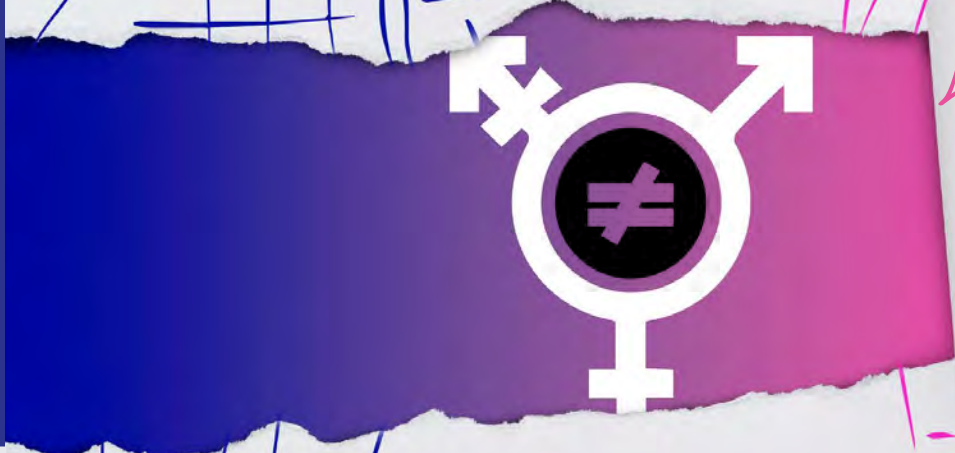


# SOIGNÉ

EMPOWERED  
POLITICIANS



WOMEN  
EXIST

ARTSEXISM

BRONZING THE  
COPPERTONE GIRL





# SOIGNÉ

**WHAT:** A heterodox print publication devoted to Fashion & Culture, Free Speech & Free Expression, honoring Artists, Ideas, and Ownership free from censorship, corporatism, and cancelation.

**soi·gné**

**/swän'yā/**

*adjective:* **ELEGANTLY**

- **DRESSED**
- **DESIGNED**

## WHY SOIGNÉ?

Instead of blindly accepting cultural traditions and trends, we examine them and explain the practical implications of culture as it is, not what we assume or assign it to be.

## OUR MISSION

**DEFEND ARTISTS**    **CHALLENGE IDEAS**    **DISRUPT CULTURE**  
**EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY**    **BE ACCESSIBLE**

## DISTINCTIVES

### DEFEND

Uncancelable- stand by writers/artists for free speech and freedom of creativity.

### OWN

Artists own their work, we license and honor their IP with technology through tokenization and NFTs.

### REWARD

Pay all contributors, no free labor.

### FAIR & SHARE

All signed associates receive a commission from business brought in. Digital monetization initiates a royalty system for clicks/views of content.

### CHALLENGE

Take a heterodox view of a tradition or trend

- challenge our readers with ideas.

### UNSHACKLE

Classical Liberal advocacy of Free Thought and Free Speech.

### DISRUPT

Create an alternative to monoculture.

### AUTHENTIC

First-person experiential writing, writers are a part of the story not written out of it. There is no pretense of objectivity, we search for truth. Cultivate a style of writing called Authenticism.

## FUTURE AIMS

### AUDIENCE

#### ACCESSIBLE

Use technology to open print and digital to audiences traditionally unable to use.

### ARTISTS

#### FORWARD

QR codes, Meta content, and NFTs built-in from the beginning.

### ABODE

#### CONSERVE

Utilize 100% recycled paper and 100% biodegradable ink for magazines.

# INTRODUCTION

TO THOSE OF YOU DISENGAGED, DESPONDENT, OR UTTERLY DISINTERESTED IN TODAY'S CULTURAL PUBLICATIONS,

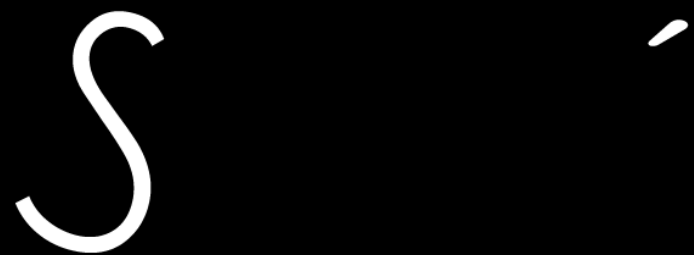
SOIGNÉ IS A NEW HETERODOX PUBLICATION IN A MARKETPLACE SATURATED WITH GROUP-THINK. SOIGNÉ VALUES FREEDOM, ARTISTS, OWNERSHIP, CONSERVATION, AUTHENTICITY, AND ABOVE ALL CHALLENGING PRECONCEPTIONS. MEDIA IS AWASH WITH SELF-SELECTING BIASES, AND WHILE WE CHOOSE OUR BIAS AS FREEDOM, WE BELIEVE IDEAS OUGHT TO BE PRESENTED AND CHALLENGED. EVEN ONES WE AGREE WITH. WE HONE OUR OWN POINTS OF VIEW NOT BY RESTRICTING THE IDEAS WE ENCOUNTER BUT RATHER BY ENGAGING THEM.

IF YOU FIND YOURSELF DISENGAGED FROM FASHION AND CULTURE MAGAZINES AND MEDIA BUT STILL VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD. SOIGNÉ IS FOR YOU. IF YOU FIND YOURSELF AGREEING WITH EVERYTHING YOU READ AND SLOWLY DULLING YOUR OWN ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND ANOTHER'S ARGUMENT, SOIGNÉ IS FOR YOU. IF YOU FIND YOURSELF LOOKING FOR A TAKE FROM SOMEONE WHO LOVES FREEDOM AND LIBERTY THE WAY YOU DO, BUT APPROACHES THE TOPIC FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE, SOIGNÉ IS FOR YOU. IF YOU LOVE VALUES LIKE STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION, SOIGNÉ IS FOR YOU. AND IF YOU BELIEVE AS WE DO THAT ARTISTS OUGHT TO OWN THEIR WORK AND PUBLICATIONS LIKE US OUGHT TO RESPECT THAT OWNERSHIP OF IDEAS, THEN SOIGNÉ IS FOR YOU.

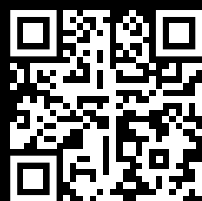
SOIGNÉ, ELEGANT IDEAS FOR AN ELEVATED YOU.

— JADAN PETER ELLIS HORYN

## ARE YOU SOIGNÉ?



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MAXWELL TAYLOR STROUD

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# BIO'S

**JADAN HORYN** is a visionary strategist and communicator. After getting his start in DC as the executive producer of the #5 Talk radio show in the nation “The Laura Ingraham Show” and serving as her FOX News liaison, he went on to serve as a senior staff member for multiple members of Congress while working with notable figures advancing public relations strategies. He then served as spokesperson for two non-profits in New York, one focused on good governance and the other focused on national and international relations. A stint driving Uber broke his DC-centric worldview. Showing him how politics is downstream from culture. Jadan believes intensely in the power of human stories to combat misguided social engineering. He now travels extensively seeking diverse perspectives that allow him to present an authentic perspective on how culture is shaping the real-world impact of DC’s political and policy prescriptions. He has appeared numerous times on television and has written extensively on the intersection of culture and politics. An Easton, Pennsylvania native he has resided in Southwest Virginia, Washington DC, New York City, and Miami.

**MAXWELL TAYLOR STROUD** is a multidisciplinary designer & art director. He has had the opportunity to work on incredible projects, both big and small in industries ranging from cinema to fashion, and nonprofit. Past partners include industry-leading companies such as Calvin Klein, Chloe, Ferragamo, Lacoste, La Perla, MCM, Nike, Victoria Beckham, and more. His working knowledge and passion for design are what guide his incredible work. He resides on Long Island.

**LENA MORRILL** now calls Brooklyn home after time in California, Georgia, and Texas. She has held project and operations management positions in different industries. Lena graduated from Sweet Briar College in Virginia and continues to support the college in her roles as class co-president and involvement in the New York alumnae club. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring the city and spending time with friends.

**JOHN MATTHEW GILLEN** was once fired for writing poetry at work, cussed out by the Chief Clerk of the United States Supreme Court after accusing him of Satan worship, and has spent over \$10,000 on tickets to Bob Dylan concerts. In addition to writing and directing short films in New York, John has had his work published in several literary journals and is a prolific writer on Medium. His first novel, American Blasphemer, was published by Epigraph in May 2020 and premiered at #1 in the world on Amazon’s Kindle Store in American Literary Fiction. His debut short film, American Ugly, played at a dozen film festivals around the country and he most recently produced The Legacy Sessions which is still on the festival circuit. His favorite authors include Jorge Luis Borges and Hank Bukowski, and he harbors a deep reverence for Martin Scorsese. You can find more information about his work at [www.johnmatthewgillen.com](http://www.johnmatthewgillen.com)

**ROBERT BLUMENTHAL** is a renowned art dealer who operates primarily out of Miami and New York City. Originally from Miami Beach, Robert grew up surrounded by artists and art collectors. He generated a strong interest in contemporary art and became an expert in the discovery of talented young artists. Supported by his prior success in real estate, Robert took the next logical steps after years of collecting and founding Blumenthal Gallery in late 2013. The focus of his projects are to give emerging and overlooked artists a platform from which to be discovered—or rediscovered.

**TYLER TURNER** is a professional model and commercial actor residing in Virginia. He has shot with clients such as Jos. A. Bank, Dillard’s, Target, and Kohl’s and also shot commercials for notable brands like Miller Lite and Belk. In addition to his professional model and acting career, Tyler also served as an elementary and middle school History & Civics teacher at a new micro-school. He has been a grassroots activist speaking at local school boards, working with local campaigns, and hosting a state-based Podcast. He writes independently on Substack on a variety of issues including culture, politics, and sports. He is also a contributor and temporary host of “The Sports Cast” podcast. Prior to being a professional model, he played college football at Liberty University. He also was a National Junior Olympic Gold medalist and National Golden Gloves Silver medalist in boxing. He is married with 4 children.

**MERRICK LEE JR.** is a senior mobile engineer with a strong passion for learning, creativity, and the desire to achieve greater personal programming acumen. He has nine years of experience in developing technology and two as a senior developer. His top app “Black History Tribute” has risen to be one of the top apps for Black History and has been featured on the radio and on the news. He was originally born in New York, NY, and was raised predominantly in the Bronx.

**JACKSON DARR** is a campaign manager and political consultant based out of Memphis, TN. He has run eight races in Tennessee, Indiana, and Georgia. He has also consulted on two races in Montana and often does political and demographic analyses, both on contract and in his spare time. Growing up in Memphis, he attended Memphis University School before continuing on to the College of William and Mary in Virginia. After living in Washington, DC for a time, he returned home in 2017. When not discussing politics and human geography, he can usually be found researching old guns and real estate. Jackson has been an editor of the right-leaning elections blog RRH Elections for several years and has appeared on several podcasts and local television programs. Although it often surprises most who meet him, he is legally blind.



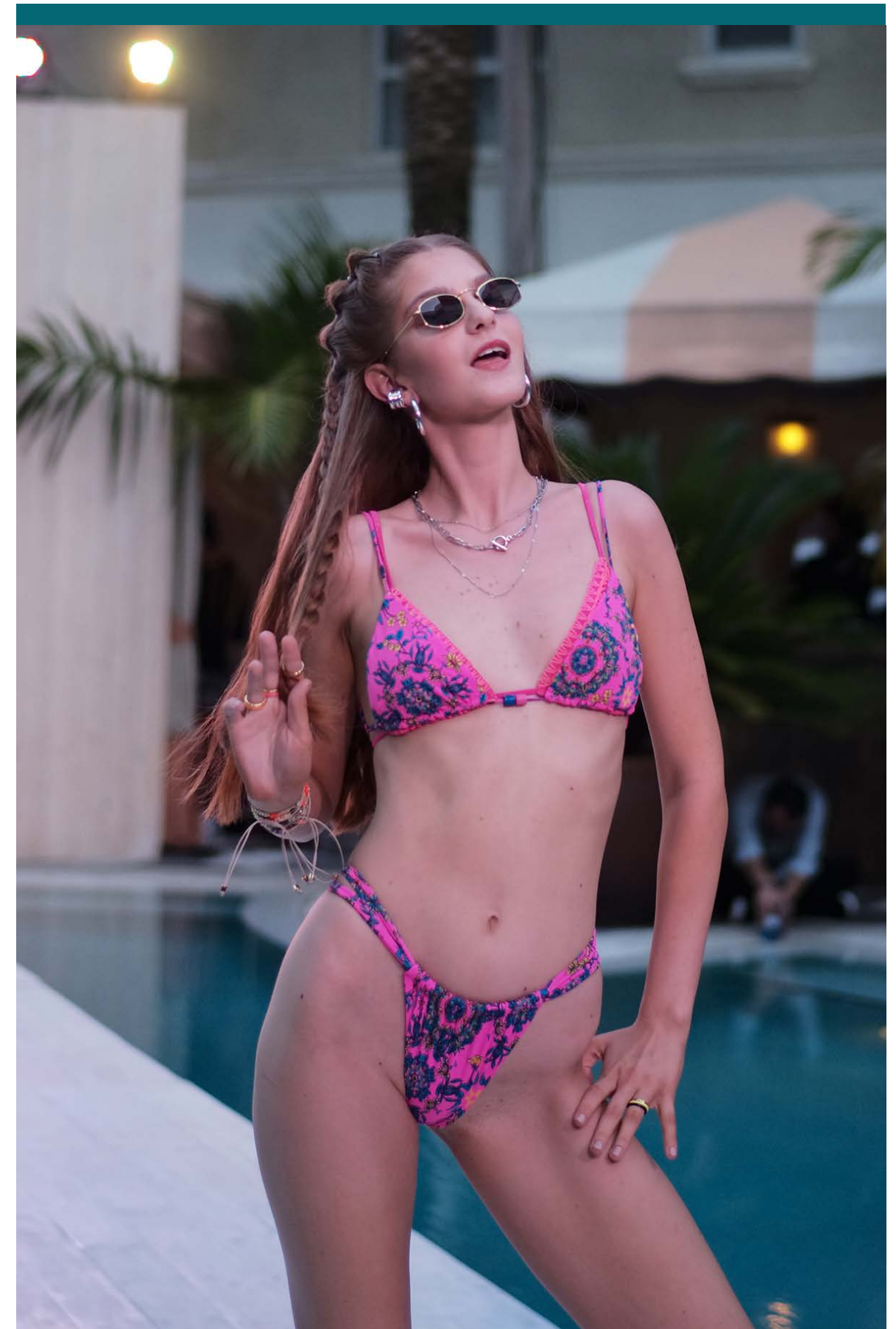
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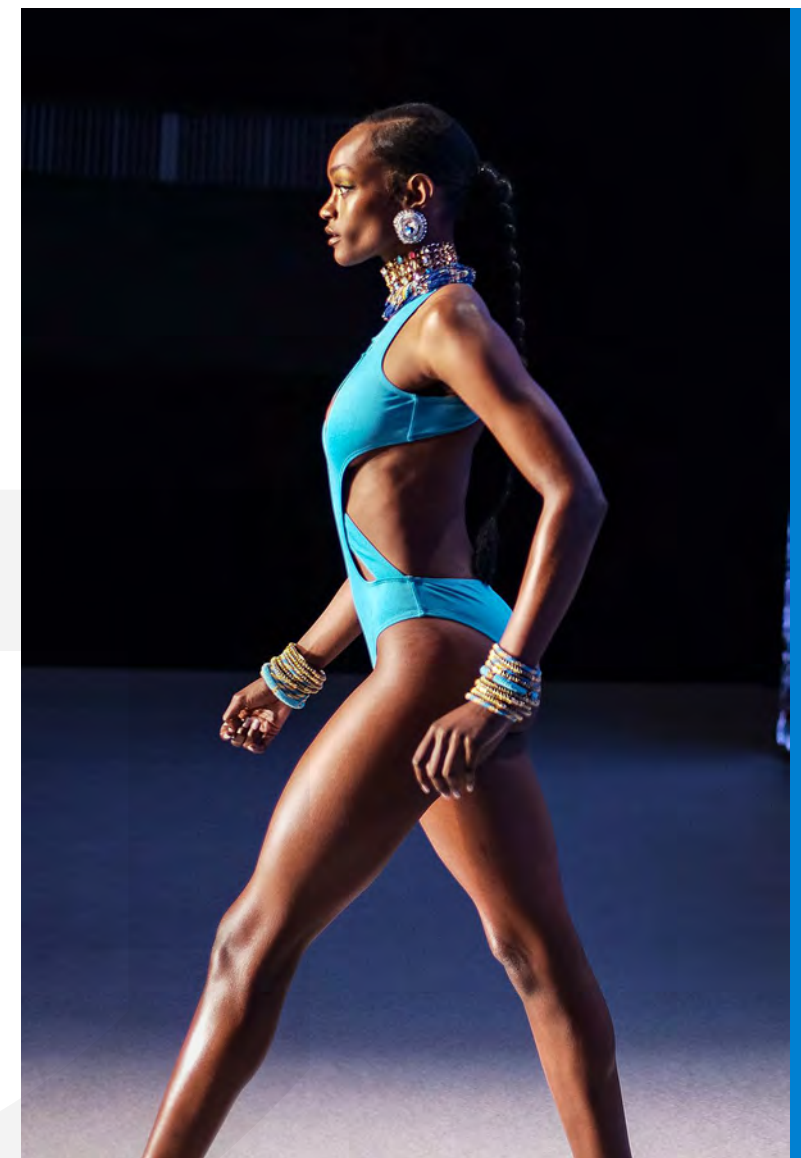
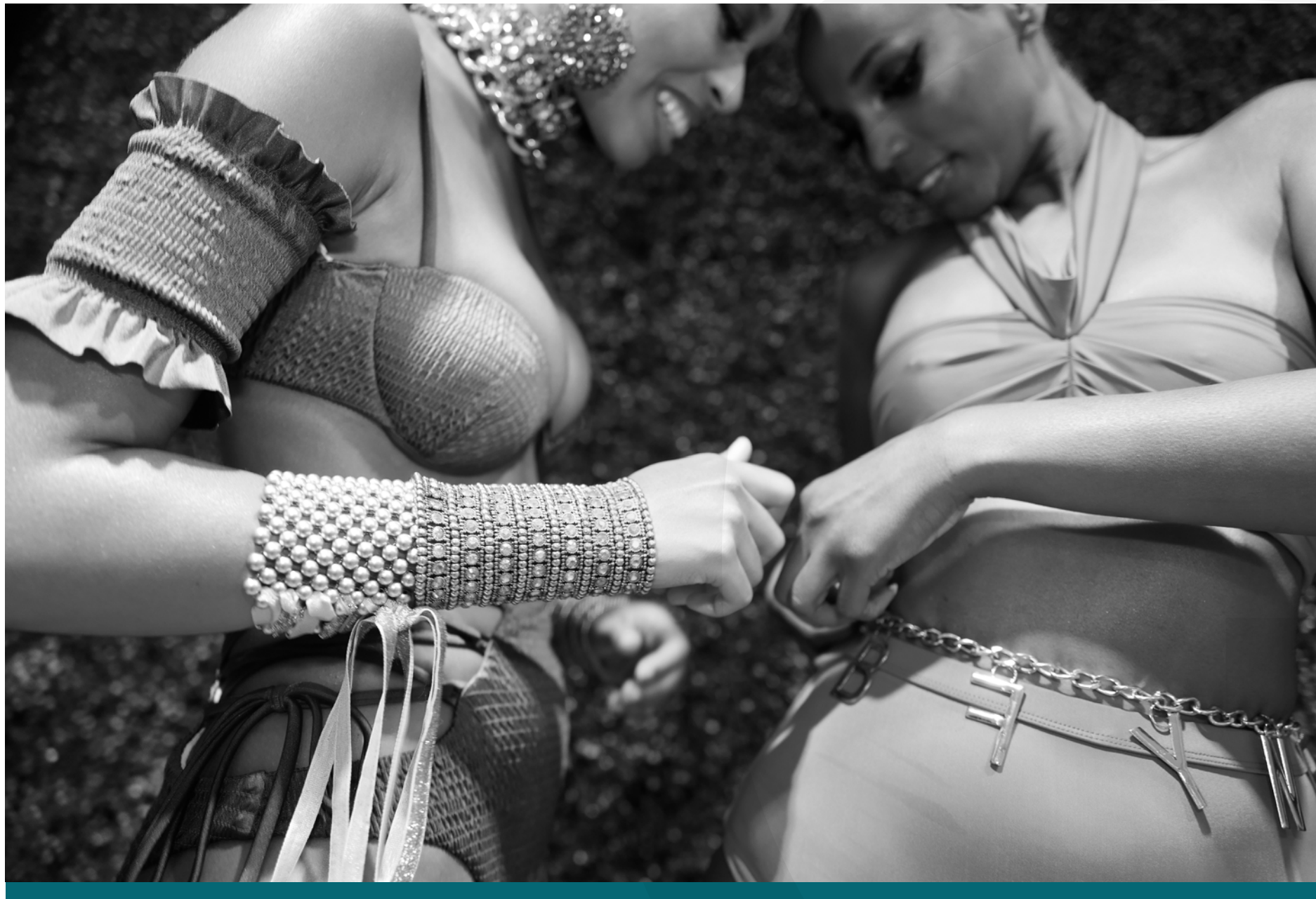




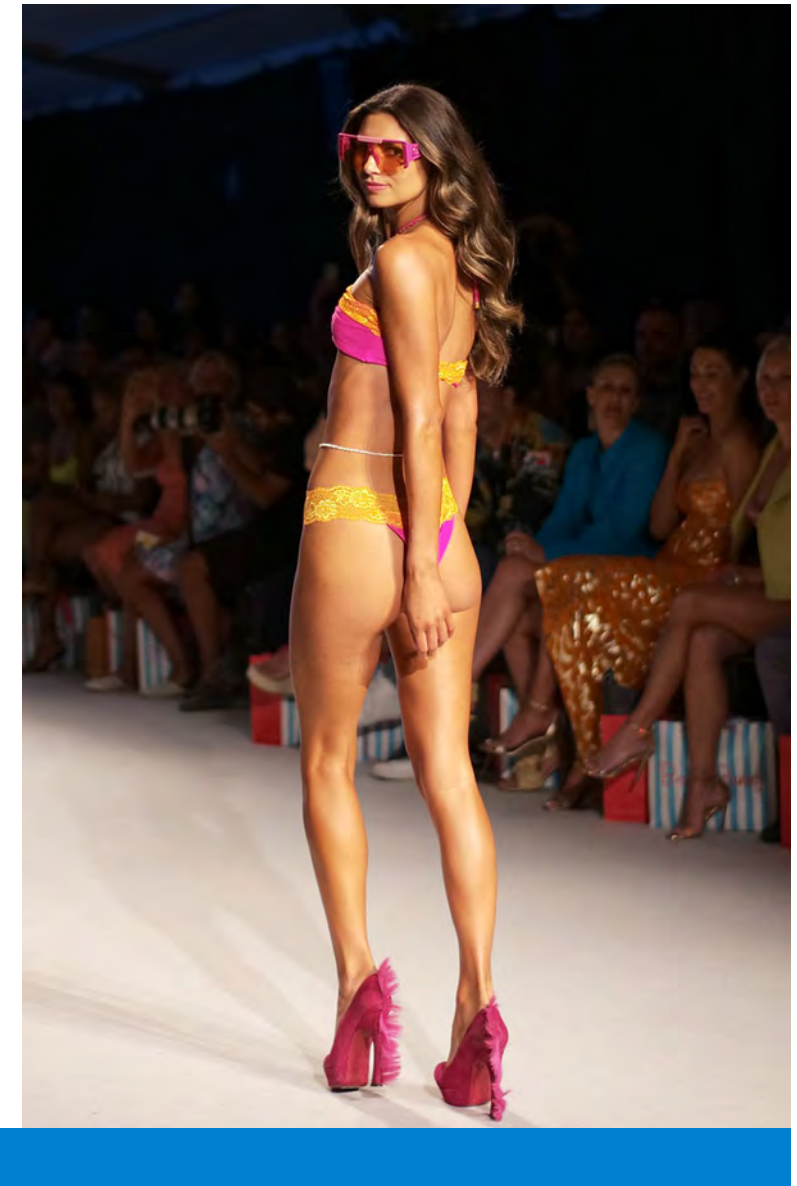




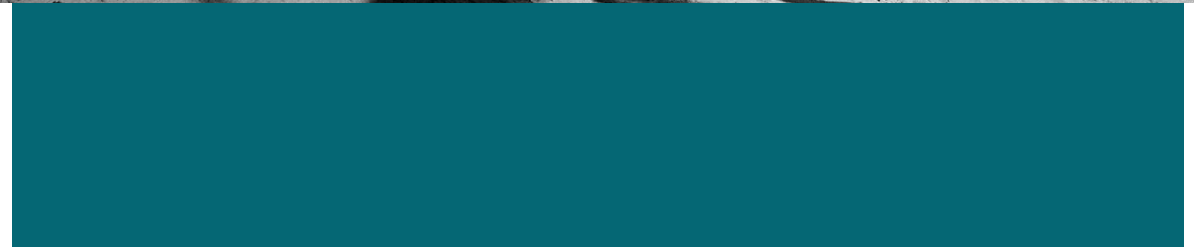












SWIM WEEK 2022 PHOTOS BY: BRIDGETT EZZARD



MODEL: ALLEGRA PARIS  
PHOTOGRAPHER: VIVIAN ARTHUR  
(@VIVIANARTHURPHOTO)

# SOIGNÉ'S

ALLEGRA PARIS TAKES SWIM WEEK





MODEL: ALLEGRA PARIS  
PHOTOGRAPHER: MATTEO  
(@MATTEOPHOTOGRAPHS)  
EVENT: KRISTIN CAVALLARI X  
CASA DEL SOL TEQUILA X  
ALLEGRA PARIS FIT











MODEL: ALLEGRA PARIS  
PHOTOGRAPHER: VIVIAN ARTHUR  
(@VIVIANARTHURPHOTO)



MODEL: ALLEGRA PARIS @ALLEGRAPARIS  
PHOTOGRAPHER: MÉGANE CLAIRE





# FITNESS INFLUENCER AND MODEL TALKS OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND ACHIEVING DREAMS

BY: JADAN HORYN

**You told me before walking in Swim Week was a lifelong dream. What was it like to accomplish that?**

*It felt amazing to walk in swim week. I love runway and I always have- and for some reason, I'm more comfortable in swimwear than anything else, so swim runway is seriously a dream.*

**Last year you had some setbacks. A heel broke, your hair got ruined, you slipped, how did you overcome that and push forward?**

*Last year I was a bit unprepared and also lacked a lot of confidence. This year I went into it differently because I had some guidance when it came to the where/when/what of swim week castings. I also felt more confident because I knew if I pushed hard enough I could walk. Swim week allows tall and short girls to walk so I knew there wasn't anything holding me back. I waited in all the lines, brought comp cards, talked to designers, I did everything.*

**Between then and now you've been busy. Tell me about some of your projects.**

*I formally renamed my influencer workout classes/events to Bikini Body. I now teach these pop-up classes in Miami, NYC, and the Hamptons. I spend my time prepping influencer guest lists, brand sponsors, and locations for my classes. I also launched a booty band line you can purchase on my website, Allegraparis.com!*

*Lastly, I took on a creative director role for an activewear brand, so I spend part of my week as a CCO, which I LOVE because I did go to college for fashion design and once had my own activewear brand.*

**What advice do you have for those who are close to accomplishing their dreams but stumble?**

*Nothing comes easy, literally nothing. You have to PUSH through barriers or they won't break down. You have to be different and stand out by being confident. People can feel your confidence, and that in turn, makes them more confident in their decision to pick you for whatever it is that they're casting/booking/hiring for! Push through and do not give up! You create your own limitations, no one else does.*

**How do you feel about being featured in Soigné?**

*Love being featured in Soigné! It's so fun and I love the magazine layout!*

**What's next for you?**

*I plan to do bigger Bikini Body classes in more locations. Also, I'll be featured in Maxim magazine in Spring 2023 which I'm so excited about! I also plan to walk in a lot more shows next swim week as well as NYFW! I'd love to be on some podcasts as well.*



MODEL: ALLEGRA PARIS @ALLEGRAPARIS  
PHOTOGRAPHER: MÉGANE CLAIRE

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# SILHOUETTE

## BY EMMA AYERS *Women Ought to Flutter*



My mother was wise about many things. Among them, was the choice of what she allowed her three children to consume in terms of entertainment. I did not know then, in the overwhelming fashion that I do now, that she was creating within our tender brains a clear reference of aesthetic to which we would each be able to turn to as we aged. In place of the garden-variety kids' programs our peers watched, we were permitted black-and-white movies.

The first TV image that remains clear within my bleary memory is of the elegant Ginger Rogers and gangly-yet-so-suave Fred Astaire. You know those two. Sure, they're currently buried by time and the advent of movie plotlines in which aliens level New York City to the ground every six months, but they're nestled within the modern consciousness all the same—even if they're simply a frozen picture of bygone Golden Hollywood to most folks.

But, oh, how frozen they were not! They danced, of course. I adored watching them dance, even when I wasn't old enough myself to walk quickly in a straight line without falling over. Their fluid rhythm, their seeming oneness of motion, the playful smiles on their faces. I ate it up with a kid-sized spoon. Mostly, I couldn't take my eyes off Ginger. To me, she was the beginning and end of femininity. I wanted to become her. I wanted to have her softness and her serene gaze. Her flawless skin and coiffed curls. But more often than not, I really just wanted to wear her dress.

Her dresses were sublime. That is to say, everything she wore was sublime. Her characters' outfits, which Rogers notoriously had a hand in coordinating, were crafted to dazzle audiences. Flouncy sleeves, silk neckties, chiffon-brimmed hats cocked coquettishly to one side. They were "everyday" glamor star looks that would blow Fred's dancin' socks off in each movie they made and would generally prompt him to serenade her. They blew my socks off, too, if ever I was wearing any. But it was those final dance numbers at every ending—the ones in which Ginger would sashay in the most beautiful dresses I've ever seen—that I remember most vividly. A-line cuts with ruffles on the waistline stay, or gray beaded gowns that gleamed under the studio lights; off-the-shoulder sleeves with glitter straps; an elongated bodice skimming Ginger's slim figure. It didn't matter what the style of dress—when they danced, the skirts would flutter. I could watch them flutter for days and I did.

Now Ginger isn't around, but fluttering did not die with her. Women wearing dresses and stunning men into

stupors with their beauty in them did not die as a phenomenon, either. Yet it is beginning to, for very dumb reasons, and it should not. In fact, more women should flutter.

Permit me. By that, of course, I mean women should flutter.

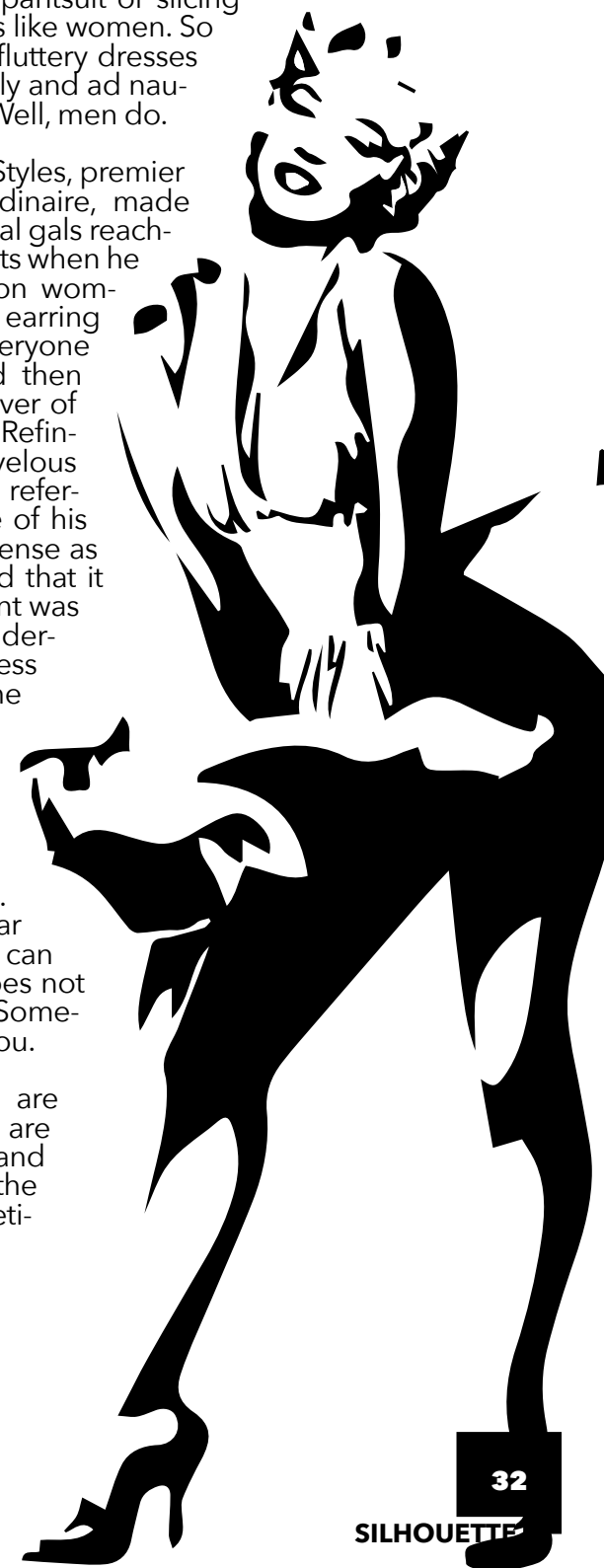
I know, it is a bold statement in the year 2022. Nowadays people tend to freak out over a person encouraging the female sex to do female-centric things and men to abstain from them. And vice versa. In fact, women today get the most praise when they "break gender norms" and do something unprecedented by wearing a pantsuit or slicing off their hair to look less like women. So who does get to wear fluttery dresses and be praised endlessly and ad nauseam by high society? Well, men do.

A few years ago, Harry Styles, premier Bowie imitator extraordinaire, made headlines and had liberal gals reaching for their smelling salts when he donned a puffed chiffon women's shirt and a pearl earring on the red carpet. Everyone was bowled over. And then he appeared on the cover of Vogue in a gown and Refinery29 deemed it a marvelous "Sign of the Times," in reference to the title of one of his songs and the end of sense as we know it. Never mind that it looked absurd. The point was that clothing, rightly understood, has no business being gendered. Anyone can wear a dress.

**“Not everyone can wear a dress.”**

Except that is not true. Not everyone can wear a dress. Sure anyone can put one on, but that does not mean it'll look good. Sometimes the dress wears you.

The truth is, dresses are made for women. They are designed for our forms and our figures, to show off the parts of us most aestheti-





cally pleasing to the eye. To catch the attention of men, who are infinitely more visually-inclined in romance. And to make us feel, deeply and softly, like women.

It's a distinct feeling, and it's not one that a pair of pants can give half so well. It is certainly true that pants make one feel more capable of fitting into a man's world, but that is not the point of a fluttery dress. It is not the point of women.

Like women, the fluttery dress stands out. It draws the eye. It's soft on its edges and therefore makes the wearer feel soft. It does not declare manly capability or competition. Rather, it demands a type of gentleness. It requires care so as to not become hooked on things or stepped upon or ripped. It asks of the people around it to make way. And, like a stained glass window, it certainly will be gazed at more often than whatever a man wears.

Unless of course, that man wears a dress. And perhaps that's why the dress is being taken from women and handed to men. We have been getting too much attention for the beauty in which we drape ourselves. For too long, men have merely been the sartorial platform offsetting the beauty of our clothes, and now they want a piece of the pie. To be sure, a guy in a dress is certainly attention-getting—but not because of his beauty.

Can you imagine Ginger in a gown, foxtrotting with a Fred in pearls and chiffon? What if Fred himself were in a gown? It would look hideous. What is more, no one would be able to pay attention to Ginger and how suited her dress was for her. They'd be too busy noticing how unsuitable the dress is for Fred.

Perhaps instead of The Disney Channel, more kids should have been made to watch Ginger Rogers portray an angel in a gown. But I do not think that would have solved the problem, because it's evident folks are bending over backwards to pretend they think men look just as magnificent in dresses as girls do.

I encourage those folks, only if they are women, to take off their Hillary-style pantsuits and progressive mindsets for a few minutes, and put on a dress. Not a straight-lined business dress. Something that flutters—something the wind can blow around and something that, if you twirled in it, the hem would do something lovely. Something you could dance in with Fred Astaire and feel like a lady.

**“A dress has a lot of power. I think it could change your mind. I think it could make you proud to be a woman.”**

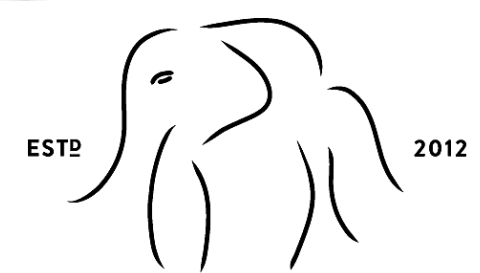
*Emma Ayers is a roving writer on religion, gender, and culture. You can find her work at USATODAY, The Washington Examiner, The American Conservative, and elsewhere.*









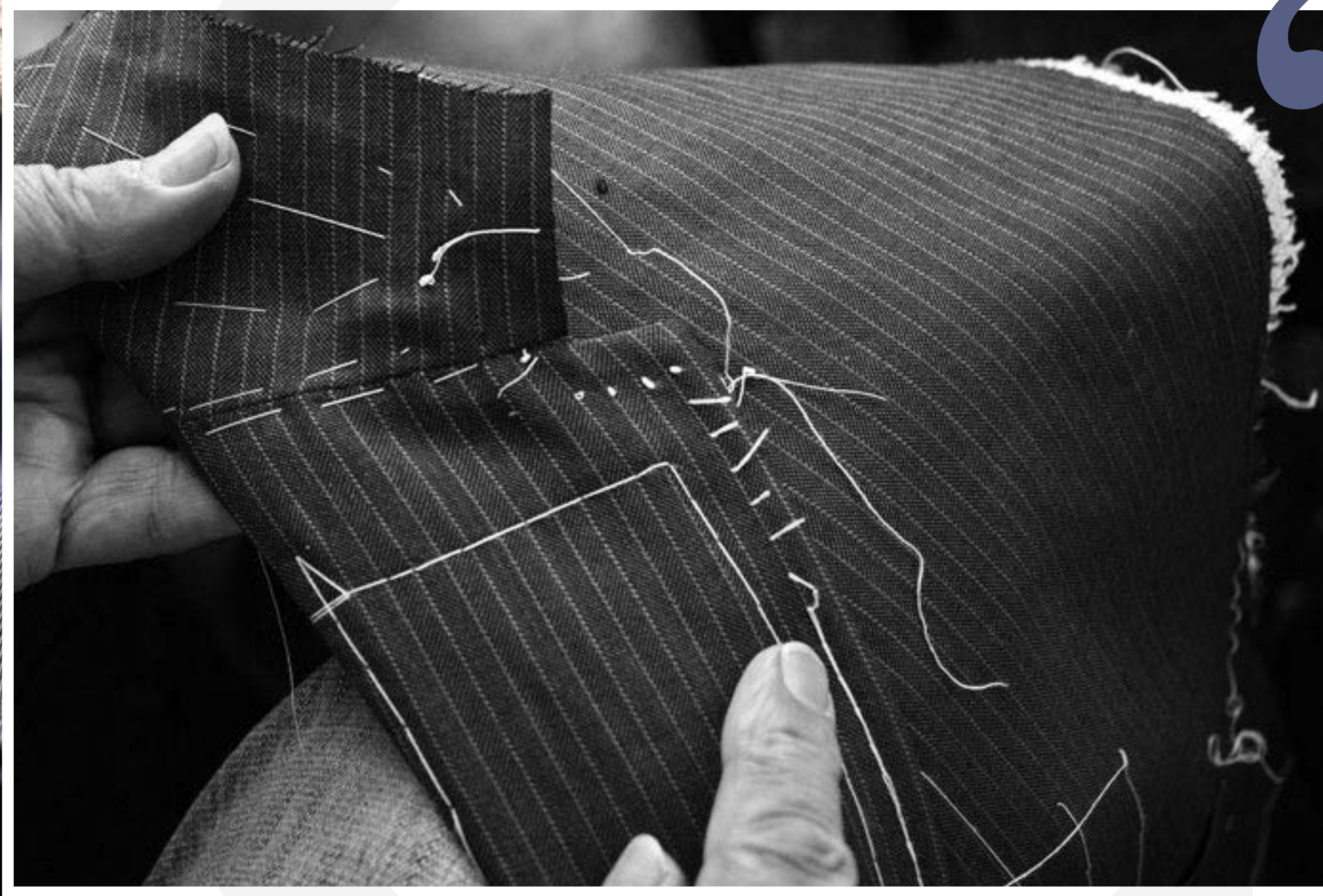


ESTD 2012  
**DRUNK ELEPHANT™**

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# SARTORIAL



*“It’s actually a great time to be a guy who dresses classy and smart. You stand out from the crowd, now wearing a bespoke shirt and pants with nice shoes. There is a reason why it’s been around for so long. They are tailored to fit the male body.”*

*~ Jason Morgan*



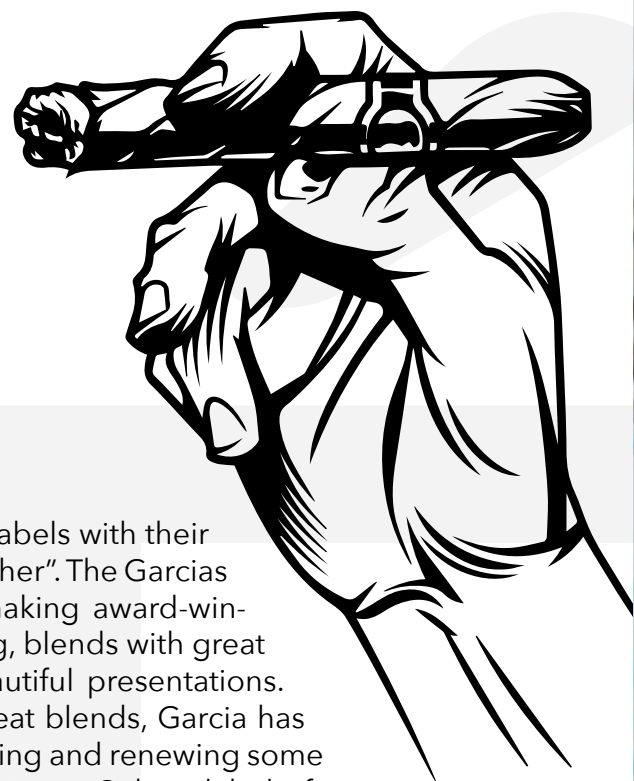






# Cigar Review

BY: PHIL MERSHON



There is something quintessentially refined about a gentleman or a gentlewoman engaging in the old-fashioned pastime of puffing on a cigar. Cigars, like fine wine or chocolates, run the gamut from pedestrian to rarified. Cigar smoking, like golf or sailing, is a social experience that requires knowledge, skill, and a bit of endurance. So there is little wonder both men and women of younger generations are embracing it as a way to slow down and connect with others. The art of the cigar is one that mainstay brands and upstarts alike are rediscovering. My Father's Cigars is one such brand.

Pepin Garcia was a master roller for Partagas, Montecristo, and Cohiba in Cuba before emigrating from Cuba to Miami. He and his son, Jaime, have built an impres-

sive portfolio of labels with their company "My Father". The Garcias are known for making award-winning, often strong, blends with great balance and beautiful presentations. In addition to great blends, Garcia has also been rebooting and renewing some lesser-known heritage Cuban labels for their Nicaraguan cigars.

Below are two more approachable reboots by the Garcias. Not as strong as some of the other blends, these sticks are Cubaneseque without losing their Nicaraguan flair. They are also fairly available and affordable for their quality.



Fonseca by My Father - The Garcias bought the Fonseca brand from the Quesadas in 2019. I like the Cosacos size. A true corona with some Cubaneseque notes of hay and earth plus the pepper and sweet spices one would expect of this Nicaraguan puro. Also, it comes wrapped in tissue in a nice nod to its Cuban counterpart. Body and strength: medium.



San Cristobal Quintessence - I prefer the Churchill size. Just rated #3 for the year on Cigar Aficionado's top 25 list, this cigar is made by the Garcias for the Levins in Philadelphia (Ashton and Holt's Cigars). Also a very approachable cigar for fans of the new world or Cuban blends. Sweet tobacco, malty bread flavors, and baking spices are some of the flavor highlights. Some coffee notes make this a great companion to a coffee or espresso. If you can't find the Churchill, try it anyway in another size. I recommend avoiding the absurdly thick vitolas unless that is something you really like. Body: medium; strength: medium+.



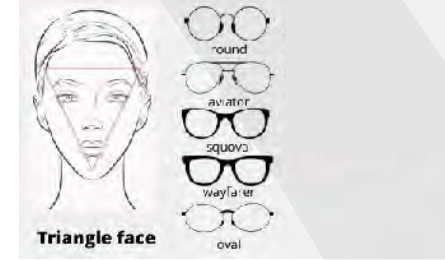
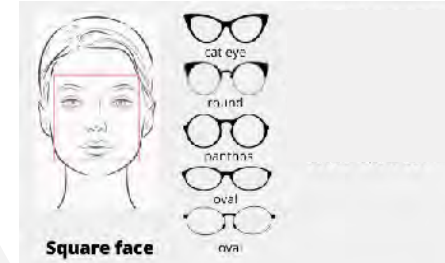




# BLURRED LINES IN EYEWEAR

BY: MAXWELL TAYLOR STROUD

SOIGNÉ.CO



Eyewear is one of fashion's most gender-fluid accessories, but should it be?

There are obviously brands and lines that cater to men or women, but who's to say what works on one face will not work on another? There is no such thing as one size fits all when it comes to eyewear.

Eyewear comes in a wide array of styles, colors, and materials with influences from the runway to everyday streetwear. Some use glasses for their true purpose which is technically a "medical device", while others use them to enhance their outfits and perhaps even their personas.

I think we have all had a moment when a pair of sunglasses has made an everyday look go from mundane to bad-ass and gain the extra confidence boost we long for or need. Whether it's to hide dark circles after a long night out or maybe give you an opportunity to check someone out without them noticing. Sunglasses are more than just a fashion accessory, to some, they are necessary.

But how do you pick out the right frame for yourself, and should it fit into the current trends? Men and women can have similarly shaped faces, but does that make eyewear unisex or gender fluid? Does self-expression have a gender and should it when it comes to eyewear? The answers to these questions vary. Here are many styles appropriate for different face shapes and some of these historically lend themselves better to men or women. Take the cat-eye,, this frame shape is more feminine in design and often made in colors and material makeups that would fit with the female accessory realm, whereas the square and rectangular shapes may seem more masculine due to the hard lines and edges.

Certain glasses styles flatter face shapes better than others.

### Here is a quick guide:

#### OVAL FACES

- Rectangular
- Aviator
- Cat-eye
- Square

#### SQUARE FACES

- Round
- Oval
- Browline
- Round

#### ROUND FACES

- Full-Rimmed
- Rectangle
- Square

#### HEART SHAPED FACES

- Modified Square
- Cat-eye
- Browline

#### DIAMOND SHAPED

- Browline
- Oval
- Cat-eye
- Rectangle

#### TRIANGLE SHAPED

- Rectangle
- Aviator
- Cat-eye
- Browline

ARE YOU SOIGNÉ?





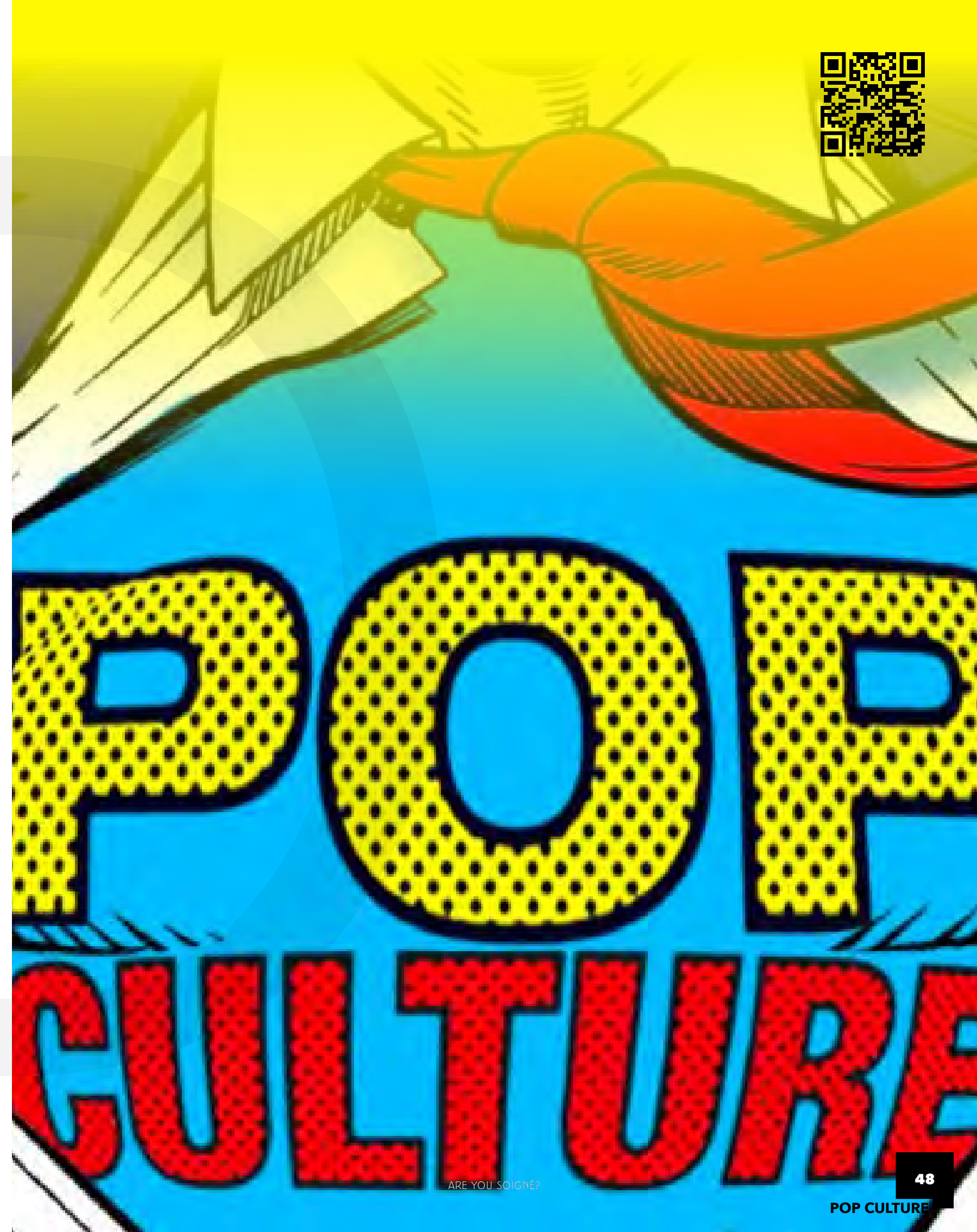
Is it possible to add drawn images for the different face shapes?

In 2022 and looking ahead to 2023, we have been seeing a resurgence of retro styles with a modern twist. Playing with colors, materials, and bold shapes, with a heavy focus on translucent and colored acetate. Frames aren't the only thing getting a bright new update with color. We are also seeing a spike in tinted lenses of warm yellows, oranges, and the ever-popular rose-colored lenses.

Unlike handbags, belts, and shoes, eyewear can play off of your own style without having to adhere to trends, or

simply taking trends and making them your own.

Eyewear should be an extension of yourself that gives you that little edge of self-expression without having to jump too far out of your comfort zone. Play around with different choices and see what fits you best. Style is about your preference and comfort and what you want to present to the world around you. Whether that is modern and trendy, or traditional and classic, it is your decision. The oversized, bold, plastic frames may not be everyone's cup of tea, but if it's yours then own it. Trends come and go, but personal style and how you feel are timeless.

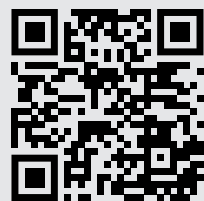






# CARHARTT AND CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

BY: TERESA MULL



There is a clothing store (and only one) in my hometown of around 3,000 folks. It's on the main street of the rundown — but reviving! — little old coal and timber town and it survives by selling steel-toe boots, screen-printed t-shirts, and sweatshirts of local high school sporting teams, and Carhartt. Lots and lots of Carhartt.

Carhartt is something of a uniform in these parts. The signature tannish-clay color of the "Carhartt Brown" bib overalls and the iconic "Car in Heart" emblem are as synonymous with the Central Pennsylvania backwoods as camouflage hats and dirty fingernails. So imagine my surprise a few years ago when I noticed Carhartt beanie hats appearing on celebrity heads. Rihanna sported a neon yellow one that readied her



for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation road crew — though she used it for added safety in walking the streets of New York City, or some metropolitan place far from anywhere the "rugged construction" designed to "protect a variety of workers in many industries including construction and manufacturing along

with farmers, ranchers, and outdoor enthusiasts" would be useful.

Harry Styles, too, has been known to rock a Carhartt beanie, and Kanye West made rural workwear look urbane by wearing a Carhartt coat on the city streets on at least a couple of occasions. Daniel Day-Lewis, Brooklyn Beckham, Johnny Depp, Kaia Gerber ... the list of celebrity Carhartt wearers goes on and on.

Fox Business ran this headline about the trend in 2020:

"Blue-collar Carhartt brand shaking up fashion industry." A CNBC YouTube video titled, "How A \$16 Hat Made Carhartt A Billion-Dollar Brand" has racked up more than 600,000 views. Shape magazine wrote about the iconic Carhartt beanie last year with a piece called, "This Viral Hat Has Taken Over Instagram." New York Magazine has also wondered, "Why Can't I Walk 5 Blocks Without Seeing a Carhartt Beanie?" At first, I couldn't help but feel a little possessive of Carhartt. To see famous people use a brand of clothing that evokes hard work, blood, sweat, and mud as a fashionable afterthought to make them look trendy caused me to scoff. How dare they, I thought! Until you plow a dirt road on a John Deere tractor in sub-zero temperatures in the dead of winter, carry a dozen ash buckets from the coal furnace uphill through two feet of snow, chop wood for the kitchen stove outside on a brisk Sunday morning in January, drive cattle through a spring snowstorm in Wyoming, or hike through crunchy ice-covered fields to shoot upland birds to eat at Thanksgiving, what right do you have to wear Carhartt?

Then I wondered: Is this what cultural appropriation feels like?

Surely, celebrities living in Beverly Hills mansions with their fleets of high-end vehicles, chauffeurs, personal chefs, in-home gyms, private jets, and luxuries I can't even dream of, using a working-man's necessity as a fashion accessory is the essence of VerilyWellMind.com's definition of the phenomenon: "[using] of objects or elements of a non-dominant culture in a way that reinforces stereotypes or contributes to

oppression and doesn't respect their original meaning or give credit to their source." Then I thought to myself — why the hell do I care? Isn't imitation the sincerest form of flattery? If a celebrity wants to borrow an article of clothing my neighbors and kinsfolk have been wearing regularly for years, shouldn't I take it as a badge of honor? So long as these people aren't changing the integrity of the brand or making it so mainstream that it's unaffordable (the beanie remains a bargain at \$16.99), shouldn't I be proud that the country-folk aesthetic is something people think is cool? Carhartt, CNBC reports, has become "an American fashion icon," and there's nothing more American than different cultures melding together to learn from one another and share, thriving in mutual admiration, respect, and appreciation.

That said, I must point out taking real offense to Pennsylvania Democratic Senate candidate John Fetterman's abuse of the Carhartt brand. As I wrote for Spectatorworld.com, "The most telltale sign this guy is not one of the real-deal, blue-collar, bench-press guys I know well is in the clothes. Fetterman's Carhartt garb never has a grease stain on it. It isn't tattered. And he seems to have the disposable income to afford a hoodie in every color there is."

If you're going to appropriate culture, do it for the appropriate reasons: because you genuinely like the aesthetic and the lifestyle it represents, not because you're trying to trick people into thinking you're something you aren't.







**ART PROVOCATEUR**

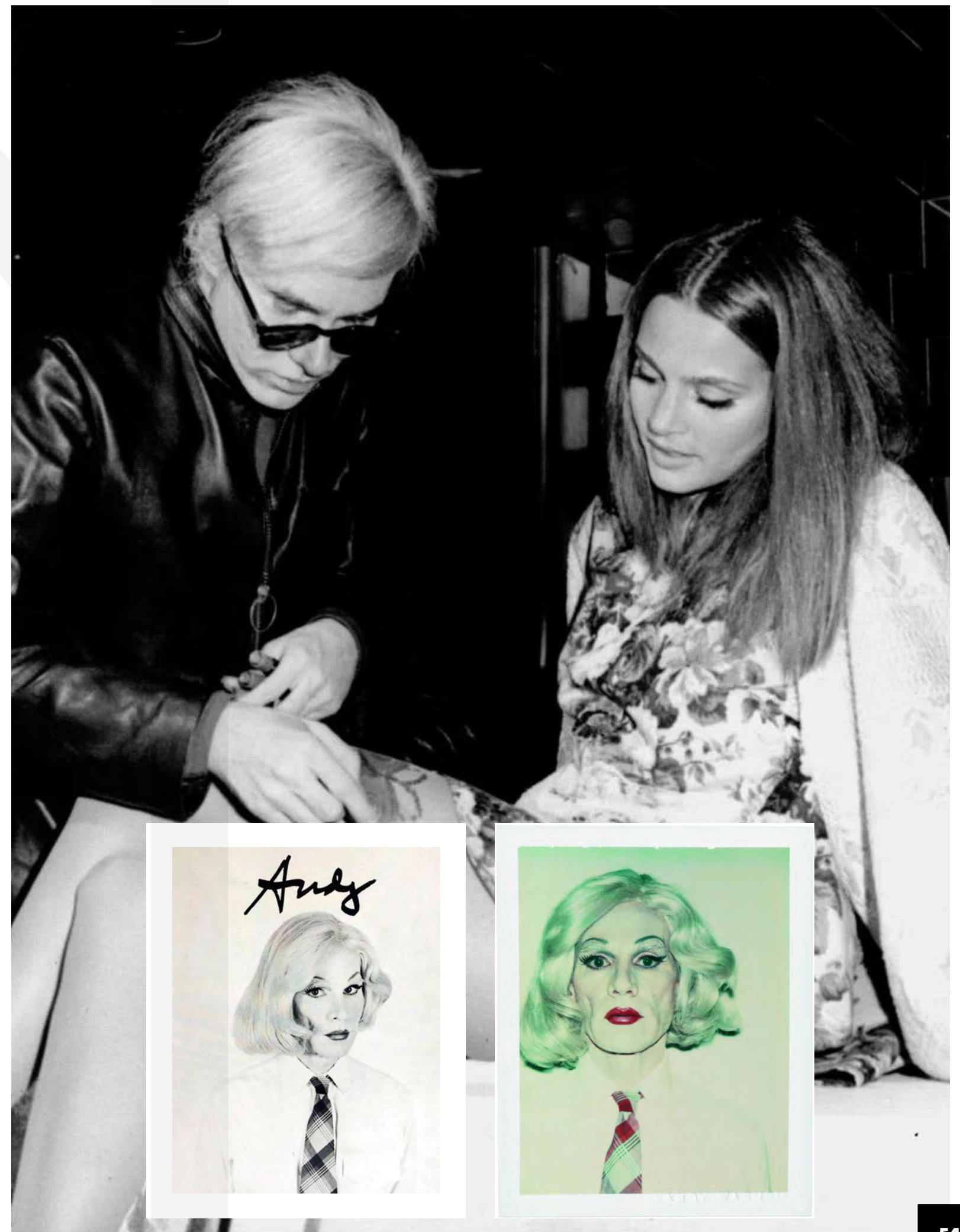
Miami-Based Contemporary and Street Artist Adam Thompson Takes on Politics, Culture, and Flamingos



Adam M. Thompson

eads."













## POST ARTSEXISM

BY ROBERT BLUMENTHAL

The Art market of the previous generation was

and may still be sexist. Full stop. The buyers, the auction houses, the sellers, the curators, the museums, the galleries, the whole lot of them.

This isn't controversial and it isn't revelational.

It's known. But it is not the case for the art market anymore.

Art, unlike sport, is not the realm of physiological advantage or physical prowess. It is the realm of creativity and skill. Debate exists on gender and creativity. However, that is only a debate and one in which the science is not settled. Skills on the other hand are not gendered, women are as capable as men. Taken in aggregate the art market should generally reflect these truths, producing results commensurate with male peers in era and skill.

Until now this was not the case; the reasons why are complex, yet obvious.

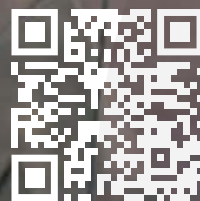
It is ignored time and again by those who hold to the values of equity and social justice. Precisely because equity discounts merit and talent, while a social justice focus does not address what is required for the elevation of women artists

to their rightful place among the American greats.

Georgia O'Keeffe, Lee Krasner, Frida Kahlo, and Joan Mitchell are the few women who made cracks in the art market glass ceiling. They are the exceptions. The reality is there is a big discrepancy in the prices of what great male artists and great female artists command. The most expensive painting ever sold by a woman artist was by Georgia O'Keeffe and its \$44.4 million price tag did not even land in the top 50 for paintings sold. This means art by men makes up every slot of the top 50 and nearly 85% of the top 100.

This is not a women's lib screed, but rather an indictment of an entire system that preaches equality but acts with every respect otherwise. Take for example the artists of the abstract expressionism movement. As a domestic vernacular aesthetic art movement centered in the middle of the 20th century, abstract expressionism shattered the norms of classical art and collectively formed the basis of major modern art museums. Based in New York City in the 1950s and 60s, the 'New York School,' as it is now called, was an informal overlapping social circle of artists that mutually inspired each other's work. Artists such as Jackson Pollock, Grace Hardigan, and Elaine de Kooning, found refuge in the eclectic art world of this era.

Many of the female greats from the abstract expressionism era were all largely ignored until now. In fact, they were ig-



nored by their male contemporaries Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning (husband of Elaine) were known for actively excluding women. Yet, Hedda Sterne somehow managed to muscle her way into the famous painting of the Irascibles.

The women artists of the era aren't ignored entirely, Sterne is currently on display at the Whitney, MOMA, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She is next to Willem de Kooning's work in all three museums. Janet Sobel, who Jackson Pollock admitted to being influenced by, has some of her paintings on view at MOMA only because she is a part of a Ukraine refugee show. Yet their perceived valuations are much lower than their male contemporaries with Sobel's work fetching only \$9,000 just a couple of short years ago. This is despite the praise influential art critics have said about their work: "Jackson Pollock may have broken the ice, in Willem de Kooning's well-known phrase, but Janet Sobel definitely helped crack it." [Roberta Smith, art critic 2002]

It makes no sense that a Hedda Sterne on view at the above museums is worth a hundred to four hundred times less than those hanging next to her, such as the likes of Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Kline. Sterne is the only woman in the famous photo of the Irascibles, yet has not elevated her works' worth.

But it appears that the market may finally be waking up to the wonderful works of great women artists. The art ecosystem is finally moving towards representation and inclusion. In the contemporary art market, things are equal and have even swung towards a large contingent of collectors that prefer women and people of color. Even on the investment end - buyers are demanding it. Over on the artist development side, women are being supported and elevated in



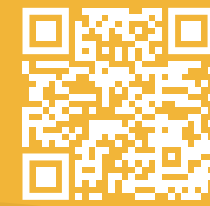
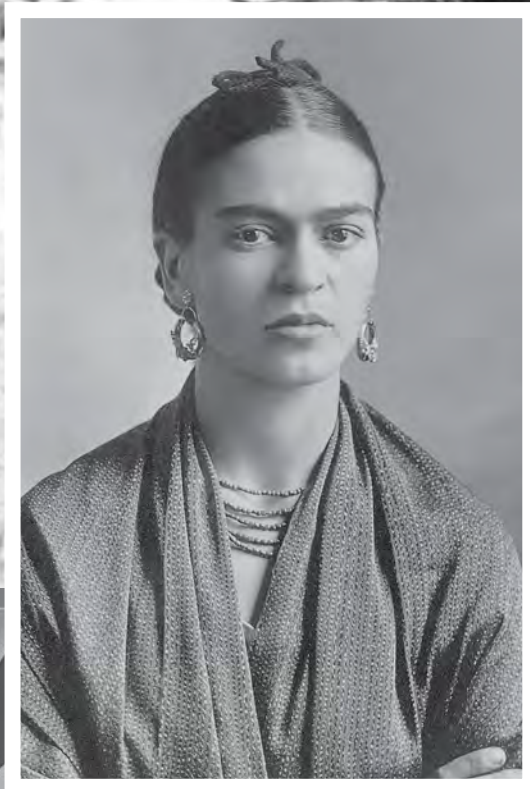
collectives, with grants, by gallerists, and by major art institutions.

Although it is not the business of this magazine to dispense investment advice, this could present an unparalleled opportunity for those inclined to see art as a hedge against inflation and a bonafide repository of value. It also presents a chance for new artists to rise in the market. After decades of neglect, the women irascibles are on the cusp of being elevated to their rightful place among the pantheon of mid-century masters.

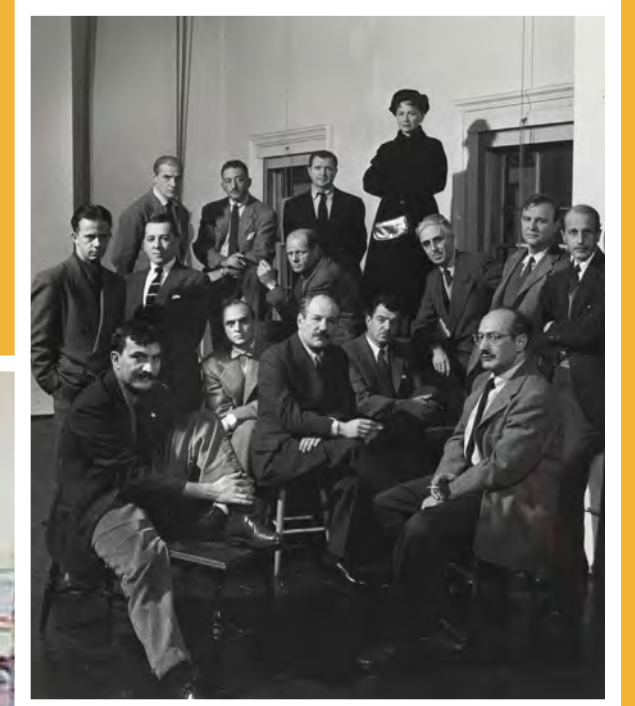
It's time the art market fully leaves its misogyny where it belongs, on the ash heap of history.







# THE IRASCIBLES





# BRONZING THE COPPERTONE GIRL: THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN TALIBAN

EDITED BY JADAN HORYN

When ISIS enters new territories, they destroy any art or non-Islamic religious monuments that may be present. It's an extremist dogma that has seen the destruction of everything in Afghanistan from ancient statues of Buddha to almost two thousand five hundred artifacts in the National Museum. Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, governments from the local to the federal level and huge multinational corporations are tearing down the monuments that threaten their own religion - wokeism. With the seduction of a high ESG score and the 12 trillion dollars of dirty BlackRock money that awaits if they just pump up those numbers, they've turned to symbols of American industry as their next targets.

Now I know I'm not saying anything new, but the artistic jihadists have gone too far this time bringing their wrath to the beautiful (and relatively unwoke) city of Miami. Their prospective target is the iconic Coppertone girl mural at 7300 Biscayne Blvd. Green Space Miami, a self-described "art space centering historically marginalized stories in a space for dialogue," lists the open call for "reimagining an iconic Miami billboard" on their website. The first step the iconoclasts take in the name of their religion is to reimagine. The next is to demand the government act on their behalf. When that fails they destroy the object of their heresy.

There are several pertinent questions that need to be answered here: Why does it need reimagin-

ing? Why is this so offensive to you? What about your woke religion is so hurt by a little white girl on the side of a building? Are there not enough diversity murals in Miami? I can think of at least a dozen, some of them slapped on with a middle

school level of skill in extreme haste to declare the building owners' virtues following the BLM riots of recent years. With all the thousands of buildings that could be used for such virtue signaling, why does this Coppertone girl need to come

down? 78% of Miamians identify as white, including white Hispanic peoples, but if you drove through the city and looked at the murals you'd think there were about five white people in the whole city. It's the same on cable TV and internet advertisements. Where have all the self-identified white Miamians gone?

I've been a professional artist for the better part of 17 years and over the course of my career, the woke

extremism has been so tough to watch. Beautiful sculptures like the Teddy Roosevelt statue in NYC are being torn down, art museums are eschewing quality work for what basically amounts to diversity and inclusion festivals, and it's virtually impossible for someone who isn't BIPOC to get any sort of grants or government recognition without being a woke extremist, themselves. The end result is that American art has turned to garbage. Go to any modern art museum in any Latin

American country and you'll see monuments to their own country, its people, and its culture - only quality art here. No wonder people worship Banksy, a mediocre stencil artist and atrocious anti-semitic or Jeff Koons, a talentless hack but the standards for art among Americans are so low these days. I tell my clients every year that upon a survey of Art Basel, American art is getting worse as I improve my own style with age. It's great for my sales, frankly, but horrible for America.

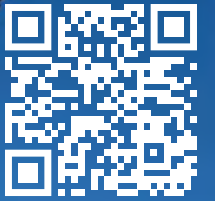
You know how I know it's all a scam? Miami was home to one of the most talented artists ever to live in the modern era - Purvis Young. He was Black, diabetic, and impoverished and died a tragic death because of a lack of healthcare. Isn't that a woke liberal's wet dream of an artist's story? He's a virtue signaler's golden goose! So what's missing here? Well, he's dead, so he can't be toted around by the phonies to make them look better than you. That's it.

The Coppertone girl might be "reimagined" soon along with all of American culture and history.

I'd hate to imagine what might happen if we don't stop all these woke-religious extremists soon.







# CHINGGIS KHAAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

CHINGGIS KHAAN  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



ЧИНГИС ХААН  
ОЛОН УЛСЫН НИСЭХ БУ



# EXPLORE

MONGOLIA LAND OF THE ETERNAL BLUE SKY



SOVIET BUILT UAZ-2206 BUKHANKA 4X4 VAN













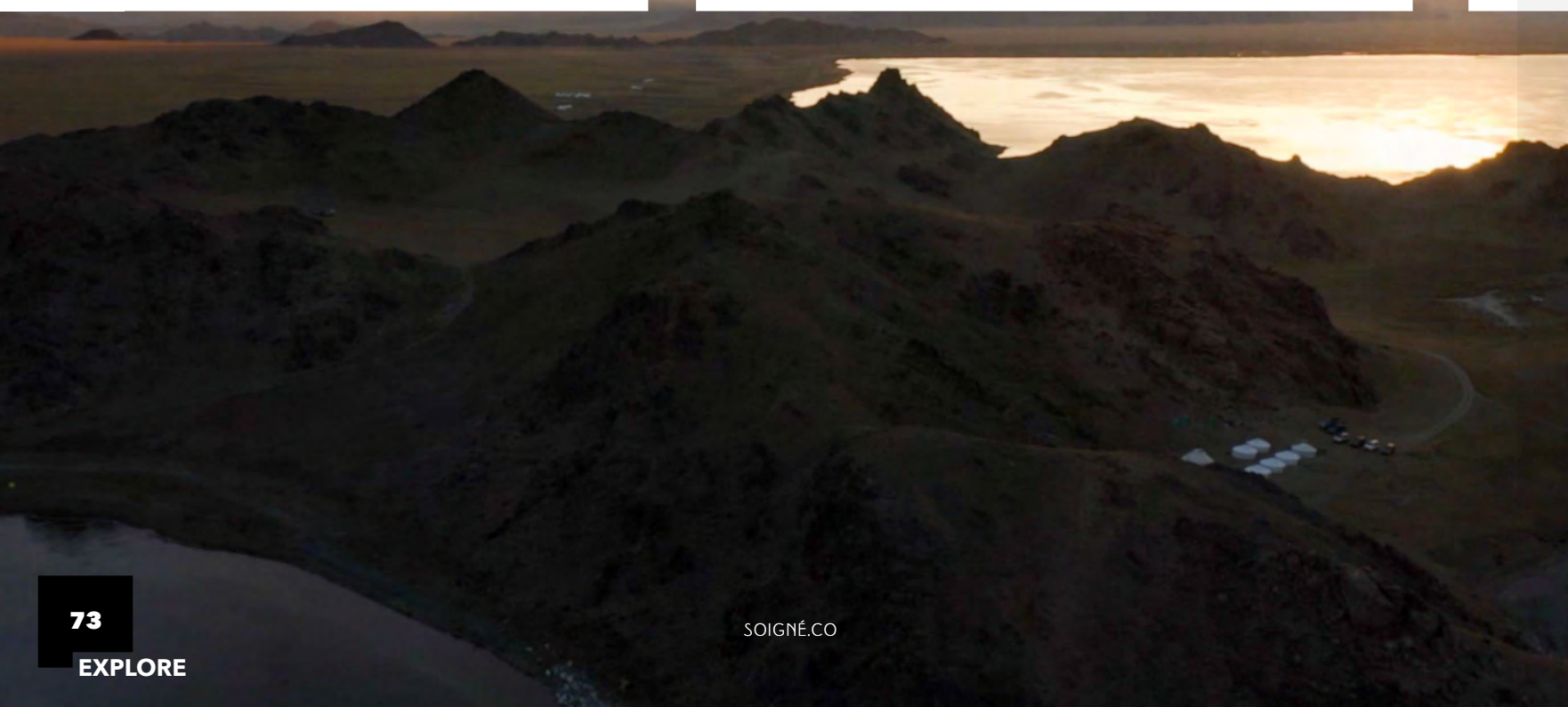
EAGLE HUNTING IS AN ANCIENT TRADITION THAT USES TRAINED EAGLES TO HUNT FOR FOOD. THIS FOOD FORMS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE DIET OF HUNTERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

EAGLE HUNTING IS PRACTICED BY ETHNIC KAZAKHS AND FELL INTO SHARP DECLINE DURING THE SOVIET ERA.

OF THE MANY CRIMES OF COMMUNISM, THE ERASURE OF ETHNIC IDENTITY FOR THE COLLECTIVE REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE. EAGLE HUNTING AS AN ART IS FACING EXTINCTION, BUT A NEW GENERATION OF HUNTERS IS RISING TO RECLAIM THEIR ANCESTRAL WAYS.

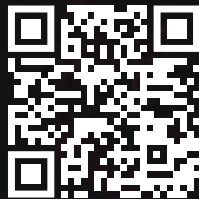




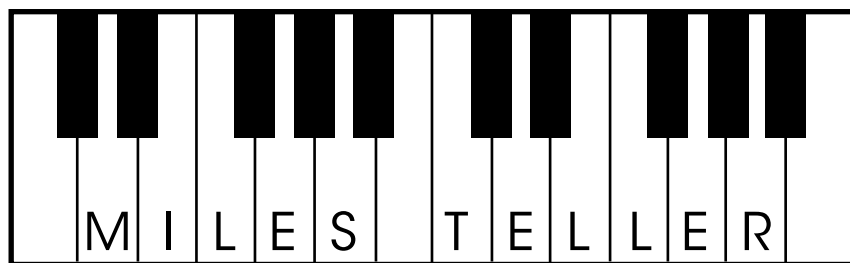




FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DANNY MCGEE AND HIS WORK SCAN THE QR CODE







CAN'T PLAY PIANO AND OTHER REASONS GOD HAS ABANDONED US

"You can't get promoted, you won't retire, and you refuse to die. The future is coming and you're not in it."

While filming *Top Gun: Maverick*, Miles Teller was hospitalized with a severe skin reaction. When he returned to set, Tom Cruise asked him what had happened and Miles told him that the doctors had found jet fuel in his blood.

Without missing a beat Tom Cruise replied, "Yeah, I was born with it, kid."

Mission Impossible 7 is slated for release in 2023. It's been reported that Cruise practiced one motorcycle jump in the film 13,000 times to get the shot right.

When he climbed the Burj Kalifa in *Ghost Protocol*, the

*"And Miles Teller, cannot play the piano."*

production company's insurance and safety professionals refused to agree to it. Cruise got his own insurance and safety crew and went ahead anyway. He did it perfectly in the second rehearsal.



Tom Cruise clung to a plane during take-off, executed a HALO jump, and broke his ankle jumping between rooftops, all on camera.

In *Top Gun: Maverick*, he successfully took off and landed a fighter jet on the USS Abraham Lincoln.

His character, Rooster, son of Goose, can and does play *Great Balls of Fire* on the piano in *Top Gun: Maverick*, but they had to shoot around his hands because Miles Teller can't play the piano.

The scene serves as a break for *Maverick* to recall singing the song with Goose and reminds the audience of how Goose died. But really it's fan service. It's what people wanted to see, not what makes sense for the character.

Viola Davis spoke about this at the launch of her new content label, JuVee Productions. "Social media has taken over the defining of this art form...I think that the word 'escapism' is something that is interesting – the goal all of us have is to sit in a movie with the popcorn and Sour Patch Kids and forget about our lives – but, literally, it destroys our art form."

Davis recognizes that some amusement is healthy, but commercial pressures to ignore reality and please the audience make it harder to create meaningful work.

"Every time you're in a room selling a narrative, it's about how much you can create a story that allows us to escape. The characters then become a Mr. Potato Head, become Bobble Heads."

Miles Teller went on *Late Night* with Seth Meyers to promote *Top Gun: Maverick* and *The Offer*, a TV show

starring Teller about the making of *The Godfather*. He told Seth about a recent experience throwing out the first pitch at a *Phillies* game.

They gave out 'Rooster' bobbleheads to all of the fans.

*Godfather* director Francis Ford Coppola is trying to make another film called *Megalopolis* now. Studio executives don't believe audiences will pay to see it, so, Francis is funding the movie himself saying,

"There's a certain way everyone thinks a film should be, and it rubs against the grain if you have another idea. People can be very unaccepting, but sometimes the other idea represents what's coming in the future."

In a recent interview promoting the release of *The Northman* filmmaker Robert Eggers shared some thoughts about being an artist in the industry today. "I think it's hard to do this kind of creative work in a modern secular society because it becomes all about your ego and yourself... I'm envious of medieval craftsmen who are doing the work for God... Any worldview where everything around them is full of meaning is exciting to me because we live in such a tiresome, lame, commercial culture now."

The truth is it's hard to make meaningful art because audiences prefer mindless content. Art used to unite and inspire, but now it pacifies. We're all intentionally being placed in digitally induced comas.

Many of my friends have left NYC recently. One actress/producer moved to Seattle. She spent a decade making other people's movies. Early mornings. Late nights. Grueling labor. Bitter winters. Sunburns and missed meals. Barely making rent. She went into corporate sales and marketing because she was tired of being a starving artist.

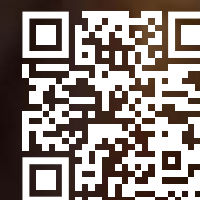
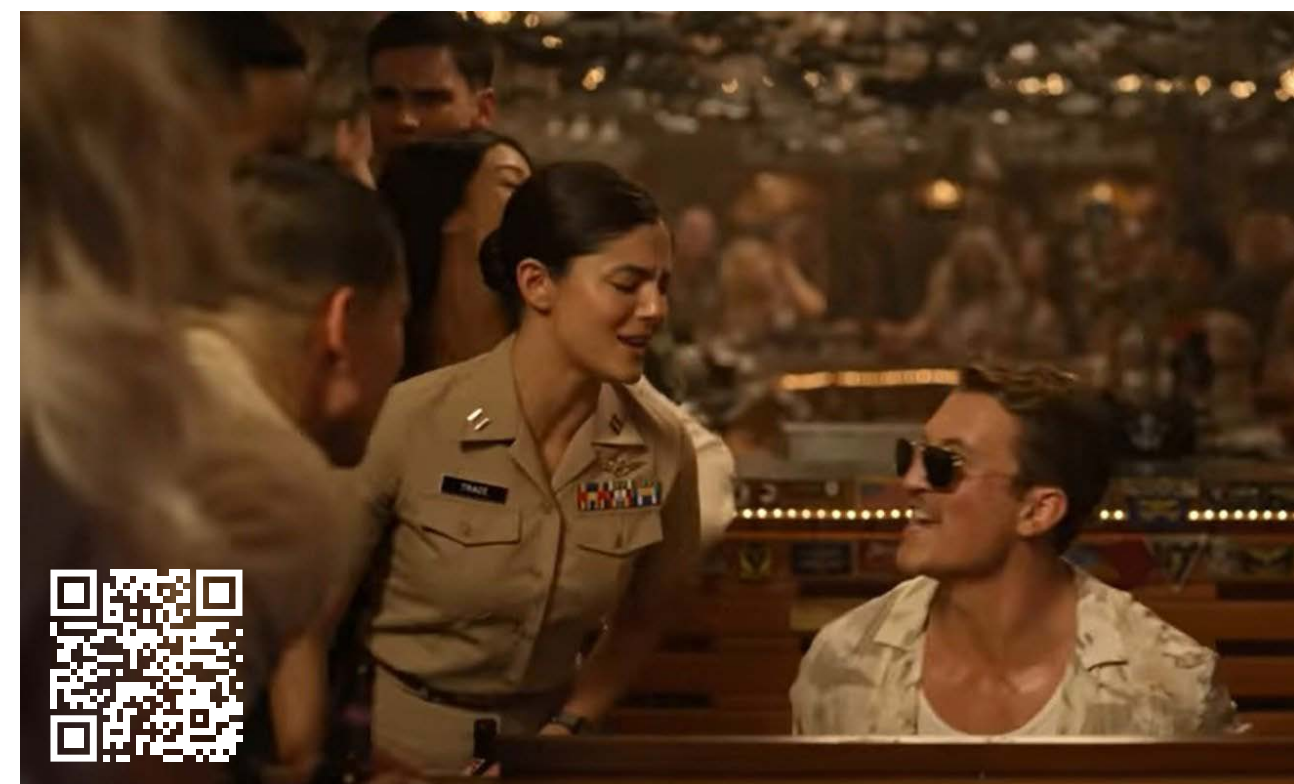
She spent a year in therapy after getting off of social media. She said it filled her with schizophrenic tortures. Be cool. Be rich. Travel. Buy this. Buy that. Be hot. Be hotter. You're a slut. Ten-second motivational videos to increase peak productivity followed instantly by bullet points on the im-

portance of sleep and mindfulness practices.

Jonathan Haidt is a social psychologist at NYU and the author of *The Coddling of the American Mind*. He said recently on the Lex Friedman podcast that there is, "no way to make it safe, it's unsafe at any speed" in reference to teens using social media. "Once you start posting, that takes over your mind, and then basically you're no longer present." Because even when you're not on it, you're always thinking about it.

Earlier this week, leaked audio from internal meetings at TikTok revealed that China has been accessing US user data for years now.

The Platform Accountability and Transparency Act (PATA), is a bipartisan bill that would require social media companies to provide the public with access to certain platform data so that the American people can have a better understanding of how social media is impacting our society.



Perhaps, we'll finally take a look at the data our enemies have weaponized against us, but we don't really want to, do we? Who cares if the Chinese are tearing us apart as long as we're able to escape?

*Jurassic Park: Dominion* is playing in theaters. I'm personally acquainted with one of the supporting leads and respect him deeply as a friend and artist. This is the best work he can get because this is all anyone is willing to pay to see in a movie theater.



But does it mean anything?

I bet you couldn't tell me how many Jurassic Park movies there have been, but I guarantee you know the plot of all of them.

Dinosaurs chase people.

That's it.

The original was about something more than that, but you can't remember what it was, can you? Nobody cares. Just like nobody cares that Miles Teller can't really play Great Balls of Fire.

It doesn't matter, it's just amusement. Escapism. Dopamine delivery.

We live in a dying empire and a world of authoritarian murderers taking more and more control through dehumanizing fear and coercion. The chaos and pain are overwhelming, so we look away rather than face it.

The Chinese Communist Party is bent on ruling the world, and Americans don't have the resolve to stop them. We don't believe in ourselves, our country, or each other anymore.

Top Gun: Maverick leaves the enemy nameless and faceless



because we're too afraid to come right out and say that we're at war with China and Russia.

That we have been at war with them for decades.

That we're losing.

That we've decided to lose.

We'd rather keep doing business with them and post a TikTok of a Tweet on our Instagram stories and hope that the next precious hit of dopamine will be enough to make it all go away.

**And as a result, we're losing everything.**

**Losing each other.**

**Our nation.**

**Ourselves.**

### GREAT BALLS OF FIRE

Words and Music by JACK HAMMER and OTIS BLACKWELL

Bright Rock

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The notation includes various chords, melodic lines, and rhythmic markings. The piece is in 4/4 time and features a bright, energetic sound.

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In a 1949 essay, "Tragedy and The Common Man" Arthur Miller said that a drama only becomes tragic if it compels the audience to change. That tragedy is driven by "Man's total compunction to evaluate himself justly" and get brutally destroyed by society in the process. By focusing the audience on this unjust destruction of the tragic hero, they are meant to gain an understanding of social problems and be inspired to correct them.

To improve. To learn. To form a more perfect union.

In an early scene of Top Gun: Maverick, Ed Harris yells out to Maverick, "The end is inevitable Maverick, your kind is headed for extinction."

"Maybe so, sir." Tom Cruise says, "But not today."

At the end of Jurassic Park, Sam Neill looks out the window of a helicopter carrying himself and his family to safety.

He sees a flock of pelicans gliding over the water. A reference to a prior discussion of how birds descended from dinosaurs. An unspoken affirmation that some benevolent force is guiding life and nature toward a more harmonious future. Toward the better versions of ourselves.

That man and his life and art should serve God, not usurp him. Like Robert Eggers said.

But this is America, and we know better.

Tom Cruise and his jet fuel blood are destined for extinction.

In 2019, there were 120 major theatrical film releases in the United States. In 2022, we're barely on track for 90.

Recent analysis from independent research firm Kepios shows 4.65 billion social media users around the world as of April 2022. 326 million new users since April 2021.

There are about 334 million Americans. 270 million are active on social media.

Top Gun: Maverick is a reminder that movies used to be a real and vital art form. With real emotions, real stakes, and real reasons to become our best selves.

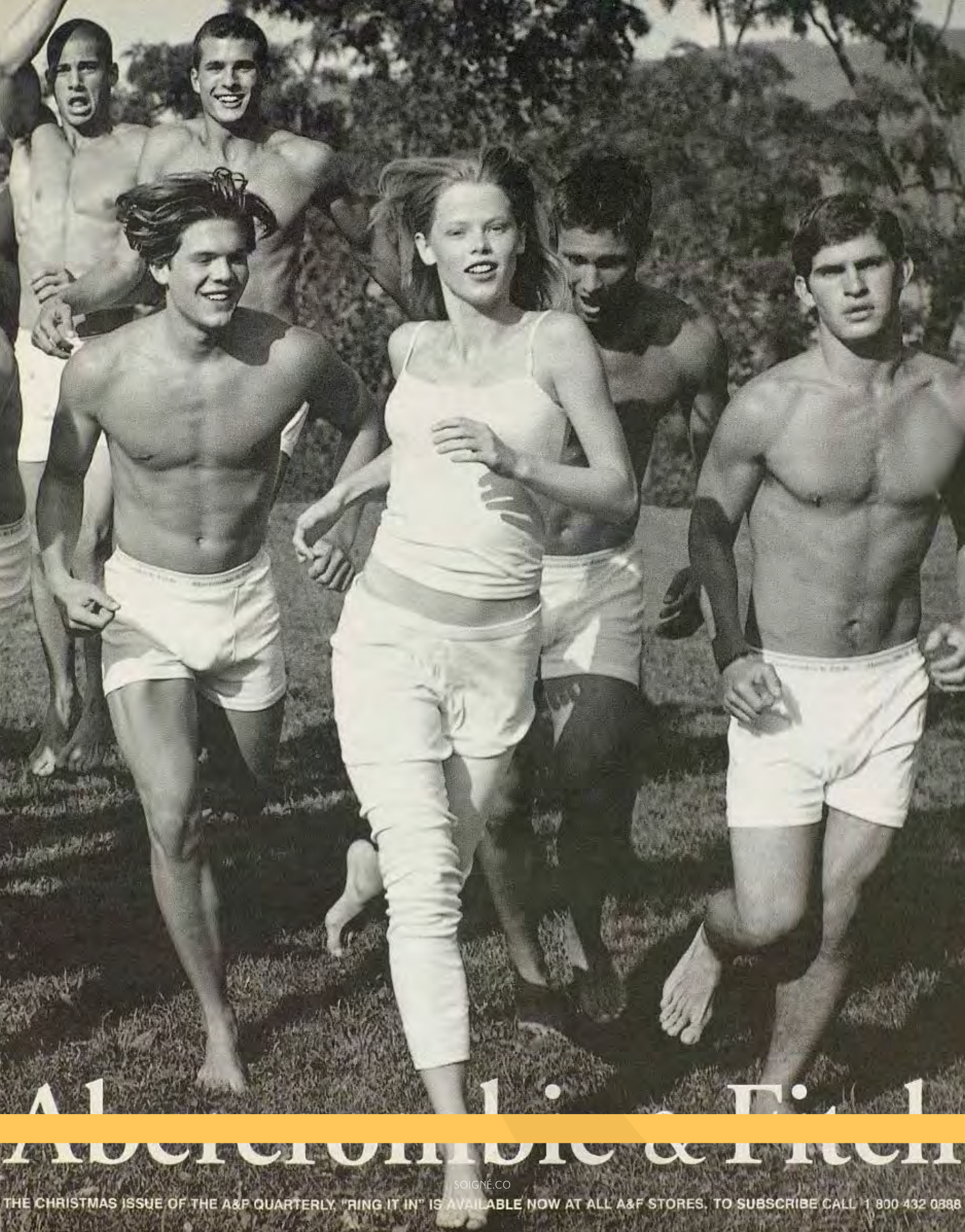
Today, they are a reminder that the future is coming. And we're not in it.

Goodness, gracious.

Great balls of fire.







# NETFLIX INDICTS ABERCROMBIE FOR THE WRONG CRIME

By: Jason Morgan

Anyone who was born before 2005 knows what an American cultural phenomenon the brand Abercrombie & Fitch was. Their overpriced jeans and t-shirts were worn by everyone across high school and college campuses around the country. Their popularity grew from classic marketing. Their ads were shot by Bruce Weber, a master at capturing what we once considered beauty. Natural, healthy, young, and sexy physical beauty in both men and women. Much like the sculptures of the Renaissance period and those of classical antiquity, his images are undeniably beautiful.

“Much like the sculptures of the Renaissance period and those of classical antiquity, his images are undeniably beautiful.”

You know it when you see it. Like a sunset over the ocean or a mountain covered in the colors of trees and snow.

When I heard that Netflix was doing a documentary on the brand titled *White Hot, the Rise and Fall of Abercrombie & Fitch*, I knew it would be some kind of hit piece on them. We all know the stories of Weber by now. If you don't, Google him. **The breathing exercises and sexual assault allegations are touched on in the documentary, but the underlying theme of it is, you guessed it, racism!** Most of the eighty-minute documentary is about their lack of inclusion. I didn't realize it at the time but this brand was canceled before cancel culture became a thing.

I worked with A&F as a model around 2006 and shot with Bruce. I did his breathing exercises and mostly laughed them off. It was harmless to me. I always found Bruce to be a really nice guy. Can I see that maybe it was an overreach of personal space and abuse of power? Yes, I also knew what my boundaries were. I never worked with Bruce again after that. After hearing about the allegations, I've often wondered if it was because I maybe didn't do whatever it was Bruce apparently did with other guys. I know many guys who worked with Bruce for years, who I know for a fact would not allow anything like that to go on. I have my own opinions about the #MeToo movement in the fashion industry, but that's for another article.

This is about how Netflix focuses on race as opposed to the sexualization of the American teen. **They are indicting the brand for the wrong moral failing.**

It's not an accident though because it is a result of redefining everything in the image of Wokeness. Once the purview of fringe academics, who in turn indoctrinated their students, those students have now made it into the workforce and have radicalized the companies for which they work.

**Wokeism is cancer in our society and big corporations are the ones pushing it.**

Watching the documentary it is just one interview after another of people crying about the brand not being inclusive enough, but that wasn't what Mike Jeffries, the CEO of the company, was trying to do. He had a target audience - rich White college kids. It worked; the brand was insanely profitable. The more I watched the documentary, the more I realized the downfall of the brand was a group of people who were upset they did not fit the brand's aesthetic so they took it down. A&F marketed itself as the "cool kids." Jeffries himself admitted this. Maybe this pissed people off. I can see how it would make people feel bad. But if you did not fit the "cool brand", find another brand you like and make it cool.

But then the lawsuits started and the media hit jobs with them. They even touch on it in the piece, describing a scene in the movie *Spider-Man*. One former employee noticed the bully in the movie was a **"big blonde asshole dressed in all A&F"**. He knew the perception of the brand had shifted. They were no longer "cool."

I remember A&F going out of style.

A lot of brands have their time in the sun and then it's over, I really didn't think deeper into it. I went with a narrative and allowed myself to be swayed. **But now**



ARE YOU SOIGNÉ?



I see how culture manipulated the country to not only look at A&F as the enemy but Whites as well.

**“We had a Black Supreme Court justice recently picked based on her race. All this forced “inclusivity” is having the opposite effect. It’s causing more racism.**

Inclusivity is a soothing illusion because it belies the obvious natural law that brands and products have audiences and use. No one can be everything to all people all the time. Creating a distinct brand identity and target consumer is Marketing 101.

So why was A&F targeted? If you don’t like the brand or how they marketed it, don’t buy it. If you think the stores were not hiring you because they wanted beautiful people working there and you weren’t, I’m sorry, but not everyone fits every company.

**NASA isn’t hiring me either, I’m not planning on suing them.**

Not to mention the fact that A&F used Black, Asian, or mixed race models in about 10% of their ads. It probably accurately reflected their buyers. We have become so one-sided on who we target as racist today and it all seems to be anti-white and anti-beauty. No, not everyone is beautiful.

I’m sorry if this hurts your feelings.

Get over it. That’s life.

Not everyone is young either. Not everyone can dunk a basketball or do quantum physics.

We had a Black Supreme Court justice recently picked based on her race. All this forced “inclusivity” is having the opposite effect. It’s causing more racism.

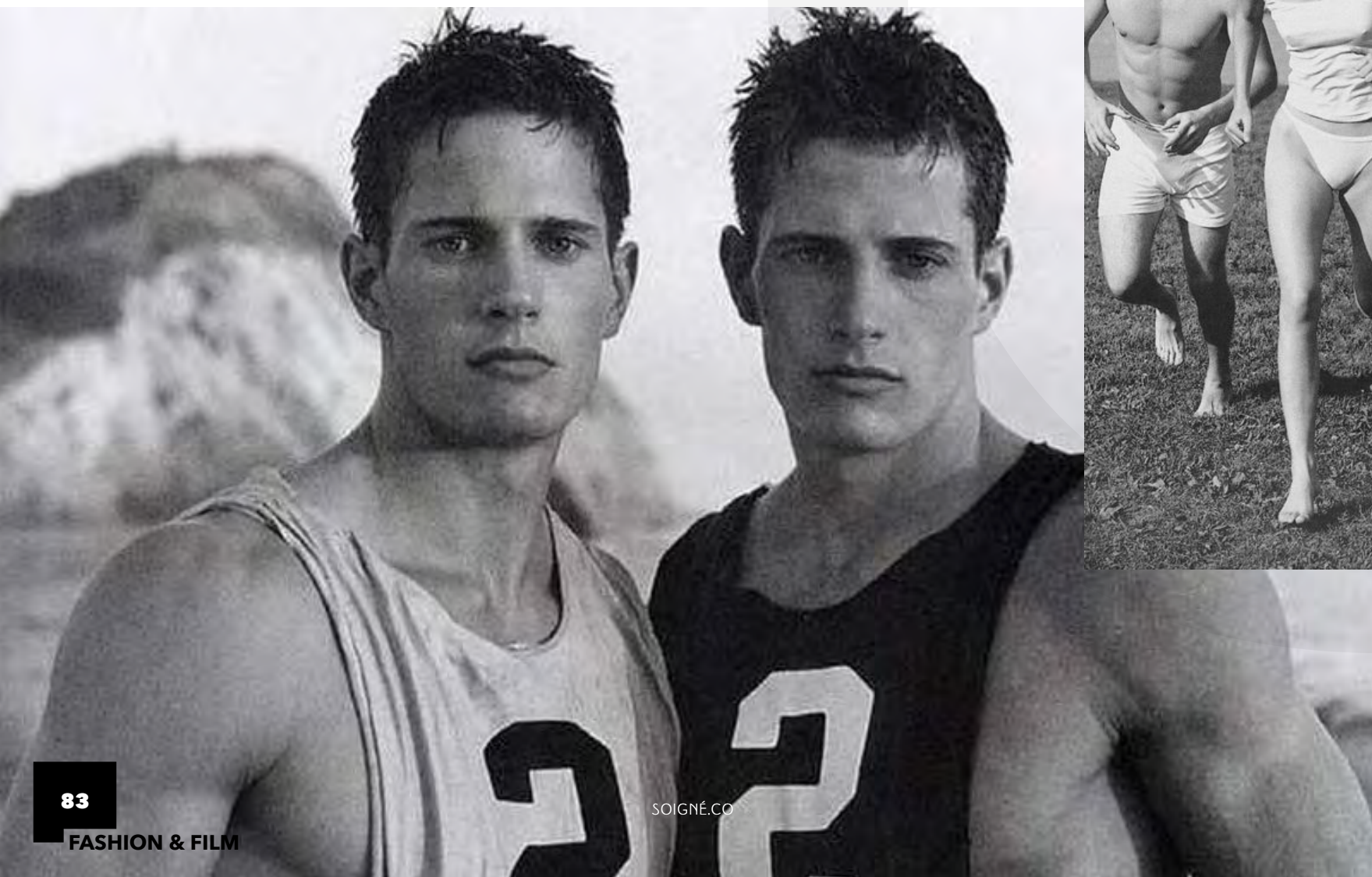
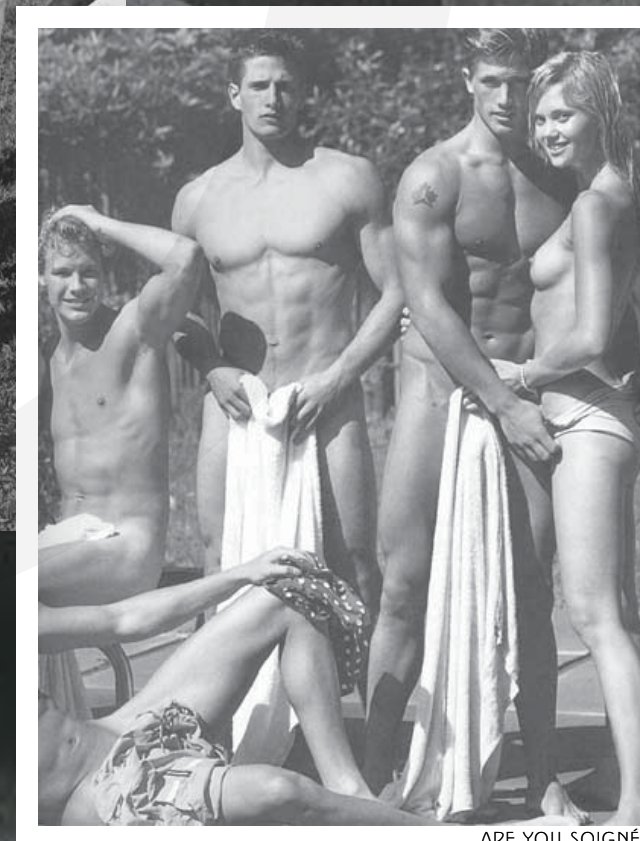
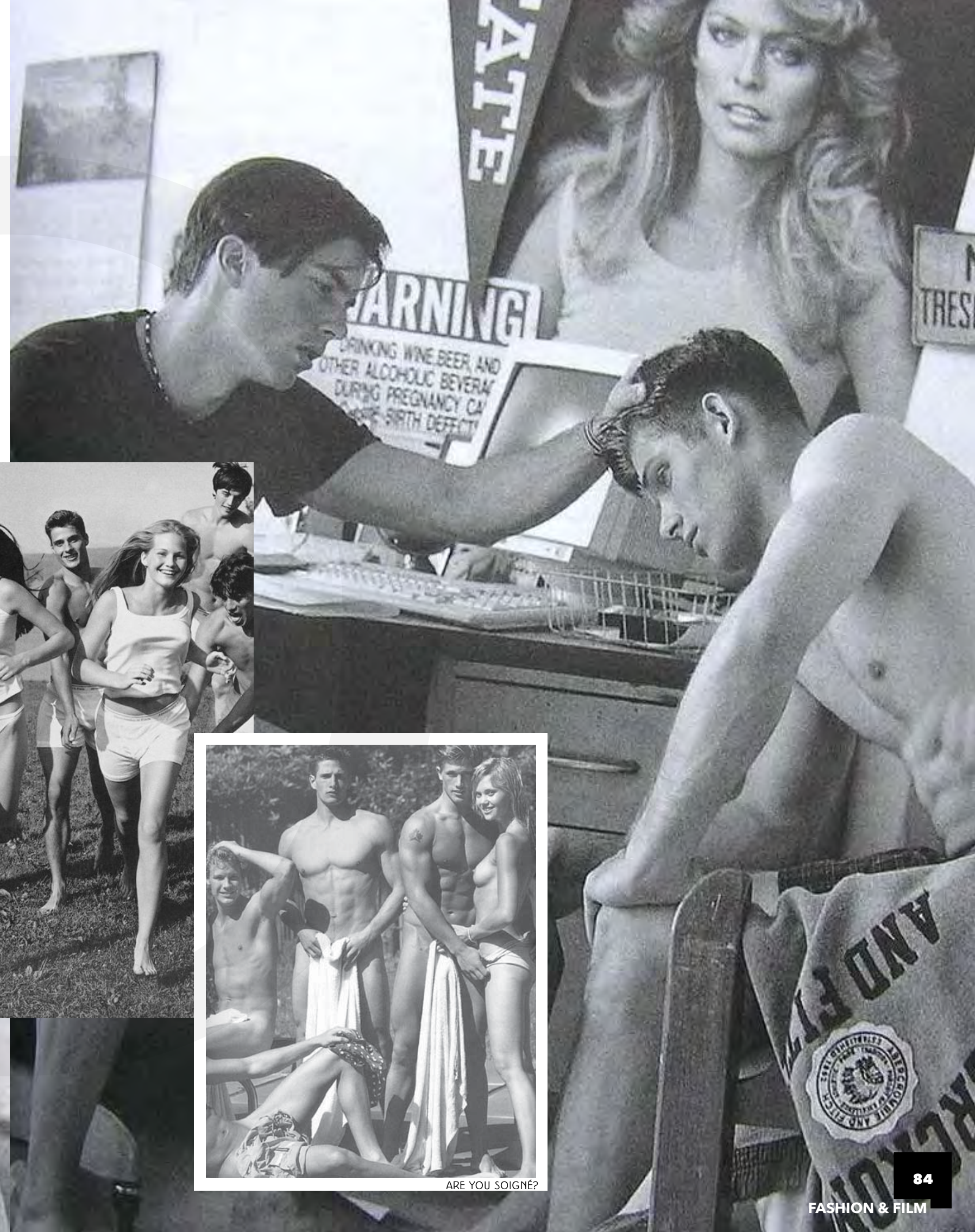
Art is horrible.

Ads are forgettable.

**I grew up in the ‘80s when Michael Jordan was everyone’s hero. Michael Jackson was everyone’s favorite musician, Oprah was the #1 talk show and The Cosby Show was the most watched sitcom. I really feel we were so close to not even caring about race.**

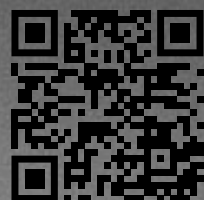
After watching this documentary it’s become painfully obvious to me now that we have a bunch of cry babies who have hijacked our culture. A culture that was thriving is now divided because we are allowing a small percentage of jackasses to stomp their feet and whine about not being accepted by every facet of society. At the end of the documentary, a current employee of A&F describes how great it is that “anybody and everyone can be the cool kids.”

How are those sales going?





MODEL: TORREN LEE  
PHOTOGRAPHER: JUAN ALGARIN  
STYLIST: ANA BRILLEMBOURG  
RETOUCHER: ALEXANDER SILKIN





MODEL: TORREN LEE  
PHOTOGRAPHER: JUAN ALGARIN  
STYLIST: ANA BRILLEMBOURG  
RETOUCHER: ALEXANDER SILKIN







# FASHION'S

## GENDER ERASURE

BY JADAN HORYN & JASON MORGAN

A reactionary revolution is occurring in Fashion. No longer on the vanguard of culture - molding and shaping it - fashion, sapped of its creative impulses from the forces of conformity, is blithely following trends written elsewhere. Moreover, this reactionary impulse follows the dictates of a culture that believes we must ignore the fundamental differences between and among men and women. The result is a revolution in Fashion quite unlike anything before, its preferred branding of the aesthetic is gender neutrality; the reality of the aesthetic is the erasure of gender.

In both its essential discipline and construction, Fashion is a gendered praxis, not because of the cultural norms of gendered clothing, such as men in suits or women in dresses, but rather because of elemental differences between the forms of men and women.

In learning to sketch human beings, a new art student is encouraged to use simple geometric shapes to represent men and women.

Triangles, trapezoids, and squares for men:

### **ANGULAR.**

Ovals, circles, and rounded shapes for women:

### **CURVACEOUS.**

This simplistic methodology reveals an essential truth. There are, in fact, two forms of human beings that are separate and distinct from each other. But unfortunately, this truth is refuted by cultural engineers who believe that defining gender out of existence will remove its power structures from humanity for all of posterity.

The various strains of ideologies: humanism, transhumanism, intersectional marxism, along with esoteric beliefs such as godhood is the permanent union of

male and female, gender is a social construct, and there are no differences between human forms; work in an interrelated way to erode the fundamental truth of sex-based differences.

The inconvenient truth for our cultural and linguistic sophists is that the view that sex-based differences in human beings are rooted in culture is refuted incontrovertibly by biological science. Sexual dimorphism (sex-based structural differences) is the iron law of homo sapiens. Therefore, it would logically follow that culture follows facts, and those things downstream of culture, such as society, government, the arts, etc., reflect such biological realities.

Just as the new art student learns the basic structural differences between men and women, so too can average humans preternaturally understand the differences in the essential biological structure of men and women. Our innate understanding of sex and gender differences is not merely rooted in culture. It is biological.

People associate certain things with masculine and feminine forms - those same angles and curves the art student learns to represent real structural physiological differences. They are not culturally derived. They are no less true than the difference between day and night.

At the same time, the linguistic sophists of our day seek to erode the meaning of words so that we cannot discuss sex and gender in a manner of universal understanding. This newspeak, while powerful, cannot alter the fundamental truth behind a concept. Simply redefining red as blue does not change the wavelength of light reflected by the former names. It just makes it harder for all to understand. Obscuring truth to serve conceit.

Fashion's failure and creative conformity result from the lowest common denominator appeal. Afraid of creating art, Fashion is instead bending to the will of culture. To be clear, this is different and distinct from gender-bending and gender-shock or placing men in a dress or a woman in a suit.

Putting men in dresses and women in suits is gender acknowledgment, not gender denial.

**Traditionalist revulsion to gender-bending/gender-shock is rooted in culture, and culture is specific to time and place.** Indeed fashion/culture has garments that were once culturally masculine but have become culturally feminine: makeup, wigs, heels, and stockings, for example. What each of these evolutions shows, though, is an affirmation of gender and the reality





DOES

ONE

SIZE

FIT

ALL?

that cultural attitudes to fashion change.

Cultural constraints on sex-specific clothing are just that - cultural. They are open to challenges and changes. **Biologically deterministic attributes cannot be challenged or changed. They are immutable, irrefutable, and essential.**

Traditionalists are up in arms over a man in a dress - precisely because it is shocking. The power to provoke is an essential aspect of Fashion. It is one of its fundamental tools to challenge and inspire. But the forest is missed with a focus on the trees. A man in a dress is not a threat. It is still a man.

The deeper danger is the idea that it isn't a man that is wearing that garment.

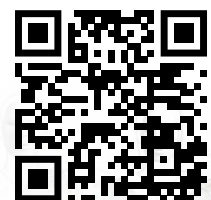
Gender neutrality IS gender erasure. Fashion is erasing gender, not with trite gender-bending, but rather in the creation of truly formless and shapeless garments that deemphasize the structural differences between men and women. It is the willful denial of essential characteristics that separate men from women. It looks to rehash the banal one-size-fits-all for the 2020s in a one-garment-for-all ethos.

Noble sounding, ignoble in its execution.

**“A MAN IN A DRESS IS NOT A THREAT. IT IS STILL A MAN.** Let us hope that the menace of gender erasure falls out of Fashion soon for the good of all.

“Probably, as in all metaphysical questions, both are true: Life is or has meaning and meaninglessness. I cherish the anxious hope that meaning will preponderate and win the battle.” – C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*

**“GENDER NEUTRALITY IS GENDER ERASURE.”**





# Nothing to FEAR from GENDERLESS FASHION

By Leonid Gurevich

From the very moment the first humans began covering their bodies with animal furs, hide, grass, leaves, bone, and shells - from Greek togas to Japanese kimonos - Rococo brocade to the most recent men's FW23 fashion collections - the concept of genderless clothing has been with us.

Every male in the animal kingdom is more visually decorated than the female from deer to lions, from ducks to peacocks, from fish to insects - and everything in between. Lush manes, branchy antlers, the tails, and fins are more voluminous, the colors are more vibrant - all the animal males look exciting and eye-catching. Humans are the only species where menswear in its basic form is precisely that - basic.

Boring. Uneventful.

However, it wasn't always like that.

Throughout history, the lines between masculine and feminine were being blurred and stretched from genderless to plain cross-dressing. Ironically, most of the stretching and blurring was done by heterosexual

men - literally the only group never in need of fighting for their rights and freedoms and thus free to experiment purely for fun. Social status, religious practices, weather conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity, and lastly fashion - there is a multitude of reasons as to why men - both gay and straight alike - adopt the aesthetic.

A pleated plaid skirt, paired with knee-high socks and a blazer - A school girl's uniform? Sure, but it's also something bearded Scottish macho men have been proudly wearing since the 16th century, only in this case it's not called a skirt - it's a kilt, and it's decorated even further, with fur and tassels. Other than that, teenage school girls and heterosexual Scottish men wear the exact same thing.

Straight men wore tights in the Middle Ages so snug, that it left nothing to the imagination and would make our adolescent girls blush, the girls that today wear similar tights to clubs. 18th-century men powdered their faces, glued dots carved from velvet or mice skin (yes, mice), perfumed their wigs, and for hours prac-

tical standing in elegant poses - which didn't stop them from seducing women.

Corsets were used in the army, particularly among the cavalry. Naval officers, fighting in the War of 1812 wore their corsets to sea. The noblemen wore corsets for hunting. Sudanese Dinka men regularly wear beaded corsets, partly as indicators of their age group and position.

Every day around us we witness rugged working men or weight lifters performing strenuous exercise, wearing corsets for back support. Only it's not called a corset, it's called a back support belt.

Satin, taffeta, and brocade, floor-length, hand-made gowns with trains adorned with beaded lace and embroideries, encrusted with precious stones - One would expect to see on someone like Dame Maggie Smith's character wears in "Downton Abbey" or something you would see on Nicole Kidman from the latest Valentino collection? Yes, but it is also exactly what prominent, traditionally male religious figures from the



cardinals to the Pope wear to their ceremonies, down to the last beaded lace twirl. Only on them, it's not called a "dress", it's called a "ceremonial robe".

For centuries straight men have been sporting unisex fashions, yet never before has a man wearing women's clothes met such fervent opposition as it has in the 21st century. Clearly, it's not about the actual clothes, and it never was. What is it about then? What is it about men in women's clothes that is so unsettling to some?

*“What is it about men in women's clothes that is so unsettling to some?”*

Clothes are just combinations of fabrics, colors, and trims - the rest is all in the public's heads, all a matter of perception. Fashion is inspired by history, contributing to history by getting inspired by fashion in a circle of life.

"I don't understand why this generation thinks they invented gender fluidity," - says designer Rick Owens - the godfather of androgynous aesthetics on the runway.

"They did it harder, stronger, and louder in the '70s... and 16th century Japan."

There is a rise in genderless collections, more prominent with the high-end brands like Burberry, Gucci, Thom Browne, Eckhaus Latta Helmut Lang. Gender-fluid design codes prevailed at NYFW's SS22.

Fashion designers - the professionals, whose very job description is to predict and emphasize changes in society and invent ways to introduce the new inspired by the old. What designers create for the runway is an exaggerated version of what already happened in the past, analyzed, and applied to what is happening now - The Zeitgeist. Contrary to popular - predominantly conservative - belief, fashion designers are not some perverted nutcases. They are just creative people in a ruthless industry, offering options. Fashion collections are merely an offer, a consideration - not a mandate. Just because it's styled a certain way on the models does not mean that the consumer has to wear it the same way in everyday life.



Some menswear designers genuinely propose the feminine aesthetic if their creative vision happens to match their target client's identity. Some do it as a statement. Some do it for attention, which is fine too. One of the numerous reasons clothes are so drastic on the runway is because designers have a mission, rather impossible: to simultaneously fight their way through the ultra-brutal competition, to excite the photographers which will keep the press rolling, to inspire jaded fashion editors to write about their collections, but at the same time to stay true to their own creative vision, yet, not to scare away the consumers, while making sure the clothes will sell, in order to appease the investors, and all this while keep pushing the proverbial envelope because let's face it, the envelope is not gonna push itself.

The search for this elusive "golden middle" is what makes the designers seem "insane" to the outside world looking in.

**Inspired by the change, a new generation of heterosexual men has been forming:** Men comfortable enough in their own skin to respect women, befriend the gays, appreciate and enjoy fashion, along with the attention it brings, and fearlessly explore the possibilities. These newly emerged straight men do not share the notion

that dressing "like a woman" is derogatory. Their masculinity is not threatened by something as insignificant as a sartorial choice.

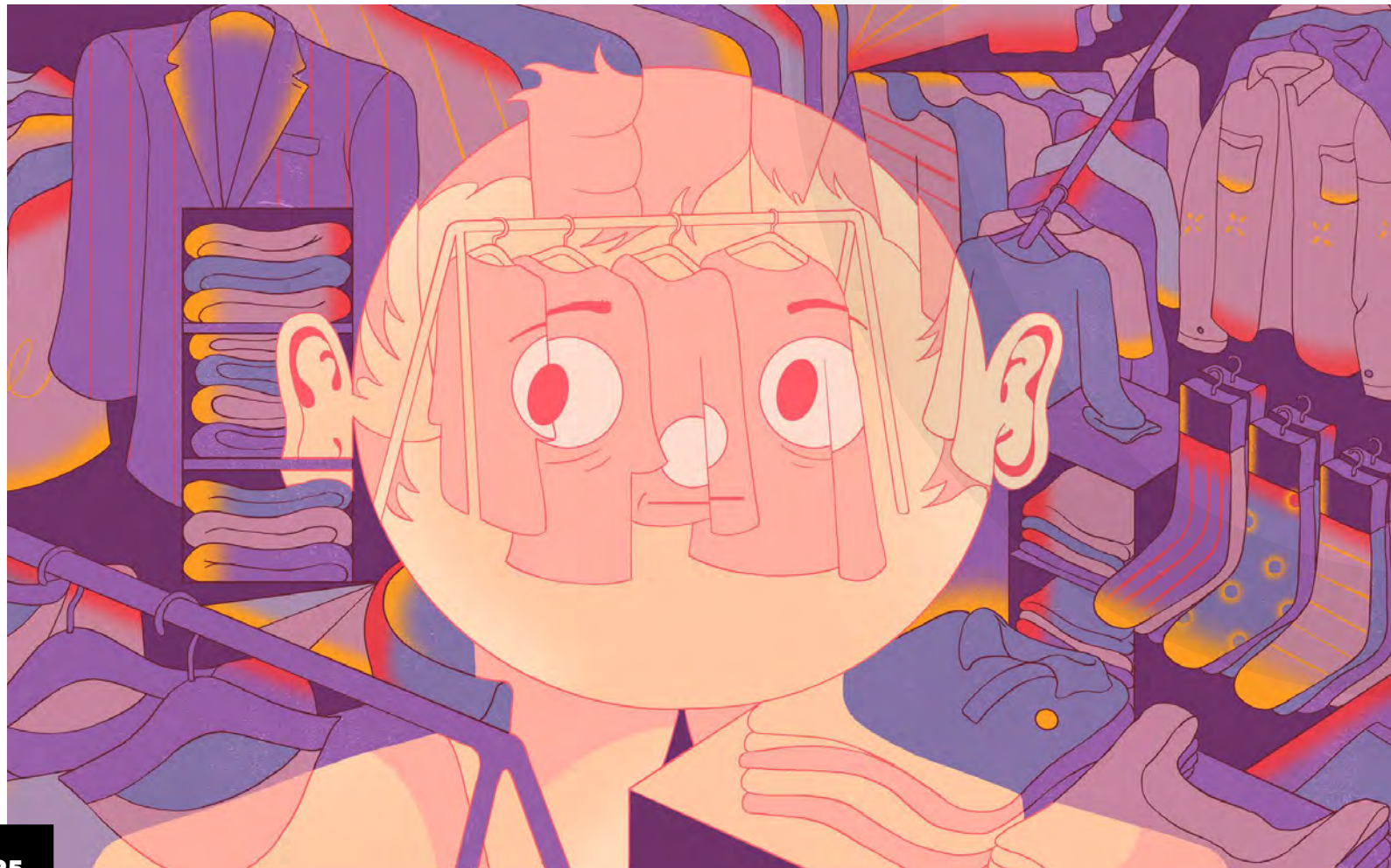
Harry Styles, who was named the most influential celebrity dresser of 2020 by the shopping platform Lyst, told VOGUE magazine that featured him on the cover wearing a ruffled dress - "When you take away 'There's clothes for men and there are clothes for women,' once you remove any barriers, obviously you open up the arena in which you can play."

Fashion designer Thom Browne made the blurring of gender lines central to his career and is known for insisting on men wearing skirts and dresses. In his FW20 collection titled Noah's Ark, he sent couples of both genders down the runway, dressed head to toe in identical looks in reference to the pairs of animals in the Biblical tale.

Genderless fashion is unifying. Uniting. It's also convenient and sustainable.

Freedom to experiment with style is one of the bloodless freedoms of all. Why not relax and enjoy it?

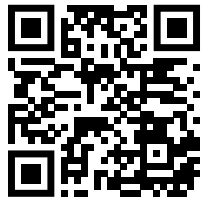
**GENDERLESS FASHION  
IS UNIFYING.**



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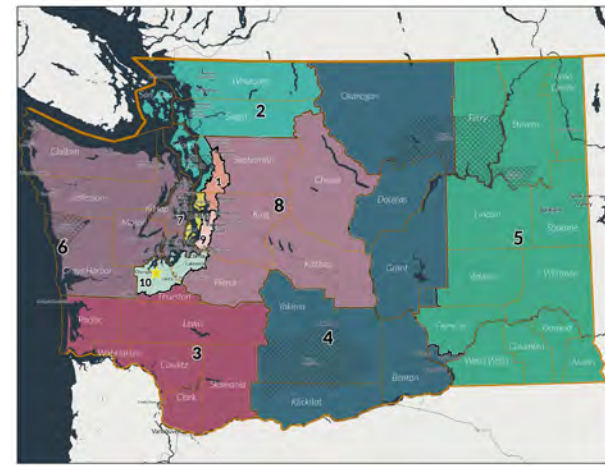






# LET'S GERRYMANDER

BY: JACKSON DARR



Gerrymandering is bad, right? That's what we've been told for decades now. For those that dared to question the prevailing wisdom, they were hit with a bevy of reasons depending on the time and context. They were told that it was racist, that it allowed politicians to 'choose their voters' instead of the voters choosing them, or that it was simply unfair to the party out of power in a particular state's legislature at the time of a decennial redistricting process. These claims are seldom challenged and even less commonly interrogated, so for the sake of wisdom, let us do both.

First, to the racism argument. For decades, white politicians, almost always Democrats in the South and in Northern cities, would 'crack' minority communities, usually black neighborhoods, between many different districts. This would dilute their voting power, especially within the Democratic primary (where most black voters cast their ballot after the early 1960s). After the passage of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) in 1965, there were many, many court cases that litigated the act's new anti-racial gerrymandering rules. As they careened back and forth from one standard to another, it was discovered that anti-racial gerrymandering laws actually created racial gerrymandering.

The methods used, nicknamed 'cracking' and 'packing', could both cause problems. 'Packing' takes place when instead of separating communities of a certain type, you put all or almost all of them in the same district, giving them their own representative, but ensuring that surrounding districts stay safe for your faction. For a while, Republicans and Black leaders even found common cause, seeking to 'pack' Black voters into their own districts. This gave Black voters more representation, while simultaneously making adjoining districts in some places easier for Republicans to win at the next general election.

However, as time marched on, it became clear to Black

leaders that while they had gained much by working with Republicans to create districts for themselves, they might be able to gain even more by spreading out their voters again, at least somewhat. Thus, they started working with other Democrats again to make sure that where and when it was advantageous for the party, Black voters were spread out among more districts. This was possible without losing Black-dominated districts that had already been created because Black voting rates had increased and White people, on the whole, had become a lot less racist over the decades. **Black representatives have increasingly been elected in significant numbers from districts that don't have large Black populations.** The current districts of Reps. Mondaire Jones (D), Jahana Hayes (D), Antonio Delgado (D), Lauren Underwood (D), and Colin Allred (D) are, respectively, 10.7%, 6.5%, 4.5%, 3.2%, and 14.8% black. Republicans' only black House members at the moment are Rep. Burgess Owens and Rep. Byron Donalds, whose districts in Utah and Florida are just 1.7% black and 6.8% black, respectively. This is all possible because White voters simply aren't the racists that they once were, at least not in significant enough numbers to hold back Black representation. Clearly, while protections from racially-motivated gerrymandering might once have been needed, the time for such carve-outs

has passed.

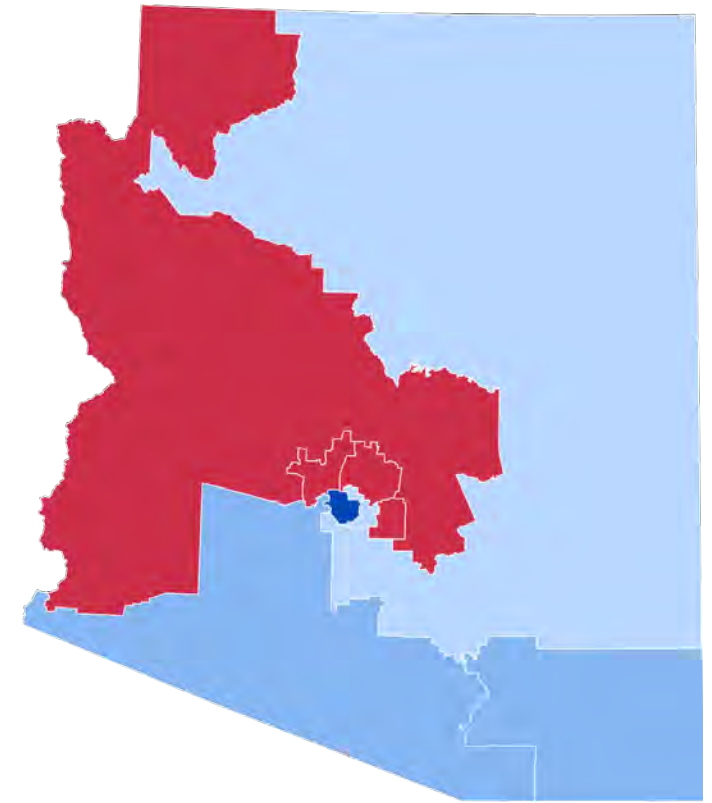
Black voters had also come to make up larger and larger shares of Democratic primary electorates, such that where a district might previously need to be, say, 60% Black to ensure a Black representative, 40% would now suffice. The original logic of Black (and to a lesser degree Hispanic) voters needing to be protected to ensure their representation against racists had now been twisted in the courts to argue that black communities should be split up because that would elect more Democrats, which is what it was argued that Black voters wanted. These court battles are still ongoing, and sanity seems to be prevailing, at least for the moment.

As for the need to prevent politicians from 'picking their voters,' this betrays a misunderstanding of how effective gerrymanders are, at least in competitive states.

Whichever party is in control of a state's legislature at the time of a redistricting cycle has a mandate to govern from their prior election. They have no need to be 'fair' to the other party, as they won more seats at the behest of their districts' voters. In some states, the people may, by ballot initiative, place certain rules upon the legislature that govern how redistricting is to be carried out. These rules usually set down criteria that make the process more 'fair' by limiting what the legislature can do to gerrymander (such as limiting county and city splits). Florida has such a regime, and Michigan used to have one until their commission process was enacted by the voters (we'll deal with commissions later).

**American history is full of gerrymanders being 'broken' and falling apart in one or two elections.** Just in the last 20 years, this has happened in state legislatures in Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, Michigan, New York, Nevada, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and other states. This is usually caused by large shifts in voter sentiment against the gerrymandering party, especially if they used to get a lot of crossover votes at the state level that then polarized against them.

Now, you might look at that incomplete list above and think that a lot of those states aren't competitive. You'd



be right, or at least be right that they aren't competitive at the national level. However, gerrymandering used to keep their state legislatures competitive, which is something that's often cited as a case against gerrymandering: it lowers competition. In some states though, it actually raises competitiveness by advantaging a party that happened to be in power during a redistricting cycle or used to do much better in that state than they do now. **In other words, a gerrymander can be a buttress against a landslide election, ensuring competition despite a huge electoral defeat.** The bottom line is that, while politicians can technically pick their own voters through legislative gerrymandering, those voters can still change their minds at the next election.

As promised, this brings us to redistricting commissions. Commissions are widely varied in their structures, but almost all of them gerrymander as well, at least some of the time. California's commission has now gerrymandered in both decennial cycles of its existence, and the commissioners likely weren't even aware of it. In both cycles, the initial maps that the 15-member commission (5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, and 5 Independents) presented made a lot of geographic sense and were generally what you might call 'fair,' or at least as close as you can get. In both instances, Democratic activists used the public comment periods to successfully advocate for changes that advantaged their side under the guise of maintaining communities of interest. They turned what



were generally fair maps into at least partial Democratic gerrymanders through disingenuous arguments that were cast as nonpartisan local interest.

During the 2010 cycle in Arizona, Democrats were able to sneak in a partisan Democrat as a supposedly nonpartisan tiebreaker who approved one of the most egregious gerrymanders of the cycle. New Jersey Republicans were able to appoint their chosen tiebreaker in 2010 and protect several Republican incumbents. This cycle, Democrats in New Jersey were able to do the same and enact a map that will likely protect several of their incumbents who might otherwise have lost this year. There are several other instances, but their situations are more complicated.

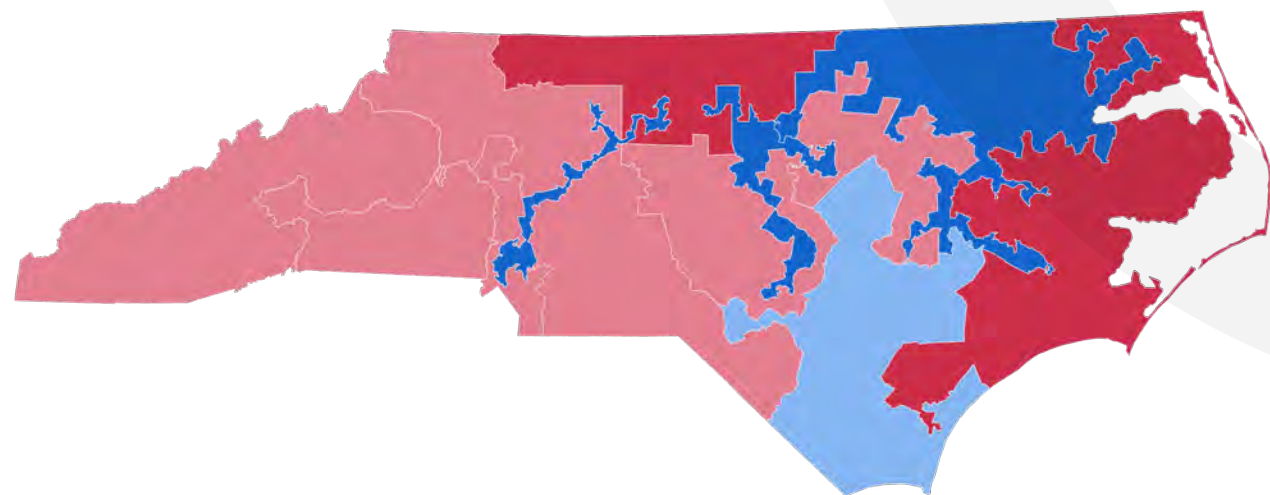
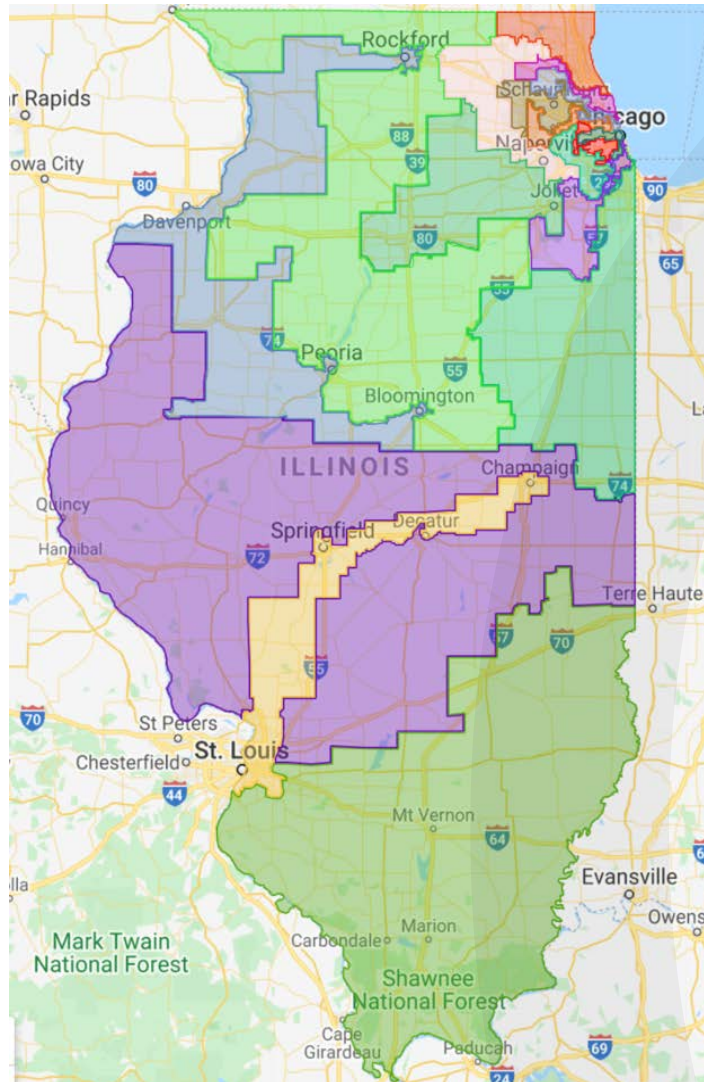
Two commission models stand out as being very effective: Iowa's and Washington's. Iowa's system uses a computer to present the legislature with several options, and the legislature can only reject so many of these options. Unfortunately, the viability of this system relies on Iowa's having a large number of similarly-sized counties and no large metro areas, so it's applicable to few if any other states. Washington's commission system actually builds gerrymandering into

the system; it's just bipartisan gerrymandering. A panel of four members, two selected by each party, draw the lines to mutually protect all incumbents. If a new seat is being added (often the case), then it will be drawn to be competitive, or at least in a way that the commissioners agree should be competitive. If the commission deadlocks, then the decision goes to court. If voters are looking to adopt a commission system, I would recommend this one, as it's almost impossible to hijack. However, it still involves gerrymandering, just in a form that is beneficial to both parties.

We empower our politicians to do many things - let's let them gerrymander

In the end, why should legislators not have the power to draw their own districts? They've been given the power to do most other things by their electoral mandates. Many suggest commissions are the answer, but they can be gamed, sometimes against the party that won the most votes and districts at the last election. The reality is that redistricting is usually a nasty process no matter

who does it, so why not just allow those who at least have a mandate from the voters to do the drawing? If they overreach, they can just be voted out.



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# THE MILITARY'S MISPLACED SUBSTANCE-ABUSE POLICY



BY KYLE EUSTIS

ARE YOU SOIGNÉ?



Our military is in a state of crisis. We cannot care for our veterans effectively and we are failing to hit recruitment goals. At the heart of it lies an outdated and grossly misplaced controlled substance policy. I believe these policies need to be thrown out and the substances that are currently illegal, both in the military and federally, could then be utilized by soldiers and veterans to help better their lives. Soldiers do not have to use any substance but their current options are not helping them maintain war fighting shape, physically and mentally.

The military, like the rest of the federal government, still has outdated drug laws to adhere to and it is absolutely unacceptable. This forces soldiers who do utilize substances during duty such as tobacco or after work such as alcohol to use only those. Everyone knows the dangers of tobacco, but many are not really aware of all of the dangers of alcohol and use it regularly. While alcohol use in the military is lower than the national average, the rate at which soldiers binge drink is significantly higher at roughly thirty percent. During the weekend on an Army base that number is realistically closer to sixty percent. In my experience, it seemed as though everyone was drinking in the barracks.

The military could reduce the use of alcohol, a known carcinogen by not passively encouraging it so often. For example, at Military balls there is normally a bowl called a 'grog' of assorted alcohol mixed together and then consumed by the group. Although military traditions are important and certainly have their place, maybe a mocktail grog would be healthier? Alcohol has also frequently caused troops to face DUI charges and has been shown to increase domestic violence cases. I believe military leadership needs to reverse their policies on cannabis immediately and not just so people can enjoy a nice joint after work. Cannabis in clinical studies has been shown to be helpful in combating PTSD, the disorder that likely causes many of the suicides within the military.

However, many of the studies are limited in the data they have due to cannabis still being an illegal drug under the federal government's drug classification system. It is listed as schedule I drug which means it has no medical use and it shares that category with heroin, GHB, and bath salts to name a few. I find it beyond hypocritical that the federal government feels cannabis has no medical usage when it is legal for medical use in 38 states. There are also cannabis derived FDA approved medicines that are on the market today. You cannot say it has no medical use when one or more of your agencies has approved of it. Cannabis has been shown to help severe and chronic pain, Crohn's disease, seizures, and other issues that are still being researched. Severe and chronic pain tends to affect veterans and for years many turned to opioids. The opioids on the market are addicting and have been the cause of many overdoses in the US and even within the military community. A recent study showed that users of opioids who were then prescribed cannabis for pain found that it provided relief on par with opioids but without the unwanted side effects typically found when using opioids. I believe alternative medicine can help save my brothers and sisters from addiction, and, even worse, suicide, and I will do everything I can to promote safer solutions to the problems that they are facing.

Psychedelic medicine should become a key component in treating PTSD, depression, and other conditions in soldiers and the general public in the near future. Psilocybin Mushrooms cause people to hallucinate at certain dosages and currently are a schedule I drug like cannabis. They have also shown positive results in studies on de-

pression and even PTSD. They appear to work quickly and effectively without the need for regular usage for the depression to subside for up to months. This could be very beneficial to military readiness because the troops could utilize it if they are suffering from depression without the need to constantly use a substance for symptoms to go away, which could keep them out of essential events such as training or deployment. We need to do something because the current medications are obviously not working when we have over 17 veterans killing themselves a day on average. Another medicine that is technically classified a psychedelic is MDMA, a substance that had its start in the pharmaceutical world before being outlawed due to its popularity as a party drug. It has made a comeback in recent years as a potential substance for treating PTSD and depression.

What is fascinating about MDMA is its success in a recent Phase 3 study, 88% of the participants had a clinically significant reduction in their severe depression, two months after their third session of MDMA. This is very promising and quite possibly the future. I have confidence in the future of these plants and medicines but the military's misplaced substance abuse policies have to go, today, not next week, or "after we evaluate the situation", which basically means it goes back on the back burner. The military takes risks every day and they are likely worse than a little MDMA or mushrooms. It is time for the military to let their troops choose how they want to heal their own bodies and catch up with the recent developments in modern medicine.





# In Praise of The Power of Local Government Action

BY TYLER TURNER

It was a midsummer day in 2021 and I got word that a hot-button issue was up for discussion at my local city council. The proposal was a diversity and inclusion task force. As a conservative, I was curious how the discussion was going to go. After a quick online search to get a feel for the topic I concluded some mini fireworks were most likely going to happen. I was not disappointed.

One side claimed the town was full of racists, the other side said this was creating racism. People yelled, people scoffed, and I nibbled my proverbial popcorn. The city council members debated and eventually came to a compromise. Concurrently, I came to the realization that local politics is where the individual objectively has the most influence in governance.

Perhaps it is intertwined in our DNA or bled into our psychology, but most people tend to look at politics from a macro perspective. We think the federal issues and federal leaders not only have the most impact but are somehow most impacted by our opinions. That could not be further from the truth, especially in this current period in American history. The national space is so far from the individual, and the individual's influence on most policy is minimal at best. The word grassroots signifies best the idea of localism or community politics.

Take me for example, over the past couple of years I have spoken at school board meetings, fundraisers, and other local events. I have helped lead local door-to-door canvassing efforts which allowed me to engage with individuals within the community. I have had conversations with state legislators, city council members, and gubernatorial candidates. I have led resolution

proposals for the state platform and been a local precinct chairman. I have had way more impact in my local community, and even my state, than I ever would have or probably ever will with anything happening on the federal level.

This is the ultimate genius of the Federal system. As outlined in the Federalist Papers and first championed by Edmund Burke's Conservative Political Philosophy, **the American Federal system of government preserves local communities the power to govern themselves.** This is the entire point of adding an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that clearly states that any rights not expressly given to the Federal Government are, and ought to be, reserved to the States.

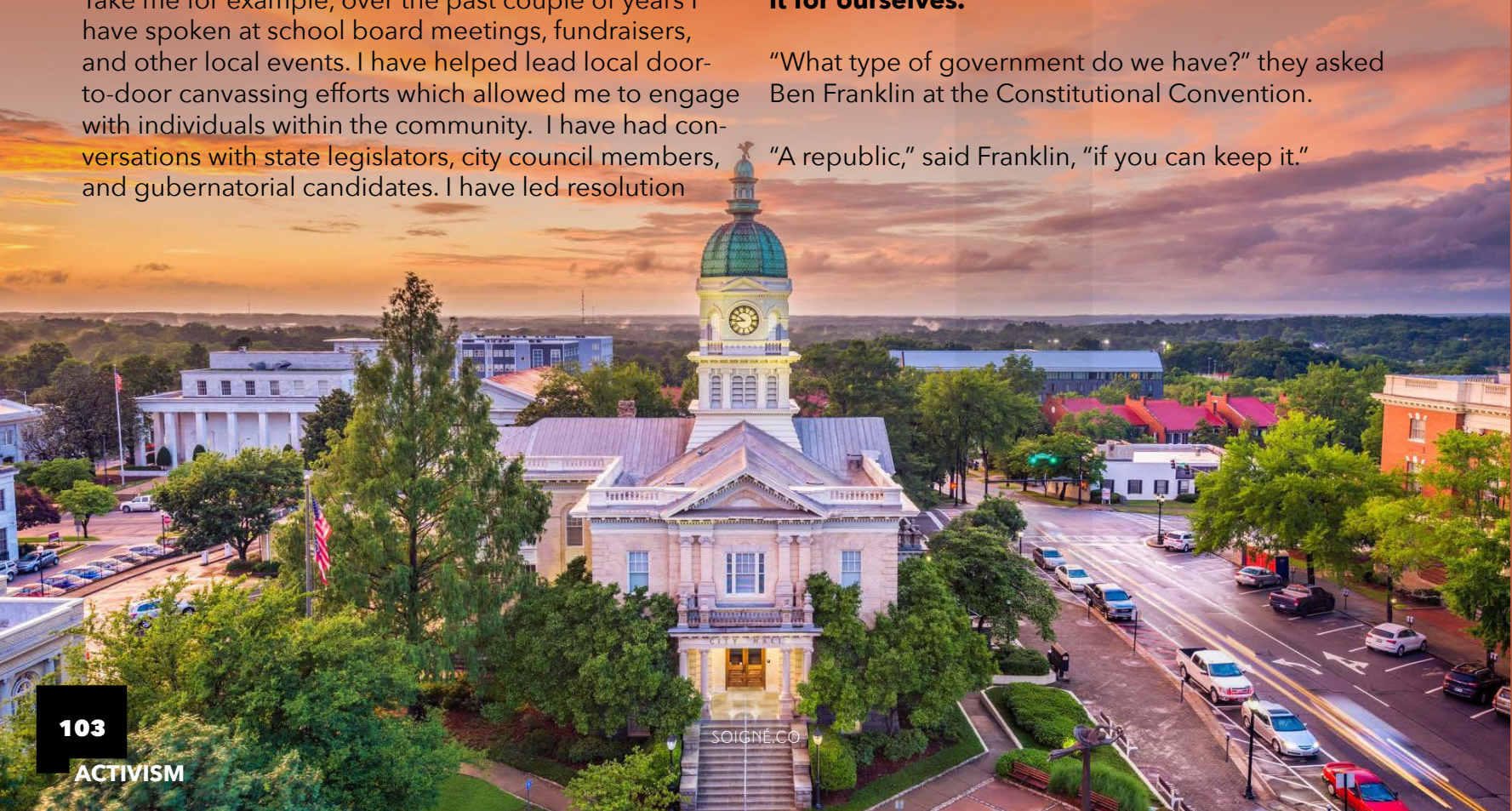
But somehow Americans have forgotten that. We have forgotten De Tocqueville who said that the true power of America came from not having to wait for a King to act in order to solve problems, but in that, we ourselves would act to solve them within our own communities.

Today though all we can do is think about how we wish some Imperial President in Washington would rise up and save us.

**Americans have forgotten that in order to preserve the American Constitutional Democratic Republican Federal System of Government, we must daily save it for ourselves.**

"What type of government do we have?" they asked Ben Franklin at the Constitutional Convention.

"A republic," said Franklin, "if you can keep it."



## CATALONIA BEYOND BARCELONA:



*An exploration of Tarragona and surrounding areas*

BY CRISTINA SLATTERY

CRISTINA SLATTERY IS MOST WELL KNOWN FOR HER WORK IN THE NEW YORK TIMES, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, FORBES TRAVEL GUIDE, FOODANDWINE.COM, AND TRAVEL+LEISURE.COM



ARE YOU SOIGNÉ?





©Alberich Fotògrafs

The Romans were in Tarragona for seven centuries, a guide tells me as I tour this city about an hour south of Barcelona. Ruins are all around us. The amphitheater by the sea and a Roman tower from the first century are the initial structures from that era that I see. Iberians lived in the region before the Romans came and approximately 4,000 people now reside in Tarragona's Old Town. The Old Town is on top of Tarragona's enormous Roman Circus that was inaugurated in A.D. 96 and whose ruins can be toured. (It is the best-preserved Roman Circus in Europe.) Tarragona's cathedral was built on the remains of the Roman temple. Its construction began in the mid-12th century, and it was consecrated in 1331.

*Tarragona's cathedral was built on the remains of the Roman temple.*

Tarragona is a port city, but it is worth starting a tour of the region south of Catalonia, because the wealth of Roman ruins and the medieval cathedral there are worth a visit. The H10 Imperial Tarraco hotel is conveniently located in the center of the city and would be an excellent choice for those who wish to tour the Old Town. A restaurant that is just a few blocks away from the H10 Imperial Tarraco hotel in the Old Town is Restaurant El Llagut, <https://elllagut.com/>. This restaurant is named after a type of boat that was used on the Ebro River, and one dish that should certainly be tried is their Arroz Romesco, or rice Romesco-style.

Tarragona also makes an excellent starting point for a tour of the surrounding region. The remains of the medieval monastery of Escaladei are about half an hour from Tarragona by car. With its peaceful setting, ongoing construction notwithstanding, a tour of Escaladei helps the visitor understand the lives of the Carthusian monks who lived in this location for centuries. It was one of the richest monasteries in Catalonia and parts of the ruins of the monastery are currently being reconstructed. The wineries of Priorat, however, may be the main draw for today's tourists. One winery, La Conreria d'Scala Dei, grows grapes for red wine primarily but produces some white wines as well. Voltons was started in 1997 by three friends, and one of their red wines has been named one of the 50 Best Wines in the World by Decanter. The slate in the soil and the lack of calcium are two attributes that influence the grapes that are grown in Priorat.

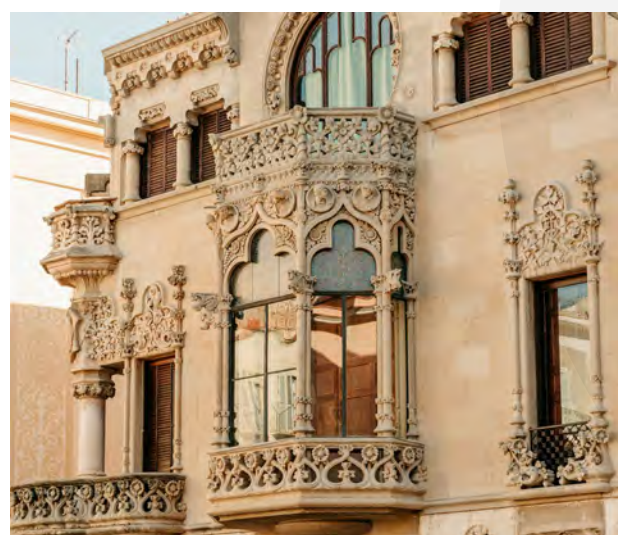
If a traveler wishes to explore other monasteries and the medieval heritage of Catalonia, Poblet and Santes Creus monasteries should be on the itinerary. Not in Priorat, but nearby, Santes Creus, founded in 1160, was an influential monastery through the 19th century. It was a Cistercian monastery, and like

the monks at Escaladei, the monks who lived here attempted to live completely in silence. There was a passageway they used when it was essential that they speak to one another. There is an interactive exhibit that explains in detail how the monks lived, and the architecture, including the magnificent gargoyles that look down captivating visitors from the archways. The beautiful Gothic church contains the tombs of two kings and a queen from the Middle Ages, although Poblet has more tombs of nobles from that time period.

*Reus is the birthplace of Antoni Gaudí, the master architect who designed Barcelona's basilica, La Sagrada Família*

If seeing a Modernist architectural jewel is the goal, a visit to another lively city not far from Tarragona, Reus, is the perfect destination. The Casa Navàs, designed by architect Lluís Domènech i Montaner, was built in the early 20th century. Roses have been carved into walls and flowers decorate the stained glass windows that are found in different parts of this exceptional home. Reus is the birthplace of Antoni Gaudí, the master architect who designed Barcelona's basilica, La Sagrada Família, and there is a small museum dedicated to him across the square from Casa Navàs. The location of his birthplace is also noted on a nearby street.

Final stops for those winding their way back to Barcelona or Tarragona by car could include another winery in a small denomination called Conca de Barberà, and a medieval town called Montblanc. The family-owned winery, Rende Masdeu, has a few rooms attached to it where visitors can stay the night, and there is a restaurant above it. No chemicals are added to these wines, and cava, the Span-



ish sparkling wine similar to champagne, is also produced by the family. Montblanc, home to excellent bakeries, is a historic town in which people currently live within some parts of its medieval walls. Founded in 1163, the town is in no way a museum, but its well-preserved walls were first constructed in the 14th century. It took four centuries to build the cathedral in Montblanc, and work was suspended when the Black Death came in 1348 and ravaged the region. When touring

the cathedral's exterior, the marks made by the original craftsmen that denoted their identities can still be seen.

If a visitor is traveling to Barcelona, it would be wise to dedicate some time to see the architecturally significant monuments and cities that are south and west of the Catalan capital. The food, wine, art and architecture are worth the venture.





# CAPRI STUNNING

BY OLGA SOKOLOVA

Desired since Roman Times, the captivating island of Capri draws one in and never lets go.

Picturesque coves, rocky promontories, and crystal blue water invite you to see the island by sea as well as land.

Rich History. Former Roman emperor Tiberius had a passion for the spectacular beauty of Capri and built a villa here with a symbolic name - Villa Jovis ("Villa of Jupiter"). Capri was always the favorite island retreat for Tiberius.

Geography.

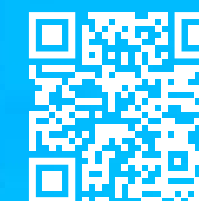
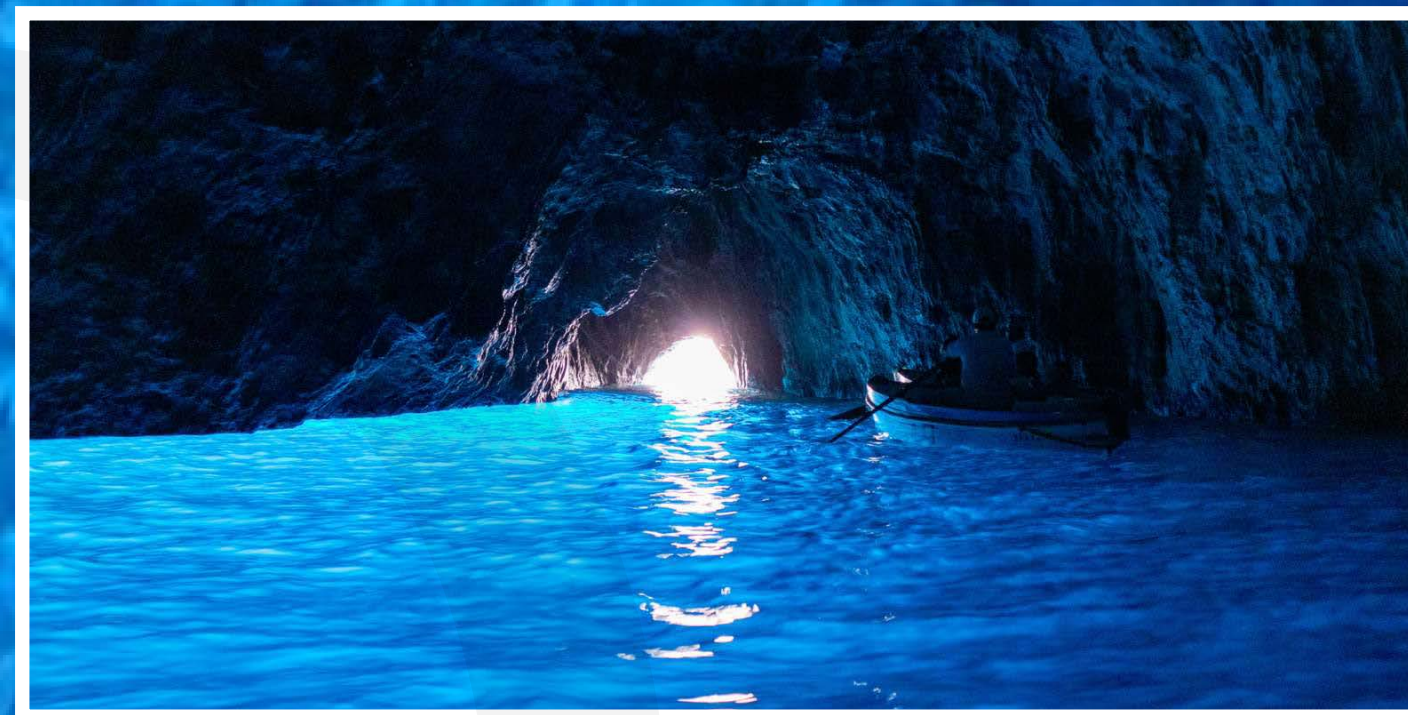
There are two towns on the island of Capri - Capri town, with its well-known sight-seeing such as the Piazzetta, Marina Piccola, and the fancy shopping streets, and Anacapri, located on the other side of the island. Anacapri is more local and where one can take a chairlift to the top of Monte Solaro.

What to see:

One's first impression of the island and its many grottoes, it is easiest by taking a motorboat tour. During the trip, you can sail to Grotta Bianca, Grotta Meravillosa, Grotta Verde and Grotta Rossa.

Be sure to visit the garden of Caesar Augustus and admire the view of the sea and the cliffs of Faraglioni. Walk along Via Tebiri to Villa Jovis, the most beautiful and largest of the Roman villas. Legend is that both Tiberius and Caligula organized orgies and tortures here. In Anacapri, the villa of San Michele is a must-see as well as the beautiful garden laid out by Swedish doctor, Axel Munthe on the ruins of another Roman villa.

Be sure to visit the famous Blue Grotto - one of several sea caves on the rocky coast. The light reflects off the white sandy bottom, and the water takes on an extraordinary, luminous blue hue. Special boats run to the Blue Grotto and back. Capri is a wonderful place for water sports and diving, or just relaxing on the waterfront with a glass of limoncello in hand.





# A Body Dysmorphic Episode

(AS TOLD BY THE AUTHOR, AS SEEN BY THE CASHIER)



BY ALLISON LAX



Is what you feel reality as experienced by other people?

Allison

I'm meeting Jack at the club soon and my phone is dead, so the Pret a Manger on Lexington is as good a place as any to charge up and wait. Someone must have just cleaned the windows because, despite the setting sun, I can see my reflection perfectly. Startled, I look down. Doing my best not to look again, I walk inside.

"Do you have anything cheaper than cookies?"

An embarrassing question (the cashier knows it, I know it), but I try not to blush. After dropping over \$100 on what should have been a simple bang trim this afternoon (Why yes, I do need a new styling wax and dry shampoo!) even I know it's probably time to slow down. She points to the bananas and I buy one, adding a water bottle for show. While I'm aware my financial priorities as a grad student—beauty products over pretty much everything else—leave much to be desired, it's a hard thing to help. I want to feel pretty so badly. Feeling pretty means feeling normal. Feeling pretty means feeling OK.

As I eat my pre-club "meal" in the near-empty room, my eyes creep back to the window. Even though the bustling city street paints an endless moving picture, one I'd love to get lost in, I have trouble focusing on anything but my reflection. I start to categorize it objectively, the way my therapist taught me. I see a girl sitting in this restaurant with blonde hair in a ponytail. She is wearing a black dress with a white collar. Her heels, also black, tie at the ankles.

But then, I move closer. That's when the image starts to twist. Now, all I can see are my perceived flaws: acne-splattered cheeks, blotchy and gross despite my extensive skincare routine, covered in layers of foundation and blush that will only make things worse. That limp, frizzy ponytail, hairline thinning at the temples. A crooked nose

that needs straightening; those brows that need Botox. You have Body Dysmorphic Disorder, I remind myself for what feels like the thousandth time. BDD eyes don't see correctly. This doesn't cool the sweat prickling on my back, though. It doesn't calm the churning in my stomach.

I try to sit with my anxiety, resist all the compulsions to "fix" an appearance that isn't broken. Though they may make me feel better short term, giving in will only solidify the illness in the long run. I know how life can stop when BDD takes control because I've experienced it: dropping out of school, residential treatment, and losing friends. Almost losing a life. I remind myself that I'm stronger now. I can't go back to that.

Still, it's hard not to obsess over the night ahead—all the gorgeous people who will be at this club. They'll look so clean-cut and sophisticated; I'll feel so ugly and inferior. Why can't I be like them? I lean in even closer, smooth my hair, and fan the redness from my cheeks. Just then, a very ordinary-looking woman walks into my line of vision. She stops to take a selfie and smiles. The shutter barely clicks before she continues on her way.

It's an effortlessness so mind-boggling that before I can do anything, tears well up. I wipe them away quickly but wonder if the cashier, a girl around my age with warm brown eyes, has noticed.

I look at my phone. 7:34 PM—less than thirty minutes until club time. There's still time to cancel, I tell myself. Tell Jack I've eaten a bad sandwich and that I'll see him later, hop the next train home. Besides, I have so much to do: laundry to fold, an essay to write. There's that new crime doc coming out on Netflix too, I think. Why did I go out again?

Something stops me, though. I can't say exactly what. Somehow, when I look at this busy, beautiful street in this busy, beautiful city, I still have this unrelenting desire to be part of it all. And I can, I remind myself. I can take these bad BDD feelings with me. They don't have to stop me

from doing what's important to me, from nourishing my values. Feelings aren't facts.

This kind of self-talk doesn't always work. But tonight, I am grateful that it does.

With a deep breath, I pull my gaze from the window and gather my things. "Have a good night," I tell the cashier, the only other person in the shop. We smile at each other. She waves.

The Cashier

Pret a Manger is slow for 7 on a Friday, which is good since that's the kind of night I like best. Even though time goes faster when things are busy, sometimes it's nice to have a little break. In fact, there's only one other person here right now: a girl around my age who's just walked in. I say hello and compliment her black dress—I have one just like it, I add—but she either hasn't heard or is ignoring me, staring blankly at the overhead menu. Whatever, I think. I'm used to this.

After a bit, the girl clears her throat. "Do you have anything cheaper than cookies?"

At first, I assume she's joking (Have you been to New York City? I almost ask), but see from her expression that it's a genuine question. Scanning the rest of our pastries—\$6.50 for the croissants, \$8 for the strawberry and cream torte—I shake my head no. "We have some bananas," I offer, gesturing to a bowl that's browning beside the register.

She cringes but nods, adding a water bottle. After paying, she retreats to the long table by the window, metaphorical tail between her legs. I can't help but wonder how a girl wearing such a nice dress can't afford a few sandwich-shop cookies.

As I tidy up behind the counter, careful to at least appear busy despite the near-empty dining room, I occasionally watch the girl. She's thin and blonde, like a Barbie, and the black dress really is beautiful. I consider trying to tell

her how nice it looks again but decide that's weird. Still, everyone deserves a compliment once in a while...

She's leaning close to the window—too close. What is she looking at? After scanning the street myself (busy as always, nothing out of the ordinary), I bristle. Is she staring at those streaks on the windows? I bet she is. Yes, it's a crap job, but does she really have to stare? Maybe she's just checking herself out.

Out of spite, the dress compliment stays in my head, unsaid. I go back to thinking about my own life, my own dreams, and my own problems.

After some more cleaning, I look again. Wait, is she okay? She's still staring at that spot and keeps fidgeting with her hair, and her clothes. It's almost frantic. She must be meeting someone soon, I decide; a first date, maybe second. I feel a pang of guilt for assuming she was judging my window-washing skills or being vain. I wish I could tell her not to worry, that she looks fine. Her cheek looks kind of blotchy—almost like she's crying. God, is she crying? She must feel my gaze because she quickly dabs her eyes, becoming absorbed in her phone.

Ashamed of my nosiness, I go to the back for a while so the girl can have some privacy.

When I come back out, I'm relieved she's still here. She looks calmer now, more composed, and is gathering up her things. I can sense her making that mental checklist every woman makes before a night out: phone, wallet, keys, etc.

I wonder what else is on this girl's personal checklist—all the concerns I can't see—and resolve to compliment her dress after all.

But before I can, she opens the door. Crisp spring air seeps in. "Have a good night," she calls, smiling. I wave and smile back. I hope she does too.





# BLUEGRASS DREADNOUGHT

BY JOHN MATTHEW GILLEN

I can still see her in the sound  
Sitting across the barrel top table at the Whiskey  
Jar  
With Apple Butter Hush Puppies  
And the dying halo of a Charlottesville sunset  
In her auburn eyes

Yet it is not enough to hear and believe  
I want this sound to come from me  
This merciful sound must come from me

I must learn to play and sing



# CONSIDER A CREATOR

BY SALLY HALL

When I read that you are a masterpiece, I knew you were one of a kind. I was told that the Creator of you, of this masterpiece, calls you wonderful and beautiful and has so many precious thoughts toward you that they outnumber the grains of sand.

When I discovered all of this about you, I knew you were uniquely you. One of a kind. Planned and brought into this world at just this time and for a purpose.

These words are true for each of us, so why do we try to compare ourselves to others?

Imagine all of us masterpieces lined up being judged by other masterpieces. Why of course each one of us thinks we are the only real masterpiece. The judging and comparisons begin and before long we are all trying to change the original works of art into something they were never created to be. In the art world, that would be called distortion.

As I reason through the "why" of my own changes, I realize I do it because I either don't like the masterpiece that I am, or I want to be more like someone else's masterpiece. I can change my hair color, eye color, nose, chin, add/subtract body parts, and on and on, my list could go. I create my own standard for wonderful and beautiful in my mind. How about you?

I also read that you and I are known intimately and thoroughly by our Creator in a knitting-us-in our-mother's-womb kind of way. While the genes of our parents determine many things about us, we are intentionally created with our own DNA.

In accepting this, I have had to change my thinking about myself and about you. It is not easy because we are daily bombarded with distortions. Lies, really. I admit these lies and distortions are easy to believe because most of the time I want to.

I really want to be different than I am. I want to repaint myself or at the very least change the picture of me to fit what I want. But what about what the Creator wants and intended? What if I took more time to learn about what my Creator says about me, my purpose, and what the intentions of my Creator were when creating me, this masterpiece?

I have found when I do this, I have two choices. Believe what has been written and recorded about me or call it hogwash and remake myself to fit what I think is best for me.

I propose the world would be a much better place if we would accept and live by what the Creator says about us and others. If we could only learn to love ourselves as we have been created and learn to love others as they have been created, we would have greater clarity on the root of our identity crises, whose lives matter, and so on.

If we could only accept that these few truths shared are not relative but absolute, I think we would want to know more because there is so much more to know. Each beautiful truth brings greater purpose to our lives.

I admit it does not always seem beautiful at first because I want what I want.

I have convinced myself the truth is relative, and I like it that way.

Often, I don't want to know more about my Creator because that might mean I would have to adjust my thinking in a direction I do not want to go.

But what if in all of our distortions we are missing the real meaning and purpose of our lives?

What if in all our conceived physical flaws, internal conflicts, and ingrained distortions, we realize and accept we are a masterpiece not to be changed, conformed, or distorted?

What if the Creator has a plan and purpose for our lives that far exceeds anything we can imagine and think for ourselves?

Oh, I know how hard and even painful can be to give up our hopes and dreams and how we envision our lives should be and go. But what if these are a distortion of what should and can be?

What if we are perfect as we are and the Creator's plans are more and better than our wildest dreams?

That would change everything, would it not?





# 10 Things I wished I'd known when I became an ENTREPRENEUR

By: Seth Denson

As I began the approximately forty-five-minute drive home from the office a not-so-uncommon commute, this particular Friday afternoon in late December was nothing like the hundreds before. Hardly able to contain my rollercoaster ride of emotions, my only calming solace was found by calling my wife a few minutes into the drive. "How did it go?" she said. "Not as I'd suspected," I responded, "Honey, I think we just started a firm."

In an almost real-life dramatization of the famed scene in the 1996 movie Jerry Maguire, I too was having a "Who's coming with me" moment. Like Tom Cruise's character, I did not plan to leave the organization I had called home for years. But just like "Jerry," I had a moment of clarity and could no longer look at the industry I had been part of for more than a decade in the same light. I wrote a business plan for how we could change our model, not approaching our clients in a "show me the money" manner, but rather putting their needs above our own and thinking different-



ly about how to impact their bottom line before ours. It should not have come as a surprise that my "mission statement" for the future of our company was not going to be widely accepted amongst my peers who had made fortunes off the status quo. Within hours of presenting my plan, I was out of the company.

More than a decade later, my "happily ever after" story has not been without its hurdles, challenges, struggles, and doubting moments. Relevance, passion, and a sense of purpose have certainly been at the forefront of my vocational life (which has propelled the same in my personal life) in the years that have followed. In speaking with many other successful innovators and entrepreneurs, I have found consistency in our stories. While the industries may be different, the challenges are similar.

## THERE IS NO MANUAL or TEXT-BOOK

Don't get me wrong, I am all for people going to college and getting an education - in some industries, it is an absolute MUST (looking at you Doctors & Lawyers). That said, if you are trying to do something different

from the mainstream, there is likely no class to take on it. You will have to learn as you go. At times, you will be simultaneously both the smartest and dumbest person in the room. Learn what you can from others that have been in your shoes before but recognize that life and personal experience will become your textbook and you will have to write your own manual.

## TIME CAN BE YOUR FRIEND AND YOUR ENEMY

Time is the great equalizer. Whether you are an entrepreneur or an employee, everyone has 24 hours in a day. How we choose to barter them for our possible outcomes is up to us. Knowing this can be encouraging, but not managing it appropriately can bring you down. On this journey, there is no "boss" or anyone to manage your time, nor is there a specific task list for day-to-day (more on this later). Distractions are even more prevalent and easily engaged in...DON'T. Recognize that in order to accomplish what it is you have set out to do, your ability to manage and protect time is critical.

## LESS IS MORE

When I started out in my entrepre-

neurial journey, I wanted to accomplish it ALL...now, but in my attempt to do so, I would accomplish very little. There is a saying we frequently hear: "Don't miss the forest for the trees." But when it comes to finding success as an entrepreneur, you must subscribe to the process of "not missing the tree for the forest." Success breeds success, so find it in a few things - those will lead to success is greater things.

## THE JACK OF ALL TRADES

In the same way that "less is more" when working to accomplish a specific task, you should also subscribe to the belief that the "jack of all trades" is often the master of none. I tell my children that no one can be good at everything, but everyone can be great at something. If you are going to put yourself, your family, your finances, through the often-painstaking process of entrepreneurship, be great at what it is you are doing, but recognize and be "okay" with not being good at everything.

## REPETITION

Routine is key - both as you begin your journey and as you progress. When I started out, there were so many things I could not control, and



my mind would easily fall prey to uncertainty. There is comfort in the consistencies. Waking up at the same time, eating at the same time, exercising at the same time, etc. all will give your brain comfort, rest, and familiarity when it needs it most.

## OWN YOUR MISTAKES

A mentor of mine once told me that we will all at some point have to eat crow. "When it comes your time, eat it fast, cause hot crow goes down easier than when it's cold and either way, you're going to have to eat it eventually." You will mess up - own it and do it fast. Learn from the mistakes so as not to repeat them but know that when you're in the driver's seat all the mistakes are yours, not any of your passengers.

## DOCUMENTATION

Now years into my journey and with a large staff working alongside me, I have imparted to them something I learned early on - if it isn't documented, it didn't happen. That, of course, is post-tense, but the same can be said for documentation before you go to work as well. Document a task list to complete and document those tasks that are completed as well - doing so can make all the difference in finding and measuring success.

## PERFECTION IS A GOAL, NOT A REALITY

The world is constantly changing and key to success as an entrepreneur is that you must continuously innovate. Success can be found in the journey; however, do not wait to launch until it's perfect - whatever it is - it likely never will be. You will have to "build the plane in the air," so take off and get to flying.

## HONESTY

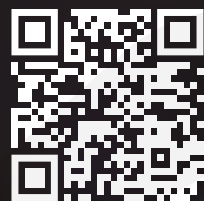
Growing up, my father would say "If you always tell the truth, you don't have to remember what you say." There is no variation in the truth, and there will be times when you may feel you can "bend it." Don't. Be honest with others, and most importantly with yourself. There is a lot to remember along the way when being an entrepreneur; do not make your 'version' of the truth something you have to.

## PASSION

When innovating there is a lot to learn and lessons are all around, but passion eats education for breakfast. Passion will lead to your desire for knowledge which will lead to confidence. Confidence will lead to enthusiasm and enthusiasm sells. Whatever it is that you are ultimately doing in life, you will be selling it - to do so you MUST be enthusiastic. This will require confidence which is found in knowledge, but the key to gaining that knowledge in uncharted territory will be rooted in passion.

I never planned to be an entrepreneur nor an innovator - quite the opposite. As I began my career, I expected to take my role within an established organization, pad my 401(k), and live the comfortable life my industry afforded. Nonetheless, a road less traveled was my fate. While there were several things I wish I had known before I began the journey. There are those that dream up ideas, and those that execute ideas provided to them, but very few can say that they do both - those people are innovators and entrepreneurs. Are you up for the journey?





# STOIC SOIGNÉ

BY: STEPHEN KENT

My name is Stephen Kent and this is Stoic Soigné. The foundation of civilization is giving way. We're taking on water and a Titanic-level failure of government and civil society is as real a possibility as ever. What are you going to do? Twitter ringleaders and emotionally unstable street fighters would have you believe that anger, rage, and the hyper-emotional experience of modern life are your salvation.

One more protest and your chains will be broken. One more Facebook rant against your enemies and you will be set free. But the insouciant revolutionaries of our moment are wrong. True freedom and resolute happiness were never to be found in institutions or the public

square. You have a kingdom between your ears. That's where the most important battle lies.

In this recurring advice column, I will help arm you for that fight. Send in your troubles and share your trials. Ask a question! A little advice won't remove the obstacles from your path, but even just a little light could be enough to help you see that what once appeared as a boulder in your way was nothing more than a flight of stairs waiting to be climbed. In my responses to your letters and emails, I'll do my best to point you in the direction of something better and more time-tested than the emotion-drenched, self-idolatry of the day. Onward!



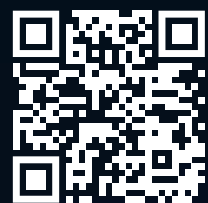


# SNEAK PEEK

Fear runs amok among our youth. Their shared cultural touchstones are that of a pandemic, school massacre after school massacre, political instability, new highs for suicidal ideation, and a celebrity elite promoting full-time the recycled doomsday prophecies of boomer environmentalists. Who needs Jane Fonda when you can have Billie Eilish, Greta Thunberg, and Meghan Markle to scream to the heavens about fires and floods that are soon to overtake us unless we dispense with air conditioning and economic growth? It is not the job of adults to confirm the fears of youth but rather to offer hope for a better tomorrow.

All is not lost, however, the future IS unwritten.

In Issue #2, Soigné takes on Generation Fright and spotlights those boldly standing fearless...





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