IdN

International
designers
Network

F/G FASHION GRAPHICS ISSUE

COLLECTION '07

10 graphic designers with a foot in the fashion world on the lure of couture.

Antimode | Petra Börner   erhoeven

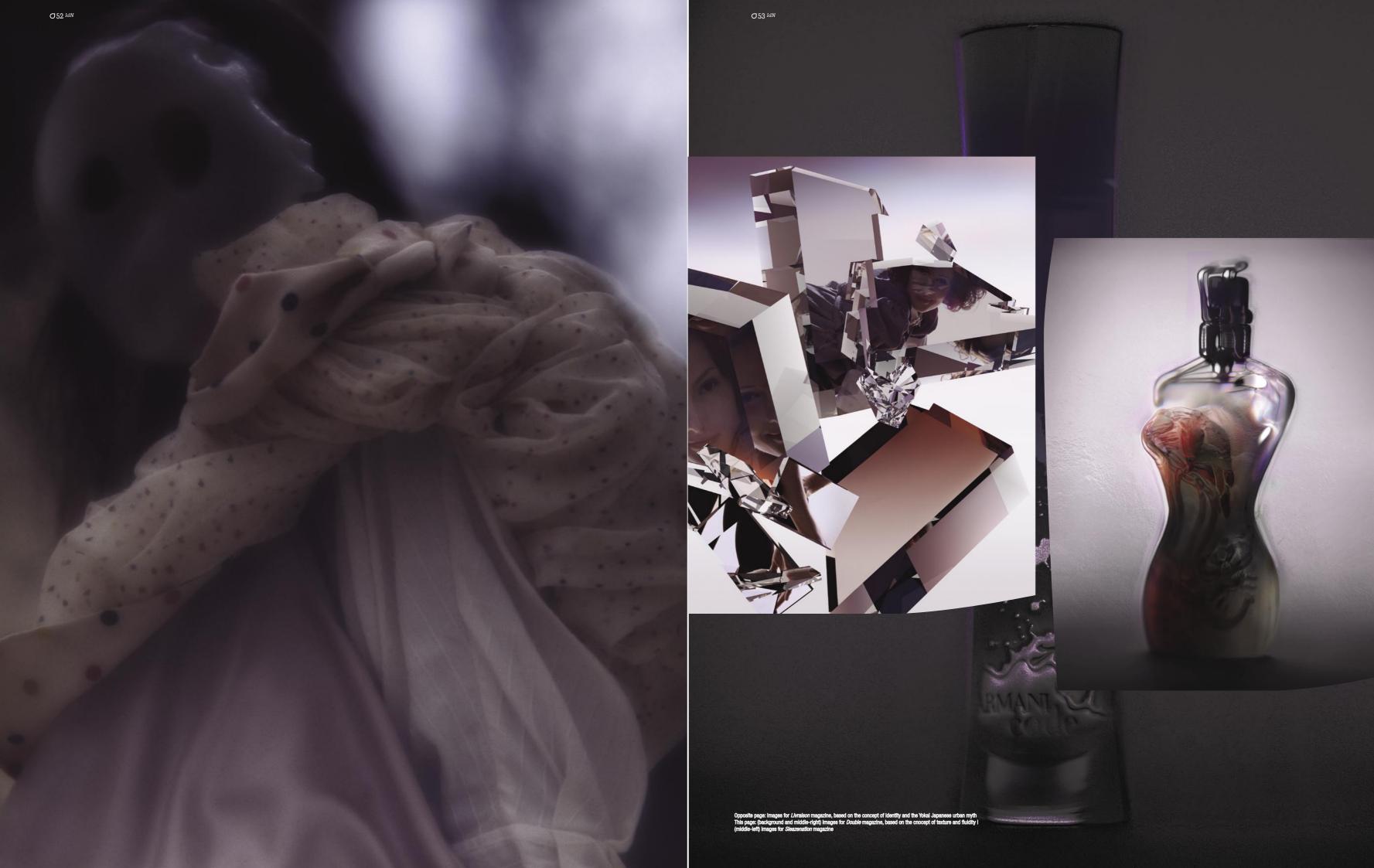|	
TEE TIME	And eight artists on the appeal of designing, making and wearing a T-shirt.
LUCKY 15	The result of our first "black-and-white" competition — and details of our new one, themed "15".
GAME ON	Director Makito Osaki talks about his latest Virtua Fighter 5, tipped to change the face of one-on-one gaming.
THE NEW MEXICAN WAVE	Colourful, chaotic, sensual, passionate — and now, contemporary, as the land south of the border casts off its complexes.
CHILD OF HIS TIME	Finnish artist and illustrator Perttu Murto is a true product of the Internet age.

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ANTIMODE

Photography and **fashion** are joined at the hip, as Erwin Charrier,

a video director and 3D artist, and photographer Khoa, will attest: they chose their company name from an expression used in an interview given by the celebrated fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto. He talked about having created a style that 'suppresses mode with antimode', meaning that his designs were arrived at in an avant-garde spirit far removed from current trends. Khoa and Erwin, from France and the US respectively, have been working as a creative duo under this name for some six years. Antimode is all about deconstruction, the couple using their specific knowledge of photography and computer graphics to expand the conceptual limits of the commonly accepted meaning of the images they present, breaking with convention to offer a completely new vision. They constantly walk the line between art and commerce and their ground-breaking approach has been recognised by many top fashion brands and publications.

This spread: Images for *Double* magaine

Opposite page: Images for *Livraison* magazine, based on the concept of identity and the Yokai Japanese urban myth
This page: (background and middle-right) images for *Double* magazine, based on the concept of texture and fluidity I
(middle-left) images for *Sleazenation* magazine

IdN: Would you tell us something about your earliest influences, how you came to an appreciation of design and how you got into it?

A: We find our inspiration in many art expressions such as music, paintings, sculptures, video and architecture, and from other fields such as philosophy and mythology, which for instance inspired our latest project. We are definitely obsessed with imagery and technology, design and its application, and both of us share the same fascination for the image-making process from the beginning to the end of a production. As we don't have the same design and visual backgrounds, we refresh ourselves constantly. It is natural that our artwork should become a special mix of photography and New Media. When we started to work together six years ago, we thought that when combined with photography or video, design could bring a new form of visual aesthetic and artistic expression.

IdN: How would you describe your style/work to first-time viewers?

A: Our art direction is to deconstruct the image given to us and to try to reveal the concept, the truth or reality hidden behind it. Our approach is more conceptual, or philosophical, than controversial, even if at the end of our working process some of our images appear to be eye-catching.

IdN: Graphics are widely used in fashion nowadays. Why?

A: Graphics have been widely used these past few years – some avant-garde fashion designers now use more design and technology in their work.

IdN: Why is the T-shirt the most popular medium for combining fashion and graphics?

A: It is reasonably priced for anyone who wants to get noticed or to buy a piece of clothing from a designer. And more than that, it is casual and easy to wear with a pair of jeans.

IdN: Which medium is the most powerful for bringing fashion and graphics together, besides the T-shirt?

A: Besides the T-shirt? Maybe sports shoes ... and pants.

IdN: You have said that your designs aren't governed by trends — how so? How do you maintain your popularity in the trend-conscious fashion world?

A: Fashion for us is a part of our working process and a means to express our artistic ideas, but we are not trapped by it and do not follow any trends. We just try to be straight with our vision and ourselves; we do not aim to create any aesthetically pleasing images simply to be either popular or commercial.

IdN: You've been collaborating for six years. Which project are you most proud of so far?

A: Our first project in 2001 (untitled *Project 01*) is very significant to us because it established our creative duo, our way of working and our artistic vision. We were young, free-minded and just wanted to free our creativity and please ourselves. From that time on, we have been following that line and trying to renew our creativity and the mediums we use on each of our art projects.

IdN: Identity seems to be the undercurrent of your stunning work. Is that the case?

A: We seek to expand the conceptual limits of the meanings of the images imposed by a common reality. We try to question the rules and break conventions, to go against academicism. Identity and reality are a big part of our philosophical and artistic search.

IdN: Antimode deconstructs images — what hidden aspects of fashion would you like to draw our attention to and why?

A: We try to draw one's attention to hidden aspects of human reality rather than showing any particular subdued aspects of fashion. Then we use fashion as a means, not a purpose, to reach this goal, to reveal these aspects of (human) reality.

IdN: You have said that your aim is to find new ways of aesthetic expression – can you elaborate on that?

A: Most of the works of both well-known contemporary and fashion photographers are becoming very unexciting and conventional. As if photography has come to an end in terms of its own form of expression. We believe that the mix of photography, New Media and design allows new ways of creativity and artistic expression, and can shake out all the conservatism in the art arena. But it will take time before it is used in a proper way by the establishment and some artists. When we created Antimode, our creative partnership, our aim was to bring a new vision and aesthetic to image-making based on our competencies in photography and design.

IdN: Where do you draw the line between graphics and fashion?

A: It really depends on the project we are working on. Our first projects were very 2D graphics-oriented, whereas fashion, photographic and 3D aspects are brought to the fore more in our latest projects.

IdN: Why do so many graphic designers branch out into fashion?

A: Fashion is always on the move, like graphic design. Sometimes the views and works of a graphic designer meet or feed those of a fashion designer and vice versa.

IdN: Which living designer who has married graphics and fashion are you most impressed with?

A: We are interested in the worlds of designers such as Rei Kawakubo [founder of Comme des Garçons], Tsumori Chisato, Atsuro Tayama and Hussein Chalayan, to name but a few.

IdN: What are your future plans? Are you working on any particular projects right now?

A: We have just finished a commissioned project for an art magazine. We examined Japanese urban mythology and the concept of portrait photography. Then we created a triptych, three portraits of a girl wearing a mask that we made from *Yokai*, a Japanese spirit, taking our inspiration from old *manga* and folk tales. We wanted to show a sort of dualism, to erase and enhance the girl's identity behind the mask and give birth to a new identity, mixing good and evil like the dual aspects of spiritual creatures in Japanese mythology. ◖ *IdN*

This page: Image for *Sleazenation* magazine
Opposite page: Image for *Livraison* magazine