

feel

issue one



a magazine by vans

A Letter from the Editor

Sitting here at 3am the night before the print deadline, I have looked at these pages thousands of times and must have re-arranged them over a hundred times too.

It's at moments like this that I start to think about other jobs I've had. Sat in a drug fuelled call centre selling washing machine insurance over the phone isn't quite as fun as making a magazine, and I often avoid thinking about what my job is now because when I try to work out how I got to this point it makes no sense at all. I am however very grateful to be here, making projects with my friends.

To us (me and Vans) culture isn't one of those things you can really fit into a magazine, or at least not in a way that is "all encompassing", and I suppose by nature it is impossible to ever do that anyway. That being said, the following 134 pages is the best we could do, a publication full of people that keep us inspired, and happy to start another day on this strange planet.

We hope that it makes you experience the undefinable, a feeling.

Feel magazine issue one, until next time.

VANS.



Jack Charlie Mitchell

viji
PAGE 4

joshua gordon
PAGE 22

inès ting
PAGE 32

daniel tabakin
PAGE 40

r&m leathers
PAGE 44

theodor black
PAGE 56

fungibles
PAGE 66

athen kardashian & nina mhach durban
PAGE 72

claire barrow
PAGE 84

paria farzaneh
PAGE 94

pillowheat
PAGE 104

powerplant
PAGE 115

helena long
PAGE 124

Vanilla aka Gigi



FM: It's been just over a year since 'So Vanilla' came out, how have things changed (or not changed) for you in life since then and have you felt any overbearing sense of progression within yourself as a person or musically since the record came out?

V: Big questionnn. It's kind of crazy it's only been a year. My hair's changed and yeah I think a lot of things have. I'm so grateful we got to tour the album when it came out, and I took my band to the US for the first time. I love traveling with them, we always end up in silly corners of the city. As a person I have lost all my fears, become 2 levels hotter and a couple books smarter. I've done a lot of living this year, so the songwriting comes pretty easy. My lyrics are as dark as ever but I'm forcing myself to write a love song before the year is up. :)

FM: It feels like everyone here wants to move to other cities like New York or Tokyo, as someone who moved here intentionally what would you say are the good bits about London? I remember you telling me that when you were in New York some things started to make sense and that being there brings a kind of feeling of being closer to the idea of opportunity. Does London compare to that in any way? Does "making it" feel like something you can achieve here musically or do you see another quality in it that keeps you here?

V: I do love London. I think my time here is not forever but it has been home base the last years. I used to want to move to LA really badly, sunshine and ocean is something that doesn't exist here. London has great qualities though. There is so much live music and events, and if you wanted to you could go out every night. There is also something more authentic in the music scene here. Not a lot of egos, at least not the people I surround myself with. People show up and put you on! A producer I worked with in LA kinda put it perfectly, he said writing with Artists here feels more meaningful. People in LA make music to become famous, people in London make music to create art. It's a little extreme but at the core there's something true about it. Saying that, London has become a bit small and I try to be away a few months at a time. NYC might be the next chapter!

FM: Why is Taro bubble tea so good? I feel like I've been missing out. Are there any other snack related suggestions that will make my life less terrible?

V: Taro is the OG flavor! I think I first tried it because it's purple and looked good, but legit have stuck with it since. Uhh okay, as a rundown. Honeybomb sweets, mochi ice cream balls, frozen grapes for movies. Takis and twisted flaming hot cheetos. A juice box will go far, and if you have a shitty day a cookie for breakfast is my go to. Also I've recently had the best desert everrr: mango spring rolls with mango coconut milk dip.

FM: When you write, do you consciously decide if a song is going to be darker or more light hearted from the beginning or is it something that presents itself to you as you go? It must be a trip to sit down with no real plan and then end up with a fully formed song that you've poured your own experiences and emotions into, is that something you've experienced or do you have a more predetermined approach to making music?

V: It's definitely intuitive. Or at least the best ones are! If I have something to say it usually just comes out as is. In my experience, I have to be more predetermined to write a happy song. I don't know why but I find it harder, you have to be super giddy to write something with a smiley face. Not everything I write is sad though. I think melancholia and reflecting on myself and others is my go to.

FM: Whats the story with your Hello Kitty guitar? I've never seen one of those before...

My friend played Santa and sent it to my moms house for xmas. I had no idea and it came in the cutest case. Best present ever! You've been connected with music from a young age, but do you think there is hope for people who start later in life? Can a 100 year old human start making good records and what would you say is the most important thing for someone who has never done it before to consider?

V: I don't think there is any time limit if you have something to say. And music is a way to express yourself with. I think it would be dope to hear what a 100 y/o comes up with. I don't know if there is anything that is specifically insightful that I can say here. As long as you create something you one hundred percent dig there will be others that like it too.

FM: The other day we were joking about those karaoke CDs and how it would be a weird idea to produce them as mech, if you could make anything that would be your ultimate Viji item to sell at shows?

V: Viji blythe dolls would be cold! They are so weird and creepy. I've also always wanted to make playing cards and underwear for each day of the week.

FM: I'd imagine it can feel confusing at times making music. In some ways you have no boss, no enforced structure and total control over your output creatively with days relatively open to fill how you'd like, but then you have to hand over a record, project or tour to other people and suddenly there are a bunch of things that are totally out of your control or at least being contributed to by others than yourself. How do you navigate this both on a personal level and as an artist and are there any words of advice, if any, that you've found have helped you in these moments?

V: I think the hardest part is when you've put in all the work and have to wait for things to come up/plans to finalize. It's great being your own boss and I love sleeping in. Unfortunately I don't have a lot of self discipline though, and I either find myself very productive or super depressed. I think the biggest things I've learned is to be flexible and grateful for what comes along. If you try and plan too much you will be disappointed. This industry is super sporadic, so live your life, create as much as you can and when an opportunity does come in work your ass off. Nobody cares as much as you do.

Dream big always.





i

can

live

i

can

be

evil

KaraokeVision™

COMPACT DISC + GRAPHICS TV KARAOKE STVG-535

FM: Where did you get your earbud necklace and why is it so good?

V: I wish I remembered the name of the shop, but I got it from this Lady in Marseille. She moved down from Paris and now makes jewelry for musicians. It has an AirPod pendant that's covered in skulls, evil eye beads and a silver treble clef in the back. I bought it on the day I dropped my real AirPod out of the 3rd story window (rip). When I saw it I felt like it belonged to me.

10



*When I look up
at the sky, I
see a blanket stretching
through the night.*



FM: When is the next Viji record and, if it exists yet, is there anything you can share about the direction it will have? If so, is it formed enough for you to notice any major musical, lyrical or influential differences from 'So Vanilla' and when will it be out?

V: I'm really proud of my lyrics in 'So Vanilla', so my own expectations for the next album are really high. I've been writing a lot, pretty much since finishing the last record. So there is a lot of songs! I know I don't wanna move too far away from my sound, but I've listened to so much more music and I'm sure the influences will vary a bit. I've got another week of writing in the studio and then it's time to pick the songs. Not much I can reveal till after then. I wanna release new music start of '25, a little taster of what's to come.









FM: Snog, Marry, Avoid - London, Vienna and Rio...

V: Snog Rio, marry Vienna and avoid London. Don't hate me ><

FM: Any last words?

V: Stay dopey!

The friends who ~~initially~~ initially got me excited to stay in London are starting to get on my nerves, the routine and normality, it's smothering me, and yet again I fantasize about being



somewhere else, about something else, Thailand or India or somewhere far away, where I don't know anyone, where I can't speak to anyone.

I wake up and know I have to get out fast, so I go to King's Cross in a daze and try to pick where to go. There's two trains on the Eurostar, France and the Netherlands.

and I've already been all over France, so I guess the Netherlands it is. Without telling any of my friends what I was doing, I board the train with my little bag. Inside the bag is some dirty jeans, a pair of boots, three old tee shirts, a razor, a notepad, and my camera.

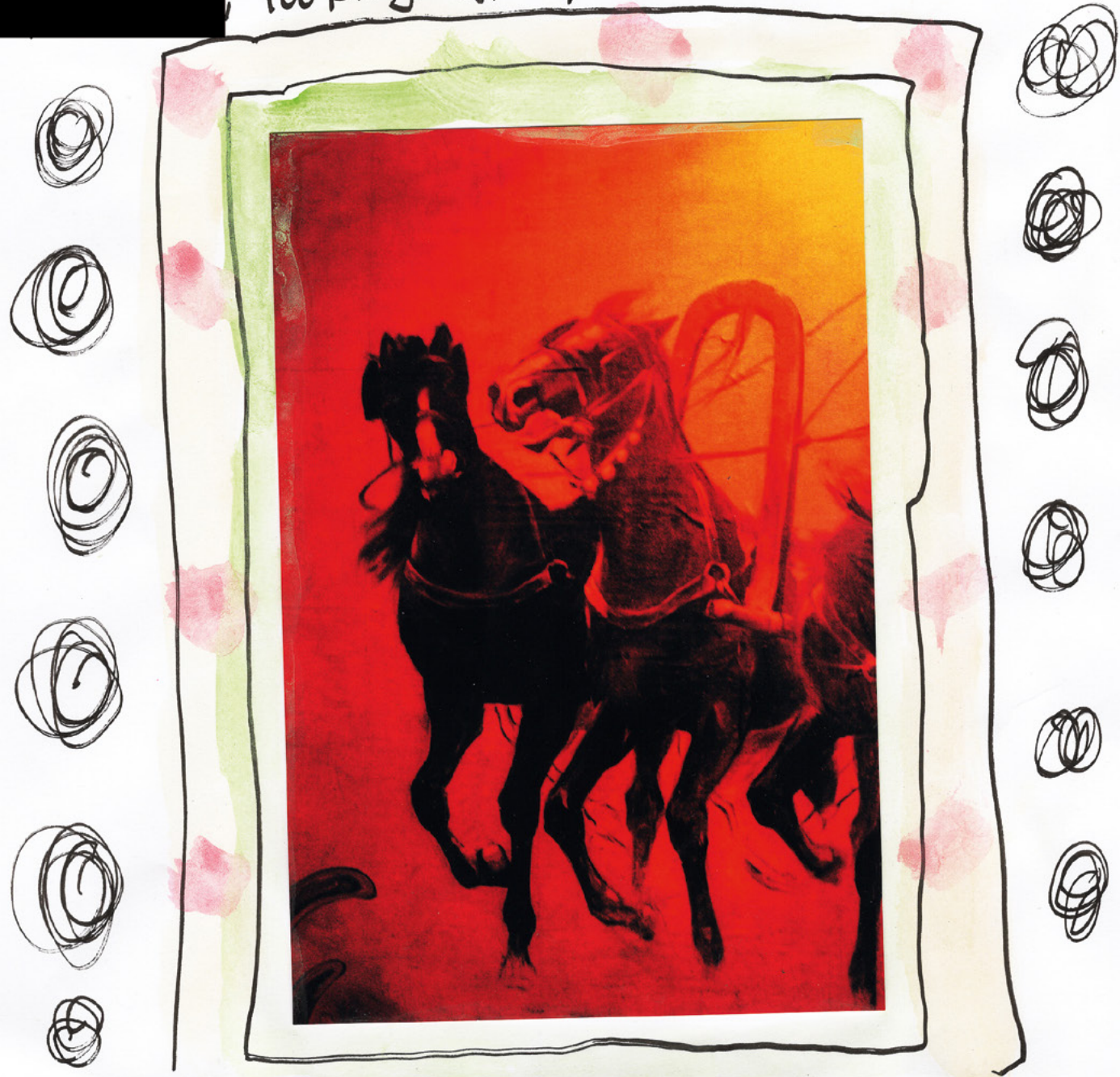
Looking at my phone, I find a photograph of a magical tree that's in a forest about three hours from Amsterdam, somewhere called Kaatshuvel, close to a place called Tilburg. I thought to myself, That's it!! That's what I'm gonna do!! ★

I'm gonna set myself a task to find this fucking tree and see if it can help me figure my life out..... ★

I arrive in Amsterdam at midnight and walk around trying to find cigarettes, I should quit at some point, but tonight I needed one. It was raining, the red lights danced on the cobbles and the streets danced with the most insufferable Irish

English and scottish drunkards that you could find. I asked someone on the street if I could buy a cigarette from him for a euro and he said no.

I walked back to my shitty little hotel, over the cobblestones, fantasizing about [redacted], looking at buildings and wondering what would happen if [redacted], looking at trains and wondering



what would happen if I [redacted] I was lower then I'd been in a long time. The lights of the city twinkled on the water of the canal, as posh, blocky houseboats stood firm. Women lit up in red windows looked straight through me as their big high heels sparkled and they sucked on vogue cigarettes, The police hassled some kids on a bridge, a man vomited aggressively down an alleyway, someone tried to sell [redacted], a shop selling novelty bongos and pipes shined brightly. I knew nobody here, and nobody knew me. It was perfect.



SEPTEMBER 4th → 9AM ★

After a few days alone, the depression was lifting, and I told my friends and family where I was. ~~It~~ It was time to find this magical tree.

Breakfast was 3 pieces of coconut husk and a gulp of lukewarm water from the broken hotel fridge. I did 20 pushups, showered, scrubbed my ass, brushed my teeth and walked outside.

First stop was Amsterdam central station, I stared at the ticket machine confused at the long names, but finally found HERTOGENBOSCH. I hopped on a yellow, double decker train and stared out of the window as cows, windmills and ~~rolling~~ green hills rolled by, covered by a blanket of mist.

I told my friends what I was doing, and they asked if I was taking mushrooms again, "you left London

suddenly a magic

they were about me.

I arrived hertogenbosch and walked



to find tree??
= worried
★ in -bosch

ed out of the station, hopping on the first bus I saw. I had about 36 minutes left on this bus and

then a 25 minute walk to the tree. I did 24,551 steps yesterday, when I have this sickness I always try to walk it off, sometimes it helps, definitely more than when I binge fast food, drink bottles of whiskey, and put strange ~~things~~ in my ~~bag~~ that's for sure!! I'm happy that I haven't done any of these things this time, just running away and smoking some ciggies instead. The bus trip was almost over and I was arriving at a place called kaatsheuvel, a 25 minute walk

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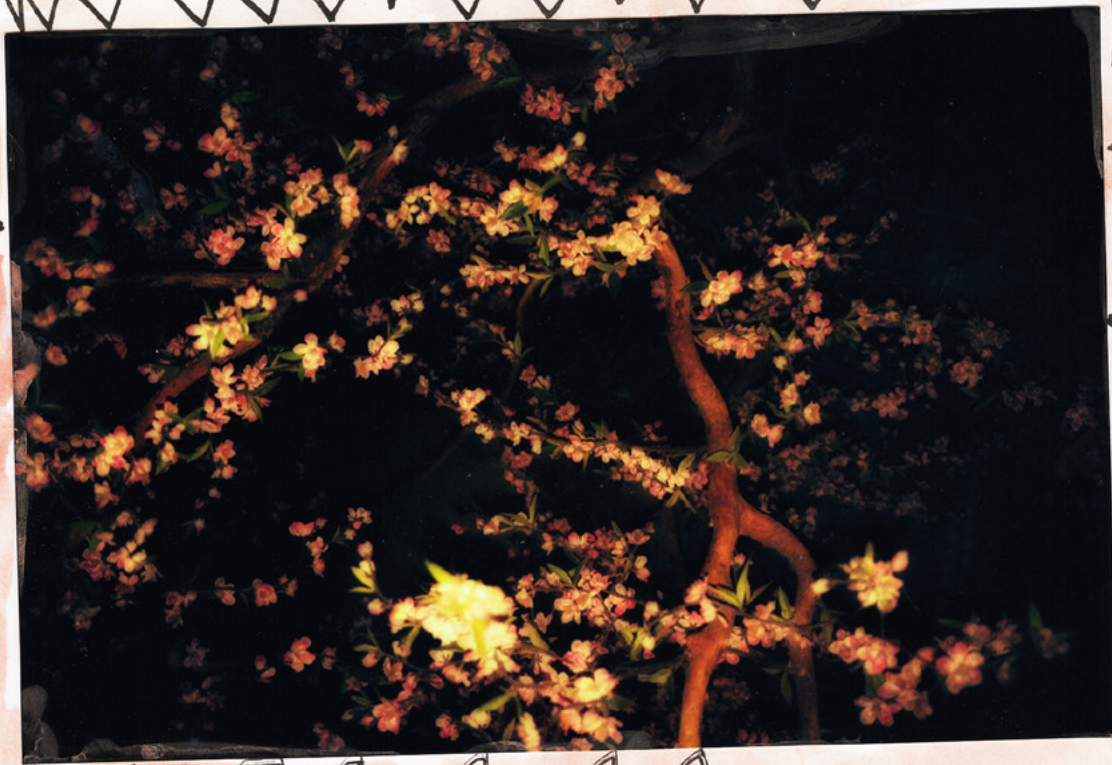
The bus
early,
↓
we were in the countryside, so this would probably add an hour to my walk,



5 steps
★
★
★

lets see. I got lost alongside a dual carr-

...lge way and ended up in the forest, it was nice aron here, my feet hurt. I finally found the park where my special tree lived and payed my entry. I looked at the various brothers Grimm type characters within the vast woods, it was full of funny little creatures from ancient fairytales, tourists wearing backpacks, and shops selling churros and toasted cheese sandwiches.



Finally I came across the gigantic, beautiful, magical, speaking tree, big and brown, finally, right in front of me. I sat on a wooden bench directly ~~in front of me~~ opposite. I spent a lot of time with the tree, I asked him why am I here, why do I always want to run away, why can I never be happy. His big mechanical eyes looked into mine, they blinked every 20 seconds. He reminded me of a tree that I would go and see, late at night in an alleyway in Tokyo, outside a candy themed

love hotel with a chocolate bathtub. I thought it was the coolest thing ever, he spoke in an English accent and would tell you jokes as you walked by.

I spent many late nights dragging friends down a complex labyrinth of alleyways to surprise them with a talking tree, each time resulting in confusion.

Anyway, back to the Netherlands, my Dutch tree didn't speak English, he didn't say anything I could understand, but if he did he'd probably tell me not to worry, that there is no definitive answer, that life doesn't work in absolutes, that these moments of anxiety, feelings of hopelessness, they come and go, they eb + flow, just as love and heartbreak and suicidal obsessions and everything else flickers on and off, here and there, back and forwards. There is no forever, and everything changes. This

life and the world I'm in now, it's not going to stop curving and winding, pushing and pulling. All I have to do is hold on!! ENJOY the ride, and bring my camera along with me. If I didn't follow my nose, chase the white rabbit, these nonsensical adventures, then I wouldn't be in the woods, 3 hours from Amsterdam, having a conversation with a mechanical tree, so I guess running away worked out in the end. I



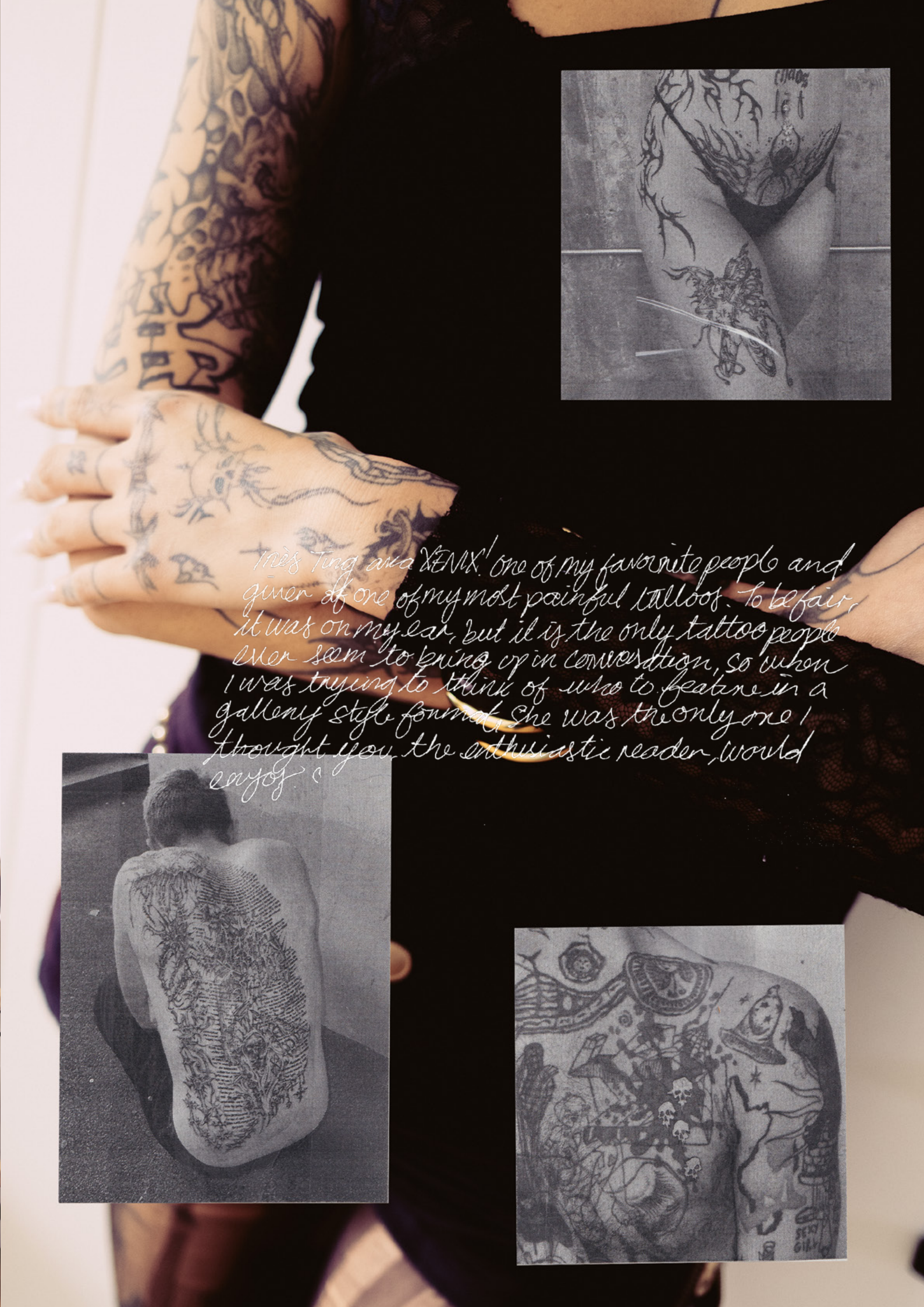
started to get tired, my battery was almost dead and I didn't know how to get home.

Kate Gush "Why Should I Love You" played as I walked through the woods, trying to find some one to ask directions. Everything was going to be ok.

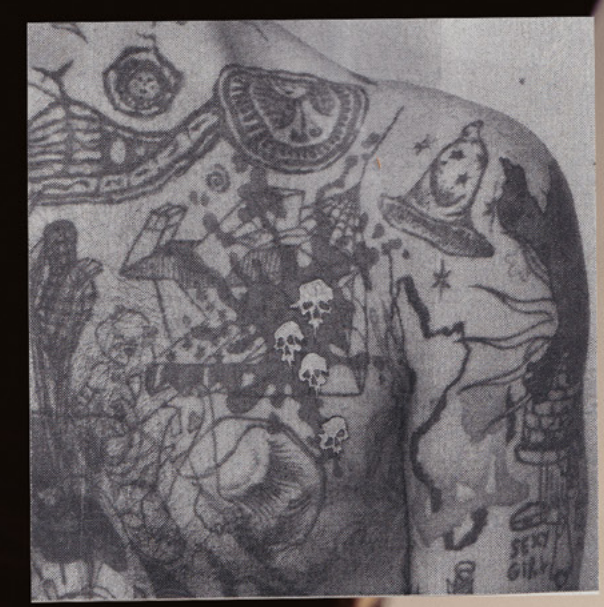
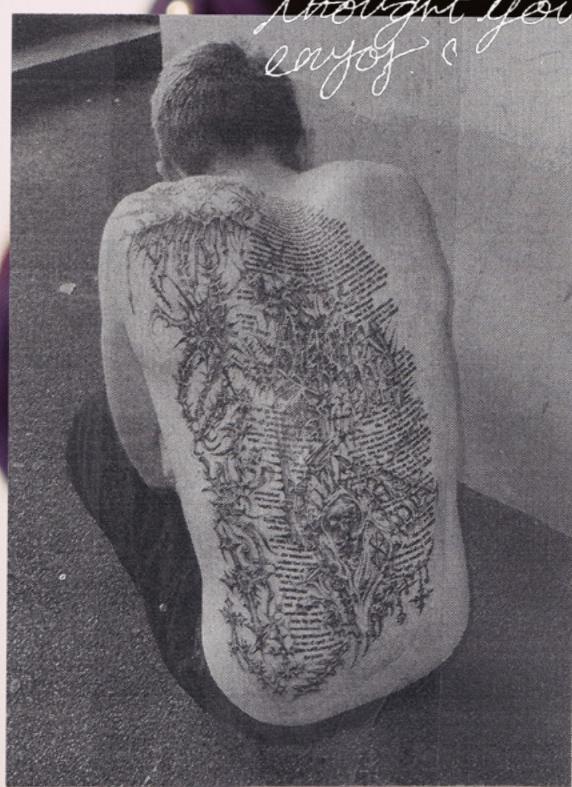
Tracy Ting



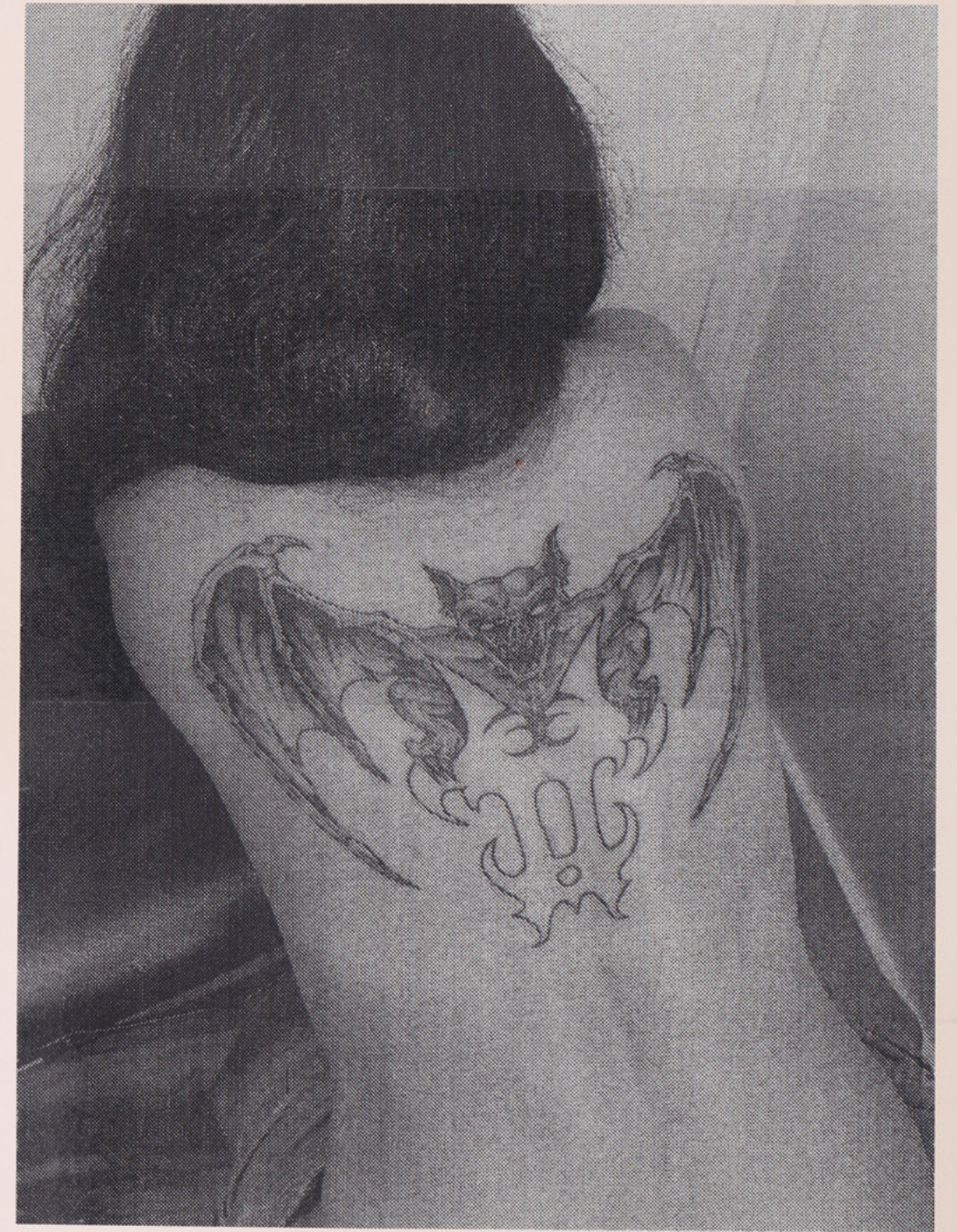
VENIX



Tracy Ting aka VENIX! one of my favorite people and giver of one of my most painful tattoos. To be fair, it was on my ear, but it is the only tattoo people ever seem to bring up in conversation, so when I was trying to think of who to feature in a gallery style format she was the only one I thought you, the enthusiastic reader, would enjoy :)







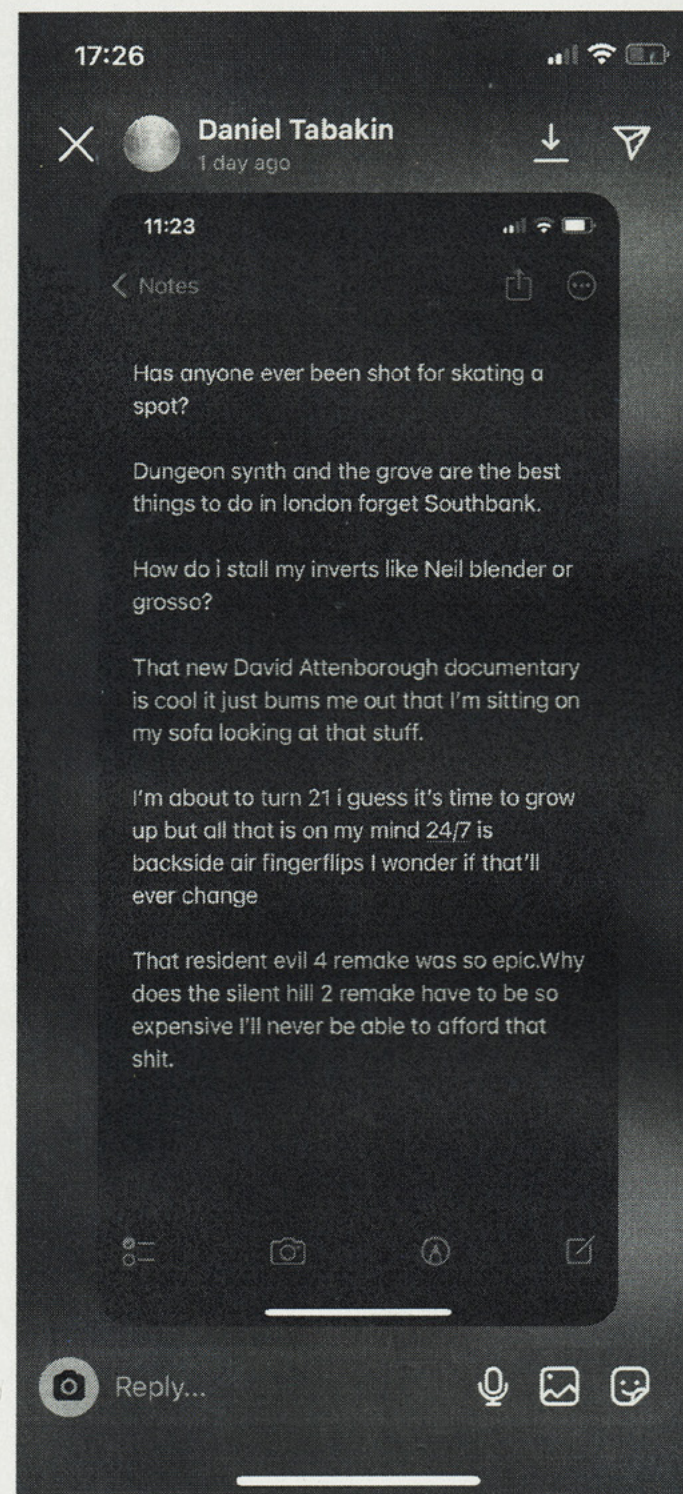


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DANIEL

TABAKIN

I was trying to remember what it's like to be 21 so that I could come up with some questions that might be relevant, but I couldn't really remember anything. So, to save him from the same hazy, memory-less reality that I exist within, I thought that it would be better to document some thoughts he has had recently. Daniel, I hope that if you ever up producing a magazine at 31, this feature helps you remember what your mind was like a decade...



i

want



to

fly



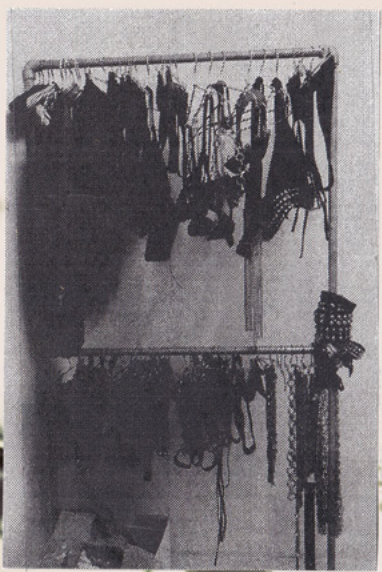
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LEATHER

FOREVER



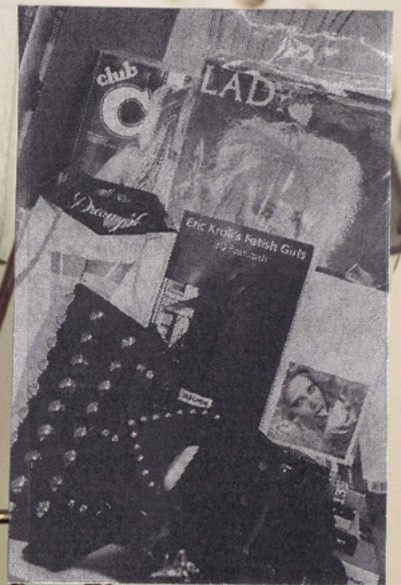
RUBY MARIANI
OF
R&M LEATHERS



R&M Leathers is handmade in London with fantasy at the centre of its dark heart. A velvet curtain tied with black bows reveals Cicciolina and Casey Fanni Tutti dressed in bow-tied frilled aprons, hand-laced bralettes, buckled hot pants and spiked rhinestone cuffs. Deeply influenced by blackened metal and noise music, R&M Leathers is a playful, feminine nod to the rawness and charm of unseen worlds.



BOUND TO PLEASE
R & M LEATHERS
MADE IN ENGLAND





FM: R&M leathers in 10 words...

R&M: Heavy leather wear bound to please for pure sex

FM: You often talk about fantasy when trying to explain where R&M sits in the world and I think it's a very you way to do that. When every other designer is trying to position themselves as "quiet luxury", "streetwear", "avant-garde" or any other pre-existing aspirational category you go the opposite way and weave the brands perception into more of a feeling... a concept open to the interpretation of the aspiring escapist. Is doing things differently a conscious point of intent you have when you work on the brand or something that just comes naturally from you?

R&M: I think it's just a natural consequence of just existing in your own sphere. I create the pieces and have no set idea on what or who they are for, they are open to interpretation. I do of course do have a lot of fun shooting them, making catalogs and so on... placing them in my imagined fantasy. Possibly playing in a crust punk band made me defiant and rebellious in my approach haha.

FM: I like those R&M shoes I saw in your studio, tell me about those...

R&M: I absolutely love shoes and a very very high heel is always part of the look. So naturally we created a shoe to go with each look using the same materials or techniques. Scalloped, studded or fringed chain for example. There are definitely plans to make shoes and boots...

FM: I'd joked around with you previously about how illusive and mysterious of a brand owner you are. It's such a rare thing in this time to just be good at what you do, let your work do the talking and not feel like you need to piggy-back of its success for own personal clout and fame. That being said it feels like a lot of customers' interest and connection to a brand comes from knowing who runs it and having an insiders view of how it operates and how things are made. Do you ever think about this kind of thing and if so how do you strike the balance between being effortlessly aloof and keeping people connected to the artisanal value and craftsmanship of your pieces?

R&M: People are very obsessed with the identity of creatives currently, I don't really think about it much and was always happy for my work to do the talking...I'm coming out slowly. Having the exhibition and pop ups has been a nice way to curate events and spaces where i've been able to meet customers and curious people.



RSM @ HEAVEN BY
MARC JACOBS, SOHO

FM: Would you ever open a permanent bricks and mortar R&M Leathers store and if so where would it be and who would be working there?

R&M: Of course. It is so important for people to interact with the pieces... we take a lot of pride and time in creating them. Everything is made in a very slow and considered manner, a lot of signature pieces taking a day to hand make. Also leather is a very specific wearing and try on experience. It needs to kind of mould to you and I think feel like a second skin almost. I would love nothing more than to have my own store. I picture a by appointment showroom with a workshop at the back to do fittings. I think Soho is the perfect place.



FM: I got to see a little bit of your own personal archive and I find it interesting that all the people I am drawn to or friends with have this affinity for the things that came before them and collecting these beaten-up artefacts. How much of a part does the past play, in the inspiration and context of what it means to exist as both a person and a brand, to you?

R&M: It means almost everything. To be very honest, music is my first passion... all my aesthetic and creative decisions are born and shaped from it and those worlds. There is always a new unheard demo or undiscovered band. It's ongoing. An unsatisfiable thirst that synthesizes with my own creative process.

Allen Jones

ALLEN JONES

UNER MA...

FM: The R&M studio summarised in one song?

R&M: I hard to pick one...

Seduced by evil - Sextrash

I hate you guts- Partners in Crime

Dimensions of the blackest- Forgotten Woods






THEODOR

BLACK

FM: Tell me about 'Crash Out!'

TB: Crash out! Is one of those projects where I really feel like I sound like myself. Me and Okho co-produced, but Okho was definitely more heavy on the production. To me it's my most fluid project. A whirlwind of all my fucked up and beautiful moments meshed into one.

Crashing out is almost a necessity sometimes, pressure cracks but after you break you heal back stronger. It's the reset, you either crash out and come back stronger or you just stay crashed out!



FM: I feel like we're similar in that we both like to have as much control and input into the projects we put out into the world, sometimes from necessity, but I think you're not the kind of person to make a record of you rapping over nothing but other peoples beats even if you could do that...

TB: Word! The necessity comes from ensuring that your message is crystal clear, from the inner to the outer world. Collaboration makes sense when someone is able to channel that. But I like the solitude aspect of making music, it's such an intimate thing.

FM: When are we getting a full length Theo part?

TB: Soon!

FM: How was your listening party? I think that format is cool, it makes sense to present something you've put so much of yourself into in an intimate way, surrounded by friends...

TB: The listening party was cool, the spot we hosted it at was hella low key which was sick. Small intimate crowds are my favorite because the people actually listening and paying attention. Also what better way to commemorate a project than being surrounded the homies!

FM: Best snack spot in London?

TB: I've got a long ass list for this question, But my favorite has to be 'La Princesse' in Finsbury park. Some Algerian coffee spot, but they got the best French pastries and deserts.

FM: How much of a role do life experiences, relationships, memories and feelings play into how you make music and are there any in particular that have influenced either the writing or musical direction of 'Crash Out'?

TB: I can only write from experience, nothing I speak about is fabricated, it's all so nuanced. The influences surrounding crash out stem from my mother's passing, she left us last year and I've been dealing with that ever since. Her passing changed everything and I'll never be the same person I was. That part of me also died, Crash out is the rebirth, my reincarnation.

FM: Do you think just being in London has a noticeable impact on your music? I saw you got out to the countryside recently and was interested. Do you see any change in your approach to writing when you're not in the city and if you could retreat anywhere to make a record where would it be?

TB: London is the best place in the world for music, the cultural diversity of the city has just allowed for so many new sounds and genres to be created here Which is sick. But being in different environments inspires you in different ways. Being in the country side was sick because I'd wake up and just make music,

no distractions, just pure isolation.

FM: Are there any similarities between the feeling you get when you're skating vs making music, and if not, what do you think they bring to your life as individual formats of self expression?

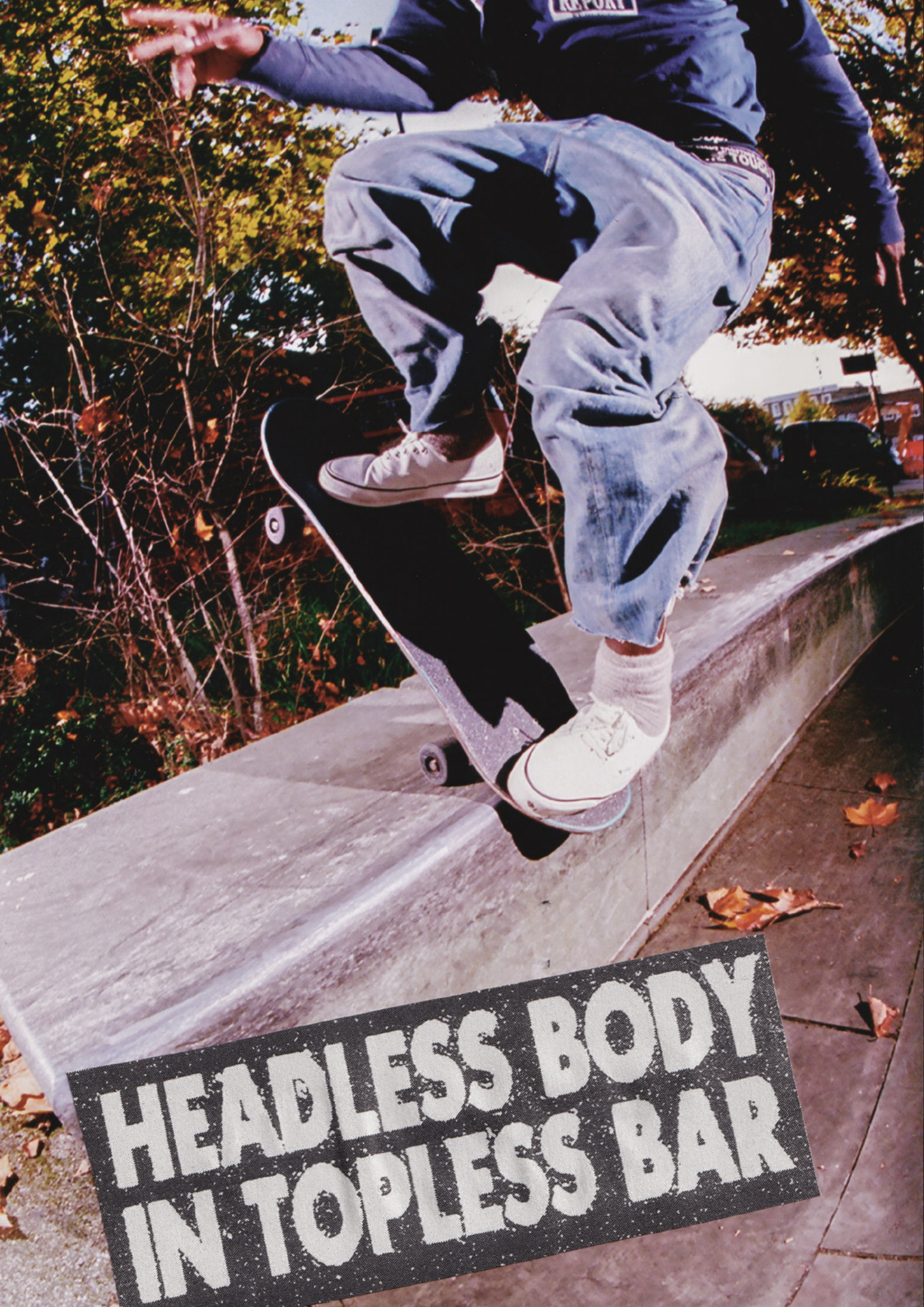
TB: The Feelings are the same but different. Skating requires so much focus, like literally no distractions and I'd say music is the same in a way. Both are Just different branches of expression and different ways to express myself. I get different things from both tho. I can skate and not capture a moment. I rarely film my skating and if I do it's usually within a moment. However, I always capture my music, I go to the studio to record.



FM: A lot of people talk about shop culture from the standpoint of the products they sell, or how they look but I've always thought the most interesting bit is how they are a common means of existence for people who can't live off their creative projects yet. Especially in Soho, it feels like people maybe don't really care about the stores they work in but it's better than working in an office and they enjoy the connectedness of being together. All the best up and coming kids who make art, music, fashion or whatever always have some kind of job in a store over there and you work at Stussy so you're right in the middle of it all - do you think working in a store is a sort of "right of passage" for people trying to come up and do their own thing in London?

TB: Shop culture is important, I met a lot of homies through working in stores. My first retail job was size Carnaby street in 2018 and that was like my entry point into the soho crowd. Stores are a great way to make money and still be active in the right places, most people in soho are on some creative shit, or claim to be [Laughs]. I feel like a lot of people get disillusioned with the idea of social media being a great place to meet people, which it is, but being outside in the real world and meeting people in real life is way more impactful for sure, and being around people who are all into some kind of creative pursuit is comforting, you're all into the same shit and all have a similar goal and purpose so it's sick to be able to surround yourself with people like that. But ultimately the goal for any creative is to not have to work anywhere and for your art to be your main source of income. Some people clock it from early and never have to even go through any of that, but again different people different Journeys...





HEADLESS BODY
IN TOPLESS BAR



FM: Last words...

TB: Whatever you do or make do it for you.
Fuck everybody else, Never compromise.
Don't care about what anyone else is doing.
Make bad decisions and make bad choices, be
open to failure because you gotta fail in order
grow.



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h a u n t s



fungible s



Waste

*****Live the life of luxury if you spend your Money at WASTE*****

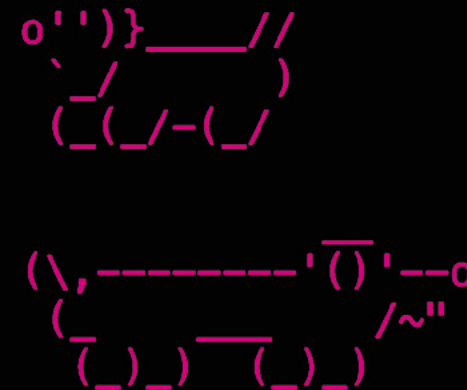
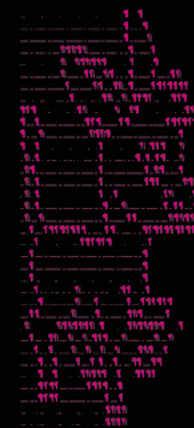


Crepe-

Always trust the original, it is always better. I think I just got the classic - choc and banana.



Hampstead Heath



Just to enjoy the sight and human intervention



Marios-

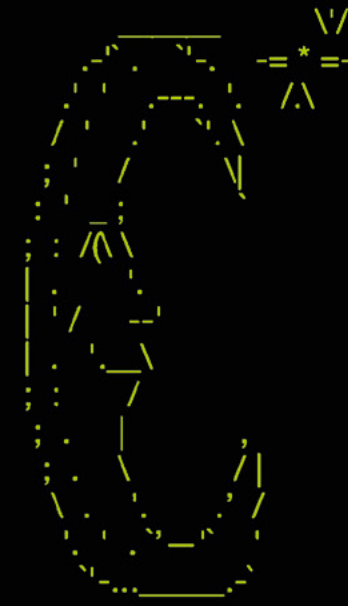
The realest in the city. very much the food you need, and its there for you - except on Sunday, Monday and Tuesdays.

(~▽)~. (づ)づ



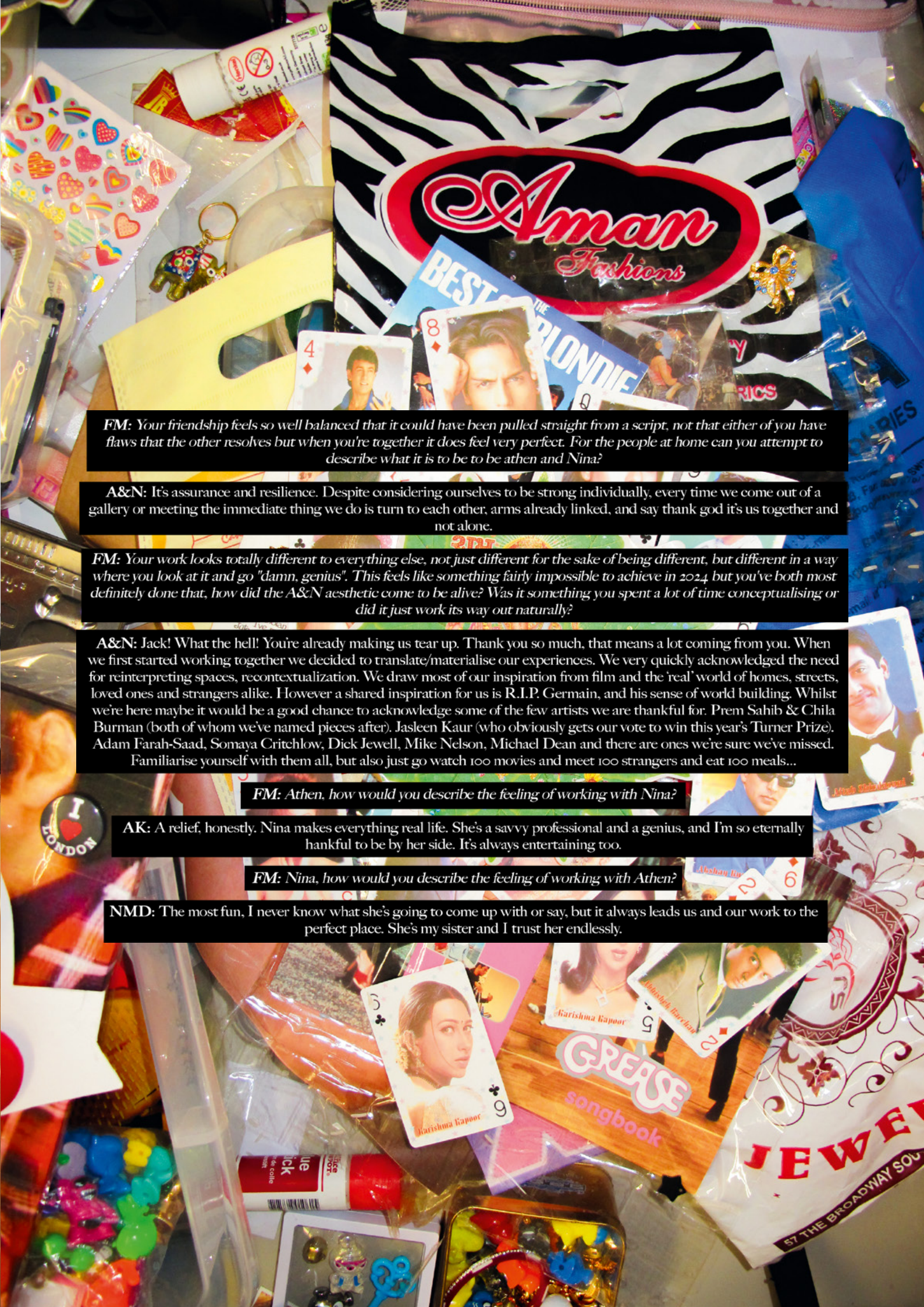
Le Beaujolais

Kind of chaos in here and half the window is blocked off which is good if you are trying to disappear and feel like you are somewhere else.



B&S DIY Homecare

The never ending shop of riches, anything you need to make happen can start here. This is a real type of archive.



FM: Your friendship feels so well balanced that it could have been pulled straight from a script, not that either of you have flaws that the other resolves but when you're together it does feel very perfect. For the people at home can you attempt to describe what it is to be to be athen and Nina?

A&N: It's assurance and resilience. Despite considering ourselves to be strong individually, every time we come out of a gallery or meeting the immediate thing we do is turn to each other, arms already linked, and say thank god it's us together and not alone.

FM: Your work looks totally different to everything else, not just different for the sake of being different, but different in a way where you look at it and go "damn, genius". This feels like something fairly impossible to achieve in 2024 but you've both most definitely done that, how did the A&N aesthetic come to be alive? Was it something you spent a lot of time conceptualising or did it just work its way out naturally?

A&N: Jack! What the hell! You're already making us tear up. Thank you so much, that means a lot coming from you. When we first started working together we decided to translate/materialise our experiences. We very quickly acknowledged the need for reinterpreting spaces, recontextualization. We draw most of our inspiration from film and the 'real' world of homes, streets, loved ones and strangers alike. However a shared inspiration for us is R.I.P. Germain, and his sense of world building. Whilst we're here maybe it would be a good chance to acknowledge some of the few artists we are thankful for: Prem Sahib & Chila Burman (both of whom we've named pieces after). Jasleen Kaur (who obviously gets our vote to win this year's Turner Prize). Adam Farah-Saad, Somaya Critchlow, Dick Jewell, Mike Nelson, Michael Dean and there are ones we're sure we've missed. Familiarise yourself with them all, but also just go watch 100 movies and meet 100 strangers and eat 100 meals...

FM: Athena, how would you describe the feeling of working with Nina?

AK: A relief, honestly. Nina makes everything real life. She's a savvy professional and a genius, and I'm so eternally thankful to be by her side. It's always entertaining too.

FM: Nina, how would you describe the feeling of working with Athena?

NMD: The most fun, I never know what she's going to come up with or say, but it always leads us and our work to the perfect place. She's my sister and I trust her endlessly.

You

SEE YOU AGAIN

♻️ 51 MICRON THICK BAG MADE FROM 100% TOP QUALITY POLYMER

FM: When I look at your art it makes me feel like I'm spiralling straight through the personal memory bank of your human existences, but at the same time feeling my own kind of familiar nostalgic attachments to the references you include. A chaotic and messy crossing of wires in my brain. Is there any specific intentions you have in terms of what you want people to think, feel or say when they see your work and if so at what point in the creative process do you identify these?

A&N: The visual language of our practice is a refinement of the houses we grew up in and the bedrooms we ordained. The mixture of opposing imagery is one that is innately familiar to us all, especially in London or within the diaspora. The contrasts seen everyday walking from your house to the bus stop, or between adverts on tele. Our own existences are formed of hypocrisy and contrasts. There's a freedom in variation and pick'n'mix personalities. The secrets we share when making aren't repeated, and therefore the viewer can project their own whispers onto it. We rarely believe in art that needs explaining, people can feel/think what they want, and at the end of the day, as long as we've created something beautiful, the art becomes accessible by way of aesthetics.

Komal

FANCY BINDI



MADE IN INDIA

सैफ अली खान
और
प्रियंका चोपड़ा
फिल्म "क्या कहना" में

ARRIE






FM: Best trinket you've discovered?

A&N: It changes constantly, but at the moment we're really into Miss Maggie's retirement sale of thimbles.

FM: Smoky-eyed portraits feature heavily within your creations, so once and for all, which star past or present has the best set of eyeballs on this planet?

A&N: Rekha.





FM: How do you see your creative and personal design language evolving over time? Do you ever think about the kind of art you want to make in 20 years and if so, do you imagine it would exist in the same vein as your current work or be something completely different?

A&N: In 20 years we hope to have won the lottery, be working in education and accessibility, to have finished editing our film (you'll have to wait and see on that one), to be published authors, to have eaten an all expenses paid meal at every Hard Rock Cafe in the world, to work with Gurinder Chadha, to successfully walk in skyscraper tall high heels, to have won the Turner Prize, for Nina to be married to Luke Wilson (having separated from Matthew Barney) and living half the time in LA, for Athen to own and run a cinema / dvd and comic shop whilst being back and forth between London and Madrid with a travelling circus. Maybe we will want to swim with turtles (dolphins are not good souls) and also win a Grammy and a RIBA, why not? Nobu Malibu, our parents' mortgages paid off, Oyster cards for all the homies that instantly top up... sometimes all we have is being ambitious and each other, our work is about fantasy and we'd be lying if we didn't admit to being deluded over achievers. The world we build spills beyond the art we make, it's built partially from our dreams, experiences and delusions so whatever we make will always exist within it, however differently it manifests.

FM: As a fellow collector of lots and lots of random (and what some people would call "junkish" things), I can appreciate the beauty in seeing that giant table in your studio full of your collected treasures. Do you get any satisfaction watching your works come together piece by piece? I imagine it must feel like when you open a box of lego, and you're just staring at all the pieces like "hmm okay how does this all fit together?" - except instead of lego, it's badges, oos trading cards, stickers and CDs, and instead of an instruction manual you're just bouncing off each others suggestions on the fly...

A&N: We take great care in curating the objects and problem solving parts till it clicks. We deconstruct and rebuild pieces and ideas continuously, Reusing to the point of exhaustion and beyond. We consistently familiarise ourselves with our archive, logging it firmly into our brains to call to when needed. A lot of people over look the beauty of simple or used things, and through our pairings we continuously aim to question , what is sacred? And who decides?

FM: You're currently in a residency next to Soho square. How did that come about, do you have any plans for your time there and how do you feel your environment affects the work you're creating, if at all?

A&N: It came about through people, including Mattia Guarena-MacArthur (an old friend also on the residency), being kind enough to introduce our art to Sarah Kravitz, who in turn had become familiar with us through exhibiting. As site-specific makers, environment and context is a massive thing for us. To be honest we love our studio under the railway arches of Loughborough Junction, especially Fran (the woman who runs that ship) but being central, warmer and surrounded by people and sound, has made a big difference to our moods (which in turn effects our work).

FM: What is it about working as a duo that resonates with you so much and do you look at any similar pairings of people from the past for inspiration, either visually or to inform how to approach working as a two-person team?

A&N: 'It takes a village' to even exist so working collaboratively comes intuitively. We take notes from family and relationships and friendships. As we said, we rarely feel informed by artists, and try not to over think working as a pair (or making). We're just grateful for it, open to conversation and take each day as it comes, as any normal person in a relationship does. Of course we don't agree on everything, inside and out of work, but that friction correlates to our practice itself, and informs both it and us. We're both stubborn people, yet are always willing to hear the other out. Best and worst thing about London? Best: The food and the people Worst: the food and the people.

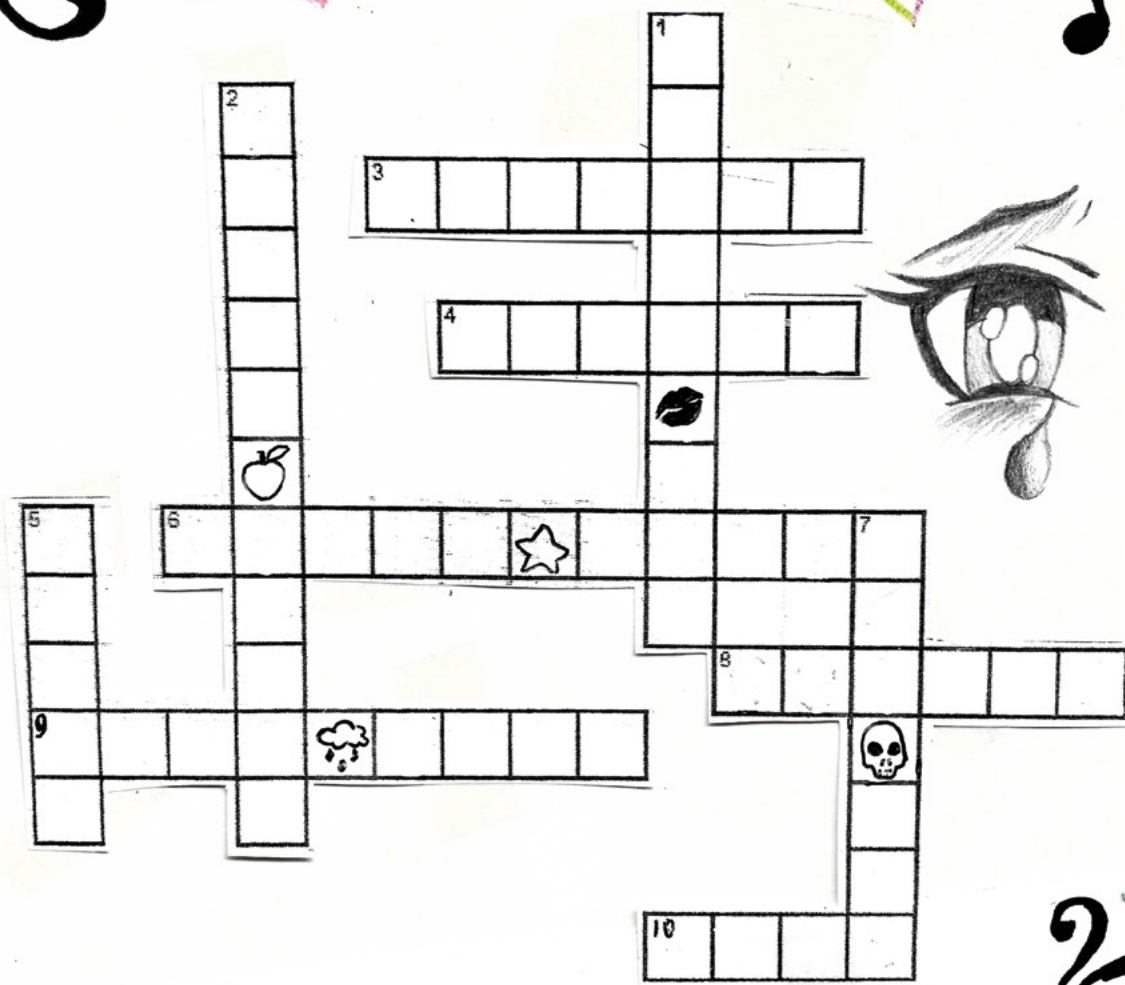
FM: Last words...

A&N: A&N forever <3 Thank you Jack for such beautiful questions, for the opportunity and for everything else!!





i feel in lyric...



- across**
- 3 i drove to new york, in a van with my friend / we slept in parking lots / i don't mind, i don't mind [one word]
 - 4 distant stars come in black or red / i've seen their worlds inside my head [one word]
 - 6 all the people are dancing, and they're having such fun / i wish it could happen to me [two words]
 - 8 i was alright, for a while / i could smile, for a while / but i saw you last night / you held my hand so tight / as you stopped to say hello [one word]
 - 9 sometimes i pray for the rain [two words]
 - 10 this dream isn't feeling sweet / we're reeling through the midnight streets / and i've never felt more alone / feels so scary getting old [one word]

- down**
- 1 the morning rain clouds up my window / and i can't see at all / and even if i could, it'd all be grey / but your picture on my wall / it reminds me that it's not so bad / it's not so bad [two words]
 - 2 if i told you things i did before / told you how i used to be / would you go along with someone like me [two words]
 - 5 oh, if i could pray, and i try dear / you might come back home, back home to me [one word]
 - 7 i'm in love with the world / through the eyes of a girl / who's still around the morning after [two words]

*today he called me a
Asxy bitch and i liked it*



C L A I R E



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Hello Claire! 🍷

Hello Jack 🍷

Does it feel strange to exist across different worlds in the creative space? I think it's interesting that people who have followed you for a long time might think of you solely in the context of being a designer (regardless of if you're making clothes or not) whereas now you're more akin to an artist in the traditional sense. Is there any internal struggle not being able to control how you and your work is perceived and categorised by others? If so, what would Claire Barrow like to be known as from this point forward (if anything at all)?

A little, yes but I can't let that stop me from what I feel most drawn to. Naturally, doubt creeps in from time to time but then I think that's more of an ego (and emo) response "no one understands me xoxo!"

...I think you have to TELL people who you are through work! Just get on with it and I remember not to be basic!! It is 2024!

Derek Jarman wasn't limiting himself to just being a film director, neither was Elsa Schiaparelli, or Hype Williams making Belly...Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy made costumes, films, painting, drawing, sculpture, sets, u know.

It's just way easier to pigeonhole someone, or yourself..

For me it's fluid, like my approach to making things; my own art, designing a mask or hoodie, or doing a commission for a musician, I just want to make everything I do very sick.

But to the later question just Artist please 🍷



You recently got back from Los Angeles where you did a residency, I think there are probably some very striking differences between the lifestyle, feel and mindset of being in LA vs. London. Do you find your surroundings influence and inform your approach-to and execution-of your work and if so, what do you imagine the CB universe would look like if you had spent your life there instead?

The month I just spent there was one of the best times in my life fr, I learnt a lot. I also spent some time in LA, sporadically, between 2016-2018.

Mainly it changed the way I eat. I used to cook and eat the same shit pasta every day until I became a health freak. Now I love salads, sushi, grain-free and all that shit. I love walking up the dusty hill to the Griffith Park Observatory, watching the sunset, and seeing movies in the cinema, in the place they were made. It's the only other place, besides my village in the Northeast and London, where I've spent significant time.

But London's where my favorite people are, it's more real, there's always interesting stuff happening, I feel understood, it's home.

If I could move to LA and get a massive studio, let's be honest - my art would probably be better!

'Les Sports Extreme', 'Victim of Cosmetics', 'Whitby Gothic', 'Fish Wives' and 'Tombstone Freeway'. All names that I really love, and feel like would make no sense coming from anyone but you. When you start a project, collection or artwork how important is the title to you? At what point do you name them and does it ever change your own attachment or opinion of a body of work you've created when the title resonates with you?

Haha, thanks <3
Extreme is > Xtreme btw 😊 an important difference.

The title could come at the start or the end! It could define the whole body of work or at some point change... or change the direction a work goes if I'm working intuitively.

I can explain a few of them if you want ???

XTREME

And totally, share away!

Whitby Gothic is referencing the Whitby Goth Weekend being there because some of Dracula is set there, Gothic location > Goth weekend. So there's this really good dracula experience museum with mannequins set up explaining the story, and Dracula's jumping out and scaring you. So the figure in the work is sort of like Lucy, from the story, who is a sexy vampire in the Coppola film. I got the blue cream on the face from a scene in Jerry Springer Show where a woman puts cake in the mistress's face and it looked so beautiful...she really suited it. Then everything is put through a late 80s / early 90s lens with colour and mood where I think catalog communism really started to get its fangs into subculture.

Tombstone Freeway, the title of show that work was a part of, I thought it sounded like a band name... quite a shit one you would find on Myspace.



2018 - year of the wig. 2025 - year of the ...?

alien contact?

Have you ever thought about how you will create over your lifetime or how your approach to creating might evolve? Do you have anything in the back of your head where you're thinking "I'd like to do that one day"?

Everyday 😊

Dance, film, theme park rides, games. I've got more ideas and energy than ever. I'd love to create performance pieces or films. Also, clothing items I would love to make real.

Why is your website so good? Please explain it's origin story.

Rifke Sadleir created it so I can design and decorate each 3d room and 2d page however I desire. The viewer can click between the two. It's like, say, the Sims or Active Worlds or worlds.com but without people or movement. An abandoned metaverse.

A 🏠 to all these different kinds of projects I have done over the last 10+ years

and also thought this would be an interesting way to contribute to the dream-like online spaces that made the internet exciting to browse. It's forever a WIP though and I leave in some imperfections as I think what is good about the early internet, something that has been lost through perfectly formatted platforms these days 🥰

Did you know Bill Steer of Carcass is also from Stockton-on-Tees? I didn't but I looked it up on wikipedia and I think it's pretty cool, what's it like in S.o.T and has it had any influence on the things you create?

Omg I did! I really got into Carcass as a teenager, after seeing their album covers in Middlesbrough HMV and developing a morbid curiosity. One of the best metal bands! Then I found that out about him being from Stockton, which totally makes sense! Collab when?

It's a harsh place, we have the countryside on our doorstep but on the other hand there is a lot of poverty, hopelessness, narrow-mindedness, chemical plants, the abandoned steel industry, it's cold a lot, the government forgets about places like Stockton and Middlesbrough and Hartlepool.

School medical textbooks with severed body parts in them are exciting, that's what he said they used to write the early lyrics and create album art, anything away from the mundanity of the town,

...I get it! I had a childhood love for this PS1 game Nightmare Creatures and Mortal Kombat 3 and saw Hellraiser II at my friend's house a bit too young (like, 8) and have been exhilarated by horror ever since.

You produced an individually painted collection for H.Lorenzo recently, do you still enjoy making clothes and how important is it that your work reflects and presents the obvious presence of something human made and hand crafted?

Always have loved fashion, making stuff, and crafting. It's what I grew up doing and studying, so it's kind of a natural direction although in saying that I've never been any good at sewing but I don't let that hold me back because ... punk lol whatever My grandma Cecelia and I are making a sculpture together at the moment, via post as she's in the North, with embroidery and a fabricated elements.

She has had a huge influence on my interest in working with craft.

Or, Tracy Emin's Tent, Meret Oppenheim, Louise Bourgeois, Claes Oldenburg, Thierry Mugler heavily utilized craft in the slickest way...and subcultural fashion, teenage girl magazines like Sabrina's Secrets and Elle Girl, punk fashion (Viv) all inspires my approach to fashion and art making.

It's not always important for me for the craft to be present though, I'm often just trying to facilitate what the concept requires.

I've always thought that the really good brands / artists / designers are the ones who build their worlds to encompass the possibility of anything and everything existing within it while still making sense and I see you as one of the few that are able to do that. No matter what medium or format you work in it always looks and feels quintessentially Claire Barrow. Is there anything you would like to design that you haven't been able to? I think a CB bridge or Stadium would look pretty cool...

Thanks m8. Do you think! It's hard to avoid because when I'm happy with a piece to me I'm like surprised I've made it... if that makes sense. So, I mean, i've got blindness to other peoples perceptions of my hand. I think that comes from going for a while now.

I LOVE your bridge idea. It comes with a Danny Devito lookalike jumping out from underneath dressed as a troll.

I really want to make a chlorine smelling water feature incorporating a wave machine and animatronic Mummy sculpture within the next few years, if someone can finance that?

Or even better a water ride like the ones in Disneyland please



IN
THE
STUDIO

W
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H



PARIA
FAIRZANEH



FM: I remember going to your studio for the first time, seeing your creations in person and thinking "shit, my clothes are rubbish compared to these". The first thing I noticed was how good all your fabrics feel, how do you start to source good quality materials in London and for someone who has never done it before, what are some of the challenges?

PF: I would say don't be too hard on yourself, everything is learning. I think it's important to not forget that we live in an expensive climate, especially in a city like London, having nice clothes that are practical and affordable are a luxury and rare.

It's important to remember that there are people who don't have access to the same everyday luxuries we do, we take this for granted. Every day. Earning money is hard if not difficult, why should anyone invest their hard earned cash buying poorly made mass produced clothes?

As designers, brands, makers and artists, we have creative and social responsibilities, we shouldn't be responsible for just creating an aesthetic. Making clothes on a mass produced level takes commitment, skill, and a lot of cash. You can't skimp out on the details which could maybe make or break people's uniforms they put on every day.

It's important to focus on how you envision your product to perform in the world you are creating and then be confident in picking fabrics accordingly. Function is always at the core of my research and the rest falls into place shortly after.



FM: It's weird because I've always said you have a very "teacher-y" quality to you, and you are now actually a teacher at CSM. How did that happen and did you have any preconceived scepticism about working with an institution as big as that? If so, what were the main things you thought you could achieve and overcome by taking the role (if any)?

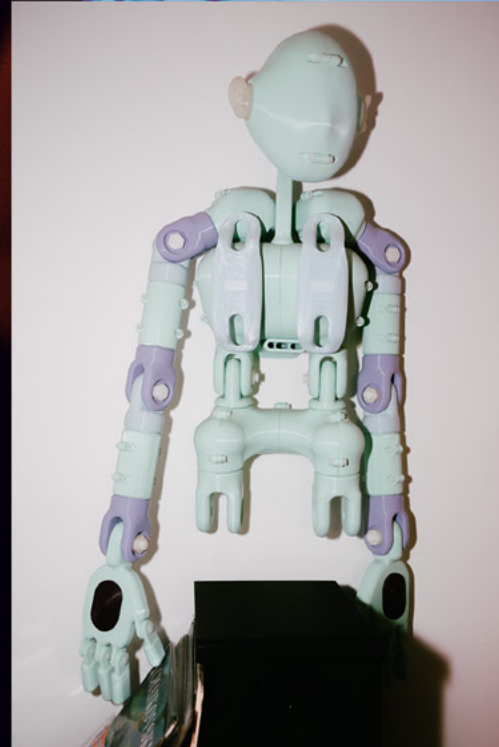
PF: I was connected by my friend to a mutual friend who was Rahemur Rahman, one of the first year course leaders at BAFCSM, and when we met we had an instant connection. I was really inspired by his vision and readiness to speak about everything we should stand for as a society within the role of fashion, and knew that I wanted to help him continue making space within an institution that didn't actually have the representation within the tutors.

It was a weird feeling to be back there after 12 years, I was planning my journey to move from Hull and study fashion at university. I remember going to the open day and feeling disheartened and intimidated, so I never applied after the first impressions I had experienced. 12 years on I find myself back in the institution, and in very different circumstances. I guess sometimes the time is necessary to determine where our positions lay within society.

فكر في

FM: Do you have any words of wisdom for anyone reading this that wants to apply to CSM and very possibly have you as a teacher?

PF: I think going to the open day and getting a feel for the space is very important. I know when I wanted to study fashion I thought that was the only thing I wanted to be doing, eight years on it's a very different story. So I guess what I'm trying to say is, finding yourself and your path is a long time commitment and being open to growing and learning in a space which can sometimes be jaded is also vital. The industry has changed a lot over the years and what I said to the students was that it's their responsibility as artists, designers and makers to talk about the realities of what's going on in the world, rather than just creating an "aesthetic".





FM: Best thing about Brockley...

PF: Even though North Ferriby is irreplaceable, Brockley definitely offers a village feel and I kinda need that vibe to survive here in London.

I like being at your studio because I can dig around and look at all of your weird little samples and one offs, like that studded PF wallet you won't sell me... It must be a cool feeling to have a space and skillset that enables you to sit down and create anything that comes into your brain, just as you imagine it to be and at any time you want.

FM: Do you ever take this for granted and can you ever see yourself leaving it all behind to start something new?

PF: I've never taken it for granted as my parents always have taught me to be aware of my surroundings and be grateful for what they've fought so hard for me to have. The freedom to express myself had never been compromised and I am more than lucky to have been given the opportunity to do so.

FM: Tell us about Bjart.

PF: He's based off my favourite ketchup bottle from Iran. It's basically ketchup shaped in a bear.

FM: You've always had loads of beautiful flowers around at your home, studio and shops. Can you tell us about your favourite types and combinations? How would you describe the role they play within your life and do you think flowers have the ability to bring a certain feeling to life that a human could not?

PF: Flowers also give me the opportunity to express myself. I love nature and I'm really inspired by the colours and the shapes, with flowers their beauty is silent but they communicate the message so beautifully and I think that's something really special.

FM: We have drank a lot of tea together over the years, why is tea so good?

PF: I don't drink alcohol and tea is a very big part of Iranian culture. I probably have 6-7 cups a day. Also being from Yorkshire it's ingrained in the culture. Nothing is better than putting on the kettle, whether it's 3pm or 3am, it can satisfy me beyond my wildest dreams.

FM: You've always been a huge advocate for domestic production, what are some of the struggles someone can expect trying to take the same route and what do you think are the payoffs of making things in the UK?

PF: I think keeping production smaller is a lot more ethical but it's difficult to scale if you want to keep things small. I'm not interested in mass producing products in factories in China for a lot less cost. After the Industrial Revolution the UK lost a lot of family businesses and trade. I think it's important to invest in the UK economy and help those family businesses thrive, we need to maintain the heritage. Making things here can also come at a cost, so the price for sale needs to be reasonable.

FM: What is Blind Foresight and how does it fit into the Paria Farzaneh universe?

PF: Blind Foresight is an alter ego, it started as a burner Instagram account and I had to shut it down since people started clocking it was me. I guess I like to keep my personal life quite private.

I started the diffusion line last year to offer the same product line at the same quality and not compromising on price. The most expensive piece we've made so far is a Pertex puffer for £370, and that's a reasonable price for something made in London.

FM: A lot of people talk about story telling in relation to fashion and design but I really love how you do this very literally in your videos on Instagram. What is that you enjoy the most about filming these videos and do you feel a deeper connection to your audience by sharing information, stories and celebrations instead of just product shots and lookbooks like many other brands?

PF: I like sharing videos and giving insight into my world and sharing knowledge. I think knowledge is power and we should constantly keep sharing. I also feel like when I do the videos I'm just giving myself to the audience and no other version. I guess this is what people resonate and relate with, because I am being honest and authentic and you can tell that if you have those qualities or believe in that for yourself.

FM: You grew up in Hull, what is it like and do you ever go back? If so, what do you find that Hull brings to your life that London can't?

PF: I love Hull, it made me the person I am today and kept me extremely humbled. Growing up there was difficult at times but I wouldn't change it for anything.

I do fantasise about moving back, taking all my favourite foods that I enjoy in London with my group of friends and living completely off-grid in a place which is the cheapest place to live in the UK right now. Let's see. I'm still hopeful.



"PILLOWHEAT"

The Other Side of the Pillow

I didn't realise at the time.... but in my youth I was searching.

Digging for something to dedicate myself to. Safe to say I found it in old-world usa-made Van's deck shoes! Style, quality, comfort, design-driven-durability, with integrity, cultural links & family values.

As such, theothersideofthepillow became the culmination of a life's work. The crystallisation of a Van's obsession. A unique brand experience. A walk-in physical archive with the opportunity to buy a piece of history.

A one man operation. A lot of blood sweat tears time energy passion. The fruits of my labour. Man, my life rules. 10 year old me is stoked!

I got all the cool shit I could ever want. My endeavours recognised by a huge corporate brand, a global giant. Livin out my dream.

You can dream, but don't sleep! You dig?

- henry.

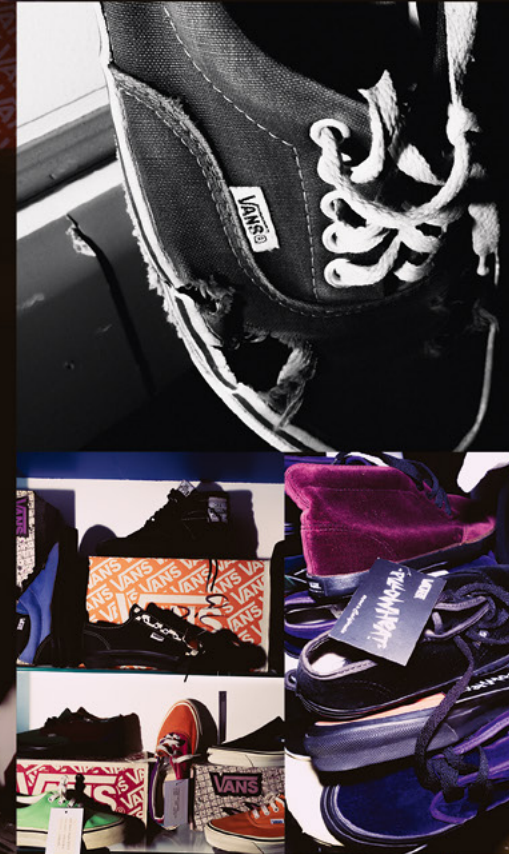
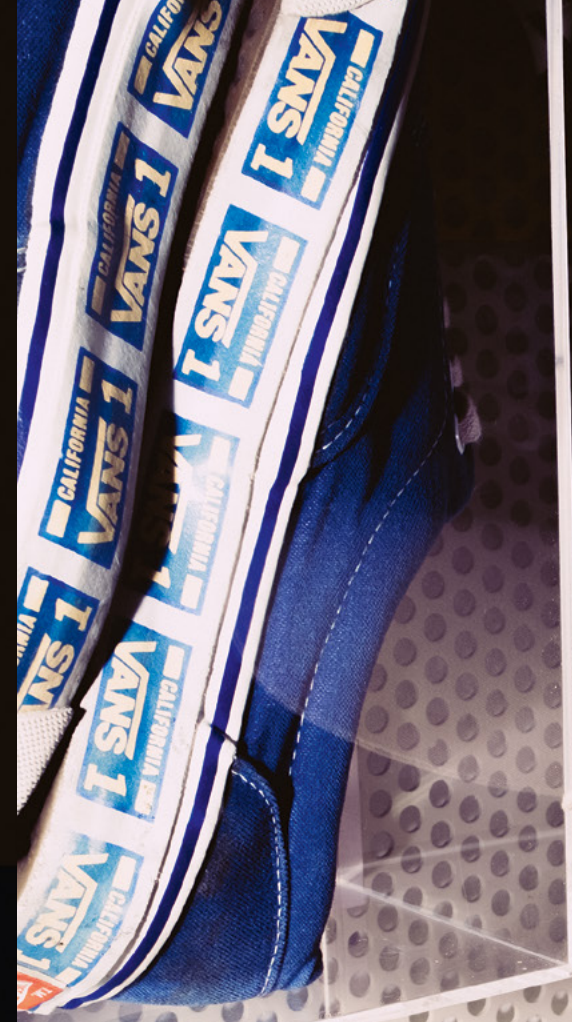
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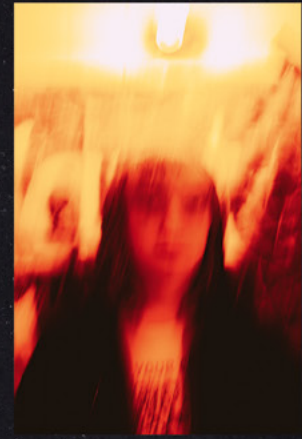
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The Other Side of The Pillow



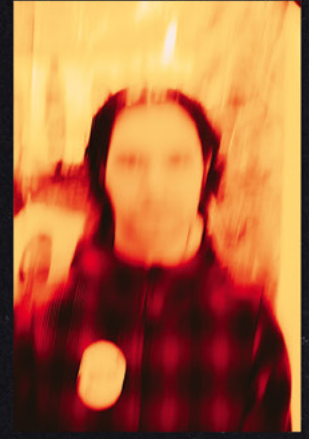
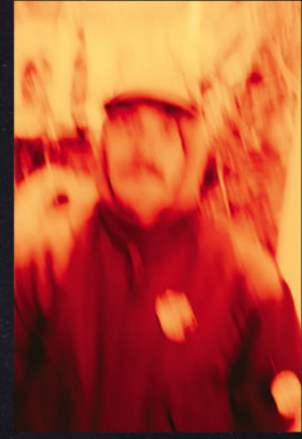
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POWER



fucking



PLANT



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FM: People who interview you seem to love to talk about what genre the band sits (or doesn't sit) in. Do you ever feel an external pressure or expectation to stay within one style of making music so that people understand it and if you could exist outside of all genres and create your own what would you call it?

TZ: It's safe to say now that anything goes in Powerplant. I always end up massively ripping off the music that I like and as that changes constantly - PP changes shape with it. The influence pot is so diluted now with everything there ever was, so I would just call Powerplant adjacent to rock music, or alternative rock. Call it whatever you want, call me on the phone let's hang out. I'm in a lucky place to musically do whatever it has to be and it doesn't seem odd anymore. I'm just happy to make music.

FM: Who is in Powerplant as of today and what are their contributions to PP both musically and as humans?

TZ: Cajm Pickering plays the synth, Karim Newble rocks the bass, Lloyd Clipston hits the drum. These are the best guys ever made - ask anyone, you won't hear any different. On top of being very creative musicians and artists they are great people who go through life in a beautiful way. Everyone's comes from different music and non-music backgrounds, makes life in the van fun. No two stories are the same. I play guitar and sing in PP, write/record the songs, do the art, send the emails etc.



FM: Your earlier stuff is just you and then you brought the other members in later. Is there a world where you regress to PP just being you both on records and at shows and if so what do you think that would sound / look like?

TZ: The real answer is who knows! All the recorded music is pretty much me in a bedroom doing stuff. I don't think PP live should be just one person, same as I don't think PP recorded should be more than one person. Its the going insane solo balance vs gelling it live together. But the road is long and twisted, I'm sure down the line everything opposite of what I just said will happen and I'm looking forward to it all. You can only do something for so long before you start getting evil thoughts in your head.

FM: Powerplant merch is very good, who has contributed over the years and do you have any favourites?

TZ: First of all thank you very much. My sister Lisa made the 'People in the Sun' face when she was 5 for my original birthday, Tosia Leniarska did the Pixie GF drawing, Tom Rees did the Stump Soup oil painting and our own Karim Newble did a few tour shirts. The rest I did myself. As for favourites, Ass Time is probably the stupidest one, Cajm helped with that, so its gotta be it.

FM: To the people reading this who have only consumed your music over the internet, how would you describe a PP show and how important are live performances to you in the grand scheme of everything?

TZ: Sweaty, loud, 35 minutes long, all your friends are there, everything is happening. One time Garfield came to the show in Chinatown. But hey I only play the music, I can only guess what its like over yonder. We head bang a lot I guess. Live music is great, the first 400 shows is a voyage of self discovery. Great to tour and see this beautiful world, meet everyone see their houses, pet their dogs. You both have to play live professionally and creatively. Sometimes its pointless and then you stop. But it must be done.

FM: Tell me about D&D, have you always played and for someone who hasn't, can you explain what the hell it's all about?

TZ: D&D is the original RPG that you play at the table with your friends and instead of the computer its another guy (the dungeon master). You got a piece of paper and a pencil and the rest you do in your head. You get a smoke machine and a couple of candles, put some dark ambient on and you have the time of your life. I've been running games for some time now and I always came up with my own campaigns, which will be a part of the 'Stump Soup Adventure Module'.

That thing was supposed to come out 3 years ago but life gets in the way every time.



FM: I like your banners, a lot. I know you sold the 'Stump Soup' flag on band camp but would you ever consider selling those handmade ones you use for shows? I think people would be into them...

TZ: Yes! I raffled one of the bigger ones for charity back in '22. It will happen again, when the time is right...

FM: We're going to carry Powerplant records in the Vans store here on Oxford Street, how do you see physical stores fitting into the Powerplant world and what are some of the best record spots in London?

TZ: To PP in Vans store I can say 'hell yeah!' Its a trip to see this stuff make it from the internet to a real life environment, a beautiful trip. Honestly I'm not much of a records guy, but Crypt of the Wizard on Hackney Road I respect a lot. I know none of the music there because its too far out for my metal knowledge but I'm happy to see something extreme like that thrive. Waste Store next door has an awesome music selection too, you know.

FM: Outside of the music, if you could do anything with PP what would it be? I feel like some kind of weird indie super8 movie made by you guys would be pretty sick...

TZ: I want to do everything there is to do. I'm just starting 'Arcane Dynamics' which is a music label, a shop, a brand etc. Hearing music is cool but ultimately you gotta start seeing images. It will and must be done. Me and my AI calendar must get there.

FM: There's something about that 'People in the Sun' artwork that makes me feel like the record was pulled out of a dusty old wooden hippie shack in the forest. Without even hearing it there's just a strange quality it has that feels like you've unearthed a long-lost relic of forgotten music. Do you ever form attachments to records based on how the artwork comes out or how big (or small) of a process is it deciding how a cover will look?

TZ: Ah hell yeah, that's very cool the cover makes you feel that. That's what album art should do. That's what images must do. If the artwork isn't good don't bother with the music. I used to come up with the art around halfway through finishing the music, which helped glue it together with an image. Its different every time. Stump Soup art was done a year before the music was done. Stuff I'm working now I think art will come last. Every day and album is different, you are never the same.

FM: Did you ever play RuneScape? There's a whole world of people on YouTube who do song covers in the style of the Runescape soundscape and I think it's one of the best pockets of bootlegging around these days. If you could re-make any soundtrack or album in the style of Powerplant what would it be?

TZ: The 'Trade Parade' song that plays at the Grand Exchange market is amazing. RuneScape rocks, I need to give it way more time though. When all the work is done and I can really play I will meet you there. But damn, I don't think I'd dare to remake any soundtracks, all the ones I like I wouldn't want to touch them. Maybe bring rock back to Tetris.





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a conversation

with



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FM: *If your life was a pie chart, what kind of slices would skating, music and art take up and what is your favourite kind of pie?*

HL: I'd say skating takes up definitely most of the pie. Especially at the moment. So I reckon a solid 2/3rds of the pie. Music is more likely the remaining 3rd but art squeezes in that last slice for sure. If it's a savoury pie I think it'd have to be Goddard's veggie mince pie n mash with gravy. Probably a cheeky cherry pie if it's a sweet one...custard too... What was it like skating that crazy bowl in Paris, I had to leave the day before but it looked mental... It was actually such a fun bowl to skate. When physically doing the act of skating, my surroundings tend to become a bit of a blur (other than looking out for on coming traffic), but it was incredibly hard to ignore the fact that we were skating at the bottom of the Sacré-Coeur. It was wild! Definitely one of the best skate related events I've ever had the fortune to witness and be part of. Was honestly such an insane location it felt pretty surreal.

FM: *You recently went on a trip and got injured just in time to hibernate through the London winter, what are your plans for your downtime over the next 3 months of cold grey-ness?*

HL: Perfect injury timing (well almost as I'm meant to be going away beginning of December for one last stint...but hopefully gonna get it working a bit for when I'm there). Downtime cold, dark and grey-ness calls for a lot of physio and rehab. Getting ready for the new year with new knees! Hopefully squeezing in a band practice or gig in between would be lovely too. Also probably investing in a new puzzle to mull over.

FM: Besides that massive ship, what is there to do in Greenwich and what is it like being a born and bread London-er, do you ever sit there and think about how it's changed over the years or is it one of those things you don't really notice unless you left for ages and came back? Like those distant relatives you see every so often and in your head they're 10 years old, then they show up to the Christmas get-together with 2 kids of their own...

HL: Greenwich Park is for sure always a beauty and also a stones throw away from Deptford with the best market and some good skate spots too. I'm one of those annoying Londoners that'll always point out how much 'it's all changed' over the years. Especially Greenwich since the London Olympics and becoming 'Royal Greenwich'. The town centre is basically a write off on weekends and school holidays with so many people. So many chains are there now and there's even a Pret! I think you know you're kinda fucked when a Pret makes it to anywhere in South East London or London in general to be honest. Can't change that beautiful park though and like my parents place and the neighbours, the market on Deptford High street and its locals, luckily some things never change (touch wood). I love Sirius, I feel like he brings out the best in people when he films and you can always tell when footage is filmed with a friend because it just has that warm loving energy about it.



FM: I love Sirius, I feel like he brings out the best in people when he films and you can always tell when footage is filmed with a friend because it just has that warm loving energy about it. Do you have any favourite memories, stories or strange tales of him over the years?

HL: God I love that boy. Probably one of the hardest working and most patient humans in the skate world I know. So fortunate to share so many fun and silly memories with him over the skating years. But actually i'd say some of my fave times were during lockdown era when the streets were dead and we would be out skating central looking for spots and the nearest Pret (we all had that free trial of 5x drinks a day for a month haha). Also just sharing the excitement of going down for breakfast at various hotels on trips to see what's on offer at the buffet. Mاما's Shelter in Paris is a notable one. Can't forget our trip straight from Copenhagen Open to Vancouver and staying in an air BnB with a trampoline where Sirius would give mad trampoline-skating demos at some point every day. To be honest running around like a mad person with him in Paris this year was pretty special too. There's too many great times honestly. Haven't even mentioned tales from trips to Nepal or Indonesia either!



FM: Do you think of skating as your job in terms of what you tell people when they ask what you do? If so, what are some of the internal struggles you go through existing within the lifestyle that it brings? Does the travelling, filming, shooting photos and jumping off things ever become something you start to lament or are you as hyped to do it all now as you were when you first started getting hooked up?

HL: I do find it weird and feel like I have to 'explain', but I do say my job is 'skateboarding' if and when I get asked," these days. I've always had part time jobs working towards spending my spare time skating. But now I'm skating more than I am working and so people do ask what I do most of the time! I joke I'm retired as I'm not at my part time work as much these days and mostly skating haha. As for skating as 'work', I feel like whether it's 'my job' or not I still approach skateboarding in the same way. For instance on a trip or working on a project I want to do my best, get clips I'm proud of, photos, learn new things. I guess I put a lot of pressure on myself anyway and I'd be so bummed if I didn't get clips or photos on a trip. I guess now that I'm doing more trips and skate related projects it becomes harder to keep it all going and be able to skate to the best of my ability at times. But I do love it nonetheless and forever hyped I get to do the thing I love as a 'job'. Hard to call it a 'job' if I'd be doing it anyway.





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FM: Tell me about Upset Stomach...

HL: So there's 4x of us and I am the drummer in this mad non-binary panic attack of a band we call Upset Stomach. Some have once said we sound like Cher meets System of a Down. I guess we're just 4x individuals all coming in with ideas that somehow merge to form a song or two.

FM: Do drumming and skateboarding share any similarities either in the feelings you experience or the reasons you do them?

HL: I definitely think I approach them similarly in the sense I'm pretty obsessive and determined about both of them. Nothing more rewarding than playing in sync with everyone as it is landing a trick. Also the muscle memory and switching off when playing different patterns likens itself to knowing how to move on your board and do certain tricks you do a lot. Also they're both such good outlets of pent up energy and really just so much fun at the end of the day.

FM: I think you have that kind of quality where I imagine you could probably do any kind of creative thing and be fairly good at it. How do you see your life progressing outside of skateboarding and if you could be really good at something what would it be?

HL: Firstly you're too kind and one to talk with all the incredible relative ventures you do! But I do think if you're doing something like skateboarding, your perspective on things and I guess confidence to just give something a go I feel really helps with trying out a new creative venture. I'd love to get really good at speaking another language but also been thinking about learning a new instrument too...outside of skating I'd hope to still be involved in some sort of creative process that circulates around it but who knows what avenue!

FM: When I'm in front of a crowd I am completely unable to talk, go bright red and want to escape as soon as is humanly possible. Is there a secret to being so calm and collected when you're performing live or skating one of those big Vans events or were you born this way?

HL: Honestly, I can get incredibly nervous, but it might not seem that way as my immediate reaction or coping mechanism is to just smile and laugh at it all. I guess I've come to find a mindset where it's as if I'm sitting outside of myself looking in and I can't help but laugh at how ridiculous it all is. In the best way possible too. Like 'wow as if people have come to see us play? We're mad!' And 'how on earth have I ended up here?' are common phrases that run through my mind at the time. At times I guess it's also because if I'm skating or performing I've actually got to concentrate on what I'm doing to make it work and I'm usually then in my own little switched off world. I think being born wanting to just play and have fun, that naivety probably did come from birth though.

FM: Last words, shoutouts and goodbyes?

HL: Thank you Jack. You're the best. I love my friends and we should all tell them that too.



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Credits.

Theodor Black studio image by Saltline.

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Viji cover story styling assistant Martha White.

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