

VICE

FREE
VOLUME 10 NUMBER 2



THE FASHION ISSUE 2012

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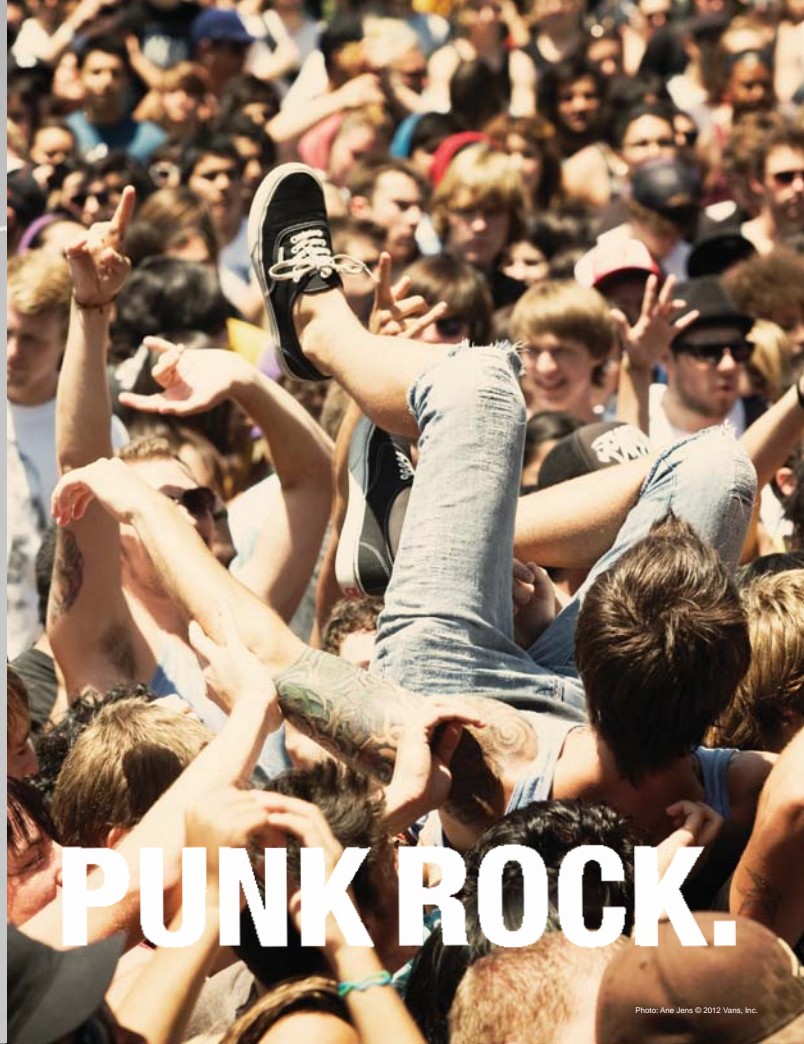
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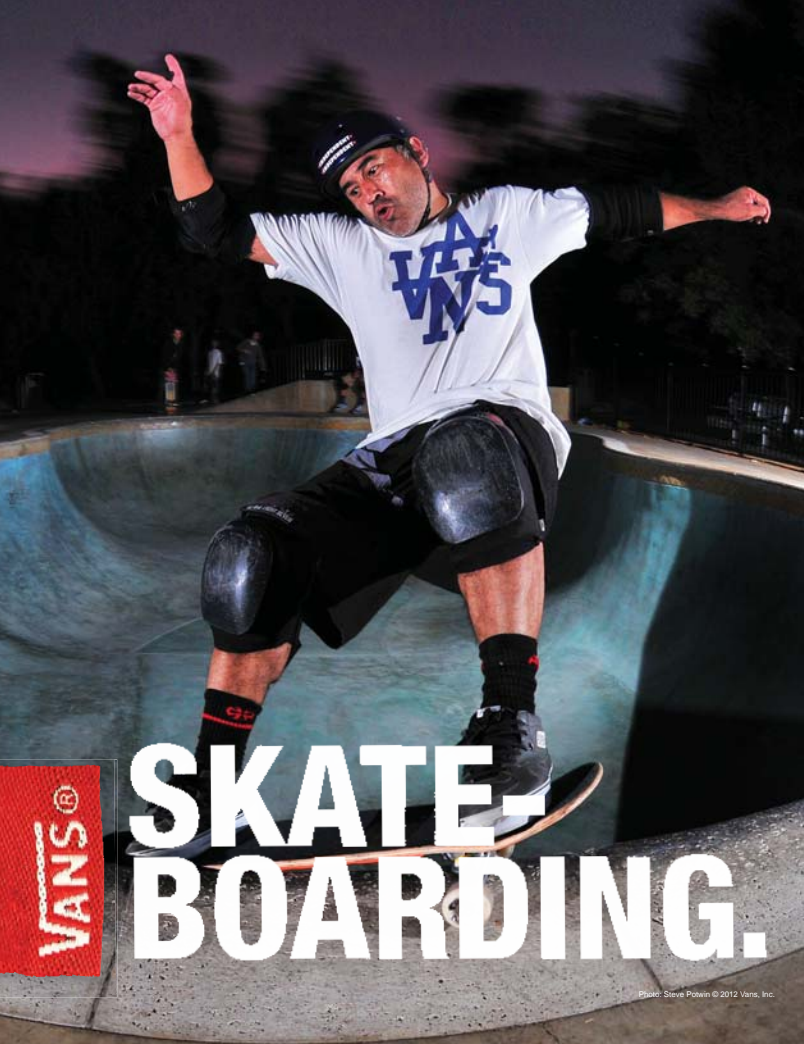
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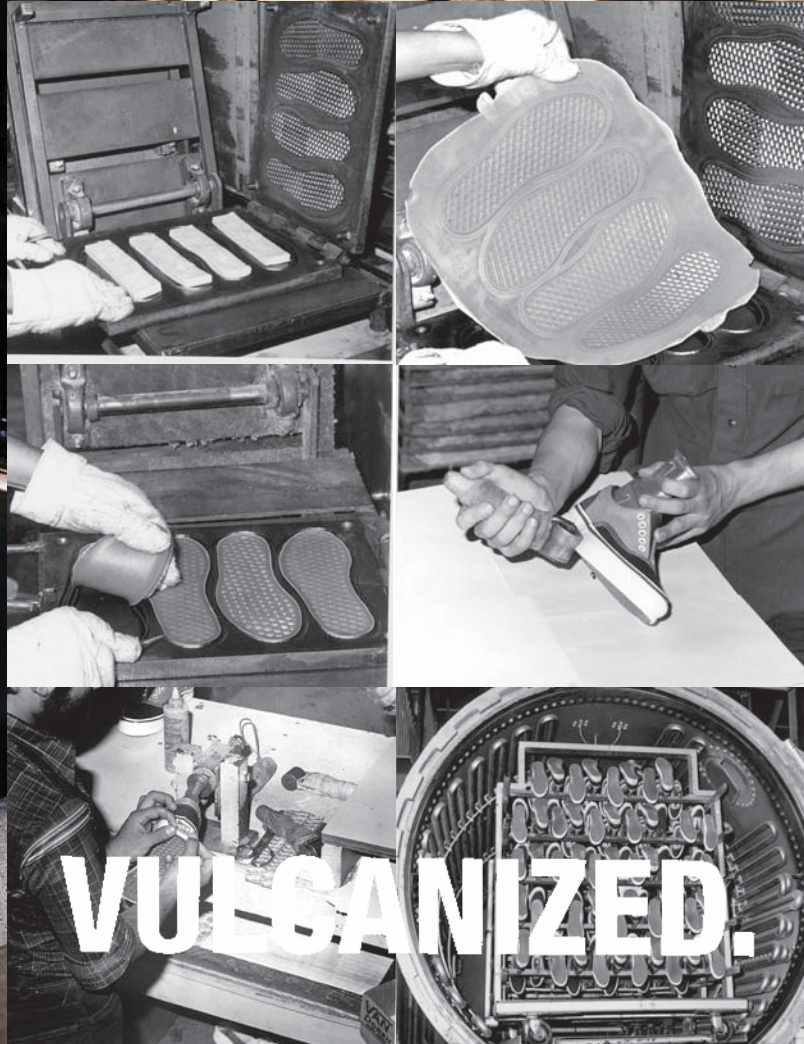
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SKATE-BOARDING.

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DUCK AND COVER
READY _
FOR _
ANYTHING 



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EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



BRYAN DERBALLA

Bryan grew up skateboarding in Asheville, North Carolina. They call it the San Francisco of the South, which is fitting because his mum is a lesbian. He went to school in Berkeley, mostly so he could skateboard in the actual San Francisco. After college he started Lovebryan.com, a blog that details the visual exploits of camera fiends Sandy Kim, Danilo Parra, Mike Belleme and others. Then photojournalists started photoblogging and bloggers started getting journalism gigs, and now Bryan's an officially credentialed member of the media who shoots for the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Financial Times*. For this issue, he shot the cover and a spread of deviant doggies getting dirty in a miniature red-light district.

See DOGGY DISTRICT, page 50



JENNI AVINS

Jenni used to work in fashion production, which meant running around factories on behalf of designers in Peru, Madagascar and the New York City garment district. This experience made her think fashion's most compelling characters work waaaaay behind the scenes, so she stopped making clothes and started making videos and writing stories for magazines like *New York*, *Marie Claire* and *Dossier* and her own website, Closettour.com. Jenni lives in Brooklyn with her fish, Rick, and shortly after accepting her assignment for this month's issue—to attempt to make a vest by hand out of a living, breathing fox—she dreamed she was drowning.

See FREE-RANGE FUR, page 126



LYNN YAEGER

Lynn started her career at the *Village Voice*, where she reported on fashion and politics and the intersections between the two, eventually moving on to write about those subjects for the likes of *Vogue*, *T* and the *New York Times Magazine*. This might seem like an odd pairing of topics considering most politicians dress like Ken dolls or asexual trouser-suited aliens, and most lefties regard fashion as just another bourgeois-manufactured opiate of the masses, but, hey, what's life without contradictions? Can't you spend the morning at Occupy Wall Street and the afternoon at Bergdorf Goodman? Fuck yes, you can, because this is a free country. That's why, for this issue, Lynn surveyed the connections between revolutionary political movements and fashion trends.

See LOOKS LIKE A LEFTY, page 24



JUNSUKE YAMASAKI

One of the friendliest and most approachable high-powered fashion guys ever, Junsuke Yamasaki is the editor of *Vogue Hommes Japan*, the best men's fashion magazine on Earth. He and Anna Trevelyan, who styled the "Close Ups" story for this issue, run their own Tokyo-based magazine called *Untitled*, which showcases the work of the world's finest new designers. Junsuke really, really likes fashion. By this we don't mean he likes hanging at cocktail parties or buying fancy bags; we mean the little guy gets insanely excited by all the weirdest and most wonderful stuff currently going on in La-la Land. With this in mind, we asked Junsuke to write about three Tokyo labels that most *gaijins* have never heard of: Written afterwards, Mikio Sakabe and Yuima Nakazato.

See LIFE IN TOKYO, page 42



KRISTOF WICKMAN

Kristof is the extremely talented sculptor who built the aforementioned miniature red-light district for doggies—which included a strip club (Humps) and a rubbish-strewn alley. Unlike the first few prudes we talked to, Kristof didn't bat an eye when we described the scenes of canine carnality we were aiming to document and quickly enlisted the help of a few friends to fire up the glue guns. Googling *doggie S&M* during one particularly heated work session almost tore the team apart. But they are pros and played "Purple Rain" on repeat until everything was OK again.

See DOGGY DISTRICT, page 50

BOXPARK SHOREDITCH POP-UP MALL

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ROMANIA'S POSHEST TWEEN POP SENSATION

Ionut Cercel is the Justin Bieber of manele, a genre of Romanian music that can best be described as a questionable combination of Gypsy folk and modern dance pop. He is 14 years old, has five solo albums under his belt, and is the subject of dozens of fan-created Facebook pages. All of this while dressing like a 45-year-old Vegas lounge singer (which, unsurprisingly, is a popular style in Romania). Recently, his brother started a clothing label under Ionut's name. Its target demographic? "Posh people". I met Ionut for a coffee at a petrol station—a place he "felt comfortable"—where he told me more about his style and I had a hard time resisting making jokes about coffee and Ionuts.



BY
IOANA MOLDOVEANU

PHOTO BY
ZOLTAN LORENCZ



VICE: How do you select your clothes?
Ionut Cercel: Clothes are the only thing I spend a long time thinking about. I am very picky. I usually choose a suit, together with a shirt and a tie, depending on how they match and on my mood. I've liked wearing matching items since I was little. It makes people respect me, and it also shows I respect myself. If you are a serious kid, you don't like to dress casual.

How would you categorise the items in your wardrobe?
Stage costumes, school outfits, TV-show outfits and accessories. I have about ten hats and 20 pairs of glasses. I like the round ones from Ray-Ban, because they cover up my face when I'm tired. I always wear this chainlet I got as a present from a Brazilian guy who owns a disco in Greece. I have to alter the watches I buy because I have small wrists. When I want to look older, I wear a tie.

What is the difference between your stage and school outfits?
The stage outfits are more serious—very elegant and expensive. The school clothes are classical. Everybody knows who I am at school; I don't need to show off. But I have to look good onstage, because that's what my fans care about. I dress quite posh.

What does "posh" mean to you?
Fashionable. Clothes should show your best features. If it's cheap, but I like how it looks, price doesn't matter. Still, I feel expensive clothes fit you better. The shirt doesn't need to have cufflinks, but it has to have a hard collar. I prefer fitted clothes; I don't like clothes to hang about me.

Last October, Canadian senator Nicole Eaton called the beaver, one of Canada's official emblems, a "dentally defective rat". She made the case that the country should instead embrace the "stately" polar bear, setting off a mini-debate over what the beaver truly means to Canucks.

In the 1600s, one of the region's most lucrative occupations was clubbing, skinning and selling these bucktoothed critters, which basically sustained Canada's economy until the 19th century. But in modern pipeline-building, oil-exporting Canada, you might think that beavers don't serve a purpose outside of being cute and gnawing on things; you'd also be wrong. Canada's fur exports brought in more than £280 million in 2010, up 36 percent from the year before and more than triple the paltry £93 million the industry brought in

during recession-tastic 1992. The upswing in the fur economy is the result of exploding consumer demand in emerging markets like Kazakhstan, Mongolia and northern China, where the middle class is growing and discovering how smooth and snuggly Canadian beaver coats and stoles can be. And successful beaver conservation efforts over the past few decades means there should be enough warm, fuzzy beaver to wrap our bodies in for the foreseeable future.



KOALA DUNG EARRINGS ARE A REAL PIECE OF SHIT



BY HANNAH BROOKS

Sometimes you don't know what's missing in your life until you see it. Such is the case with earrings made out of koala faeces sold by the True Blue Roo Poo Company, an Australian business that specialises in making products out of animal poop. For the low price of £12 you can own a pair of plain brown drop-style earrings, or you can splurge and get koala pellets covered with 23-carat gold leaf for £22, which is surely the bargain of the year.

After poking around the internet to learn more about koala caca, I came across a site called *Diary of a Koalawrangler*, written by a woman who cares for injured koalas in Port Macquarie. According to her blog, koalas excrete "uniformly shaped pellets" that look "almost mechanically produced" (except for when they have diarrhoea, of course). And their shit truly doesn't stink—thanks to the eucalyptus leaves they chew, the scent of their poo is "barely distinguishable from the general eucalyptus haze that prevails in an intensive [koala-] care unit."

The bad news is that after I placed our order for the earrings, I was informed the item was no longer available. Pissed off about the shitty situation, I found True Blue Roo Poo's phone number and called them to give them a piece of my mind. Why were they out of koala shit that was designed to hang from your earlobes, and when the fuck would they have more? A heavily accented woman answered, muttering something about her sister, and hung up. We called back, and before we could say anything, the woman screeched, "You be careful! Don't call this number. Goodbye."

ROADKILL IS THE NEW BLACK

Gerry Armsworthy is a 73-year-old "roadkill specialist" who makes stylish and practical winter wear out of animals he finds dead on the street. His home in Regina, Saskatchewan, is also his workshop, where he keeps seven sewing machines and a giant freezer for storing his collected carcasses. He creates upward of 100 pieces per year, selling them at local craft markets and through his made-to-order business.



BY KARA-LIS COVERDALE

ILLUSTRATION BY
MAIA RUTH LEE



VICE: How did you get into this very unique line of business?

Gerry Armsworthy: Back when I was working and travelling around the province, I saw all these lovely animals whacked and lying on the side of the road. I had a hobby of sewing leather and needed some trim for my slippers, so I went to the library and got a few books on skinning, fleshing and tanning.

Is useable roadkill hard to find? I imagine the majority is all torn up.

Not in Saskatchewan. On the highways there are a lot of wild coyotes, foxes, badgers and raccoons that are always out foraging for food. Most of the time they get hit at night.

But don't the animals' bodies basically explode on impact with the car?

No, the only way they fall apart is if the vehicle runs directly over them, but even then it's not very much. They're only not useable if they get hit by a 16-wheeler and they become completely flat. But I don't pick up the ones that are stuck to the road. I use the ones that are off to the side and in the ditches.

Do you price your furs according to scarcity?

Absolutely. My most expensive item is a hat made out of badger fur. The badger is one of the meanest animals of the weasel family and has beautiful fur, but it hibernates in the winter. They only get hit by cars when they wake up to eat.

Have you ever come across a cat or dog hit by a car and thought, "Hey, they'd make a nice hat!"

Oh no, I wouldn't do that, but I have had some strange requests. I once had a guy who wanted me to process his dog. I told him he'd have to go somewhere else. I also had some fellow phone me up and tell me he wanted the skulls. My wife and I thought that was pretty strange. There're all sorts out there.

Do you have any advice for someone who wants to do this?

Most people don't think of this, but when an animal gets hit by a car, one of the first things that happens to it is its bowels break. It can be very messy and stinky, and it's rather discomfoting when you skin it. When you're cleaning the blood and innards just use water, but never hot water because it will cook the blood and you'll never get it out.

Mentioning Unmentionables in Saudi Arabia

BY EZRA POUNDLAND
ILLUSTRATION BY GRACE WILSON

The laws of Saudi Arabia are based on strict Sharia principles, which require genders to be segregated and forbid women from driving, travelling alone and achieving the same professional status as men. Of course, the effects on civil rights are a total bummer, but perhaps the most awkward Sharia by-product has to do with lingerie. Strangely, almost unbelievably, most of the Saudis selling women's underwear are men. And in a country where a man and woman dancing together is the Western equivalent of having anal sex in the middle of a nursery, many ladies find it uncomfortable to speak with a dude about panties and bras.

Saudi women have been protesting this situation for years—activist Reem Assad, for instance, was the leader of a campaign

to boycott lingerie shops that employed men. Last July, their demands were finally heard by King Abdullah, who gave knicker merchants six months to lay off their male employees. (The king's decree also extended to cosmetics shops.)

This isn't the first time officials tried to put the kibosh on men selling women's undergarments. The labour ministry brought up the idea of banning lingerie salesmen three years ago, but for very stupid reasons it was opposed by the nation's powerful clerics, who went so far as to issue a fatwa against women selling bras or lipstick. When a woman named Fatima Garoub launched a Facebook campaign called "Enough Embarrassment", it sparked a number of protests by women across the country.

Though the clergy remain opposed to the idea that a woman might be embarrassed by talking about bras and such with men, Abdullah stood by his decision, and the ministry of labour recently hired 400 inspectors to make sure the country's lingerie sellers are complying with the new law.

While women in Saudi Arabia only recently won the right to vote and run for office (but can't do so until 2015), and have far fewer employment opportunities than men, this small measure to make them comfortable under their abayas is certainly a step in the right direction.





SMILE AND SAY “PASSION GAP”

Having your four top teeth removed for the sake of fashion may seem a little extreme to the squeamish, but in the Cape Flats, an area in Cape Town, South Africa, where many non-whites were forcibly relocated during apartheid, getting your chompers yanked out of your skull is on par with ear piercings. It's common for teens to have teeth removed so they can buy flashy dentures, which are seen as status symbols and range from basic, street-cred-devoid porcelain to iced-out displays of gold and diamonds. The trend is widely known as the “passion gap”, and according to urban legend it started in a South African prison where high-ranking gang members would beat the teeth out of their “wyfies” (prison bitches) so that they could give better blowjobs.



BY JAMIE CLIFTON

PHOTOS BY SYDELLE WILLOW SMITH

Rapper Isaac Mutant was born and raised in the Cape Flats, so he seemed like a good person to ask about passion gaps. He wouldn't tell me whether he himself had a gap but happily answered nearly all of my other questions.

VICE: How did this whole passion gap trend start?
Isaac Mutant: Ah, man, it was never a trend at all. Hell, the passion gap is a fucking way of life, my bra. It's always been there as a part of coloured culture.

When you say “coloured”, do you mean people who don't fall into the classifications of black or white? Yeah, coloured people are, like, between black and white. It's kind of a political thing, but coloured people could be defined as all the fucking leftovers of South Africa. Doesn't matter what their background is; coloured is just all the people in poverty who were forgotten about. Poverty is what linked us all together, and also what forced us to deal with shit ourselves, so the passion gap came out of that as, like, a way of identifying yourself as part of coloured culture.

Does anyone just get grills and pretend they've had their teeth taken out?

Fuck grills. The passion gap is part of coloured culture; all that grill stuff came afterward with people like Lil Wayne and all those American rappers. Fuck Lil Wayne, man. The passion gap's got nothing to do with the hip-hop thing. It was around long before hip-hop ever came anywhere near South Africa.

Where do people get their gaps done? Do they go to licenced dentists?

I mean, some uptight, snobby, larny [slang for “snob”] types will go to the dentist, but I personally don't like to waste money. This is South Africa, man, so there's always a bra with a brother who can sort it out. Of course, the cheapest way to do it is sip on a bottle of rum and just get them teeth beat out of your mouth by the bra with the hardest knuckles.

Fashion Is Destroying the Earth

BY BRUNO BAYLEY
ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE PLATTS

When you go to a fancy-shmancy clothing shop, you probably don't think about the long process that caused your favourite new polyester thong-bottom leotard—or whatever—to get into your hands, but perhaps you should, you selfish little shit. Chances are the manufacturing of said garment resulted in either deforestation, pollution, a bunch of villagers in India being killed by bulldozers or all of the above. Makes you feel pretty lousy, huh? To make you feel even worse, here are three of the fashion industry's most harmful practices.

TANNERIES

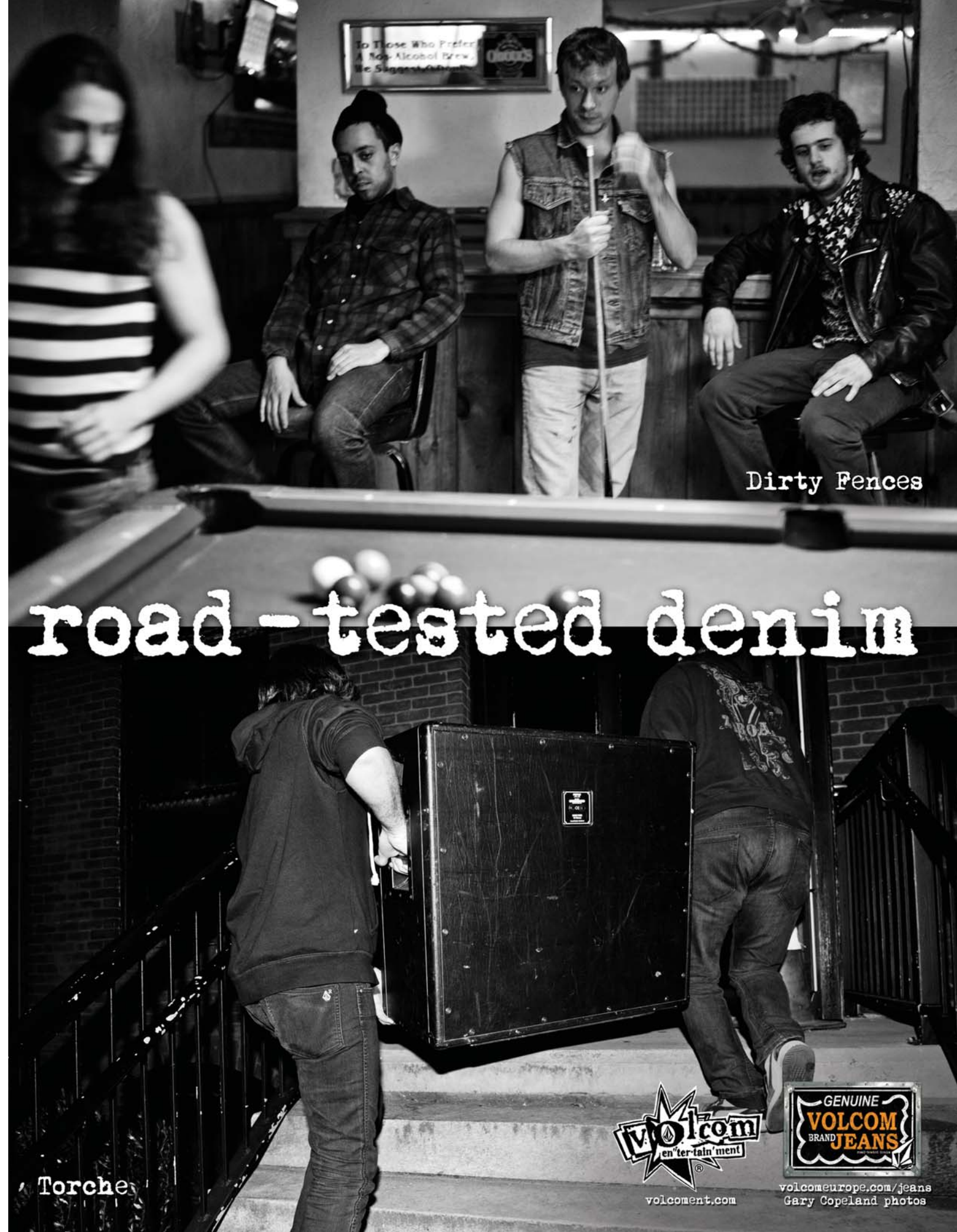
Cow skin gets transformed into handbags and boots through a process called tanning, the most common type of which involves chromium compounds being sloshed all over the leather before it's wrung out and dried. Some of these compounds are carcinogens that can cause boo-boos like ulcers, respiratory ailments and kidney and liver damage. For extra bad vibes, tanneries tend to be clustered in low-income areas, which get turned into chromium dust bowls of misery.

ARTISANAL GOLD MINING

In its natural state, gold is often mixed together with crap like silt and non-precious ores, so it has to be isolated. One method of isolation often used in small-scale (artisanal) gold mining is mercury amalgamation, which consists of getting gold particles to stick to liquid mercury, then heating the mixture until the mercury vaporises, leaving only the pay dirt behind. Problem is, mercury is extremely poisonous and if ingested can wreak havoc on your kidneys, heart and nervous and respiratory systems. Not only is this bad news for workers who inhale the fumes when they're pumping it into the ground, mercury can also build up in the earth, where it contaminates the entire food chain.

COTTON PRODUCTION IN INDIA

In the late 90s, many cotton farmers in India were convinced (or conned) to switch to growing genetically modified Bt cotton, which, while invulnerable to the troublesome bollworm, proved to be susceptible to numerous other pests. This forced farmers to buy more pesticides to protect their crops, sending them into a downward spiral of debt that has contributed to an epidemic of farmer suicides (200,000 in the past decade alone). Have fun showing off your “totes cute blouse” to your friends, though.



Dirty Fences

Torches



volcoment.com

volcomeurope.com/jeans
Gary Copeland photos

ED HARDY, ART HISTORIAN

BY MEGAN AMRAM
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JIM KREWSON



MONA LISA BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

What up what up what up!!!!!! Let's talk about some weak-ass gay-ass art! I'm Ed EFFIN' Hardy and I'm gonna be your M-F-in' DOCENT! Which is just a silly fancy McGaylord way of saying "art yeller-at-er"!!! I got a BA in ART from internet college (WebMD.com, MAYBE YOU'VE HEARD OF IT) and a Four Loko in my MAN PURSE. I'm ready to GO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

So: the *Mona Lisa*. This is trash. How many tigers or skulls are in this painting? THE ANSWER IS ZERO, WHICH IS THE GAYEST NUMBER OF SKULLS OR TIGERS YOU CAN HAVE IN A PAINTING. Put some tigers around Lisa's head and then, boom, you got the *HARDY LISA*. Then her little smile will mean: "Yeah, I got some bomb-ass tigers around my head, what you gonna do about it? Let's make out and then go ivory poaching at Epcot!!!!" BOOM!



THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY BY SALVADOR DALÍ

THIS IS TRASH. Just like what I initially said about the *Mona Lisa*, but this time MUCH LOUDER, AS IF IT WAS IN ALL CAPS IN A CHAT ROOM FROM 2002!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Um, can someone say G-A-Y? I mean, I know I can, as I've proven before and will prove again now: GAY-GAY-GAY (sung to the tune of "Bad Romance" by Lady Gaga, which is DOUBLE GAY x 5-Hour Energy Drink). Here we got some clocks, which rhyme with *cocks*, which is urban slang for "wangs", and some beige-ass desert shit. The only colours that should ever be in art, in order, are: NEON GREEN, NEON PINK, BOOB-COLOURED (MANY DIFFERENT OPTIONS), FLUORESCENT TIGER, NEON PEEN (PINK + GREEN OR THE COLOUR OF A PEEN, MANY DIFFERENT OPTIONS), FOUR LOKO-INDUCED BARE.



THE LAST SUPPER BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

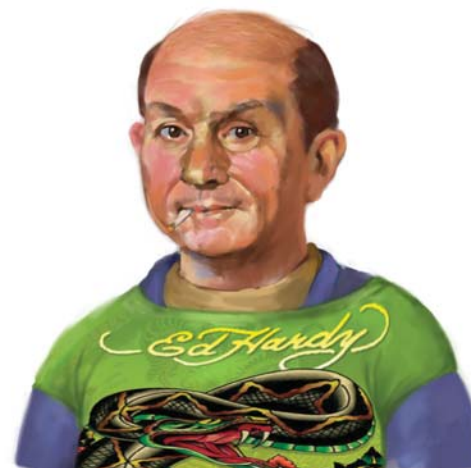
I may not know art (jk, I do), but I know what I like/that if I made a Swiss Hardy Knife, here is what I would put in it: sceptre, tiger, tiny gun, Lisa Frank art kit, boobs and/or tits, Guy Fieri.

OK, so, *The Last Supper*! It's an unbelievably beautiful depiction of Jesus's last moments of peace. HAHHAHAHA, JUST KIDDING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! More like Gay-sus's last gayments of GAY! Did you see how I just replaced all major syllables of what I just said with *gay*?! I did that to highlight the gay nature of the art!! YOU NAILED THAT, ED. [Ed Hardy gives himself a high five and then sucks his own "peen".] Now, in my humble opinion (IHOP), this painting could use some awesomeness, like a naked chick with rainbows for mush-melons. Maybe some tie-dyed roses and pizzas? OR A P'ZONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING BY JOHANNES VERMEER

More like *Girl With a Pearl Necklace*.* (*More like *Girl With the Lion Made out of Tigers*.**) (**Good one, Ed, lion made out of tigers, write that one down and use it for a future design.)



NO. 5, 1948 BY JACKSON POLLOCK

This is a bunch of colour swizzles. But some of the swizzles look like a neon skull on the crest of a tsunami made of blood diamonds, so in that way this painting is great!



AMERICAN GOTHIC BY GRANT WOOD

Slap me with a homing sausage and call me Susan B. Cameltoe, because literally this painting could not be worse or gayer. Two old men holding a gay little salad fork?!? It makes me more barfaroni than my recent meal of nine Four Lokos, a Slim Jim (no homo), a long banana (no homo) and a meat lovers' P'Zone (no homo). This is gayer than Gay Gay Milne.



THE SCREAM BY EDVARD MUNCH

Oh my God. An awesome joke when I was doing the *Mona Lisa* would have been "Mona Lisa Car", like "Mona, lease a car". Holy SHIT, ED, WRITE THAT DOWN!!!!!!!!!!!!



AN ED HARDY VELOUR TRACKSUIT BY ED HARDY

This is art. Pure art. It looks like it was designed by a girl in seventh grade who likes stickers and got into her dad's speed-ball kit.



GUERNICA BY PABLO PICASSO

Guys, I'm gay. 🐯



LOOKING GOOD BEHIND BARS

Staying Fly When Your Wings Are Clipped

BY BERT BURYKILL
ILLUSTRATIONS BY NICK GAZIN

The UK has some 97,000 inmates and there are approximately 2.3 million people incarcerated in the United States, and yet hardly anyone is attending to the fashion needs of the prison-industrial complex! To remedy this injustice, we asked Bert Burykill, our recently-paroled penitentiary correspondent, to give us some inmate style tips. If you're reading this in jail, take heed lest you become a human fifi towel.



LARGE CLOTHING

Tight clothes might be in style on the street right now, but wearing the same duds in jail might make you more alluring to a certain breed of booty bandit. Plus, state-issued duds are going to be uncomfortable, so it's best to at least have some room to let your nuts hang a little.

GLASSES

One of the few luxury items you're allowed in jail is eyeglasses—the government would rather not pay for your specs so they let you wear your own. So ball the fuck out and get some £250 Oliver Peoples glasses. Just watch out for guys with names like “Big D from Brownsville”, 'cause they might break your ass wide open and yonk your fancy frames.

CUSTOM PRISONWEAR

Ask your people to buy you some threads from online prisonwear shops (yes, they exist) like bustthemove.com. You can have your own style in prison, within limits: everything has to cost less than 30 quid, and your choices are pretty much limited to solid-colour, logo-free sweat suits. And no blue, grey or orange, because that's what pork-chop COs wear. But *anything* will feel more luxurious on your skin than state-issued polyester.


DRESSING UP FOR VISITORS

The visit room is the most important place to feel fly. You might only see your people or piece of ass a few times a year, so it's important to try to look like you give a fuck. Try a nice collared polo shirt and wash your face, you slob.

SWITCH IT UP

Having a £30 limit on shoes is kind of rough if you're trying to represent kingpin status. One solution is to have your visitors wear an expensive pair of Jordans, and then swap kicks with them while no one's looking and hope the COs don't notice. You can also pull the switcheroo with religious jewellery—the only ornamentation inmates are allowed besides glasses.

METICULOUS GROOMING

If you decide to wear braids or cornrows while incarcerated it's a pain in the nuts. You have to tie them up because you could potentially stash a banger or something up there. There are plenty of barbers in prison, but most of them can't cut white-boy hair properly. My advice is to keep it simple and short. A shitty battery-operated beard trimmer will set you back about £12. Plus, obsessive grooming kills time and gets your mind off the unpleasantness of jail. 



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HATS OFF, LESBIANS

Gay Women and Their Moronic Headwear

BY KELLY McCLURE

ILLUSTRATION BY
SAM TAYLOR

Ever since school I've been two things: a lesbian and addicted to hats. In my late teens my look had veered towards pervy degenerate, and the commingling of these three characteristics meant that only a simple black beanie was an acceptable method of controlling my banana curls.

Today it is my belief that wearing a hat for any other purpose than keeping one's head warm—or hiding shameful hair—is the equivalent of teaching your body to suck shit up from your large intestine and blast it out the top of your skull like a poop water fountain from which everyone in range must drink. In other words, dumb hats are the manifestation of terrible personalities.

Focusing my hate, I tried to approach women on the street to ask them whether they were aware of the tragic mistakes that encircled their brains. This, however, didn't work out so well because they were insipid buffoons who wouldn't let me take their photos or agree to let me use their real names. So instead, I present to you a few examples of hats lesbians like to wear that, if donned, will instantly make you a total asshole, interspersed with some anonymous back-and-forth with the gay gals I spotted wearing ugly caps in the street.

THE LESBIAN BASEBALL CAP

I don't care if you're a bald dad, an alopecia-afflicted bull dyke, a frat guy or a toddler—unless you're sitting at a baseball game with a hot dog in your hand, you're not allowed to wear a baseball hat. Even if you're a professional baseball player, the minute you're off the field you need to take that thing off your head and stuff it into some sweaty cubbyhole where no one can see it. Do you know the result of covering up a sweaty head with fabric? Dandruff flakes the size of your palm. And when lesbians pair one of these caps with something fun and flashy like an ill-fitting blazer or a polar fleece zip-up that's three sizes too big, you know what they look like? Human dandruff. So when I spotted a piece of dried-up scalp skin blowing down the street, I just had to ask her a few questions.

VICE: Hey, slugger!

Lesbian: What? Do I know you?

No, but I bet you've got a really low ERA. What are you talking about?

You know, baseball. The American dream. Are you on steroids?

Fuck you. [storms off across the street]

THE LESBIAN FEDORA

The list could really start and end right here because wearing a fedora is literally the most disgusting fashion choice I can think of, regardless of your sexual orientation or gender. I don't care if it's Halloween and you're dressing up like Johnny Depp from that movie where he fucked a schizophrenic, or if you bumped your head on an armoire at IKEA while leaning down to pick up the chain wallet that slipped out of your pocket and all of a sudden thought you were living in the Gay 20s; this is the most severe type of hat crime. Don't believe me? Check out this conversation I had with a real-life lesbian fedora wearer:

VICE: Hi, my name's Kelly. Would it be OK if I took a picture of your hat for an article I'm writing for VICE?

Lesbian: Um, no, that would make me very uncomfortable because I'm uptight about my whole life and make random rules about what's OK or not OK to do. Plus, I know that your magazine supports the patriarchy and doesn't shop organic.

Can I at least ask you a few questions?

Yes, but make it quick. I'm late for my kombucha class.

OK. My first question is: Do you play the banjo?

No.

I see. Might you be an extra in *Boardwalk Empire*, or some sort of movie/show about ragtime music or "newspapermen"?

I'm absolutely scandalised by these questions. You should be ashamed of yourself.

THE LESBIAN NONSENSE HAT

These are the type of hats you sometimes see lesbians wearing that are usually knit or fleece and are commonly used for skiing (which is completely acceptable). Typically, however, they are worn any ole place the wearer damn well chooses in an attempt to show people that she's quirky and maybe has a sardonic sense of humour but still thoroughly enjoys life. Do you know what I'm talking about? Sometimes these hats look like its wearer slapped a dinosaur's butt on her head, or they're topped with a yarn Mohawk or maybe they even suggest an Indian headdress of some sort. I spotted a lady wearing one of these the other day while walking down the street towards the dildo shop, and I just had to ask her why her head looked like fucking Bart Simpson's.

VICE: Hey, you! Are you a comedienne?

Lesbian: Huh?

I said, are you a comedienne?

No, why?

Because your hat makes you look like shit and it's making me laugh.

[mumbles something under her breath while turning her back to me and walking away]

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LOOKS LIKE A LEFTY

Fashion's Grand History of Protest, Revolution and Civil Rights

BY LYNN YAEGER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHNNY RYAN

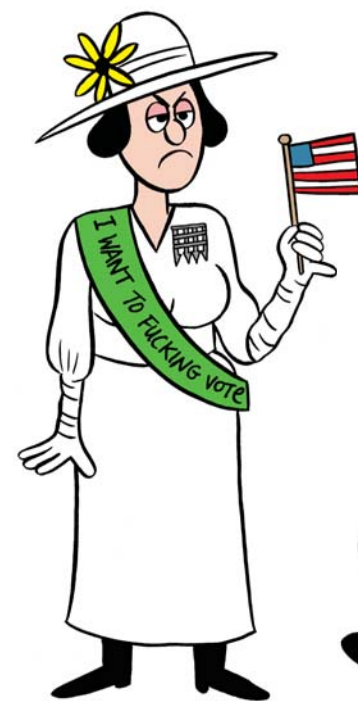
Even as you pull that flak jacket over your camo trousers and stuff a sequined sweater into your knapsack (there might be a dance party after the demo), even as you draw an A on your arm and circle it or tattoo MEAT IS MURDER on your vegan-sleek tummy, the ghosts of progressive fashions past are cheering you on.

Every generation of rabble-rousers believes it has invented its own unique style and negotiated its own sartorial relationship with the larger world, but those

activists who have gone before, on whose incendiary shoulders we proudly stand, also had their special ways of signifying to one another. Without saying a word, they were members of a larger movement.

The subject is far too vast to tackle in one little article, but as natty dressers around the globe prepare to suit up and carry the tumultuous messages of 2011 forward—from Occupy Wall Street to the streets of the Middle East and collective actions in the squares of Trafalgar, Tahrir, Red and Pearl—it could be a fun exercise to take a moment to examine the outfits favoured by our illustrious activist ancestors over the past 100 or so years.

Herein is a brief, deeply personal, resolutely nonexhaustive, highly abbreviated look at a century of great moments in our shared revolutionary sartorial history.



WOMEN WHO FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO VOTE

These valiant early-20th-century feminists, properly known as suffragists (*suffragette* is a derogatory term, invented by the right-wing press of the time), may have employed everything from hunger strikes to violent civil disobedience in their struggle for the franchise, but that doesn't mean they didn't have their own pristine fashion code. This included long white dresses enhanced with slogan-bearing sashes, which were frequently rendered in distinctive colour schemes: purple, white and green in England; purple, white and gold in the US. There was even suffrage jewellery crafted in these hues, not to mention the famous Holloway brooch—a simple silver pin fashioned to resemble a prison gate, bestowed by the British Women's Social and Political Union on suffragists who had done time in London's Holloway Prison for their public dissent.



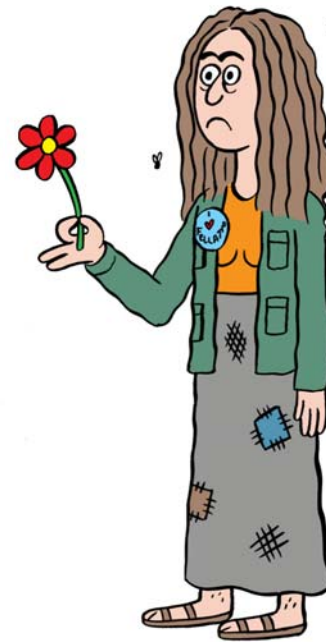
BEAT GENERATION

"Add zest to your Tuxedo Park party... rent a beatnik, completely equipped: beard, eye shades, old army jacket, Levi's, frayed shirts, sneakers or sandals (optional). Deductions allowed for no beard, baths, shoes or haircuts. Lady beatniks also available, usual garb: all black." Believe it or not, in 1959 New York photographer Fred McDarrah actually advertised this "Rent-a-Beatnik" service, a (one assumes) largely tongue-in-cheek venture that would dispatch a dissolute citizen of bohemia to your middle-class, middlebrow fête for a fee of £25 per night. And what would this emissary wear? If he were a poetry-spouting, finger-snapping swinger, maybe a turtleneck and a beret; if a female existentialist were sent to liven things up, she would have perhaps sported a leotard with a pencil skirt or capri pants, free-form silver jewellery and ballet flats. (Have a look at Audrey Hepburn in 1957's *Funny Face* if you need proof of just how glamorous black tights and dance slippers can be.)



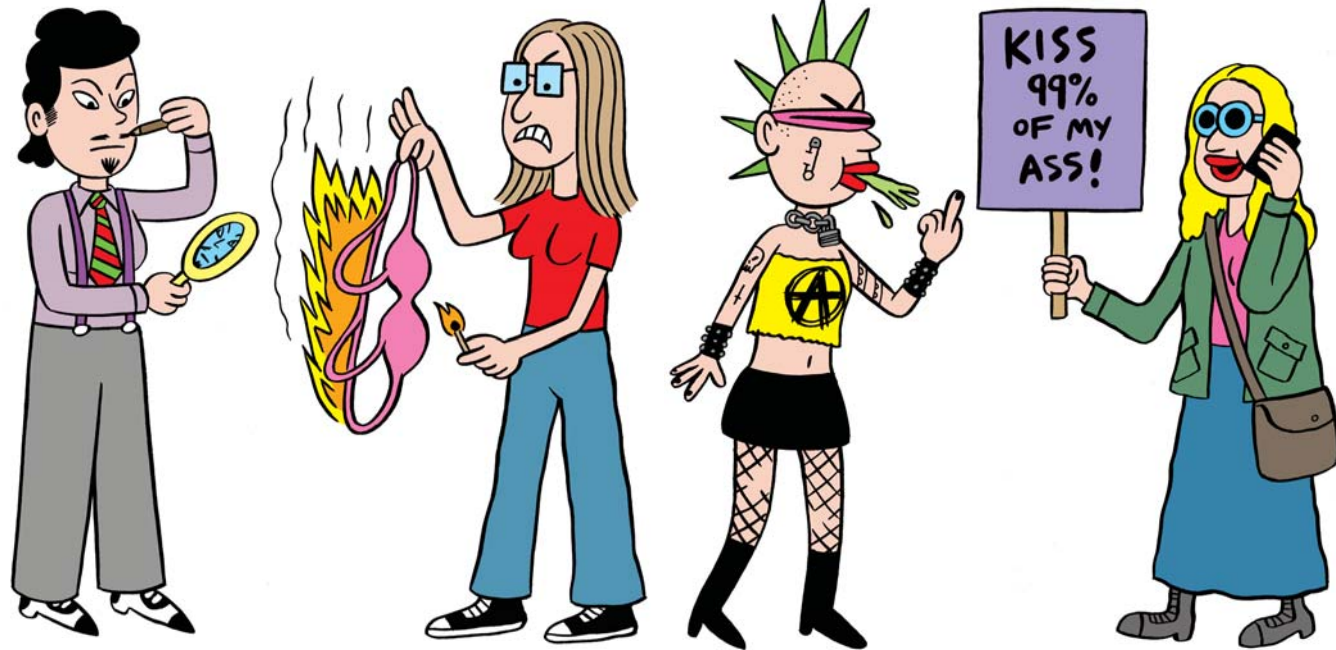
CIVIL RIGHTS

Sometimes the connection between fashion styles and social protest is oblique; in other instances it mounts a soapbox of its own. In the case of the civil rights movement, the slogan "Black Is Beautiful" was a direct refutation of the racist ideas about style and fashion that white society forced down everyone's throats, including the belief that there was such a thing as "good" (i.e., straight) hair. Like so many other examples of what leftists call false consciousness, this notion was rightly turned on its head: by the height of the movement in the late 60s, a woman like the gorgeous activist Angela Davis (who, by the way, is still out there today—Professor Davis even visited New York's Occupy Wall Street last October) was resplendent in high-waisted bell-bottoms, riding boots, denim jackets and a legendarily humongous and stunning Afro. (So threatening was this coiffure that Davis was rumoured to have smuggled a firearm in her tresses.)



THE PEACE MOVEMENT

How does one sum up the fashion preferences of the 1960s anti-war movement in a few sentences? It was a decade of profound shifts, an era that began with helmet hair, girdles, garters, bullet bras, pillbox hats and depressing little white gloves for women (worn even in the dead of summer) and ended with a miniskirted Bernadine Dohrn strutting on the floor of the Students for a Democratic Society convention wearing, in the recollection of then SDS president Greg Calvert, "an orange sweater and purple skirt, and while everyone else had 'Stop the War' buttons, hers said: 'Cunnilingus Is Cool, Fellatio Is Fun'." The decade saw the ascendance of conceits like fringe and tie-dye, when the freethinking students who took to the streets experimented not just with new political ideas but also by donning seemingly unlikely clothing combinations—army jackets over Victorian lace dresses worthy of suffragists, dashikis dancing with denim, men with the kind of long, flowing hair that hadn't been fashionable in more than 100 years.



GAY RIGHTS

Recalling her participation in the Stonewall Rebellion of June 1969, Maria Ritter, who at the time was known to her family as Steve, said, “My biggest fear was that I would get arrested. My second-biggest fear was that my picture would be in a newspaper or on a television report in my mother’s dress!”

Audiences may now indulge in the guilty pleasure of *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, and Cher’s son, born a daughter, may be endearing to those glued to *Dancing with the Stars*, but not so long ago the simple act of men dressing as women, or women donning men’s clothing, constituted a criminal offence. The insanity of these laws was exemplified by New York statutes, which required citizens to wear at least three items appropriate to their “real sex” or risk arrest. Drag was civil disobedience.

WOMEN’S LIBERATION

As it turns out, the myth of rabid feminists burning their bras is just that—a fable. (The conceit was apparently dreamed up by a feminist journalist to liken the nascent women’s movement to draft-card-burning rallies.) While they may not have torched their dainties, on September 7, 1968, women’s rights advocates demonstrated on the boardwalk outside the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, where participants (many in t-shirts, more than a few no doubt sans brassieres) were encouraged to toss materials that symbolised their gender oppression—girdles, high heels, hair curlers, etc.—into a “Freedom Trash Can”. Their original intent was to immolate these offending items, but alas, protesters weren’t granted a permit to light a fire on the boardwalk.

PUNKS

“God save the queen/ She ain’t no human being/ And there’s no future/ In England’s dreaming,” the Sex Pistols’ Johnny Rotten sang in 1977. Though he insisted the band and their songs were apolitical (and that he didn’t “even know the name of the prime minister”), history has proved otherwise.

In 1976, Vivienne Westwood and her partner, the late Malcolm McLaren, opened a shop on the King’s Road in London called Seditious. The name embodied the nihilistic rebelliousness of their young customers, such as Rotten, whose Pink Floyd t-shirt featuring the band members’ eyes scratched out and the added slogan of “Hate” was one of McLaren’s favourites.

Of course, dissolute street kids had no money to shop at Seditious or its offspring, but anyone wishing to express their dark enthusiasms could afford the price of a safety pin to pierce a cheek, or a jar of pomade to grease up a Mohawk, or a knife to tear up a pair of trousers to let a swathe of bruised flesh show through.

OCCUPY WALL STREET

To look back on the encampment in Zuccotti Park, and its sister demonstrations around the globe, is to see in living colour virtually all the progressive fashion trends of the past century—Afros and army jackets, Beat berets and pierced protuberances, denim and Doc Martens. And if long white suffrage dresses have yet to make an appearance, there is certainly the occasional long flowery frock, along with plenty of slogan-bearing buttons and badges—the modern-day equivalent of those Holloway brooches.

This brings us to 2012, and the question of what looks will show up at this summer’s potentially scorching political conventions (fashion inspired by Chicago 1968?). Regardless of how young activists decide to costume themselves at these gatherings and what people make of it, we all owe a great debt to our cross-dressing, bearded, white-gowned, braless elders. They paved the way for us not only with their clothes but with their lives.



Bear hug: a shot from UNIQLO and Undercover’s UU spring/summer 2012 collection.

A BRAIN-DUMP IN REALITY

Peeking inside the Supernatural World of Undercover

BY
DARYOUSH
HAJ-NAJAFI

Don’t be ashamed if you’ve never heard of Jun Takahashi, his label Undercover or its slogan, “We make noise not clothes”—not too many people have. But those avid fashion fans who have tend to visibly sparkle at the mention of either. Jun has had far more impact on the world’s wardrobes than you realise. Back in 1993, with Nigo of BAPE and Billionaire Boys Club fame, Jun set up an early streetwear and fashion store called Nowhere in Tokyo’s Harajuku district, then the most happening fashion locale on the planet. Around the same time, the duo also penned the influential streetwear column “Last Orgy” in *Asayan* magazine.

This past decade, Jun has shown unconventional Undercover collections in Paris and made waves with his twisted photography projects. His photos feature figures you could swear are based on the Power Rangers, yetis, ancient Greek statues and freaky alien dolls. More recently, Jun created Gyakusou for Nike—that’s Japanese for “running backwards” or, more accurately, “going against the flow”—possibly the world’s only high-concept running line. And now Undercover has collaborated with UNIQLO on a new range called UU which launches worldwide in March.

Jun’s designs veer between hi-tech functionalism (he uses materials NASA has researched), sport and punk, and often feature that deconstructed “look” (i.e., ugly clothes ripped apart and put back together) that fashion guys worship. The result is bags that look like giant brains, lots of lace, t-shirts decorated with smashed records, masked faces and clothes so off-kilter they don’t seem to age. What does it all mean? We’re not entirely sure, so we asked Jun the same question.

VICE: For people who don’t know Undercover, what does it all mean?

Jun Takahashi: It’s hard to describe in words; it’s not meant

to be radical, it’s more difficult. We’ll take a pea coat and do something a little different, surprising or uncomfortable. Undercover isn’t confined to fashion, it’s also photography. It’s a brain-dump in reality, photography and music. What Undercover does in one area isn’t necessarily linked to what happens in any other.

Aliens and otherness seem to be big for Undercover and you speak a lot about the “mysterious” and “unidentified”, so how does that work in fashion?

I try and make the what, how or who unidentifiable to try and make people think. There are a lot of mysterious creatures in my shows and in my photos. Children always like scary and mysterious things, and I’m just tapping into the same feelings. I’m always trying to move things in a supernatural direction, because in art when reality and unreality come into conflict, that always accentuates the drama.

Do you try to design clothes that consciously make people look weird, just to push people’s buttons?

For me clothes design is all about balance. Not designing in a normal way and pushing the boundaries is just part of ensuring balance. Doing something new in the world’s eyes is not important to me, but doing something new for myself is. If I’m working with technology it’s usually more for functional rather than design reasons.

What was it like running the Nowhere store and writing your “Last Orgy” column back in 1993?

Well, it was Nigo’s store, and there was a lot of very avant-garde streetwear coming out of Harajuku around then. Nigo and myself actually had totally different mindsets and philosophies. The whole point was having the imported streetwear and my customised pieces in the same shop. We did have a lot of fun though—that period really was nothing like working.

You said some fierce stuff in the *New York Times* about magazines and the link between a lack of creativity and advertising a couple of years ago.

The majority of magazines are just catalogues. Magazines should be exciting and provide a space to showcase fashion, even from brands that aren’t advertising. Good magazines should be a venue for creators and creativity first. Historically that’s what the best magazines have done. Fashion is a form of self-expression anyone can engage in. There’s no room for class discrimination or social hierarchy.

Are you angered by people who don’t make fashion exciting?

Well, what and how people think are different—that’s diversity—and what people feel and believe should be different. So you can’t get angry. Really with Undercover I’m just trying to reflect everything that’s going on in my brain.

What are your thoughts on Undercover’s new collaboration with UNIQLO?

We wanted to make slightly unconventional family clothing, including a kids’ range, something a little bit twisted and something with the essence of Tokyo. It’s difficult to keep that basic functionality and get that level of design without using expensive materials. We also wanted to do something affordable for everyone who enjoys fashion.

For more on Jun Takahashi, visit Undercoverism.com.



Igor hanging out in Montmartre, Paris, in his tin-can shoes and a bunch of fabric he found, topped off with a traditional Croatian vest.

SHOES MAKE THE MAN

Igor Dewe Cobbles Together Footwear Out of All Kinds of Shit

BY MILÈNE LARSSON
PHOTOS BY MACIEK POZOGA

Archival Images Courtesy of Igor Dewe

Igor Dewe is just the sort of jollification injection the pouty, dour-faced fashion industry needs: a hairy 21-year-old French guy who gained notoriety by dressing in rainbow-tie-dyed Lycra shorts, heel-less platform pumps and a Turkish hat while sexily grooving his hips and soaping up the limos of stuck-up journalists as they arrived at Paris Fashion Week. Igor is a dancer, performer, fashion activist and designer, and he makes the most original and insane footwear we've ever seen. We're talking 16-inch platforms made out of fruit, tin cans, sand castles, candle wax and leaves. Not only does he create the shoes with his own hands, he also crafts equally spectacular outfits and performance art pieces. For instance, he once hooked a fruit juicer up to his crotch and invited people to slurp the sweet goodness that dribbled out of an attached plastic hose. Of course, we had to speak with Igor for the betterment of those sad souls of the fashion industry—and the world at large.

VICE: Hellllllloooooo, Igor. How do you come up with your crazy shoe ideas?

Igor Dewe: I don't know. I just play around with whatever I find and work a lot with concepts. I started making shoes because I couldn't afford to keep buying Yves Saint Laurent and Christian Louboutin shoes. I built my first pair out of a pallet of wood, and then I made a pair out of tin cans. My father has an atelier where he welds parts for aeroplanes. I use his equipment to make strong, architectural and masculine shoes.

So you believe that men can wear heels and still look masculine?

Yes! Take orthopaedic shoes, for example. They do wonders for people with deformed feet. I find the concept of those shoes interesting; you can't tell where the foot is, so you can lengthen the silhouette without anyone knowing. I think that's genius—that they enable you to change your body according to your desires. I would love to have super-tall and beautiful legs, but a pair of orthopaedic shoes tailored for me would cost £4,000! So I make my own versions instead.

How, exactly, does one walk in 16-inch heels?

It's actually pretty easy, but they can be heavy and sometimes I cut myself on them. I like how walking around in my shoes is a challenge. I'm not scared of falling over, I just walk out. Sometimes I have to go back home because blood is pouring all over me and I can't walk.

Are your shoes for sale?

I don't think I could sell them, as they are pretty fragile and they take ages to build.

If there's no commercial gain, why put in all of this work?

When I see photos of my performances, I'm like, "Am I crazy? Why did I go there and do that?!" I guess I have this psychological need to perform and create. If I don't challenge myself, if I don't build the shoes I've sketched or make a performance and a video, I'm depressed and feel like a failure. It's like an urge, a sexual drive. You don't know what will happen when you're performing on the streets, and that's the adrenaline kick I'm after. It makes me feel alive.

Do you have representation? An agent or a gallery?

No. I would like to get exposure, but I'm really bad with the whole communication and marketing process.

Come on, you're a marketing genius. The performance you did outside Galliano's final show for Dior, where you dressed like a Roman emperor in crazy-high platform shoes, holding flowers and a sign that said "The King Is Gone", was a brilliant publicity stunt. You must have put a lot of thought into that.

Even though Galliano said some horrible things and deserves what happened to him, I still wanted to pay homage to him for what he's done. Galliano and Jean Paul Gaultier are my favourite designers because they bring folklore and forgotten cultures back to life in a modern mix of ethnic glamour. Some of Galliano's friends came up to me and thanked me. I don't know whether Galliano saw me, but I was in a lot of newspapers. Even Boy George posted about me on his blog.

Why did you start doing these performances if not for promotion of your footwear?

I met some new friends a couple of years ago, and we started partying a lot. Eventually they moved in with me. That's how I met Maja Bergström, who makes my videos. We needed money for rent, so we started doing performances under the name House of Drama. We've performed at clubs, art fairs, fashion events and even the Cannes festival. I still perform with them, but I like to have my own thing on the side as well.

What was your first solo performance?

Money Mercy, in which I begged for money off to the side of the catwalks during Paris Fashion Week, dressed in a Gypsy- and folklore-inspired outfit and Nina Ricci platform shoes. I love fashion, but Fashion Week has become such a fake, commercial mega-event with police surveillance and high security. I felt this urge to protest, to stain that perfect universe of luxury and beauty, to which only the elite is invited, and bring it back to reality. I wanted to remind people that fashion also takes place outside, on the streets. The second performance I did was a protest against the editors in chief and fashion journalists who take themselves for stars and arrive in limos. I figured, "I'm going to trash their cars!"

Are you speaking of the performance you documented in the *Fashion Carwash* video? I love that video! Especially the bit when the body-guard pours the bucket of soapy water over you.

Yes, the guard and I had a little fight. Fashion has become so serious and boring. I wanted to bring some humour to it all.

I've noticed that almost all your performances are interactive in some way. You invite passersby to get involved.

Yeah, the interaction with the public is important to me. I like to work with the street and test people's reactions. Whether they get upset, angry, happy or curious when they see me, it creates a connection, which I really like.



Igor claims he wears his high-platform metallic shoes (top right) for orgies with his robot friends and then puts on the candle shoes (top left) to pray and ask forgiveness for his sins. He spent two days making his fruit shoes (bottom), which you can see in his *Selling My Juice* video.

It's funny that most of your performances take place in Paris, because Parisians are famously cruel to those who purposefully stand out in a crowd.

That's true. The atmosphere in Paris isn't exactly friendly. I feel like people are getting darker, and it scares me. It feels like something dark is coming; maybe it's just the economic crisis, but I have an eerie feeling that fascism is on its way back. I only perform when I have the courage. I'm often depressed and feel like nobody needs me.

We definitely need you.

I always perform when I'm travelling, though. It's a great way of meeting a new country. Last time I was in New York, I performed every day and it was amazing because people were so positive. I really felt like Mickey Mouse. I would love to go back, but I can't return to the States right now because I was recently thrown in jail for a night after one of my performances at Art Basel in Miami.

You were locked up? For what?

Yes, it was horrible. I was supposed to perform at a night hosted by Le Baron [a Parisian nightclub] at a hotel, but there were so many people outside I couldn't get in. I tried the staff entrance at the back, but the guards threw me out violently on the pavement. Then six security guys came and held me down. When the police arrived I tried to explain what had happened and that I was supposed to perform, but they said they didn't care and that "we don't wear high heels like that on the street in this city". Then they threw me in jail.

You were thrown in jail for wearing high heels?

Yeah, it was crazy.

Do you frequently get hassled by police and security during your performances?

Yes, all the time! It's really annoying and tiring, and I have to have authorisation if I want to perform now.

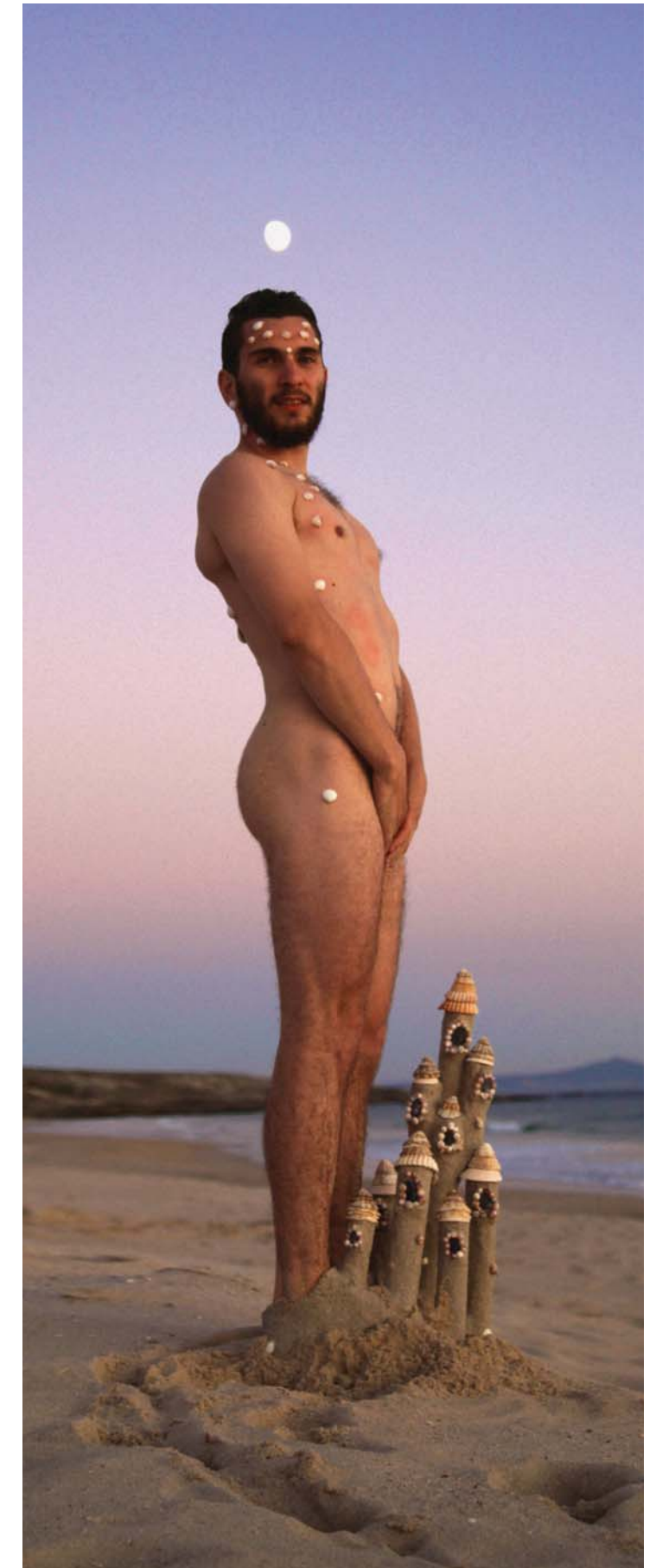
But it's just clothing and shoes. Can't you dress how you want?

No. Even if I'm wearing a carpet and a miniskirt they'll threaten to arrest me because I'm "naked". But I'm not naked! I like to protest for political causes as well, but I always encounter problems with the police. The last political protest I did was my *Grève de Vêtements Pour Sauver la Grèce* [Garment Strike to Save Greece] performance, when I walked around in leaves, flowers and platform shoes, ancient-Greek style.

What's next for you?

I don't know. I'm trying to ask myself what I want to do, but it's hard. When I see all the shoes I have assembled, I think that maybe one day I could do an exhibition with them and the videos. That would be nice. 🙌

To see more of Igor's shoes and watch some of his hilarious videos, visit Igordeuwe.com.



It took ages for Igor to collect the shells for these shoes, and tube after tube of superglue to make them sturdy, but they still dissolved the third time he waded into the water. Now they only exist in his video *The Little Sand Castle*.

ANOINTED ATTIRE

Catholics in Mexico Love Dressing Baby Jesus in Costumes

BY DAVID MURRIETA

PHOTOS BY TONI FRANÇOIS


Mexican Catholics think Baby Jesus is so goddamn adorable they can't resist putting him in all sorts of cute little outfits and costumes. This is especially true in December, when the veneration of *Niño Dios* (God Child) kicks into full gear. On Christmas Eve, families gather around their Nativity scenes to delicately place a figurine of the newborn Christ into his manger, where he will rest until February 2, the date of the Candlemas celebration commemorating the purification of the Virgin Mary.

Officially, the Catholic Church approves only a handful of variants, such as the *Niño Divino* (Divine Child), the Good Shepherd and the Baby Jesus of Nazareth. All represent the same Christ child but are dressed differently, depending on the type of prayer or virtue associated with each look. But the practice has evolved beyond its sanctioned roots and has become a mini-industry in the process. Today, elaborate Christ figures are available in many different sizes, poses and skin colours; it is common to see them dressed in pyjamas, surgeon scrubs, princely robes and even the garb of Aztec warriors.

First introduced by Europeans more than 400 years ago, Baby Jesus figurines are traditionally given as gifts, with the giver appointed godparent of the child for the next three years. During this time he or she must provide clothes for the little one, following a mandatory dress code: year one sees the child wearing a white knit outfit; during the second

it is dressed like an angel (including gilded wings); and for the third year the godchild is adorned in a celestial white robe. After this final stage, the godparents are dismissed and the figure can be dressed to reflect its keeper's prayers—even if this means dressing Baby Jesus as a football player on one's favourite team.

Doña Lupe owns a mini-Jesus tailoring operation in Mexico City and says the market is booming. In just seven years, her company has grown from a roadside stand to a well-established wholesaler. "We produce all the costumes during the year, and from December to February we focus only on selling them," she said. "I ship products all over the country, to places such as Matehuala, Monterrey and Oaxaca. I even have a new customer in Denver."

Although some church officials condemn the custom, arguing that Jesus should not be dressed up like a child's doll, many priests have come to terms with the practice. At the Church of San Bartolomé we met Fray Pedro, a priest in his 80s who was ordained when he was 13. "It is not the image that matters, but the love we show is what really keeps all this going on," he said. "Since God is all and God is love, then we are all praying to the same ol' friend. The Virgin Mary is dressed and named different ways in many countries. Even the image of Jesus in the cross is altered. He was crucified naked! We place that white piece of cloth around his waist out of mere respect." 



NIÑO FUTBOLISTA (CHILD FOOTBALL PLAYER)—Most Mexicans are fanatical about two things: football and religion. Naturally, many pray to Niño Futbolista during penalty shoot-outs, corner kicks and any other time a miracle is needed on the field. He's so popular that he's displayed year-round at the San Miguel Church in Tacuba, Mexico City.



NIÑO ANGEL (ANGEL CHILD)—Baby Jesus in his heaven-approved second-year outfit.



NIÑO CIRUJANO (SURGEON CHILD)—All scrubbed up and ready to go, Niño Cirujano receives the prayers of patients undergoing intensive surgery.



NIÑO DE LAS SUERTES (CHILD OF FORTUNES)—Parents of missing children pray to this incarnation of Baby Jesus in the hope that he will wake during the middle of the night and patrol the streets for lost little ones. He is exhibited all year long at the Convent of San Bernardo in Xochimilco, Mexico City.



NIÑO DE LA FE Y EL TRABAJO (WORK AND FAITH CHILD)—Perhaps the most topical Baby Jesus of these financially uncertain times is this pint-size blue-clad guy. He is venerated by job seekers or those looking for more stability in life. Not to be confused with Niño de la Abundancia (Baby Jesus of Abundance).



NIÑO BEBÉ TEJIDO (BABY WITH EMBROIDERED DRESS)—Baby Jesus in his super-snuggly first-year outfit.



Doña Lupe with her favourite Baby Jesus figure outside her shop, Trajes Tejidos y Bordados Lupe, in downtown Mexico City.



THE END OF ELEGANCE

YSL's Stefano Pilati Explains Why Fashion May Never Be Fashionable Again

BY COSTANTINO DELLA GHERARDESCA
PHOTOS BY CARLOTTA MANAIGO

It's not hyperbole to say that Yves Saint Laurent is the greatest, most evocative name in the history of fashion. Stefano Pilati has been the company's creative director for the past decade, defining yet another era with his analytic eye for design and plainspoken opinions about fashion's place in modern culture. Before taking the helm at YSL, Stefano worked closely with Tom Ford and Miuccia Prada, perhaps the most innovative figures in Italian fashion of the past 20 years.

While Stefano was the most suitable candidate to take over the billion-pound fashion house after Tom Ford's departure, that doesn't mean he didn't piss off a lot of people in the process. And while writing about and interviewing those in the fashion industry can very quickly veer into pretentious nonsense, to be honest, for people who—like me—live fashion the same way others live music or art, Stefano's as real as it gets. So far he's managed to keep YSL economically viable while flying the banner of elegance and weirdness first raised by his mentor and master, Yves—a psychotic genius whose madness created a new way of communication. But things are changing for designers; times are tough and battles must be picked carefully. As Kim Jong-il used to say, "He who is afraid of a challenge will never be a good revolutionary." Stefano is undoubtedly a revolutionary figure, and he's not afraid of provocation—whether that means serving up controversy or sitting back while fashion bloggers bitch about him.

I conducted the following interview with Stefano via Skype. He was sitting in his office in Paris, dressed to the nines, while I wasted away on my bed like a Nan Goldin photograph.

VICE: The vision you brought to Yves Saint Laurent is much different—and some would say more daring and perverse—than your predecessor, Tom Ford. Were there people in the fashion industry who weren't happy with your ideas and whose opposition you had to overcome?

Stefano Pilati: Of course! I came across many difficulties, and at times still do. Mine has been a serious, respectful, professional path, based on the fundamental idea of elegance at YSL. Some of the choices I make in my collections, however, are ultimately due to business, but I think they can still be seen as glamorous choices nevertheless. Some of this has to do with the fact that when I started, the company was losing a lot of money—75 million euros a year. I didn't start from scratch, I started at *negative* 75 million. I had to strike a balance. I was asked to be innovative while respecting the tradition of the *maison*, but I also had to be commercial and saleable. People were expecting fireworks, but I never gave them any. I had to lay the foundation first.

Would it be fair to say that your influence was subtle but significant? Yeah, I created a new silhouette. In 2004, everybody was hanging around with low-waisted pants and skirts. It was disgusting! You'd walk down the streets and see fat asses in low-cut jeans. So I said to myself, "Maybe we don't have to keep on seeing that." That's when I raised the waistline and tightened it up

with belts and stuff. It's a silhouette that's still the basis for many things today; it's still working. And in fact, despite the initial criticisms, I was given the credit for it.

What kind of difficulties did you have to go through when you joined YSL?

You know, YSL—unfortunately for me—is already strongly defined in people's imaginations. Pretty much everyone has an opinion about it. You make flounced skirts, they ask for capes; you do capes, they ask for tuxedos; you do the tuxedo, they want it more 70s; if you go 60s, no, you should have gone to the 80s. My hardest challenge was putting all this bullshit aside. When I create a piece of clothing, I think of today's life—dynamism, the role of women in society, and her behaviour in given situations. I'm speaking of women who play leading roles in our society, not just the big-spender wife or lover who spends her days being fucked by her rich boyfriend. I try to include all of society in my creations. That's the most challenging thing. Saint Laurent is maybe the most complex brand in the fashion system, because you have to face people's imagination, which is infinite, just as infinite as Yves's work was. He was maybe the most prolific designer in the history of fashion. From the 60s to the 80s—I'm talking about the birth of prêt-à-porter—that's when he was most active, and it's also when the fashion industry reached the next level.

Perhaps the epitome of women and glamour, at least in mainstream culture, is the red-carpet outfit—women in LA, wearing long gowns at 4 PM, all made up as if they were an anchorwoman on a newscast, with 1930s hairdos. It's one of the most inelegant things imaginable. We have no icons of elegance; we don't have a Grace Kelly. Are there any contemporary women whom you would consider exemplars of elegance?

Generally speaking, or referring specifically to Yves Saint Laurent?

In general.

My idea of elegance—and this refers to women as well as men—is that someone is elegant when he or she shows a good knowledge of what fits them, where you can find naturalness and self-esteem. Not showing off. Elegance is the idea of showing an optimistic depiction of oneself, and to lose oneself in the frivolity of style and fashion. Nowadays nobody gives a shit about being elegant, or chic. If you're doing it, you're doing it for yourself, because it's your way of being. When you're not thinking, "This is fashion," and you're not buying clothes to create statements, you're on the right path. If fashion goes low waisted and you're fat bottomed, well, forget it; don't put slim-fitting jeans on. They're going to look awful on you. You should dress in black; it would be better.

But seriously, it's not easy to find elegant women. There are a few, the majority of whom are old—and there are one or maybe two in the world who created a new style when they



Some of the artwork that Stefano surrounds himself with, which, he assures us, he draws almost no inspiration from.

were young. Today when I go to New York and survey art and fashion, I see smart women and the level is high. But there's a difference between this and saying a woman is elegant.

Are there any particular artists or other creative people from whom you draw inspiration?

I'm not like that. My culture is self-taught and based on curiosity. I grew up in the 80s and my iconic artists are Cy Twombly, Hermann Nitsch, and... there are a whole bunch of them. But I've never found myself leafing through the pages of an art book and thinking, "Now let's do a collection inspired by Rothko." Maybe architecture. For my next collection I showed my assistants some of Gio Ponti's interiors in the University of Padova. They have a strict, linear form combined with traces of originality. Sometimes I take the cue from some master who inscribed in his work a general aesthetic sense that inspires me. You have to remember that I work in a highly inspirational environment. Our archives are insane. Yves created a lot of different work. He made Mondrian dresses, Picasso jackets, etc.

Is the idea of fashion as part of contemporary culture—alongside music and art—still valid? Or has the market transformed the reality and perception of what is fashionable into some sort of abstraction?

Fashion is not fashion anymore. I am sure of this, but nobody realises this because the world is full of romantics like me—people who continue to believe in it. Now "fashionable" can mean anything. Everything is fashion. Anything can become fashion. A while ago, things were more elitist, and this allowed it to be more aspirational and directional, and this would inspire others. It might have even—to use a horrible term—"taught" others. Nowadays, what can you teach? I might make a collection in flannel, and then the next guy makes a collection using technical see-through nets. If somebody doesn't know much about fashion, what can he draw from this? What can he learn? It makes no sense! He can't use fashion as a road map, he's lost. Nowadays, it's all business.

The other problem is that fashion, as a system, is very insular and introverted. We constantly recycle the same concepts and express them through the same modes of representation. The moment you start making videos or move off the catwalk, most journalists will have no fucking clue what you're doing because they don't have the time, willingness, or culture to really understand something new. You'll be misunderstood, and you'll have no choice but to return to doing the things that follow the language everyone understands.

Yves Saint Laurent brought street fashion to the catwalk with his Beat collections in the 60s, and then he created prêt-à-porter. Over the past 20 or so years, I can't think of many designers who crystallised youth culture in their work like he did. Maybe Raf Simons or Junya Watanabe. Is high fashion's relationship with streetwear officially over?

The real question is: What can you take out of streetwear? Girls are all wearing miniskirts and leggings and leather jackets. We've already seen all of this. Streetwear never taught me anything. Consider this: Yves Saint Laurent was one of the first designers to revisit vintage. If you read his biography, you'll see it. He used to go to London to the first secondhand markets and find clothes from the 30s. That's how he invented the tuxedo. He bought a man's smoking jacket and put it on one of his muses. That's how most of his innovations began. Today you can do that type of research, but it's hard to create a story like that, because too many have already been told about almost

everything. Personally, I view my work like that of an artisan. I am very egocentric in this sense. I work in fashion to express my own self, because it's the only way I know how.

Do you think fashion is misunderstood because the people who create it speak a different creative language from those who consume and analyse it?

When people enter our store they imagine cashmeres, silk cravats, shirts in crêpe de chine, crocodile shoes. Obviously, we make them, but it's like hitting myself in the balls. I have 800 cashmere coats and 900 silk cravats. My point is, your work can't just be a selfish journey. You're working for *a* brand, not *your* brand. You have to adapt. I like to let myself go with some ideas, but you have to have the rest of the company on board with you and deal with those dickheads who are only businessmen—the ones who ruined fashion, people who move from Danone to YSL like it's the most natural transition in the world.

“Your work can't just be a selfish journey. You're working for *a* brand, not *your* brand. You have to adapt.”

In the 70s, at his peak, Saint Laurent lived a very exciting life, or at least it seemed this way from the outside: drugs, rent boys, etc. Do you think a contemporary designer in today's fashion landscape could ever get away with behaving like that?

I don't think you can, because today it's a real office job that goes beyond any normal conception of what time one should devote to work. I work 24 hours a day, essentially. I have to make a collection every two months. You have to be in shape; you have to be more athlete than rock star. The real problem is that fashion isolates you. When you go outside that world and meet the 90 percent of society who have no clue what you're doing, you end up choosing to go back home with your friends. Or maybe you run away for ten days and party like an animal, and then it takes you ten days to recover and you hope nobody noticed. Today, excess has to be kept within the private sphere. But you know about my past and that I used to get high. When I used to really use, at Prada, a guy found out, and he told me, "Well, David Bowie made his best records when he was using." That was maybe the last time I felt that there was a slight acceptance of what I was doing. Today that kind of stuff is just impossible. Without getting right into the dirt of it, John [Galliano] really kind of put an end to that sort of option.

His behaviour may have seemed inexcusable at the time, but I'm still shocked that Galliano was expelled from Dior. His couture shows were among the best and most incisive I've ever seen. Absolutely.

What do you think of that whole mess?


I think it was a tragic situation, both for him and for the *maison*. The truth is, going back to what we said before, about excess: Let's not forget that we aren't pure creators with rich boyfriends who fund our work and take our hands to lead us along while we do whatever we want. We work for corporations, with hundreds of people who go home at 2 AM on the subway, not with drivers. There are whole factories full of people who create our stuff, and in a way there is a public media system that puts us at the centre of it all, a system for which we are the face of an entire corporation. You have to come to terms



with your responsibility and choices. If you're a guy who has his own little things going, you can do that, but then you can't expect to stand next to Charlize Theron in front of millions of people. If you stand on that stage next to Charlize Theron, you have to be able to stand up and talk coherently. Shit, if you can't even talk normally, and you arrive two hours late fucked out of your mind just to leave after ten minutes after two glasses of wine, well, it might be best if you just stayed home.

We have to understand that people are there *for us*. Our creations have a power, and we have a power, which we transmit to others. People want to give you that power, and in the moment that they give it to you they expect to see a person standing in front of them who can at least appreciate it. In a way, it makes me think about how you make your own bed. You can do what you want, at home. But when you go out, keep it together. Look, it was a tragic situation, and I'm not justifying anybody's actions. If I must choose sides, I might justify him, but I do so with sadness. It's just sad. I don't feel bad for him, though.

Would you consider yourself more of a Scott Walker or a Truman Capote type, with respect to social life?
I don't like flattery. I don't care about it at all. I think I might be so extremely egocentric that I just don't care what others think. If I do something I like, I think it's valid. The first few years I was

in this position, I have to admit, when I found myself in an elevator with Kathryn Bigelow and Richard Gere riding up to Mick Jagger's flat, I mean, when I got home I used to slap my own face just to confirm that I was really me. Of course I am fascinated by that kind of social life, but I prefer staying home, relaxing, watching television, or spending time with my partner. But consider that I work like a dog, and most of the time when I get home I am so beat I can barely do anything at all. Right now I just go to my own openings, and I might go out for a pizza with friends on a Sunday. The bare minimum of what's expected to function as a social being. And then it all becomes work, work, work. You go to these things because they ask you to, because you have to—it's part of the job. I don't have a great relationship with high society and social types. But I love this experience, and I love my job. I'm more grateful for the lifestyle this job has bought me than for the fame or the recognition. If I walk the streets and somebody recognises me and asks for my autograph... well, it stuns me. I ask myself, "What did I do?" I mean, are you sure you want my autograph? Because, if we lived in Picasso's time, what would this person do if they met Picasso? Would they ask him to kill them? I'm a designer. But then again, I understand—you're somebody who feeds people's dreams, you live surrounded by beauty, and you're seen in that context, as a privileged person. Unfortunately the figure of the "designer" continues to be deified. 

"Gags, girls and good times. X marks the spot!"

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IN CINEMAS MARCH 2

LIFE IN TOKYO

Japanese Fashion Is Still Insane

INTERVIEWS BY JUNSUKE YAMASAKI

Anyone with an elementary knowledge of clothes knows that the Japanese have a serious penchant for bizarre, innovative and shocking fashion. That's why being "big in Japan" isn't just some hoary cliché for all those Central Saint Martins graduates basing collections on, say, anal rape in the steampunk era—it's a vital economic lifeline: the citizens of Tokyo and Osaka genuinely buy the nuttiest gear and many young British designers regularly sell the bulk of their collections to Japan.

Such a fertile and progressive domestic market means that Japan is inevitably the first place to look when seeking designers who will totally blow your mind. Trouble is, Tokyo is a long way from the rest of the world's fashion capitals, and the language barrier (still) means Japan's designers, journalists and fashion industry are as reluctant to communicate in English as New York and London are to get to grips with Japanese.

Beyond the coterie of designers who show in Paris every season, foremost among them Comme des Garçons, Issey Miyake and Yohji Yamamoto, many amazing Japanese designers barely register abroad, bar those making the odd appearance on a forum having once collaborated on a sharkskin tea cosy with Eastpak. In order to right this informational injustice, Junsuke Yamasaki, editor of *Vogue Hommes Japan* and founder and editor of foremost new-fashion talent zine *Untitled*, speaks to three Tokyo designers whose work, we feel, should be better appreciated overseas.



MIKIO SAKABE

ABOVE AND RIGHT: Mikio Sakabe's autumn/winter 2011-12 collection.

The Tokyo district of Akihabara is well known to be geek central and the spiritual home of cosplay. Here the scene is divided between the star karaoke singers and performers who make up the Akihabara idols, and the *otaku*, the geeky followers of the idols and mega-fans of all things anime. It's no coincidence that designer Mikio Sakabe's latest show took place at Akihabara Fashion Week.

During Mikio's show the idols replaced the usual fashion models and the *otaku* sat in the front row seats normally reserved for the glitterati. Several other designers also showed, each of whom are loosely aligned with what the Japanese call "the 2D aesthetic"—that's style based on all things comic book, manga and gaming.

VICE: What made you want to work with the Akihabara?

Mikio Sakabe: I wanted to do something that reflects something current. Obviously, most new movements come from subculture, not from high fashion, and Akihabara has been important in Japan for a long time now.

Most people in Japan see Akihabara culture as something that's totally



unfashionable in general—why base a collection on that scene?

The older generations do think that Akihabara is just about the *otaku*. However, go into the fashion schools and people don't draw any boundaries between high fashion, street fashion, the *gyaru* Mecca that is Tokyo's 109 department store, manga, anime or cosplay. Everything is allowed.

What is it about the *otaku* that fuels your obsession with them?

The dynamic at the Akihabara idol concerts between the *otaku* and their idols is very pure. During the concerts the *otaku* and their idols become as one soul; they get closer than any audience and band I've ever seen at any punk rock concert. And on a fashion level, even though they have such a strong look, the *otaku* aren't really thinking about fashion or trends. It's a special world.

So you're trying to tap into whatever it is that motivates people to get involved in cosplay?

Yeah, cosplay is such an interesting thing. Traditionally western fashion has always been concerned with making yourself look better, whatever that means, but on the other hand cosplay is for people who want to transform themselves.

Would you say you are making fashion or costume?

I'm trying to make fashion that's freer, more enjoyable and more open, but we are making real fashion. We sell a lot of t-shirts and sweaters.

Mikiosakabe.com



YUIMA NAKAZATO

ABOVE: *The third way: a look from Yuima Nakazato's spring/summer 2012 collection. Photo by Yuima Nakazato.*

TOP RIGHT: *Another look from his 2011 spring/summer collection.*

After Yuima Nakazato graduated from the Antwerp Royal Academy of Fine Arts he started a womenswear label, but he soon realised his real fascination lay in menswear and androgyny. Yuima now says his collections are for a missing third gender, which isn't that unusual in the world of fashion. But what is unusual is Yumia's penchant for using highly non-fashion materials like wood, foil and obscure industrial components such as the film used in the manufacturing of TV screens. Even better, the wildly sculpted and metallic clothes suggest some mad collision between a samurai warrior and 70s disco fruit Sylvester. Yuima also recently

collaborated with self-styled "art shaman" Matthew Stone on *The Body Beyond*, a book based on the inspiration behind Yuima's latest collection.

VICE: Why fashion design?

Yuima Nakazato: Even as a very little kid I was always making things, and by the time I was in high school I was customising second-hand womenswear to wear myself and even organising fashion shows at school. An aspiring architect friend did the lighting and special effects, a wannabe hair stylist did the hair and make-up, and a friend in art class did the body painting and I played the music.



WRITTENAFTERWARDS

BELOW: *A powerful look from Writtenafterwards' "The Fashion Show of the Gods" collection. Photo by Daniel Sannwald.*

Yoshikazu Yamagata is the mastermind behind Writtenafterwards, a truly insane Tokyo label that designs collections based on themes such as crime and punishment or god. Because he's the ultimate creative, Yoshikazu's fashion output is so out-there he rarely makes much money from it. Instead he subsidises himself by art-directing for various ad agencies and freelance illustrating. He also runs his own fashion school, Coconogacco.

VICE: Did you always want to be a fashion designer?

Yoshikazu Yamagata: Definitely, and not

just because it's a fun thing to do, but because my fashion skills are the only thing people have ever praised me for. Really, there was no other choice.

How do you alight on rubbish, god and freemasonry as collection themes?

You know, I don't really think of that stuff as crazy, I think my design sensibility deals with stuff that's quite normal. Maybe it's normal, but an exaggerated normal, or normal's extremes. If I'm thinking about fashion I just naturally think about garbage or god or whatever. Or my ideas come from personal experience, I'll often work my memories and dreams into my creations. For example, I wrote a story called "I Am 0 Points"

for my fourth collection. I used to constantly score a 0 for most exams when I was a student in Japan, so I based a collection on a character drawn from that time.

Your fashion shows seem to be about so much more than the commercial imperative to make the clothes look good. What are you trying to do?

People are always telling me fashion is business, but every single thing is a business in this world; commerce is a part of every field, not just fashion. Fashion is a very natural part of humanity, but people make too much of the connection to business and money, which is something I'm not sure about. My aim is always to elevate the level of creativity in fashion, unfortunately that takes a lot of effort and a strong spirit.

Is money wrecking fashion?

I love money, and actually want more of it. We can't live without it. My new collection is called "0 Written" and is focused on fashion and money. I wanted to honour the history of fashion and money. In the past, there was always a strong link between cloth and money.


What did you learn from your time assisting John Galliano?

Fashion is life and death, it has infinite appeal and power, but it is dangerous. Being creative can make people depressed and crazy. Geniuses like John Galliano and Lee McQueen broke apart which is sad. I was always moved by what they did, but with that very rare level of 100 percent self-sacrifice, you could always see the possibility of mental destruction at the same time. Personally I've never had the courage to reach that level.

What do you teach at your fashion school, Coconogacco?

Previously I'd been asked to teach at many schools, but in Japan, fashion education is really conservative and based on making clothes. So I decided to create a place where people can connect to fashion in various ways. I teach students to be themselves, and in their own way make something relevant to now. Because creating fashion means creating a new human viewpoint, we educate them in fashion, but not focused solely on making clothes.

Wouldn't it be nice to just make some simple, wearable clothes?

I really want to in time, but there's so much more I want to say right now. 

Writtenafterwards.com



DOs



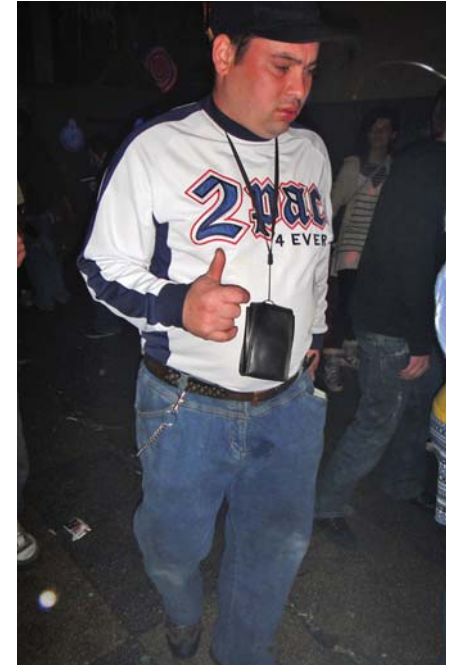
I always appreciate someone who is ready and willing to take NYC back to the 80s by acting like a human burning rubbish bin.



Um, can you say "dorbles"? While the rest of the porn convention is packed with waxed Botox monsters who look like latex RealDolls shout-laughing at each other's coke jokes, these two just breeze right through on a cloud of healthy body image and fleecy red pubic hair. I kind of want to live in their attic.



VICE paid £6,000 for this rare candid photo of Matthew Broderick and Sarah Jessica Parker because that's how much we give a shit.



What does it take to preserve an icon's memory? Simple! Blistered bottom lip, wallet necklace, wallet chain, baby-dick pee stain and a pair of tailored jeans.



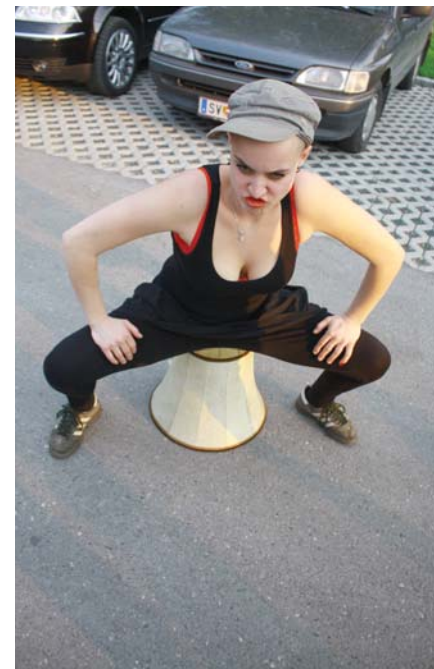
If Baz Luhrmann were to set *A Tale of Two Cities* in the underground tunnels of New York, this woman would be part Madame Defarge and part night rat.



Oh, the Germanity! Imagine walking down the street and passing Sgt Synth as he busts out a little "Pocket Calculator" on his Minimoog. The whole rest of your life would be the best day ever.



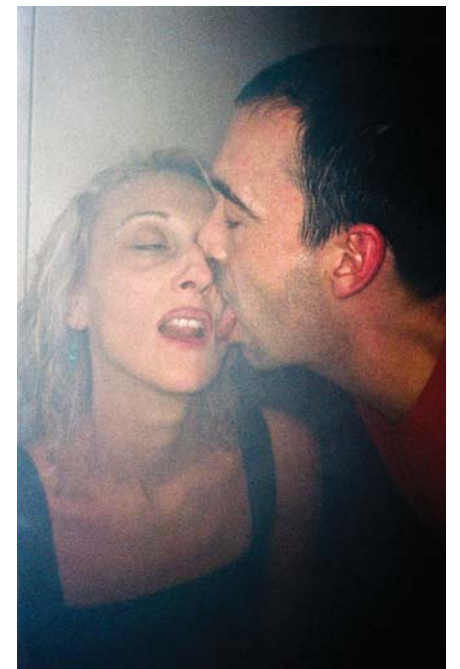
Does anyone else have that fetish where you get totally turned on by women who dress like retarded gymnasts who are about to rob a Costco?



Having to serve a minimum of two years in the Israel Defence Forces could make anyone act out. I'd let her shit in my lampshade; it's pretty much the least anyone can do.



News flash, Asian Jesus. Pink scrotum tote bags don't make you look less like a piece of shit.



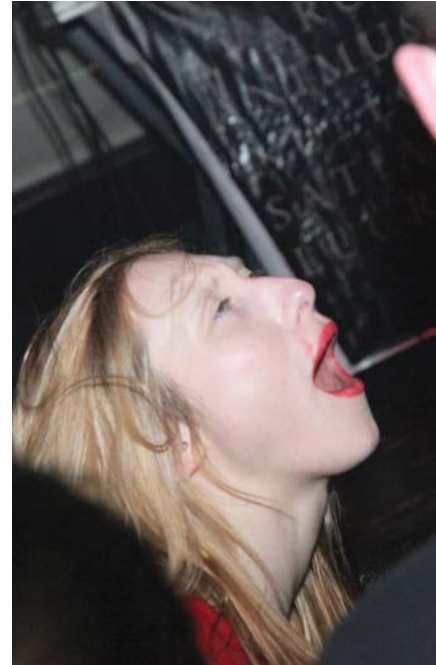
When you buy your wife from a developing country it is your right as an individual from a more developed country to do with her as you wish. She is your slave.

DON'Ts

DOs



There's a lot our kids can learn from a tramp, like how to roll a joint using only a £5 note and a small Asian woman.



Say what you will about banshees. They never short you on a bag, usually have their own smokes and are always willing to throw down, even when it's Tuesday night and they've got, like, 20 impending deaths to foretell.



"Everyone, look! There's a guy over there yelling and waving his arms. He must have something very important to say because he's wearing a Kermit the Frog t-shirt."



This looks like one of those shitty *Star Trek* episodes where Picard goes back in time to the 1920s and fucks a flapper or something.



Can I get the SuperBucket of hot wings with a side of transsexual street justice?



You know when you're watching some film from the 70s and think, "Why don't people's faces look like that anymore?" It's even weirder when it happens in real life from the present.



If your ass is so clean you could run a white glove through your entire digestive tract without picking up a spot and yet somehow you're *still* looking for a husband, it's time to get creative with the advertising. Figure out how to sell to your strengths.



Six-foot, seven-foot, eight-foot bunch! Daylight come and me wanna go home. Three-quarters of the world's cocaine is produced in Colombia.



Nothing like begging for cash in an Elmo sweater to distract from the fact that you're begging for cash in an Elmo sweater while your best friend nods off, much to the depression of his confused dog.



The last time I saw my sister was in this basement. I don't remember where. Some guys' house. We met them at a bar. There were like six of them. I woke up on the beach with my underwear around my ankles.

DON'Ts

DOGGY DISTRICT

PHOTOS BY BRYAN DERBALLA
COSTUME DESIGN: ASHER LEVINE

Costume design assistants: Hannah Peyser, Jeremy Wood and Sunja Culley
Set design: Kristof Wickman (Kristofwickman.com)
Set design assistants: Danny Durtsche, Matt Wenger and Scott Penkava

Special thanks to: Bailey, Bowie, Finn Danzig, Henry, Lula, Megabite, Monster, Piccolina and Weezy. Shot at Fast Ashley's Studios.







umps

GNAUS GIRL





STICK 'EM UP

PHOTOS BY RICHARD KERN
STYLIST: ANNETTE LAMOTHE-RAMOS

*Stylist's assistant: Miyako Bellizzi
Hair: Amber Duarte
Make-up: Jen Myles
Models: Samantha York at Trump, Abby Stedman
Special thanks to: NJ Fire Arms Academy*

BERETTA 92 FS (RIGHT HAND)
SPRINGFIELD 1911 IN 9MM (LEFT HAND)

adidas jacket



KIMBER
DESERT
WARRIOR

Pull-in underwear



ROCK RIVER
9MM LAR-9

American Apparel shorts



BERETTA CX4 STORM

Unit shorts

REMINGTON
870 MARINE



Motel dress, vintage belt



BERETTA STORM AND
M4 TYPE (JERSEY LEGAL)

*American Apparel top, Unif skirt;
Vans shirt, Robin's Jean trousers*



SMITH & WESSON
MODEL 686

Stussy x MadeMe jacket, Tripp NYC jeans



American Apparel tights, Palladium boots

BUSHMASTER M4

GONE FISHING

PHOTOGRAPHY: SANNA CHARLES, STYLING: TONY SYLVESTER

Models: Edd Hyde, Lee Rogers, Tony Sylvester. Thanks to Bindi Kaufmann and all the brands. All clothes available at Butterystore.co.uk.



THIS PAGE: Lee 101 cardigan, Lee jeans, Sperry Top-Sider shoes, Present hat, vintage socks
OPPOSITE PAGE: Patagonia waders, Present hat





THIS PAGE: Lee 101 shirt, Carhartt Heritage trousers, Pointer shoes, YMC hat, vintage socks
OPPOSITE PAGE: Heritage Research shirt, TENDER Co. jeans, Pointer shoes, YMC hat, vintage watch and jewellery, YMC x Gloverall coat, Edwin jeans, Pointer shoes, Present hat





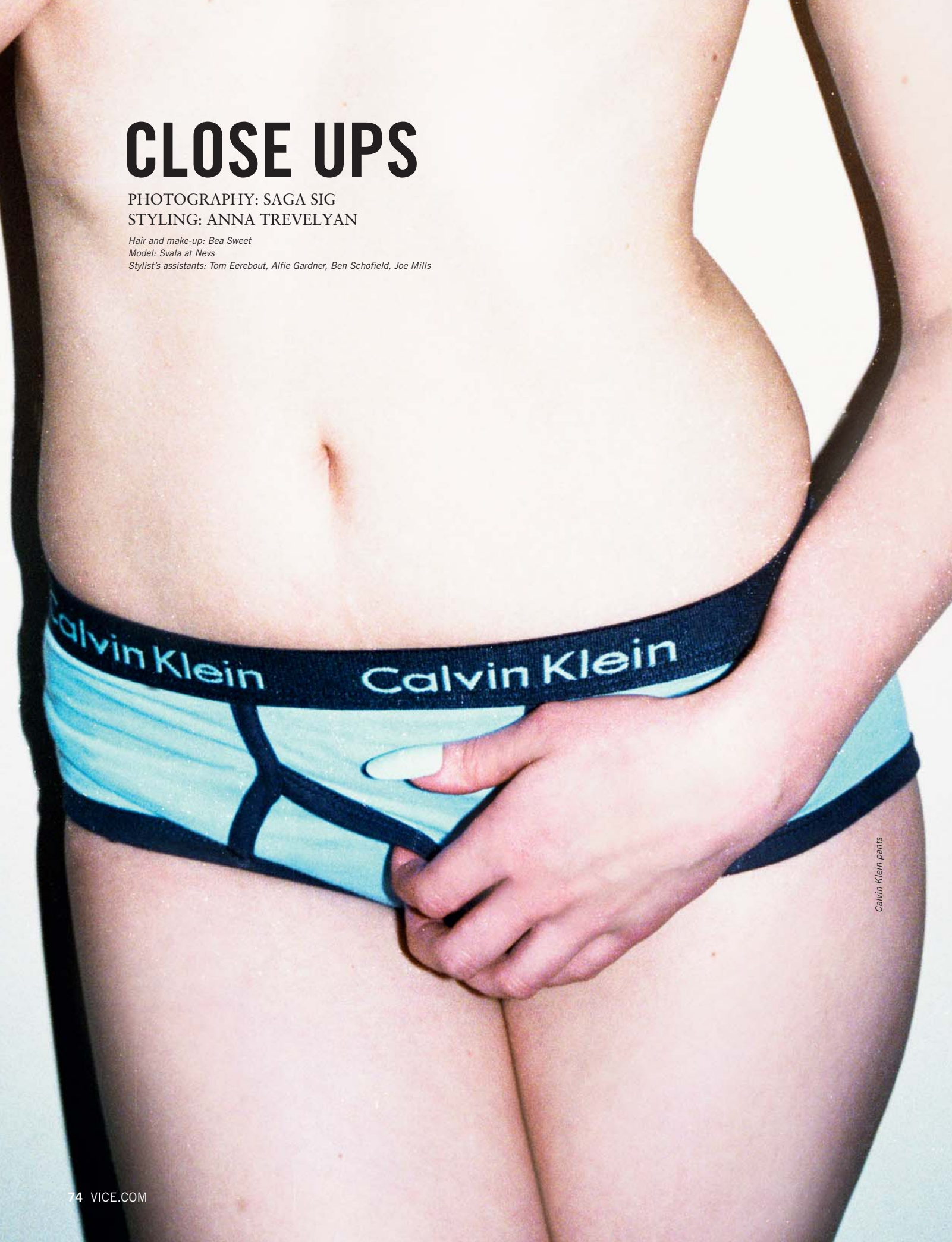
THIS PAGE: JanSport Heritage backpack, vintage Hudson's Bay blanket
OPPOSITE PAGE: Patagonia jacket, Lee jeans, Sperry Top-Sider shoes, YMC hat, JanSport Heritage backpack, vintage socks, Lee 101 jacket, Carhartt Heritage trousers, Poirter shoes, JanSport Heritage holdall, YMC x Gloverall coat, Lee 101 jeans, Poirter shoes, Present hat, JanSport Heritage backpack



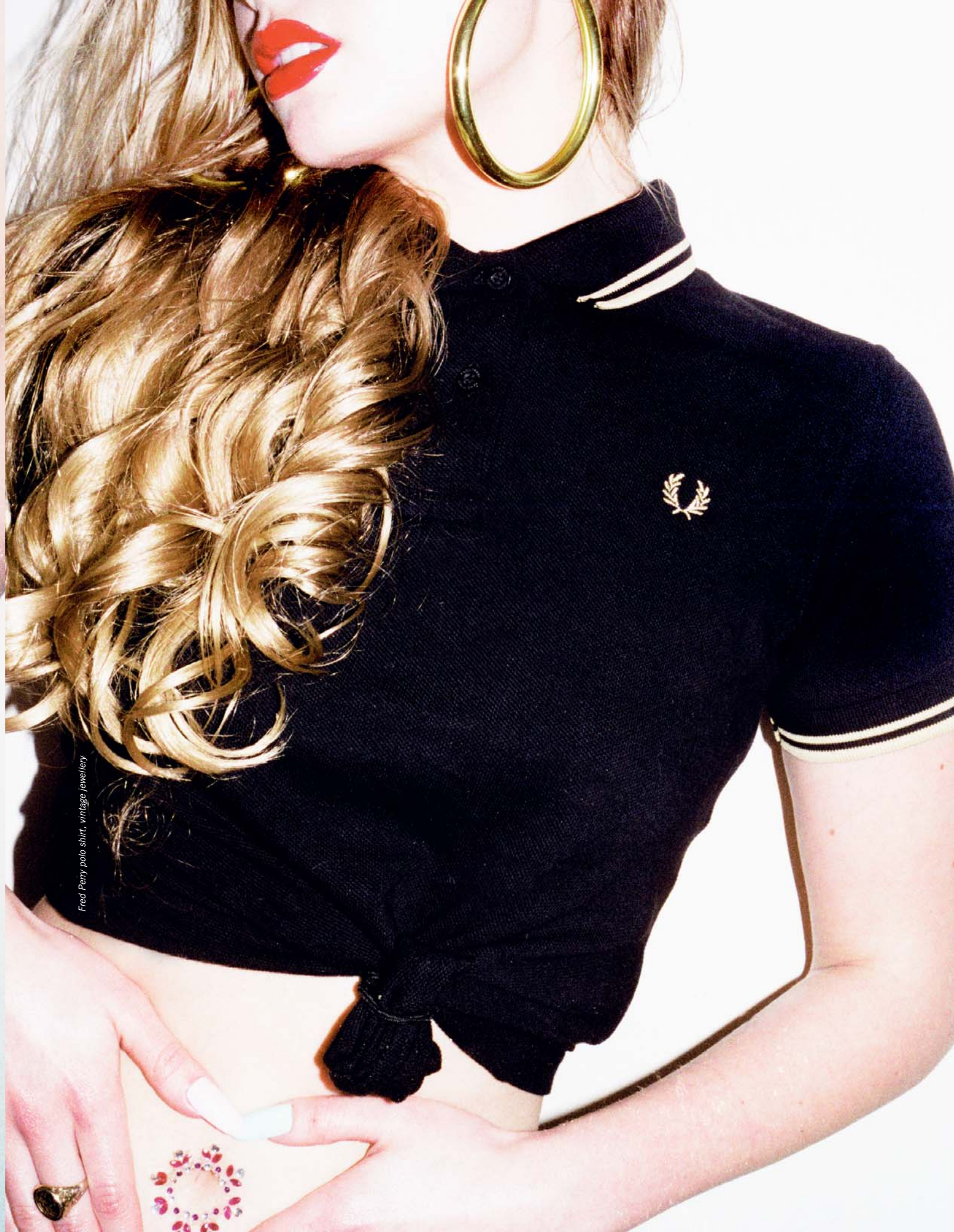
CLOSE UPS

PHOTOGRAPHY: SAGA SIG
STYLING: ANNA TREVELYAN

*Hair and make-up: Bea Sweet
Model: Svala at Nevs
Stylist's assistants: Tom Eerebout, Alfie Gardner, Ben Schofield, Joe Mills*



Calvin Klein pants



Fred Perry polo shirt, vintage jewellery



Cool Cats for Lacoste LIVE jacket, vintage choker and necklace



adidas ObyO Jeremy Scott jacket and swimsuit, adidas wristbands, vintage jewellery



Dr. Martens shoes and socks, vintage jewellery.



New Era cap



Nike top, vintage jewellery



Stone Island jacket, vintage choker, vintage jewellery



STEMS: A HISTORY OF HOSIERY

BY LIZ ARMSTRONG
PHOTOS BY LOGAN WHITE

Stylist: Hilary Olson; Model: Zumi

Now a way to scandalise the leg by means of veiling it, stockings had a long, rough journey on their way to getting everyone horny. Here, we trace hosiery's history, from the foot of a mummy to the legs of barbarians and settlers and statesmen, creating new models for industry, causing violence and riots, and leading us into a freewheeling new world.

Hilary Olson: stockings, Topshop shoes



Vintage cape, American Apparel underwear, Yelele tights, Hilary Olson stockings, Leg Avenue garter belt



Vintage jacket, Halder Ackermann tank top, Trashy Lingerie hot pants, Hilary Olson stockings, Leg Avenue garter belt, vintage boots

THE EARLY DAYS

In the West, wrapping thin strips of animal skin around one's legs was the zygote of modern hosiery. This was a hot-and-cold phenomenon, going in and out of fashion for centuries before knit hosiery became stylish in the mid-1500s. Meanwhile, Egyptians were wearing knit socks around the fourth or fifth century AD, fashioning them to fit around the heel 1,000 years before England caught on. If this isn't definitive proof that they were

taught by the aliens, I don't know what's going to finally convince you.

Fun fact: When the Saxons ruled England, the Saxon monk was forbidden to celebrate Mass in bare legs, so he wound fine linen leg bindings around them. By this point, Roman authority had already peaked and collapsed in England. The clergy in Rome, clearly perverts since day one, wore silk stockings.

MATERIALS

A hundred years after Jesus died, Europeans began using animal hair instead of skins to cover their legs. Poet and epigrammatist M. Valerius Martialis spoke lovingly of the "udo", as it was called: "Wool did not supply these, but the beard of the he-goat. Your feet will be able to take refuge, in cloth made of goat's hair." This majestic he-goat came from a river in Africa. The first non-goat hosiery came from tiny, peculiar sheep in the Sherwood Forest that had wool with the longest filaments anyone

had ever seen. Silk became popular in 1560, when Queen Elizabeth was presented a pair of fine silk stockings she loved so much she refused to wear anything else from then on. In England's American colonies, a series of confusing laws restricted the wool trade, so they found some hemp in the swamps and knit early American stoner stockings. In 1939 the first pair of nylon pantyhose was unleashed on the world and thousands of women lined up to get a pair. Soon, no one gave a shit about silk.



Vintage jacket, Haidler Ackermann tank top, Traeshy Linxene hot pants, Hilary Olson stockings, Leg Avenue garter belt, vintage boots



Bebe bodysuit, Christian Dior garter belt, Hilary Olson stockings, Zumi Resow Jewellery

THE INDUSTRIAL STOCKING SCENE

Reverend William Lee's invention of the stocking frame, a hosiery-knitting machine, in 1589 pretty much eradicated hand-knit hosiery. By 1811, mechanisation had replaced hand-craftsmanship in England almost entirely, and on top of that, hosiery manufacturers were charging stockingers to rent the frames they worked on. Bullshit was finally called: a group of pissed-off labourers assembled in Sherwood Forest, supposedly led by the probably mythical/nonexistent Ned Ludd. For a year, they attacked stocking frames with hammers in waves of

violence, destroying the machines in an attempt to tear down the industry and return to the living they made by handicraft. Thus was born the Luddite movement.

On Valentine's Day, 1812, the government passed a bill that made breaking industrial machines punishable by death. With the rowdy artisans quelled, making one pair of stockings became a zillion-part process involving all kinds of complicated contracts regarding seaming, binding, weaving and rent, from machine's needles to the space the frame sat in.

COLOUR

From the mid-1300s to around 1550, stockings, or "nether-stocks", were flaunted on men's bodies like plumage on beautiful birds. Pieces of silk, cotton, linen or wool were cut by tailors to fit the leg and thigh, short or long, puffed and slashed or embroidered at the top or around the ankles, and in a zillion different colours. Yellow stockings, like yellow snow, signified trouble, at least from 1552 to 1601-ish. Not only were they worn by invalid children at Christ's Hospital, they also refer-

enced gender confusion, and even eunuchism, thanks to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. After 1550, the mix 'n' match approach to stockings fell out of style, and from 1670 to 1680, English people were such nerds about monochromatic dressing that hosiery was custom-made and dye-sampled to match the accompanying garment. In 17th-century Paris, however, stockings could still be obtained in 50 different colours, all bearing their own labels: Amorous Desire, Sad Friend, Lost Time, Mortal Sin.



Vintage cape, American Apparel underwear, Yelote tights, Hilary Olson stockings, Leg Avenue garter belt



Marlies Dekkers bra, Victoria's Secret underwear, Leg Avenue garter belt, Hilary Olson stockings, Versace earrings, Topshop shoes


TIGHTS

Guess where those Dalston girls walking around in oversize t-shirts and shredded-up tights got their style inspiration? In the mid-1300s, tights were all over Western Europe, multicoloured, sewn with innumerable stripes and patterns, and worn with short flared jackets.

Obviously, the church did not approve of this, as you could see every muscle and tendon of the wearer's legs and bottom. Flouting all common decency, the youth of the time not only persisted in wearing this discordant outfit but also shaved half their heads.

LAW

Leg bindings were held in contempt as a sign of barbarism in late third-century Rome. If you were busted wearing stockings, the penalty was eternal servitude and confiscation of all your worldly possessions. However, in a hundred years, everything was fine. In 1555, a sumptuary act was passed in England decreeing that nobody but aldermen and mayors could wear silk stockings, upon penalty of a ten-pound fine and

imprisonment. In 1656, the court of Massachusetts ordered every idle woman and child whose hands weren't broken to spin yarn, much of which was used for hosiery. Men wearing women's clothing, including knit stockings, became illegal in Connecticut in 1796. But leather stockings—basically chaps—were A-OK for men, undoubtedly beginning the leather-daddy trend. But that's a whole other history. 

BJÖRN BORG
SAYS JA! TO TURNING
THE LIGHTS OFF

BJÖRN BORG BJÖRN BORG

BJÖRN BORG BJÖRN BORG

BJÖRN BORG 

FEEL THE FEAR

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BADER

Stylists:

Daniel Balks, Arkadius Giesek

Designers:

Patrick Savo Dramis, Arkadius Giesek,

Mira Naurath, Rayan Odyll

Photographer's assistants:

Philipp Kölker and Michael Lämmle

Make-up and hair:

Sabrina Holtmann, Elena Köhler,

Shideh Nikou, Monika Michalik

Set design:

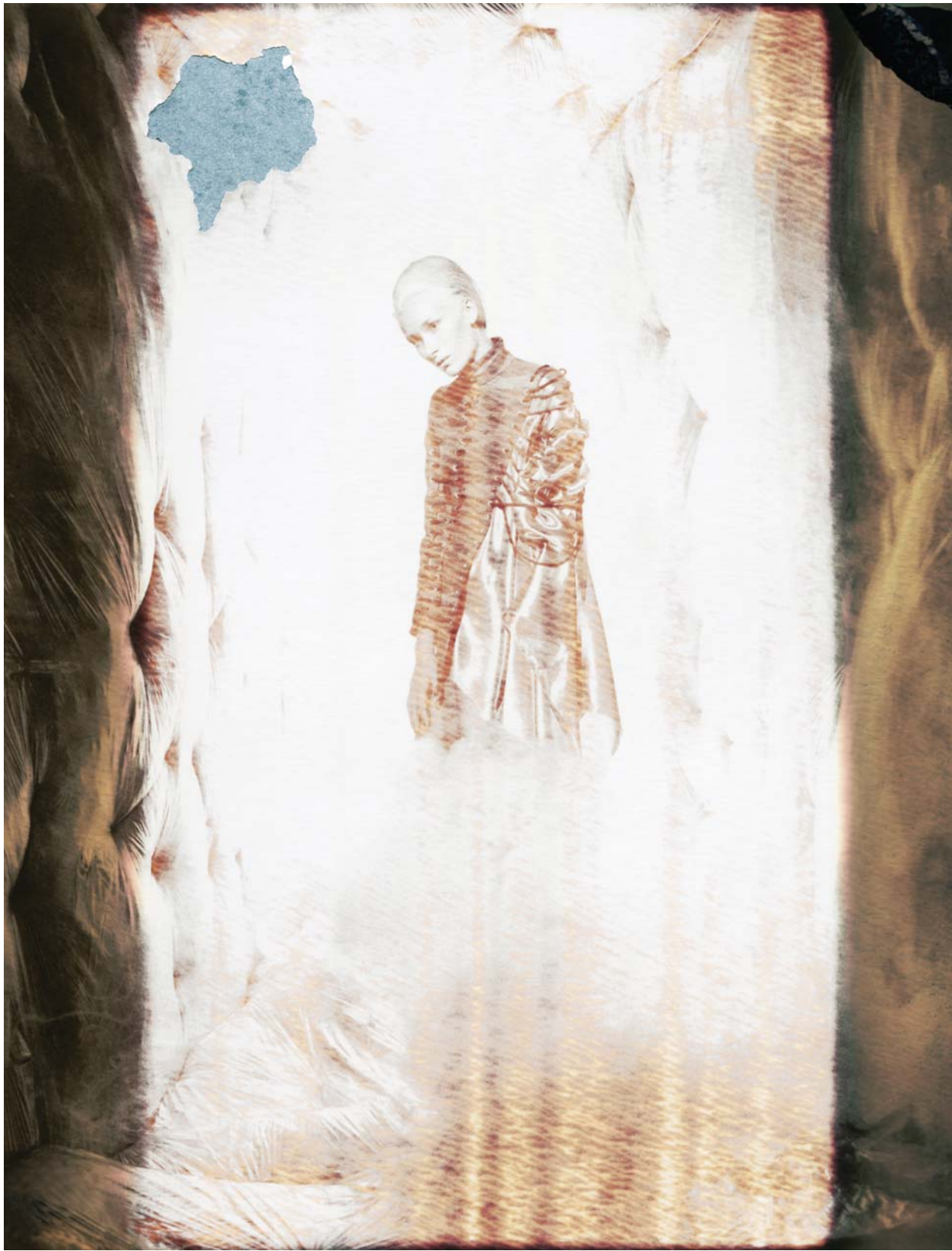
Michael Bader, Heidi Franke, Simon Mellnich,

Sarah Neumann, Kathrin Rutschmann

Models:

Fabian Ringel, Jules Paltschinskaja,

Nina Bauer, Ruby and Tugs



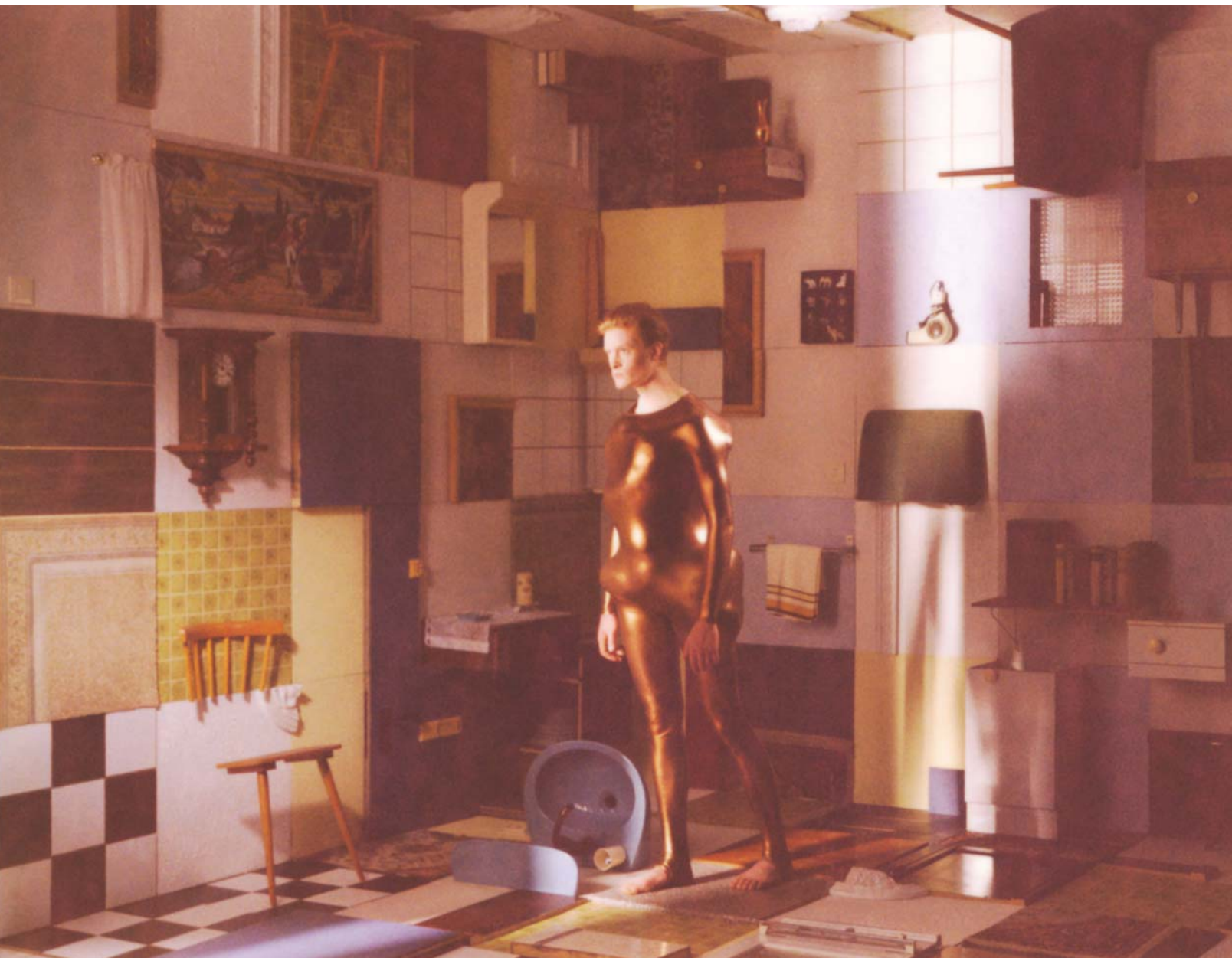




Photo: Vincent Scipiano



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SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY
INTERNET FOREVER
ALBUM LAUNCH
 Internet Forever *Live*
 Stairs To Korea *Live*
 Her Parents *Live*
 Entry: Free

SUNDAY 19 FEBRUARY
THIS IS NOT
REVOLUTION ROCK
 The Perfect Crime *Live*
 Plus Special Guests
 Entry: Free

MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY
OLD BLUE LAST PRESENTS
 Cut Ribbons *Live*
 Our Mountain *Live*
 Steve Smyth *Live*
 Entry: Free

TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY
OLD BLUE LAST PRESENTS
 Wet Nuns *Live*
 Crushed Beaks *Live*
 Drop Out Venus *Live*
 Entry: Free

THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY
NOISEY YOUTUBE LAUNCH
 Bleeding Knees Club *Live*
 WhoMadeWho *Live*
 Cymbals *Live*
 Entry: Free

FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY
44 PRESENTS
 Graphics *Live*
 Glover *Live*
 Mister Sushi DJ
 Entry: Free

SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY
TUBELORD PRESENT
 Boca Negra *Live*
 Seal Of Quality *Live*
 John Makay *Live*
 Entry: Free

MONDAY 27 FEBRUARY
MEAN FIDDLER
 Lafaro *Live*
 Freeze The Atlantic *Live*
 Lakes *Live*
 Bad Sign *Live*
 Entry: £6.50

TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY
PINK MIST
 Hold Your Horse Is *Live*
 Axis Of *Live*
 Real Adventures *Live*
 Entry: Free

WEDNESDAY 29 FEBRUARY
LOTTAROX LONDON
 Native Tongue *Live*
 Ivory Seas *Live*
 Everything By Electricity *Live*
 Entry: Free

MONDAY 5 MARCH
JOSH BEECH
SINGLE LAUNCH
 Josh Beech & The Johns *Live*
 Tu Amore *Live*
 Tom Morley *Live*
 Entry: £6

TUESDAY 6 MARCH
HUW STEPHENS & DZ
DEATHRAYS PRESENT
 DZ Deathrays *Live*
 Run Walk *Live*
 Entry: £3

WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH
DIY & DZ DEATHRAYS
PRESENT
 DZ Deathrays *Live*
 Bos Angeles *Live*
 Crushed Beaks *Live*
 Entry: £3

THURSDAY 8 MARCH
FRONT MAGAZINE &
DZ DEATHRAYS PRESENT
 DZ Deathrays *Live*
 Hawk Eyes *Live*
 Eager Teeth *Live*
 Entry: £3

FRIDAY 9 MARCH
CLUB.THE.MAMMOTH
 Cold In Berlin *Live*
 Severin *Live* Heretics *Live*
 Entry: Free

SUNDAY 11 MARCH
UPSET THE RHYTHM
 Mickey Gloss *Live*
 Mr Peppermint *Live*
 Trogons *Live* Inca Gold *Live*
 Entry: TBC

Downstairs: Free entry
Free Rough Trade jukebox, free Wi-Fi

God Don't Like It | Danielle | Motorik | The Line of Best Fit | Mischa
 Rough Trade | My Ex Boyfriend's Records | Off Modern

For full listings visit theoldbluelast.com



CHRISTMAS IN THE ANDES

PHOTOS BY LELE SAVERI

December is a special time of year in the Peruvian state of Chumbivilcas. The girls all braid their hair and put on their finest brocade skirts and hats. The boys put on their nicest ski masks and leather chaps and affix a dead bird to the top of their noggins. Then everybody young and old, male and female, gets together on Christmas morning and beats the living crap out of each other.

Takanakuy is a fighting ceremony with roots in the Andes's pre-Spanish, pre-Incan history. In the absence of pretty much any form of justice system—the Chumbivilcas state police department

sports a whopping three officers—villagers and townspeople from the region save up their grudges and disputes for the entire year and settle them by punching their offenders in the face at Takanakuy. While some duke it out over legitimate legal grievances, others fight over girls or petty interpersonal rivalries, and a lot of folks just fight for the sake of a good fight (or because they're drunk).

But most important of all, they do so dressed like amazing DMT-nightmare Mad Max mountain men.

Watch for the video of 2011's Christmas day Takanakuy fighting on VICE.com, coming soon.









HEY! WHO'S YOUR FAVOURITE TAKANAKUY CHARACTER?

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
TAKANAKUY: CUANDO
LA SANGRE HIERVE BY
VÍCTOR LAIME MANTILLA

If you don't mind being called a *q'ara gallo* (that means "naked rooster") you can just pop on a *uyach'ullu* (that means "a ski mask") and wear whatever the crap you want to Takanakuy—even crazy, shredded nü-metal jeans. Hell, even a werewolf mask. For those less cocksure in their style, there are a handful of traditional Takanakuy "characters" to use as fashion templates.



MAJEÑO

A *Majeño* is just a guy who lives near the Majes River in the Andes, and this is what they used to dress like. Wool horse-riding trousers, a sporty little leather cap, a Harrington-like traditional Peruvian jacket and a hollowed-out bull's horn for your booze. The *uyach'ullu* mask has a bunch of arcane symbolic associations (the four colours are supposed to represent the four "quadrants" of the universe), but its original and most important function is hiding your face so you can beat up your boss or the mayor without catching shit for it the next day. You're also supposed to talk in a high-pitched bird voice to guard your identity, which is beyond unsettling to hear 50 enormous men in ski masks do at the same time.



LANGOSTA

Langosta means "lobster" in Spanish, but it also means "locust" for some reason (sort that out already, Spanish). In the 1940s, Chumbivilcas's crops were ravaged by a series of locust plagues, so the men naturally started dressing up like locusts to fight, and, again naturally, the locusts all flew away the very next year. The bright-coloured raincoat and trousers are supposed to mimic a bug's shiny abdomen and go equally well with a plastic miner's helmet or a dead bird tied around your neck. The *Langosta* is easily the most affordable look and kind of gives you an *Akira* gang-member vibe.



QARA CAPA

This means "locust" in the indigenous Quechua language and is basically just a more indigenously version of the *Langosta*. We like the cape.



NEGRO

The Takanakuy Negro is based less on actual Negros than on the sort of man who used to own Negros. Aka a slavemaster. To be a Negro, you need knee-high leather boots, fancy worsted pants, a nice shirt and waistcoat, a silk embroidered cape in pink or baby blue and a cardboard crown with shiny wrapping paper on the sides and a star at the top. Then you have to dance in hoity, swooping circles like an uppity rooster, the Negro's associated spirit animal. The Negro's outfit was originally reserved for the wealthier men in town and served as a preening, dandified counterpart to the *Majeño*'s drunken lout. Gradually, the Negro became less the rich man's costume than the top fighters'. The costume doesn't really have a set meaning these days, but Negros are still generally the suavest of the bunch and the best dancers. God, this whole paragraph makes us uncomfortable.



QARAWATANNA

Kind of like the Ramones did with actual 50s greasers, *Qarawatannas* took the traditional *Majeño* look and cooled it up by swapping the wool jacket for leather, the hat for a taxidermied bird or fox, and the horse-riding trousers for enormous motorcycle chaps that look like *Aeon Flux* boots. Most of the younger dudes go for the *Qarawatanna* these days, as it's far and away the toughest and most intimidating look. Just like those guys in school who went as the Crow every year for Halloween. OK, mostly kidding. 🐼

THE FLESH MACHINE

Surveying the Indubitable Style of Iggy Pop

BY JON SAVAGE
PORTRAITS BY HARRY BENSON
ARCHIVAL PHOTOS BY MICK ROCK



Iggy enjoys a tender moment with a companion at his home in Miami, 2012.

Some people might ask: What does a guy who's been shirtless for at least two-thirds of his life have to say about fashion? If you're one of them, this interview is not for you. Read it some other time, after you've listened to *The Stooges*, *Raw Power*, *Fun House*, *Lust for Life* and *The Idiot* and realised that Iggy Pop's animalistic physicality has informed style for decades and will continue to do so well after the last time he writhes and slithers across a stage.

Iggy's ubiquitous uniform—trousers so tight they could have been spray-painted on, a sinewy bare chest that didn't start aging until his 60s, and Beatle boots or bare feet, depending on his mood—undoubtedly looks at least five times better than whatever you're wearing right now. It was also carefully calculated, like a sleek, stripped-down hot rod built with the single-minded goals of efficiency and speed.

A thorough perusal of archival photos and video of Iggy reveals that he took the same care in his appearance offstage, where he tends to wear a bit more clothing; almost every outfit seems iconic in some way, but also natural and unforced. As far as I can tell, over the past four decades he hasn't worn anything that could be considered embarrassing or dated in 2012. I'm not sure there's anyone else on Earth—save menswear designers who never stray from suits—whom you could say the same thing about.

But Iggy's not just a historical figure. In the 21st century, he has worked hard to revitalise his name, with Stooges tours, records and collaborations with various clothing brands. His argument for participating in these unabashedly commercial enterprises is that the Stooges never got the recognition and the sales they deserved in their brief lifetime. So if this is the way to finally achieve some payback, he has no problem jumping on board.

As far as I could tell, no one has interviewed Iggy explicitly and exclusively about fashion, so that's precisely what I did.

VICE: Do you remember the first time you understood the concept of fashion or at least being cool?

Iggy Pop: When I was in elementary school, I saw two older boys who were dressed in the 50s delinquent look—jackets with the collar up, dark blue Levi's with the cuffs turned up and winklepickers—and they were leaning against the wall of my school for some reason. They were too old to be there, and one of them said, "Shit." I'd never really heard the word, but it sounded bad. I wouldn't say I thought they were cool, but there was electricity in the air at that moment. Let's put it that way. Then they disappeared, and I thought, "Oh my God, what are the implications?"

When I was about the same age, my great-uncle George Osterberg came from Chile to visit my father, and he brought his daughter with him, who looked and dressed exactly like a male greaser. She had the greasy pompadour, like a young man, and spent a lot of time just lying around, sneering at everything. On a woman, I thought, "Woah, she's bad. That's cool." I was very impressed; I found it attractive.

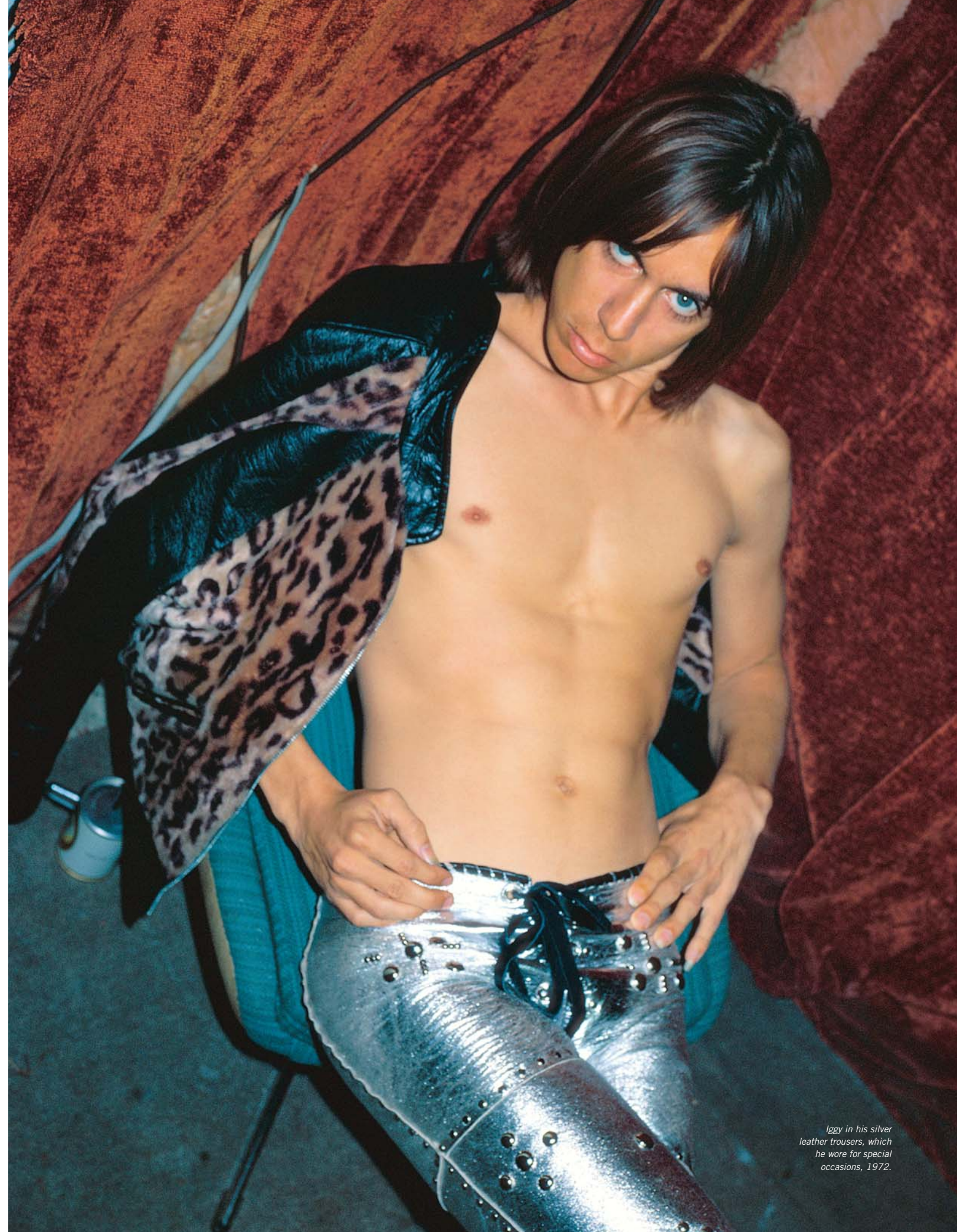
How about the British Invasion? Did it influence your sense of style, or were you more into American trends? I always liked Charlie Watts's look. I'd go to thrift stores and try to buy suits so I'd look more like him. I was a drummer at the time, so I liked that almost Savile Row

look very much, which he'd taken from American jazz players. The others had a good look, too, and there was this store in New York called Paul Sergeant that imported most of their stuff from London. It was a good place to shop.

There were two chains for shoes in America at the time: The best was one called Cancellation, which was where black people went in the inner city to buy their cheap, flashy Italian models. And then there was something called Flagg Brothers. I didn't know this, but there's a new film out about William Burroughs that I participated in where they mention Flagg Brothers, so I guess it was also a place where... Anywhere with good style is where boys tend to meet boys. A lot of that went on.

During the early days of the Stooges, would it be fair to say that your look was a lot more put together and less raw than it came to be?

Well, I was careful about what I wore. From our second gig on, I looked a lot more like what I've looked like, on and off, since: no shirt, a pair of tight, slim jeans, bare feet, and I had permed hair and a white, painted face. By the third or fourth gig, I lost the perm and the white face, and I started wearing this same pair of shoes that you can see in every photo of the Stooges from mid-'69 to the end of '71. They were these authentic Anello



Iggy in his silver leather trousers, which he wore for special occasions, 1972.

& Davide Beatle boots. Dave Alexander had brought them back from England because he and Ron [Asheton] had skipped their senior year of high school to go to Liverpool and see what was going on. I used to wear them over and over, and they had holes in the bottom, like a cartoon hobo.

Then, as I began doing more gigs, these flimsy pants I wore would start to rip, and I left the rips in. I thought it looked right. It was the thing at the time for people like P.J. Proby or Jackie Wilson, or even James Brown, to leave loose basting instead of proper stitching in the crotch of the pants. Before the end of the show they'd rip onstage, and that was part of the gig. But I was the first one to just come out with the rips, as far as I know.

“Male dogs smell each other’s dicks and stuff, and then they jump female dogs and do everything to everything.”

Some perceived your style as machismo, but you weren’t particularly macho onstage.

No. I actually think there shouldn’t be any genders. Male dogs smell each other’s dicks and stuff, and then they jump female dogs and do everything to everything. That’s the way humans really are, but there have been elaborate codes adopted to weed out parts of behaviour that don’t match whatever gender or social group you want to belong to. And I think that actually cuts both ways, straight and gay—each cuts out or emphasises certain bits. It’s sort of like using hair spray on your personality. But no, I never wanted to look particularly macho. For one thing, I realised the girls don’t really go for it. [laughs] I think ideals of beauty in our society are dictated by those who identify themselves as feminine, at least in their thought processes. Whether those are gay people, or women who are thinking in a particularly devious, savage, amoral manner, which is how women think when they really get down to business. And that’s where the bread is buttered, so I wanted to look kind of smooth, slinky and super forward.

Then there was your silver period, which seemed to be the evolution of this point of view.

Yeah, I first had these silver gloves when I lived in the Midwest, before I started hanging out with glitter people and competing more in New York and internationally. More glamour became necessary. I was using Nestle’s Streaks ‘n Tips on my hair, and that gives a great effect onstage, but it takes four showers to get that stuff off your body. I don’t know if it was popular with streetwalkers, but there it was. It was an actual silver paint that you sprayed on your hair. You could get it in gold and silver at all the cheap drug stores. Then, eventually, it was the silver pants and, later, sarongs. I had this pair of underwear



Iggy soaking up the sun in his yard, 2012.

I bought at a little kiosk in Piccadilly Circus, where they sold peanuts and cigarettes and souvenirs. They just said *soho* over the penis. I guess they were women's, but I didn't really think about that. I just thought about how cool I would look in them. And I would see pictures of women in knee boots and would think, "I want some. I want to wear knee boots and have my legs show." And vice versa. I'd see biker stuff, the Hell's Angels using, like, wolves' heads or something, and I'd think, "Hey, what about a horse tail?" so I had one of those made up. I'd get stuff out of old Greek and Egyptian books as well.

"Occasionally lone men in cars would slow down and stare at me intently, and I had no idea what that was about."

Where did you get the now-iconic leather leopard jacket featured on the back cover of *Raw Power*?

James Williamson and I were staying in Kensington, and there was a market. I went over there and, it was like Steve Martin in *The Jerk* or something, you know? Like, "Hey, it's me! It's who I am." I bought it that day, and I bought a man purse, like a shoulder bag made out of—honestly it looked like it was made out of a black-and-white chinchilla cat. So I had that, I would walk around Kensington, Hyde Park, Mayfair and Bayswater in my dressed-down leather pants. I had two pairs of leather pants—silver glitter leather, which were for, like, special state occasions like a Stooges gig or going out to a really big gig, and black leather pants, but instead of stitches there were rivets; they were heavy duty. And by this point I'd been to Anello & Davide and bought a new pair of Beatle boots because they still had some left over. I would sort of mince or trundle or slink around those neighbourhoods, going on long walks, trying to figure out what I was doing, wearing the cheetah jacket, leather pants and Beatle boots. [laughs]

I'm sure you drew some attention.

Occasionally lone men in cars would slow down and stare at me intently, and I had no idea what that was about. Occasionally [it happened with] the other gender too. One day, in Fulham, I ran into a *Men Only* cover girl and I was going with her for a while, but I'd never really hang out with people for any length of time.

I wanted to ask, did you go to Malcolm and Vivienne's shop, Let It Rock—or whatever it was called then—on the King's Road?

Yeah, it was Let It Rock, and you walked in the door and he had a huge, dirty cardboard bin full of winklepickers with no laces in them. Most of them were, like, frozen solid; there was absolutely no flexibility left in the shoe, and I'm pretty sure it was £5 per winklepicker. Then he had all the rock stuff. James loved it and went more than

I did, but I was over there regularly for some reason, just kind of snooping around. I remember there was some guy there, and it was probably Malcolm, and then there was a woman there, who could have been Vivienne. Then later she was kind of an item with James. I also remember there were a lot of extremely skinny guys walking up and down Fulham High Street, King's Road, in American Boy Scout uniforms, gas-station-attendant jackets and old bowling shirts. All this weird shit that I recognised from my youth. You would go into thrift stores and find very, very small sizes of all this American gear that was incredibly expensive, so people were doing that too. It was odd.

Hearing you talk about this makes me think of the too-small jacket you're wearing on the cover of *The Idiot*.

I borrowed that jacket from my girlfriend at the time, Esther Friedmann. It was a woman's jacket. It was probably French, or it could have been vintage German. The idea was that it didn't get in the way. The waist was kept short, and the arms were too short so that it emphasised the hand and length of the whole arm.

In the late 70s and early 80s, when a lot of people were trying out god-awful looks, you still had a good sense of style. You've always kept an interest in fashion, haven't you?

I had a nice look for a while in the early 80s—Americans really hated it. I was still going with Esther, and I would just buy all her clothes and go out onstage with moderate heels, fishnet stockings, a miniskirt, a little leather jacket and a mini leather cap. Sometimes I'd wear a little white shirt underneath. I looked like a temp secretary or something. That was a good look.

Why did Americans hate it?

When I played my own gigs it went down fine, but when I went and opened for the Stones one night [laughs] people threw bottles, everything they could at me. They were very keen on the macho look in that era. And once rock 'n' roll became *rock*, once it became that one word, it kind of took all the play out.

Do you think Americans are more reserved than the Brits when it comes to clothes?

Absolutely. It's a bigger country and harder to move. It's not a flamboyant place. That's a good word for what I was saying about before, what got lost around 1975. If there was ever an American flamboyance, it happened in those 25 years from '50 to '75, and it had to do with the blues, R&B, rock 'n' roll, big cars and giant breasts.

Nowadays it seems like some people think it's a sin, if you're a musician, to explicitly want to look good, to have real style. Do you think that's an important part of being in a band?

Abso-fucking-lutely, yes. I mean, God, I was so disappointed. I was reading a promotional interview with the



A rarely seen shirted Iggy dons greaser gear in New York City, 1980.



Iggy sitting in his bed, enjoying his bongos, 2012.

singer of Coldplay in the *Guardian*, and the interviewer asked him about his shoes—he had some cool sneakers on—and he just went, “Oh, I don’t know, the stylist just gave them to me.” It’s like, come on dude, give me a break. I thought, “Gee whiz, can’t we have somebody better than that at the helm of guitar music?” So yeah, it is really important, and it can be achieved in any number of ways. You could look hideous; that’s OK too. You could have one guy who looks really good and one guy who looks hideous, but he’ll start growing on you. It’s important to look amazing or astonishing or intriguing, but mainly interesting in some way.

Is the goal to look sexy?

There can be some sex in there, but there can also be some humour. Also, I think maybe some sort of canned spirituality is in there. Like if a religious person sees a light when they find God, well then some guy in the hood can just buy some hub-caps, you know what I’m saying? A lot of it is also something about being a human—the spiritual need to shine a little.

And now we’ve kind of come full circle. It seems like every brand and designer on the planet wants to work with musicians like you who were at the forefront of style in the late 60s through the mid-70s. How do you feel about these types of collaborations?

To be very to the point: people are hearing our music through different media, bypassing the old media that refused us entry, and what I’ve done is two things. One is to push through any door that’s opened in this new type of media, and the other

thing is to do things that make it OK for what’s leftover from the old media.

You recently worked with Vans to make some shoes and a few articles of clothing. How’d that come about?

I was asked to OK something, and I was happy to because I used to wear their shoes in 1977 in Malibu. I was in a phase when I was trying to break out of the rockist mould. I’d just made *Lust for Life*, and I was about to tour behind it and was stuck with this standard American baseball-cap-wearing road crew. So I had this concept: get me rental furniture and home lighting, and we arranged this stage in the rehearsal room that looked like a living room. I was going to sing the songs on a couch, and I had a little attaché case; I had this character in my mind, the rockin’ realtor. [laughs] Anyway, I saw these shoes one day and they were cool. They were like a deck shoe, but they didn’t have the shape that implied a paunch and a lack of hair; it was a sneaker shape. But what was really cool was that the canvas was a black-and-white checker, and you just didn’t see checkers around.

Except for S. Clay Wilson’s Checkered Demon in *Zap Comix*. Yeah, it reminded me of the Checkered Demon! He would fuck people with his tail. [laughs] That’s what he would do. He’d come in and some really nice guy would be having an evening out with his date, and the Checkered Demon would jump in with his tail, which had a spade on the end and would sort of lash out between his legs toward wherever he wanted to put it—to do the deed to his victim. I always loved him. ☺

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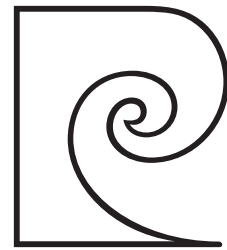
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SCANDALOUS, CHIC AND RICH

Pierre Cardin Has Met Everyone and Designed Everything

BY PAUL GORMAN
PHOTOS BY MATTHEW FROST



Pierre Cardin is one of those names everyone knows, even if you have no idea who he is or what he looks like. For the clueless, he is the man behind and the designer of one of the most famous logos in fashion—the entwined PC splashed across more than 800 products: neckties, collapsible bicycles, car upholstery, chocolate, cigarettes, ice buckets, frying pans... You get the idea.

Cardin, now 89, began his career as a menswear tailor in Vichy France, and went on to become one of the first designers of ready-to-wear before going on to create some of the wildest space-age looks of the 60s. In the decades that followed, he became one of the most famous and commercially successful designers in the world, striking million-dollar licensing deals in places as far-flung as Russia, Japan, China and India for perfume, cosmetics, clothes and anything else his ubiquitous logo would fit on.

Throughout his seemingly endless heyday, he's remained a controversy-fomenting enfant terrible, defiantly refusing to define his sexuality in public in the wake of rumoured affairs with his beautiful female model Jeanne Moreau and his beautiful male assistant Andre Oliver.

These days he's still doing stuff that bothers people, like any decent fashion designer should, except now he's moved on to the weird world of real estate. Over the past decade, he's been restoring the Marquis de Sade's infamous castle in the sleepy southern French village of Lacoste and buying up all the property around it (angering some locals in the process). He's also planning to build a massive Dubai-style luxury residential complex in Venice, designed by him, of course.

For all his wealth, Cardin's seat of power lies within a scruffy office in Paris's eighth arrondissement, which I visited on one bright morning in January. The floor was littered with paper clips, crumpled documents, and cardboard boxes bulging with ephemera, and the walls were adorned with framed photo-collages and mementos: Cardin with Fidel Castro, Pope John Paul II, and pretty much every historical figure of the 20th century. "I knew them all," he said, never one for modesty. "I am the one who has been in fashion the longest, for 70 years. I am the one who is still talked about."

Cardin is surprisingly rumped in person. When I met him he was wearing a blue blazer, collared shirt and tie, grey trousers, and a shock of white hair. The shoes—anonymous black slip-ons designed for maximum comfort—betrayed his age. As we spoke, he fluidly and fluently transitioned between English and French, wandered around the room picking up old photos from shoeboxes, and brought out copies of his European-royalty-obsessed magazine *Princes*. Cardin may be old enough to have achieved living-legend status, but he's still as sharp as a bespoke tuck.

VICE: You've recently been in the news for your transformation of Lacoste. It seems you've got the locals all riled up, as if the Marquis were back to disturb their rural idyll.

Pierre Cardin: The chateau had been left to become a complete ruin before I arrived; now it is beautiful. There are a few people there who are jealous because I have done so much for the place. Lacoste has galleries and the annual festival because of me. There's a lot of activity. Maybe some of the locals are upset because they are quite old.

Do you think they were surprised that someone of a similar age—or perhaps even older—was responsible for bringing the noise? Well, they didn't mention that. I arrived like a tomahawk thrown into the scene and shook it all up, so they became agitated. Now most of them are beginning to understand my good intentions.

You enjoy shocking people, don't you? Whether it's taking on the locals of Lacoste or buying the respected, traditional Parisian restaurant Maxim's and turning its name into a brand, controversy always seems to follow you.

I'm not scared to provoke. You need to surprise. If an idea is good, people should be bothered by it. That's happened with my clothes. When a design is pretty or decorative, it is passive and becomes a matter of taste: do I like it or not? I abhor the phrase "he has good taste". It's meaningless. Who cares?

Obviously, you don't. Some in the perfume world were pretty upset a few years back when you put the PC brand on a range of tinned sardines.

I lived through the war! We were hungry! It's ridiculous that someone who makes perfume cannot have a sardine business. You can't live on perfume. If I want to have Pierre Cardin sardines, then I will.

Around the time you were born in Venice, the Italian Futurists were saying things like, "We want no part of the past!" You seem to have internalised that sentiment at an early age.

For sure. I've always been interested in the future; it formed part of my conception of fashion. Remember, when I started, it was the time of the avant-garde.

But when you arrived in Paris in 1944 you were just a tailor from Vichy; soon afterwards you were working for the House of Paquin and on the costumes for Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et le Bête* [*Beauty and the Beast*]. How did that happen?

I wanted to go on stage, but on the first day I came to Paris, a Saturday, I met the man who presented me to Paquin. And on that Monday I met Christian Dior, and through Paquin I met Cocteau. I didn't have any money to pay for dancing or drama school fees, so fashion it was. It was very important when I was starting out to meet such people. And I met them all: Picasso, Visconti, Balenciaga...

You were an arriviste in your 20s, but the crowd you were hanging out with were in their 40s and 50s. How did you become one of their peers so quickly?

I worked hard, and they were very generous. Balenciaga was an inspiration when he returned to Paris after the war and started to design for the new civilian life, but Christian Dior was the most important person to me. He was working on the New



Look, a true revolution in fashion, and he welcomed me into his house. If he had not, I would not be Pierre Cardin today.

I'm not sure I can detect Dior's work in yours, though. Where is his influence?

You want the truth? I have never been influenced by anybody. I have my own style and would much rather be copied than copy.

Your first big statement, the "Bubble Dress" of 1954, was viewed as too radical because it distorted the shape of the female silhouette with its bulbous outline.

At the time I was more interested in sculpture than fashion. That came out in my work. The Bubble Dress was my depiction of the circle. I am obsessed with the round: it represents the moon, the breast, life. And I return to it again and again because it is infinite; I relate it to the cosmos. The infinity of space is more inspirational than any person.

I guess that came out loud and clear in your Cosmocorps collection of the 60s, which was based on Russian cosmonauts and tried to predict how we would dress in the future. Why aren't we all wearing *Star Trek* synthetic jerkins with asymmetrical zips and heavy pendants in 2012?

Cosmocorps was my way of thinking about how fashion should be, not necessarily how it would be. To this day, I am always looking to the future. My work is a continuum of my own ideas about fashion—nobody else's. I try to remain true to myself. I try to be Pierre Cardin.

You are known as the pioneer of fashion licensing and the creator of the designer label, which started with the way you marketed perfume and then branched out into every product imaginable. Any regrets?

None whatsoever. The licensing came out of my first menswear show, which was held at Galeries Lafayette in 1960 and based on my "cylinder" line. At that time, you went to Italy for style and England for The Look; there was no prêt-à-porter for men in France. I used 200 college students as models, which caused a scandal. I invited buyers from around the world who all ordered the clothes. That was it. Licensing had begun—after me, everybody else. Now licensing has reversed the roles in fashion. The power no longer resides with haute couture. It now comes from the girl on the street and what she wears. It's to her that women look these days. This fits with my original desire, which was to democratise fashion. I didn't see why only the rich should dress well. It was a socialist ideal.

Success in commerce is evidently very important to you. I've heard your business has profits of \$1 billion a year from sales in 140 countries. What do you think of Andy Warhol's pronouncement that "being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art"? I knew Andy Warhol well; in fact, I had two Warhols in my modern art collection at one time. All I can say is Warhol was always fascinated by business!

You've also conceptualised a fantastical tower for hundreds of people to live in near Venice. It looks like something out of Dubai or a surreal dream. Is it really going to be built?

I call it an inhabitable sculpture, and it is far superior to anything you would see in Dubai. I have also designed a whole bunch of houses on the ground around it, in the shape of mushrooms for the people who do not want to live up in the air.

Mushrooms? Like your Bubble Palace [Cardin's *Star Wars*-style Palais Boules on the Riviera, which is built on a foundation of semi-submerged brown concrete domes]?

Yes, why not? It's an organic shape, perfect for living in. Here I am, again, going back to the Bubble Dress, back to the circle. I told you: It is the basis for all my designs.

You first visited Japan in the 50s and became the first Western designer to feature a Japanese model, Hiroko Matsumoto, in your runway show. Do you reckon you had influence over designers from Japan in the 70s and 80s?

Of course. When I first arrived, Japan was starting from zero after Hiroshima and WWII. There was no fashion, just the kimono, so I was the only designer, the only reference point for those people who wanted to express themselves in fashion. It was the same in China [Cardin first visited the country in 1978]. They were wearing Mao uniforms or traditional dress. I took my inspiration for the shape of the shoulders on my suits from the pagoda, whereas others just copied the details of the Mao jacket: the collar, the pockets and so forth.

"You want the truth? I have never been influenced by anybody. I have my own style and would rather be copied than copy."

With so many interests and such a busy schedule, is it hard to find some sort of stability in a daily routine? Or is that something that doesn't interest you?


First thing in the morning I have a meeting here with my bank—and that's my own bank, the one I own, you understand. I take care of all the company's finances. I learned how to do this when I was an accountant for the Red Cross during WWII. Then I have meetings with every department, and all the time I sketch designs for clothes, for ideas. For example, I designed a range of radiators that way. I think standard office radiators are ugly [*he points to a standard radiator next to his desk in his office*]. The ones I had made, in 50 different versions, are very futuristic in red or blue and much more exciting for the home.

What do you think of fashion designers today?

Wearing the corset over the dress isn't fashion, it's costume, and there is too much of that—too much attention to "style", too many references to films, to the past. My conception of fashion is to produce something new. Maybe sometimes people don't like the designs, but the important thing is to ignore trends.

That's easy for you; unlike everyone else in fashion, you still own the company. There are no outside financiers, no investors pressuring you.

That's true. And remember this: my house is still commercially very viable. So my conclusion is that this is a result of my talent. In the 50s, when Yves Saint Laurent ascended at the House of Dior, it was said: "In three years you won't hear anything about Cardin."

But as you can see, I'm still here. 

Paul Gorman is a writer and cultural commentator. His next book, *Mr Freedom: Tommy Roberts—British Design Hero*, will be published by Adelita in April. More information about Paul can be found at paulgormanis.com.



FREE-RANGE FUR

*Is It Still Murder
If You Trap It, Skin It
and Sew It Yourself?*

BY JENNI AVINS
PHOTOS BY DUSTIN FENSTERMACHER

Coming face-to-face—actually,
face-to-exposed-leg-muscle—
with the half-skinned fox. That's
Larry laughing in the background.

Years ago, I worked for a fashion designer who had a penchant for fur dyed in bold colours that ranged from acid-green to plum. Most of them were for very expensive jackets that looked like they were made of Muppet skin. Only fox fur—specifically that of the American red fox—was left in its natural state. It was perfectly gorgeous on its own. And while I admit that I'm somewhat vain—I like fashion and will endure uncomfortable clothing on the right occasion—with fur that discomfort goes deeper. The thought of farm-raised animals being executed via anal electrocution is hard to shake once it enters your mind. Surely, there had to be alternatives.

About one-fifth of fur is wild, supplied by hunters and trappers: pelts from animals that lived free and (hopefully) great lives before they became great clothes. Auction prices for farmed fur recently reached record highs, making wild fur—which is far cheaper but not quite as smooth—an attractive and viable alternative. Suddenly, coats made from wild coyote and raccoon are hanging from the racks of Neiman Marcus and Barneys. But while activists continue their crusade against fur's fashionable resurgence, many designers seem to be ignoring—or ignorant of—American wild fur, which in the hands of a forward-thinking entrepreneur has the potential to be the fashion-industry equivalent of sustainable, free-range, farm-to-table meat.

My attempt to survey the literature about this ethical grey area turned up nearly zilch, so I decided the only thing left for me to do was to go hunting and see just how difficult it would be to transform dead animal skin into haute couture. As it turns out, it's a macabre but doable task, given some expert assistance.

First I had to sort out the logistics and find someone willing to walk me through the steps that would immediately follow hunting and skinning. I quickly found a fur manufacturer named Dimitris who was happy to help. As with all of the subjects I interviewed for this story, I made him aware that I planned to write a magazine article about my experience. I've decided to leave out their last names, lest they enter their workspaces one morning to find them blood-splattered by animal rights activists.

The first person Dimitris called was Marc, a “dresser” who cleans and softens skins. Marc called Harry, a fur distributor and wholesaler; Harry called Larry, a “country collector” who buys and skins carcasses bagged by hunters and trappers; Larry called Barry, his best trapper; and the last call was also made by Larry, to Eric, his business partner (yes, all of these names are real).

A short time later I was barreling down the Pennsylvania Turnpike, headed to a yellow house with a sign outside that read RAW FUR BUYER. I did my best to ignore the skinless

carcass—possibly a fox—curled up in a plastic tub in the driveway. As I approached, the basement door opened and a man in a plaid shirt who looked like an older, rounder Jeff Bridges came barreling out. This had to be Larry.

He pointed at my feet. “You got boots?” During our initial phone conversation he had advised me to buy a pair of hip-high rubber boots for the hunt, and as I looked into his face I was relieved that I could say yes, I did.

I could tell Larry wanted to get down to business, and within a few minutes I was sliding my boots on and being introduced to Barry, who, besides being a prolific trapper, is also a veterinarian technician. Wearing an aqua sweatshirt and John Denver glasses, Barry seemed more like a sweet old maths teacher than a feral woodsman.

It was already mid-afternoon and we were losing precious light. Barry quickly led me across the road, down a wooded hill and to a shimmering creek. We walked towards the creek bank and straight into thigh-deep water. I learned that most of the animals he traps are nocturnal, with a strong focus on foxes, mink and coon (which he seldom refers to as “raccoons” and never “coons”, even when he's referring to more than one). Coon, Barry told me, look for food in nooks and crannies along the water. To reel them in it was best to build a little seductive scene called a set to serve as a lure. For my first set, I dug a hole, slicked down the surrounding mud, and stuffed some grass near the back. As soon as I finished, Barry produced a glass jar of grape-jelly-ish bait and instructed me to dip a stick in the mixture and smear a good helping inside the grassy opening. Then he handed me a tiny bottle labelled RACCOON #1, the contents of which I diligently dripped around the set. It smelled like bacon. Finally, I scattered a handful of mini-marshmallows, mostly for visual appeal, I think. It was time to lay the trap.

Barry uses spring-loaded traps designed to hold an animal's paw until it's “dispatched” (i.e., shot and killed) the following morning. He handed me one, a black metal circle a little smaller than a CD, with two smooth jaws. I tried to envision the angle from which a curious coon might enter the set. I picked a spot, carefully gripped the base of the trap beneath its jaws, and submerged it within the creek bed. That was it; my first trap was set.

The sun sank as we sloshed down the creek, pushing more traps into the mud, digging holes, and scattering marshmallows. I tried to imagine what it would be like to do this every day, which prompted me to ask Barry what he liked best about trapping. “Matching your wits to the animal,” he said. “And being successful at capturing and holding it.”

I also asked about Barry's success rate and learned that he typically sets 50 traps a night; if five of them catch a coon he considers it an excellent hunt. We had set only 15.

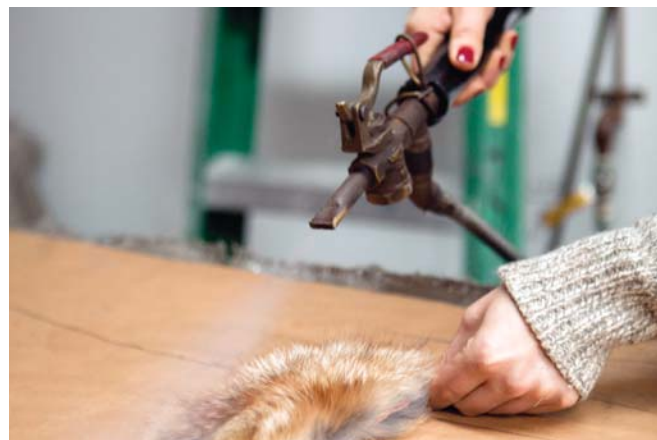
By the time we made it back to Larry's it was dusk, which is when he opens for business, supplying trappers and hunters with equipment and buying their catches and kills. I followed him to the basement, which doubles as a workshop.

Inside, death was everywhere, and it was crowded. Cardboard covered in maroon splotches lined the floor, and every surface was piled high with supplies—chargers for hunting lights, paring knives, dark-stained towels, glass jars filled with what looked like organs. Bloody vice grips and shiny hooks hung from the low rafters where carcasses were hung and skinned. A double-handled blade rested on the edge of a chest-high wooden box containing discarded skin and hair. Larry explained that it was a scraping station where he

THIS PAGE, BELOW:

Checking traps with Larry. OPPOSITE PAGE: The steps from fox to skin to fur.





separated fat from hide. And, of course, there were the skins—hundreds of them pulled taut over metal U-shaped frames to dry. Others were turned fur-side out, in lengths varying from several inches to four feet. Three shrew-like opossum carcasses lay on the floor alongside a dead raccoon. They were frozen. Larry explained that if hunters know it'll be a few days before they sell a carcass, they'll throw it on ice. The little guys on the floor were just thawing out.

I got used to the scenery quickly, probably because every time I turned my head my ponytail would brush across a possum skin or raccoon tail. But one carcass in particular caught my eye: a little red fox that had been set on its side. Except for the blood spatters and bared teeth, it looked like every cartoon fox I'd ever adored as a kid. Its little rib cage had dimension and its legs looked they were running. I felt a sinking in my chest, and left Larry's for the evening shortly thereafter. That night I went to bed wondering whether there was a raccoon shrieking under the moon, its leg caught in one of my traps.

The next morning I returned to Larry's and headed out with him to the trap sites. We didn't catch anything; the water level had fallen more than we expected, leaving the traps awkwardly exposed. Even the marshmallows were left untouched. "The thing about these animals is that they've got the whole world to walk in," Larry said. "We've got to get 'em in a four- or five-inch circle."

Empty traps, however, weren't enough to get me off the hook with Larry. There was work to be done. The little red fox on the floor had thawed overnight and was ready to be skinned. I realised it was probably my last chance to skin my own fur, and shakily said that I'd do it.

Larry fetched me a yellow rubber apron and latex gloves, and with that his job was complete. Larry's partner Eric, who had just gotten off the morning shift as a sergeant at the Lebanon County Prison, does most of the skinning. So while Eric guided me through the process, Larry pulled up a chair. I was focused but also a little nauseous. Eric reached above his head and grasped an industrial-strength metal hanger, which was dangling from a rope attached to the ceiling. It hung at eye level, with two big shiny silver hooks suspended from chains at either corner. He lifted up the fox and pierced a hook through one of its hind feet. Then it was my turn.

I've always liked how dog paws have those cute little pads, and the prints they leave behind. This fox's foot didn't look so different. While Eric secured the body, I took the cold, bony shin between my latex-gloved fingers and pressed the paw onto the hook, but it didn't want to go through. Eric told me to press harder. I felt the hook push past the bones and saw it come out on the other side. Eric slowly turned the fox, now hanging by its hind legs, a blue plastic bucket on the floor beneath its nose. A few drops of blood had already fallen in. He handed me a metal-toothed brush, which I combed through the fox's matted, copper-coloured fur as I held my other hand against its cold belly to keep it from turning while I picked out brush and burrs.

Next, Eric handed me a small, plastic-handled paring knife. With the tip of the blade, I traced up the backs of the fox's shins and then around the bottoms of its ankles. I worked my fingers into the seam of sliced flesh, pulling the fur from shiny muscle until the swath was completely separated and hanging just below its tail. Then I worked my fingers into a tiny space between the muscle and the still-connected skin and yanked it as hard as I could, peeling the fox to the base of its tail, exposing the tailbone.

Eric then passed me something that resembled a red plastic clothespin—a "tail stripper"—which I clamped around the tailbone. I wrapped my hand over the top of the device, the bone running between my index and middle fingers, and pulled as hard as I could against the bushy ring of tail fur and pushed against the fox's cold rump. The hard plastic dug into my fingers, but nothing was budging. Then it started to peel down, my head got light, and I think I squealed. "There you go!" Eric said. "Just pull, pull, pull! Keep pulling!"

Without warning, my right hand flew down the length of the tail as the fox swung away from me, and a long, spindly bone sprang up in my face. It was absolutely horrific. "This is the easy part," Eric said. "Wait until we get to the hard stuff."

The entire hind half of the fox hung naked and peeled, red and violet, with white traces curving along its musculature. With Eric's coaching, I continued until the skin, pale pinkish grey and now of significant length, hung from just behind the fox's front legs. Eric handed me a maroon towel to wrap around it, and once again advised me to pull. The skin slowly peeled away with each tug, all the way down to the widest part of its torso. Then Eric suddenly grabbed the fox and worked his hand between the skin and the body into a circular hole, like a handle. Anatomically, it made no sense, but then I thought about clothes. We were pulling off a sleeve. "You got it," Eric said, securing the armpit while I yanked off the final strips of skin. Eric trimmed off the remaining flesh above the paws, leaving the fox with two furry front feet.

The next step required me to work much closer to the floor, so I pushed my apron between my legs, positioned the towel-wrapped fox skin between my thighs, and leaned back, pulling it nearly parallel to the ground. As I pulled, I nicked my knife along the fox's neck, delicately detaching the skin from the body. When I reached the head, Eric stepped in to slice a couple of inches around one ear. Then he handed me the knife and I did the other one, which took some elbow grease but finally opened up.

As I worked towards the forehead I discovered a tiny silver pellet, the fox's tiny cranium bruised crimson underneath. It made me feel sad for a second, but Eric quickly distracted me with instructions to put my finger in its earhole.

"Inside it?" I asked.

"Yep, put your finger in there," Eric said. "Now pull." With one finger in the ear, I leaned back, leveraging my body for a few more inches of face. The idea, Eric explained, was to hold the skin taut to get a few more inches of clearance while we did the eyes. "You want to keep the whole eyelid on," he said, taking over to demonstrate. He stuck his thumb in the fox's earhole, peeling the skin down to one of its blue-grey eyeballs, where he made a slice and removed it.

"I'm gonna let you do the other one."

"Oh, great," I said, taking the knife.

"Keep steady pressure with your legs, just like you are."

I had almost forgotten that most of the fox skin was between my legs; I was distracted by Eric's instruction to cut straight towards the bone, bit by bit.

"Don't be afraid of it," Larry said. I soon exposed the other eyeball and pulled until only the fox's snout remained inside the skin. Eric worked through the lips and whiskers, exposing an entire jaw full of jagged teeth. The skinless fox face, staring at me with its giant eyeballs, looked like an alien. All that was left to carve was the tip of the nose, around which Eric advised me to pull and saw.

Moments later I was holding the entire skin, inside out, in my arms, completely bewildered. I looked at the clock. The process had taken about 40 minutes.

"Now take that skin," Larry said, "turn it fur-side out, and see what kind of good job you did." This required me to stick my entire arm inside the cold and slimy fox skin, which was basically a meat sock at this point. I found the end and pulled it right-side out. "See how everything's on?" Eric said. "The whiskers are there, the nose, the ears. Everything's good."

With its weight in my arms, what had seemed like a gory, gruelling science experiment suddenly and simply became a fox. I rubbed his little black nose and whiskers between my fingers, the curve of his jaw resting in the palm of my hand. An unfamiliar mixture of gratitude and remorse washed over me. Something inside me wanted to clutch it to my chest, like a teddy bear or a baby. I felt my chin crinkle up and tried to steady myself, fearing Larry and Eric might start to wonder whether I was an undercover activist.

The entire hind half of the fox hung naked and peeled, red and violet, with white traces curving along its musculature.

There was a little hole between its eyes.

"Is that where the bullet went through?" I asked.

"That was one of the pellet holes, yep," Eric answered.

To my horror, I was starting to cry.

"Sometimes when we're tired and silly," Larry piped up from his chair, "we'll play puppet. One guy'll put a fox over his hand, the other guy'll put a coon on his hand, and we'll sit down here and talk to each other." We all laughed. Larry instinctively took care of the final step, turning it inside out and pulling it across a stretcher to scrape away the fat. Eric sliced the glands off the body, which was still hanging from the hook, and popped them into a jar for future use as bait.

After I proved my conviction, Eric and Larry realised that one fox skin wasn't going to get me far and graciously allowed me to purchase five of their most beautiful fox pelts. I brushed them out and passed them to Larry, who unhooked the bottom bar of a heavy steel hanger, laced it through their eyeholes, and zipped them into an oversize black garment bag. Then he wrote up a receipt for \$150 (£95)—a total steal.

Even though all furs aren't created—or killed—equally, PETA does not distinguish between the wild and farm-raised varieties. "The fur trade is simply a violent, bloody industry, any way you slice it," campaign director Lindsay Wright told me.

I was looking for a little more moral nuance, so I called Steven Wise, author of the scathing condemnation of factory hog farms *An American Trilogy* and a legal scholar who has taught courses on animal rights at Harvard Law School. He thinks fur should be completely illegal but conceded that there might be room for degrees of ethical distinction. "Factory-farmed fur is probably worse than killing wild animals for fur," he said. "Up until the animal is killed in the wild, they have a normal life in the wild. An animal raised for fur has a terrible life and a terrible death." I asked whether he thought killing or processing one's own garment changed anything. "No," he said. "It just makes you wonder whether it's insane." Call me crazy, but I wasn't buying it.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Putting the final touches on my vest.

The weekend came, and I wasn't able to take the furs to Marc, the dresser, for three days. In the meantime, the garment bag hung in my bathroom with the door closed and window open. At first it was sort of like having a new dress; I'd get a little zing when I thought about them. Then it started to smell—a mild odour somewhere between a butcher block, a leather shop and a bowl of Wotsits—and the garment bag seemed more like a body bag. I unzipped it one last time on Monday morning. The fur was still beautiful, but the hides were stiff and papery, and the skin had turned a striking shade of magenta. Let's just say prosciutto hasn't been the same since. By the time I got to Marc's soaring brick facility in New Jersey, my skin was itching with anticipation—I couldn't get rid of the furs fast enough.

"Skin a red fox?" Marc said, when I told him my story. "Are you kidding me? I'm a North Jersey boy." Marc got into the fur business as a 19-year-old dropout and aspiring musician, driving a fur truck in the 70s. I found him surprisingly squeamish, especially considering that he owns one of North America's biggest fur-dressing facilities. He winced at the smell when he opened my garment bag, but said, "I think they'll dress up nice."

To demonstrate, he showed me furs frothing in tubs of soap, chemicals and salt, preparing to be scraped of excess flesh, moisturised, and then tumbled in towering wooden barrels. "I turn skin into leather," he said.

Until a few years ago, Marc told me, only about a fifth of his business came from wild animals. But recently, as auction prices for farmed fur have peaked, he estimates that the proportion has climbed to about 50 percent. He attributes the change to increasing demand for fur in Russia and China. He also told me that he believes North Americans are getting priced out of farmed fur but said the alternative can be challenging. "Wild fur is very woolly," he said. "It tends to get tangled."

I didn't think my Pennsylvania pelts seemed particularly woolly until Marc showed me farmed Finnish foxes: improbably fluffy, three times the size of mine, and bred in colours from "platinum" to "blue frost".

American red foxes, on the other hand, come in one colour. But I still thought they were prettier than those Finnish fluff-bombs and couldn't wait to see Marc's handiwork. He told me that after he was finished he'd put them on his daily truck to be dropped off in Manhattan's fur district.

Two weeks later, I walked west on 30th Street, towards Dimitris's workshop. In 1985, when he came to New York from Greece, he was one of more than 500 furriers in the city. Today there are about 40, and during the week between Christmas and New Year's, Dimitris's fourth-floor workspace was pretty quiet. Bags, boxes and piles of fur covered every surface, except for a thick wood table in the middle of the room.

We spread out my fox skins. They were supple and soft, with caramel-coloured backs, grey down beneath and silvery-grey necks and sides. The once prosciutto-coloured skin was now approaching stark white leather. The pelts still had ears, noses and whiskers, but it was as if they had been exorcised of their animal spirits.

We matched two of the saltier-coloured furs and laid them side by side. With a gold-handled blade, Dimitris sliced off their pale inner edges and sewed the skins together, creating a mutant, two-headed fox pelt with a double-wide back. "See?" he said. "Like plastic surgery." Then he unceremoniously swiped across the tops of their necks. Like that, my foxes were fabric.

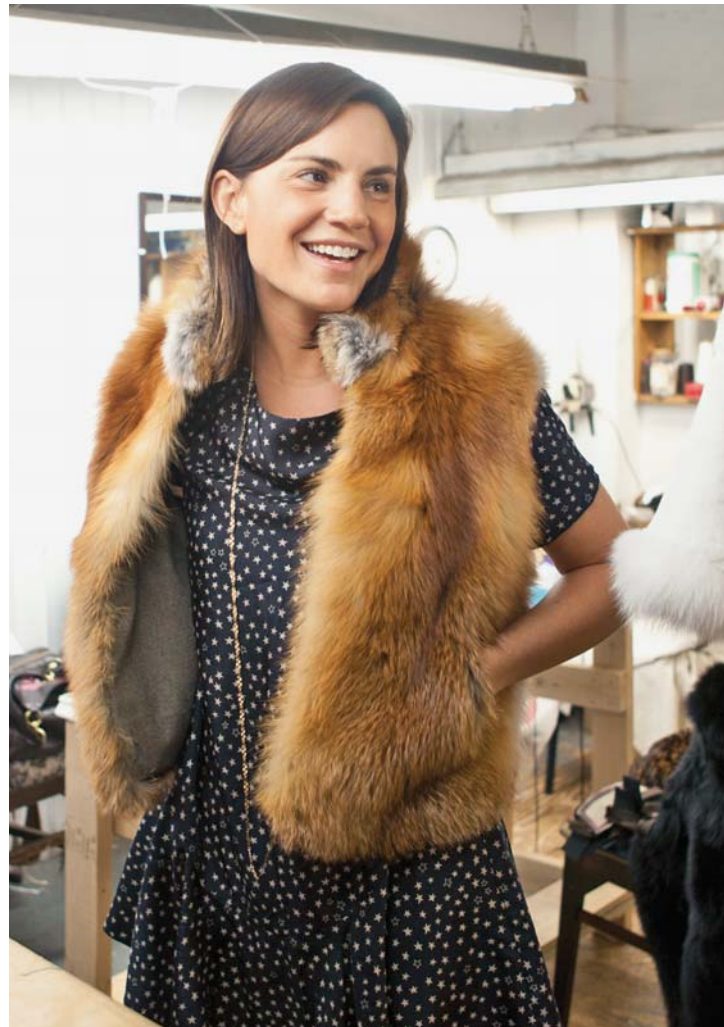
Over four days, I apprenticed with Dimitris, slicing around bullet holes and belly scratches, stitching up skins, and stretching them to size. We made a cardboard pattern for a vest and traced it onto four of the skins' leather sides, setting aside the fifth skin for another project. We cut the lines, sewed the shapes together and steam-blasted the fur. When it came time to close up the collar, he let me sit at the machine.

For days I had watched Dimitris sew the leather together, tucking fur with his thumbs as he went. But when it came time to press my own foot down on the machine's pedal, I felt the same fearful focus I had with my hand on the knife at Larry's workshop. Eventually, I pressed, turning the machine's steel wheels while the needle moved back and forth through the collar.

Once the vest was constructed, I went to the fabric store for lining. I couldn't decide between two flannels: a hunter green that recalled the Pennsylvania woods and a butterscotch-flecked grey that resembled the underlayer of fox fur. I chose the grey and brought it to Maria, the seamstress known, appropriately, as the finisher. She made the lining and, with a dagger-sharp needle, sewed it into the vest by hand. It was finished, except for one old-fashioned final touch.

I brought the vest to a monogram shop on 30th Street to have my name embroidered inside. Really, I should have requested a few more: Maria, Dimitris, Marc, Barry, Eric and Larry. Plus four little red foxes who are keeping me very, very warm this winter. And I love every last one of them for it.

Admiring the brand new (and very comfy) fur vest.



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TOUPÉE: GOOD TIMES

BY BRETT GELMAN, PHOTOS BY JANICZA BRAVO

Featuring Curtis Gwinn

Shit, I'm stressed out. This is probably the most stressed I've ever been. And stress is a constant in my life, but usually there's some sort of break. Some sort of breather so you don't drown in all the bullshit. I mean, what the fuck? When does it end? How will it end?

Dead Dick was supposed to be dead, and now, apparently, not only is he not dead, he's the one who set up the setup. Is Shit Bird telling the truth? I don't know. Shit Bird's probably the biggest liar I know, but to lie about your dead lover not being dead... that would be a hard sell even for such a primo piece of fucking scum. Especially if the liar is weak-minded, and there ain't no weaker mind than old Shit Bird's. He's impressionable, the type of guy you could persuade to blow a mountain lion that hadn't eaten for weeks. He's like that feather in that stupid Gump movie.

I tie him up and leave him in his cosy little bed. I might come back later to untie him. Might not. Depends how I'm feeling. All I feel right now is stress. I need some good ol'-fashioned good times. Some simple fun that doesn't have anything to do with hustling or running. A safe haven. A place to think and release the worry. Only one place to do that: Shamrock's.

Shamrock is the best. You can always count on him to brighten your day. A lot of people say this about their stupid fucking friends who they think are the funniest thing since Milton Berle's cock, but I mean it. Shamrock is fucking hilarious. Everything the guy says leaves me on the floor. I almost can't handle it, but you bet your ass I wouldn't give it up for a gazillion rim jobs.

I grow excited as I drive. Ain't nothing like good friends. They're about as hard to come by as a hooker who don't charge you extra for clampin' her nips. The other thing you need to know about Shamrock is, he's one of the most loaded guys in town. He started out doing everything all of us assholes do. He hooked, he robbed, he might have even popped a few junkies who didn't pay up, but after that he did it smart. He invested. That's what I should have done. But I'm a fucking idiot. If I wasn't I wouldn't be getting into messes all the time.

I pull up to Shamrock's, get out of the car, and knock on his door. It opens.

"Heeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy, Toupéeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!"

Shamrock doesn't disappoint. Gives me a Grade A hug. I've never been one for physical affection, but when Shamrock grabs you, you feel like you're the king of the universe. Fuck, it feels good.

I start to give him the lowdown on my toils and troubles. He laughs: "Aw, there's always something with you."

There he goes again with that good ol' Shamrock wisdom. He's right, but he doesn't say it in a way that makes you feel like a turd. He makes you realise we're all turds dropped from the same ass, and we're all headed towards the same sewer.

We immediately start cokin' it up and out, and it feels good. It feels right, like friendship. He pukes in the pool. Anybody else did that, I'd think they were a complete piece of shit. Not Shamrock. He pukes and it's like he's God and he's making it rain.

"Aw, there's always something with you," he says again. He's right. There is always something with me. I've always had some problem or other. Something's always fucking wrong. I'm so tired of it. I want shit to be right. I want things to be good. I want my life to be like Shamrock's.

So I decide right then and there that I will end all wrongs, solve all my problems. I'm going to find Dead Dick—that is, if he isn't dead. And if he isn't dead, and he really did set me up, I'm going to make him fucking deader than any Dead Dick has ever been dead before.

Shamrock gives me another hug. Feels even better than the first one.

"You're fine, Toupée," he says. "You're more than fine. Hell, I wouldn't let you in my house if you weren't fine. I don't hang out with losers. I only hang out with the best and the brightest. And you're the best of the best, and the brightest of the bright. Free yourself, Toupée. Free yourself."

Soon I'll be free. I'll be free of the past. I'll be free of who I am. I'll be the freest fuck that was ever free. As soon as I show them that they are nothing, as soon as I put them into their most attractive state. I'll kill 'em all. Every last one of 'em. And then... *poof*. No more problems.

Check VICE.com for previous instalments of Toupée, Brett Gelman's novel about baldness, disgusting depravity and being on the lam.



Photo by Harold Ivey



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MY COOL STUFF

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My collection of **FOUFONES ELECTRIQUE MAGAZINE** from Paris—a biweekly that featured fashion worn only by electronica DJs. Mi amour! (Out of print)

A photo of someone's grandpa in a **GORDON & PINCER FAUX-IRON FRAME**, my favourite picture-frame designer! (£210 at Lalouche Gallery)

My **ORVILLE & KNORKLER BLACKSTAR FAUX-DECANTER**, filled with Asley & Warren's Spice-Butter AromaScent Cheekwater—keeps my cheeks cheeky! (£28.35/oz. at Gamble & Gimble)

My **2012 MODEL SNK VIDEO 50" 60 HZ HDTV WITH 3-D**—a gift from my mother—hi, Mum!

My fave scribing instrument, a **FAUX-REPRO WESSON & HALSEY SQUID-INK PEN!** Writes in indelible (and edible!) squid ink squeezed from the ass of a dying squid—I use it to note my favourite colours and the shapes of my favourite clouds! (Pen, £32 at Staples, squid Ink, £379/oz. at Hester & Chalkie's fish market)

My pointy-toed calf-scratrum **BILLS & PEEBLER OXFORD SHOES**, the softest shoes I own AND the cheapest! (£325,000 bought in Milan somewhere!)

My collection of **JENSEN & VORHEE & SOLVERT INFLATABLE BUTTER BEDS**: blow them up and fill them with melted butter, and when you're done, just toss 'em! Makes butter baths easy as 1-2-oops! (£285 at Dpondon of London)

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BAILBIX & TAIN'T'S REPRO PIPE TOBACCO CANISTER, filled with edamame from my fave restaurant, Ed-A-Mommy's in Williamsburg. (Canister, £324 at Steven's TopKnot Shop on Avenue C; Edamame beans, £3.95)

My **LEATHERETTE SPIK & SPANK SHOULDER CHAP CARRIER BAG**, EXACTLY like the kind Amelia Earhart wore when she got lost flying around the world! I love to carry it and imagine I'm lost, too, and that I'll never be found and turn into a skeleton on a deserted isle!! (£2,050 at Squib Bros. Leatherette Place in Williamsburg)

*This Month's VICE Funpage!
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by Bob Odenkirk; photo by Dan Meyer

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THE CUTE SHOW PAGE!

BY ELLIS JONES, PHOTO BY MALOU TAN

Guinea Pig Village

Watch a brand new episode of The Cute Show! featuring these squeezable balls of fur later this month on VICE.com.

Guinea pigs are those chubby-faced mega-hamsters that squeak when you squeeze them. They were domesticated when 16th-century explorers brought them from the Americas to Europe, where they quickly become a popular pet for the upper classes. Meanwhile, people living near the Andes mountains continued to enjoy cooking and eating guinea pigs as they had for centuries. But enough about that nonsense. If you happen to find yourself in the Netherlands, there's a small guinea pig village where you can adopt one of these creatures yourself—to eat (please don't), squeeze or whatever else you wish. All day long they roll around on a plush lawn dotted with tiny windmills and miniature gnomes holding saxophones. There's even a separate, less busy area where older guinea pigs spend their retirement amid a floor of golden hay sprinkled with ripe veggies and poop. It probably smells like shit in there, but if given the chance we'd hold our breath just long enough to put one guinea pig in each hand and tenderly stroke them across our faces till we sneezed.



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THE FASHION ISSUE 2012

SKINEMA

BY CHRIS NIERATKO



BUTTFACE

Dir: Belladonna
Rating: 10

Enterbelladonna.com/
Evilangel.com

I went to school with a kid named Phil McCracken. I am a big fan of juvenile humour, so you can see why I love this title. Recently I was informed that there's a skateboarder in England who is gaining popularity with the birth name Ash Hall. That's right. There's an Ash Hall skater running around jolly ole England shitting on everything. Oh, how my heart sang when I heard about him. I emailed my friend Ben at the UK skate bible *Sidewalk* in ALL CAPS insisting that he couldn't possibly be my friend if he'd hide the UK's Ash Hall from me. I told him how I wanted to speak to this Ash Hall, get all inside this Ash Hall. He responded confused, unsure what I meant. I shot back, "THE KID'S PARENTS NAMED HIM ASSHOLE!! YOU DON'T THINK THAT'S A PERSON OF INTEREST TO ME???" "Oh, I see," he replied, unamused. Turns out that something was lost in the translation, since the UK refers to the tushy as *arse* and not *ass*. And so this Ash Hall has managed to avoid a lifetime of asshole jokes! But no more. He and I are going to become friends, and I am going to make up for his non-English-speaking countrymen who couldn't put two and two together.

As a child I was called Chris Piss. The taunting backfired. I thought it was a hilarious moniker. To the disdain of my teachers, I began to sign my tests and homework Chris Piss. I gave my other classmates similarly crude nicknames. Their reactions were not as accepting and entertained as my own.

In high school—my second high school, that is, after I was removed from my first for putting my algebra teacher in the hospital by breaking her neck (total accident)—I was placed in a Catholic school for a year

where the girls wore polyester skirts and form-fitting white button-up shirts. Not even the baggiest of cardigans could hide the fat rolls that were tucked into those blouses. There was one girl in history class named Sue who shimmed like jelly at all points below the chin. She looked like a bowl of soup ready to spill out at any moment. So I sat beside SUE from September to June, whispering the word *SOUP* to her from 10:15 AM to 11 AM Monday through Friday, except on holidays. Soup. No one heard me but her. It was not for the class's amusement, just my own. Soup. She'd beg the teacher to make me stop, but no one else had heard me. Soup. So no one could corroborate her story. Soup. Not to mention I excelled in history. Soup. Especially the chapters dealing with 1939 to 1945. Soup. Did you know when given the chance to choose my home phone number, I picked the one ending in 1942, soup, because it was the year of the Battle of Midway? Soup. Recently at a carnival in my hometown I saw her and she looked fantastic. I'd like to think my saying *Soup* to her aided in her transformation. She came up to me, in front of my wife and child, and unleashed nearly 20 years of pent-up rage. How she hates me, hates the mention of the word *soup*, etc., blah blah, etc. I smiled politely, apologised—not for what I'd done, but for not remembering who she was or what she was talking about. It devastated her that it meant nothing to me (although I did remember clear as day). As she turned and went off crying, I called out one last time, "SOUP!" She looked back as if she were going to vomit. I merely smiled again and waved.

More stupid can be found at Chrisnieratko.com and @Nieratko on Twitter.

VIDEO GAMES KILLED THE RADIO STAR

BY CHRIS DONLAN

Do you want to know what's changed in handheld gaming? You can't *kill* anyone with a portable console anymore. Old handhelds were all reassuringly blunt and heavy. The Game Boy, for example, was the perfect weight for caving somebody's head in, and you could probably even file the thick plastic corners down and use it as a knife. *A knife that also played Tetris.*

PS Vita, though—the brand new PlayStation handheld—is far too chic and streamlined to be much use in a fight. It's light and thin and isn't going to injure anyone, in fact, unless its beautiful five-inch screen is secretly made from plutonium. At least Sony knows it's a looker, though. That's why the company has announced the machine's arrival in Europe with some hilariously aspirational lifestyle ads suggesting the typical Vita owner slots a little *Ratchet and Clank* in between setting up their latest transmedia art installation down at the local skate park and having highly conceptual threeways with Banksy and a Rem Koolhaas building.

The ads miss the mark, in other words (if Sony really wanted to capture the gaming lifestyle all they'd need was one of those concrete pipes you find in an adventure playground and a bag to huff glue out of) but the Vita itself is surprisingly lovely. It's as if the console's design team wasn't quite sure what they should do, so they've done everything at once: a big bright screen, touch control, face buttons, tilt sensors, a separate rear touchscreen (it's weird), a microphone and cameras. You can buy it in 3G or Wi-Fi-only models, and, best of all, it's got two thumbsticks rather than one, meaning third-person games are no longer strange virtual theme parks for people who really like walking into walls.

Speaking of games, the obvious star of the Vita launch line-up is *Uncharted: Golden Abyss*. The latest instalment in the Indiana Jones-alike action series has made the transition to the small screen with surprising flair. Fans of the franchise will be delighted to know that the shooting sections are still worse than getting your tongue stuck in a chain-link fence, but at least you can now choose to throw the game's hero around the craggy environments with either thumbstick and buttons or an imperious swipe of the index finger. It reminds me a little of the time I had to guide Sylvester Stallone through a spooky graveyard by coughing. How I miss him.

WipEout 2048's another updating of a classic Sony IP: a racing game in which

you blast about in a variety of needle-nosed anti-gravity ships. *WipEout's* set in the future, as the name deftly insinuates, but it's clearly the future of the 1990s, when the game was originally created. It's all kind of endearing, really: it's got thudding dance music, shuffling basslines, and the sort of utopian cityscapes we all gave up on around 2008 when the banking collapse tilted our idea of the 21st century towards something a little more Dickensian. As far as the launch line-up is concerned, incidentally, *WipEout's* only competition on the driving front is *ModNation Racers: Road Trip*—a game that allows you to make and share your own tracks. It's entertaining enough, but it's always felt a bit too much like work to me, and it has a vinyl toy art style that suggests the developer is actually a Camden-based ad agency and would rather be pitching for a sweet Pepsi campaign.

Everybody's Golf and *Reality Fighters* are also worth checking out. The former has you knocking balls around rolling green hills in the body of a mildly deformed child—it's a lot better than it sounds—while the latter casts you as a resurrected Jean Baudrillard and charges you with smuggling a copy of *Simulacra and Simulation* out of war-torn Iraq. Actually, it doesn't: it's an AR fighting game that lets you scan your face in.

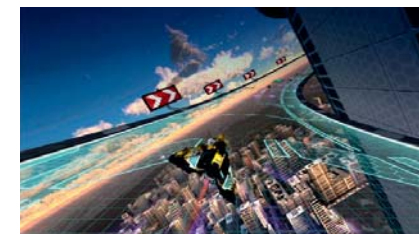
The game that's really got me excited, though, is *Gravity Rush*. *Gravity Rush* is made by Sony Japan, and it's *Inception* by way of Toulouse-Lautrec, only bearable. You explore a weird semi-Parisian city in the company of a non-Euclidean cat, and you can fight monsters while titting about with the laws of physics and walking on the sides of buildings. Sold.

It's a pretty strong line-up, but will it be enough to pull people away from their iPhones and iPads? I remember reading a while back that one of the Sitwells spent his declining years in crazed solitude building a revolver that was designed to shoot wasps: an intricate and strangely heroic folly that I suspect a lot of video game commentators might want to chalk Vita up alongside. After all, with *Angry Birds* turning up on *X-Factor* ad breaks, a gaming device of this complexity no longer feels quite as mass-market as it once would have.

If it is a folly, though, it's a really enjoyable folly. Based on the quality of the hardware alone, Vita deserves a decent shot at success.



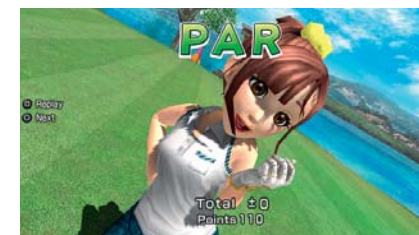
Uncharted: Golden Abyss



WipEout 2048



ModNation Racers: Road Trip



Everybody's Golf



Reality Fighters



Gravity Rush



**BEST ALBUM OF THE MONTH:
DEATHHAMMER**



TEDDY MUSIC
Grime: The Compilation
Teddy Music

6 If you're after a rose-tinted summary of grime's last three years, you'll struggle to find better than this compilation by producer Teddy Music (Lord knows why he changed his name from Silencer), featuring a barrage of guest MCs. It's all as you'd expect: the beats are as brutal as ever (but far less weird), the old guard (Newham Generals, Trim, Ghetts) may not possess the passion of old but they still most definitely have it, and Lethal Bizzle is still the second worst grime MC of all time (after Bruza). The only surprise here is that Ironik—that chubby twat who got signed to a major because his uncle pulled some strings—is behind a brilliant track called "Falling In Love".

SHANTY MEDDLER



5 Considering DVA (aka Scratcha) fancies himself as the next Chris Evans (he's the Rinse FM breakfast show host and has a penchant for silly glasses, but he doesn't like to talk about that in interviews for this record), it really comes as a surprise just how bland his album is. This "UK funky" stuff may be popular with the punters right now but, believe me, it will be looked upon as grime's intelligent drum'n'bass phase in the annals of history/Simon Reynolds' next book. The incredible final track on here—a divine dubstep dirge with languid horns called "Where I Belong"—suggests that DVA is of the same opinion.

PRANCEHALL



V/A
Trevor Jackson Presents Metal Dance—Industrial, Post Punk, EBM: Classics & Rarities 80-88
Strut

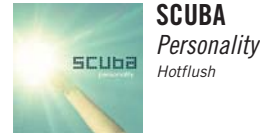
8 Trevor Jackson dusts off the nipple clamps and unlocks his sex dungeon with a whopping 27-track 2CD selection of fruity body music from the 1980s that reminds me of good times down at Nag Nag Nag in 2004. All the pin-ups of leather-boy new beat are here (Nitzer Ebb, D.A.F., Mark Stewart, Hard Corps), muscling in on slinkier gear from Pete Shelley, Secession and Severed Heads. One or two kinky thrills lurk among the clanking dub and thrusting pistons, and the whole experience feels a bit like getting molested in Hamburg docks by a Frankie Goes To Hollywood remix.

JENNIFER JUPITER



9 It's hard to imagine now, but there was a time when a "minimal synth" was one you could just about fit into a Ford Fiesta, a "cold wave" was what your girlfriend gave you as she walked through the door of the abortion clinic, and no one much cared what a bunch of teenagers in France did in their bedrooms in 1982. Of course nowadays you can't move for people exhuming this tiny burial ground of frosty records. For that, we must thank Minimal Wave's first compilation of treasured nuggets, which along with Angular's *Cold Wave and Minimal Electronics*, helped kickstart the vogue. Given what a satirically small niche theirs is, some diminishing returns might be expected. Not so. This is vital primitivism: sleazy, colder than Julian Assange rape testimony and utterly essential.

PETER MOKABA



SCUBA
Personality
Hotflush

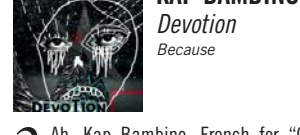
6 You used to be able to tell dubstep records by the big wobbly basslines but now that big wobbly basslines appeal heavily to morons on roflicopter who keep soiling themselves and muttering about "the drop", it seems the thing to do is hide your inner dubstepness by making serious house or techno music instead. Scuba is such a moodypants that even his warbling divas sound like they're having a really terrible day, but tracks like "Cognitive Dissonance", with its watery synths and skittering drum'n'bass rhythms, carve out something coldly beautiful.

DEAN FUNK



8 A Hot Chip side-project named after an 808 State album that sounds like the Doobie Brothers loved up on moon pellets and features Janine from Planningtorock glueing all the beautiful songs together—really, what's not to like? Between 2 Bears, About Group, New Build and Hot Chip, these guys could put on their own festival and only book themselves. Who'd go?

LES PANINI



3 Ah, Kap Bambino, French for "Crystal Castles". Your bleeps are generally more melodic than your Canadian rivals, but curiously only for a period of 25 minutes, after which it becomes apparent that what we had recently regarded as "the bracing, brawling, bleeding edge of smart, narky technocotics" suddenly becomes ear-gnashingly painful scree. Like

**WORST ALBUM OF THE MONTH:
PERFUME GENIUS**



that moment where you tip from "just enough heroin" to "going to have to lie down now heroin" to "someone call me an ambulance please heroin".

KADER ASMAL



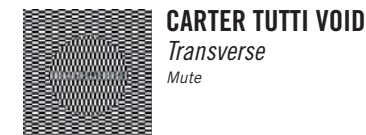
4 As we all know, New York has pretty much been at the vanguard of most musical and cultural innovation over the last 30 years. So what I really want to know is why have they just come out with a band that sounds like Manuel Göttsching playing wibbly guitar over the top of "Music Sounds Better With You"?

HUEY MATTISON



9 What's going on? WhoMadeWho just had a new album out last year and now they're back with another one, *Brighter*, which is by some distance the best thing this Danish trio have ever done. Good work! Juicy Moroder riffs, outrageous tunes and curiously compelling lyrics make me forget that LCD Soundsystem even existed. I don't know why but I love this record.

CANARY DWARF



7 Last year at Camden Roundhouse, while fat, bald men in leather trenchcoats danced to Nitzer Ebb and Moby at Mute's Short Circuit festival, downstairs in a concrete bunker, an experiment was taking place. Nik Void, the guitarist/singer from Factory Floor joined Chris and Cosy to perform four ten-minute-long

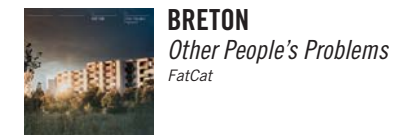
excursions into industrial techno and event-horizon dub in front of a packed audience, leaving a frustrated mob locked out. Now with this live album you can recreate that distressing experience in the comfort of your own 40-watt-bulb-lit cellar.

GENESIS P. OPTARTS



5 Minny Pops are one of those 80s minimal synth groups that for some reason I've never really checked out, perhaps because I got confused and assumed they were a breakfast cereal. Now I have this live album they made in 1981 and I can hear exactly what I've been missing: a rudimentary drum machine, some one-fingered synth, a Dutch guy singing "scary" and some pretty inexpert guitar. Odd that this lot were pretty big when comparatively better groups like Nine Circles went completely unheard, but you know what they say: people from the olden days were assholes.

CHARLES HANSON



6 Breton are cluttered like inner-city living—a jumble of jaundiced voices, claustrophobic brick walls of keyboard and juddering MPC beats that poke an elbow in your ribs right when you're trying to get off a bus with a couple of shopping bags. Trying to listen to them when the sky is blue or there's a small patch of grass in sight probably wouldn't work, but there's something about their deeply obtrusive music that makes me think it would be a great idea to go sit on an abandoned council estate with some strong lager and bellow things into the sky for a while.

FLORENCE RADA



CEREMONY
Zoo
Matador

8 If you were the gambling sort and wanting to place money on the hardcore band bound for a Fucked Up/Iceage-style sortie into the mainstream in 2012, you might want to put some reasonable money on Ceremony. California-bred, four albums old (this is their first on Matador), they play a sort of mid-paced, mean hardcore which makes me think of Pissed Jeans and the Stooges and bad men who want to be good but for some reason just keep on doing bad things. *Zoo* is good from start to finish but in particular I appear to have listened to the track "Adult" about 100 times before January is even out the door.

EL PEE

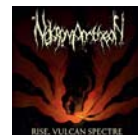


7 Everyone knows the Cannibal Corpse Top Trumps facts: excellent death metal/splattercore from Buffalo, New York. Their first three albums were banned in Germany because of violent and depraved lyrics and song titles such as "Entrails Pulled From a Virgin's Cunt". They are Robbie Coltrane's favourite band and he refused to appear in *Nuns on the Run* unless they had a cameo. This is their 12th album in 24 years and their third with a steady line-up and the same producer, Erik Rutan, which has seen them traversing a plateau of demented quality nearly equal to the level they achieved with *Butchered at Birth* in 1991 and *Tomb of the Mutilated* in 1992, two records that every home should have.

LUC VAN CRACKER



**BEST COVER OF THE MONTH:
BLACK RAIN**



NEKROMANTJEON
Rise, Vulcan Spectre
Indie Recordings

9 This is what happens when you listen to too much 80s leftfield metal, smoke enough weed to add a flicker of originality to its blueprint and get so drunk you knock posers out in the moshpit for fun. Also, I think having your drinking water polluted with the corpses of murder victims helps make a record this amazing. The ritual has begun! Sound the alarm—the sleeping horde awaits!

GENE HOBGOBLIN



DEATHHAMMER
Onward to the Pits
Hells Headbangers

10 I don't even have to listen to this to know that it is the best record that will be released this year. Just look at that sick demon asshole rising up out of the flames of hell on the cover. How could anything beat that? Well, I fucking listened to it anyway and it was ten times better than what I thought. This record is fast as shit and the singer sounds like a crazy wizard with dragons flying out of his dick. And every song is about the things that matter to me the most: evil sorcery, voodoo and kissing Satan's fat ass. Everything sucks except for this record.

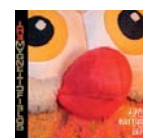
JOHNNY RYAN



CAST
Troubled Times
Self-released

5 Artists are forever whining about the discipline that record labels impose on them, but what they are

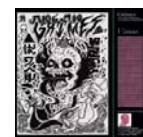
beginning to realise is that now they're "empowering" themselves with fan-funded albums, the discipline of their most ardent supporters is far more fascistic. So it is that Cast (194% of funding target on Pledgemusic.com), have reined in the sort of creative excesses that turned 2001's final fling, *Beetroot*, into an ill-advised 70s space-funk romp: not only do the fans want Cast to be Cast, they've damned well paid for them to be. And frankly, now that Powers and his mates no longer have to cosh themselves with their artistic vanity to "move forward", they sound much better for it.



THE MAGNETIC FIELDS
Love at the Bottom of the Sea
Domino

7 There's never been a better time for Stephin Merritt to return to relevance. Death Cab and his many other spiritual children continue to stalk the US charts, it has become socially acceptable to enjoy the ukulele, even Green Day are doing musicals. Yet still this stubborn Zeus continues to sit up on Mount Olympus, failing to produce the carbon copy of *69 Love Songs* many pine for. His tenth arrives aboard a raft of deliberately vulgar synth presets, and lyrically is still way above Neil Hannon levels of wryness: "My Husband's Pied a Terre" ("All the social classes mingle there") and "I Don't Like Your Tone" to name two instant sniggers. Overall, it feels more like an elegant placeholder rather than a step in any particular direction.

JOHN WILEY



GRIMES
Visions
4AD

6 Grimes' press release describes her as "a curator of culture", which I think translates as "is into a whole bunch of stuff". *Visions* seems to bear this out: a

seasick mash-up of karaoke R&B, K-pop, Madonna and bedsit electronica. To me, it sounds promising but unrealised, but hey, what do I know? She's got lovely doe eyes and a kooky fringe and she lives and makes music in an abandoned textile factory in Vancouver, so she's going to be at least as big as Tune-Yards, even if I grouch on about it for the next 15 minutes.

NED BUNGER



THE SHINS
Port of Morrow
Columbia

8 *Port of Morrow* pares back some of the dubby echo that made *Winning the Night Away* such a head-wrap, pegging itself halfway between that and the more straightforward *Chutes Too Narrow*. It is also completely brilliant. James Mercer could sing a series of race-murder affidavits and you'd find in the twisting-spiralling cadences of his melodies something that reminded you of what it is to be suffused with beauty. To call it "assured" implies a prospect of failure it doesn't hold out. You wouldn't find a visit from a dear old friend "assured".

DULLAH OMAR



TENNIS
Young & Old
Fat Possum

6 Tennis is great and this is a nice record, but I feel like I'm listening to an album of Christmas songs.

HOLLY JOLLY



PERFUME GENIUS
Put Your Back N 2 It
Matador

1 So there's a guy chained to my radiator in the cellar, whom I occasionally beat with a cricket bat, and it

occurred to me the other day that most of the noises he makes are a lot like the ones that emanate from this new Perfume Genius record: the low moan of the disconsolate, a shaky whisper, the hollow, rattling sound of someone who's given up on life. I'm trying to get him to learn how to play short stabbed chords on the piano, and maybe he too can be a post-chillwave godhead. Must remember not to beat him on the head so much, 'cos we definitely want to improve on what PG's come up with here. It's a fine line, innit.

GRAHAM ROWE



SIMPLE MINDS
X5
EMI

9 If you look back far enough into the hazy past of any band, no matter how crap they became, it always turns out they used to be blinding. You know about Aswad, Ultravox, the Beastie Boys and the Sisters Of Mercy, so who would really be that surprised to find out about Cast's early years playing industrial dub or Ed Sheeran's grounding in DC hardcore? These five albums (complete with rarities) prove that between 1979 and 1982 Simple Minds truly were one of the all-time greats, playing electronic disco post-punk of the highest stripe before that howling cockmaster in size-4 Cuban heels, Bono, invited them to tour with U2 and ruined everything.

CHELSEA GIRL



NITE JEWEL
One Second of Love
Secretly Canadian

5 I'm all for quality and class in music—hey, I'm a pretty sophisticated guy myself—but Ramona Gonzalez is really pushing the limits of good taste here with this album of Tanita Tikaram b-sides. Nite Jewel? Night Nurse more like.

THEYDON BOIS

**WORST COVER OF THE MONTH:
NEW BUILD**



JULIA HOLTER
Ekstasis
Rvng Intl

10 Real-deal SoCal synth siren Julia Holter casually dazzles with more spaced-out organ-grinding on this follow-up to last year's *Tragedy*. For fans of that record, she even has another go here at its best song "Goddess Eyes" and now it's twice as long. How considerate! And speaking of goddesses, for bearded guys into vintage keyboards and record collecting, Holter's pretty much a deity these days, perched at present between Wendy Carlos and Kate Bush. In a way, she's kind of what everyone wanted Maria Minerva to be.

THANDIE NEUTRON



THE TREEMAN
Ghost of Love
Video Nastie

8 Do you know the Treeman? You don't!? Go to YouTube right now and search for "the angriest guitar player in the world". There are two clips of an older, maybe not quite mentally stable Liverpudlian reducing his guitar to splinters in a choking fury over a tricky finger-picking part in a song that kind of sounds like a more northern Robert Wyatt. Watch them both. That's the Treeman! Nicknamed for the barklike skin condition he's been afflicted with since youth, John "the Treeman" Ryan has been writing emotionally naked, just-barely-out-of-tune acoustic songs in the vein of Daniel Johnston or a way-less-bullshitty Jandek for the past decade on his lonesome. Then the internet finally made it to him, and now he's got an endorsement deal with Jägermeister (they sent him a hat), a growing audience of rubberneckers and genuine aficionados, and we've got his "Ghost of Love"



stuck in our head, which is like hearing someone doing a really obscure La's song at brainstem karaoke. Thank you, internet!

BABIA BALLOS



ELFIN SADDLE
Devastates
Constellation

4 Sumptuous post-rock being something of a luxury, it figures that times are probably pretty tough for labels like Constellation. What better time, then, to break into the lucrative LARPing market? With its wheezing pipes and accordions, hey-nony vocals and general mental image of buxom maidens pouring mead from huge flagons, there can be no better soundtrack to a group of software designers in chainmail walking across a muddy field with rubber swords, talking rather too convincingly about how just how badly those goblin hordes are gonna get vanquished.

GIDEON SUITS



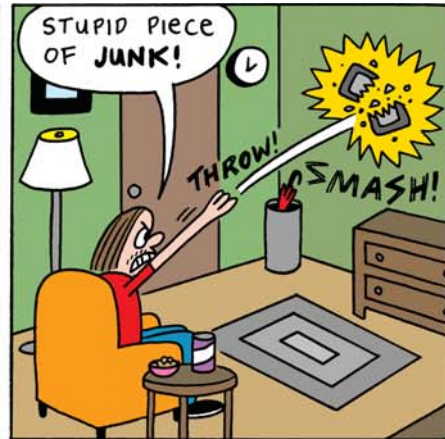
BLACK RAIN
Now I'm Just a Number: Soundtracks 1994-1995
Blackest Ever Black

7 As with the rejected soundtrack to *Hellraiser* by Coil, *Now I'm Just a Number* is mainly made up of music that was cut from *Johnny Mnemonic*, a sci-fi flick starring that walking wall of spam, Keanu Reeves. The compilation (which also features tracks from an audio-book of William Gibson's *Neuromancer*) was recorded by former Ike Yard post-punk-turned-minimal-industrial guy Stuart Argabright and Shinichi Shimokawa under the Black Rain moniker. And if all this cyberpunk gimpishness makes you feel like your virginity is coming back, never fear, because this excellent album sounds like the actual noises you would hear if *Bladerunner* was real and you lived there: screeching terror, metallic techno and acid rain on dangerous streets.

AUDLEY HARRISON FORD

JOBS' GLOBS

BY JOHNNY RYAN





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