they're stored and shipped. By foraging, we're able to source everything locally. Everything is fresh. Part of our foraging practice has conservation built into it, since we're targeting invasive species. During the right seasons, we're also throwing down seed bombs so that more wildflowers grow. And we're licensed by the city to be volunteer caretakers for street trees.

Is it fair to describe a Wretched Flowers arrangement as sculpture?
It's not so much that each individual arrangement is a self-contained meaningful piece; maybe each one isn't a capital-s Sculpture. But I think the project as a whole is an ongoing piece.

What solutions do you propose to people who want a more typical arrangement?
There are little independent farms where you can clip their flowers. You could forage for yourself. You could find a local sustainable florist that grows their own flowers. We're all so used to the ease of ordering through Amazon. People are at their computer thinking, "Oh God, it's my mom's birthday. I need to order her flowers real quick."

This project isn't about making anyone feel bad for what they're doing. It's more that we already know about the sustainability issues with food, and the issues are the same with flowers. But no one's really talking about it. It's about spreading awareness. We don't want to be super prescriptive. You know, bodega flowers are five bucks. If you want to get someone flowers and you only have five bucks, that's a fine option. We don't want to put the burden on the consumer. It's actually the flower industry's fault.

Is it difficult to balance the vision that you have with how it may be perceived? I could imagine if you're creating an installation or a centerpiece for dinner, you wouldn't want the mushroom that's bleeding. Or would you?
It depends on the client. Some people understand. We do use a lot of plants that are toxic, so sometimes we have to ask, "Do you have kids? Do you have dogs?" We always give a little printout with each bouquet that gives interesting facts about the flowers and also might say, "If it is toxic, it can kill dogs. Keep it away." To be fair, a lot of flowers that you get from even regular florists are totally toxic if eaten. But we're super careful about that stuff.

Is it fair to say that you have a desire to change the mind-set of how people approach flowers?
Bringing the outdoors into your home reminds you that the environment exists, and that it's in crisis. We need to keep this in our minds daily because it's only a matter of years until it's too late.

BOT

SHIFTING

WORDS
CHARLIE ZHANG

T E R

CURRENTS

PHOTOGRAPHY
JULIEN LIENARD

As consumers become increasingly aware of environmental issues, brands have taken to eco-friendly narratives as convenient shortcuts to higher profits. It's much easier, after all, to lay claim to sustainability than to practice it. If there's one label challenging this dissonance, it's BOTTER. Founded by Rushemy Botter and Lisi Herrebrugh in 2017, early collections called attention to the pollution growing around their Caribbean homes of Curaçao and the Dominican Republic. "As a child, I very clearly remember the beach," says Lisi. "I could see my father snorkeling through the water and seeing the beautiful coral reef. Now, you can't even take a swim without catching something between your fingers or stepping on glass." The two believe there should be substance tied to sustainability. "For us, it's not about screaming that you're doing it," Rushemy explains. "It's about doing it in silence."

Spread between the design-conscious city of Amsterdam and the breezy sun-stained shores of the Caribbean, Herrebrugh's and Rushemy's cross-cultural roots are reflected in vibrant colors, exaggerated volumes and eco-friendly textiles. The duo first started working together at Antwerp's Royal Academy of Fine Arts, a school whose alumni include Raf Simons, Martin Margiela and Dries Van Noten, to name a few. "In Antwerp, they really push you to dream big, to create fairytales and to be conceptual. It's all created by hand, and it's all manual." In just a few years since graduating, the two have managed to win the 2018 Festival d'Hyère's Grand Prize, were finalists for the 2018 LVMH Prize and were appointed creative directors of Nina Ricci in the summer of 2018.

We sat down with the duo ahead of their Fall/Winter 2020–21 show to discuss their work, their appreciation for individuality and what they believe to be the most urgent sociopolitical issues. →

In our eco-anxious world, we've reached a point where it has become difficult to tell whether brands are truly invested in ecological change or employing subtle marketing spins.


RUSH
RUSH

R: We didn't just work on school projects. We saw school as an opportunity to work with other people and connect. In Antwerp, you have sculptors, painters... the artist community is really big. You're connecting with other worlds and building relationships.

Living in Europe and studying in Antwerp, what does that shift of coming and going to your respective homes look like?
L: Rushemy was born in Curaçao and I was born in Holland, but the bond with my family in the Dominican Republic is very strong. It's very different in the Caribbean compared to Europe. You have to take care of your parents, your parents have to take care of their parents and we all live in the same house.

R: We were raised in both the Caribbean side and the Dutch side, and we have friends and family on both, so the shift isn't that big for us. I think you can see that in our collections—the structured, sober side as well as the more colorful and playful side.

So what does your brainstorming process look like?
R: We're constantly looking around. We collect things, make pictures, print them out, put them in a book. Everything we find interesting, we put in. It's how we were trained.

L: We archive things. It's not structured or anything, but it's just a big book piling up or a big file on our phones. We've made a lot of files and sketches. Archiving is like settling ideas.→

Q & A

When did you guys realize you wanted to collaborate together to start BOTTER? How has the vision for the brand changed since day one?
L: I think our vision grew very early. We had this big dream about starting something together. It was an organic thing. We talked about a lot of things, and we really felt like it was the right time to start it together. We had nothing to lose.

R: We also felt we were doing something quite personal and unique. I was in my second year at the Academy in Antwerp when Lisi came to live with me, presenting our collections and working in Antwerp—it's a tough school.

L: It's a bubble, but we were already participating in competitions in our second year.


ATTENTION
PASSAGE DANGEREUX

R: But also not control it too much. Sometimes we make mistakes that we can make something beautiful out of.

What does it mean to be progressive or avant-garde in fashion today?
L: We don't believe you need to be shocking to be noticed. There are a lot of brands that focus more on creating beautiful seams and developing solutions. You just need to stick to your own universe. I really believe there is a customer for everybody.

R: It's about being true to yourself and not being insecure about showing who you really are. When we create, we have fun. People see whether you're being genuine or trying to be someone you're not, and they're more interested when you're being genuine.

In some ways, being environmentally friendly is becoming a "trend." What are your thoughts on this?
L: I think we got a little afraid of the word "sustainability" because it's true, it's kind of a marketing tool for some brands. For us, we started this out an honest interest and a genuine worry.

R: For us, it isn't about screaming about what we're doing. It's more about doing it in silence, and if it shows, that's a plus.

L: Everything we do has a personal touch and requires a lot of research. It's easy to find random sustainable fabrics, but finding a particular fabric, making sure it integrates well with the collection and seeing what a supplier's doing for the environment takes more time. It's very important for us to create lasting designs, and I think it's a sustainable way of thinking.

How do you define "good design"?
L: Good design for us is when it's comfortable. You need to be able to just throw it on, feel good and leave the house, you know what I mean? We're not garment designers that create museum pieces, but we do like to put in the time.

R: I think it's all in the details. It's being playful with the design so that you discover little things as you wear it, even if you don't see it at first. We like that effect.

R: When you put it in the book or your phone, it becomes permanent—you're already creating something because you're evolving ideas out of some state of mind or feeling. Lisi starts making collages, finding shapes and colors. I start drawing to make it really visual, but in a way that can be aligned with 3D models. Lisi then renders my sketches into 3D, and sometimes she sketches over them. It's all a constant conversation and why we complement each other.

What's the dynamic like?
L: We literally create all the samples here at the studio. Our team consists of me, Rushemy, one other employee and two interns. We do everything here for quality control, so we can deliver exactly what we envision.


brother

Caribbean residents selling toys to tourists—they work all day in the burning sun so they can feed their families. We want to keep the conversation open and not push the ideas in your face. We want people to start asking questions.

How have your views for your own label changed since becoming creative directors for Nina Ricci? How does that old-to-new school contrast affect your designs?
L: It's enriching because we learn so much at Nina Ricci through the archives. We're talking garments that are decades old. It's a win-win for both sides. What we learn from BOTTER, we can also apply to Nina Ricci. It's true that BOTTER is new school, but we also love old school. You need to know history to make something new.

Where do you see fashion going now?
R: I believe fashion is becoming more focused on craftsmanship.

L: It's like the doors of old mansions are opening up to new tenants. I think we're a good example of this. The industry needs new tenants, but new tenants also need homes. I think it's a good change, and there are people getting to important places with fresh ideas. Right now, fashion creates a lot of pollution, but I think with so many new ideas, it's definitely possible to have positive changes.

"PEOPLE SEE WHETHER YOU'RE BEING GENUINE OR TRYING TO BE SOMEONE YOU'RE NOT, AND THEY'RE MORE INTERESTED WHEN YOU'RE BEING GENUINE."

Your Spring/Summer 2018 "Fish or Fight" runway show incorporated inflatable toys. This seems like a recurring theme in your shows. What are you trying to convey with this?
R: We are very conceptual designers. Sometimes we want our shows to be digestible, but for us it's much deeper. There are multiple meanings for the blowup dolphins. For example, you can think of plastics in the ocean affecting dolphins. You can also see it from the perspective of local

ood Job

Alex G (Sandy)

WORDS
MEGAN WRAY SCHERTLER

PHOTOGRAPHY
RAY SPEARS

ARTWORK
RACHEL GIANNASCOLI

Alex Giannascoli could easily be described as a bright young thing. At just 27 years old, the man behind the moniker (Sandy) Alex G has already released nine albums and attracted a legion of uber fans who collect every morsel of information about him they can on the subreddit r/sandyalexg.

The uninitiated may also already be familiar with his work from Frank Ocean's *Blonde* and *Endless*, on which Alex played guitar.

But to dismiss (Sandy) Alex G with a surface-level reading based on his youth and seemingly fast rise would be to miss the point of his work entirely. Alex's story isn't one of a child who dreams of becoming a rock star, and all the glitter and glam that come with it. His ambitions have always been much more in tune with that of a story teller, conveying narratives in the best way he knows how. Music came to him via his older siblings' interests. "I have an older brother who is really musically gifted. He has perfect pitch; he could play the piano before he could hold a fork. So when my parents got him a guitar when I was little, I was like, 'Guitar is cool. I'm going to try that.'" Inspired also by his older sister Rachel's taste in music—Elliot Smith is often quoted as one of his early influences—Alex started writing and recording his own songs in his room in the suburbs of Philadelphia.

To this day, he still plays almost everything himself, sculpting each album with complete control until the point of completion. His latest album—2019's *House of Sugar*—was no exception. In addition to recording at home on his laptop, Alex now often ventures to his friend Tom's new studio PUHD II, a handy 10-minute drive from Alex's apartment. On the rare occasion he does ask another musician to play on a track, he chooses to work with those already close to him, keeping the process still close to his chest. His girlfriend, Molly Germer, a classically trained violinist, can be heard throughout his recent albums, and the band he tours with comprises his childhood friends. Even Alex's album artwork is a family affair; most of his albums feature artwork by his sister Rachel that were inspired by their conversations.

Following a slew of tour dates across America in support of *House of Sugar,* Alex welcomed HYPEBEAST down to his home in Philadelphia. What better setting for Alex to tell his own story than the world he's carefully crafting? →


HARPER ST

Q & A

I saw you play in Brooklyn on your last tour for *House of Sugar*. You were really generous in your performance—the encore went on for about an hour. Is having strict control when recording your music what allows you to be so generous when you're collaborating or playing live? Does it allow you a sort of freedom or flexibility?
I think that sums it up, because I have so much time to craft this representation of myself that I'm proud of. So, then, moments when I don't have control become easier because I'm like, "Okay I constructed this core that I think I can fall back on if I look like an idiot here." You know?

Does it require two different versions of yourself—one that is a strict self-critic and then one that is a more flexible collaborator?
I think everyone has those two versions. It's hard to force control over every situation.

I'm always impressed by anyone with an artistic practice who can, in real time, be having a dialogue with their work. That, to me, takes such a level of self-awareness. Is it hard to then shift into a collaborative head space?
Yeah. Working with the mixer is a little tricky because it's my friend Jacob Portrait who mixes my albums. I feel insecure about all the little things we do because we're still working on constructing this thing that's going to be permanent. I'm such a pain in his ass every step of the way. But with the band, it's way easier to just be like, "Here's the songs, guys. Let's figure out how to make it an exciting show." It's easier because the show is temporary. No matter what I do, I can't have total control over it.→


CASIO

Are there people you use as your sounding board when working on a song?
You know, I try to do that but by the time I'm showing it to someone, it's at the point where I'm not going to change it. Criticism throws me out of whack. If I bring a half-finished song to somebody and they're like, “Oh, this is good, but this part is a little weird,” I then think the whole thing is flawed. And then it's harder to continue working on it because I think, “Oh, maybe this isn't a pure, perfect idea.” I know that's illogical, but I can't really help that train of thought. Because of that, I just try to finish a thing as far as I can before I show it to somebody.

How do you navigate being your own critic, though?
That’s the easy part for me. I'm not sitting there thinking, “Oh, I have this idea for a song. I know exactly how it's going to sound.” I just sort of hash it out step by step. I'm like, "Okay, this sounds weird. And this sounds weird. Oh, I hit it. This is the right part."

I hadn't thought about it in that way, but the part of the process that you are keeping really close to your chest is the part that's being documented forever.
Yeah, exactly. That's the part where people can say, "Alex G—he makes music? What's his music?” And then that's it; they're listening to it. In a live show, there's so many factors that I just can't control, so it's easier to let go.

There is a certain level of self-assuredness in your way of working. I don't know if you feel it, but it certainly comes across like that. Did you feel that way even when you were younger?
When I was a kid, I remember just being like, “I'm the best.” Now I know I'm not the best, but I think that's where it started. I was always thinking, "I don't need help."

Where do you think that came from?
I have an older sister, Rachel, who was really supportive. Like, I'd make a stupid song and send it to her, and she'd be like, "Oh, you're so good, Alex. Good job." Probably a lot of people don't have someone saying "good job" when they make stuff. Then they don't foster that inside themselves maybe, because they don't realize it's there.

It's certainly validating to have someone championing you from a young age. Does your relationship still have that dynamic or are you also influencing her now that you’re older?
I'd like to think I'm influencing her, but probably not. I still take what she says very seriously.

Is music the only medium you work in? Do you write, or paint, or sketch?
I mean, it's the only medium that I'm showing people. I write, but nothing I'm proud enough to show. Music is something where I know what I'm doing. I’m still trying to figure out how writing works. I know what chord feels good after another. But with writing, I'm like, should I put a comma here, or a period? Just basic shit like that. Not like I don't know how punctuation works, but just flow.

It takes a certain understanding or mastery of the rules to then start breaking them.
And I still don't know what a semi-colon really does.

I don’t think many people do, to be fair. Does being a singer come naturally to you? I feel like getting used to the sound of your own voice in that way is such a...
Hurdle.

How did you even know you wanted to use your voice as a tool like that?
Singing was always the biggest hurdle. Even now it's the part of the recording process that takes forever because it's so three-dimensional. There are so many little points that it can be awkward. There are so many songs that I was really proud of until I had to sing on them and then had to trash them because my voice couldn't do it. I could hit the notes but not the exact way that was needed. →

"I HAVE AN OLDER SISTER, RACHEL, WHO WAS REALLY SUPPORTIVE. LIKE, I'D MAKE A STUPID SONG AND SEND IT TO HER, AND SHE'D BE LIKE, 'OH, YOU'RE SO GOOD, ALEX.'"

THIS PAGE

***CRYSTAL COAST* (2020)**
22" X 28"
OIL ON CANVAS

OPPOSITE

***ROCKET* COVER (2017)**
23" X 29"
OIL ON CANVAS

***ROCKET* BACK COVER (2017)**
24" X 24"
OIL ON CANVAS

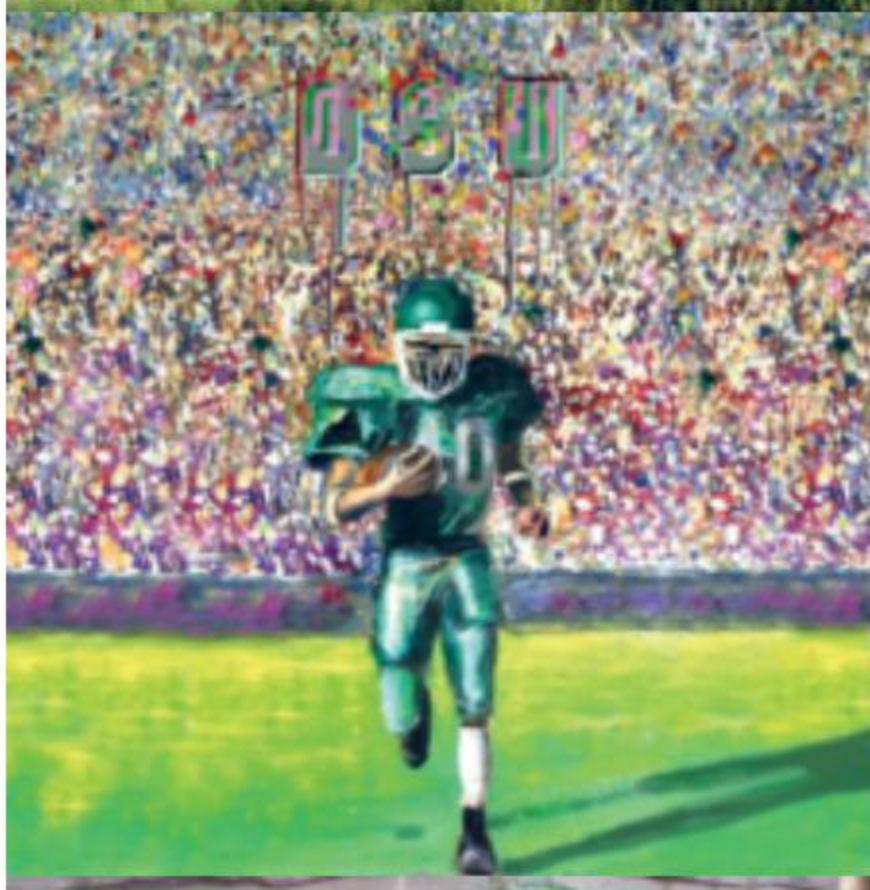
***DSU* COVER (2014)**
29" X 16"
OIL PAINT & GEMS ON BOARD

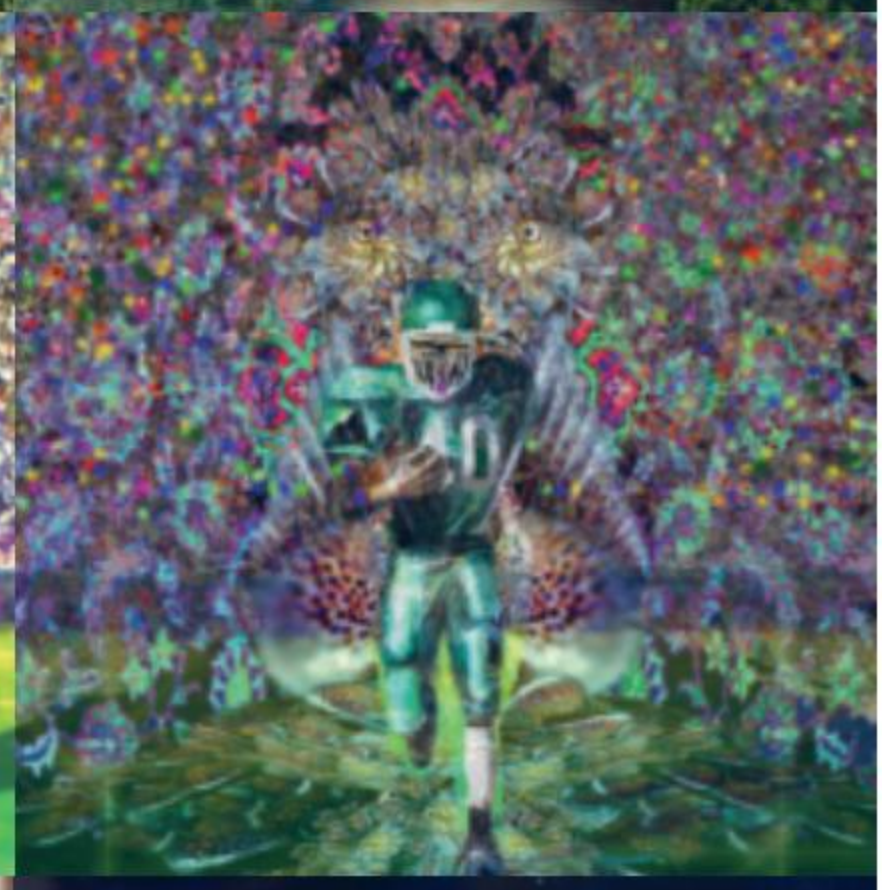
***DSU* BACK COVER (2014)**
DIGITAL PAINTING

***BEACH MUSIC* COVER (2015)**
42" X 30"
OIL, ACRYLIC & PUTTY ON BOARD

***BEACH MUSIC* BACK COVER (2014)**
36" X 24"
OIL ON CANVAS


ROCKET






Beach Music

Is it easier or harder when singing live?
I think about it less live because I'm not going to listen back. I can't watch live videos of us because I hear myself and cringe. If I could sing better, I would. At this point I'm just like, okay, it's happened, it's over.

It's easy to forget that being a musician is a job. In terms of your planning process, do you set deadlines for yourself? For instance, when you finish a tour do you give yourself a certain amount of down time and then set a schedule to start recording again?
That's kind of my life. Whether I'm writing or making music or whatever, because otherwise I wouldn't respect myself.

Staring at a blank page can be so intimidating for me, sometimes. Do you ever have that feeling coming back off tour?
A little bit. When a new album comes out, I've got a lot of time until it feels urgent again. There are infinite possibilities at that point, as opposed to when it gets closer to crunch time. For example, right now, I'm like, "This next album is going take over the world and be this crazy revolutionary album." And then by the time I finish four or five songs, I'm like, "Oh wait, it's just some more songs."

How involved are you in choosing or designing your tour merchandise?
Do you mean for shirts and stuff? That's me and my manager. I do have final say. Someone in the band will suggest we should sell hats, or we should sell tote bags, etc. I used to be worried about being viewed as using the music to market other shit as opposed to the music being the product. But now I realize nobody cares. I'm trying to make everyone get paid the most, so fuck it. The label doesn't have anything but the records. We have to buy the records from the label to sell on tour. The merchandise—shirts and all that—is just ours. I think there's probably certain types of record deals where the label controls that stuff, but I don't know. With my deal, the touring is totally separate.

So then do you have to organize finding your own tour manager and all that stuff as well, or does the label help with that?
No, that's all us. Like, my friend Sam [Accione], the guitar player, he basically does the tour managing.

I think fans forget that there's a lot of admin involved with being an artist.
We're just working.

And it's literally hard work. It takes a certain level of business acumen and administrative thinking to plan this stuff and to keep yourself going.
At this point, I'm lucky to have a great booking agent and great manager. Sam does the tour managing and keeps track of expenses, so I don't have to. I guess if we're going to spend money, I'm still the one who's like, okay let's spend the money. I'm not really worried about a bunch of that stuff.

Your albums feel so cinematic. Have you ever scored a soundtrack?
No, that sounds like fun, though. I would love to. My girlfriend, Molly [Germer], could play violin on it too. Every movie score needs to have violins. I'm waiting for someone to ask, I guess. Give me a movie.

Someone please call Alex and give him a film to score.

HARRY NURIEV WANTS TO DESIGN YOUR ENTIRE UNIVERSE

WORDS
EMILY ENGLE

PHOTOGRAPHY
SEAN DAVIDSON

A completely royal purple set made in collaboration with Opening Ceremony, consisting of powder coated steel pieces with human handprint motifs, for instance. Purposefully riding the line between familiarity and newness allows Harry to manifest functional works of art that truly resonate in an age where images are fleeting and attention spans are dwindling.

Recently, the designer has begun to shift his focus to sustainability, a controversial topic within the design community for one simple fact: producing new items is not sustainable. While many designers approach the delicate subject from a material standpoint (i.e., recycled aluminum chairs or zero waste footwear patterns), Harry prefers a raw approach that confronts consumers with their own habits, allowing them to face sustainability head-on. "I don't necessarily want to buy less, and I don't want to tell people to buy less. But we have to think about what to do with these clothes after we're done with them," he tells HYPEBEAST during a visit to his royal purple and light gray apartment in New York.

In line with this thinking, Harry collaborated with Balenciaga on an unexpected piece of furniture that caught the Internet by storm: a transparent recycled-plastic couch stuffed with Balenciaga clothing. The couch looks almost identical to the one in everyone's childhood home, and this isn't by accident. "When we see something we remember from our past, even vaguely, we trust it more than a completely new shape," he says. Pairing a recognizable form and the familiarity of piles of clothing with a modern transparent shell left onlookers bewildered—they had been confronted head-on with a metaphor of their own waste.

Harry wants to think beyond the constraints of individual industries. In his world—and the world he wants to create for us—every detail is colorful, all creative industries collide, and there are no smoke and mirrors—what you see is what you get. →

When Harry Nuriev enters into a relationship with a color, he commits. His practice, Crosby Studios, shows loyalty to said relationships in the form of collections centered around one specific hue.

I think my ability to predict popular colors is an instinct. Early on, I just had crushes on certain colors. Now when I fall in love with a color, it becomes Color of the Year the next year. I was very insecure about using Millennial Pink for the first time because it's a color people only used when they had a baby girl. It was very controversial to use this color, but I loved it so much. We ended up bringing this color out of children's rooms and into the entire world. It really caught on.

Do you get sick of a color after you work on it for so long?
Yes. It's like when you write a book and can only handle reading it after five years have passed. Everyone around you is obsessed. "Oh my God, your book is so good." But you don't want to talk about it. That's one of the negative factors of working with colors in such a strong way. But I have a different experience with color than many people. This is my profession. If I use blue for a collection, I use a thousand square feet of blue. Every day, all day long. It becomes my world.

What color do you want to work with next?
I don't think I'm personally ready for red, but I think it will be a big color soon. Right now, I want to work with green—an ugly green, like old screens when you turn them off, or grass. I think every shade of blue will travel with me all the way because it's my personal color.

Many designers make the choice to focus on form or function, but you focus on both. Why do you choose to navigate both simultaneously?
I use and live with the furniture I make, so I test everything I create on myself first. I love comfort, and since my background is in traditional architecture, I pay attention to function and logistics and all of those boring rules you have to know. There's beauty in the delicate balance between function and shape. If you're looking toward function too much or vice versa, you always lose this balance.

Your work subtly references iconic shapes from history, including columns and arches, but in a more playful, inviting way. Do you believe in looking toward the past to design for the future?
History class in university was my favorite. I found myself thinking about how people today try very hard to create new shapes, but there are so many shapes from the past that we haven't explored to their fullest potential. We're trying to forget, but I think it's time to rethink. I call this concept "shape upcycle." →

Q & A

You designed an entire Millennial Pink collection before it became a craze, and you recently used a blue similar to Pantone's Classic Blue before it was named Color of the Year for 2020. What is your relationship with color forecasting?
When I launched Crosby Studios in 2014, it was the first time I sat down and thought about how I could change the interior design world because everything looked exactly the same. I realized that color can change the shape of a design. You can have two shapes that are exactly the same, but different colors can make them ugly or beautiful, ordinary or extraordinary. I believe in color more than I believe in shape.

Do you think your method of referencing past forms in a vaguely familiar way is why people feel naturally invited to your work?
When we see something we remember from our past, even vaguely, we trust it more than a completely new shape. It doesn't mean the new shape is bad—like Tesla's Cybertruck, which I love. But there's something to be said about how people spend so much time traveling to areas like Rome to see archeology sites and ruins. When we see destroyed structures or exposed materials, we feel human. It's a naked and honest experience that we relate to most.

Crosby Studios has become wildly popular on Instagram. Do you consider social media a form of marketing for designers?
Yes. Nowadays, we see so many brands with marketing that we can't digest products without it. We don't understand them. Because of platforms like Instagram, we don't just see six chairs anymore. We see hundreds of chairs, and they're all different. The good side of this is that you actually have a choice right now, and you understand the range of options you have. You have the opportunity to learn about mid-century modern and futuristic renders at the same time. But the negative side is that we don't take time to appreciate certain design elements as much.

As a designer, how do you stay relevant in an age where people scroll endlessly through content with glazed-over eyes, often forgetting where images they reference come from?
When you scroll on Instagram, it's easy for something to feel like it's your idea. People don't always give credit to other designers that inspired them because they don't really remember where the information came from. I personally don't really use design as inspiration, though. I use my childhood memories, and I try to remember shapes that I encountered, like my dining room table growing up. I love to refresh my memories while giving new lives to upcycled shapes.

Your apartment seems to truly represent who you are as a person. Was this your goal when designing the space?
Yes, my apartment completely reflects who I am. Many years ago, I lived in a little apartment that was completely the opposite of who I am. I never really thought about it at the time, but I always felt uncomfortable. Changing it was my first project for myself. I remember feeling so different my first night sleeping in the new space. It was a beautiful change. I currently don't feel comfortable with many of the clothes I own, so my partner Tyler and I have decided to start designing fashion so we can create an entire environment for ourselves.

The couch you recently designed with Balenciaga merged fashion and furniture in a way that shocked many people. How would you define the current relationship between the two industries?
Fashion and furniture have always lived very close to each other because day-to-day we can't live without them, and I think that's why they're finally getting married and having babies. Have you ever noticed the difference between how some celebrities dress on the red carpet and what their apartments look like? Sometimes you don't understand how such very different aesthetics can come from the same person. You can't have a beautiful Balenciaga dress without equally beautiful surroundings to complement it. My ass is in these jeans, and my ass is in this chair. People are starting to care more and more about this relationship.→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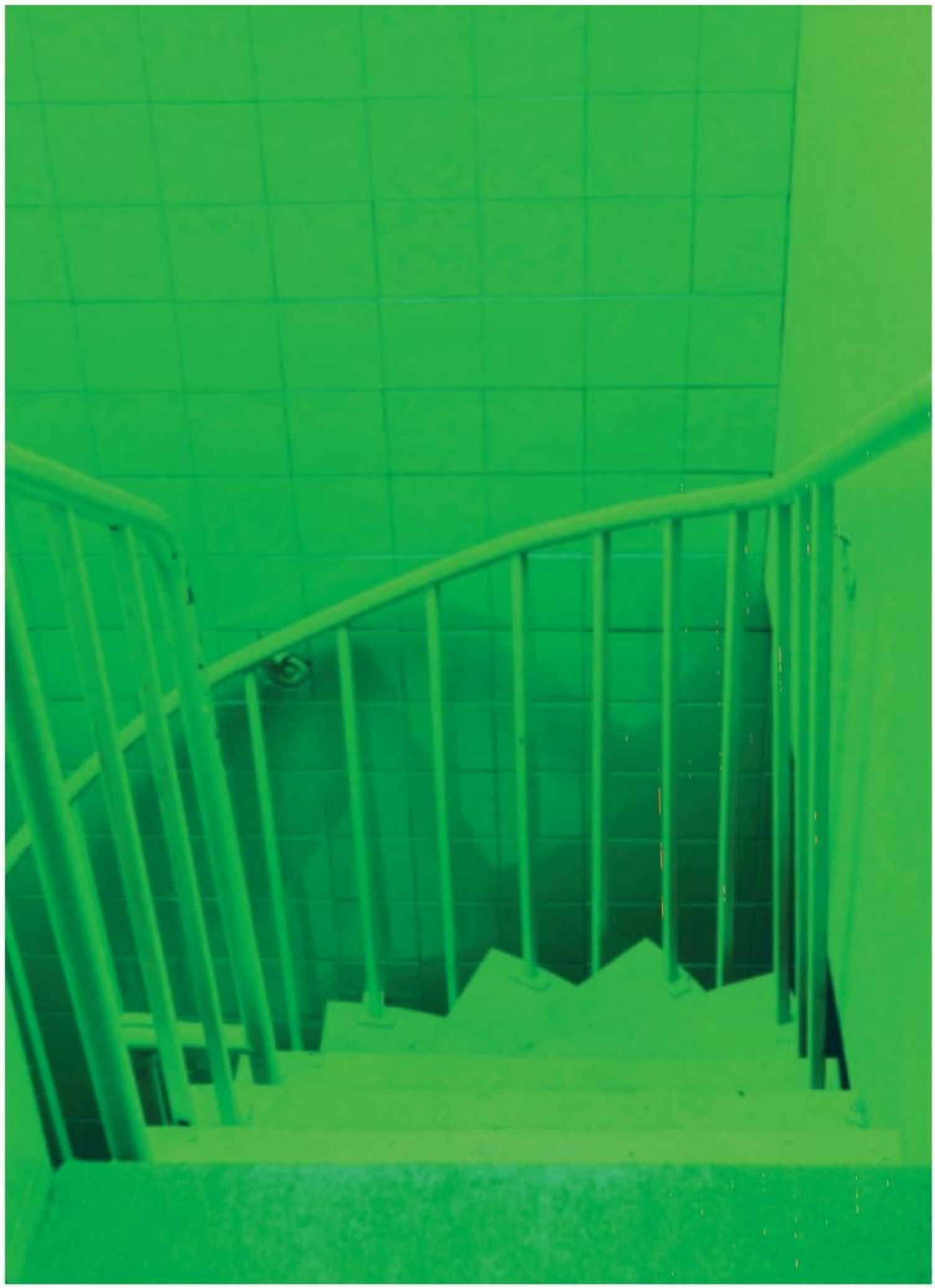


“YOU CAN HAVE TWO SHAPES THAT ARE EXACTLY THE SAME, BUT DIFFERENT COLORS CAN MAKE THEM UGLY OR BEAUTIFUL, ORDINARY OR EXTRAORDINARY. I BELIEVE IN COLOR MORE THAN I BELIEVE IN SHAPE.”

Do you ever feel pressure to keep up with the fashion industry's fast-paced cycle?
Fashion moves so fast. I was always jealous. I think it's so unfair that furniture's and interior design's metabolisms are so slow. You just can't change chairs and walls every day—it's not even sustainable to change furniture every day. I think fashion brands also look at the design world and get jealous of how slow we work. Sometimes they wish they could be in this environment. But when we meet, we give each other energy. It's a win-win situation for both sides.

You've been participating in a lot of design shows and traveling so much compared to many designers. What attracted you to this lifestyle?
With my aesthetic and my design language, I can't whisper. I have to speak up very loudly. Luckily, I love traveling—it's what I've always dreamed about. Until I turned 20, I never left my little city in Russia. Twenty is usually when people get jobs and travel, but I didn't even have a personal computer until I turned 20. Right now, I'm starting to travel less because I've been flying so much. When you fly, you start to feel like you're on a bus—except you can't make stops to buy ice cream.

What are you working on right now?
Right now is a great moment in my career. We're currently working on about 30 or 40 projects, including several collaborations and a bunch of new furniture lines. I finally have access to the brands I want to work with and the galleries I want to be represented by. I'm excited about this art installation and retail display I'm working on that is fully sustainable and made from upcycled Nike products, including damaged goods. It's going to go in the KM20 conceptual store in Russia. Brands have huge stocks of damaged goods that they don't know what to do with—it's a huge issue for business and also a design challenge to find a new life for these products.

Are there any special considerations you make when designing retail spaces?
Commercial retail is a very uncomfortable experience because you lose your money when you enter these spaces, so you have to make people as comfortable with their purchases as possible. Stores need to be very honest in order to earn confidence in consumers. Stores need to help people relax and make them feel like they're at a playground or a museum, rather than a crazy store with bright lights.

Barneys New York has been super messy since it was sold under bankruptcy. There are these crazy yellow and red stickers everywhere marking final sales. People are running around the store, clothes are in huge piles and the carpets are dirty. But now is the first time I have ever felt comfortable inside Barneys. You actually want to buy shit there now, and if you don't want to buy something, you can just throw it on a table. You don't have to speak to employees. And if they talk to you, just say, “Fuck you, get out of my way.” This is a real shopping experience. It's really cool to see how this entire beautiful retail world doesn't work anymore. It's like when the Titanic went down.→


RIMOWA
SOVIET METRO STATIONS

Sustainability is a hot topic in all of your industries of choice, and it's also a personal interest of yours. What does sustainability mean to you?
After years of randomly buying things without thinking, I realized I have so many clothes that I have only worn once. I started to worry about how many other people do the same thing. I don't necessarily want to buy less, and I don't want to tell people to buy less. But we have to think about what to do with these clothes after we're done with them.

Clothes don't just disappear after we donate them, and clothes themselves are not always sustainable. Even when you wash clothes in the washing machine, little polyester needles get carried away in the water, then into a larger system. It makes the world worse and worse every day. I personally want to crack the code of how to make upcycling and sustainable design beautiful without hiding it. The sofa I did with Balenciaga isn't subtle, it's screaming.

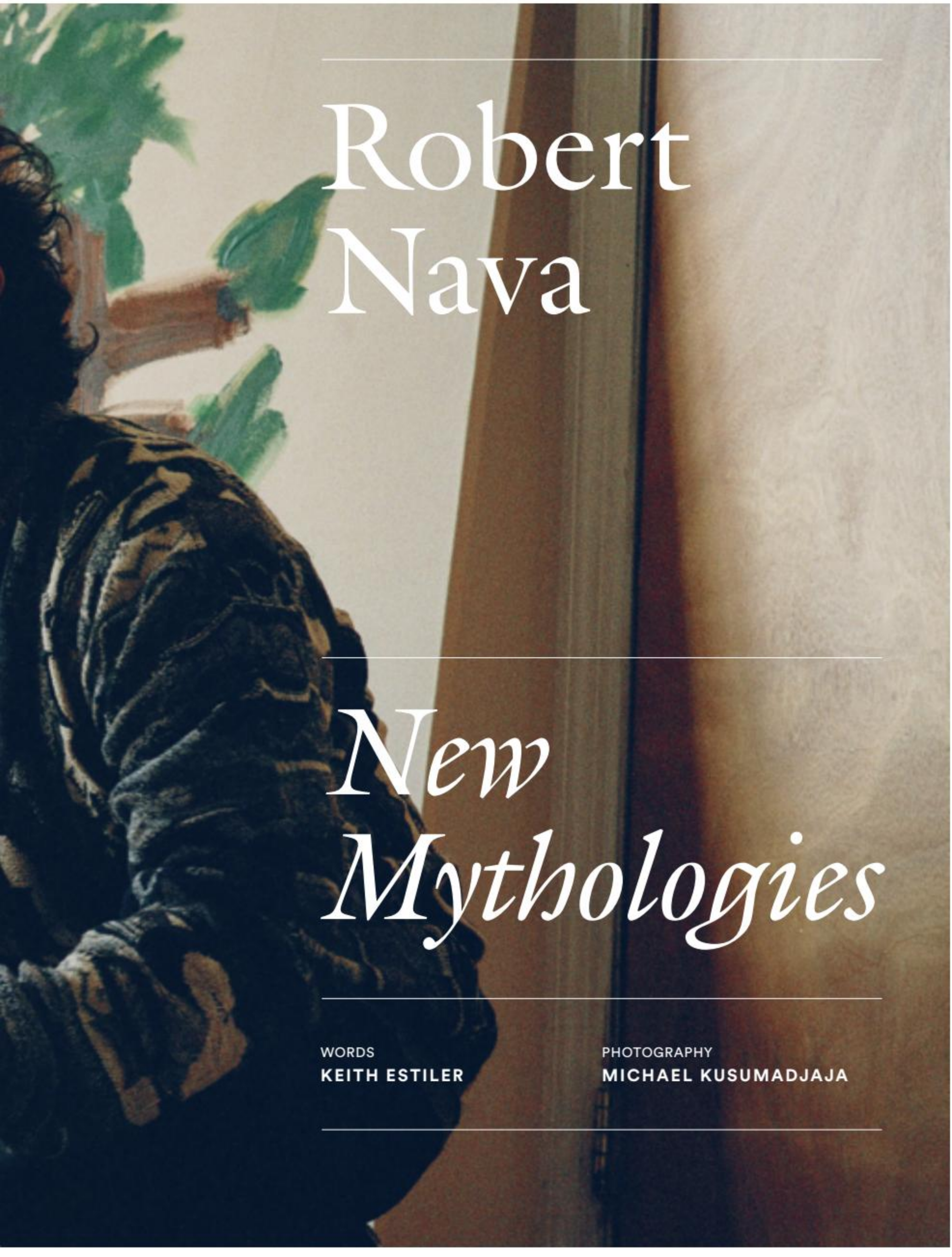
Does it change your design process when you don't have to consider what material to use?
When I was at university, sometimes we would have architecture workshops where we had to select what property we wanted to work with. Everyone picked an empty lot, but I would always go with an old garage or something like that. Even at that time, I really wanted to work with existing things to give them a new life. I feel sad for abandoned buildings because I know how beautiful they can look. It's like this archaeology thing that resonates with our souls. We trust it more.

When you do need to choose materials, what is your selection process like?
There are so many materials and colors in the world, but somehow people use the same ones over and over again. It makes me sick. That's why before I start a new project, I don't think about the surface and materials I want to use; I think about which surface and materials I'm definitely not going to use.

Is there a type of product or space you haven't designed yet but really want to?
I really want to design a hotel because I want to design everything from a bathrobe to a breakfast table set. Including, of course, the interior, entrance, balconies, inside and outside. I want people to be able to eat, sleep, shower and dream in my world. Everything would be unusual. The gym would be blue and everything inside it would be blue. Even the weights would be powder coated in blue.

Now I'm imagining a swimming pool designed by you...
Where it's not classic blue water—it's royal blue.

Unfamiliar but vaguely familiar enough to be inviting? I'm sensing a theme here.
Exactly. That is my signature.



Robert Nava

New Mythologies

WORDS
KEITH ESTILER

PHOTOGRAPHY
MICHAEL KUSUMADJAJA

Indiana-born artist Robert Nava says his paintings are "carefully done wrong." Each working day in his Brooklyn studio becomes an opportunity to unlearn the stringent guidelines and techniques that secured him a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) from Yale back in 2011.

Nava embraces mistakes and visual abnormalities as necessary components in his oeuvre, evoking a childlike innocence in his unruly compositions that are made using bold acrylic paints on canvas.

Nava works with the flow that feels best for him. Throbbing techno mixes fuel his morning painting sessions, sometimes resulting in nothing at all. Other times, he handles multiple paintings at the same time, with a personal record of completing a painting in just 27 seconds. Before touching the canvas, Nava spends hours rigorously sketching out the forms he wants to create in his sketchbook. This practice allows him to confront the canvas with unbridled confidence. After drawing multiples of the same motif on paper, he attacks the canvas to build his new hybridized monster.

His more recent paintings are largely influenced by figures in ancient mythology, twisting the forms of fabled brutes to create a motley crew of creatures. Although he doesn't have a particular concept or narrative in mind when he's painting, his otherworldly subjects assume unique personalities once they've been realized on canvas. For instance, he describes his new *Red Angel* character as the champion of all the beasts in his studio (maintaining a fictitious battle record of 33-0 against his better known *Shark* figures). Nava continues to have a deep connection with the subjects of his paintings, seeking to unearth new characters in his sketchbook that can one day defeat his *Red Angel*.

Nava currently makes a living exclusively from selling his art. After receiving his MFA, Nava managed to sell a number of his pieces and used the money he earned to move to New York. To help provide funds for his art career, he drove a moving truck in NYC while also working on his paintings at night. Since then, he has had solo exhibitions in a number of progressive galleries such as Sorry We're Closed Gallery in Brussels and Night Gallery in Los Angeles, CA. His work has been included in group exhibitions at V1 Gallery in Copenhagen, Wayne State University in Detroit and Safe Gallery in Brooklyn, NY.

We caught up with Nava at his Brooklyn studio to learn more about why he chooses to break the rules of fine art, his strong bond with his subjects and future projects.

***"RED ANGEL"* (2019)**
ACRYLIC AND GREASE PENCIL
ON CANVAS
72" X 68"

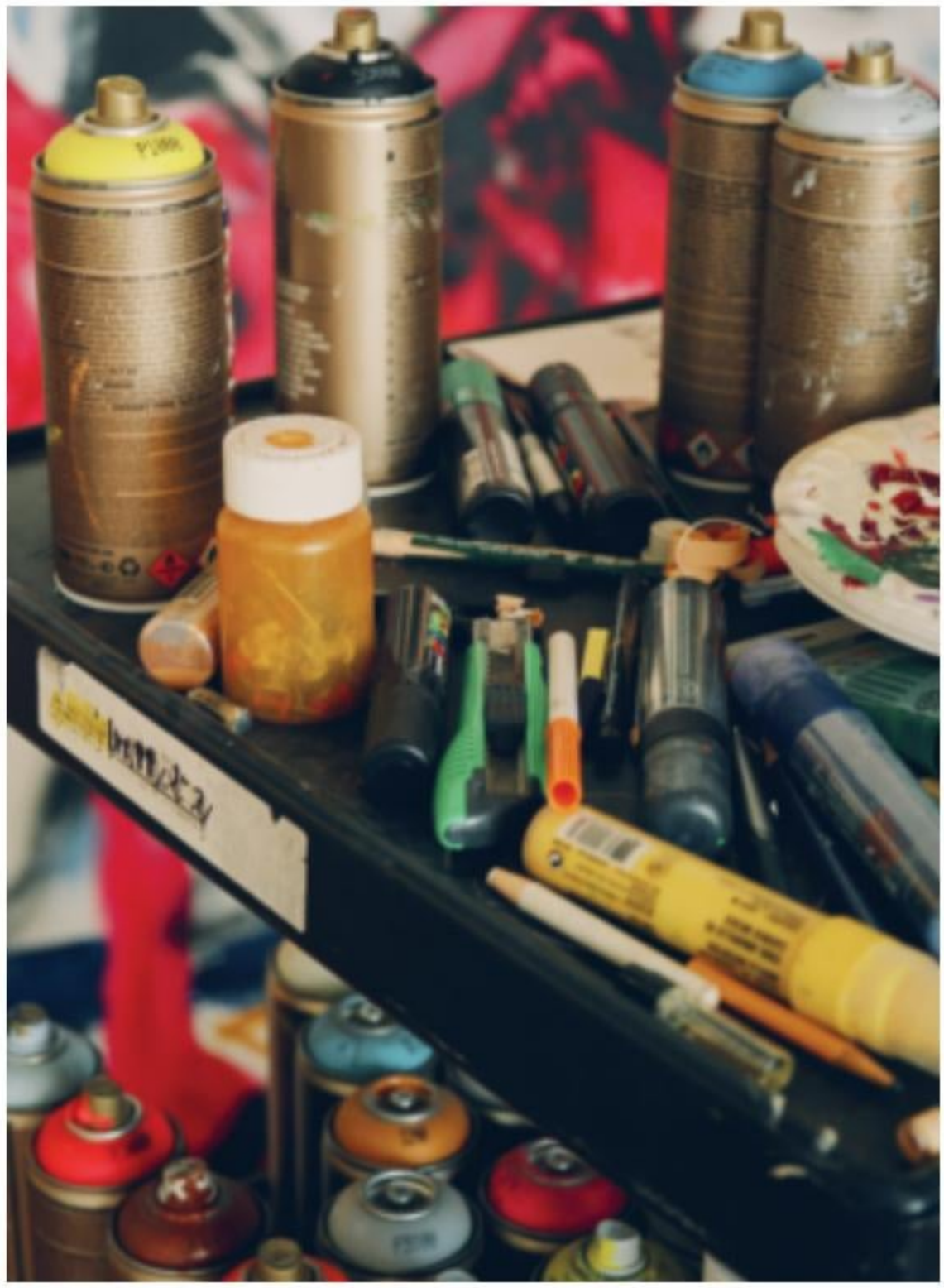
Q & A

When did you start painting and drawing?
Ever since I was three years old, I would draw using crayons and pencils. It wasn't until 2008 that I got serious about projects and unconscious ideas.

Do you remember what you were drawing at the time?
A lot of cartoons. I would draw on the back of cereal boxes. I think by the time I was eighteen, I got into drawing cars and things like that.

At what point did you realize that you could turn painting into a viable career?
When I was an undergrad at Indiana Northwest University in Gary, Indiana, one of my teachers showed us that it was possible. That must've been around 2007 or 2008.

What kind of paintings were you making in college? Are the compositions entirely different from what you're creating now?
In college, we learned how to draw very realistic, like photoreal. By the time I was 12 or 13 years old, I could actually draw in that style, and I like to think that I was pretty good. We also learned how to paint in the Renaissance style and all those traditional techniques. After we learned advanced painting, the teacher would give us feedback like, "Okay, now you're artists. You don't even have to create in these styles or what we just taught you." I was kind of cheering that comment on because I went completely the opposite way. When I was 12 or 13, I could already draw and paint like Velasquez, but it took me a lifetime to learn how to draw like a kid again. →



OPPOSITE

***"CAT + TREE"* (2019)**
ACRYLIC AND GREASE PENCIL
ON CANVAS
48" X 60"

What artistic direction were you moving toward after graduating?
This idea of "seriousness in play" was always at the root of my ideas. For me, it was more interesting to incorrectly draw an arm or fuck it up by breaking all the rules I learned. I wouldn't say that I was drawing full-blown monsters and mythology stuff yet. The pieces I was doing were kind of comedy and tragedy at the same time. These kinds of tropes, you know?

Let's talk about your current subjects, these monsters. What inspired them, and what are your source materials?
People will send me stuff sometimes, but it really just begins with my little sketchbooks. One source material is this dictionary of fallen angels that I just got from a friend. I tend to combine things that are different, even if it's just mindless. I'll repeat the mouth of that tiger and the shark. I just really enjoy combining things and then making them have different strengths and abilities. But these subjects don't necessarily have to belong to a particular narrative. I like them to just be moving on their own, sort of. It's fun to see the possibilities. I'll be excited to think, like, "Man, I'm just going to repeat the tiger's head seven times and give it something unexpected." I'm into any kind of old mythology.

From angels to sharks, do any of the subjects you paint have any sort of connection with one another?
Yes, and sometimes these paintings get into little fights here in the studio, especially when they're side by side like this. Like, who would win in a physical battle? Then they start having personalities. Like, this *Red Angel* wouldn't be a subject that is trying to hurt you, even though it could. I've heard someone call it demonic. But I also feel like this character is more like a protector in a way. I also have battle records and stuff in my head. This *Red Angel* has a record of 33 and 0.

I've got one painting around the corner that I didn't show you—that one I don't count. It has a losing record. Hopefully they can all be champions of some kind before they leave the studio. Right now, I think the Red Angel is the king of the studio, and then this Shark is probably close to second place.

Are you creating a sort of visual language for your viewers to decipher with your work?
I'd like to think I am. It's always evolving throughout the draft as I keep working on each painting.

“I KNOW WHAT I’M DOING. IT’S CAREFULLY DONE WRONG.”

What kind of creatures have you been sketching recently?
I wanted to make an angel with a battery pack or battery. Just angel plus batteries somehow. But I don’t know how it’s going to go together. But I know I tried to, on the newest book.... This is it. No. Where is it? Yeah. The angel was coming up. I guess angels were on my mind a lot here. It’s just some weird shit. I don’t know on that one.

How do you approach painting?
I like to go in with confidence. When I’m drawing in my sketchbooks, I like to think of it as a warm-up. It’s like getting my blood hot. By the time I’m painting, it’s a full sprint. Like, “This one’s going to count. This is making the last-minute shot right on the buzzer.”

You claim to have once finished a painting in just 27 seconds. How did you know it was complete after such a short time?
I knew roughly what I wanted to do, and it started very abstract. I just kind of went scribbling on it, and things started forming. I’m like, “All right, the head is going to be here now. That’s totally a tail. So, this means that these have to be legs.” Right? The techno music in my studio was really, really loud, and I just kind of got into the zone, you know?

What are some memorable reactions to your works that have stuck with you?
We threw a little party in my old studio, and one of my friends was standing in front of an alligator painting that I made. He said, “You know what? This one really calms me down.” And it just felt good. If my paintings can make someone feel anything positive, that’s great. Some people think they’re total bullshit too. I get hate comments and stuff, but it comes with being an artist.

Have you always been working on large-scale canvas pieces?
I’m addicted to scale. I almost don’t know how to paint small. The only small scale works I do are drawings in my sketchbook.

What’s the atmosphere in your studio when you’re painting?
Usually the music will be really loud. It sucks because I have neighbors now, as opposed to the old studio. I could be as loud as I wanted to be there. My ideal situation is working with several blank canvases and transitioning between each one of them. While this piece is drying, I’ll put in some time over on the other one, you know what I mean? →

"SHARK PEGASUS" (2019)
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS
72" X 84"

I prefer working in the daylight, especially in the morning when I have the most energy. I've always been a morning person. It's just my natural alarm clock to wake up around 7:00am or 7:30ish. 7:00am to noon is my prime time. I don't know, I just don't have the energy as much later in the day. I think because my eyes aren't as fresh. I have a lot more energy in the morning because nothing is in my head yet.

Do you ever feel pressured to make work because you live in your studio?
Yeah, actually. I take dedicated days off on Sundays and Saturdays. Or I make sure to give myself a couple of days off during the week, and I turn my paintings around so I don't see them. It's hard to separate, which is kind of a problem. But I guess the best part of living in my studio is that I can wake up at 3:00am and make a little scribble or add some color to something. They're just there. There's no commute.

How many paintings can you work on at one time?
When I'm on fire, I can make four and a half paintings in one day. That's the best feeling in the world when you can just hit it. There's all of these raw canvases, and I can't really fuck up. I love starting a canvas and not messing it up in one session. Usually, there's probably three bad paintings under one piece. I usually have to keep working and wrestling with one until I get it right. Each has a layered history.

What gets you into that zone where you're just "hitting it"?
With the drawings, sometimes it's mindless. I might repeat the shark mouth over and over, and then something comes from that. With a raw canvas, it's usually the music and getting fearless with that until I feel unstoppable.

Why do you draw the same subjects like the shark over and over again in your sketchbook?
It gets me away from being scared to paint them on canvas because I've drawn it so many times already. Also, people don't know about what I do in these sketchbooks. Most of the time, I'm like, "Man, this shark mouth, I got this. But I'm going to kind of make it look bad." But I know what I'm doing. It's carefully done wrong. Like there's ways to make that mess up, but I'm still trying to master my hand in a certain way.

Can you tell us a bit more about your "carefully done wrong" approach?
I think it comes from knowing all those "rules" from the traditional drawings I did for so many years. So I know how to compose. I'd like to think I've got a good sense of color. If it looks like it's done, and it looks easy, then I've done my job.

What do you look for in a gallery that wants to showcase your work? How are you navigating contemporary art spaces?
I think each gallery should have a unique aspect about it. Especially, if it has a good program and there's vision—that usually will scream out at you at an opening or a show. Also, I like Photoshopping my artwork into spaces that I see on Instagram. Somewhere it would never make it, like in a castle or a palace. I enjoy the places that shake things up a little bit too. Like, what if my crazy *Red Angel* painting was in an airport or a corporate office space?

What are you working on next?
I think the Armory in March. I'm excited for that one. I haven't really showed much in New York. I gotta get my act together and kill it. It should be pretty fun.

WORDS
VANESSA LEE

PHOTOGRAPHY
GREG LEWIS

AND SO, WE CONTINUE

GROOMING: ASHLEY BROCKMAN USING MAC
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT: ALEX MILLER

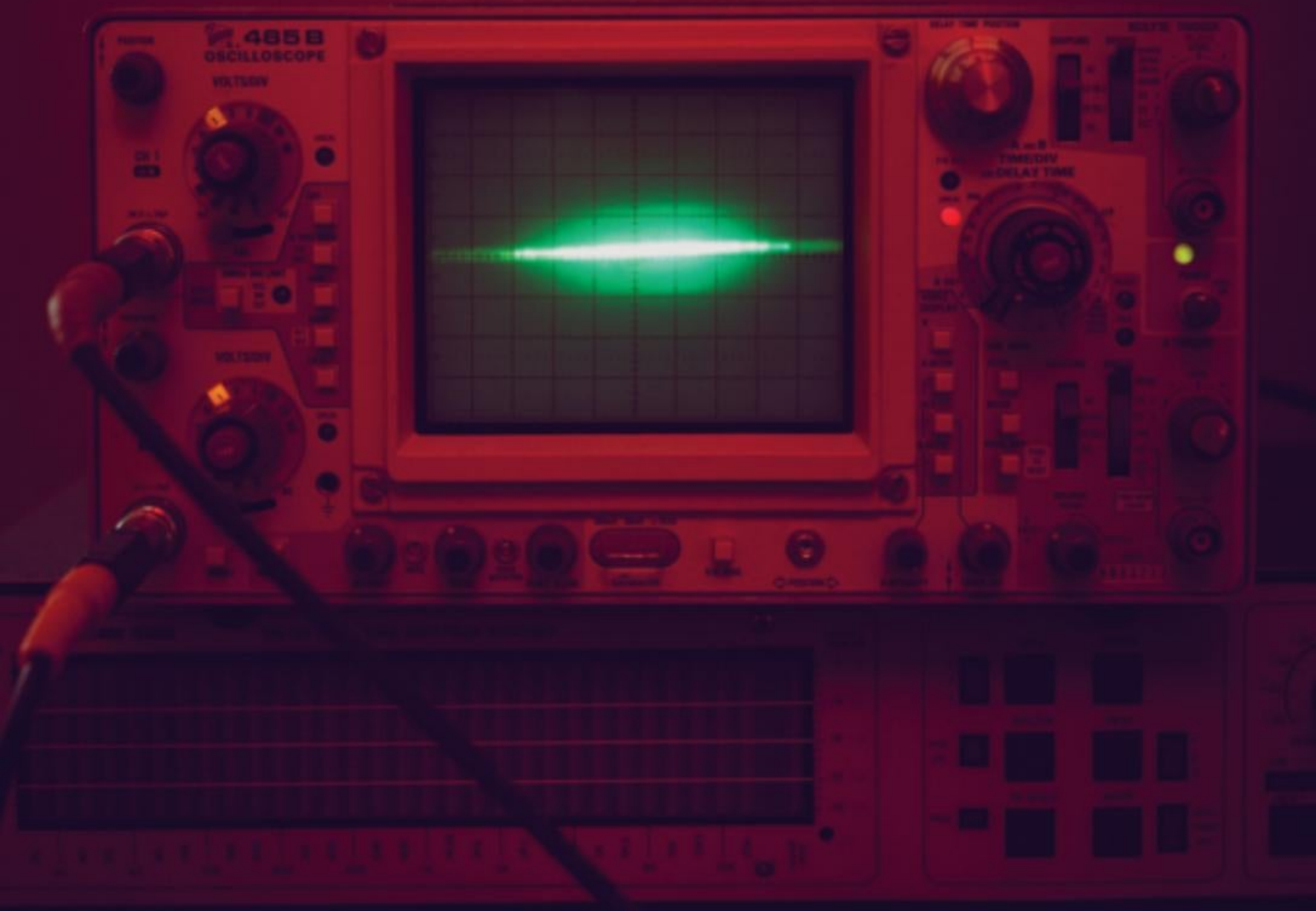
"But I *could*," he continues, a mischievous glint in his eye almost audible through the phone. When you're on the cusp of releasing a new album to a hungry public after a five-year hiatus, it's easy to understand why the itch to tinker is hard to resist. The liminal period between an album's completion and its release date is so short lived that Parker is just trying to make the most of it. "Everything is said and done—all my anxiety, all my joy, terror, doubt, ecstasy," he laughs. "I just want it to get out there now." But getting to this point was difficult. He had to go as far as to publicize the album's launch date so that he would be forced to release it on time.

"I just went, 'Fuck it. Let's announce it,' so if I missed that deadline, I was going to have to explain to everyone why the album's postponed. That's the only way," he declares. It's easy to wonder how Kevin Parker, who works on the production alone with no outside input, can tell he's on the right path. "I can't," he admits. "I have no idea where it's going. I have no idea how long the song's going to be, or if it's going to have a pop or prog feel. I have no idea until we're in the piece."

Parker jokes that Tame Impala's style is part blessing and part curse, and attributes it to a loss of perspective. The fact that he has no idea how a song will turn out is, Parker thinks, what gives Tame Impala tracks the rabbit hole-like quality that has become his musical footprint. The sonic embodiment of a wandering mind left to its own devices, a single song can morph into multiple styles and moods: "Breathe Deeper" sees disco veering into classic acid house; on "Posthumous Forgiveness," we can hear the twangy instrumentals of an old Western open to dreamy psychedelic pop. In a perfect world, Parker says he would be able to split himself into several artists: one for making pop music, one for electronic, one for hip-hop, etc. Instead, these influences meld together in Parker's psych-rock pot to form a blend of genres that he himself didn't think would work together. →

As I write, Kevin Parker has about six weeks to go until the release date of his fourth studio album, *The Slow Rush*. Right now, he's exercising great restraint in not tinkering with the finished product. "Because I can't," he states, business-like. A pause.

TAME IMPALA


Tektronix
465B
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VOLTS/DIV
TIME/DIV
DELAY TIME

"I KNOW A LOT OF PEOPLE CONSIDER ME LIKE A ROCK, LIKE I'VE SOMEHOW NOT BEEN AFFECTED BY A LOT OF THE SHIT IN MY LIFE. AND I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK IT'S BECAUSE I'VE HAD MUSIC."

After spending the first part of his five-year break from Tame Impala working on tracks with the likes of Travis Scott, Lady Gaga and ASAP Rocky, Parker readily admits that his chosen production method may not have been the easiest. "I never realized how tough I make it for myself, not having any grounding force or being able to step away from the project," he says. Working with other artists gave him the chance to detach and regain perspective. "And I appreciated it. The most I ever get of that [in my own work] is, literally, just not working on it for some time," he laughs, more so at himself than anything else. "I guess that helps explain a lot of the delusion and craziness for me."

When I ask how the journey has been, starting with *Currents* and arriving at *The Slow Rush*, he doesn't really know how to answer. Half a decade—where to even begin? Whether it's personal milestones like getting married last year, trekking to Namibia to photograph derelict houses for his latest cover art, or being holed up in a studio with Travis Scott, Parker has certainly been busy during his time away from the spotlight. And Tame Impala is in a very different headspace now compared to the one of *Currents* yore. He attributes this change to having more confidence, both in his personal life and as an artist. It sounds like it, too—the album's opening track, "One More Year," is exultant: synthy Gregorian chants distorted into a shimmering echo, like the choir is singing into a giant fan. The blooming melody gives way to Parker's melancholic croon in contrast, "Do you remember we were standing here a year ago?"

This is what's resonating with Parker at the moment: music which helps to unpack the struggle of contemplating the future, leaving behind the past, and imagining himself as an old man. He doesn't have a solid explanation for why he chose to focus on time for *The Slow Rush*, but he gives a thoughtful one, likening his current mindset to reading a book. "You see how much you've done, how much more you have to go. And I feel like every time we finish a chapter in life or start a new one, we have that same feeling."

For Parker growing up, music was an uncharted journey, a place of solace he could tunnel deeper and deeper into, until he finally emerged on the other side. "The only purpose for making music was to get lost in it," he says of his youth. That sense of escapism is tangible to this day. "Without music, I am nothing. I am a shell →


CONTROLLERS
OSCILLATOR BANK
MIXER
MODIFIERS
OUTPUT

of a man," he says in earnest. "I don't feel like I have much to offer socially." He hopes to become someone who can converse on "books, films, life." But he says that right now, all of his personality lies in his music.

When we touch on "Posthumous Forgiveness," a song for his late father, we hear Parker at his most bare. It must not have been easy for him; as cheerful and chatty as Parker is in conversation, you never lose the sense that he is an intensely private person. "I haven't been so direct before. There are songs that have been more difficult for me to write, because I'm dredging up demons. I think 'Posthumous Forgiveness' is the most exposing, something that probably hasn't been spoken about with anyone. It's definitely putting it out there." Music—the right kind of music—whether we're on the listener's end or the musician's end, offers a private kind of exhalation that we don't need to explain to anyone else. "I'd probably be a lot more mentally unbalanced if I didn't have music. I know a lot of people in my family see me as strangely balanced. I know a lot of people consider me like a rock, like I've somehow not been affected by a lot of the shit in my life. And I can't help but think it's because I've had music."

Humble words from a man who has also had a hefty hand in the design for his album covers. *Innerspeaker* started with Parker fiddling with landscape images on Microsoft Paint. "For the album, I wanted it to sound electronic, but with totally organic instruments. So the art was about electronic repetition, but with organic stuff," he explains. He eventually had designer Leif Podhajsky execute the final version, but Parker plans to dig up his DIY version ("It's on an old laptop of mine somewhere.") for the 10-year anniversary of *Innerspeaker*. He gives a short guffaw as he recalls the art for *Lonerism*: "It was literally just a picture I took." Depicting a well-manicured Parisian garden with people lounging about inside, Parker took the photo through an iron gate as an outsider, looking in. He continues, "The album cover was going to be something else. They delivered an album cover and I cancelled it, which pissed off a lot of people." He bursts out laughing. "And I just went, 'Naw, let's just use this picture I took.'"

Despite the layered influences present in *The Slow Rush*, Parker tells us that the most common feedback he's received so far is that the album appears to be his darkest work yet. He touches on enough past trauma and growing pains for this assessment to pass as a justifiable one. He gives the subject of time an urgent sense of loss, something that slips through our fingers even as we scramble to catch it. " Why don't we just say one more year," Parker mandates at the beginning; "one more hour," we hear him beg at the very end.

Few strains of nostalgia cut as sharply as the growing pains that come as we leave behind our former selves. We hear sadness, grief, melancholy—but we can also hear Parker choosing to move past it all, to finally arrive at a place of joy. Tame Impala is grown. "It might be time to face it," he airily announces on "It Might Be Time," over a buoyant beat, "You're not as young as you used to be. You're not as cool as you used to be." *But it's okay*, he also seems to say, wordlessly. It's better than okay.

WORDS
EMILY ENGLE

PHOTOGRAPHY
MAXIME VERRET

Ill-Studio *Talks Transcending Creative Industries.*

While you read this introduction, look through Ill-Studio's online portfolio. There's no better way to describe how multidisciplinary the Paris-based studio's work is than to keep hitting that endless scroll, flexing your eyebrow muscles repeatedly as you pass through countless photo campaigns, print books, T-shirts and exhibition spaces along the way.

Thomas Subreville and Leonard Vernhet founded Ill-Studio in 2007 with an ambitious goal to work on whatever creative projects they wanted across any and all industries. Today, their client roster is a veritable list of dream clients—Louis Vuitton, Supreme, Colette, Nike, Tame Impala and Nowness, to name a few. Needless to say, their plan worked.

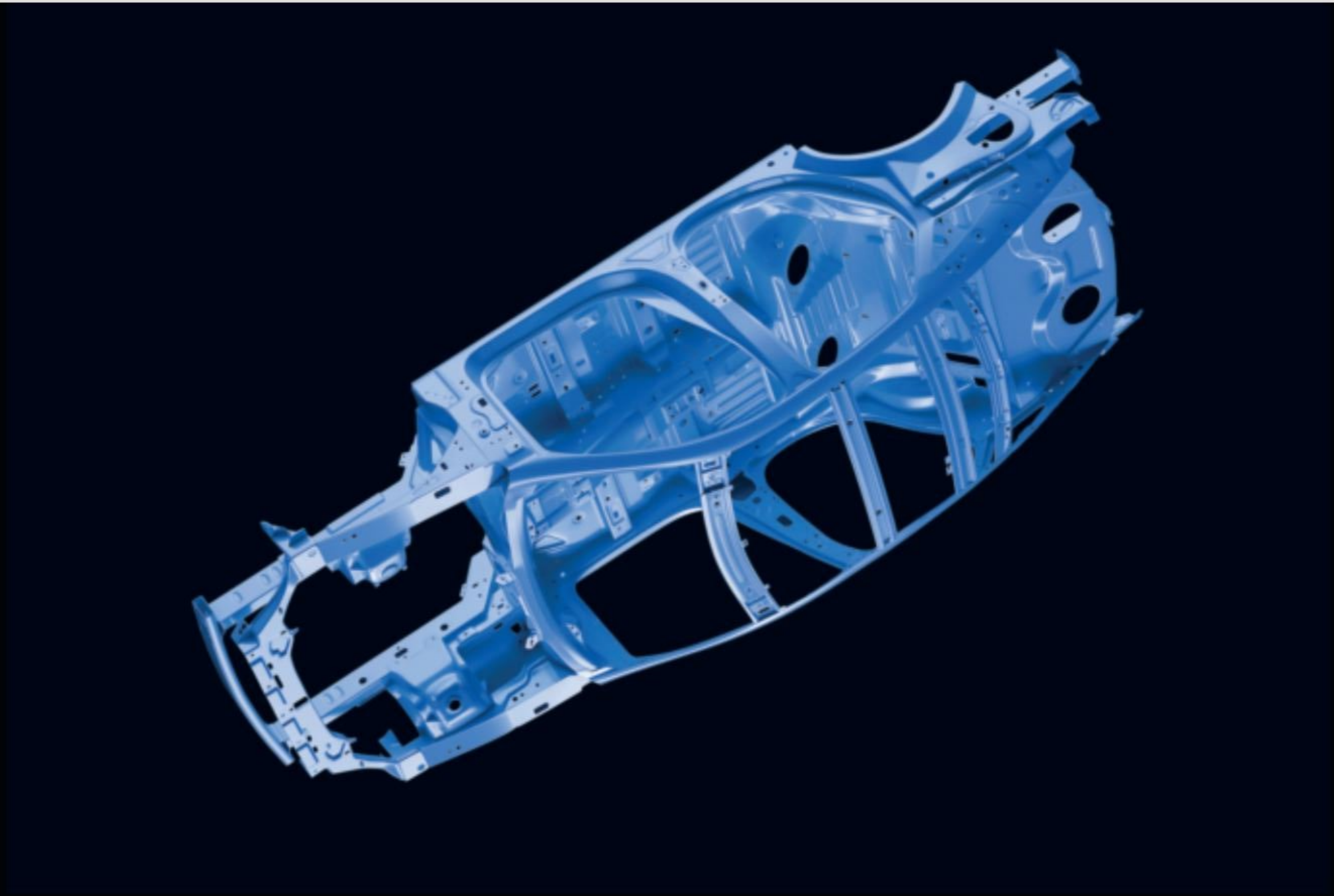
However, starting a studio that transcends all creative industries back in 2007 was tough. This model hadn't quite been invented yet and neither had Instagram—a social media platform that has become trodden with archival image accounts that compile a person's aspirational furniture, design objects, album covers and fashion into one neat package. Communicating a business model that was new and confusing to many at the time took relentless persistence, consistent outstanding work and, most importantly, versatility. Each time a new or returning client approached the duo with a project, it would be different than the last. One day it could be creative consulting work for Virgil Abloh and the next designing a purple and lime green ombre playground in Beijing.

When asked what the most challenging part of starting a studio was, both designers were quick to respond that they wanted to avoid being cornered into one industry at all costs. "We could easily end up doing only fashion or only music, so we always keep the lines blurry enough that we can maintain the freedom of doing anything we want and also maintain the freedom of not knowing what we're going to do in the future," they told HYPEBEAST.

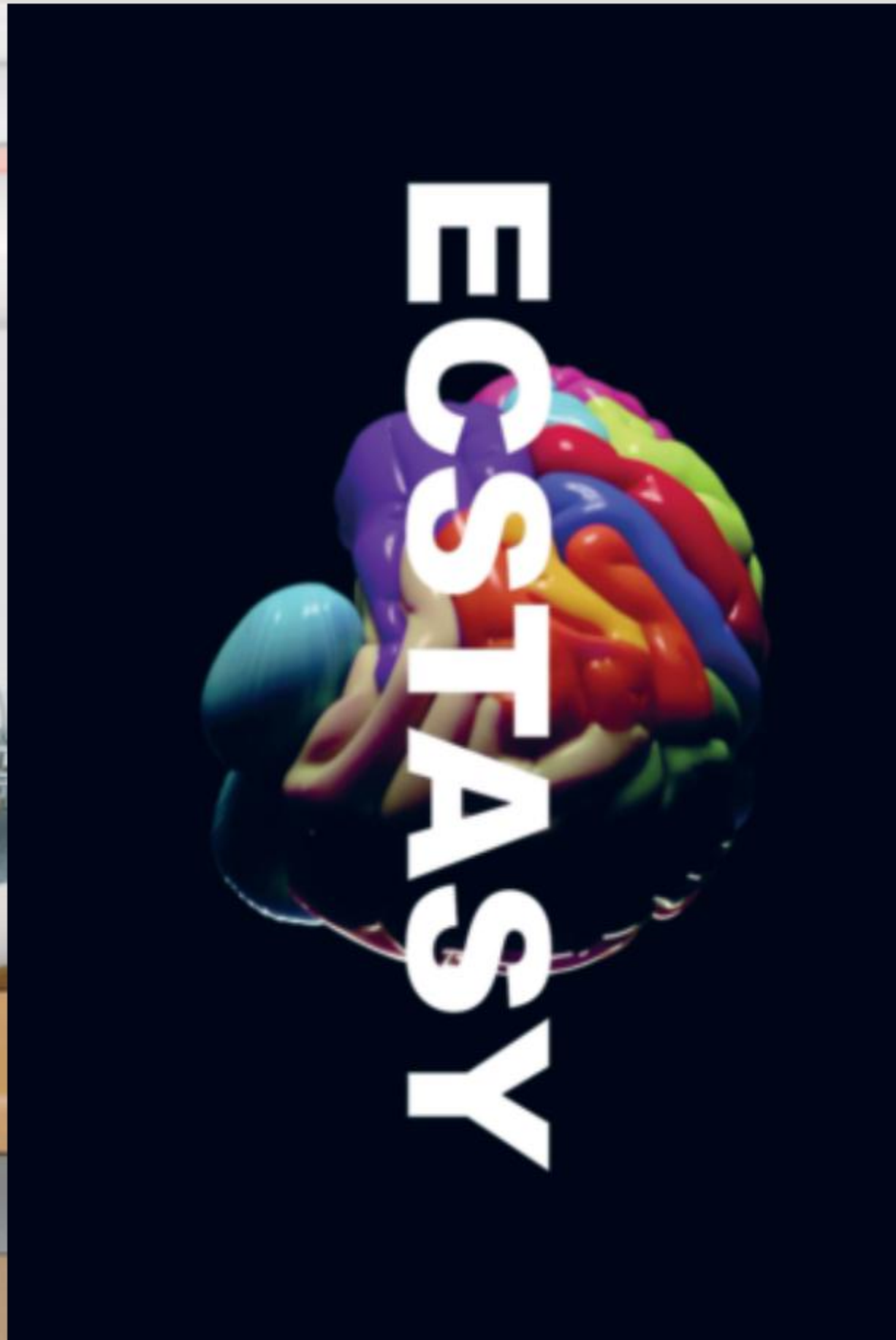
One way the team has accomplished working on so many different types of projects is by including self-initiated projects under the same Ill-Studio umbrella as their client work. However, in order to establish a more distinct line between contracted and personal projects, Ill-Studio's new label GENERAL_INDEX was born. Inspired by an encyclopedia's general index page, the label functions as an extension of Ill-Studio, offering up the studio's personal work in all formats, centered around Subreville's and Vernhet's inspirations (ranging from Bart Simpson to DJ Screw to the DIY skate culture they grew up in).

The self-taught designers were, and still are, ahead of their time when it comes to connecting the dots between creative industries. In fact, over time Ill-Studio has become a pioneer of sorts, paving the way for a new wave of young creatives starting their own all-encompassing practices. Subreville and Vernhet welcome this industry shift with open arms. "When kids tell us that we opened the door for them to do this type of super transversal creative business model, it's the best compliment of all." After 13 years, Ill-Studio's once confusing business model is now the norm, and the duo is ready to delve into their process and give advice to those looking to adapt it.→

"VIEWS FROM FUTURE PAST" (2019)
POST-POSTMODERNISM TOKYO EXHIBITION



"ADDPMP" (2020)
COLLABORATION WITH SLAM JAM



DETAILED EXPLORATIONS OF THEIR PARIS STUDIO,
AS SEEN THROUGHOUT.

"2054" (2019)
CONSULTANCY / IDENTITY FOR
LOUIS VUITTON MENSWEAR
CREATED BY VIRGIL ABLOH.
(PHOTOGRAPHER : THIBAUT GREVET)

"INCOMPLETE INVENTORY" (2019)
320 PAGES BOOK BY GENERAL_INDEX

"INCOMPLETE INVENTORY" (2019)
320 PAGES BOOK BY GENERAL_INDEX

"*MANIFESTO*" (2019)
FIRST ITEM BY GENERAL_INDEX.

"PAST PRESENT FUTURE" (2017)
INSTALLATION FOR NIKE & PIGALLE SUMMER SHOW

"PARABOLE" (2019)
POST-POSTMODERNISM TOKYO EXHIBITION

"MANIFESTO" (2019)
FIRST ITEM BY GENERAL_INDEX.

Q & A

How big is your current team?
It is just the two of us. People are usually surprised when they find that out, but we like it this way. We work with a lot of talented freelancers, though. It is better for us to outsource people with different skills depending on the project we are working on. This system also allows us the freedom of traveling whenever we want and not having to work from our studio all the time. Traveling a lot is really necessary to our process.

How would you describe the work you do at III-Studio?
Over the past 13 years, we've experimented with many different fields—some we liked, some we didn't. In general, we mostly do creative direction at-large and consulting for different brands, record labels and magazines. We also work on personal, self-initiated projects, such as exhibitions, publishing books and other spontaneous self-produced projects.

When we first created the studio, we wanted it to be a platform that allowed us to work on a different project every week. A lot of people are actually confused by what we do, and we kind of like keeping these lines blurry. When people ask us what our job is, we love to say that we're still figuring it out. Our job is constantly evolving.

Why do you think people still have trouble grasping the way you work and the projects you do?
We kind of cultivated this on purpose by not having a website until very recently and by not sharing too much information surrounding our projects. We don't think it's necessary to explain or show everything we do. Some people know us through our video work, some through fashion, others through music or architecture. What counts the most for us is the overall vibe people get from our work. Our families and girlfriends still don't even understand exactly what we do.

What are the main ways in which your jobs have evolved over time?
When we started the studio, our approach of creating a job that essentially allowed us to do whatever we wanted was completely new. There weren't many people doing this back then, so that's where the confusion first came in. "Are you a video director? Are you a fashion designer?" Fields like fashion and music used to live separately, but they now live together. Now it's normal for a music producer to also design clothes. It's normal that a fashion creative director curates a magazine or an exhibition. It's not seen as something weird anymore.

What impact does your location have on you as creatives and on your work, especially when you travel?
Locations in general have a big impact on our work. Paris definitely has had a big impact in our development in terms of community, exposure, cultural education, etc. But any other place we travel to also has an instant impact on our work. Like every creative, we use our telephone as a prosthetic visual memory for everything we come across, and it happens a lot that something we saw in a foreign country gets revisited years later for a project.

What are some places, industries, people, etc. that you have gotten powerful inspiration from in the past?
We don't pretend to invent everything we do from scratch. It can be anything from 1960s Polish conceptualism to early '80s obscure music. It ranges from Jean Cocteau to Bart Simpson, Paul Virilio, DJ Screw, Issey Miyake, Reinhold Messner, Michel Foucault, Haruomi Hosono, Marco Van Basten and Carl Sagan. The best is when inspiration comes to you—not when you look for it. It is very important to keep some space for that in your daily life.

What is your process when starting off with a client?
New clients often come in already knowing about some of our work, but it's rare that we work with people who know about everything we've done or that we work on so many different types of projects. Oftentimes, clients reference one project then ask us to work on something completely unrelated. "We've seen this book that you did, and we'd like you to design a space," or "We've seen these videos you did, and we'd like you to create a photo campaign." Clients call us for a vision or general idea instead of a more specific skill.

What qualities make or break your decision to work on a new project?
We always consider how interesting a project is, how much freedom we'd have, the budget and the amount of time we'd have. Sometimes a proposal will be interesting in terms of the freedom we'd have, but there's absolutely no budget. Sometimes there's a big budget, but we know the project will take way too long. We're able to say yes or no pretty fast. It is very important for us to be able to look beyond a project and have it fit in with our larger portfolio. Things that we do that don't fit, we don't show publicly. You will never see them.

Tell me about your new self-initiated project, GENERAL_INDEX.

For a long time, all of our projects were mixed together under the same Ill-Studio name, but we've decided to separate it all. So now all of the product collaborations we're doing—the exhibitions, the self-initiated projects—are going to be released under this new label, GENERAL_INDEX. Our studio has always worked with a lot of cultural references—that's one of the main particularities of our studio. GENERAL_INDEX is basically the index page of Ill-Studio. Our idea for GENERAL_INDEX is for it to be the merchandise of our culture—not the other way around. We consider it to be an encyclopedia, or an encyclopedic program, where every project we produce for this label is one page or chapter of a subjective encyclopedia.

Encyclopedias are supposed to be scientific and structurally rigid. ***Universalis*** was the main French encyclopedia we used when we were younger, before we spoke any English. We went through a lot of different encyclopedias recently while doing research for GENERAL_INDEX, and ***Britannica*** is probably our favorite generalist one. But as much as we love traditional encyclopedias, we want ours to play with the relationship between scientific and subjective. The first GENERAL_INDEX t-shirt we released was called the "Tree of General Knowledge." It illustrates the idea of doing something with a very wide range of specific topics.

There's something to be said for people who don't need Instagram to find inspiration in today's world. Many kids probably haven't even used a physical encyclopedia before.
The way we use the Internet is probably different than the way a kid who was born in 1998 uses it. We love the mix of being connected to the youth and digital cultures, while still maintaining our DIY background where we had to make everything up on our own. It's funny to think about how it wasn't always like this. Even compared to five years ago, this exponential growth of information and culture grew up so fast, and it's still growing so fast.

Did growing up in the '80s and '90s also influence your work?
We were both born in 1980, and I think we're the last generation to have grown up as teenagers without the Internet. We'd constantly look for new information and references to level-up our own knowledge. This mentality has had a lot of impact on the way we work today. When we started the studio, there was no Facebook or Instagram, so we had to make our own way to communicate our ideas.

We also both started skateboarding very young and were really into skate brands like 101, New Deal, the early days of Blind and World Industries. These references are obviously linked to nostalgia—our first boards and the first videos we got to watch, etc. Skateboarding and style were always highly connected. It wasn't like any other sport where the best player wins. Style was always as important as tricks. We learned a lot through skateboarding as kids. We learned how to produce and organize events, build little skate parks and things like that. We grew up with the mindset that if you have something you want to do, you have to find a way to do it. You don't need anybody else.

What were some of the methods you used to communicate your ideas at that time?
The network of people that we developed through our previous experiences was very important. We also had a website at the very beginning, but we quickly realized that it was too restrictive. We always considered that our "world" wasn't only limited to fully developed projects. The music we listen to, the books we read, the movies we watch, our travels, our community and most generally the things we get inspiration from are to us as important as a given project. That's why Instagram became much more instinctive than a classic website to develop our vision.

Have there been any overarching trends you've noticed since you started Ill-Studio?
What is really changing, and where the future is likely headed, is that people are not going to have to decide on one major when they are in school. Of course, if you are hoping to become a surgeon, you should probably learn medicine, but this is starting to be a major shift in terms of the creative industry. In the near future, fashion companies are going to hire even more creative directors who don't have a fashion background, and there will probably be new types of architects who are not trained to be architects in the first place. Everything is going to mix up. It's really exciting because in the end, it's going to be about a designer's personality and the ideas, visions or stories they want to tell. It will start to be less about social or educational backgrounds.

Do you guys have any advice for designers or creatives hoping to start their own business or creative agency in today's landscape?
You can be the best designer in the world and have the best ideas in the world, but you need to know how to communicate them. It's very important to consider your network and your ability to show your ideas. You also need to try to understand what you're good at and what you're not good at. The problem with doing a lot of different things like we do is you can be tempted to do everything yourself. The truth is, you can't be good at everything. The day you understand this, you'll save a lot of time and energy to focus on what you really are good at.

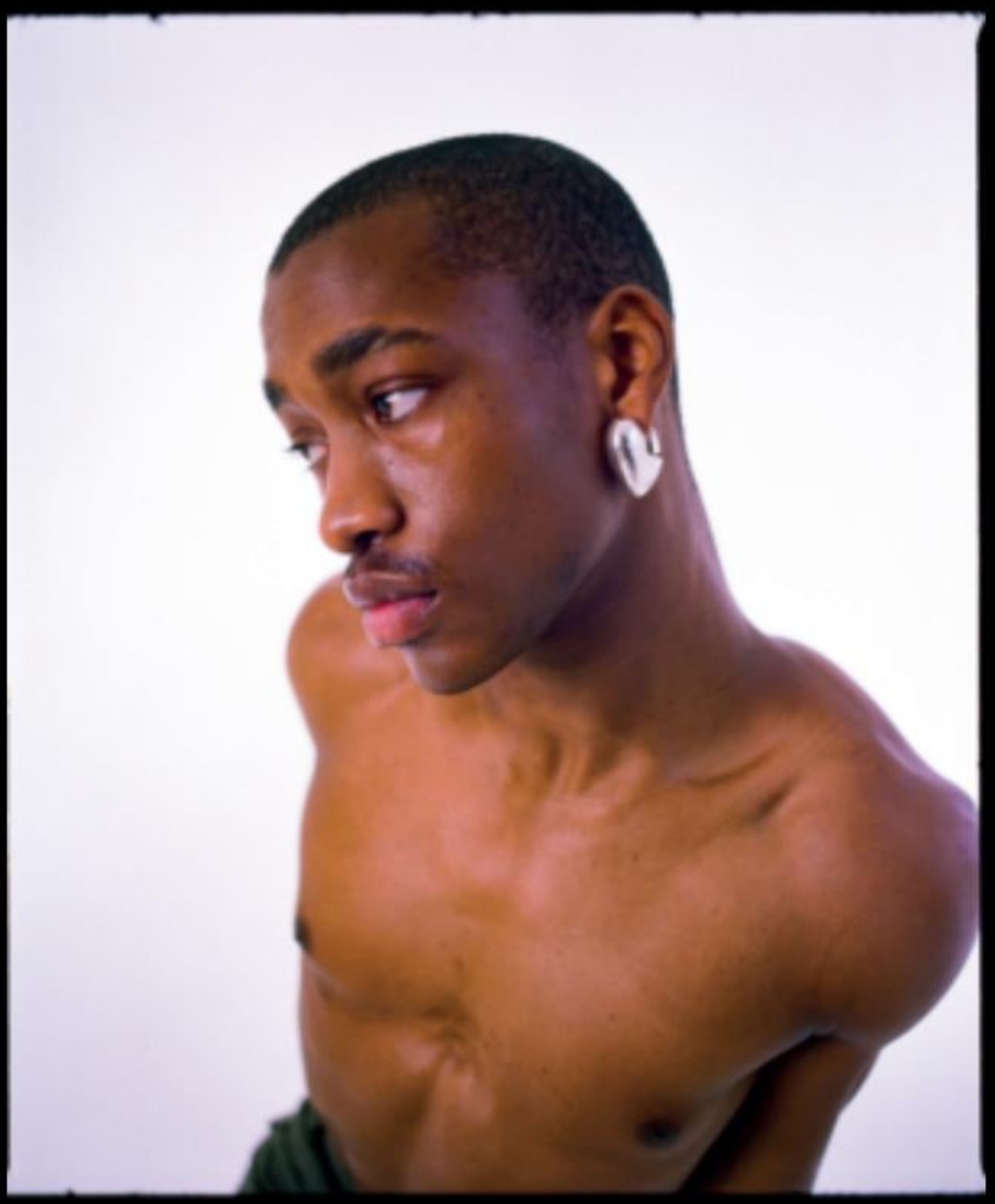
FACE ABOUT

PHOTOGRAPHY
QUIL LEMONS

MAKE UP
MARCELO GUTIERREZ

STYLING
NIA GROCE

DARK CIRCLES: MAC COSMETICS
GLOSS: FENTY BEAUTY
JACKET: LEVI'S



(OPPOSITE)
DARK CIRCLES:
MAC COSMETICS
GLOSS: FENTY BEAUTY
JACKET: LEVI'S

(THIS PAGE)
SKIN: MAC COSMETICS
EARRINGS: AMBUSH

FRECKLES: MAC COSMETICS
SOLITAIRE EARRING: AMBUSH
NECKLACE: HERON PRESTON
CHAIN: MAPLE
I.D. TAG: TIFFANY & CO.

(OPPOSITE)
RING: KHIRY
HICKIES: KRYOLAN
CHAIN: TIFFANY & CO.

FRECKLES: MAC COSMETICS

MODELS
KAI BAYNES
CHIKI UNO
ISA'AH

PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT
DENZEL GOLATT

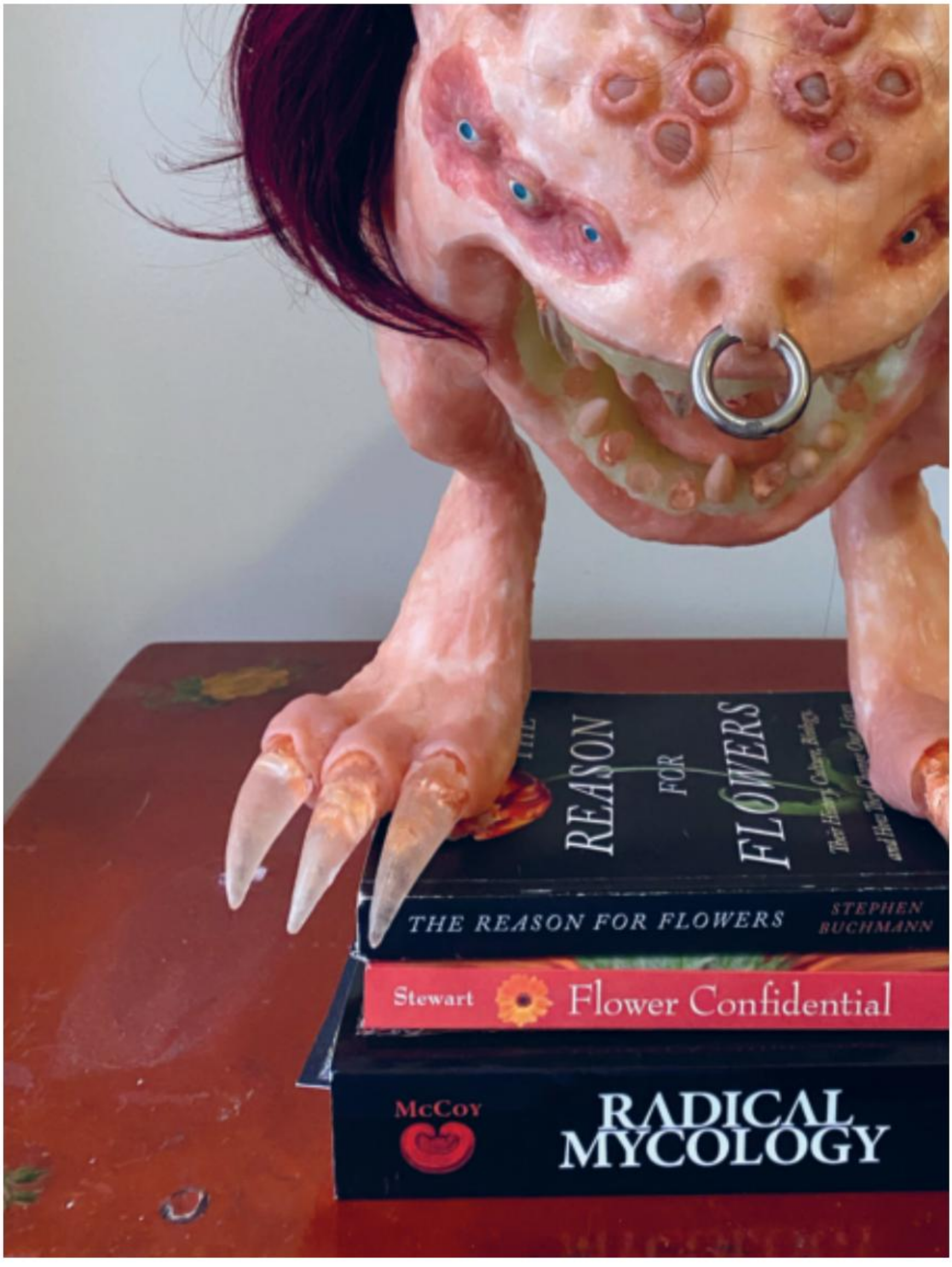
MAKE UP ASSISTANT
HINAKO TAKAGAKI

SPECIAL THANKS
7 LINE STUDIO

Guide Issue 28

5 books,
3 restaurants,
1 hill
& other things

Wretched Flowers
Reading List



Wretched Flowers
Reading List

Books we're reading:

The Reason for Flowers by Stephen Buchmann

This one is about flowers in general, but goes into their cultivation and trade history too.

Flower Confidential by Amy Stewart

This one's more specifically about the cut flower industry.

For field guides, we find apps more useful than books:

PlantNet

PlantSnap

Next up, we're learning more about mushrooms and fungus, as well as algae and seaweed. To get started we'll dig into:

Radical Mycology by Peter McCoy

(For mushrooms.)

Practical Phycology by William Padilla-Brown

(A great algae e-book.)

And for inspiration, we have this amazing booklet called

Flower Arranging: A Fascinating Hobby by Laura Lee Boroughs

that was published in 1941 by Coca-Cola. Laura was William S. Borroughs' mom. It's about flower arranging and the images are amazing. They have Coca-Cola product placements and the whole thing is fascinating.

Harry Nuriev & Tyler Billinger

Favorite Places

Harry Nuriev & Tyler Billinger
Favorite Places

Beijing, China

Chao Hotel
No. 4 Workers' Stadium East Road, Chaoyang District

ilovechao.com

We always have such a relaxing time in Beijing. The city is huge, with a crazy mix of cultures and people. We always find ourselves staying at the Chao hotel—mainly because the breakfast is hands down the best breakfast in the world. We are surprised every time by the beautiful combination of colors, dishes and tastes that you experience in one breakfast. We dream about this breakfast at least once a week.

Harry Nuriev & Tyler Billinger
Favorite Places

Saint Petersburg, Russia

Moika Tri
Embankment river
Moyka, 3
moykatri.ru

Troitsky Rynok
ul Galaktionovskaya 27

Open Daily, 8am – 5pm

Saint Petersburg has our favorite underground scene. It's the new Russia. The energy of the city feels free, open and creative. We love the mix between Soviet and modern architecture, and spend hours walking down small streets getting lost. Our favorite place to eat is a restaurant we designed called Moika Tri in the historical city center next to the river. After we have a coffee in the traditional Russian yet modern designed restaurant, we always find our way to the Troitsky Rynok market where we find amazing clothes and inspiration for many of our projects.

Harry Nuriev & Tyler Billinger
Favorite Places

Seoul, South Korea

Café Onion
04797 8 Achasan-ro 9-gil
(Seongsu-dong 2ga)

t: +82-70-7816-2710

Seoul is a bit of a fairytale for us. Most would say Bali is their fairytale, but Seoul is our Bali. From the food, design and fashion, we love every aspect of the culture. We gain about 10 pounds every time we are in Seoul, and for that we can thank our favorite place to eat and relax, Café Onion. We normally take one of everything by the time we leave Seoul. The black rice bread doesn't just have an amazing structure and look, the taste is indescribable. We also feel so at home in the raw industrial interior, as we use a lot of the same materials in our projects.

Harry Nuriev & Tyler Billinger

Favorite Places

Berlin, Germany

Teufelsberg
teufelsberg-berlin.de

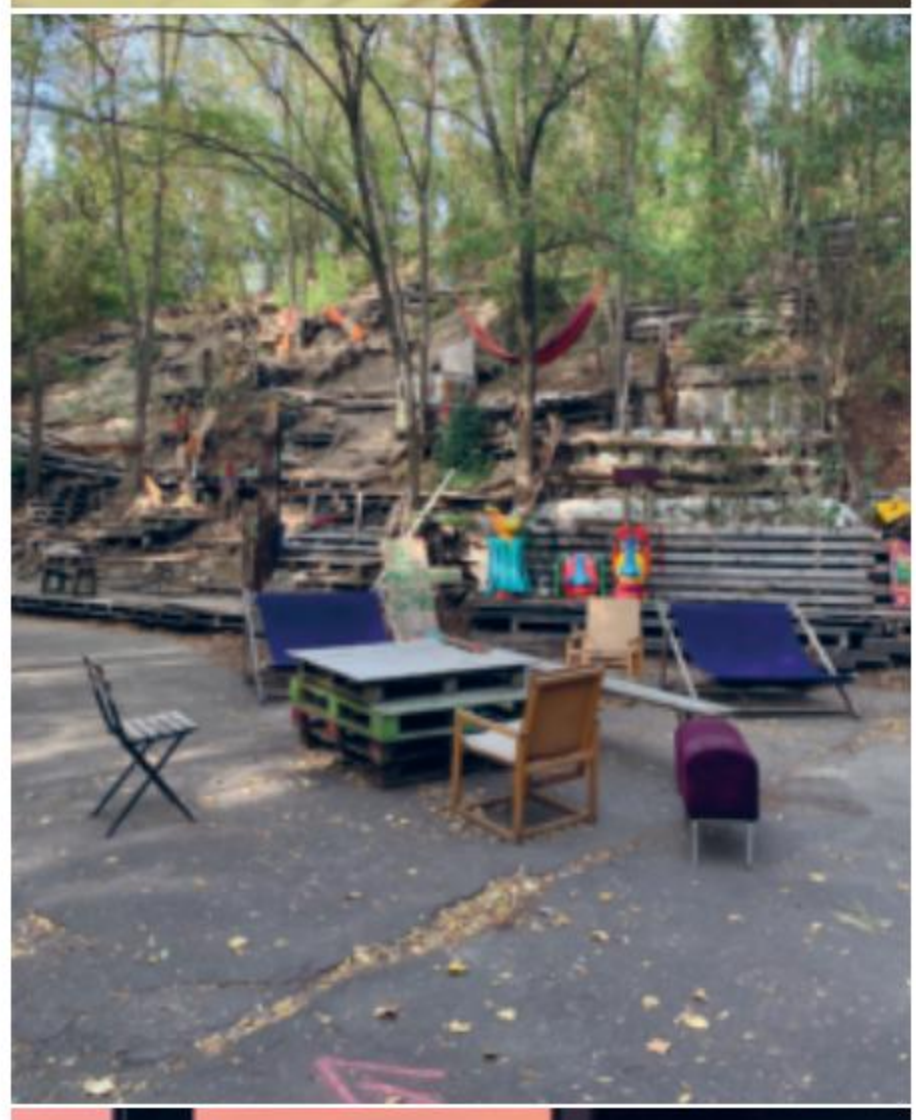
Open Wednesday to
Sunday, 11:00-20:00

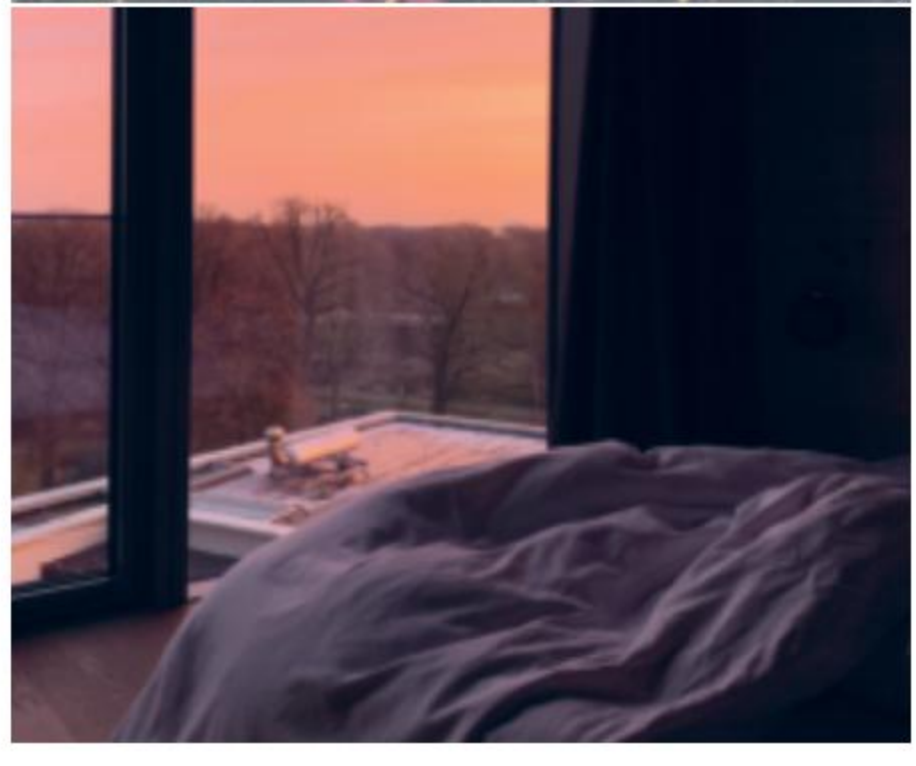
Berghain
Am Wriezener Bahnhof

berghain.berlin/en

Lost and found:
lost@ostgut.de

We spend a lot of time in Berlin. From the art scene, music, people and energy, it reminds us of what New York was like 35 years ago (from the art, magazines and movies we have seen). Berlin feels very romantic for us. Our favorite spot to visit is Teufelsberg. We spend hours walking in the forest, stumbling upon people's thrown out art, old furniture (which we take inspiration from), and many secret trails filled with street art. The energy here is calming and inspiring, it also makes for a good photo. Of course, a trip to Berlin is not complete without visiting Berghain for way *too* many hours. The city truly never sleeps.





Harry Nuriev & Tyler Billinger
Favorite Places

South Lake Tahoe, California

Café Fiore
1169 Ski Run Boulevard
cafefiore.com

Open Daily, 5.30-10pm

Everyone always asks us where we go to escape and relax and the answer is South Lake Tahoe. It is our hidden getaway. We both grew up around nature, and now that we are living between New York and Moscow we always miss being in real nature. Not only does Tahoe have the most gorgeous lake, mountains and hotels—our go to is Edgewood—but also Café Fiore is a must. It is a tiny house, with 6-8 small tables. The design is very vintage. It almost looks run down but in a beautiful way. However, the food and experience does not disappoint. You truly feel at home.

Directory
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