

AKKURAT

STUDIOS

HEY, ALL!

First things first: THANK YOU!

AKKURAT is celebrating its very first birthday! And well, we're grateful to say the least. We're only able to do that because of support from this awesome creative & collaborative community we're all in.

Especially during these extraordinary times.

After properly hunkering down, we're hankering to get back to the creative grind and know you are, too. To lift each other up and support the crazy awesome hustle as we all boldly live out our BIG dreams!

And that's why we're super excited to share the first issue of AKKURAT PAPER. We're out to de-snoozify your life post all the 2020 craziness of the world with our colorful new print missive!

This first issue of PAPER welcomes you to our little paradise of fun and imaginative creators. We can't wait for you to check out & discover our award-winning director & photographer talent.

In the future, look forward to features on more talent. Creative work we love. That you love. That the world loves. Behind-the-scenes work in the production process. The creative process. The technical process. Exclusive interviews. Inspirational tête-à-têtes. And so much more out of our universe.

To the future – and see you soon! Enjoy!

Stay safe & healthy,
your AKKURAT family

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Oh, and we also cordially invite you to get social with us, if you haven't yet!

Stalk us on Instagram: @akkuratstudios
Thumbs up us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/akkuratstudios
Peek our website: www.akkurat.tv



AKKURAT®



“I’M IN CHARGE”

HYUNDAI
IONIQ



“I couldn’t imagine a better experience for my first car commercial. Against all odds – AKKURAT along with co-producers OBJECT & ANIMAL managed to pull off my favorite film to date, fully visualizing our ideas for the project, all the while having a hell of a time. I am very proud of what we have accomplished given such wild circumstances.”

Amber Grace Johnson



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AKKURAT Studios is an exclusive family founded by Rocco Kopecny and Andreas Roth - consisting of award-winning creatives, directors, and photographers coming from a variety of acknowledged constellations.

We're a creative company committed to changing the way brands and agencies discover and work with creative talent. AKKURAT is our own utopia built on creative trust. We collaborate and bring stories to life which seemed impossible in the first place.

Over time we have gathered together a rich pool of multi-disciplinary creative minds who are flexible for all kinds of projects. The core of all AKKURAT projects is maintaining a collaborative spirit.

We write, we produce, we shoot: in short we do stuff - stuff we really like. Let's say love! The aim is to create only selected, raw, and distinctive visual work. Something to talk about.



PERSONAL SERIES
#1

35MM DIARY

photographed by Murat Aslan

BERLIN, GERMANY





AKKURAT TALENTS
#1

MEET OUR DIRECTORS

feat.
Amber Grace Johnson
Cloé Bailly
Joakim Revemann
Mario Feil
Joschka Laukeninks
Mischa Meyer

Novemba
Mario Clement
Ivana Bobic
Andreas Roth
Ben Brand
Francisco Sendino

BERLIN, GERMANY



Born and raised in New York, Amber Grace Johnson is a filmmaker striving to create work that makes you feel. To honor individuals and their truths all the while pushing the artistic and visual integrity to the best it can be. Her inventive storytelling and infectious youthful spirit has enabled film collaborations with Jorja Smith, J. Cole, Prada, Dior Homme, Hyundai, Nike, and Rihanna’s Fenty. In 2020, Amber received nominations as AICP’s ‘Best New Director’ and Ad Age A-List & Creativity Awards’ ‘Director to Watch.’ She is currently working on a personal short.

INTRO x AMBER GRACE JOHNSON

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

I always struggle with this question because I never know what to say. Growing up my parents inspired us to have big imaginations. They really let us run free. I watched my dad befriend every person we encountered with such warmth and curiosity. I watched my single mom pursue her dreams and build her own business from scratch. Because of my parents, I have a love and fascination for people. I’ve been working since I was 13 with no real direction. I went to college in New York, had six internships alongside too many jobs in sales and restaurants – and often all at once, etc. New York is brutal. I did everything I could to try and find my own way. In 2015, I turned my sixth internship into a job for a startup creative production named MATTE. I worked my ass off. Overtime, brought in big clients, wore all the hats, did a lot of things I hated (and a lot of things I liked). Account managing, producing, writing, eventually creating and directing for them. In 2017, I was asked to tell a personal story about a known model named Teddy Quinlivan. This was a coming-out video to announce Teddy was transgender. I was honored. Having never directed before, I was very precious about the whole thing. I felt like her story was in my hands. We had pennies but it didn’t matter, the story was there. Teddy’s strength and the shared intimacy was beautiful to me. I was happy that the LGBTQA community was moved by the film. For me, if I could make just one person feel something, that’s all that mattered. I’ve been making it up ever since.

— How do you try to be different?

I don’t. I just try to be as “me” as possible. Whatever that is in any given moment.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

Without a doubt. My dad always taught me to “live my life like a movie.” You wake up, what song plays? You’re worried about someone else’s life, but who’s the main character? What’s the genre? If you were watching, would you root for you? I somehow romanticize every moment in my life and voilà, everyday is my movie, Baby.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

Not absurd but any time I feel down and out, I put a song on very loud to fight off the bad juju. For the past six months it’s been “People Get Up and Drive Your Funky Soul” by James Brown. I also like to do this when I’m nervous before a set or a pitch call. I like to forget who I am for a second. Helps get the blood and heart moving.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Take my life to learn these three philosophies, but they have become almost biblical for me: Happiness is reality minus expectations. I used to think that I would be happy if I could finally get X.Y, and Z. If I landed that one film job, found the best lover, a higher income, the perfect apartment, etc. One day someone told me I’d be waiting until I’m on my deathbed because I will never stop wanting more. Life is process. Enjoy all the in-betweens. Number two is simpler. You are your energy. So be lovely to be around and protect your energy, it’s sacred. Number three: We’re going to die anyway so be a child and always have fun.

— When you feel overwhelmed, unfocused, or have lost your focus temporarily, what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

I take a step back, live a little, and then return with (hopefully) new eyes.

— Is advertising art or business to you?

It depends. I personally try to find the beauty in everything. In a traditional sense, advertising for a brand or musician is the art of capitalism. As a means of survival for my sanity and soul, I like to pretend it’s art. This helps me at least feel constantly inspired. I like to philosophize and romanticize everything. Call me dramatic.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

The below because they see the world differently: Philip-Lorca Dicorcia, David LaChapelle, World Press

Photo photographers, Gordon Parks, Nan Goldin, Alex Webb, Guy Bourdin, Gregory Crewdson, Jean-Paul Goude, Harry Gruyaert, Julie Blackmon, and Yuan Yao.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

Live a really big life. Ask questions. Always be a student. Be kind to everyone. Build your own point of view because no one is ever going to do it like you do. No one is ever going to see what you see. Try not to lose yourself in perfectionism. One of my favorite quotes that articulates a feeling I’ve never been able to communicate is “The Gap” by Ira Glass. It reads: “Nobody tells this to people who are beginners, I wish someone told me. All of us who do creative work, we get into it because we have good taste. But there is this gap. For the first couple years you make stuff, it’s just not that good. It’s trying to be good, it has potential, but it’s not. But your taste, the thing that got you into the game, is still killer. And your taste is why your work disappoints you. A lot of people never get past this phase, they quit. Most people I know who do interesting, creative work went through years of this. We know our work doesn’t have this special thing that we want it to have. We all go through this. And if you are just starting out or you are still in this phase, you gotta know it’s normal and the most important thing you can do is do a lot of work. Put yourself on a deadline so that every week you will finish one story. It is only by going through a volume of work that you will close that gap, and your work will be as good as your ambitions. And I took longer to figure out how to do this than anyone I’ve ever met. It’s gonna take awhile. It’s normal to take a while. You’ve just gotta fight your way through.”

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

Oh wow, almost everything. Time is the only thing that matters. I’ve become quite precious about how I spend it. I am the type of person who has to give everything to everything I do. Otherwise, I just don’t see the point. Even if that is 150% nothingness and silence or 150% focus and energy. Because time is what you give your attention to. And we will never get it back. “No one is ever going to see what you see.”



AG JEANS — “HAILEY BENTON GATES”



JORJA SMITH FT. BURNA BOY — “BE HONEST”

KALI UCHIS — “SOLITA”

Q&A x AMBER GRACE JOHNSON

Any morning routine?

Very strong coffee, Bossa nova and an open window.

Tell me something that makes you cry.

When the five senses are wildly synchronized with the perfect song.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?

This morning my twin sister crawled into the daybed I sleep in when I stay at hers. For a second I felt like we were five again. I saw an innocence in her I hadn't seen since we were kids. A purity that reminded me how much I love her.

What's the first way you ever made money?

When I was 13, I cleaned tables at a rich preppy restaurant where they made me wear khakis and a tie. Some people who came in were the worst, ha. I really loved their om-ettes, though.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?

The same, and some more. Secure finances to give back to communities I care about, start up my own philanthropic endeavors (therapy for all, self-defense classes for young women, mental health initiatives) and put more energy into my personal projects.

What are you most guilty about?

I only ever want to make people feel good. When I fail at that it's hard for me to live with, so I try to make it right.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?

In 2007, my older sister Ariel was in a car accident which sent her into critical condition. She was in a coma for some time and thankfully emerged as a TBI “traumatic brain injury” survivor. This time miraculously brought my parents’ eight year divorce to an end. We call this painfully beautiful time in our lives a “blessing in disguise.”

What track do you listen to for inspiration?

“Maggot Brain” by Funkadelic. I will always feel something when I hear it. It's very important to me. Guitarist Eddie Hazel is magic.

What's one of the best films you've seen in the past few years?

Jean-Jacques Beineix's “Betty Blue” (1986) starring B atrice Dalle.

What's your favorite food and drink?

Mezcal and sashimi, never together.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?

Being fluent in every language.

How do you wish to die?

Knowing I've lived with my whole heart and soul.

What is your main fault?

Sometimes I feel too much.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?

I have four truths, actually:
1. Inspire people to love and trust your vision.
2. You will fuck up.
3. Do everything in your power to bring the best film to life.
4. Try and remember everyone's name.

What was your last Google search?

Young Robert Plant

What kinds of habits do you have?

Caffeine, work, play, laugh, dance, and love addictions.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

Fear eats the soul.

What is something that people don't know about you?

I adore my alone time as much as my time in good company.

What's something you always need on set?

Smiles.

What's the next big thing you like to learn?

Narrative filmmaking.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?

What is weird anyway? I think normalcy is weird.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

Kiss the first person I see then immediately become a zombie.

What are you really not very good at?

Pretending and grammar.

What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?

I never graduated college (shy of one class).



FEAR EATS THE SOUL

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make it better in your opinion?

It has to make you feel something. Good or bad.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?

A homemade Italian feast. Burrata, charred octopus, spicy olive oil with warm bread, pasta ragu, wine forever, and my favorite humans.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?

Art is a chance to respond.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?

Gut laughter is the cure!!!

Also sticking my head out the window on long car rides just does something for me.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfectly beautiful?

I am attracted to anything truly pure and that's usually wrapped in imperfection. I find myself allergic to superficiality or perfectionism. It hasn't lived.

What scares you the most?

Not living up to who I desire to be.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?

Being caught inside that special space where you and the person you love exist alone with zero outside interference.

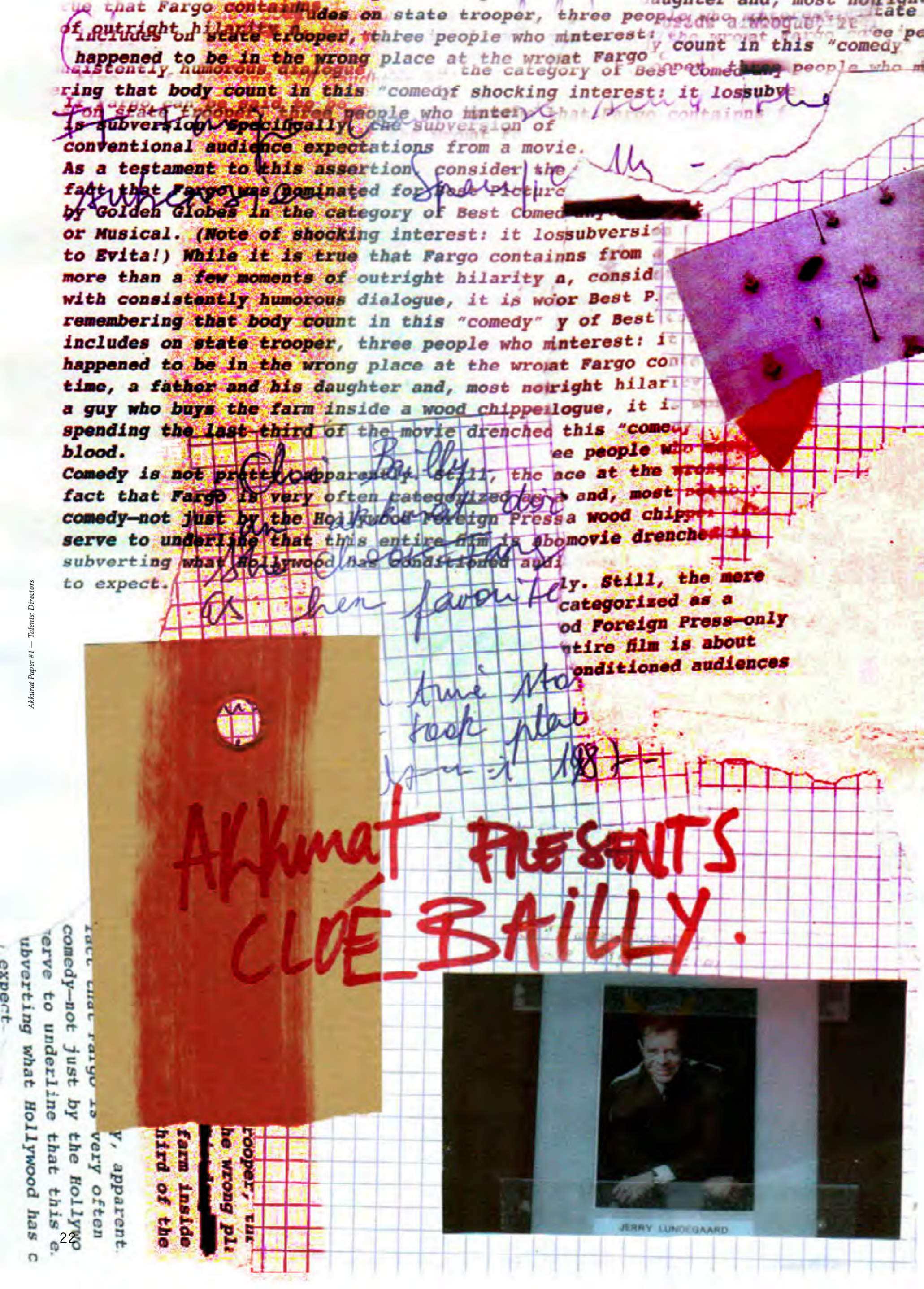
It's a world inside a world where everything else is white noise. Requires very little (if nothing) to make you happy.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?

A necessary evil. But, don't let it swallow you whole!

Space trip – yes/no?

No, because I don't need to go to space to feel like I'm in space. Plus, I would miss my people too much.



INTRO x CLOÉ BAILLY

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

Growing up I was constantly filming stuff with a DV camera, mostly making pastiche comedies with my friends and my brother. I honestly feel like it started there. Later on, I decided I wanted to be an actress, and got in acting school in parallel of university where I was studying Literature and Cinema. But very quickly I realized acting wasn’t for me... All I knew though, was that being on set was my favorite thing in the world. I loved shoots, the buzz, the magic vibe, the thrill, the constant excitement. I loved getting out of reality and watching another world being created from scratch for camera. So I tried stuff. Assistant Director, Production Assistant... I was terrible at it but I loved shoots so it didn’t really matter to me. Then I moved to L.A. where I worked a bit for my friend, director Dimitri Basil and his co-directors, Cooper Roussel and Laura Gorun. They were making music videos. I was helping them out with a couple of other friends and we worked pretty much like a collective. That’s when I realized I wanted to direct myself. So with the help of my friends, I filmed my first “piece” which was a fake reel. We had good gear, amazing production value, suites filled with vintage clothes gathered here and there, Californian light, and plenty of ambition. Weirdly enough, the video got visibility when I got back to France, and people kind of bought into it. It gave me my first jobs.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

I guess things had already started a little bit, but my “Alexa on Alexa” film for “Vogue” was a game changer. It won a Gold YDA at Cannes, which definitely made a difference. It gave me credibility as well as access to bigger and better jobs.

— How do you try to be different?

I don’t really think about being different. I try to not compare myself to others, because otherwise I freak out and feel like the whole world is cooler, better, or faster in their career than me. What I try to do though, is to be as personal as possible. I always question and challenge how true my tone can be. And if it genuinely looks or sounds like me, it will be different.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

Experience is definitely the most valuable asset. I believe 100% more into set experience than theoretical

knowledge. Shooting is the best film school. I think I’ve never learnt as much as when I failed.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

I’ve no idea whether my failures have set me up for success, but there’s one that taught me a lot. A few years back, I decided I wanted to direct a second short film and have it well-produced (my first short was auto-produced). Back at that time, I was a little tired with commercials and felt pigeon-holed in a “feminine” category of work. I wanted to do comedy, but not girly comedies. Anyways, I was in a hurry. I wanted to show the world what I was capable of, I wanted to prove I wasn’t a girly director. So I wrote this short film, pretty fast. I knew the script wasn’t solid enough but I was ignoring it and pushing to shoot. My producers at Caviar Paris followed me and fully financed the film. We got a tremendous crew and cast, including Damien Bonnard who was at the Oscars for “Les Misérables.” Anyways, once we finished post-production, I could only admit the truth to myself: I hadn’t worked enough on the script. The story wasn’t solid enough. I had rushed the process because I was impatient and greedy. The genesis of this film was shallow. Basically I had cared too much about the form, not about the content. I know I won’t make this fundamental mistake again. I’ll always question the foundations of a story. Because even if the image is beautiful, it’s just not enough in fiction.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

This ticket to L.A. a few years back.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

Watching videos of people popping their pimples. It’s gross and so satisfying. But is this fetish that unusual though?

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Psychoanalysis. I highly recommend it to everyone.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

I’ve become less greedy with work, meaning I’ve learnt to select the work coming in better. In the past, I was afraid of not working, of not making enough money, of losing my momentum. I would lie if I was saying this

fear totally disappeared but it’s much better now. I guess getting more work on a steady base helped, and signing my first feature film contract gave perspective to everything. But anyhow – I took a chill pill and now accept the unstable workflow the way it is. Most importantly, I pick a job when it’s exciting me creatively and when I feel it’s coherent with where I want to take my reel.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

It comes and goes. It’s phases. Sometimes I’m super focused, sometimes I have the focus ability of a cow. Especially when writing a script, it’s so hard because it’s such a long process. When I lose focus, I let go. I accept now isn’t the time and go do something else, ideally with no screen. Meet a friend, walk around, go exercise, play with my dog, anything that will take my brain off this creative process I’m not inspired by at the minute. Most of the time, it’s when I manage to let go that inspiration comes back. And when I have inspiration, I do have focus.

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Both. It’s a business before anything, because come on, is there more of a capitalist industry than ours selling products to people? Advertising is driven by and made for money. BUT: It is a great medium that can be extremely creative, and I consider ads to be the best training for films. Actually I consider ads like mini-movies. I believe you can make a beautiful, memorable, great piece even though in the end it was commissioned to sell toilet paper. :) Basically, to me, advertising is a business which is an excuse to make art.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers?

Juliette Abitbol because she is the most talented young photographer I know. Each of her photos is filled with poetry, nostalgia, emotions. Each of her photos tells a story, in a very cinematic way. Otherwise, I love Eggleston.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

Reality will probably seem a bit depressing at first but it’s totally normal. It’ll get better. Don’t take “no” for an answer. This industry (commercials or fiction) is all about hierarchy but you don’t have to be a 3rd AD for 10 years to allow yourself to direct one day. Also if something seems impossible, it actually isn’t. Don’t think you can’t do it because you absolutely can. There’s always a way to go around things and make an idea possible. Have deep faith in your creativity but don’t be too proud and stubborn – at the beginning, you might have to tweak your ideas and find ways to make them doable on restricted budgets. It’s actually super enriching as a constraint. Ignore older, powerful people who will love to make you feel it’s a tough/impossible path you’ve got in front of you. Just stay 100% true to the singularity of your ideas and it WILL pay off. Last thing: be kind to people. This job is entirely about collaboration. Learn how to delegate and act nice to the people working around you. This will create much better results.



Q&A x CLOÉ BAILLY

Any morning routine?
Manage to wake up.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
A 3-legged dog. If on top of things he's got one of these little wheels, I'm KO.

When did you last cry tears of joy?
Probably recently, of laughter.

What's the first way you ever made money?
Age 6, selling seashells and galettes on which I had written cute stuff. Otherwise my first job was at Pizza Hut...

What's your earliest memory?
The ceiling from my bedroom when I was like, one. A fascinating memory to hold onto.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
I think I had never expected my life would be so entertaining and different everyday. Directing makes you step into 100,000 different lives, discover many different countries and cultures, meet all sorts of people. I'm so happy to be able to experience so many different scenarios, both on screen and in my life.

What are you most guilty about?
Everything. Literally, everything. I'm the personification of guilt.

What's your favorite business in the world?
The wine business. I'll probably end up like Gérard Depardieu.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
When I moved to L.A. for a little while, a few years back. That's what triggered my desire to direct.

What was your dream job growing up?
Opera singer or actress.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
How is the universe expandable?!?!?!?

What's your key to happiness?
Good balance.
Balance between good fun time with my loved ones and hard-working time alone. Balance between time off and intense shoot time. Balance between indulging and being more reasonable. Balance between noise and silence.

Your directing idols or people you look up to?
The Coen Brothers. And in commercials, Andreas Nilsson.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
100% natural and healthy sleeping pills that have zero side effect.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
"Freedom!" by George Michael.

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?
"The Hunt" by Thomas Vinterberg and "Parasite" by Bong Joon-ho.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Amelia and Abigail, the two geese from "The Aristocats."

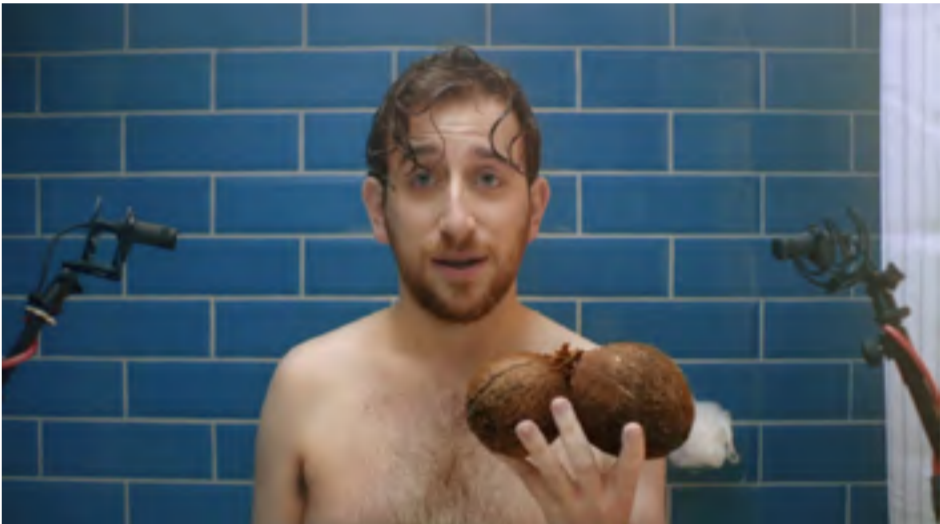
What's your favorite food and drink?
Buttered bread and red wine. French much?

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Music skills. I wish I could be a piano genius.



COLDPLAY —
"CHAMPION OF THE WORLD"

LYNX — "BALLS"



How do you wish to die?
Elderliness, in my sleep. Who doesn't?

What is your main fault?
Impatience.

What was your last Google search?
"Best restaurant in Riga" (I'm shooting there at the moment). Told you I'd end up like Gérard Depardieu.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
"Trump mysteriously kidnapped by aliens!"

What's something you always need on set?
LOLs.
No, but honestly. I need to have a good time between takes otherwise I perish. Especially in comedy, you need to have a fun atmosphere for it to come across on screen.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
7,5.

What are you really not very good at?
Anything mathematic. It's scary how imbecile I become when numbers and logic are involved.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
Never take no as an answer.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
1.) Good structure and dramaturgy. If the script isn't solid to begin with, it just won't work. 2.) Honesty. The more sincere, true and personal the film is, the more touching it will be. 3.) Beautiful cinematography. Seems like a given but so many films, especially in comedy, are just not nice to watch. A great film needs to be visually appealing. It's in the form as well as in the content. 4.) Great acting.

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
A pilot, so she or he can rationally explain to me why I shouldn't freak out.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?
A huge rural/medieval dinner with poultry, my grandad's mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables, amazing bread and butter, red wines. Then a whole truck of cheese. And then tons of ice cream with whipped cream. Should I quote Gérard Depardieu again?

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
To elevate ourselves from our existential nonsense.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
Our past definitely structures who we are. Our

patterns, our tendencies.

What scares you the most?
That we're running to an ecological disaster and absolutely not acting on it.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Both. Enrichment as it opens our mind and our field of possibilities. For instance, I've discovered amazing spots on Instagram for when I travel, as well as have gotten to know great people I probably would never have met in real life. It's also a great source for inspiration and reference digging. And of course, there's no better displayer for work.
But obviously the downsides are infinite. Increase of individuality and narcissism, increase of the "swipe effect" (getting bored and jaded way more easily), apology of shallowness, total obliviousness to reality ... I could go on for hours. I'm genuinely scared and curious of the next steps. How can it actually get worse?

Space trip – yes/no?
NEVER EVER! EVEN IF YOU PAY ME!!!





INTRO x JOAKIM REVEMAN

— *How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?*

At age 13, I rented out DV cameras from different electronic stores that had a two week refund policy. Of course I had to return them as new with all the stickers on. Back then I was into skateboarding and shot my first videos with friends. I remember using the bottom of a glass bottle to mimic a fish eye lens. Later on I got hired to film weddings, a chance to rent a bigger camera. I ran back and forth around the church to capture the bride from different angles as she entered the church. Good times. With a diploma in art direction/graphic design, I got hired by an ad agency in Berlin. I worked there for a couple of years. Turned freelance. Got hired in Paris by another ad agency and then turned freelance again, founding a collective called The Vikings. In 2008, I moved from Paris to New York City to pursue my own career.

— *What was the project that jump-started your career?*

I wrote and directed (with The Vikings) a branded content film called “The Wind.” That film went through the roof. It touched so many people. I think it still touches people today.

— *How do you try to be different?*

I try not to force it. Both in my private life and in my work. I try to approach my life with authenticity.

— *Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?*

Good instincts are extremely helpful when dealing with production. When I started out as a director, I didn’t understand that good directing also has something to do with experience. Experience boosts your confidence. And confidence allows you to instinctively make the right choices. And with confidence you manage to get everyone on the same page.

A director can profit from an experienced crew, if a production is complex and a certain department requires a lot of attention from a director. But sometimes the longest experience can lead to blindness or work that feels repetitive. If you do the same thing over and over again, you might have great experience but the result might not lead to something fresh and inspiring.

— *How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?*

I’ve had one failure (a kind of “Lost In La Mancha” story) directing a car commercial in Johannesburg. The project was quite underfunded. But the producer at the time went all in, which I still have great respect for. But to make those projects a success, you have to have a little bit of luck. We had no luck.

The storyboard was perfect. Every shot consisted of complex special effects. Complex wire work with extras (not stuntmen). Huge green screens. Multiple VFX plates. We had one of the hottest Swedish DP’s on board and a superb VFX company. Three days to shoot at night to make it happen.

Everything had to be shot in slow motion. The Phantom had just come out. We knew shooting in slow motion would absorb a lot of light, which consumed a huge chunk of the budget. I remember around eight cherry

pickers or so loaded with 18ks to light a huge street block night for day. It looked surreal.

On day #1, the stabilizing head broke and there was no replacement, compromising the climax of the commercial. We came up with a solution to keep the compromise as little as possible and then kept on shooting until first light.

On day #2, we shot most of the car and stunt plates (actors, featured actors and extras alike were being wired and pulled back several meters). I focused mainly on the actors and when I looked at play backs during a break, I noticed a flicker in almost all the takes. At first we thought that it may be something electrical. Every cherry picker was brought down, every HMI light was checked but nothing wrong was found. My producer was on the phone with people in LA and we found out that the camera paired with the HMI lights had conflicting issues leading to flicker. I think Phantom solved that issue later on, but at the time we had to deal with that flicker somehow.

I had to cross out a couple more shots from the storyboard and we kept going until first light. After the shoot, a van brought the producer, the visual effects supervisor, the DP, and me to a local post house where we were trying to solve the flicker issue in flame. It worked; seemed good enough a solve to keep on shooting the next day. I remember day #3 really well because I woke up to a huge storm. Still I was motivated by the team spirit, how nothing of the gloomy experience compromised the mood on the set.

Day #3 was packed. The storm was a challenge for the art department but at least we were able to shoot. We knew we had to set up the packshot (three cars lined up next to each other on the center of the square) at 3:30am to be able to finish before sunrise. I tried to motivate everybody; agency and clients still had confidence in me which gave me a lot of strength.

Then it started raining. And because we shot at 400 frames per second or so, the continuity wasn’t given anymore. None of the plates would match the shots we had in the can from the previous days.

We stopped shooting and were hiding underneath a tent and suddenly I felt that heavy burden on my shoulders for the first time. Whenever it stopped raining, we ran and tried to shoot as much as we could but it never stopped more than 5 minutes. It was devastating.

At 3am in the morning it finally stopped. By that time we only covered the bare bones of the storyboard. “Let’s focus on the product shot!” Something that the client was keen on, understandably. I remember talking to the DP when my producer tapped my shoulder and pointed his finger up to the sky. I turned towards the cars and looked up and couldn’t believe my eyes. Tons of fog was coming in, creeping down the building walls (like in an 80s horror film), filling the entire street. I was speechless. Next, I wasn’t able to see the cars anymore. Something I never had witnessed in South Africa before. We waited, shot as many reference plates of the cars as possible, knowing that we had to recreate the scene in CGI from scratch. I looked at the VFX supervisor who was really pale. His VFX list of what we had to do in the next couple weeks seemed endless.

The good news was that the rain provided us with a weather day. I was hopeful that I would be able to cover some of the shots that were crossed out, but waking up in the afternoon on day #4, the storm was back and it kept raining almost all night.

I spent months in Stockholm assisting the VFX company, trying to make the commercial the best it could. I am still grateful for the experience. It was a hard lesson but I learned a lot from it.

— *What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?*

I help my wife (she’s a painter) as much as I can in her studio. She has been working tirelessly on her work since the birth of our son four years ago.

— *What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?*

When I tell stories to friends, for example during a dinner, I tend to stand up and act the scenes out for them as if reliving them. Apparently that isn’t normal.

— *In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?*

Sticking together in good and in bad times. Loyalty is a core value that I strongly believe in.

— *What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?*

Saying “no” is a very hard thing for me to do. For instance, scouting locations is my least favorite part of production, because I have to say “no” ten or more times a day.

— *When feeling overwhelmed, unfocused or temporarily lost – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?*

I always try to be very clear. The more crazy things get, the more clear I become.

— *Is advertising art or business to you?*

It can be a mix of both. It’s important to enjoy the process. I think a confident client (you’d think it’s only business to them) isn’t generally reluctant to let you do your art, as long as you stay within logic or reason.

You have a lot of tools as a director to influence a piece of film through your vision. Light, color, emotional expressions, wardrobe, art direction. They can be subtle, abstract things or very symbolic. There are many ways to do artful things in advertising. But I guess advertising isn’t art because it is funded by corporations who want to make money and you therefore almost always face restrictions.

— *Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?*

Crewdson, DiCorcia, Bresson, Parr, Eggleston, Webb. A few photographers influence me. I look at how they approach light and composition. But the way they work differs. While some photographers stage their work, others seek the perfect moment.

— *What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?*

Ignore fear.

Reveman was just 25 when he won his first Cannes Gold Lion for Doctors Without Borders, effectively jump-starting his illustrious advertising career. As an Art Director at TBWA Paris, he won over 40 international awards. Joakim launched his own directing collective, “The Vikings,” with several likeminded friends. Their first endeavor was “The Power of Wind,” a film that the Gunn Report stated was the “Second Most Awarded Film” that year. Reveman has collaborated with a wide variety of clients including Nike, Cadbury, BMW, Epuron, Schick and ESPN alongside agencies like Wieden+Kennedy, Euro RSCG New York and more. Joakim lives with his family in Berlin.

Global energy problem solved!



Q&A x JOAKIM REVEMAN

Any morning routine?
Coffee.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
90s Hollywood films.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?
I can't remember, I think after Christmas listening to my mother-in-law telling a story.

What's the first way you ever made money?
Age 6, proudly selling things on the street outside my home where I grew up.

What's your earliest memory?
Sweden. The smell of summer. Family.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Spend more time with my family traveling.

What struggles you?
People who only think about themselves.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
I don't think I ever had expectations. Maybe life is more about goals?

What are you most guilty about?
Sweets.

Do you remember the first time when you got in trouble?
Too many times to remember the first one.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Moving to New York.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
I don't read enough and tend to forget the titles of the books that I like.

What was your dream job growing up?
Jonathan Heart, self-made millionaire. James Bond, later.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
Is there something like destiny?

What's your key to happiness?
Not worrying about anything.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
An app that finds you the perfect location.

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?
Oh man. There are many. Perhaps I was most impressed with “Son of Saul” and “Girl” in recent years?

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Playing the piano. I think it is a wonderful gift. If I could play it I'd like to think that I would spend a lot of time composing.

How do you wish to die?
Healthy.

And hopefully loved by my family and friends.

What is your main fault?
Remembering details like an elephant.

Who are your heroes in real life?
I feel terrible trying to point them out. Everyone who achieves things to the benefit of other people.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
Believe in collaboration. Trust in your instincts. Choose your battles.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
You mean what kind of headline I would love to read the most?
'Global Energy Problem Solved!'

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?
Thom Yorke, Rose Wylie, Matthew Barney, Klara Kristanove, Chris Ofili



ESPN — “EAR”



MERCEDES BENZ AMG PETRONAS — “BREAKDANCE”

EPURON — “THE POWER OF WIND”



INTRO x MARIO FEIL

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

I never filmed until I was 22, but when I was 14, I had this strong desire — that inner passion and out-of-this-world perseverance ... when it came to taping every single “Simpsons” episode with my VHS back home. The most difficult part was “editing” out the commercial breaks with a seamless cut. After all of my friends saw that perfect, almost glitchless edit, they cheered and hugged me for minutes. Great times. Ok, confession: my friends never noticed but it stuck and I wanted to know how editing really works. Fast forward to 2007, I still had no clue how it worked until my brother said, “You have a laptop with a FireWire plug. Just capture those tapes and leave me alone!” DANG!! Dad’s old MiniDV cam, a FireWire 400 cable, 30 tapes of my sister growing up, and just three months later (most of the time passed just capturing MiniDV tapes) and I got my first tear in someone’s eyes. Moving pictures, the right order, music ... emotions. I got hooked, borrowed some money from grandma to buy a used Sony PDI50, and started filming live performances from bands until I upgraded to the Sony EX1 with Letus35mm adapter and boy, what a crappy way of working – but it was the first time I felt that I had reached a certain “film look.” In times of 50i, my most Googled word must have been “film look.” This was also the time (around 2009) when the Canon 5D hit the market and the joy of converting 30p to something usable was mindblowing. I still worked as a salesman somewhere between Munich and Salzburg, and had literally no access to real gear, people that know shit or even proper clients to start freelancing right away. I guess I was just scared ... It was in 2010, when I went out with my buddy Andi to shoot timelapses like the dudes from California. We just went out when the weather was right, did some “Starlapses” and all kinds of cloud formations, full moon, super moon, you name it. During that time, Twitter was something like a resource for me and Vimeo was still that kind of underdog of video platforms. Asking questions on Twitter; showing my work and ideas to people abroad without having to live in the city or going to school once again. And I had LOTS of trial and error moments ... learning how to edit, to do motion graphics in After Effects (thank you, Andrew Kramer), and understanding what all those film terms meant was sometimes frustrating. I finally quit my job as a salesman, worked at a nearby photo studio and had the chance to learn the business side of things as well as composition, etc. from photographers, which was great. A colleague finally convinced me to upload the nature timelapse video we shot the year before, which I thought wasn’t good enough to show on Vimeo, and while I was shooting some ski footage in the Alps, the video became a Staff Pick (which was HUGE back then). People reached out to me, companies wanted to license shots, and it was screened at Times Square. In 2013, I finally made the step to be freelance with no idea how to get new clients, bought a RED Epic with my buddy Andi, got myself a Leica M9 (just because ...), and founded Beech Studios with some friends as a creative collective. This was also the year I did my first TVC which came out of nowhere. I had no clue how it worked, why there were so many people for stuff that I usually shot all by myself, why I needed a DP for that, what a “DI” is (I desperately tried to Google it), what a “recce” meant, why I should fly in for a so called “PPM” and why they

spent so much money to do “color grading” in Berlin ... After that I went to Cannes by accident (different story) and met not only Rocco Kopecný, but lots of agents and later on buddies from the business. It took a year, many small projects and one ski film together with Red Bull to finally kickstart my commercial career in 2014 and ever since, it’s a lot of fun, ups and downs, and also the best time of my life. Not to mention that I met the most beautiful woman (and mother of my daughter) through my first commercial job in 2014.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

I would say that might be 3-4 different ones over the course of 5 years. I never had that sort of “bottle opener.” The nature video was important in the beginning, the ski movie “Shades Of Winter,” and of course my first commercial job. The most successful to date might have been “Commerzbank – Pferdeschwänze.”

— How do you try to be different?

I never wanted to be different, I always try to blend in. Some people say they recognize my work when they see it but I always think my next projects should be different to the last one in terms of genre. Like, in a natural way instead of trying hard to separate my style to other directors. It probably is something that comes by itself.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

Depends. Experience is something no one can steal from you and especially in filmmaking, something a lot of people underestimate. That’s why experience should be valuable. I personally think that it’s much more important to be experienced in long formats because you can always sneak your way in and out when doing short format stuff (i.e. music videos, commercials, etc.). Like I did ...

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

Just one? There are so many fail stories and each one of those stories were important. I tend to do small fails instead of big ones. Stuff I can hide and pretend I did it on purpose ... Years ago I had this pitch presentation for a tourism campaign. Huge budget, very important project. I went there and thought I could impress them with my sports reel but didn’t know they wanted to see proper ideas, concepts and even mood boards. I just thought they wanted to meet me because I’m so good at what I do ... whoops.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

Moving to Hamburg with my girlfriend in 2014. Regarding gear: it’s probably the Leica M9 as it taught me how to frame properly, and think about what I shoot.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Getting out of bed at 5:30 – 6am with my wife, 1 hour before our girl wakes up. 1 hour of coffee, reading news, making a ToDo list for the day, baking fresh bread, and maybe preparing for sport after our little one gets dropped off at kindergarten.

Mario Feil is a director out of Rosenheim. His work reflects a deep, sensitive visual experience in combination with a highly aesthetic style. His realizations feature an incredible authentic closeness of the protagonists, thus conveying poignant and candid stories nearly working as a mirror of real life. By way of his origins as an editor and a DOP, Mario develops and transcribes his ideas through a great variety of technical operating experience conjoined with high demands of creative output.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

If my first thought is “no” I stick to it. I was convinced to say yes too often and did regret it 99% of all times. In jobs, a simple rule helped: FFF – Fun / Fame / Finance. I only say yes to jobs/boards/scripts if two or three of the F’s match. Is it a fun project and it might go on my reel? Yes. If it’s well paid and it’s a lot of fun? Yes ... If it’s just well paid but not fun and nothing for my reel? ... No. Then I’d rather stay home with my family and bake some more loaves of bread.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

I just go for a walk and talk with my wife about it. Simply by letting steam off, it mostly helps to move on. Or at least, it motivates to do something else instead of sitting in front of a blank page. And I ask myself how that situation came up?

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Business as it serves a certain product or client. Sometimes it turns into art by accident.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

This might sound very basic, but follow your instinct instead of listening too much to others in the business as tastes are so different and you get easily intimidated which slows down your creative process. Even Instagram as a creative resource happens to be counter productive. Imagine going grocery shopping when you’re hungry ... same goes for being inspired by Insta when you search for creative input. At least that’s what I feel ... But most importantly: share what you know, collaborate with others, and be nice to everyone. It’s a fun business and it should stay like that.



Q&A x MARIO FEIL

Any morning routine?
Coffee, short talk with my wife, and trying hard to be creative.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
Family, in good and bad times.

When did you last cry tears of joy?
The birth of our daughter.

What's the first way you ever made money?
I helped my dad in his garage.

What's your earliest memory?
Squinting while blowing out candles on my birthday.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Cook all the dishes in the world with, and for, my family.

What do you struggle with?
When family stuff is not in place or someone gets sick.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
By winning the bid on a job where the producer was my future wife.

What are you most guilty about?
Not sure as I think everything I did, led me to where I am today and I don't feel so bad about it.

Do you remember the first time when you got in trouble?
Not the first, but the worst thing.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Meeting my wife, getting married, and the birth of our daughter. That happend in a two year rhythm: 2014/16/18.

What's your favorite book?
"City of Thieves" by David Benioff.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
Is it ever possible to do time travelling?

What's your key to happiness?
Besides family, it's probably cooking.

Your directing idols / people you look up to?
Fincher, Cameron, Spielberg

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
Too many ... All kinds of music inspires me in a different way that's why I listen to everything I come across.

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?
Also, a few: "Vice," "Searching For Sugar Man," "Joker," "Whiplash"

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Marty McFly, Han Solo, Mathilda (Léon)

What's your favorite food and drink?
If I had to choose one drink: Bavarian beer.
Food: homemade burger or pizza.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Being able to compose music.

How do you wish to die?
Jumping out of a plane without a parachute.

Who are your heroes in real life?
My wife and my parents, for sure.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
Never finished. Always hungry. Always feeling small compared to others.

What was your last Google search?
Denzel Washington Dakota Fanning film.

What kinds of habits do you have?
Can't just do one thing at a time.
Easily distracted.

BE
NICE TO
EACH
OTHER...

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
Be nice to each other ...
Caption: Or I will come and sucker punch you!

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
Ottar Gudnason.

What is something that people don't know about you?
I'm an introvert who hates to be on stage or even presented in front of people even though it's basically my job. I even feel uncomfortable talking about this here.

What's something you always need on set?
My phone (for the shot list I don't look at, the notes I don't write down, the photos I don't take, the framing I won't show on my phone, the look I researched but also don't share ... but just in case someone asks ...).

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
Playing a new instrument.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?
USA.
And after that Austria (Vienna, in particular).

What's the best advice you've ever received?
Don't compare yourself or your work too much to others.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
Steven Spielberg.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
Somewhere in the middle. Maybe a 5. In certain things, a solid 10.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
The same thing I do in between jobs because jobs sometimes feel like a zombie apocalypse. Crazy, lots of hungry, brain-eating people and the most important thing in the world no one is able to escape: I get home, cook/bake, and enjoy life on the countryside with my family.

What are you really not very good at?
Patience.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
It's really never finished ...

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
Authenticity. When it's natural behavior even in strange circumstances.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
"Whiplash" – Because it was a script written out of desperation and the film totally surprised me.
"Drive" – I just loved the actors and the overall feel of the film.
"Star Wars" – Childhood memories and the fact that everybody thought it would fail hard.



"Joker" – Because it didn't need any gimmicks, CGI, or even a classic DC/Marvel plot. It's just a great actor with a perfectly executed story/character arc.

What are we not asking that we should?
If self-doubt plays a big role even when people think you are successful. I'd say YES, big time. Not that I feel I'm successful which makes this question even more important. :)

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
Inspiration / Expression.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Cooking / baking (bread in particular).

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
Imperfect beautiful no matter if it's humans, films, interiors, etc.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
Both at all times. We get inspired by the past to create the future. We constantly reinvent everything that's already there. Honor the past by reinventing or at least quoting it, so to say.

What scares you the most?
Spiders for sure.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Both!

Space trip – yes / no?
Nah, too much to discover on our planet.

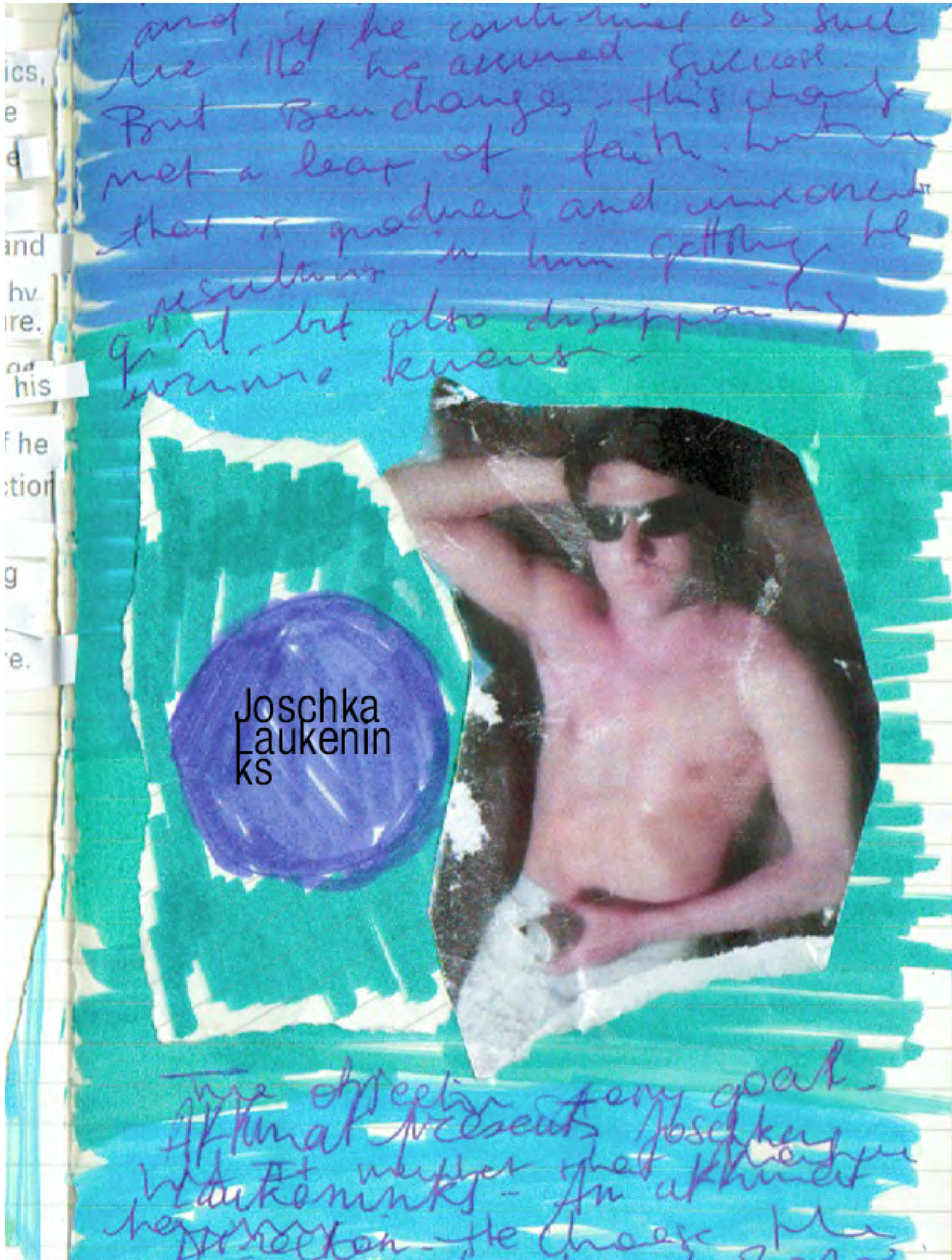


FLOYD — "BOWLING"

DFB FRAUEN —
"PFERDESCHWÄNZE"

OR I WILL
COME AND
SUCKER
PUNCH YOU!





Joschka was born in Hamburg, Germany in 1989. You know, sometimes when your brain recognizes a beautiful image, it is actually the music and sound that makes you feel whatever you're feeling. Joschka tries to work with this truth as much as possible. He likes stories that are funny and sad at the same time – and he likes to create weird and wonderful visual worlds. He loves short form content that is brave enough to go from f***ing crazy to absolutely human within a matter of seconds.

Third-person bios are boring. Thank you for reading this until the end, you are a nice person.

INTRO x JOSCHKA LAUKENINKS

— How did you get started? What's your story? How did you end up where you're now?

During my teenage years, I was extremely fascinated by music and photography – and soon discovered that film-making combines these two and adds the element of time & story. I began making really stupid short films with ridiculously weird and difficult-to-use equipment and knew I had found my passion. I landed my first directing gig at the age of 22 and started full-time directing at 23. The DP of my first commercial was three times my age. I am seven years into this crazy career now and it's been exciting ever since!

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

That's really hard to say but I'd say the project that took everything to another level was my short film BACKSTORY.

— How do you try to be different?

Finding inspiration in mediums other than film, like music or poetry. Following your gut feeling instead of copying over and over again what has already been done. Intuition is a powerful tool if you know how to work with it.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a "favorite failure" of yours?

If you stay open and flexible within your creative process, problems/failures/challenges will always lead to an even better result. You just need to be open to see things differently. Happened SO many times! I mean, for example, you lose a location that was very important. It can be frustrating. But instead of just settling for the next best option, I think every time this happens it is actually an opportunity to step back for a second and reflect what new possibilities this will give you. It's

actually fascinating how often you can turn this "problem" into an advantage. And I love to work with people that see it the same way and like to see creative changes as opportunities for the project to grow instead of freaking out and just trying to fix the hole as soon as possible.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you've ever made?

Just recently buying an old piano and preparing it to have this really soft, mellow, warm sound. Oh dear, it sounds so lovely and mysterious, almost ambient-like. Best decision ever!

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

I like to go to music festivals, face-painted and wrapped in golden glittering fabrics. :)

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Love and openness towards everything and everyone is the only thing that makes sense in this world. It's actually true. :)

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

I've always been good at saying no. It doesn't help anyone if you direct a project that you don't really believe in. If I say yes, I'm in 100%.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

I meditate or make music. Sometimes instead of asking more questions it's actually better to STOP asking questions for a while.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

I'm just going to change this question as for me the biggest inspiration is actually not photography but music! If I'm listening to music by Nils Frahm, Boards of Canada, The Acid, Flavien Berger, Alessandro Cortini, Weval, Clint Mansell, John Frusciante, Apparat or Warren Ellis (just to name a very very few) – I see photography in my mind that no camera would ever be able to capture.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

Especially in the early years of your career: take it easy and focus not only on your career, but also on your inner growth. A career will never lead you to satisfaction until you learn the skill of actually being satisfied. It can be very hard and I'm still in the process of learning it. I think everyone is. Being a perfectionist is great, but being ego-centered isn't. Both seem to be very connected with artistic people, but they don't have to be! Learning as early as possible to be the one but not the other – I guess that would be my advice. Be a passionate and ambitious perfectionist, but don't compare yourself with others, don't think in terms of "better" or "worse." Just love the process. We're all in this together.



Q&A x JOSCHKA LAUKENINKS

Any morning routine?

Oh yes! Doing everything I feel like except looking at my phone for one hour. That could be meditating, drinking coffee, playing piano or running around my flat without clothes, watering my plants. The first hour of the day is so vulnerable, the mind is so fresh. We need to use it wisely!

Tell me something that makes you cry.

Musicians putting all their heart into a performance.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?

Honestly, just yesterday night. I was in Singapore, meeting a friend who I hadn't seen for a year and a half. We had a couple of beers by the water, overlooking the Singapore skyline – and then all of a sudden these massive fireworks went off because it happened to be the Chinese New Year. It was beautiful.

What's the first way how you ever made money?

As a teenager, I actually had a few small jobs as a photographer (while having no idea what I was doing) and sold one of my photos to a café in Sweden.

What's your earliest memory?

After having been a musician, my father was working at a radio station and from time to time had his own show. I remember one day sitting in the bathtub, listening to my father's voice on the radio. My mother looked at me and said: “Do you hear that, Joschi? That's your father's voice.” I have no idea how old I was. But I can remember this weird feeling very clearly. How can it be possible that my father is speaking to me through this tiny bathroom radio?

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?

I strongly believe that humans are not made to live in big anonymous cities, working most of their waking hours to make money for people they don't know and purposes they don't understand. We are so disconnected from human nature. And I believe deep down we are all longing to

live simple artistic lives in small loving communities. It's something I think about a lot. And with the old family model disappearing more and more I think it's time to think about new forms of community. It's an interesting topic and I would like to dedicate more of my time to it. But you know what, even without all the time in the world I might as well just do that. :)

What do you struggle with?

I constantly feel like there is never enough time for everything.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?

I'm still in the middle of the journey. Ask me again in a couple of decades. :)

What are you most guilty about?

I used to feel guilty about certain privileges. A very common impulse. But I am realizing: instead of feeling guilty or bad about them we should actually all reflect on and use our privileges (whatever they are) to help each other and make this world a better place. It's not that difficult!

What have been the most defining moments of your life?

Traveling. Experiencing other forms of perception and consciousness through music, meditation and other things. Losing someone you love.

What's the book you've gifted the most?

“Life of Pi” by Yann Martell. What a masterpiece!

What was your dream job growing up?

Driving around the city selling ice cream to other children (for free, of course!).

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question what question would you ask?

It used to be pretty much exactly the next question. And as you can see: I already know the answer. :)

What's your key to happiness?

Living in the moment.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?

A smartphone that actually helps you slow down and simplify your life instead of making everything faster and more complicated.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?

Nils Frahm – “Says”

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?

WHIPLASH blows me away every time I see it.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?

Playing the violin. Maybe I will give it a try one day, haha.

How do you wish to die?

Close to all of my friends and family in a community of freaking cool old people.

What is your main fault?

Ego. It's actually incredible hard to form decisions without involving your ego. But I'm working on it. :)

Who are your heroes in real life?

Peaceful activists. Non-mainstream musicians doing their own thing. People who do good secretly.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?

Sound is more important than visuals. Nothing is ever certain. Don't overthink it.

What was your last Google search?

I try not to use Google anymore but switched to eco-friendly Ecosia. Check it out!

What kinds of habits do you have?

I tend to bend my body in weird ways during long conference calls and end up in really strange positions.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

New study reveals shocking news: love actually is the answer to everything.

What's something you always need on set?

Passionate people that are able to switch from silly to sensitive to creative, reacting to whatever the energy on set needs that second. A camera. And some water to stay hydrated.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?

I honestly want to learn so many things ... For example, I would love to take acting classes and workshops again and just get

the experience of being exposed to a camera or audience again to express something. Not necessarily to act, but rather to get back in touch with an actor's experience on set. Sometimes you forget that they are human beings and not machines. And when I give directions it helps me to constantly reflect how I would be able to work with this direction if I was in front of the camera. And every actor is so different – I feel like you always need to start from zero with every person and find your own way of working with them – for me that's the most exciting part of being on set.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

Make your decisions based on love, not fear.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?

I think the most successful people don't have big names. You won't see them on magazine covers. They don't run big business and they also don't have 5 million instagram followers. They are not famous or rich or powerful. They understood – and truly understood – that life is not a race to be won. They figured out a way to live this truth. A way to not try their whole life to win a game they can never win. But also not to resign in passivity and just get numb. To me, successful people are people that lead free and creative lives and decide every day of their life that they value love, time, and art over money and status.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?

8.2738928.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

Invite them in for a really excellent bottle of red wine, put on some mellow tunes and see how the evening goes.

What are you really not very good at?

It's hard for me to finish projects, especially if they don't have a deadline.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?

Every project needs space to breathe. Every creative person needs space to breathe. It's your job as a director to create this space.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?

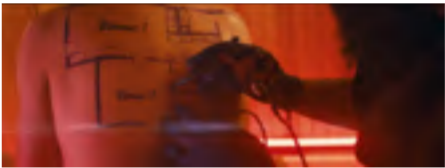
A film needs magic. I don't think there is a recipe. It might be a classic three-act-structure, or maybe it's just an actor's look, a piece of music, or maybe it's just a few seconds of silence at the right moment. You never know. That's what's so fascinating about it. Speaking of silence. I actually think it's one of the most powerful tools in filmmaking. Sometimes the quietest scenes are the loudest.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?

If any of the new plant-based food start-ups ever come up with a vegetarian version of Peking Duck, I would be very intrigued. :)

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?

I have NO IDEA! I mean, it's crazy! Why do we react to paintings and music the way we do?



IMMOWELT — “EDDY'S DREAM”

Why do we feel the urge to create? I think it's one of the biggest mysteries of human nature. I guess it's about expressing something beyond words. And it seems like it's connecting all of us.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?

Inviting a friend, plugging in some 80s synthesizers, drum machines, tape delays, and going on a never ending jam session.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?

I only like really flawless, slick and overly perfect things. No, just kidding. Obvious answer: there is beauty in imperfection and flawless perfection is usually boring.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?

Coming back to living in the moment. It's actually crazy how much time we spend every day spiraling through endless narratives about past and future. We need to shut out all this noise. That's when we are most happy and creative and ready for change.

What scares you the most?

World politics right now are fucking scary.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?

So many. Just recently, I took a bicycle and went through a super small Cambodian village during during sunrise, with just a couple of chickens and Indian cows looking at me. No tourists anywhere close. It was so quiet and loud at the same time. Will never forget the visions, sounds, and smells of this moment/place.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?

We live in a crazy world. So much noise. This insane level of connectivity is pretty new to us humans and playing tricks with our minds. I love Instagram to stay connected with other artists and to get inspired. But it's also highly addictive and can cause a lot of anxiety. I also found that I am more focused and creative when I am disconnected from social media. I love being disconnected to do creative work. It's not always easy to do this with today's super tight deadlines. But when I mentioned earlier that it's a director's job to create space for the creativity of the people they work with, the same is actually true for yourself: you need to know how your creativity works and create space for your mind. Respect the timing but also understand that as a creative you are responsible for letting your own ideas flow and to see the big picture – and I think while inspiration plays a big part in that, it's also creating an everyday life for yourself that allows for some space/freedom/disconnection on a regular basis, so that you are not constantly just RE-ACTING, but actually CREATING. And while I said this in regard to creative work, I actually think it's true also for any other kind of work, relationships, friendships, and basically every aspect of our lives.

Space trip – yes / no?

Yes – I would totally be up for shooting in space. :)

New study reveals shocking news: love actually is the answer to everything.



Mischa Meyer is a young German director & photographer based in LA, with a well-established career background in editorial. He didn’t study anything, but that’s okay. He’s created award-winning work for brand clients like Nike, PlayStation, Mercedes-Benz, Sony Bravia, Audi, Coca-Cola, BMW, Vodafone and agencies including DDB, BBDO, Saatchi & Saatchi, and TBWA/CHIAT/DAY. Artists he’s worked with include Metallica, 30 Seconds to Mars, and Green Day. In 2018, Mischa produced and directed his first very own short film, ANT, which captured the attention of multiple Oscar® qualifying film festivals. His most recent directorial work includes projects for GRAMMY® nominated poet Sekou Andrews and Academy Award® winning actor Sean Penn for his non-profit CORE.

INTRO x MISCHA MEYER

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

I started by making skate videos and basketball mixtapes on Hi-8 cameras and Mini DV camcorders and editing those together on a friend’s computer in my teens. That’s also where I learned the power of editing and how music can elevate images like nothing else. The magical combination of the two really stuck with me. First time I ever got paid for anything in film was being a runner on a commercial shoot one night in December in my hometown of Stuttgart. Blocking off the road in an orange reflective vest, freezing my ass off. But I was so excited to be on a film set in the first place. That was a great experience. Being able to observe what all the people were doing. But it all started a lot earlier, with me watching a ton of movies on a daily basis as a young kid. Mostly bootlegged VHS cassettes that my neighbors brought over when looking after me, while my mum was out working nights. Basically feeding me movies for dinner. In retrospect: lucky me for having film loving kids around the neighborhood! That’s where I really fell in love with movies. Regarding your last question: hard work and staying persistent in chasing your dreams is probably the answer.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

I guess it would be a Mercedes-Benz commercial with the German national soccer team. Was a very new and different approach – also from an editing perspective – away from the rather old-man’s-car image, to a much younger generation.

— How do you try to be different?

I try to be very honest with the work. Finding something honest and interesting that stands out within the material.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

Oh for sure! Probably because you have to work really hard to gain experience in the first place. But there’s also experience in failure. You can’t buy experience. That’s why it’s so valuable. I try to gain experience every day and I’m super grateful for everything new I learn.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

You gain a huge load of experience at once in failure. You have to take a hard look at why something didn’t work. It will teach you a lot. It taught me that preparation is key. Even if you’re doing something rather freestyle in its essence, you gotta have a very clear vision of what it is you’re trying to capture. That way you can focus on finding what you’re actually looking for. Otherwise you’re just fishing, not knowing what it is you’re trying to capture in the first place.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

Investing into personal projects. Just making stuff. And my Leica most definitely.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

Listening to a song on single repeat for days. When I find new music, or rediscover old stuff and something really catches my ear, I’ll do that. Just getting my mind in a certain mood helps me focus. Also helps with editing the same sequence over and over again.



— In the last five years, what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

I embraced an honest look at things much more over the last couple of years. Trying to be truthful to what you do. This constantly evolves.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

Trying not to do too many things at once. The realization being that things take way longer for results that are usually worse than if you would have just focused on one thing at a time. I think I’ve also become better at just going out and doing things, instead of overthinking them a million times just to eventually not do them at all. So, I got better to saying no to too many things at once.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

Go for a run. Play some basketball. Meet some friends. Sometimes you need to step away from the problem, to readjust your perspective. Reset your brain and get some other input. Be it fresh air, a friend’s advice, a good laugh. Anything like that really helps. The questions you need to ask usually come in moments like these. And you’ll most likely have the answer by then, too.

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Depends really on what you’re advertising and how you’re doing it. You’re advertising a song and an artist in a music video and most would consider that art. As long as it’s interesting and has something to say. The field of advertising is quite broad and filled with lots of great talent. I’d consider most of Jonathan Glazer’s work art. In recent memory, there was work like Spike Jonze’s work for Kenzo and Apple that really stood out, or the “I’m a Londoner” piece by Megaforce – so off the hook and super fun. Or “The Diamond Journey” by Ian Pons Jewell. That certainly transcends into art. Those pieces definitely transpire into pop culture and therefore become art.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

Bruce Davidson, Robert Frank, Anne Leibowitz, Alex Webb, Susan Meiselas, Harry Gruyaert. Because I marvel over how they capture people, expressions, emptiness, love, and the world surrounding us.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

They should ignore their preconceived notions of how exactly they’re going to do things. You certainly need vision, but you also need to be able to forget everything you know when things don’t go your way. And learn how to deal with the situation at hand. Be ready to improvise. Obstacles will always occur, you might lose that location and you might not get that actor pick. Make it work with the other one, by adapting your concept and vision to the circumstances you’re dealt with. The main actor is not as good at reading his lines as you thought he’d be? But the supporting actor is? Give him the lines and find a solution to make it part of the concept. The problem is not a problem as long as you have a solution. Your job is to find solutions to problems. The rest is artistic expression.

Q&A x MISCHA MEYER

Any morning routine?

Coffee and some good music to get me started.

Tell me something that makes you cry.

Forrest Gump.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?

Being in love and realizing how happy I was.

What's the first way how you ever made money?

Delivering newspapers in my neighborhood at the age of 13, I think.

What's your earliest memory?

Drowning in a swimming pool and almost dying. Also the star destroyer entering frame from atop in "Star Wars" on someone's TV.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?

Take pictures, cook, travel, make movies.

What do you struggle with?

Not losing that focus when there are too many things going on at once.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?

It turned out a lot better than expected, but somehow got me to exactly where I always wanted to be.

What are you most guilty about?

Putting the two of you [Rocco Kopecny and Andreas Roth] together. Most definitely!

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?

Not really, to be honest. I guess even when I did get in trouble, I usually managed to find a solution to the problem and make things right. Maybe I memorized the solutions from the experiences that gained more trouble in the first place.

What's your favorite business in the world?

None of your business. That's my favorite business!

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?

Dropping out of school and really taking ownership over my own life. I never looked back once since that day. I had just turned 18. My mother had lost her job a few years before. We were struggling quite a bit financially. So I had to go to the "Arbeitsamt" to file for welfare "Hartz IV" on my 18th birthday. They declared me an adult now living with another adult, my mother. They had cut her "Hartz IV" in half for that fact. Even though I was still going to school and had small after school jobs. That was a pretty devastating moment. Just made me feel like I was worthless before I even had a chance to really work. A government approved stamp that said: "You can't even help yourself." On top of that I really disliked school. So one day I decided not to wait around for someone to lend me a hand. But instead to get out there and get it myself. Every time. That really stuck with me ever since.

What's the book you've gifted the most?

In which year did you write this question-naire!? Ha! I'm huge on filmmaking books and photo books; novels not so much. Probably a Bruce Davidson or Syd Mead book.

What was your dream job growing up?

Astronaut. Until I discovered it wasn't all floating around in space 365 days a year. Luckily I also dreamed of becoming a filmmaker. So that always was the dream.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?

How many billion light years away is the next civilization on another planet?

What's your key to happiness?

Enjoying what you do and the people that surround you.

Your directing idols / people you look up to?

Stanley, Alfred, Quentin, Francis, Marty, Akira, Sergio, Fincher, Michael Jordan, Dr. Dre, Anne Leibowitz, Martin Luther King Jr.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?

A device that reads your subconscious and writes it down into the notes app on your phone. That'd be interesting to read and take notes from and make it a lot easier to memorize feelings and ideas.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?

Totally depends on what type of inspiration I'm looking for and what mood I wanna lean into. Definitely music that motivates me to go into a certain direction, or that's a direct contrast to where I'm going, to see if that contrast inspires me.

What's the best film you've seen in the past years?

"Apollo 11" might be the one. Saw that about a year ago in an IMAX theatre. I think it's one of the most powerful things mankind has ever put on film. 65mm film that was sitting in a temperature controlled vault ever since. Real footage. No sets, no fiction. Just bonkers that humans built and achieved all that.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?

Jules Winnfield & Vincent Vega, Luke Skywalker, Harmonica, Tetsuo, The Bride, Batman, Mark "Gor" Lee, Ripley, James Bond, Rick Deckard, Darth Vader, Michael Corleone.

What's your favorite food and drink?

A good margherita pizza and a non-alcoholic Erdinger or Beck's.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?

Being a great surfer.

How do you wish to die?

Doing what I love to do. Whatever that is by the time I get there.

What is your main fault?

Overanalyzing my thoughts.

Who are your heroes in real life?

My friends and everyone who makes up my "family."

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?

Story is king! Always! The film will tell you what to do if you pay the proper attention. Magic moments always happen when you least expect it. So be ready and keep an open mind.

What was your last Google search?

Can an AI answer all of your questions for me?

What kinds of habits do you have?

I like running. It's something I need to do at least two or three times a week to keep a fresh mind. A habit I can have anywhere in the world. All you need is a pair of shoes. Other than that, once I find a good restaurant or coffee place and an item on the menu that I really like, I will always go back to that place and eat pretty much the same thing every time I'm there. So any time I wanna try something new, I literally have to go find another place and find my one favorite thing on the menu there that I can have every time I go to that place.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

"Obey?"

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?

Kendrick Lamar, JR, Kaws, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Nine Inch Nails, Banksy, YBN Cordae, Thundercat, SZA, The Blaze, Daft Punk, Anderson .Paak, Tyler The Creator, Jimi Hendrix, Frank Ocean, Johnny Greenwood, Matt Black, Nirvana, Jay-Z.

Who have you worked with that you've been especially intrigued by?

Fortunately quite a lot of people along the way. Most recently Sean Penn and Samuel Bayer, who both have this "just do it" mentality. Embracing the unknown. I really like that. Overall just a lot of people. From sound mixers and colorists to cinematographers and VFX artists. There's usually always something that I'm super intrigued by, if people are especially good at what they do.

What is something that people don't know about you?

That I have a green belt in Jujutsu.

What's something you always need on set?

Coffee, my notes, and a speaker for music.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?

Spanish.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?

US, Mexico, or Canada.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

"Don't be too happy too early."

Also, "love life."

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?

Dr. Dre.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?

9.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

Rewatch "Shaun of the Dead."

What are you really not very good at?

Multitasking.

What is your favorite quote?

"Just Do It."

What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?

What CV?

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?

Be prepared. Always!

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?

A great script in combination with a world that feels real. For example, the original "Blade Runner" had a much smaller budget than the new one and therefore is a more confined movie. The few wide shots that we get to see are just enough for my imagination to fill in the blanks.

I guess if a movie achieves to make me forget that I'm watching a movie. That's the best quality a movie can have. If you can get lost in it.



What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?

"2001: A Space Odyssey," "Pulp Fiction," "Blade Runner," "Vertigo," "The Shining," "The Godfather," "Goodfellas," "A Better Tomorrow," "Once Upon A Time In The West," "Dr. Strangelove," "Star Wars," "Forrest Gump," "Goldfinger," "Kill Bill," "There Will Be Blood," "Full Metal Jacket," "The Big Lebowski," "Chinatown," "No Country for Old Men," "T2," "Alien," "Heat," "The Birds," "Apocalypse Now"... The list is too long, but these are probably the main ones.

The first three probably being the most inspiring, for reasons of:

1. Showcasing what a film can truly be. That a film doesn't have to be a three act structure and a bunch of dialogue from the get-go to draw you in or be meaningful. The raw power of what a film can be. – 2. Getting creative with some of the most basic stories and giving them such a refreshing spin with fun and authentic characters and dialogue. The hitmen that are out to return something for their boss. The out-of-age boxer that's supposed to go down in round three; the Bonnie & Clyde couple. But instead of the "kicking in the door



SEKOU ANDREWS & THE STRING THEORY — "LOVE SAYS"

CORE — "GUARDIANS"



and shooting everyone up," we get to hang out with them for the whole day and just listen to their weird conversations and spend all the moments with them before and after they do their thing. That approach is what makes it so unique and intriguing to watch. And again breaking up classic three act structures. – 3. World creation and what type of questions a film can pose upon an audience.

What are we not asking that we should?

What a movie can be, instead of what it cannot be.

Who should sit next to you on the plane?

Snakes.

Your most interesting nightmare?

Forgetting to answer this question.

Which invention from the last 30 years would you have liked to have done yourself?

The iPhone.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?

Challenging people to think different. Also art is always a reflection of the times we live in and often a window into the future of what may lie ahead of us.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?

Taking pictures & playing basketball.

Do you like things that are just beautiful?

Or rather imperfect beautiful?

Definitely imperfect beautiful. Just beautiful sounds very boring to me.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?

Both. Always depends on how big and heavy

the constraints of our past are. The more tools to change we receive from our past, the more free we are to change constantly.

What scares you the most?

Not putting enough effort into something and to blow it for that reason.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?

Santa Teresa, Costa Rica.

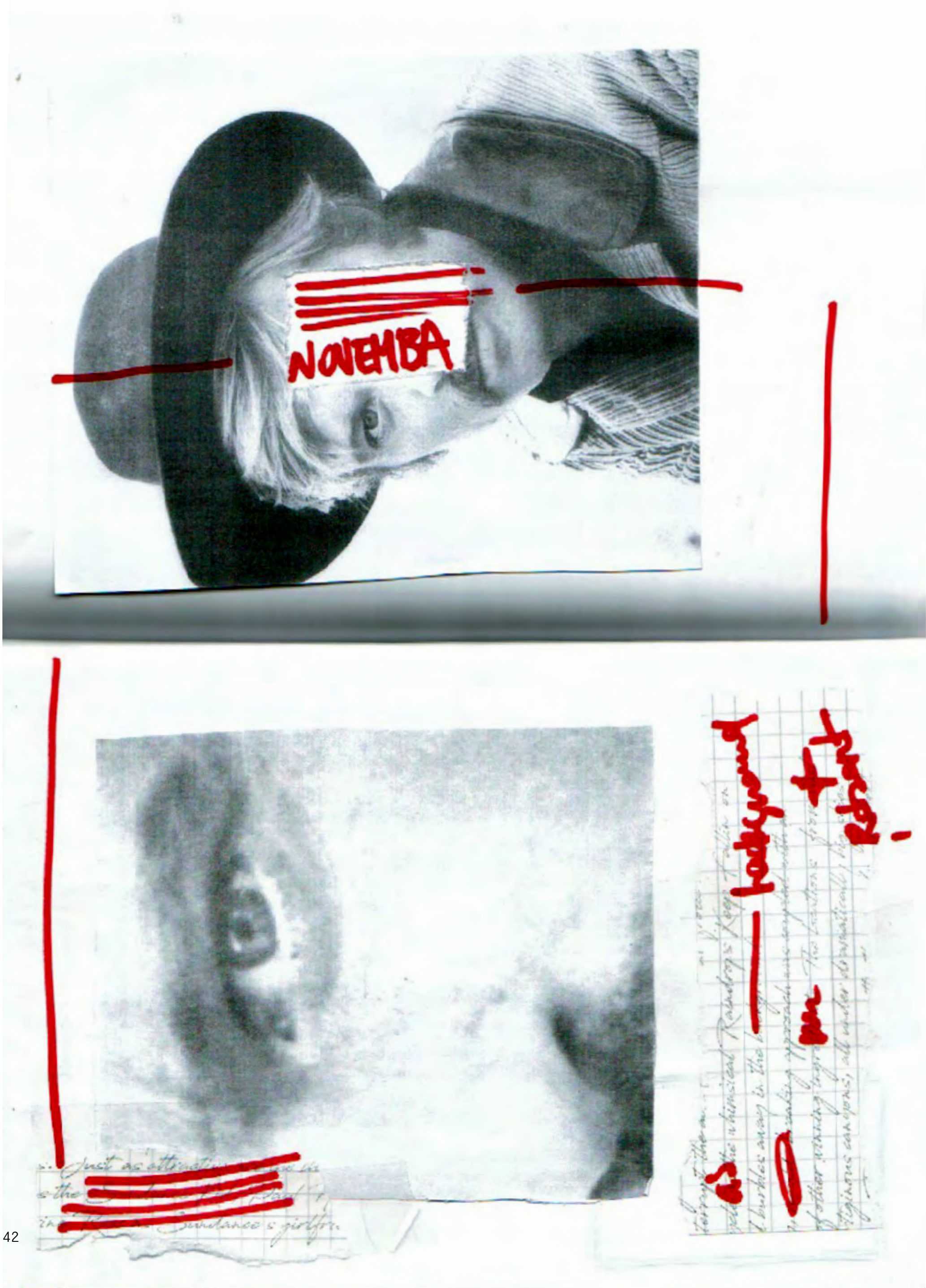
And weirdly enough, LA.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?

Overall it allows for worldwide communication like never before which is amazing, but it also needs to be educated as to what a slightly healthier way of what social utilizing social media means.

Space trip – yes / no?

Fuck yes!



Blair Macdonald and Oliver Clark were born on the same day in November. Astrologically speaking, they were fated to collaborate. After a much-beloved-but-completely-unsuccessful sandwich shop in Sydney, they decided to pursue what they do best: documenting life without the boring bits. They're enamored by people, culture, far-flung places, and the challenge of interpreting it all through the eye of a camera. Shortlisted in 2013 for the prestigious Cannes YDA award and shortlisted again in 2015 at D&AD, Novemba have gone on to work for clients such as Bose, Bacardi, Ballentine's and Coke Burn to name a few.

INTRO x NOVEMBA

— How did you get started? What's your story? How did you end up where you're now?

We're best mates, been knocking about together since we were 14 years old. We bought a camera when we first moved to London, at the age of 19, and started messing around making short films and documentaries. How did we end up here? A lot of luck, perseverance, fuck-ups, lost DV tapes, making friends, learning from people more talented than us.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

We submitted a video for a branded film competition for Chevrolet, and won! First prize was a trip to Sydney; it's where we're originally from and the whole reason we entered. When we arrived, our mums were waiting for us at the airport, beaming with pride. In their eyes, we'd damn well made it, and in some ways I guess we kinda had – our commercials career was up and running.

— How do you try to be different?

Well for a start, there's two of us sharing the directing hat. There's this inherent duality in the way we approach things, the way we think. Our process is a kind

of dialogue, an exchange of ideas. It's a fluid thing, about listening as much as it is about speaking. Most of the time we can manage to leave our egos aside and gravitate to the best idea, regardless of in what brain it originated.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

For sure. Our experiences influence us greatly, they shape our thoughts and our decision making process. But beyond that, experience holds a special significance because it's the act of doing, making, living and breathing. As two friends, on this journey together, our experience is our life and our story. That's really special to us. Hopefully it could be for others too someday.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a "favorite failure" of yours?

All the clichés about failure are true, right? Try again. Fail again. Fail better. At times failure really bites, but on the whole it means we're still learning, and ain't that a blessing?

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you've ever made?

Standing desks. Bitcoin?

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

Oliver: I love washing dishes, it's instant gratification.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Oliver: Flossing.
Blair: Surfing.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

Work. Pitches. It's the realization that time is our most valuable commodity.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

Simplify. Step away from the computer, work in a notebook. The internal dialogue for destressing normally goes like this:

We've been here before right? — Yeah ...
And did everything turn out ok? — Well, yeah.
And did failure have any real consequences on the quality of your life, or of the people you love? — No, no it didn't. Nor humanity at large? — ... no.
Ok, so fucking relax.

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Hopefully a bit of both, as often as possible.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

Bill Henson, Tracey Moffit, Robert Frank, Martin Parr.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

We never went to college, so not sure they'd need any advice from us! And they should ignore advice from other people, too.

Q&A x NOVEMBA

Any morning routine?
Lemon water. Yoga. Coffee.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?
Oliver: My wedding day.
Blair: “Toy Story 4.”

What’s the first way you ever made money?
Oliver: Washing cars.
Blair: Selling my paintings at my mum’s dinner parties.

If you had all the time in the world, what would you do?
Oliver: Only a little, everyday.
Blair: Learn multiple instruments and languages.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?
As teenagers, getting caught for a fraction of all the dumb shit we got up to.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Moving to London at 19.

What was your dream job growing up?
Oliver: Rally car driver.
Blair: Lumberjack.

What’s your key to happiness?
Gratitude.

Your directing idols or people you look up to?
Plenty.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
Oliver: Bon Iver – “Skinny Love.”
Blair: Today it was “Control” by Emmit Fenn.

What’s the best film you’ve seen in the past years?
Narrative: “Victoria,” “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri,” “Parasite.”
Documentary: “Anvil: The Story of Anvil.”

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Oliver: Drawing and painting.
Blair: Photographic memory.

How do you wish to die?
Blair: In my sleep, after a long and meaningful life.
Oliver: In the arms of my beloved.

What is your main fault?
Oliver: A sham guru in India once told me “You don’t know when to tell people to fuck off.” There’s probably some truth in that.

What was your last Google search?
Is floss recyclable?

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
Every Day Beautiful.

What’s the book you’ve gifted the most?
Oliver: “No One Belongs Here More Than You” by Miranda July.
Blair: “Cloudstreet” by Tim Winton.



EVERY DAY BEAUTIFUL.

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?
Trey Edward Shultz, Alma Har’el, Nadine Ijewere, Norm Li, Dean Martindale.

What is something that people don’t know about you?
We’re born on the same day.

What’s something you always need on set?
Positive energy. Coffee. Water. Call sheet.

What’s the next big thing you’d like to learn?
Play a musical instrument, draw.

What’s your favorite country to shoot in?
We’ve had some fantastic experiences filming in Brazil.

What’s the best advice you’ve ever received?
Fuck ‘em.

If you think of success, who’s the first person that jumps into your head?
The Rock.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
Outwardly, like a 2. But you don’t want to see what’s inside.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Blend in to survive.

What are you really not very good at?
Taxes.

What is your favorite quote?
‘I’m not really a quote person.’ – Anonymous

What didn’t you get a chance to include on your CV?
University.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
Keep going and enjoy the ride.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
Originality. Also if a film genuinely moves you, even if only for a moment, that can be the tipping point into a great film.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
“Mad Max” – world building.
“Old Boy” – style, pathos.
“Les Amants Du Pont Neuf” – pure cinema.

What are we not asking that we should?
Lol, think you’ve about covered it.

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
Oliver: Usually Blair. If not, hopefully someone small, who smells good.

Your most interesting nightmare?
Blair: Being dragged out to sea, and then realizing it was a dream because I could see underwater.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?
Shellfish – crabs and lobster.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
Guess it was a way of looking at and interpreting the reality around us. A form of expression.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Oliver: Dancing.
Blair: Surfing.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
Flawed beauty is for sure the most interesting.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
Don’t think we can escape the past, but nor does it completely define us.

What scares you the most?
Having to someday get a ‘real job.’

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
Blair: Litchfield National Park.
Oliver: Outback Australia.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Both. It’s powerful, that’s for sure.

Space trip – yes / no?
100%



ADIDAS — “SORRY”
“DON’T CARRY A KNIFE –
LONDON NEEDS YOU ALIVE”



INTRO x MARIO CLEMENT

— *How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?*

It’s kind of a happy accident to be honest. But I guess everything started with music. As a teenager and a twenty-something, I used to be a musician. Touring the country, recording two albums and all of that and then somehow, I ended up producing, writing and directing music videos for other artists. I knew I wanted to make films since I was a kid, but I didn’t dare to apply for film school, being too afraid of being rejected. So, I studied design and eventually found out that music, film, and design are deeply connected and not to be looked at as different entities but as one wonderful, endless space. And so, I went for it trying to become better day-by-day.

— *What was the project that jump-started your career?*

My first music video was for a German rapper called Prinz Pi for a song named “1,40m.”

— *How do you try to be different?*

I don’t know if there is a way to TRY to be different. In music there are only 12 notes. Yet, there are millions of ways to look at them. That’s how I also feel about film. I guess I have a rather minimalistic approach to my work. I always try to distill the essence of a story before I put it into a setting. For me it’s always about human interaction, communication. So, when I start writing or thinking about a film, I always start by imagining the story happening inside a black box. What do you really need to tell a story? What is it about? How does a narrative unfold without a location or props and all of that? That’s the essence of your story.

— *Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?*

I think the most important currency in our world is empathy. Because to really “experience” you have to be empathetic enough to be able to put your ego aside. Watch and listen. Then you can truly experience, reflect, learn from it and eventually become a better human being and also a better filmmaker. At least that’s my point of view. One of the things I love most about making films is the ability to change perspectives, meet people you would never have met, learn about subjects you would never be in touch with if you wouldn’t be making a film about

Mario Clement is a Berlin-based director who loves the drama and romance that is inherent in the smallest moments and subtle gestures. His commercials and music videos are driven by powerful performances, sophisticated cinematography, true cinematic storytelling, and a profound sense for casting, styling, and production design. The German with Brazilian roots, with a Master’s degree in Communication & Design, started his career, first as a (ghost) writer, then worked as a producer in music videos and commercial film. His works also include documentaries and intimate portrait films that always follow a highly refined, cinematic visual approach. Right now he is developing his first feature film script. Clement is based in Berlin and works internationally.



them and experience situations that are not your own but the experiences of others. As a filmmaker you have the privilege to be invited to be a part of these experiences and to eventually interpret them in your work.

— *How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?*

I’m not sure if I have a right answer for this question. It’s hard to really “fail,” I think. In any creative process you have to “fail” all the time to get somewhere. Making a film, that means: Stuff doesn’t work out – may that be your story, casting, finding the right locations, fitting it into a budget – you will make mistakes, hit road blocks and new challenges along the way but in the end, you always make it work somehow. There is always a result. So to be honest, I don’t think there is failure in creativity, there are challenges and problems to be solved.

— *What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?*

Jane Austen adaptations. Listening to other people’s conversations in restaurants.

— *In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?*

My son Aari. He’s making my life better every day.

— *When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?*

CBD has helped me out a couple of times when I got stressed out on set, but mostly I just take a break, sleep, take a shower, and spend time with my son, which always helps me to calm down.

— *Is advertising art or business to you?*

Business. And that’s totally fine with me. To me commercial filmmaking is problem-solving. Someone has a problem (mostly selling something to someone) but hasn’t got the language and the tools and that’s why they hire me – to solve that problem. Do I put my personal feelings in there? Do I make it my own? Do I try to make it artistic / visually rich and innovative? Of course! Does that make it art? I don’t think so. “Art” has to be free from all restrictions. The moment I am financially dependent from my “art” deprives me from its sheer existence.

— *Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?*

Alex Prager – It amazes me how one can create such a stylized interpretation of the world we live in and at the same time speak so much truth about us human beings.
Magdalena Wosinska – Authentic, raw, sexy, and beautiful at the same time.
Robert Capa – War photography always amazes me. It shows us how trivial “evil” is. Capa’s work is special. It’s so close to the people he captures that it gives me chills just looking at his photography.
Stuart Winecoff – I love the sensibility in all of his work. I have the feeling I can see that the people he photographs actually trust him.
Purienne – It’s just fucking hot.

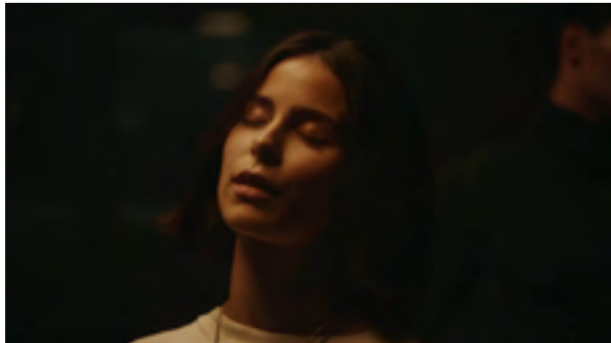
— *What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?*

Don’t try to imitate your idols. You can only find disappointment in that.
Be honest to yourself. Do not try to be someone you’re not.
Try to ignore what you see on Instagram. It’s poison.



ADIDAS —
“WHY WE RUN”

BMW —
“GO AND GET LOST”



LENA —
“THANK YOU”

Q&A x MARIO CLEMENT

Any morning routine?

My son wakes me up at 6. We read, play, sing, have breakfast. Then I walk to my office and start working.

Tell me something that makes you cry.

Unselfish human beings, generosity, melodramatic pop music, Jane Austen adaptations, rage.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?

I don't mean to sound corny but there was a lot of crying involved at my wedding.

What's the first way you ever made money?

As a graphic designer at a small discotheque, somewhere on the countryside.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?

Probably getting nothing done. Time is precious because it's limited.

What struggles you?

The demands I place on myself. Comparing myself with others. People that are always loud.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?

I'm not sure it did.

What do you feel most guilty about?

The guilt of the western world – selfishness.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?

When I was in elementary school I did something that I can't even remember anymore but I still do know that my mom was really angry at me. In school I read a story where a kid got in trouble, his or her parents got really mad but then this kid went missing and obviously the parents got really worried and scared and as the child came back, all the anger was forgotten. So, one day after school I just hid inside my parent's car inside the garage for a couple of hours, hoping my mom would eventually find me and all the trouble would be forgotten. It didn't work out so well.

What's your favorite business in the world?
I guess I lucked out until now.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
There are two. Losing my dad. Meeting my son.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
Raymond Carver – “Short Cuts.”

What was your dream job growing up?
Becoming a stunt man.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
Does all of this even mean anything?

What's your key to happiness?
Love.

Who are your directing idols or people you look up to?
Oh, too many: Denis Villeneuve, Joachim Trier, Mike Mills, Darren Aronofsky, Steve McQueen, Kathryn Bigelow, Todd Haynes, Miles Jay, Noah Baumbach, David Michod, Luca Guadagnino ...

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
A dream recorder.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
I listen to tracks by: Johann Johannsson, Son Lux, The National, Joep Beving, Haim, Gesaffelstein, Olfuar Arnalds, Maggie Rogers, Max Richter

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?
“Call Me By Your Name” by Guadagnino, maybe? Or perhaps “Incendies” by Denis Villeneuve.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
In fiction or in real life, I enjoy people that are complex.

What's your favorite food and drink?
Italian food, French wine.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Understanding mathematics.

How do you wish to die?
Happy.

What is your main fault?
Impatience.

Who are your heroes in real life?
My wife, my mom, my aunt.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
Filmmaking is a collaborative craft. You can't control everything, and that's what makes it so special. It's bigger than you are.

What was your last Google search?
“Best acoustic guitars under 500 Euros.”

What kinds of habits do you have?
I tend to say “Mhm” a lot.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
IT'S ALL MADE UP.

IT'S
ALL
MADE
UP.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
4.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Probably die.

What are you really not very good at?
Pretending to be enthusiastic about things that I don't care.

What is your favorite quote?
“I have come to the belief that the whole world is an enigma, a harmless enigma that is made terrible by our own mad attempt to interpret it as though it had an underlying truth.”

What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?
Spending time in another country for a longer period.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
Your work is just as good as your team.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
Great storytelling. Writing is what always needs to be the basis to every great film. I have seen many bad films that are beautiful but also many films that are incredible but not very good looking.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
This might not be my favorite movie in the world but when I was 13 my dad took me to see “The Green Mile.” I had never felt my heart beat that loud watching something on a screen. The fear, the compassion, the heart-break ... I had seen lots of movies before that and I always loved watching films but this day – for the first time in my life – I really understood what “cinema” means. A random list of inspiring films: “Black Swan,” “Atonement,” “One Hour Photo,” “Louder Than Bombs,” “To The Wonder,” “Sicario,” “Shame,” “Short Term 12,” “Zero Dark Thirty” ... (too many)

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Watching films and music.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
What is beauty?

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
We are a product of our past and our present. I'm not sure if we're actually able to “change” who we are.

What scares you the most?
Time.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Both.

Space trip – yes / no?
Yes.

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
I really enjoy working with people who are much more experienced than me.

What is something that people don't know about you?
That I spent almost 10 years being part of a boy group with guitars.

What's something you always need on set?
My director's viewfinder.

The next big thing you'd like to learn?
French.

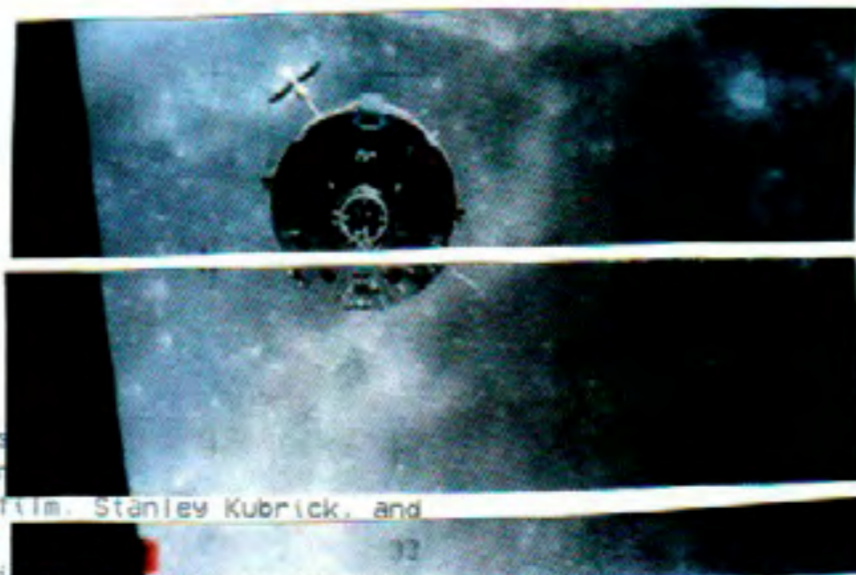
What's your favorite country to shoot in?
I love shooting on stage.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
You can't know everything.



IVANA BOBIC

Since its premiere in 1968, the film 2001: A Space Odyssey has been interpreted by numerous people, ranging from professional film critics to writers and science fiction fans. The director of the film, Stanley Kubrick, and the writer, Arthur C. Clarke, wanted to leave the film open to a variety of allegorical interpretations, purposely presenting the film in a way that allowed for multiple interpretations without the underlying thread being apparent; a concept illustrated by the final shot of the film, which contains the image of the embryonic "Starchild". Nonetheless, in July 2018, Kubrick's interpretation of the ending scene was presented after being newly found in an early interview.



Ivana Bobic is a London-based director and writer. She has created an array of film projects from music videos and branded content to narrative shorts as well as commercials. With a background in graphic design, her films blend striking imagery with perspective, fashion aesthetic, and intriguing narratives. Her ground-breaking ad for Coppafeel was the first campaign to show a female nipple on daytime TV! She has recently collaborated with Sigrid, the first of which was voted by Pitchfork as 2nd Best Video for January 2018. Ivana has developed a strong visual style working with fashion brands like Stella McCartney, Mulberry, Au Point Rouge, Adidas, and Whistles.

INTRO x IVANA BOBIC

— *How did you get started? What's your story? How did you end up where you're now?*

My first job was as a runner on a short film when I was 18. The shoot was at Pinewood in a studio between the "007" stage and a huge period set built for the film "Alexander." It blew my mind. All those departments working together to make something creative. That's when I fell in love with filmmaking.

Getting from there to here has been a long, winding road ... and still is.

— *What was the project that jump-started your career?*

I made a strange short film about a priest plagued with doubts. It was set in a bleak Welsh landscape. When it was finished I put on a screening and by chance the visual director of Stella McCartney saw it. He asked me to make films for the fashion label and I spent two years doing that. Around that time, I toured with the cult noise band S.C.U.M. making live visuals for their shows. Two very different outlets for filmmaking!

— *How do you try to be different?*

I don't try. I'm not too concerned with being different.
I do think it's important to be myself.

— *Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?*

Of course. Life is full of joys and sorrows and nothing can replace experience. I was always a “say yes and figure it out later” person, which is a risky strategy but it exposes you to a world of experiences. Ultimately that’s a good thing.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

Failure is inevitable in filmmaking. Films are expensive, require contradictory skills, so many people, so little time and all under extreme pressure. Something is bound to go wrong. But I think it's about how you deal with it. My favorite (or most ridiculous) failure was on a car shoot in St Petersburg. The actress couldn't drive, we lost the unit vehicles, the police escort went home early. As if that wasn't enough, the car got hijacked at a red light with me and the DP in it. Turns out it was the angry owner trying to get home before all the bridges closed. We didn't speak Russian, he didn't speak English. It was chaos. We only got one shot of the car driving away but it's all we needed.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you've ever made?

Learning yoga. Seriously, it has made me a more patient, less anxious person.

— *What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?*

I LOVE to brief every department with detailed, nerdy documents. So much prep is done remotely and ultimately it empowers everyone to do a good job.

— *In the last five years what new belief, behaviour, or habit has most improved your life?*

Taking time to think. It's so rarely appreciated but you have to allow yourself time, or demand the time to make decisions properly. In all aspects of life.

— *What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?*

As a yes person it's hard. But I've become better at focusing on projects that mean something to me. It's easy to get pigeon-holed (especially as a woman) so you have to work hard to stay on a route that you're happy with. Otherwise you wake up in 10 years and wonder how you ever got there.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily, what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

When I'm overwhelmed or unfocused I read. It's grounding and helps tame my mind when it's all over the place.

— *Is advertising art or business to you?*

I believe all filmmaking has an art to it. Advertising is such a sophisticated, subversive language. When it's done right, some real innovations can happen.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

So many. I love Guy Bourdin for his melancholy and surrealism. Juergen Teller for his sense of humor and directness. Viviane Sassen for her use of light and shadow.

— *What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world?*

Ha! Say yes and figure it out later? No. Seriously ... Focus on the idea. People always said that to me and I didn't



believe them but it's really true. A good idea will have its own legs.

— *What should they ignore?*

Don't worry about the technology. It's great but should be serving your idea, rather than the other way around.

Q&A x IVANA BOBIC

Any morning routine?
Coffee and yoga.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
It's too sad to tell you.

When did you last cry tears of joy?
When I got married. And when I (briefly) won a pitch for the band Liars (before they canned the track).

What's the first way you ever made money?
At 16 I was a waitress in a banqueting hall. I was awful at it. On the first day, I lit a candle and set fire to my shirt.



What's your earliest memory?
My dad grabbing my hand at a traffic light in Rome. The sense of danger etched it into my memory. I was 2.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Travel. There's so much of the world to see. And make feature films, lots of them!

How has your life turned out differently from what you expected?
I've learnt that anything can happen. It's better not to expect.

What are you most guilty about?
Worrying. It's not constructive.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?
Who me? Never!

What's your favorite business in the world?
I have a lot of respect for people who make things with their hands. So anyone from a carpenter to a chef.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Labor. And loss. At the same time.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
Can I say album instead? "The Velvet Underground" by the Velvet Underground. Everyone should have it.

What was your dream job growing up?
I wanted to be a fashion designer but when I got to try it at university I realized I'd miss all the other aspects of art.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
What is consciousness?

What's your key to happiness?
Love.

Your directing idols or people you look up to?
It's better not to idolize the people you're working with, it messes with the job!!

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
A sleep tablet so you don't have to actually do it. Apparently you spend 17 years of your life sleeping ... that's way too much.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
It changes all the time and depends on the project. At the moment I'm obsessed with Kevin Morby, Nick Cave, T. Rex's "Cosmic Dancer" and weirdly enough that track from Ferris Bueller "Danke Schoen."

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?
"Raw." A coming-of-age film seen through the lens of body horror. It's effortless, clever and brutal with an unexpected female character.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Vladimir and Estragon in "Waiting for Godot."

What's your favorite food and drink?
Ramen. And a cold beer.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Singing. It's such a pure expression, I'd love to be able to sing properly.

How do you wish to die?
Happy. And not too soon.

What is your main fault?
On set I instantly lose all my stuff. I have to tape everything to my monitor.

Who are your heroes in real life?
My sister. She's an amazing producer. Maybe one day I can convince her to work with me!

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
A good 1st A.D. is worth their weight in gold. Don't shoot anything you don't want to use. It'll always sneak up in the edit. Be kind.

What was your last Google search?
What the angle of the Earth's tilt is. 23.5! Seems quite a big tilt to me.

What kinds of habits do you have?
I never sit down while I'm shooting. And I never leave set between shots. It keeps me focused.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
All you need is love!

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?
Pierre Huyghe.

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
Malcolm McDowell, so wise and kind. And Micheal Howells, who sadly passed away a few years ago. He was an incredible production designer who worked with John Galliano and Sally Potter on Orlando. I feel so lucky to have worked with him.

What is something that people don't know about you?
I'm an introvert.

What's something you always need on set?
My own monitor. No negotiation.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
I want to direct drama and work on longer projects. Developing characters and experimenting with narrative is something I'd love to spend more time doing.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?
I last shot in Bulgaria and was really impressed. The crew were excellent.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
Don't give up.



If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
Kubrick. He was an obsessive researcher and was never rushed.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
Ha. On the outside 0, on the inside 10.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Disguise myself as a zombie.

What are you really not very good at?
Performance.

What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?
I never had a CV!

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
Always be in the present.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
It has to tell some kind of truth, to hold a mirror up to the world.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?

EQUINOX — "FURTHERMORE"



SIGRID — "STRANGERS"

"2001: Space Odyssey." My family watches it together every New Year's Eve. It depicts the fragility and miracle of life.
"Sunset Boulevard." What an amazing opening – narrated from beyond the grave. It's the ultimate noir.
And Fellini's "8 1/2" – it's like a dream and it's the best film about filmmaking.

What are we not asking that we should?
Better to ask 'how' rather than 'why.'

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
Iggy Pop.

Your most interesting nightmare?
That I've finished a job only to wake up and still have yet to do it!

Which invention from the last 30 years would you have liked to done yourself?
The Post-it. So simple.

All you need is love!

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?
It would have to be at my favourite restaurant, St. John in London. They'd know what to do.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
To say that we exist.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Snowboarding. In another life that's what I'd do.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
There's beauty in everything.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
I think we're free to change, we just have to remember it.

What scares you the most?
Uncertainty.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
I'm in Bali at the moment, this seems up there in terms of beauty. Also the Dolomites.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
I'm not on social media anymore (I know that's a crazy thing in this day and age). When I realized I was spending so much time on there, I had to give it up!

Space trip – yes / no?
No. I like the Earth, I think I'd miss it too much.

— *How did you get started? What's your story? How did you end up where you're now?*

— *What was the project that jump-started your career?*

— *How do you try to be different?*

— *Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?*

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you've ever made?

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

— *In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?*

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

— *Is advertising art or business to you?*

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

— *What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?*





Any morning routine?
Green tea and ideally some sort of work out in the morning.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
Classical music (sometimes).

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?
Cutting onions yesterday evening ... lol.

What's the first way you ever made money?
I was selling miscellaneous objects in front of our house – I had a table and a sunshade – like my own flea market stand. I was probably 7 or 8 years old.

What's your earliest memory?
Sadly I'm not an elephant ... my memory sucks a bit.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Traveling. Visit every country, city, inch of this planet.

What do you struggle with?
Being patient.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
I guess it's quite okay like it is at the moment.

What are you most guilty about?
I'm not really guilty about something particular but I try to stop worrying so much. It just takes so much time and energy.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?
It might not be the first time but when I was young, a friend and I sprayed on a few doorbells.
The neighbors were not so amused.

What's your favorite business in the world?
When I was younger I would say NIKE – because I was a big fan. Nowadays, I would say AIRBNB because I use it a lot.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Probably moving to Los Angeles directly after film school. It was a great vibe and overall feeling – would love to recreate that.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
“Shoe Dog” – Phil Knight's biography. There you go ... NIKE again ...

What was your dream job growing up?
Tennis professional.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
Is there another lifeform in the universe?

What's your key to happiness?
Sunshine, sport – or ideally both together.

Your directing idols / people you look up to?
David Fincher, Tony and Ridley Scott and many more. All the 90's directors/movies I was growing up with.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
A teleportation machine like the one they used in the Star Trek universe. It would make travelling so much easier.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
“Time” by Hans Zimmer (on a 10-hour loop).

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?
“Parasite” by Bong Joon-ho.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Patrick Bateman, James Bond, Calvin and Hobbes ...

What's your favorite food and drink?
It varies – open for new things. Food: Sushi or a good ramen at the moment. Drink: Depends on the season – Sake or a fresh coconut.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
If you give me a list of natural talents I'll let you know.

How do you wish to die?
While being asleep.

What is your main fault?
Being impatient.

Who are your heroes in real life?
Gandhi ...

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
1. A good crew having your back is essential.
2. Having a plan is great but be open for new things to happen.
3. Performance is key.

What was your last Google search?
Natural talents ... ha!

What kinds of habits do you have?
I wear this black cap and I try to get rid of it but it always comes back to me.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
Just do it!

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
Paul Cameron (DP). I had the chance to shoot

a commercial with him through RSA in Los Angeles. He was a big collaborator of Tony Scott's – one of my idols – which is why it was a special moment for me.

What is something that people don't know about you?
I'm not human – I'm an alien.

What's something you always need on set?
My own little monitor booth – ideally.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
I have a few languages on my list ... but I guess the first thing: motorbike license.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?
It depends ... I haven't shot everywhere yet but for now LA was pretty cool.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
Step by step – prioritize.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
Roger Federer.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
7 ... maybe ... sometimes more, sometimes less.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Binge watch all the series that I haven't seen yet.

What are you really not very good at?
Doing one thing at a time ... I have a monkey brain ... ha!

What is your favorite quote?
“If you can dream it, you can do it!”

What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?
I played piano and did ballet when I was super young.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
There's no right way of doing things.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
The overall arc – I like intelligent thrillers and movies which turn around at the very end.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
“Se7en,” “The Game” ... actually just because of what I said above.

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
Ideally no one – like to have some alone time up there.

Your most interesting nightmare?
Haven't had any for some time now.

Which invention from the last 30 years would you've liked to have done yourself?
Airbnb, Amazon, Google ... any questions?

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?

Probably all the junk food there is.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
To control crazy minds.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Sports, like tennis or golf – back in the day, also gaming. Nowadays, a good book.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
I like both.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
I guess the past and our memories make up a big part of us, but I always believe in change.

What scares you the most?
Being unprepared.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
Tricky one but I guess Lady Elliott Island in the Great Barrier Reef.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
For business it's an enrichment – for private life it's definitely a threat. It's about the balance, I guess.

Space trip – yes / no?
Interested: Yes, but for now I'm still having a “places to check out” down here on planet Earth.



JUST DO IT!

HERBARIA — “FEARS”

DIRT DEVIL — “THE EXORCIST”



O'NEILL — “A PERFECT STORM”



In 2010, Ben Brand graduated from the Dutch Film Academy in Amsterdam. His very first commercial for the Young Director Award’s festival in Cannes won several prizes including the Golden Hammer in Latvia, the Silver Drum in Slovenia, and a Cresta Award in New York. It was a two-time nominee for the Cannes Lions and gained over 50,000,000 views worldwide. Currently, Ben is directing commercials worldwide and his two new shorts are making the festival rounds globally; “Grief,” a short animation film for Pathé Netherlands, and “Re-Entry,” a live action film based on a short story by Andy Weir, author of the bestseller “The Martian.”

INTRO x BEN BRAND

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

For me, it all started with my favorite aunt discovering that I had actually made some (in her eyes) beautiful pictures with her photocamera when I was around six. She then gave me my own camera and I started making a lot of photos all the time. When I was 15, I studied film and photography for four years while writing, filming, and directing short films with friends in my spare time. With my graduation film, I applied to the film academy in Amsterdam where I graduated as a director another four years later. The boss of Caviar Amsterdam liked my graduation commercial so much that he gave me a chance to direct my first commercial which was for the Young Director Award festival in Cannes.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

That actually was the Young Director Award commercial, haha. When I was still in film academy, I was very jealous of friends who already had their commercials on TV but when I experienced what going viral was for the first time, I never had any interest in anything on TV anymore, haha. The commercial quickly gained around 50 million views within no time. It was crazy!

— How do you try to be different?

I don’t really. I just try to focus on stories and ideas that matter to me and that touch me in some kind of way. And I hope my films will be able to convey that same feeling to the people who watch them.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

I don’t agree and I would love to see that change. For me it’s more about the passion and fire within someone instead of the security that experience seems to offer to some people. Everything changes so rapidly, so what does experience mean? We should give more trust to each other, no matter what age or experience.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

Hahaha, most of everything I do feels like a failure to me but at the same time that feeling motivates me to keep trying to do better and better every time. Twice in the past, I did jobs just for the money and both were absolute nightmares so I guess that taught me to never do anything just for the money ever again. One of them was with a famous Dutch actress and I didn’t know if I could go up to her before the shoot to ask her if she was aware or even ok with the fact that the commercial was going to suck big time. I just wanted to know so we could laugh about it and be happy with our money that day, but I didn’t dare to ask and during the day she slowly started realizing it was going to be shit and from there things went downhill very fast, hahaha.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

I think making my own short films was always the best investment. They let me travel to festivals and meet people from all over the world and at the same time it gave me an insight in which work was great and which work was not. And where my work stood. Also when a film would go online, a lot of people would see it and a lot of commercial jobs would come in based on those films. So making that personal work also made my commercial work more personal.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

Haha, i just love to play the boardgame Carcassonne EVERY DAY with one of my best friends. This has probably stood in the way of quite some work I could have otherwise completed. Damn you, Carcassonne!

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

I learned that if you really want something you have to tell people and throw it out there in the world, not just hope that it will magically happen one day.



— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

To everything, haha. If you take yourself and your time on Earth serious, you become much more careful of what you spend your time on.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

When this happens, I first go sit on the couch depressed for two weeks (and play Carcassonne even more) until I get kicked off by my girlfriend at some point and go back to where everything originates from. Inspiration. I drive around the canals in Amsterdam, go to museums, read books and then start writing at some point. The main question always is, what inspires me and what do I really want?

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Both. I hope to make something beautiful and touching as well as making a client happy and proud of what we created together.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

It couldn’t be more schizophrenic, but two photographers that I really like are Gregory Crewdson for his very stylized and ultra crazy photography and on the other side of the spectrum, Nan Goldin for her very raw, close and personal photos. Also, the World Press Expo packs some big punches every year.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

Find your niche. The faster you find it, the better. For me this is still my biggest struggle because I don’t see myself having a certain style. I just love to tell stories in a way that fits the story.

— What’s your favorite country and/or city you’ve travelled to?

To be honest, having seen a lot of the world in the last couple of years, my heart is still in Amsterdam. The only shit thing is the weather. But then again, I also love all the seasons. One of the other places I really loved was Madeira, the Portuguese island next to Morocco. It was so beautiful and diverse. You could walk over steep cliffs, hike above the clouds, chill in the sun or walk through a sort of mini rainforest. Just beautiful.

— What’s your favorite movie?

Just like my niche problem, I can’t possibly name one film. So just a quick sum up! “Requiem For A Dream,” “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind,” “Jurassic Park,” “Pulp Fiction,” “Home Alone,” “Terminator 2,” “Mommy,” all the films of Ruben Ostlund, “Das Leben der Anderen,” “The Wrestler,” “Revolutionary Road,” “The Rock,” “The Pusher” trilogy by Nicolas Winding Refn, “21 Grams,” “There Will Be Blood,” “Goodfellas,” “Fight Club,” “Back to the Future,” “Groundhog Day,” “The Matrix,” “Whatever Works,” “Interstellar,” “Parasite,” “Marriage Story,” “Arrival,” “Lost in Translation,” and probably many, many, more ...



NIKE —
“DON’T CALL ME PRECIOUS”



“RE \ ENTRY” — (SHORT FILM)



Q&A x BEN BRAND

Any morning routine?

Nope, every day is very different haha, especially when you have a young kid!

Tell me something that makes you cry.

Films/videos with little kids.

When did you last cry tears of joy?

When my daughter was born.

What’s the first way you ever made money?

Illegally delivering magazines once a week when I was 11.

What’s your earliest memory?

Sitting outside in the garden and my mom running to me, grabbing me and taking me inside in front of the TV. Chernobyl had just exploded.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?

Exactly the same as I do now.

What do you struggle with?

Making films and rasing a child.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?

I never expected that much from my life to be honest so I guess that’s why i’m generally very happy.

What do you feel most guilty about?

Pfeww. The one that still hurts is that in 2017 when I fucked up my thank you speech at the premiere of my first feature film. I thanked everyone except for my creative director who had been with me from the script development phase. And I didn’t realize it until I was in bed that night, to make it even worse.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?

Not exactly, but I still know I would and could always blame it on my big brother. Thank you for that, David!

What’s your favorite business in the world?

Filmmaking of course!

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?

Leaving my hometown to go study directing in Amsterdam.

What was your dream job growing up?

Probably being a photographer or cameraman.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?

What’s after death!?

What’s your key to happiness?

No expectations.

Your directing idols/people you look up to?

Elon Musk and Steven Spielberg.

What product hasn’t been invented yet that would make your life better?

High-end augmented reality game of Carcassonne seen and played through simple glasses.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?

“The Blue Notebooks,” Max Richter.

What’s the best film you’ve seen in the past few years?

“Mommy” by Xavier Dolan and “Parasite” by Bong Joon-ho.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?

Don’t read a lot of fiction actually, I tend to read more biographies. Love those.

What’s your favorite food and drink?

Indonesian, Ethiopian, pizza, coconuts, whisky, beetroot juice, white beer, sake. A lot of bad things I guess!

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?

Playing an instrument or singing!

How do you wish to die?

Watching a film on the couch with my family.

What is your main fault?

I want it now.

Who are your heroes in real life?

My aunt.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?

Be passionate, be prepared, and be prepared to let it all go.

What was your last Google search?

Bong Joon-ho.
What again was the order of his name?? John Bong- ho, Hoon Jong-bo ...?

What kinds of habits do you have?

Bad ones.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

Don’t worry about it.

DON’T WORRY ABOUT IT.

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?

Banksy might be cliché but I love the visual statements, I’m sorry.

Who have you worked with whom you’ve been especially intrigued by?

Actor Issaka Sawadogo. Please google and watch the trailer of THE INVADER. He is huge and soft at the same time.

What is something that people don’t know about you?

Nothing. I think i’m very transparent and boring.

What’s something you always need on set?

Time.

What’s the next big thing you’d like to learn?

Surfing.



What’s the best advice you’ve ever received?

Don’t worry about it.

If you think of success, who’s the first person that jumps into your head?

Elon Musk.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?

Depends on who you ask, probably in the middle.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

I would stay in the city and film for sure! This is a dream come true, hahaha.

What are you really not very good at?

Drawing, singing, dancing ...

What didn’t you get a chance to include on your CV?

All the movies I made before I graduated film academy.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?

Don’t worry about it.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?

Yes, if it’s an emotional rollercoaster. This also means watching in horror and laughing!

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?

All Spielberg movies and “Requiem For A Dream.” Spielberg because of the wonder for things out of normal life. Things you can only experience in movies. And “Requiem For A Dream” because it was the first film to really hit me in the face.

What are we not asking that we should?

How old do you expect to become?

Who should sit next to you on the plane?

No one, let me sleep or watch a movie!

Your most interesting nightmare?

A nightmare as a kid, in which I had to choose

between two glowing buttons in a dark WW2 bunker. I chose the left (I am left-handed) and I woke up from the nightmare. The next day I had the exact same dream. I chose the same button because I knew I would wake up but I was tricked and a fucking horror nightmare followed.

Which invention from the last 30 years would you’ve liked to have done yourself?

The script from “The Matrix.”

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?

Pizza.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?

To reflect on life.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?

Carcassonne / Filmmaking!

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?

Beautiful.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?

Still figuring that out, but I hope we are free.

What scares you the most?

The thought of the possibility of nothingness after we are dead.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?

Madeira, Portugal!

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?

Very entertaining and tiresome at the same time.

Space trip – yes / no?

YESSSSSSSSS!!

But it has to be a roundtrip!



Rather than documenting the superficial, Francisco Gonzalez Sendino conducts in-depth research and dives deep into the cultural dynamics of the subjects he's working with. Francisco's films take us on a journey of questioning habitus and cultural norms, always revolving around a human-centered approach. With passion and precision, he composes sensuality weaving it into a grid of emotions and storytelling. His brave attitude and sharpness led to his wins for prizes including the Young Director Award in Cannes, the 1.4 Award in London, and the Berlin Commercial Award. Growing up in his father's theater, he learned to carefully observe the stage, its power dynamics, and aesthetics. For Francisco, this stage is now called life.

INTRO x FRANCISCO SENDINO

— How did you get started? What's your story? How did you end up where you're now?

I grew up in my dad's theatre where he taught me directing from an early age on. During my whole childhood, I was watching plays and hanging out with actors and artists and knew I wanted a creative-driven life.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

My two passion projects "Billy" and "Exchange" that came out at the same time on "Nowness" and won the YDA in Cannes as well the 1.4 gold award in London. It got me a lot of attention on Instagram and opened many new doors.

— How do you try to be different?

I don't think about being different. If you start thinking about it you are already on the wrong path. Instead I really do what I feel. If you trust your unconsciousness you will be authentic without trying too hard. That's why you have to feed your mind with good stuff and protect it as best as you can from all the shit that comes your way.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

All you need is love.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a "favorite failure" of yours?

You NEED to fail in order to succeed. I once was part of an expensive production that in the end never got published. Ironically though, it paved my way to shooting in the US and my first YDA in Cannes.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you've ever made?

My first camera and my first car. They both marked new beautiful episodes of independency in my life as a young adult.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

I can only sleep in white linen.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Loving a woman from the bottom of my heart.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

I'm much better in managing the little temptations in everyday life. Isn't it the little things that make a difference?

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

I go running and ask myself: "Am I the only one?"

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Isn't everything that pays your bills business?

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

Ryan McGinley and Helmut Newton. They defined new genres and made me want to create.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

As a student you think there is a moment everything starts and you enter the real world. But the beautiful big drama called life starts the moment you are born and ends when you die. There is no entering in between so don't worry and be happy.





“BILLY” — (SHORT FILM)

Q&A x FRANCISCO SENDINO

Any morning routine?
1. Deep spiritual cleansing. 2. Coffee and cigarettes.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
Movies.

When did you last cry tears of joy?
After I finished my last film.

What's the first way how you ever made money?
My father payed 2 Euros to me and my sister for walking around on his back at the beach in Spain. I would call it a professional foot massage.

What's your earliest memory?
A white pillow falling down from a window onto a patio while a pigeon was flying up into the sky.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Build up a peaceful community on an island with all my friends, watch every good existing movie, make children, and be happy.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
Everything makes sense to me.

Do you remember the first time when you got in trouble?
A hot summer day at the Atlantic Ocean. A rented kayak. Me and my cousin at the age of 12 testing limits. Rowing towards the horizon until the coast guard had to rescue us.

What's your favorite business in the world?
Film.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
When I realized that human beings die.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
“The Art of Loving” by Erich Fromm.

What was your dream job growing up?
Being a film director.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question what question would you ask?
What is love?
(Baby, don't hurt me ...)

What's your key to happiness?
Don't think about happiness. Enjoying the moment.

You're directing idols or people you look up to?
Charlie Kaufman, Paul Thomas Anderson, Cohen Brothers, Darren Aronofsky.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
A machine that brushes my teeth when I'm tired.

What's the best film you've seen in the past years?
I've never been a fan of “The best”

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Daniel Plainview from “There Will Be Blood” and Telly from “Kids.”

What's your favorite food and drink?
Soylent.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Playing the trumpet like Chet Baker.

How do you wish to die?
Happy.

Who are your heroes in real life?
I never had heroes.

What was your last Google search?
Wuhan market place.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
Truth is reasonable for mankind.

Truth is reasonable for mankind.

What is something that people don't know about you?
I don't sleep.

What's something you always need on set?
Lovely people that trust me.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
Playing trumpet.

What's your favorite country to shoot it?
America.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
Shut up and look as if you get everything.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
My dad.

On a scale of one to 10, how weird are you?
∞

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Buy a shotgun and have some fun.

What is your favorite quote?
“Truth is reasonable for mankind.” – Ingeborg Bachmann.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
“There Will Be Blood.”

It shows human chasms at its finest and has the best method acting I've ever seen.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
Art is necessary for society to survive and proceed. Life means art. No art means death.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Spending time with your beloved ones. Did you know that the words friend and freedom have the same roots?

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
Real beauty only exists within imperfection.

What scares you the most?
Myself.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
A beach called Langres in northern Spain.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Both.

Space trip – yes / no?
Yes.



“EXCHANGE” — (SHORT FILM)

GMBH X HIGHSNOBIETY — “GUEST ON EARTH”



PERSONAL SERIES
#2

LOVE, DEATH & GASOLINE

photographed by Mischa Meyer

SOUTH CENTRAL, LOS ANGELES, USA





AKKURAT TALENTS
#2

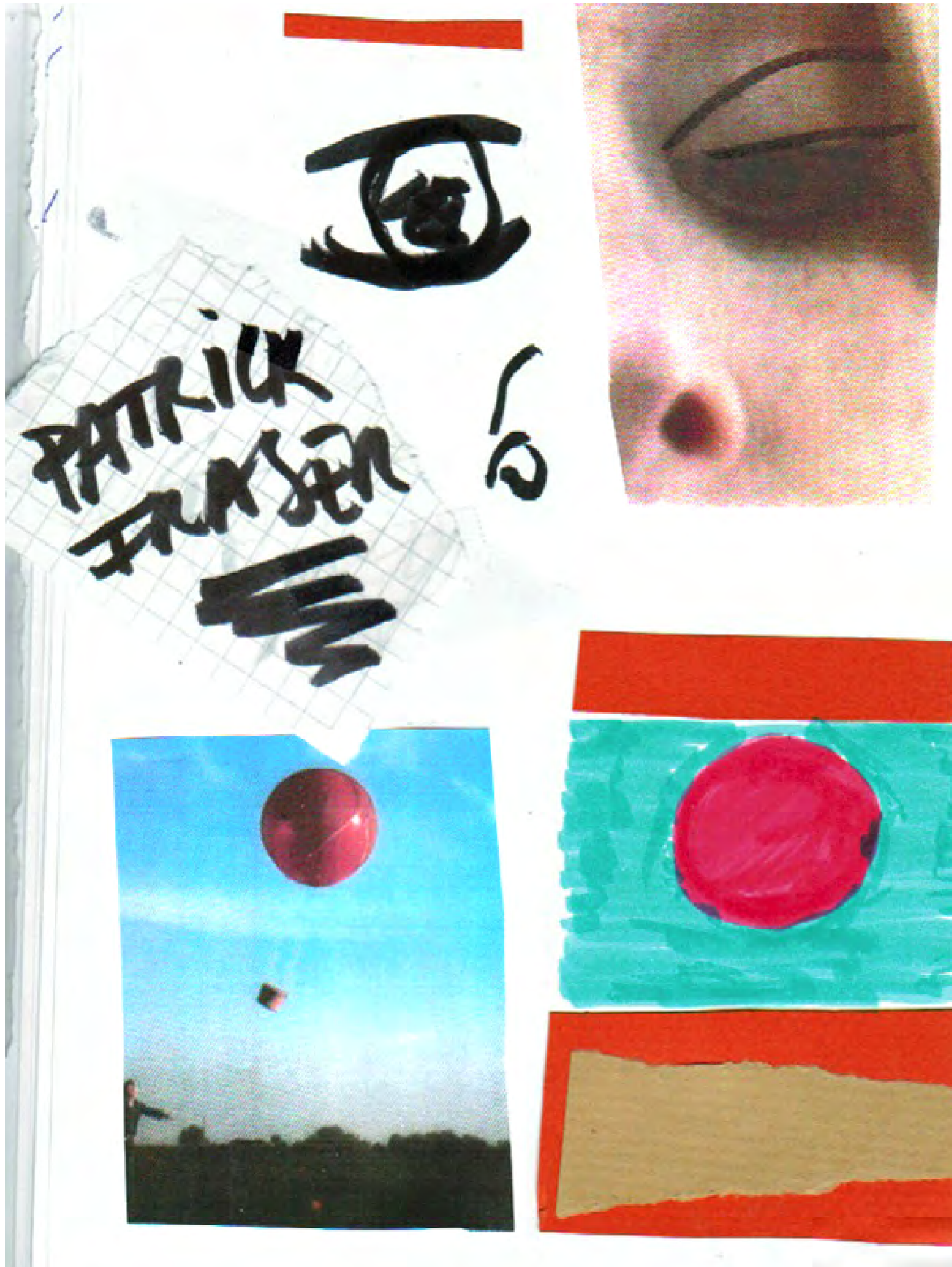
MEET OUR PHOTOGRAPHERS

feat.

Patrick Fraser
Evelyn Dragan
Florian Bison

Murat Aslan
Jens Koch
Patrick Maus

BERLIN, GERMANY



British photographer and filmmaker Patrick Fraser has lived in California for the past 18 years. He photographs editorial features for magazines like “Vanity Fair,” “British Vogue” and “Esquire” as well as color supplements “The Sunday Times,” “Observer,” and “The Guardian.” He has shot ad campaigns for several leading US brands including Google, Microsoft, Pinterest, and Hilton Hotels. His portrait work has been exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery in London. Patrick continues to make documentary and experimental films. He has always loved the Mojave Desert in California, and often visits his cabin in Joshua Tree. You might also find him on his farm in the Midwest, or playing on the local USTA 4.0 Tennis League.



INTRO x PATRICK FRASER

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

I started by assisting photographers in London. Then I headed to LA after a camera trainee position on Ridley Scott’s “Gladiator” movie. I made a portrait portfolio of the people I met on Venice beach and then showed it to magazines I admired in New York. Six months later, “Rolling Stone” called me with an assignment.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

I was hired by design firm IDEO to document their Tokyo Design Week process. The creative director who hired me all those years back is a great friend now and we still work together on projects.

— How do you try to be different?

I don’t try to be anything. I just shoot images that I can stand behind.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

Yes. We can’t travel forward in time, yet. I like the feeling that I can handle any situation with crew or lighting that is thrown at me. I like to stay calm and problem solve which comes with experience.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

Having a few set backs is part of the growth process. You have to have a thick skin and learn from those mistakes early on.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

Buying a house on the Westside of LA.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

I take the teabag out then add the milk.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Communication with the one you love.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

Being pressured into cutting time to make your art. A good producer and organization.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

I go out and shoot personal work. I self-assign. Do I love this series and why?

— Is advertising art or business to you?

If I can help a company sell something with my images, then it is business.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

Robert Frank – caught moments of real life. Alec Soth – portraits with text and fine art story. Avedon – In the American West series. Irving Penn – simplicity in portraits. Martin Parr – social documentary with humor.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

Shoot and show only what you love and stand behind. Make personal work. Ignore trends.





Film is not dead!



Q&A x PATRICK FRASER

Any morning routine?
First always a cup of M&S Luxury Gold tea from the UK.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
Scenes in films that hit a personal chord.

When was the last time you cred tears of joy?
When my baby girl was born at home.

What's the first way how you ever made money?
Started a car cleaning company in my home-town called Clean Machine. I was about 12.

What's your earliest memory?
Walking into a metal post, cutting above my eye and going to the hospital.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Photography.

What do you struggle with?
My determination.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
No, it's sort of how I imagined.

What do you feel most guilty about?
Some stupid things I did when I was younger.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?
No, not the first time.

What's your favorite business in the world?
AirBnB.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Becoming a father.

What was your dream job growing up?
Reportage photographer.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
Where will I be and what will I be doing in 30 years time.

What's your key to happiness?
Staying positive.

Your directing idols/people you look up to?
Tarantino.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
The baby butt wiper.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
"Medicine" by Daughter.

The best film you've seen in the past years?
"Moonlight."

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Bond villains Scaramanga and Goldfinger.

What's your favorite food and drink?
Lamb chops, red wine.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Piano playing.

How do you wish to die?
Peacefully.

What is your main fault?
Staying focused.

Who are your heroes in real life?
My wife.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
Time is valuable.
Don't compromise.
Stay calm.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?
Film is not dead!

What was your last Google search?
Australian Open tennis scores.

What kinds of habits do you have?
Spontaneity.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
One of my self-published books, "Ambulantes."

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?
Jamie Hawkesworth is making nice work.

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
George Clooney.

What is something that people don't know about you?
I worked as a camera trainee on Ridley Scott's "Gladiator."

What's something you always need on set?
Dark chocolate coated almonds. (I wish.)

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
Screenwriting.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?
Iceland.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
You are only as good as your last job.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
Federer.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
8.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Grab my Leica and a roll of film.

What are you really not very good at?
Mathematics.

What is your favorite quote?
"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." – Benjamin Franklin



What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?
Good cook.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
Don't ever do other people's jobs.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
Art direction, cinematography, music, great acting.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
"American Beauty" because Conrad Hall shot it and I was learning a lot from him at the time.

What are we not asking that we should?
Are you a single-handed or double-handed backhand?

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
Nelson Mandela.

Your most interesting nightmare?
Probably after some day full of drama.

Which invention from the last 30 years would you've liked to have done yourself?
Solar panels.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?
My mother's sherry trifle.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
To illustrate religion.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Tennis.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
Imperfect beauty.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
Free to change.

What scares you the most?
Thinking about a near drowning.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
Heaven Lake in China.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
More a modern day necessity.

Space trip – yes / no?
Sure, anything for a new angle on Earth.



"CELEBRITIES"



INTRO x EVELYN DRAGAN

— *How did you get started? What's your story? How did you end up where you're now?*

I've always liked photography as a way of expressing myself but never considered doing it for a living. Growing up, I didn't have role models who worked in creative fields so it seemed unattainable for me. On my third try, I got accepted to visual communication studies and was preparing to become a graphic designer but things changed when print publications asked to buy my photographs (off my photo blog / diary, back in the day) and sent me on my first assignments. I was 23 at the time and had just gotten my degree and didn't have much to lose so I thought I'd just go for it. It snowballed from there and I haven't stopped since.

— *What was the project that jump-started your career?*

There wasn't one particular project – it grew organically.

— *How do you try to be different?*

I'm trying to focus on being myself – exploring the imagery I carry inside, creating things that speak to me emotionally, with the hope of reaching others as well.

— *Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?*

While I do value experience and know how important they are in shaping who you become, some people don't learn from their experiences while others don't need extreme experiences to have sort of a natural emotional intelligence.

— *How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a "favorite failure" of yours?*

I don't have a favorite but all of my past failures have taught me to either step up my work routine, be humble, ask for help, or admit when I'm wrong – so they've all been valuable lessons.

— *In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?*

Going at my own pace. I'm very efficient so I don't necessarily need to sit in the office for 8 hours every day. Structuring my work and time aligned with my personal rhythm and without apologizing for it has been a life-changer for me.

— *What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?*

A big realization for me was that I'm not ungrateful if I decline assignments. Especially in the beginning I used to say yes to everything. While this time taught me a lot and I wouldn't recommend people who start out to be too picky right away, I'm glad I've eventually learned to say no to things that eat up a lot of my time without a real benefit for me or my work.

— *When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?*

I'm overwhelmed when I do a lot of things at once, like scheduling work, private commitments, paperwork.



Evelyn Dragan is a photographer based in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Her photography portfolio spans a wide range of personal, editorial, and commercial projects for publications like "Süddeutsche Zeitung Magazin," "Monocle," "Bloomberg Businessweek," "Zeit Magazin," "brand eins," and clients like Mercedes-Benz, Jaguar, Lufthansa & Volkswagen.

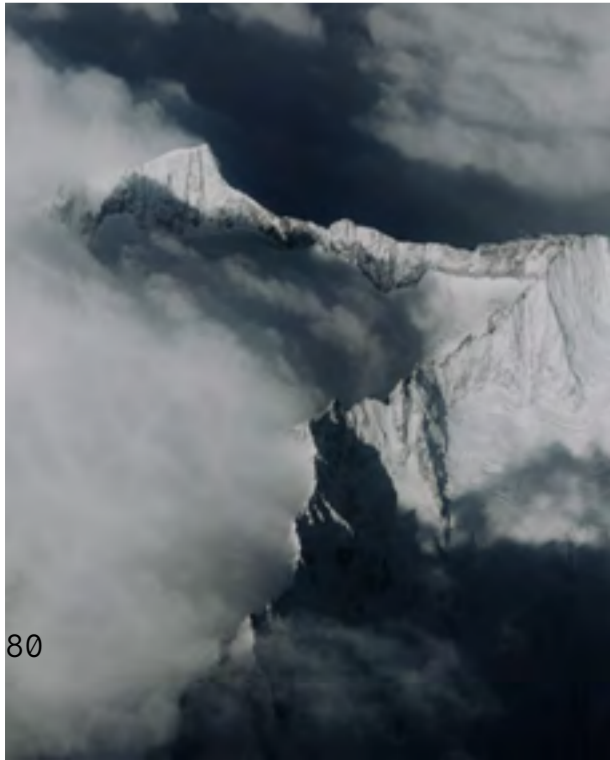
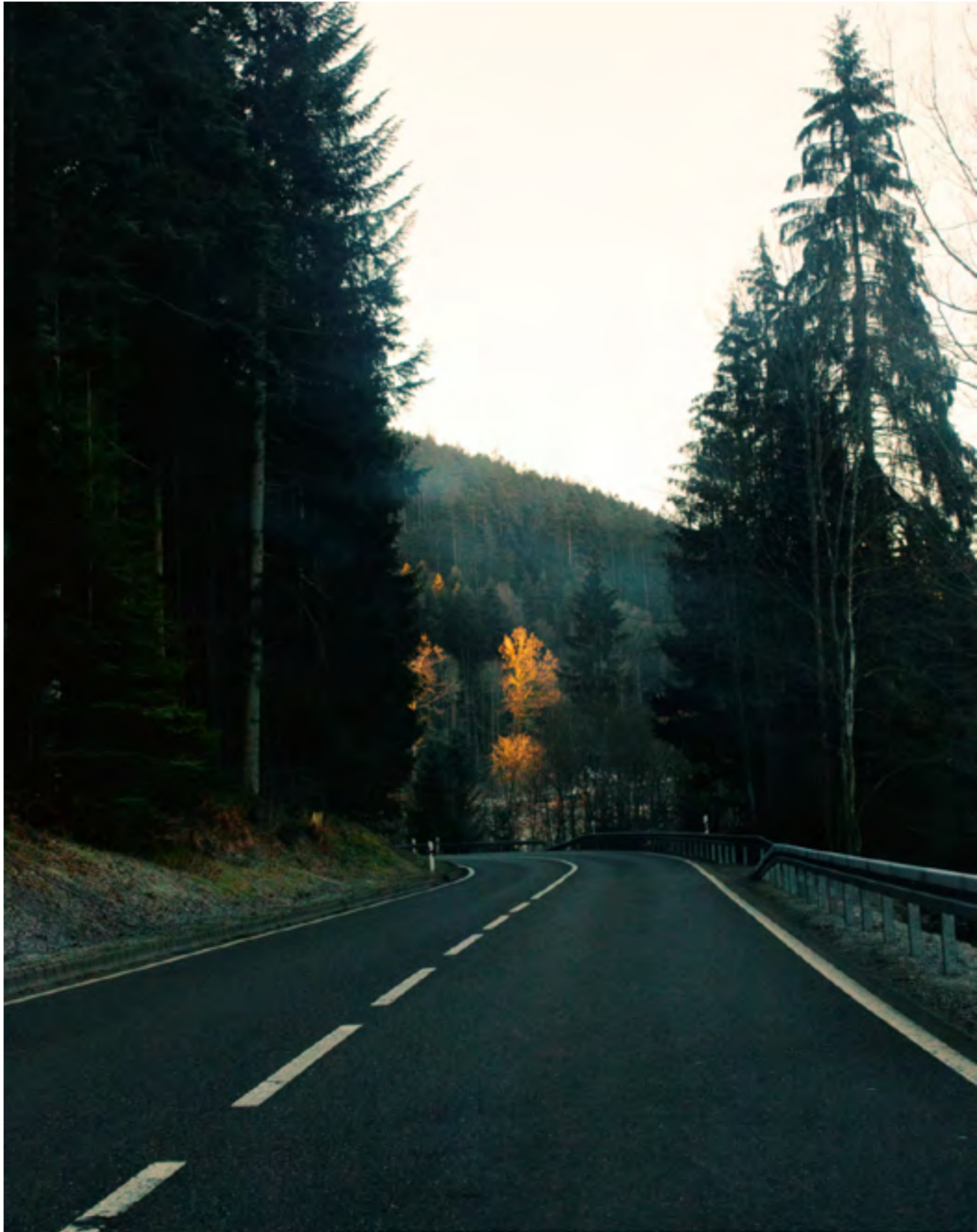
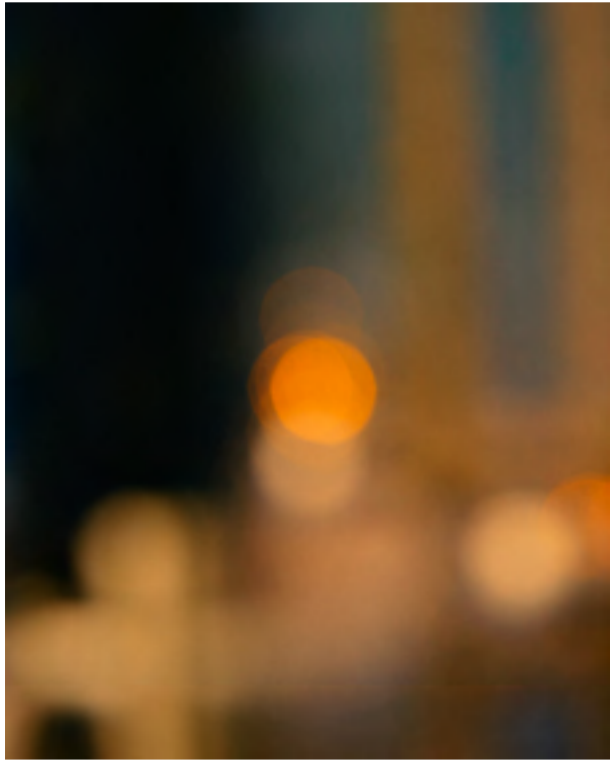
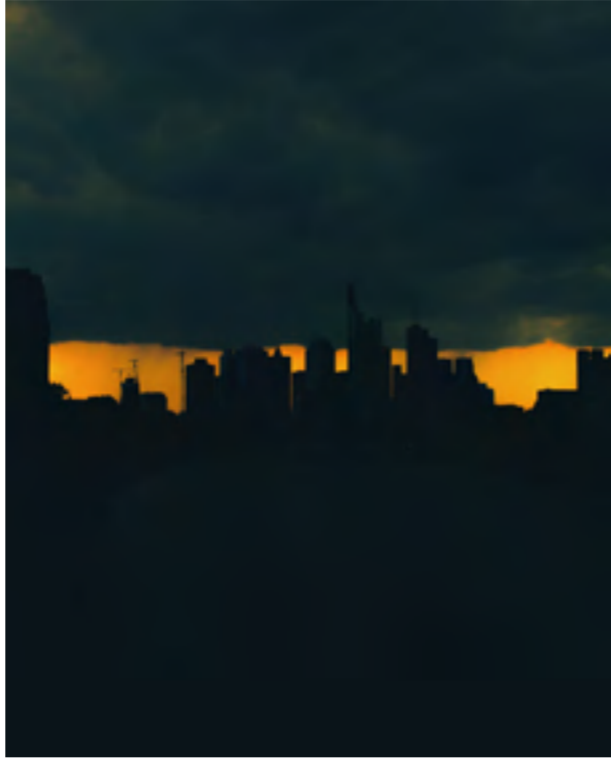
It helps me tremendously to put things down on a list – everything, even things like doing the laundry & taking out the trash and crossing them off. When everything else fails, I just tell myself that everything passes, that I've gone through phases like this before and they're just that: a phase.

— *What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?*

When it comes to art school students: I think it's more important than ever to listen to your inner voice and compass and try to find your unique vision – apart from trends and the work of others. Try to find inspiration outside of social media: music, movies, books, nature, conversation. Nobody starts out with the kind of images they've originally envisioned – at first there's a gap between what you want to create and your actual output. Keep shooting, keep learning, keep making mistakes – even when it feels like work. The feeling when your vision aligns with your output and you're finally able to truly express yourself is worth it!



“SINGLES”



Q&A x EVELYN DRAGAN

Any morning routine?

I wake up around to 6–7am and enjoy the luxury of one hour of reading while having coffee and breakfast before I start my day.

What's the first way how you ever made money?

As a young teenager, I used to give singing and English lessons.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?

I remind myself of this a lot: My life actually turned out even better than I expected.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?

Is there a God?

What's your key to happiness?

Gratitude. Finding happiness in little daily joys.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?

A teleportation device.

What's your favorite food and drink?

I love pizza, summer rolls, and a good white wine.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?

Being more handy around the house. Don't know if that counts as a 'natural' talent.

How do you wish to die?

Without pain and preferably not too soon!

Who are your heroes in real life?

My husband and my parents.

What was your last Google search?

Dirk Nowitzki.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

Woman loses dog.

Woman loses dog.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?

I've just picked up painting again and would love to get better. At the same time, it's a good lesson to suck badly at something and still have fun doing it.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

If you can't find a role model, you have to become one yourself.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?

Beyoncé!?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?

A 3 in public, an 11 in private.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

I thought about this a lot: I wouldn't survive very long. I don't have any survival skills, don't know anything about weaponry, my fridge isn't usually stocked with many supplies, and I live in a major city with no way to hide – I'd definitely be one of the first ones to turn.

What are you really not very good at?

It took me a while to admit: my sense of direction isn't great.

What is your favorite quote?

"You can tell a lot about a person by the way (s)he handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights." – Maya Angelou

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?

Documenting events and people in time. Expressing emotion in an associative way.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?

Reading, painting and cooking.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?

I appreciate both.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?

We need to own our past in order to be able to change. I do believe that change is always possible and knows no age limit.

What scares you the most?

Losing my loved ones.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?

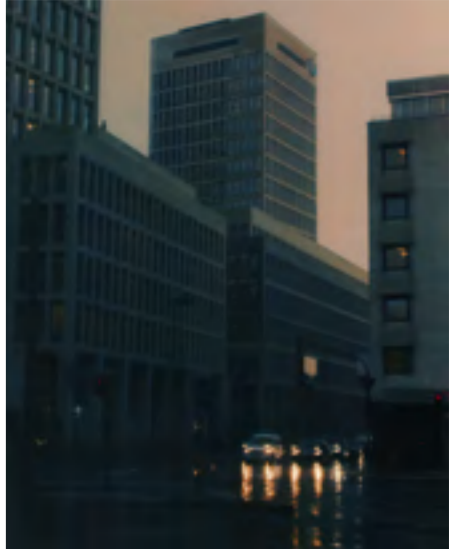
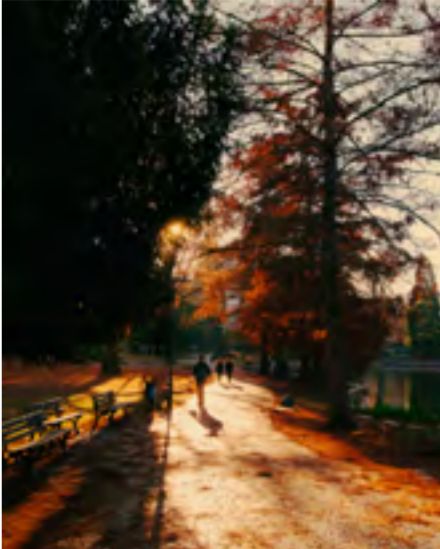
Making a home.

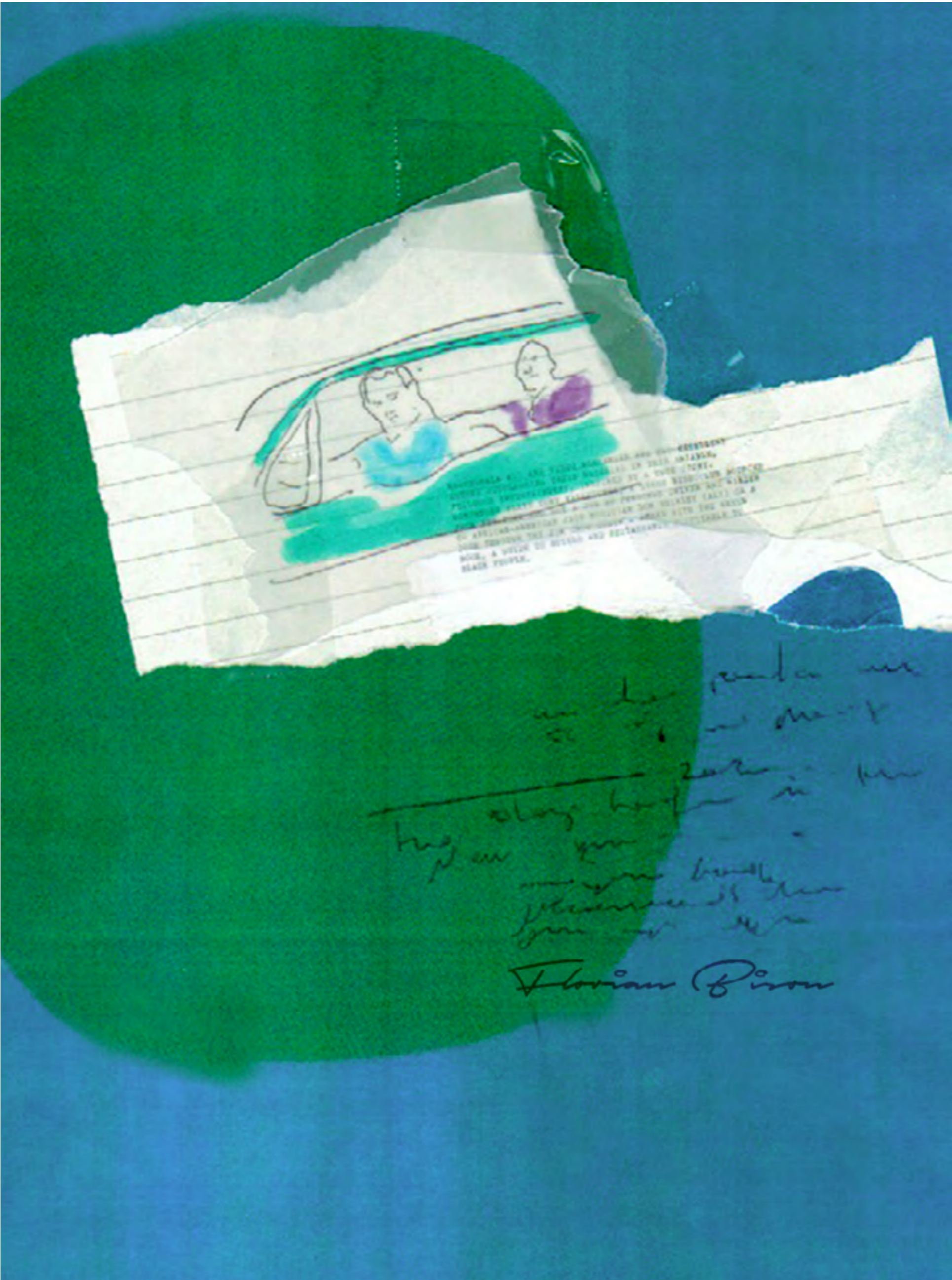
Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?

It's a great tool to reach a broader audience, especially compared to how it was just a few years back.

Space trip – yes / no?

YES!!!!!!





INTRO x FLORIAN BISON

— *How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?*

Wow, that’s a long one. To make it short: I studied business and wrote my bachelor thesis in Malaysia. I bought my first camera from my boss who happened to be a gear nerd. He had no idea what he was doing and neither did I. Traveling through South America, still wanting to be a business dude, I realized that spending my life in an office was not what I was passionate for. I moved to Hamburg, started assisting in 2010, and here I am.

— *What was the project that jump-started your career?*

A worldwide FILA campaign that took me around the globe. Don’t think I have ever been that far out of my comfort zone.

— *How do you try to be different?*

I really don’t. I think trying to stay close to who you are and to what you feel is the best way to be different. No one else sees the world the way you do.

— *Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?*

Totally, because it is earned through hard work. These days everyone wants everything now. There is no shortcut to being successful with what you love. There is only effort, patience and resilience.

— *How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?*

My first job as an assistant turned out to be a nightmare. The photographer had a bit of a Napoleon syndrome and treated me like shit. It was a big downer for me back then. I started working at a cafe to pay the rent and bought myself the best camera and lens I could afford to learn the ropes and see how it is to be behind a camera. I quickly realized what I wanted to shoot and in what style. I never really got into assisting and started shooting by myself about two years later. If that assisting job had worked out, I don’t think it all would’ve happened so quickly.

— *What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?*

That camera I mentioned in the last question.

— *What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?*

I feel really comfortable in the unknown. Being by myself in the middle of nowhere, getting in touch with people in random places to dig for stories. Not sure how absurd that actually is, but I get a thrill out of it.

— *In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?*

Phew ... hard to say, so much has happened. Probably the realization that big jobs and money don’t make me a happier person. It’s something I’m incredibly grateful for. Being associated with big names is flattering but the process has to be fun and the outcome has to be something you enjoy. Of course not every job is for the portfolio but you need to have something in the creation that you dig.

Otherwise you won’t do it for long or end up unhappy.

— *What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?*

Small budgets and ridiculous deadlines. :) Getting creative around small budgets and making things work is great, but you need two out of three things for a job to work out: Time, manpower, or budget. If you have all of them at your hands – well done. If you have two – great, sorted. If you have one – you are in trouble.

— *When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?*

What shall I have for lunch? Haha. I always try to circle back to where I started. What was the idea when I walked into the studio or location in the morning? How did we get to where we are now? If that doesn’t help I go for lunch.

— *Is advertising art or business to you?*

I think anything that is commercially motivated is not art in its purest form. Advertising can be artistic though if you are lucky enough, and you have a client and an agency who trust you. The more control there is, the less art there will be.

— *Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?*

Matt Stuart – his feeling for moments in his street photography is incredible. This was how I started snapping photos in 2007, and I have always admired him for his patience and eye for chance.
Joe McNally – I spent days and nights online to learn about lighting and other technical stuff when I got started. Joe may not be in the top league of photography, but the way he spoke about light and explained it, made it really accessible for me.
Claus Wickrath – I assisted him in 2012 before he passed away. He was a top shot in the fashion world and good friends with Peter Lindbergh. I often sat with him for drinks after the shoot and learned a lot from him about his approach to photography.

— *What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?*

Don’t take anyone’s advice. Anyone else’s opinion about their work and about how to be successful is based on their story and what worked for them. Go figure it out yourself. If there’s one rule, it’s work hard.

— *What favorite country / city have you traveled to?*

Sweden/NYC.

Florian didn’t really get into photography until he was 25 – he lived in Malaysia at that time and was lucky to get a good deal on his first DSLR camera. After another year and a trip to South America, he realized that photography suited him better than a suit. All this in mind, he decided to chuck his plans for a business master overboard and traded that gray office desk in for a camera. These days he’s doing what he would’ve been doing a lot earlier if he got this camera when he was seven. He snaps photos and makes films.



Q&A x FLORIAN BISON

Any morning routine?
Coffee.

Tell me something that makes you cry.
The moment I saw there were more pages to this questionnaire.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?
Must have been an Eddie Izzard video.

What's the first way you ever made money?
I worked as a paperboy.

What's your earliest memory?
I remember sitting on the couch next to my dad in '89 when the Berlin Wall came down. He watched the news and I asked him what was happening. He answered: "Something very special and important."

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
Spend more time with less people.

What do you struggle with?
Balancing work and life. All about priorities, but I'm getting there.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
The fact that I am answering all this would have been unimaginable 10 years ago.

What are you most guilty about?
Nothing really. I think whatever happens is because it feels right in that very moment.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?
Yep, we were on a class trip in 5th grade and threw firecrackers out the window at night and blamed it on the kids next door. Actually that's something I should feel guilty about ... haha.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Meeting an American couple in Malaysia who were the most free people I had ever met up to that point. I think that got me hooked and I somehow knew back then that I'm not made to be employed and work for someone.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
I'm not a big reader but I really enjoyed HOMO DEUS and SAPIENS by Yuval Noah Harari.

What was your dream job growing up?
Being a train conductor. My dad was one and I got to ride with him a few times. That made me a king in kindergarten.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
How many questions are there?

What's your key to happiness?
Having no expectations in return for whatever I do.

Who are your directing idols or people you look up to?
Oscar Hudson. I met him while traveling in Asia when he was 22. When he skyrocketed a few years later it blew my mind. I've never seen anyone more creative.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
A pitching machine.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
Really depends. Either deep electronic music or piano.

What's the best film you've seen in the past years?
"The Rider." Going to watch "1917" tonight tough, so ask me again tomorrow.

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
A.L.F.

What's your favorite food and drink?
Pizza and gin fizz.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Having hair style options.

How do you wish to die?
Quickly and unexpected.

What is your main fault?
Impatience.

Who are your heroes in real life?

All those who sacrifice their time to better the life of others.

Name three truths of directing / filmmaking?
Story first.
Always haze.
Keep things small and simple.

What was your last Google search?
Three truths of directing.

What kinds of habits do you have?
When eating, I always start with the dish I like the least and keep the best for last.

If you were to put a headline in a news-paper, what would it say?
NO MORE PITCHES!

NO MORE PITCHES!

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?
Joaquin Phoenix, Bon Iver and Christoph Niemann.

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
Claus Wickrath.

What is something that people don't know about you?
Nobody knows.

What's something you always need on set?
Music and no egos.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
Carpentry.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?
The US.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
Hard work beats talent, if talent doesn't work hard.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
Will Smith.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
What's weird really?

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
Order pizza and gin fizz.

What are you really not very good at?
Being patient.
How many more questions???

What is your favorite quote?
If you never shoot, you'll never know.

What didn't you get a chance to include on your CV?
My paperboy job.

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
There's only so much you can plan and should plan.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
When the acting carries a story more than the tools that were used to shoot it.

What films have been the most inspiring or influential to you and why?
"The Rider" and "The Green Book" – great stories told with simplicity.

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
No one on a long distance flight.

Your most interesting nightmare?
That all this here might take me more than a day.

Which invention from the last 30 years would you have liked to done yourself?
Gaffa tape.
We all would be nothing without it.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?
Fries and truffle mayonnaise.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
Rebellion.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Missioning around in nature.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
Real beauty is in the imperfect.

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
Phew ... tough one. Really depends on your mindset, I guess it's a constant battle.

What scares you the most?
Ignorance and intolerance.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
A small remote mountain hut on a bike back-packing trip through Iceland.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Job-wise it's an enrichment, but people are wasting their lives on it.

Space trip – yes / no?
Depends on the leg space.



“MORNING ROUTINE”



“BACK TO THE BUBBLE”

“NEW YORK WARRIORS, DOWNTOWN CLOWN”





German photographer Murat Aslan is visually arresting and conceptually bold and original. He draws inspiration from the graffiti generation of the 90s and represents a new class of driven photographers using craft and technique in service of the idea. Interested in German Hip-Hop, he began his career documenting its culture with a focus on the Berlin Rap scene. In 2006, he moved from West Germany to Berlin and gradually embraced the world of advertising – shooting big campaigns for clients like Nike, Adidas, BVG, Sennheiser, eBay, DHL, and VW to name a few.

Any morning routine?



What's the first way how you ever made money?



If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?



What's your favorite business in the world?



What's the book you've gifted the most?



What was your dream job growing up?



What's your key to happiness?



What's your favorite food and drink?



What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?



If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?



What is something that people don't know about you?



What's something you always need on set?



What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?



Just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?



What scares you the most?





Berlin-based photographer Jens Koch’s art is rather daring. His photos are coincidentally cheeky, charming, and empathic. Spectators often commend them for their affecting and liberating qualities, which cause amazement and reflection. By looking at Koch’s portrayed characters, people frequently imagine observing themselves – and for a very good reason. Photography is art.

INTRO x JENS KOCH

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

Born in 1981, and raised in Leipzig, I was based in Cologne before I found the ideal hotbed for my photographic language in Berlin. At 17, I managed to creep onto Berlinale’s red carpet to release the shutter for portraits. My first commissions came from newspapers after I’d taken photos of actor-friends of mine. From then on,

I just followed the path God wasn’t providing me. Catching the clients and people I wanted to work with.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

I started so slowly, there wasn’t a specific project. I’m a natural grown.

— How do you try to be different?

I’m not trying to be, I just do what I like.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

Absolutely.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

Failure is the energy that always makes me better and hopefully will. Favorite failure is setting up a shitty lighting sometimes.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

My best investment is challenging myself everyday.

— Any unusual habits or absurd things that you love?

I have no unusual habit at all, but I listen to Metalcore a lot and really like Justin Bieber.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

Being more self-reflective.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

I’m better in saying NO to things I don’t like to do.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

Go on vacation, listen to myself while being patient. I’m asking myself: is this bringing joy to my life?

— Is advertising art or business to you?

It’s mostly both. It should be.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

Art Streiber, Martin Schoeller – they do perfect lighting to me and they are down-to-earth guys with sometimes, a little fun in their portraits. Ansel Adams – he just calms me.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world?

Don’t study photography – go out, connect with people.





WARS ARE OVER

Q&A x JENS KOCH

Any morning routine?
Aside from coffee? Yes ...

Tell me something that makes you cry.
Almost all movies and documentation about GDR citizens entering the Berlin Wall.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?
When I was finally able to work closely with my all-time favorite band.

What's the first way you ever made money?
Distributing papers.

What's your earliest memory?
I have absolutely no idea after thinking a lot about it.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?
I have all the time in the world, just like everybody. I'm trying making the best of it.

What do you find struggling?
The opposite of love.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?
I have no expectations on life.

What are you most guilty about?
Not following advice from my loved one when I really should.

Do you remember the first time you got in trouble?
Just now when I flooded my plane seat with apple juice.

What's your favorite business in the world?
My business. :)

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
Falling in love with my bestie.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
Just started reading books.

What was your dream job growing up?
I had no dream job until I made my living with photography.

If you could know the absolute and total truth to one question, what question would you ask?
Is there anybody outside?

What's your key to happiness?
LOVE.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life better?
Brain-computer interface (BCI) or controlling electronic devices with brain waves.

What track do you listen to for inspiration?
Noises keep me from inspiration, so no track.

What's the best film you've seen in the past years?
"Heat" and "Pulp Fiction."

Who are your favorite characters in fiction?
Cartman from "South Park."

What's your favorite food and drink?
Grießbrei and Cuba Libre.

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?
Patience.

How do you wish to die?
Painless, late.

What is your main fault?
Answering question number 9.

Who are your heroes in real life?
My loved one and Ricky Gervais.

What was your last Google search?
Don't ask ...

What kinds of habits do you have?
Listening and spreading love.

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

Wars are over.

Who are some of your contemporaries (artists) you are really digging?
Art Streiber & Martin Schoeller.

Who have you worked with who you've been especially intrigued by?
Rammstein & Robert De Niro.

What is something that people don't know about you?
I pee in the shower but many people know that.

What's something you always need on set?
Music and love.

What's the next big thing you'd like to learn?
Myself, really.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?
I'm doing portraits, so the country doesn't matter.

What's the best advice you've ever received?
Be kind to people.



If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?
Nobody really.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?
Friends would say 11. I say it's a 7.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?
I would cut off zombie heads.

What are you really not very good at?
Won't tell.

What is your favorite quote?
"Kids if you don't sin, then Jesus died for nothing!"

What was the most important lesson you had to learn during filmmaking?
Making still photography.

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better?
Emotions.

What are we not asking that we should?
You really asked everything.

Your most interesting nightmare?
Nope.

Which invention from the last 30 years would you have liked to done yourself?
The wheel.

What food would you like to have for the Last Supper?
McRib.

In your opinion, what was the original function of art?
Spreading the love in their hearts.

Which hobby / time displacement brings the greatest satisfaction?
Standing naked in front of the ocean.

Do you like things that are just beautiful? Or rather imperfect beautiful?
What is "beauty" at all?????

Are we a product of our past? Or are we free to change constantly?
Yes and yes.

What scares you the most?
Pain to my loved ones.

The most beautiful place you have ever found?
Iceland.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?
Absolutely an enrichment.

Space trip – yes / no?
Yes, please!



“CELEBRITIES”





INTRO x PATRICK MAUS

— How did you get started? What’s your story? How did you end up where you’re now?

I moved to Los Angeles from Hamburg, Germany in 2006 to experience my “out of high school” adult life in a different way. I went with the flow and ended up spending three years at The American Academy Of Dramatic Arts. All of my friends were actors and needed cool portrait shots and this is really how I got started. After I was done with my studies, I had already shifted all of my focus to photography and started an internship at David LaChapelle’s studio. That same year I had to make a decision: stay in LA and pursue my dreams or move back to Germany. I stayed and I opened up my own studio.

— What was the project that jump-started your career?

When I opened up the doors to my studio in 2011, I was lucky that the area I chose was a melting pot of cool & upcoming brands. The Arts District of Downtown LA is not only home to many brand design studios but also most of the manufacturing and sample-making warehouses. It was here that early on I became friends with the people responsible for the clothing brands John Elliott and For Love & Lemons – shooting my first fashion content for them pushed me right into the business and it has never stopped since.

— How do you try to be different?

I am so very German and ‘akkurat’ in how I run my business. I’m definitely different by default. I take great pride in each project; the next one is always the best project.

— Experience is the most expensive currency in the world – would you agree and why?

It simply takes many scenarios. One has to live and work through to master their craft and run a successful business.

— How has failure set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?

Almost every job comes with its own set of surprises. Each one taught me something new and now, many years later I would say the the accumulation of all of those little failures has prepped me well for anything.

— What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you’ve ever made?

Opening up my own studio was the biggest and most worthwhile investment for sure. It’s an awesome feeling to not only have a cool homebase but also offer my clients a space to get creative in. Some of my regular clients have shot with me in the same studio for almost 8 years, it’s almost like a family get-together at this point.

— What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?

I’m really into two-wheels. Cycling is awesome but my greatest passion are motorcycles. Both in adventure/enduro riding and on the racetrack, I like to push myself just close enough to the personal “Holy shit, that was close!” limit. All of my senses are fully present right there in that second, nothing else to think or worry about. Pretty awesome, almost absurd.

— In the last five years what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?

I learned to outsource some of my work and to not do every single step myself.

— What have you become better at saying no to? What new realizations and approaches helped?

I am still working on it. Being self-taught and running my own studio from the start, I have always taken great pride in saying yes and pushing myself beyond to always find a solution when realizing I should have pulled the plug a while back.

— When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?

I love photography and my job, but it is not what defines me the most. I have many interests and hobbies and now my own family. This is where I get my inspiration and focus from.

— Is advertising art or business to you?

Business, but I am excited when the project allows me to be creative and play.

— Could you name a few of your favorite photographers and why?

My absolute favorite must be Sam Abell. His work couldn’t be more opposite to mine. His timing, framing, and storytelling is just beautiful to study.

— What advice would you give to a smart, driven college student about to enter the real world? What should they ignore?

Work hard, be a good person, be true to yourself, learn to say no, and know your own worth.



Patrick Maus is a German photographer living in California for the past 13 years. His photography work focuses on editorial features, portraits, and fashion work. Patrick is married and a proud father to his American-Swedish-German son, Julian. His studio is located in the exciting Arts District of Downtown LA, surrounded by top restaurants and grungy dive bars. When not shooting or spending quality time with his family, Patrick can be found on one of his motorcycles riding up Angeles Crest Forest, a local race-track, or the dirt trails of California.



I LIKE TO WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS

MOA ABERG
FOR PALM SPRINGS LIFE MAGAZINE



Q&A x PATRICK MAUS

Any morning routine?

Rye bread, two eggs, and Stumptown coffee using a Chemex drip.

When did you last cry tears of joy?

When my son Julian was born.

What's the first way you ever made money?

Cleaning my parents' cars. I definitely did a better job than the local "Aral" Tankstelle.

What's your earliest memory?

Sadly, my memory is pretty bad. I'd say learning to ride my bike as it's the most vivid memory.

If you had all the time in the world – what would you do?

Travel the world with my family, collect new experiences, and take more time to perfect my hobbies.

What struggles you?

The feeling of being one step behind.

How has your life turned out differently than you expected?

I didn't really have expectations. Over the past ten years I have for sure put a lot of things on the line and taken somewhat calculated risks that have played out well.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?

Deciding to stay in LA when I was so close to moving back to Germany in 2011. Everything now is based upon that decision.

What's the book you've gifted the most?

"Sapiens" by Yuval Noah Harari

What was your dream job growing up?

Formula 1 Driver.

What's your key to happiness?

Love and staying true to yourself.

What's the best film you've seen in the past few years?

"Victoria."

What natural talent would you like to be gifted with?

Singing.

How do you wish to die?

In my own bed, in my sleep, at an age where I was still able to take care of myself.

What is your main fault?

Some people have told me that I am rude or don't listen, when I personally don't think I was.

What was your last Google search?

What is the temperature in outer space

If you were to put a headline in a newspaper, what would it say?

I LIKE TO WRITE IN CAPITAL LETTERS.

What's something you always need on set?

Good coffee. And music. But I really don't want to be the DJ, myself.

What's your favorite country to shoot in?

I really enjoyed shooting in Vietnam. So I would say countries that are new to me so that I get to experience everything for the first time.

What's the best advice you've ever received?

To never get too full of yourself and keep focusing on the backbone of your business. Now during Corona times, that advice is paying off.

If you think of success, who's the first person that jumps into your head?

Elon Musk.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how weird are you?

5.

What would you do in the event of a zombie apocalypse?

Jump in my built-out Toyota truck with my family and camp out far away from everyone.

What is your favorite quote?

"If you run into an asshole in the morning, you ran into an asshole. If you run into assholes all day, you're the asshole."

What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make it better?

I like smart mind games and good twists.

Do you perceive social media as enrichment or as a threat?

It's a good business tool to give a quick portfolio breakdown and to stay in touch with likeminded folks and industry professionals. But I am spending less time on it and would like to limit even more so.

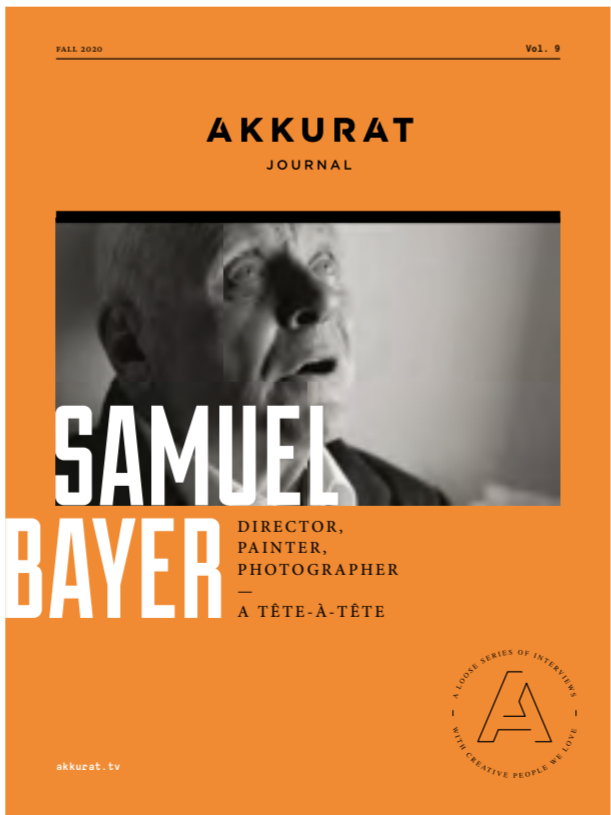
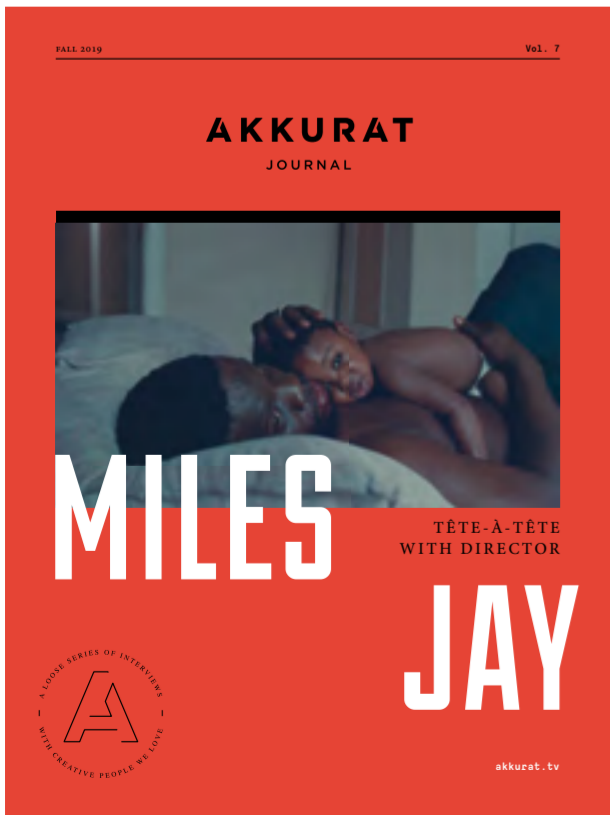
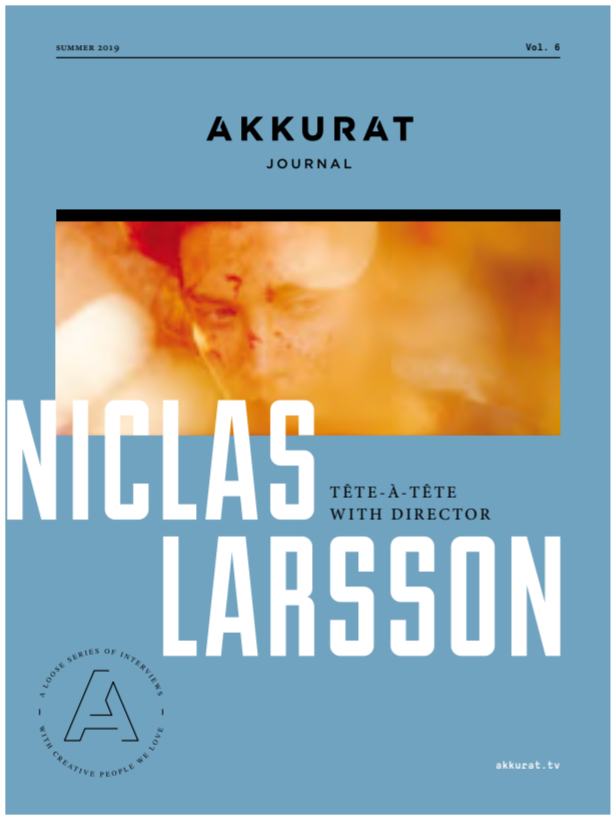
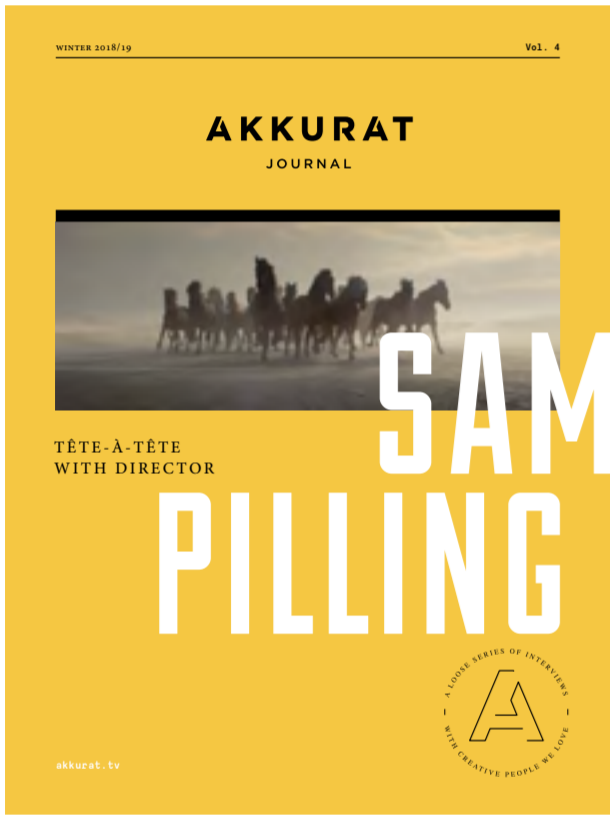
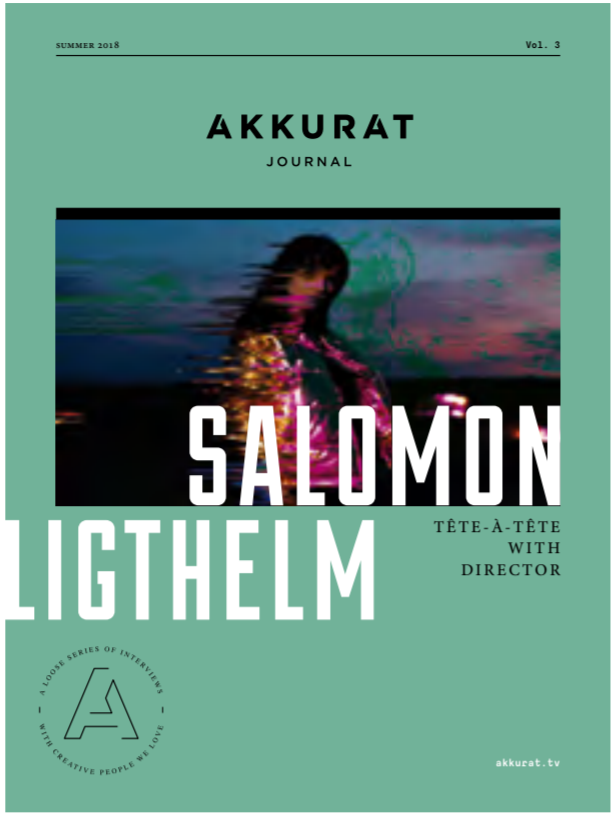
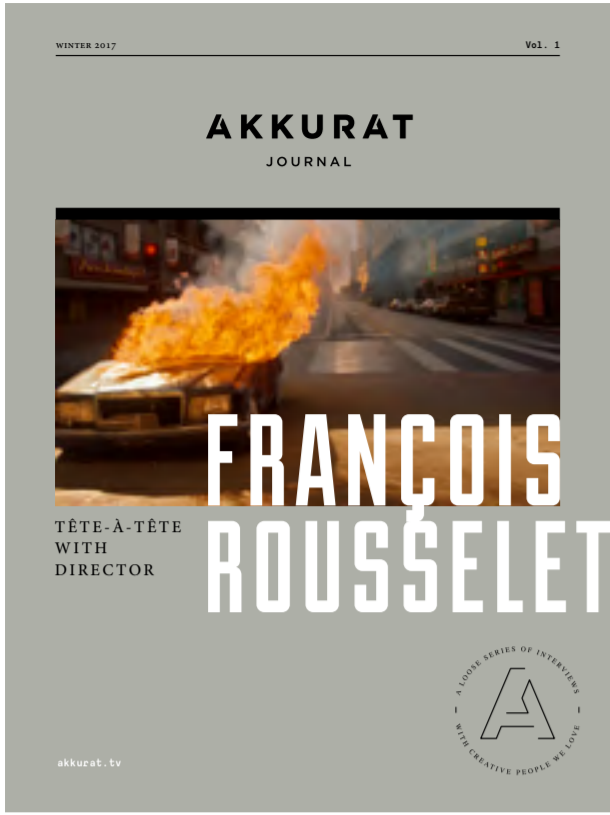
Space trip – yes / no?

Yes but not for me.



CHANEL IMAN





AKKURAT

JOURNAL

PERSONAL SERIES
#3

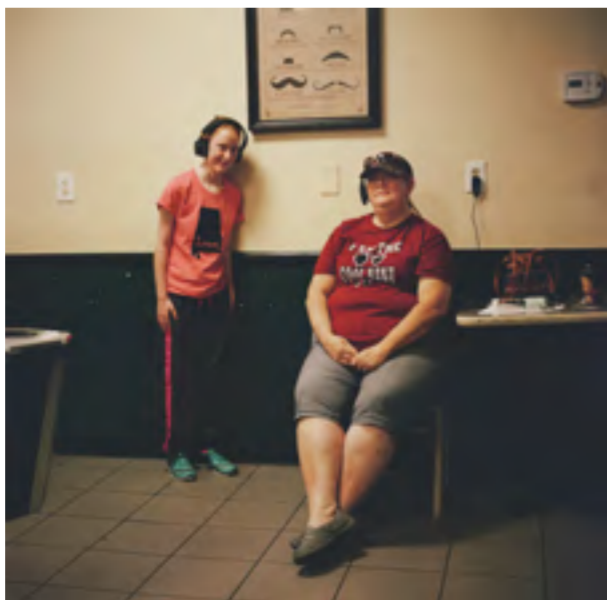
WOMEN TRUCKERS

photographed by Patrick Fraser

LOS ANGELES, USA







Travel is key for inspiration. We need to change our environment – if not – we get stuck.

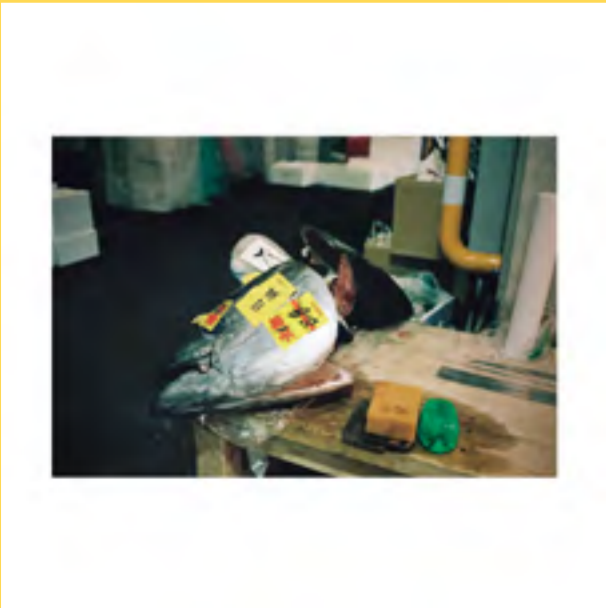
We’re looking forward to new shoots, trips and endeavors.

Here’s the selection of our last travel escapades.



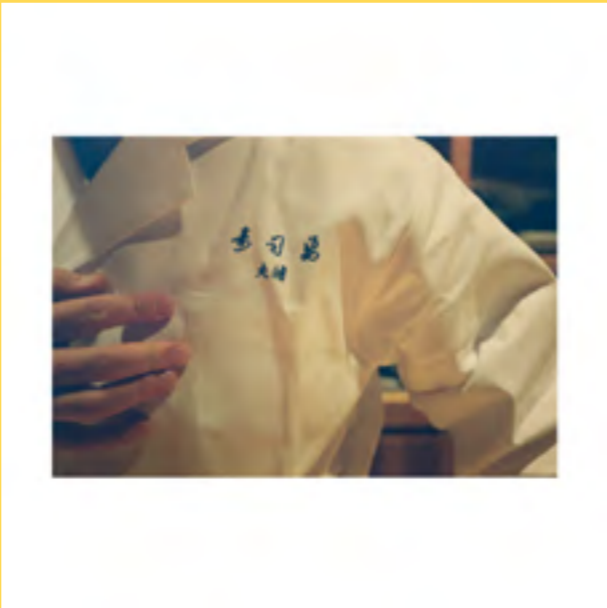
SPOT #1 – SOHO FARMHOUSE

Soho Farmhouse in Oxfordshire, 90 minutes outside of London, is a true Neverland and might be the greatest creation from Soho House’s Nick Jones. Set on a 100-acre valley in the sprawling, 4,000-acre countryside of Great Tew in the Cotswolds, it’s unlike any other country hideaway in Britain. With 40 cozy cabins set along the banks of a stream, the property also boasts a Boathouse with outdoor and indoor heated pools, a Cowshed spa, an Electric Barn cinema, horse stables, tennis courts, and much more. — Safe travels.



SPOT #2 – SUSHI YUU, TOKYO

Sushi Yuu, located in Roppongi, Tokyo, opened in 1972. Chef Daisuke Shimazaki is the second generation to have taken over the restaurant after the death of his father three years ago. He’s been perfecting his culinary art for 24 years. Shimazaki serves simple, high-caliber, omakase style sushi that rivals some of the world’s most acclaimed sushi dens. Omakase, a Japanese phrase that means, ‘you leave your experience in the hands of the chef’ – provides fish selections depending on the season. In winter, for example, tuna, yellowtail, mackerel, cod roe, and flounder are delicious. Every morning, seven days a week, Shimazaki attends Tokyo’s new fish market “Toyosu.” The old one, “Tsukiji,” is primarily for tourists by now. “If there’s something special coming in, they’ll call to give me a head’s up,” he says.

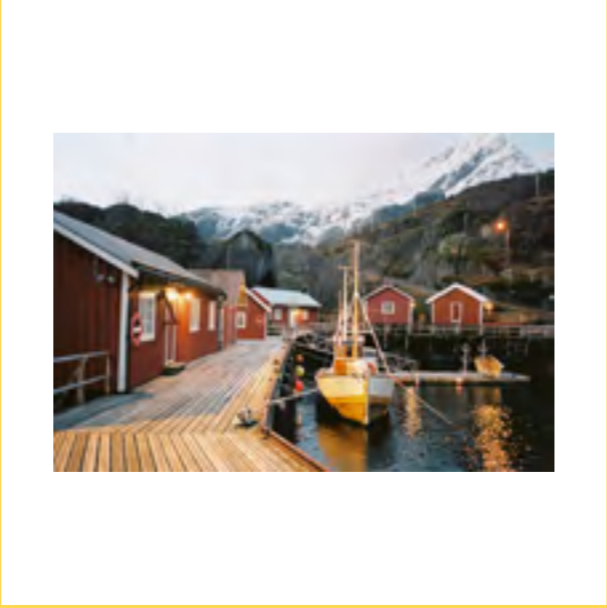




SPOT #3 – NUSFJORD, LOFOTEN

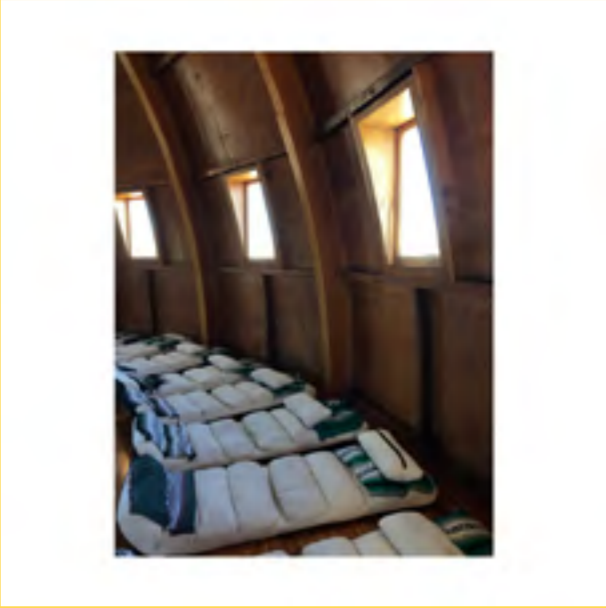
The Nusfjord Arctic Resort is situated in the secluded and tranquil fishing village of Nusfjord in the incomparable Lofoten, Norway. To date, the quiet fishing town remains one of the best-preserved fishing villages in Lofoten with a long-standing tradition of seasonal cod fishing. In the 'golden age' of Nusfjord, over one thousand people inhabited the village centre, but today only 19 people can call Nusfjord their permanent home. The resort consists of 19 cabins, fully refurbished to its current modern and luxurious standard. All year around it welcomes guests and explorers from all over the world. The Nusfjord Arctic Resort offers unforgettable and authentic experiences like going on a fishing trip with fishermen and a captain, heading out to old trekking paths through the mountains, rejuvenating in the sauna after a long day, or watching the Northern Lights in the wood-fired hot tubs. On top of that it has three restaurants (Restaurant Karoline, Oriana Tavern, and the Landhandleriet Café) perfecting their dishes with locals ingredients. The focus is always 'locavore', to connect guests to the exceptional flavors of the Arctic.

It's definitely worth a visit! Ahoi!



SPOT #4 – THE LAUTNER COMPOUND

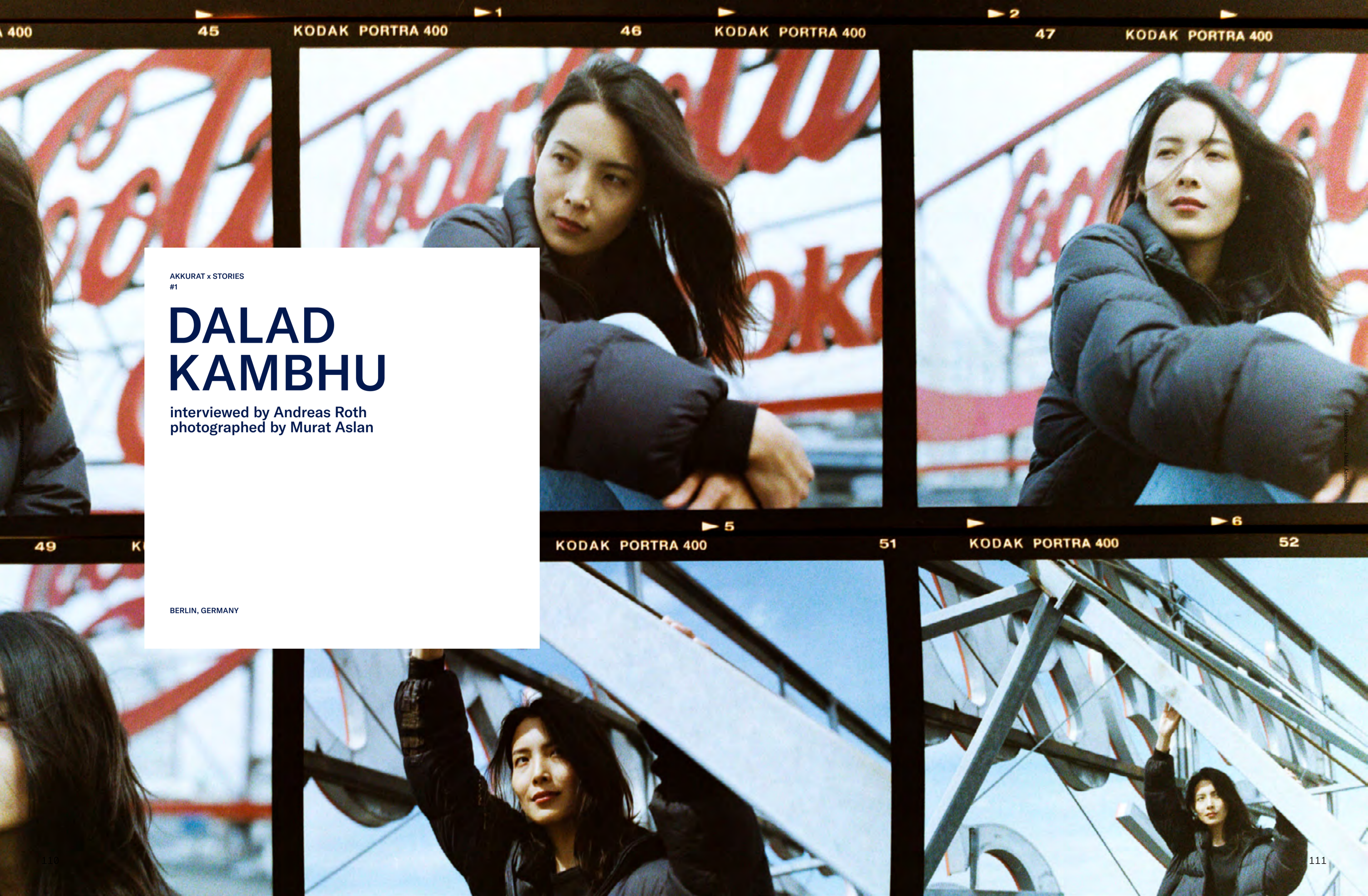
The Lautner Compound is the only residence designed by legendary American architect, John Lautner, that is open to the public as high-end accommodation. Described as a "micro-resort" this property is a hybrid between an upscale vacation rental property and boutique hotel. The four meticulously designed units located just outside of Palm Springs offer the perfect desert oasis and will give you an exclusive taste of authentic mid-century design. The Lautner Compound was built in 1947 by John Lautner – a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright. It was purchased and renovated by Tracy Beckmann of Tracy Beckmann Design and furniture designer Ryan Trowbridge of Brown + Trowbridge. Renovations resulted in an authentic restoration of four unique units: The Redwood Lounge, The Bachelor Pad, The Hideaway, and The Desert Retreat.



SPOT #5 – THE INTEGRATION

The Integratron is a 38 foot (12 m) tall cupola structure with a diameter of 55 feet (17 m) designed by ufologist and contactee George Van Tassel. Van Tassel claimed the Integratron was capable of rejuvenation, anti-gravity and time travel. He built the structure in Landers, California (near Joshua Tree), following instructions that Van Tassel vehemently claimed were provided directly to him by visitors from the planet Venus. It was financed predominantly by donations, including funds from Howard Hughes. The location of the Integratron is an essential part of its functioning. It was built on an intersection of powerful geomagnetic forces that, when focused by the unique geometry of the building, concentrate and amplify the Earth's magnetic field. Magnetometers read a significant spike in the Earth's magnetic field in the center of the Integratron.





AKKURAT x STORIES
#1

DALAD KAMBHU

interviewed by Andreas Roth
photographed by Murat Aslan

BERLIN, GERMANY



— Please introduce yourself.

My name is Dalad Kambhu; I'm the head chef of the Kin Dee Berlin, a contemporary Thai restaurant.

— How did you end up where you're now?

Basically by following my gut and doing what I wanted to do, without people telling me.

— Tell us a bit more about yourself and your history.

I was born in Austin, Texas, but grew up in Thailand all my life. I moved to NYC when I was 20 years old and I spent about 10 years there. While I was in NYC, I realized how much I love the food and hospitality world, and how food can be so fun and such an experience. I knew then that I wanted to be a part of that. I tried to get into that world when I was in NYC, but I was really young and I didn't really believe my gut nor listen to my inner-self doing something else. But because I had so much love for food, I kept getting drawn back to the kitchen cooking for myself and hosting friends. One day, while cooking with my mentor Rirkrit Tiravanija, he encouraged me to be a cook and do whatever I wanted to do. We wanted to do a restaurant together and because of another friend, Stephan, who's a great art collector and a friend of Rirkrit, we thought: why don't we do it together? That was when I moved to Berlin.

— Was there a special occasion where you said: I want to do something else?

I think when I first came to NYC, a lot of people may have thought what I did wasn't so glamorous, but I chose to work really hard from the bottom up. I went to NYC for school and started working in a restaurant. For a lot of people that's not really glamorous. Like rolling your sleeves up and being a hostess, running the food, being a waiter, than an assistant to the manager, etc. All of that, I found really fun. I discovered that the hospitality world was so interesting and fun, I also realized it can be quite magical and has this energy which is really beautiful. It's where many young people can dream – and when I say young, I don't necessarily mean by age, but rather by heart. I wanted to be a part of that.

— Did you have any role models?

I would say I grew up with a lot of strong women in both my immediate and extended family. And by strong, not necessarily self-made or financially independent or successful in their professional careers. In the time I grew up, we were meant to stay home. My grandmother on my mum's side, she's the strongest one in my family. She's a stay-at-home wife but she has the authority and audience. Everybody listens to her. It sort of let me know that strength doesn't really come from only having the money. It's more like the confidence and the belief she has in

herself. But at the same time my great-grandmother and my other grandmother are incredibly successful in their professions and have very honorable careers. This was something I always had in mind and it gave me the idea that I could do what I want as well.

— Why is Berlin special to you?

Berlin is so wonderful, because if you think about the city – and I've lived in NYC, in Bangkok, and I had spent quite a bit of time in London and Paris – they're all wonderful in their own way, but they all have some kind of stress that I don't like to be a part of. NYC, for instance, is so expensive and everybody is constantly working so hard and trying really, really hard to get somewhere. Every conversation and relationship is mostly transactional. Berlin has that platform where there's not so much bullshit. If there are bullshit conversations or circles, you can easily walk away from it. There are so many possibilities, so many great people, creatives, and talents here that you don't have to deal with that. That's why I love Berlin.

— Are your surroundings generally important to you?

Definitely. When I moved to Berlin, it was more like a personal growth of who I wanted to be while being in NYC. After living in Berlin for some time, I realized that I didn't really like myself the way I was in NYC ... I liked myself more being here. I care much less about superficiality – I came back more to the core of who I really am and can now say that I have a really beautiful life; a life I always wanted to have. But I just had forgotten about it. I forgot that it could be simpler and it is out there. In terms of the restaurant, it was more myself who wanted to do something in Berlin. As a business owner and entrepreneur, I realized that it is really important to have a social responsibility. And wherever you go, there is an investment going back into that city or your surroundings. You don't just open a business, make the money, and just leave. I have to think a lot now – also for the future – asking myself do we serve the community better in that area; do we input something into that city? Because if not, then there's really no point. Berlin is in a really exciting stage right now – it's growing. Some people already say it's grown or overgrown, but I think it has a lot more ways to go. There's still a lot more opportunity, creative-wise. In the food scene – at least for me – I can say there's so much more to be done and that could possibly happen. We are just starting to discover the amazingsness of the local producers we have here. When I first got to Berlin in 2017/18, there were still people out here who thought that they're such a food expert but would say something like, “Why don't you use XYZ from Thailand – Mango, Papaya, ...?!” and I'd suggest, “Why don't we look around here and see what's really, really amazing?” In 2020 people finally agree that we, of course, should use local producers first. They're the freshest and best.

— So you adjust your menu around Berlin?

Yes, our menu works around the ingredients. We look at what's available and what we can cook with it, and of course I need Thai herbs. Unfortunately a lot of them are not able to grow here or if they're from here, it does not necessarily mean that they taste good yet. But fresh vegetables, meat, and etcetera — we use them from here.

— What would you say you do differently than others?

I think there are many great chefs in Berlin that do

amazing work. They paved the way for me to be able to do what I'm able to do here now. In my cuisine, I would say what I do differently is that I compromise a lot less for what is deemed to be Thai and never give up on that. I never use curry paste from the supermarket, I'm going to make it on my own. I'm also not going to do oyster sauce with garlic and chili like smaller wannabe Thai chefs are doing because for them it's easier. It's umami; it's flavor enhancing. I'd rather go the harder route, but it's a route where I don't have to compromise my integrity and I feel that I do it with full honor. If I can't cook anymore tomorrow, I can look back and say that everything I've done – it was done right.

— What means freedom to you?

Freedom is equal rights. Everyone has the same rights in terms of thinking, expressing, choosing, and making decisions. Berlin is full of freedom. Freedom for Dalad is to live life the way she wants to live – without anyone stopping her.

— What represents freedom in Berlin?

There are parts of Berlin that are still quite conservative but for the most part — the beauty of Berlin is that it's free. I mean that in a sense that you can be yourself. You can do whatever you want. No one is going to judge you. You can experiment and fail and do it again. There's not as much financial or social pressure as there is in other cities and places. If anything, people encourage you to be more creative or strange. That's definitely a beauty of Berlin.

— What means freedom in your kitchen?

In our kitchen the hierarchy is quite flat. I'm the head chef and I have the final word, but while we're in the process, we all have a say and agree as a team. No one is told to do something they absolutely hate. Everyone has the right to say what they want and think is best, and we can discuss it. Often people come to my kitchen and say that it is a really calm kitchen. They've never been to any kitchen that is so quiet before because we don't yell. It takes a lot for me to lose my shit – ha!

— How would you describe Berlin – if it were a person?

Poor but sexy – just like the old mayor used to say [laughing]. No, Berlin has many characters. In one way there's no other city in the world where you can drive for 15 minutes and you get into the middle of nature and lands, trees, grass, flowers, etc. On the other hand, we have a weekend club that is open for 72 hours. Berlin is definitely full of unpredictable things.

— Would you cook differently if Kin Dee would be in London?

If I would go to London and open a second branch there – I would first look around in that area. I would create dishes and cook according to the local producers available. However, I have my style and would cook similar to how I do so in Berlin. I made a few mistakes in the beginning but I don't have any regrets.

— What's your signature dish?

There are two dishes that have stayed on the menu the longest – actually, kind of three! One is a green beef curry – we had it on there for a really long time but had

to take it off because we were limiting ourselves of our own creativity. The other one is octopus confit with Kra-Prao sauce – those are really, really yummy. The kohlrabi pickle was the very first dish I came up with when I wanted to do something like papaya salad but I didn't want to use papaya – and I realized that kohlrabi has a similar texture, it just tastes different but you get the crunchiness. So we decided to do that.

— Where do you get your inspiration for new recipes – are you, for instance, getting back to Thailand?

Yes. I sometimes go back to my roots. When you're younger, you don't appreciate it so much – you see your mum almost every day and then go see your friends but now it's very valuable. Once a year I'll visit my mum and see my family and dog – something I regret a little bit that I should have done more. But in terms of inspiration it's usually my craving for what I want to eat. The tricky part can be taking the kind of ingredients we have on hand and seeing what we can make of them based on the craving. Then we put them together. Sometimes the craving comes later.

— What's something you really hate overall in the restaurant business?

I don't really hate anything ... maybe in the future, customers who think that they know about Thai food better than me but they've never been to Thailand or only went there for holiday once or twice. That's a bit annoying. I don't tell anyone how to do their job – so don't tell me. Another thing that I don't really like: people having an idea what fine dining should be and they're stuck on that. That results in repetitive kind of food that's outdated, not necessarily good for your tongue and your body – not good for the environment but is still in high demand because a group of people still support this system. There's so much great food out there that isn't the classic fine dining style – it could be simple food and still be great!

— What are you the most proud of?

I'm proud of the fact that I've accomplished that tiny baby step in my career of owning a business and getting some recognition, and I've done it fully on my own. I have great partners and they believe in my potential. They see me do a pop-up and see me working – they gave me a chance and I fulfilled it. I didn't have any family connections; I didn't have any rich, hot boyfriends or rich, old boyfriends (laughing) or someone to help me. I've done it fully on my own.

— Did anything change after receiving the Michelin star?

Our food has progressively grown, changed, and developed just as we have, too. What changed the most is that a lot of customers are coming. We've received so much positive recognition from people, which is just really nice to hear. It also has given me more confidence. It's helped things become a bit easier. Before the Michelin star was awarded, business was hard. People said it's too expensive to pay €48 for 4 courses of 10 dishes. We use mostly organic and the best-produced ingredients, and it was hard that people complained about it or didn't appreciate it. After the Michelin star it became worth it for them...now it's perhaps the cheapest Michelin menu in Europe or in Germany. There's only me plus two chefs in the kitchen and we work really hard to make this menu possible for that price.

— Also internationally?

Internationally and locally. We have a lot of international clientele – they ask: Why are you not doing this in London or NYC – why are you just doing it here? I say: I love Berlin [laughing]. It could be my optimism or it could be the fact that Germany is quite a solid country – with the government supporting. Or it could be that I believe that we have a good enough reputation to go on with our business.

— Was it easy for you to conquer Covid-19?

We decided to do a curry take-out but I don't know if we would have had so many people order take-out without having the Michelin star. However, I sense it's a stressful situation, stress for everyone. But it also doesn't feel too stressful. Somehow I have the feeling in the end we will be okay.

— Do you have a personal mission for yourself?

I think growing up in a family where many had successful careers — and not necessarily wealthy but all honorable careers — that give me a sense of value that whatever I do, I will do well and right. So when I look back one day, I can say I did it right.

— Going to your restaurant – it almost feels like a little gallery. Could you elaborate on that?

My career in food thought came to be what it is now because of Rirkrit. We've always had a special bond – we've always had friends who were artists, so when we opened the restaurant, his friends gave us stuff and contributed works. It's not for sale – it's not meant to be commercial; it's meant to be organic so we've slowly added pieces bit by bit from our friends because it shouldn't feel like an art shop. It's more an artist place full of love and creativity.

— Why is Dalad Kambhu creative?

I don't know ... I think it is in my genes [laughing]. I don't think that I understood it when I was younger. Why I always had weird ideas in my head, or why I always



painted very differently. I've always wanted to do things that were different. I always wanted to be a painter, or make-up artist, or an interior designer. Everyone in my family was a public servant or a classic businessperson, so I didn't have anyone who sat me down and say it's okay to be creative, or even that it's actually good to be creative. So I didn't really understand what it is for a really long time until I went to NYC and was in a situation where everyone embraced the creativity.

— *Are there any big learnings from your careers as both a model and a chef?*

Something I learned recently is that we all should decide for ourselves how we want our life to be. How do you want your life to look like? How do you want to live? Where do you want to live? And how do you want that to be? It should entirely be your own decision, because it's your life. That's something I didn't know when I was younger. I always wanted to live the lives of others because it was other's ideas around me and I thought that's the way it is. It took me about 33 years to figure out that that it's not actually what I wanted. What makes me really happy is much more simple, that my most fulfilling life is because of ideas I discover on my own. When I was modeling in NYC and Bangkok, it was a very superficial world. I was really young. Overall it was quite materialistic. Coming to Berlin, I stripped myself of everything. I remember the third day in my first apartment with a lease in my name – and I was walking down the street in just a T-shirt, an old pair of sandals, no jewelry, no makeup, nothing on me ... and I noticed nobody gives a shit if I have anything here anyway. That was a great start to cleansing myself. Then last summer, I got to spend time with my mentor Rirkrit and some old friends and realized that this is the life I always wanted to have. These conversations, this time; and when I returned to Berlin, I set myself out to have that life.

— *Is there any place in Berlin where you go to zone out or relax?*

Just walking next to my apartment on the river in Kreuzberg is very nice, or getting out of the city. I love nature. It doesn't matter where exactly.

— *Name three truths of cooking!*

1. Flavors don't lie. If it tastes like shit, it tastes like shit.
2. Cook ethically. Always use the producers that benefit the local farmers and small businesses first. Especially the ones who do it right — that care for the land and Earth. That's really important and not done enough in our food world yet.
3. If it doesn't hit you, it doesn't hit you. I only serve what hits me personally.

— *The best and worst life advice you've ever got?*

The best life advice is actually from my mentor Rirkrit. He told me long ago – and I was too young to understand or too caught up in that other world I didn't want to be in – he told me that I should build a life that I want to have first, and everything else will come. Build your own life first. The way you want to live. That's the best advice I've ever got. The worst advice I've ever got: You shouldn't be a cook because it's too hard for you! If you're young and you hear something like that, you could actually believe it, especially if it comes from an older figure that is accomplished in their field. In reality, cooking is not that



difficult and all the good chefs fuck it up all the time. I don't intend to be a chef that works like a machine who cooks everything perfectly. I just want to cook everything so that it tastes really good. And when it is not good enough, I make it better.

— *How important is it to make mistakes?*

Very important, because with the right mistakes you get the right genius to work, I guess. Mistakes are the part of the process of trying and going for it. I wouldn't start serving very good meat or vegetables with some weird things, but if you're curious about it – always try. We all should just try. That gives you the knowledge. Again: I'm a self-thought chef. Everything I've learned – I've learned from my mistakes.

— *Describe yourself in just three words?*

If I have to describe myself in three words I would say: Honest, passionate, and unapologetic.

Q+A Dalad Khambu

How do you try to be different?
 I don't try to be different, I just be myself.

What is one of the best or most worthwhile investments you've ever made?
 Moving to Berlin and pursuing my career.

What is an unusual habit or an absurd thing that you love?
 Fat. I love eating fats.

In the last five years, what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?
 Believing in myself.

When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused or have lost your focus temporarily – what do you do? What questions do you ask yourself?
 I meditate or tell myself "it's ok."

Do you have any morning routine?
 Tea, tea, tea.

When was the last time you cried tears of joy?
 When my friend got married!

What's the first way you ever made money?
 Sadly, modeling.

What is one of the most defining moments of your life?
 When I did my first-pop up in Berlin at Dottir.

What's the book you've gifted the most?
 None.

What was your dream job growing up?
 It always revolved around design; interior designer, being an artist, or window display designer.

What's your key to happiness?
 Being content of what you have in life.

Who are your heroes in real life?
 My grandmothers and great-grandmother.

What was your last Google search?
 I won't tell you.

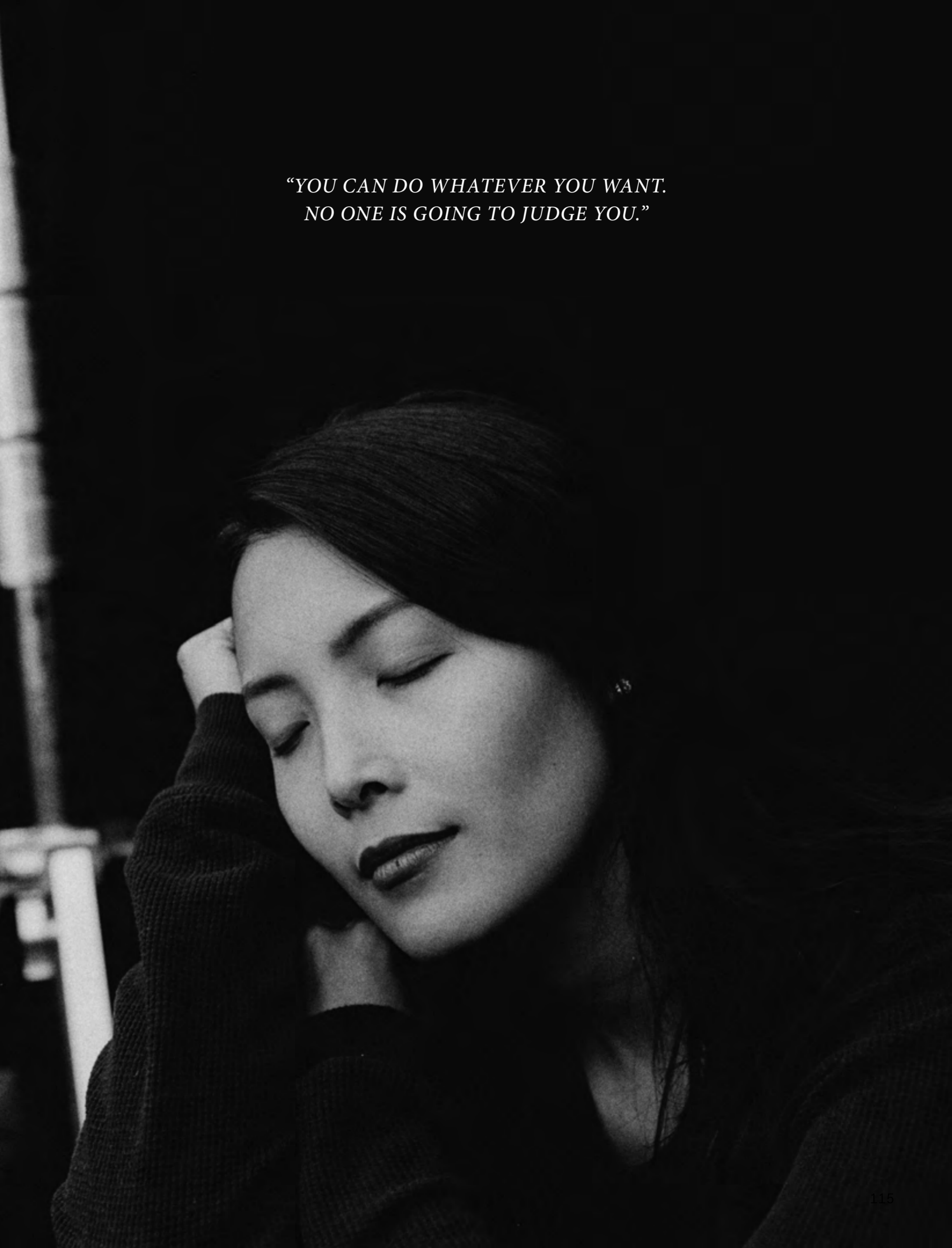
What are you really not very good at?
 Baking.

Who should sit next to you on the plane?
 No one!

Your most interesting nightmare?
 You don't want to know.

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“YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
 NO ONE IS GOING TO JUDGE YOU.”



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LABS

NOT ABOUT US

Let's not make this about us.

Because nope, it's not.

It's about the love for people.

Talented people. Inspiring people. Weird people.

People-people who like to work close together.

Connect their brains. Their hearts. Their heartbeat.

And boom.

It's about the love for stories.

Long ones, short ones. Ones that make you laugh.

Cry. Blush. Bite your fingernails. Clench your fists.

Stories that make you want to change something.

Yourself. Your everyday. Or hey – why not the world?

It's about the love for tech.

The lights. The mics. The grips. The click-click.

The fiddling with flares, flames, frames.

All that nerdy stuff that gave us Germans our fame.

(And yep, you're right – it's also in our name.)

It's about the love for creativity.

The pain. The process. The power.

The pushing of the possible and the impossible.

Working long nights, riding shotgun into the magic hour.

And shouting "It's a wrap!" when we finally got it right.

Oh well, come to think of it ...

Maybe this is about us, after all.

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