

Flipped

Issue #11



Colors

EDITORIAL

The limits in your imagination are proved by not being able to imagine a new color.
This thought used to annoy me very much. I couldn't disprove it at all.

Until I realized that maybe it is not about creating something completely new, but more about mixing
and matching what we already have in a successful, interesting way.
Colors are magical and infinite in their use.

You have colors in every art form, you can even 'color' your voice. You cannot touch them or feel them,
but they are there. Depending on our most powerful life source, light. Much like everything living.
Colors are alive.

What I cannot imagine is a world sans vibrant hues of green, red and yellow. Light is the instigator and
our irises the machines. Beauty cannot exist without color. And we have assigned colors to each and
every feeling! Green with envy! Blue is sadness! Red is love!

This issue celebrates color and its importance in our lives. In the simple ways we know and use it.
We do see color and we love it so dearly, that we almost crave to taste it!

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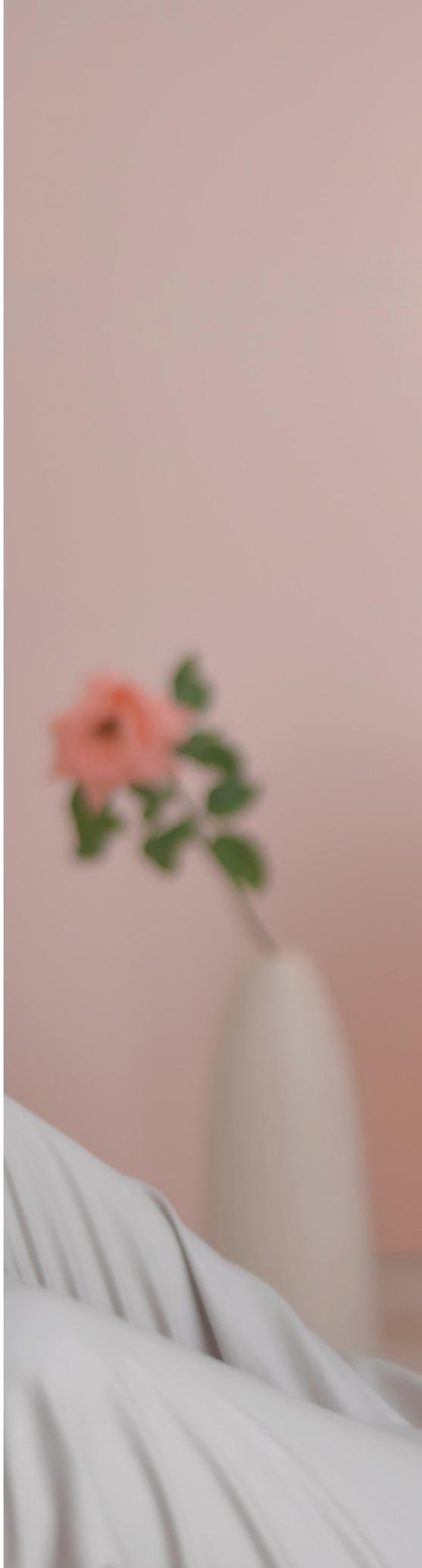
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DO YOU HAVE THIS IN PINK?

Words: Eva Papasoulioti

Photography: Marilia Kalantzi

...**a** question I ask every time I find something I like; be it clothes, cups, pajamas, headphones, you name it. Granted, some products come in shades of pink that are unfortunate, if not plain horrible, but I'm all for taking advantage of the ridiculous marketing towards women and girls. If there's a pink version of a product, and I like it, I'm not ashamed to ask for it.

Of course, this wasn't always true. For as long as I can remember, my answer to the question "What is your favorite color?" was always purple. Growing up, I was a tomboy who wore sweatpants and baggy clothes, had her hair in a pony-tail more often than not and swore. A lot. In my mind, pink and I were incompatible. Because I was a girl, but I wasn't girly. And pink is girly.

Through the centuries, fashion trends have come and gone, and colors have circled back and forth to the preference of people according to their gender, their social status, their financial capacity. Pink, too, has been used in different ways to define masculinity, class, sexuality. In the 18th and 19th century, pink was considered a paler shade of red, thus it was preferred for boys and men as the more masculine choice. In the 1920s, pastel pink, mint and yellow seersucker suits were broadly worn in the US by the working class in summer. During WWII, in concentration camps inmates accused of being homosexuals were forced to wear a pink triangle.

Today, the homophobic connotations of men wearing pink have toned down. Fashion has circled around with more clothes, like shirts and ties, in pink shades. But those who choose to incorporate it into their wardrobe still have their masculinity questioned, since fashion is widely considered a women's thing, thus men who are interested in fashion aren't real men. One would think that masculinity isn't so fragile that merely wearing or liking pink would break it to pieces.

Nevertheless, people's perception of women preferring pink isn't great either. With one hand, society is giving women hygiene products like razors and pads and make-up painted pink, and with the other it's punishing them for liking the color and wearing it in the same way others would wear red or black or even blue. Women who decide to dress in a pair of jeans, blue sweater and blue Converse are considered trendy, easy going; ideally

attired for a Sunday morning walk in downtown Athens. But those who do the same with pink are considered childish and immature. At best, eccentric. At worst, stupid. If they happen to be blonde, then it's a killer combination. The extendedly exclusive association of pink with little girls has given the color infantilizing connotations that hurt the adult women who prefer it.

This is a result of how heavily gender-coded colors are. It's either pink or blue for babies, and gods forbid an infant with no self-awareness, but with a penis, is seen wearing pink. Girls, from an early age, swim in toys of all shades of pink, from dolls to teddy bears to even the girly version of nerf guns and chemistry labs. Science is associated with intelligence, which in turn is associated with boys so much that toy companies' only idea to market science kits to young girls, is making everything pink.

But this tendency doesn't stop at products for children.

When it comes to hobbies that are statistically dominated by men, like riding a motorcycle, the accessories directed to women are mainly pink. I love me a black jacket with pink details (it's the one I got anyway), but at this point equating women with pink has become tiresome.

It's not a coincidence that while the Breast Cancer Ribbon is using the color as a marketing tool in an attempt to make the sign more recognizable, it is, in fact, preventing women from thinking they can get breast cancer and donate money to research because they associate the color with a negative aspect about themselves. Research shows that women are more likely to donate when the campaign is expressed in gender-neutral colors. In other words, women have internalized pink so much, that a campaign about their health drenched in their coded color is having the opposite effect.

It took me years to educate myself and realize the way society uses colors to maintain a binary and patriarchal status quo. It took me the same amount of years to see that 'tomboy' is a ridiculous word to use for a girl because it describes her in comparison to boys. Using the word means that the girl is in a role other than what she is supposed to be.

Activities, like colors, aren't inherently gendered. Girls can run and play and swear, and at the same time love skirts, wear pink and paint their nails. They are still girls, unless they tell us otherwise. Boys, too, don't have to run, they don't have to swear, they don't have to break hearts since the tender age of two, they can paint their nails and they can like pink. Or not. It's up to them. Pink is just fucking pink.







IT IS EASY, BEING GREEN

Words: Kristiana Lalou

Photography: Dimitra Keteoglou

We live in a world where an eco conscience is a must. The cliché says we ought to take care of the planet as it takes care of us. In theory, most of us would like to live greener lives, but it's the application that gives us a difficult time. So, if you have trouble figuring it out, we have made a comprehensive list of the first steps you need to take to live a more eco conscious life.

First of all, you need to think about the waste you produce. A person produces about 2kg of garbage per day and if you do the math, the amount gets astronomical per year, let alone in a lifetime. So unless you want to soon live in a world infected by your trash, you ought to minimize the amount you produce.

Get a reusable water bottle. Plastic bottles are a huge faux pas and detrimental to the environment, much like all plastic. Which brings me to my next point. Acquire a reusable bamboo coffee tumbler. Each day you take it to your favorite coffee shop, get your drink and relieve the planet of the plastic cups and lids most coffee shops offer. There are now a million brands offering very stylish options, to help be greener and more stylish at the same time. Win win!

Plastic is generally not something you want to use a lot of. But most food packaging makes it impossible to avoid. Nonetheless you can cut back on your plastic waste by adopting a few easy habits.

Ditch the plastic straws. There are funky paper straws everywhere and I love them to death. They make any drink ten times more fun to consume, yet if you feel even more committed to ecology, you can buy reusable metal straws online and sip guiltlessly on your drinks forever.

Do I even need to tell you about plastic bags? Oh the horror. I have no idea why we still even produce them. Pick up three to four tote bags in colors and styles you prefer and say adios to plastic forever. No excuses here. Ever. I won't even hear it.

If per chance you do find yourself without a tote bag on you and must make a purchase, then you insist on a paper bag that you can later recycle easily.

Dim the lights. Not to seduce anyone, but to save energy. You don't really need a house lit up like a firework. One strategically placed lamp with an energy saving light bulb will suffice. Plus the dim lighting helps your brain prepare for turn down time and helps you sleep easily. Goodbye insomnia and hello green living!

Whilst we are still at it. You should also turn down that thermostat. Put on a sweater, fluffy socks and get under the covers. No need to turn your place into a sauna.

This last easy tip is a very simple one, yet quite controversial. Eat less meat.

Even if you don't care that innocent animals are being slaughtered just so you can eat a burger whenever...you should consider eating less meat for the sake of the planet. Cattle farms are probably the biggest strain on the environment than anything. The water they consume. The land they cover and destroy. The harmful emissions and you know...the mistreatment of animals too, render them a huge burden on our ecosystem. If you won't do without your chicken fillet or grazed pork, at least limit them to twice a week. Not only will this help minimize pollution but it will help you eat better, be healthier and happier. Not to mention smell better. People who regularly eat a lot of meat tend to smell different and it is not exactly a pleasant odor.

Last but not least, your carbon footprint. This is again very basic, yet we all look past it constantly. Use the car only when you have to. Walk to places as much as you can. Get a nice bicycle and ride around the town doing your errands or shopping. Once again, this will make you fitter and healthier.

There is really nothing to lose and everything to gain when adopting a greener lifestyle. Start making small changes and see your life transform on multiple levels!



Remember to . . .

...start dieting every Monday.

...fall in love with the most inappropriate person and ignore the appropriate one for me.

...buy a new cell phone while my previous one is perfectly functioning.

...complain about being broke and then going out for cocktails.

...finally tidy up my desk.

...arrange an all girls/ all boys vacation and scare off the opposite sex of ever approaching us.

...watch every series on Netflix and never live my life.

...go to the beach, at night, with friends, alcohol and music and everything will be alright.





FROM WOMAN TO WOMAN

Words: Ariadni Tzounakou

Photography: Ioanna Melissinou

“ I am a woman.”

It has been a few years since the first time I uttered these words unironically. This is a deeply personal process commonly known as “coming out.” In popular culture, this act is seen as one of courage, self-reflection and strength, especially if the conditions are less than ideal (spoiler: they most often are, especially for us trans folks). However, there is another feeling that I personally experienced when I first came out. I am referring to guilt. I believe it to be common among other women of my kind. It makes us quite uncomfortable and thus we keep it hidden underneath the surface, to protect ourselves. But that is exactly the reason I want to talk about it.

It is not criminal guilt but rather that of shame. Let me explain. Growing up, the world’s portrayal of trans women was of ugliness and depravity. Our genitals were considered by others a reminder of maleness or, when corrected through surgery, open wounds. Only suicide was, in the eyes of many, a worse outcome than surgically constructed vaginas. Our looks were, and still are, a controversy. Ask a trans woman her worst fear, and a common concern you will hear is that she may look like “a man in a dress” or “Mrs Doubtfire”.

But what about those who “pass” *? Well, we face a different struggle. Our trans status is expected to be stated loud and clear so that others will always be aware of what they deal with when in our presence. Otherwise, we are labeled deceivers, walking traps for men and women alike.

Who wishes to be like this? I know I did not. As a teenager I would imagine myself as a woman but never a trans woman -“transvestites” as we were called in the media; men pretending to be women. Whenever I wanted to express in words the distress I experienced between my perception of self and the physical attributes I carried with me I would not dare say “I am a woman” or “I want to be a woman.” Instead, I would try something along the lines of “I wish I were...”. I could not help but ask myself, do I have the right to say something more?

I was raised as a little boy, a teen boy, to become an adult male. Was it of my own volition? Certainly not. I remember my flesh being defective very early on. I am talking about both form and socialization, the way it functioned but also the signals it gave to my social surroundings, the expectations it created. This is a medical condition known as gender dysphoria, which in many cases, mine included, means consistent distress with one’s gender and/or sex. It was other people’s ignorance and awkwardness that made it impossible for me to correctly explain my condition. It was the world’s pressure that further delayed my transition^{2**} once I reached self-realization. But how does that change the road I have walked?

¹Passing means being perceived by others as a person of the sex you are transitioning to.

²Transition means to start living as the gender you wish to. That can mean socially transitioning and/or medically altering your sex. For more information see WPATH’s Standards of Care, v7.

Most of the most impressive people I have met in my life are women, the majority of them cisgender. Be they family, friends, lovers, fellow artists or writers, icons who create timeless masterpieces, professionals I look up to or complete strangers, I admire them so much for their strength in life. The world -yes, the whole world, not just part of it- is horrible for women and ignorant of the harm it causes us. Despite this reality, I see women face every day with everything they've got. We know that we cannot always get what we deserve, yet we do not stop trying.

In that admiration lie my own feelings of guilt. I escaped the social policing that other women were subjected to. I was never told to not spread my legs, was never asked "when are you going to get married?" or reminded, in the middle of another awkward family dinner, that "the time to have children is ticking away." I did not have, for most of my life, the experience of living as a woman and being female. Instead, what I carried was the experience of being defective. I could not help but feel like stepping forward would only spread my own ugliness onto other women, take space where it was not needed, generate harm. And I did not want to see the reaction such a confession would bring. So I kept my mouth shut.

It is a lovely irony of life that the person who encouraged me to admit my feelings was a cis woman. She insisted that we discuss the subject, that there was something more to my discomfort with my body than just "my dumb weirdness". Her reassurance that I would have support, led me to stop ignoring my problem. And so I came out. Initially to her. Then, quietly, amongst trusted friends. They went with me to an old-fashioned clothing store to see how much fixing my fashion sense needed - quite a lot as it turned out. They held my hand during my first efforts to publicly dress the way I wanted. My journey had begun.

In the years that followed, my girlfriends and I shared drink after drink as we discussed gender. Unexpectedly, I was not the only one who had secrets to disclose. I was surprised to see how concerned many cis women were in regards to their gender. Some were completely comfortable with their womanhood but not with the social burdens it carries. Others questioned their femininity or experienced minor dysphoria.

Having a female body from birth is the one thing many trans women would give up everything for. I know I would. But talking to cis women I got reminded that having just that does not mean life is fair or satisfying. Cis women's bodies hurt too. They do not always adhere to the standards their owners hold them up to or society's expectations. When exposed, their flaws cannot be hidden. For millions of women being female means being judged on your appearance, having your long-term dedication to



your job questioned, waking up to your body tormenting you. Age will not be any gentler to a female body.

"I look at men and feel envious because I may be exercising just as hard, but I may never be able to have as much physical strength as they do. Damn testosterone, you know?"

"It is the one thing I wish I did not have to deal with every month. And everyone expects you to be fully functional even while in pain."

"I remember, growing up I did not want to be a boy, but I did not want to be what girls were. Cute and submissive, that is not me."

When I hear cis women talk about gender what I usually hear is concern with social norms and the way these force themselves into everyday life. Or, as a friend recently put it: "If all there was to male and female was biology, without any expectations, would we even need gender?" For many trans folks, the term represents our fight against our initial biology. I think that the common ground in both contexts is that we essentially struggle for the same thing. The right to define ourselves in this world, to change how we are perceived and to live a more honest, meaningful, and self-determined life.

Our culture has the image of women constantly sabotaging one another. From my perspective, this feels like a complete fabrication. We invest in heartfelt, lifelong friendships. It is in other women we find solace when the earth is shaking. I would not be standing here without the support of other women. And yes, that includes a whole lot of cis women. I feel like sometimes, in our need to prove our worth we forget to tell our "cisters" how much they matter to us. Walking the same path, sharing our different perspectives, acknowledging each other's past and learning from it, is a blessing. Be it in tearing down stereotypes, fighting the aspects of our bodies that hurt or demanding respect from the world, we have more in common than we tend to think.

I am excited to be walking this life alongside you. I owe this to you. Because without you, I would not be able to, loudly, unironically, say:

I am a woman.





KALE, GINGER & AVOCADO SMOOTHIE

Recipe | Photography: Amaryllis Tsegou

In the winter, when early morning is usually dark, quiet and cold, I long for comforting, warming oats with stewed fruit, nut butters and fragrant spices; or hearty, saucy eggs served with thickly sliced bread. And then, there are also those days when all I crave are bright smoothies, filled with all the goodness and freshness, served in big round glasses. Sometimes they are dark pink or pale yellow, most often though they are green: pale and smooth or deep emerald, thick and frothy.

I change the fruit and vegetables depending on what's available and what I feel like, but almost always, there's some ginger and kale in there. I always have both in hand, as I love ginger's peppery taste and intense aroma and kale's dark green colour, slightly bitter taste and lovely texture. This super green, super tasty version was concocted with the help of my sister, using some of our favourite beauties: kale and ginger of course, buttery soft avocado, a crunchy red apple and an almost black banana for sweetness, a good squeeze or fragrant lime (I go through periods of utter obsession with lime, much like with other things, but citrus has a tendency to constantly make me swoon) and a sprinkle of chia seeds.

Blend blend blend with water, serve and drink immediately, preferably standing in a dim kitchen, watching the morning light grow a little stronger minute by the minute- I swear this smoothie makes everything just a little brighter.

Ingredients

(serves 2)

1/2 ripe avocado

1 ripe banana

1 red apple, washed, cored & cubed

60g kale, washed, chopped, hard stems removed

10g ginger (1 thumb), peeled

1 1/2 teaspoons chia seeds

juice from 1/2 lime

3 cups water

Instructions

Place everything in a blender and whizz until smooth.
Pour into two large glasses and drink up.





Colors in Music

Big Yellow Taxi – Joni Mitchell
16 Shades Of Blue – Tori Amos
Back to Black – Amy Winehouse
Red – Taylor Swift
Black Magic Woman – Santana
Black Velvet – Alannah Myles
Brown Eyed Girl – Van Morrison
Super Massive Black Hole – Muse
Pink Snow – The Cribs
Colors – Halsey
Ultraviolet – The Stiff Dylans
Three Colors Trilogy: BLUE WHITE RED

Colors in Film

Pretty in Pink (1986)
Blue is the Warmest Color (2013)
Blue Velvet (1986)
Moulin Rouge (2001)
Yellow Submarine (1968)
The Color Purple (1985)





THE ROCK & ROLL STORY 20 GREATEST HITS

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- 1. BYE BYE LOVE The Everly Brothers
- 2. JAMBALAYA Fats Domino
- 3. JOHNNY B. GOODE Chuck Berry
- 4. HOT BALLS OF FIRE Jerry Lee Lewis
- 5. BOY FOR MY SWEET Drifters
- 6. T. GONZALES Pat Boone
- 7. PRETENDER The Platters
- 8. FRUITI Little Richard
- 9. R. ALLIGATOR Bill Haley
- 10. SIXTEEN Chuck Berry

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inspired by an alternative perspective on color

ESTHESIA

Art direction & photography by Mimika Michopoulou
Styling by Elisavet Mavru

























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ANOTHER SKY, ANOTHER RAINBOW

Words: Deppy Karagianni

Photography: Anna Trympali

“Let me tell you something strange about my name. The official, longer version of it is dark blue, like the bottom of the sea, while the shorter version, the one I’ve been called by my family since the day I was born, is somewhere between pink and purple, maybe a shade I’ve seen referred to as ‘rich mauve’. I would think of myself as more mauve than blue, but in all honesty, neither feels right.

Then there’s my nickname, the online name I took in adolescence and has stuck with me since, which is exactly right. It originates from a fictional character, whose design features mainly silver-white and oxford blue; yet the name itself is a mixture of turquoise, baby blue and white, and that somehow feels more “me” than my most beloved shade of crimson. It is funny how always, whenever I was to make a choice of color, in an application’s settings, for example, I would impulsively pick one from the range of turquoise, teal, petrol, the hues a friend of mine has classified under the term “bathroom color”(the term has also stuck ever since).

At some point in my childhood, it occurred to me that maybe not all people see colors in numbers and words. I had never heard anybody mention the number 2 being yellow, or discuss their name-giving choices based on their favorite hues. This lack of talk meant that it was either taken for granted or a rare oddity. So, one day I asked my sister «Hey, do numbers have colors?». She gave me a weird look as if the answer was obvious. «Of course they do!» she replied. She then told me her rainbow of colors from 1 to 10, and I told her mine. Our erroneous impression was now solid: everyone’s 3 had a color, though not all of them were pink.

The misunderstanding didn’t last long. Apart from my sister, no one else seemed to know what I was talking about and, naturally, I was asked to explain. Explaining is an awkward process, and up to date I haven’t found any better way to convey it than “When I think of number four green comes to mind. *A word with the letter O in it usually is red to me. Sundays are pink and November is both gray and petrol.*” It is quite difficult to relay this mental association with colors to someone who has never experienced it. You begin to wonder whether those are just conscious connections your brain has made sometime in the past and still retains. Maybe I had seen my first name written in mauve as a kid and thus I still remember it this way.

However, it is equally difficult for me to imagine living without it. What do others mean when they say a name suits somebody? How do they even name their pets at first sight? What does their favourite number mean to them (except in cases where it is directly related to an event)? What is on their mind when they say they have something “on the tip of their tongue”?

The next person who understood without further elaboration was my best friend. She sees a rainbow of her own in the sequence of numbers, completely different than mine. It was from her I learned that this phenomenon has a name. Synesthesia is a mixing of the senses; the stimulation of one sense triggers also the response of another sense. As the Internet then informed us, ours, known as "grapheme-color synesthesia", is the most common form in which letters, numbers and days appear in distinct colors. Other synesthetes can see or smell sounds, hear scents, or taste shapes. To some people, musical notes have shapes and colors, and every song is a painting; synesthesia can produce paintings that are not just inspired by music, but to the artist, are the music itself. But what I found most fascinating is that not all synesthetes see these representations of shapes and colors only internally, in their mind's eye; some of them actually see these representations projected in front of them, like an image or a movie.

Every synesthete experiences this phenomenon differently. For me, colors seem to be an essential component of memory function and a translation key for various impressions. For instance, when I have to memorize a list, I tend to place yellow words in the second place. When I try to recall telephone numbers or passwords, it is their colors that surface first. Furthermore, colors are often part of how I process my feelings. A movie that leaves trails of gray tends to be more deeply depressing than one filtered in blue, which is simply sad. A scare is a drop of red in the blackness, dispersing into bubbles as it goes away. My fondness for my favourite book, what is left from the excitement of reading it and the passage of years since then is a lilac strip on a clear morning sky. My best friend also sees colors in touch, a concept entirely foreign to me, while I may see color in some voices, the high pitched ones in yellows and oranges, the soft, sweet ones in brown hues, the husky ones in coal and the feminine-sounding ones in burgundy or cherry red.

Synesthesia's colors are not the result of active thought or imagination; they happen automatically. Still, there are numerous factors that may evoke a color and it is sometimes hard to tell whether it is an involuntary event or a more conscious association, influenced by the actual way something looks. It is very likely for me to associate a person with the color of their hair or eyes, or the usual tones of their wardrobe. Nevertheless, numbers, as well as certain letters of the alphabet, have always been very distinct and invariable in their hues. Each synesthete's colors are a stable reality, to the extent that it is a challenge to accept that things might be different for another. It was greatly amusing when I declared February to be a dark chocolate brown and got an impulsive "no!" from my friend, in a tone that plainly said "you're wrong" rather than "your perception simply differs", just because her February is blue. It is always pure entertainment to share your number rainbow with another synesthete and see them physically recoil from it, as it contradicts the truth of their own rainbow.

Once you become aware of it, this colorful perception of the world is so much more fun to live with, especially for a person like me who has no talent in graphic arts. I might be unable to put these impressions on paper, but I can sit back and contemplate them, express myself in metaphors that are no metaphors at all and hear how near or far they are from the unique images of other minds. It is amazing to learn about the various sensory forms the abstract takes on for other individuals, how differently it materializes in their own skies. And more importantly, it is a useful tool for picking the appropriate name for your fictional character, or a beautiful telephone number when given the chance, or writing your labels with the right crayons, even if your choices make your fellow synesthete's cringe.

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FOR A FISTFUL OF SHELLS

“That precious color which gleams with the hue of a dark rose...it brightens every garment and shares with gold the glory of triumph.” - Pliny

Words : Leonidas Sarkas

Photography: Nhat LE

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hat, would you say, is the color of kings, of those who always held close ties with humanity's progress throughout history? The color of emperors, of the aristocracy, of power?

Gold is the first candidate, but it would take numerous pages just to talk about the Pharaohs' sarcophagi and many more to cover the goose and her golden eggs, the golden ratio and the Golden Age of Pericles. Blue, favored by all, is next in line. During the Middle Ages, the nobles' persistence to stay hidden from the sun in order for the shade of their skin to be as far as possible from that of the sunburned workers - as well as from that of the Arab conquerors, later on - allowed the blue veins of their wrists to stand out on their pale arms. Thus, the blue-blood myth began. Unfortunately, the magazine's editors, through Mongolian tactics, forbade me to write about that color, saving it for themselves.

Therefore, the only choice left is the color completing the triumvirate of royal hues. That was a relief since purple is not only amazing but quite mysterious as well.

If one wants to be thorough, one has to seek the origins of this whole affair all the way back to the Ice Age. The Muricidae sea snails were true to form. Charming, no more than ten centimetres tall, able to secrete a substance that turned purple when coming in contact with air, those snails liked to hang out in the Mediterranean. Sixteen centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ, they had the misfortune to meet the human race...

In Tyre of Phoenicia, through the snails' genocide and an industrial process which Pliny the Elder and Aristotle describe with vague details, the so-called Tyrian Purple dye was being produced. Its main characteristics were the rich and vibrant color, the resilience to sunlight, the astronomically high cost and the unbearable stench. Moreover, the color's density improved over the years, instead of fading. All these factors contributed to the product's elevation to a luxury item and it entering the homes of the powerful.

Alexander the great, the Assyrian kings, Solomon, the Roman emperors and senators, everyone shopped from Tyre and its branches. In Rome especially, laws had been drafted which denied the usage of the color to those outside the imperial family.

At this point, we are obliged to ask: what hue, precisely, was Tyrian Purple? There is no definite and irrevocable answer. Due to the production's imponderables (environmental conditions and heating process), the final color wasn't always the exact same. Somewhere between deep crimson and deep purple (and often taking a vacation in the fields of dark cyan), a mixture of clotted blood and imperial egotism - that was the hue which had sent the blue-blooded over the edge.

During the Middle Ages, Tyrian Purple remained blue-blooded and worth its weight in gold. Every Vatican cardinal honored the color in their official attire and Charlemagne was buried in a purple shroud that has survived to the present day. In Byzantium, it was established as the imperial color. Purple ink was used in imperial documents and Bible pages while officials and bishops never missed an opportunity to flaunt their power through the color. Jesus Christ and Virgin Mary are shown wearing purple fabrics in mosaics and the emperors' legitimate children were titled "Porphyrogenitus", meaning "born in the purple" - what better proof for the right to succeed the throne?

The Byzantine Empire's mishaps (caused by the Franks and then by the Ottomans) led the production of the color to a premature demise. Purple may not have lost its primacy but with the destruction of its manufacturing sites, the price skyrocketed, thus pulling the brake on its application and usage. By order of the Pope, Tyrian Purple withdrew from the Vatican's palette, ceding its place to red and its various low-cost hues.

The complete turnover took place in Easter of 1856. William Henry Perkin, a Chemistry university student was struggling to synthesize quinine so he could deal a blow at malaria. What with his youthful enthusiasm and clumsiness, the anilines and the position of the stars, he succeeded in producing an organic substance with an intense purple hue. He came face to face with the imperial color, circumventing the shells, the Tyrians, centuries-long traditions and imperial whims and forgetting all about malaria.

Mauveine. That's the name of that dirt cheap dye. William introduced it to the market, allowing us mere mortals to live the purple dream. In fact, when Queen Victoria and Empress Eugenie of France eagerly started to wear it, purple, disguised as mauveine, came back into the spotlight.

Ah, yes, we forgot to mention that the student became rich. Of course..

By then, the fact that anyone could wear the new "purple" decreased the color's prestige. It got downgraded to something so trivial and mainstream that the present day Caesars and Justinians could resemble their predecessors without wasting a fortune. By no means, however, can an ancient vogue be forgotten, especially when it has come to define the ruling class. The Tyrian Purple moved to the Suffragette movement. It decorated its flags together with white, green and gold while later it became the registered color mark of American singer Prince - what other choice did he have, with a name like that? Even today, a toga or a mantle of that color echoes the orders which set legions and Varangians in motion.

As for the obsession with the royal color, it was never extinguished. Confirming the recipes left to us by our ancestors, the chemist Paul Friedlander managed, sometime in the previous century, to isolate 1,4 grams of Tyrian purple from twelve thousand sea snails. The product was just enough to dye a handkerchief. In 2000, one gram of the dye was sold for two thousand euros. Finally, there's already talk of the magazine being renamed to "Tyrian Flipped" and every page being dyed, from now on, in purple hues.



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WHITE NOISE

Words: Kristiana Lalou

It's almost always there. It is hiding behind my desk. Under my bed. Inside my closet. Deep inside the drawers of my dresser. Sometimes I can see it trapped behind my computer screen. I am trying to set it free. To let it go. I open the door for it to escape. I don't really understand why it won't go away. I am not keeping it hostage. I am even aiding in its release. Yet it stays and comes back and hides wherever it can. Every time I find it again, creeping on me, I get mad frustrated. "Go away" I scream at it.

It wasn't always my unwanted companion. It started about two years ago. This soundless sound of congestion. I moved into a new house and all I could hear for months was this filling emptiness. I started throwing things out. Decluttering. I began with my make up. Threw out everything and gave away even more. Until I was left with 2 lipsticks, make up and a mascara. I then moved on to banish the noise in my closet. I threw away clothes and underwear and shoes and accessories. The noise remained.

I decided on a designated junk drawer. I made a house for the white noise in my head. "Here! This is yours, you can live in this drawer and I won't mind." I told it. But it is a rebel. It doesn't stay there. It slips out and covers my space. Levitates over me while I sleep and swallows me whole, so when I wake up, my head is burning and my arms are numb.

I wash my bedding and sheets, for fear it is hiding in my pillow case. Yet two days later I find myself the same again.

Until I pinpoint where this unwanted guest came from and why it is still here, I can't do much but keep cleaning and tidying and throwing out things. I empty my space and my brain, only to accumulate more white noise. My brain is a broken television. The zzzzzzzzzz sound and frozen frames have high jacked it.



ROSE - TINTED GLASSES

Words: Yiota Bouga

Photography: Maria Kryou

There are road trips that are filled with colors, music, scents and flavors. Their destinations are easy to get to, inexpensive and don't take more than a week to explore. Trips like that are eye-opening, make us see beyond clichés, stereotypes and prejudice.

The Balkans offer this kind of scenic adventure. Every area, every city or even neighbourhood is a universe in itself, completely different than the last. With a history that goes back deep into the past and a culture that lives on, the Balkans are worth exploring whether on foot or in a car, and most importantly worth experiencing life in. While there, you don't need rose-tinted glasses to make everything feel like a movie.

With all this in mind, we got in our car ready for the most colorful trip of our lives. After driving all night, the first light found us five kilometers from the border between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia. The scenery was desolate. The only signs of human presence were the abandoned buildings. It was the bleakest landscape we had ever seen.

We drove some more... In the Serbian countryside that spread before us, time seemed to have stopped in the '90s. Even the cars were from another era. The scenery repeated itself, making the journey through it feel endless. Barren houses in the field, huge blocks of faceless buildings, colorless towns inhabited by brooding people. This part of our trip definitely called for some rose-tinted glasses.

Suddenly, after a fourteen-hour drive, we felt something change. There was a buzz around, more cars, the buildings were more contemporary and the people very different. We reached Belgrade, our first stop. The city was friendly, with people upbeat and busy, streets quite chaotic and buildings that kept a reasonable balance between the old and new.

Belgrade, the Serbian capital, will be the next 'cool' European destination in the years to come. There's nightlife, distinct artistic activity, and an all-around youthful culture. The city aspires to be the heart of the Balkans in terms of culture and urban lifestyle, and with the number of happenings taking place there, it is sure heading that way.

Here you can walk around Kalemegdan and Skadarska, the city's most bohemian neighbourhood, you can stroll through Trg Republike Square and visit the National Museum, have a drink in one of the floating river bars or the traditional kafanas and do your shopping on Knez Michailova Street.

After getting our fill of this sleepless city, we set off for our next stop, Sarajevo. This time we didn't mind the route, we knew we were heading towards a capital full of incredible contrasts, that captures the visitor from the very first moment. West meets East in a very peculiar way in Bosnia, a country that stands firmly on its feet and, twenty years later, seems to have forgotten about the war entirely.

Here, you will cross the legendary Latin Bridge, pausing at the spot where Austro-Hungarian Prince Franz Ferdinand was murdered. You will immerse yourselves in the atmosphere of Baš aršija, the historical and cultural center, enjoy the panoramic view of the city's minarets from the "Yellow Castle", look at the outdoors games of chess near the Cathedral, visit the museum of Bosnian blues and party all night in the countless clubs located in the historical city center.

Our third stop was Mostar, where we saw the old bridge that still stands stubbornly over the Neretva river. 'Mostar' means 'he who guards the bridge' and that particular bridge has always been the center of the city's activities. The old, 16th-century version of the bridge was destroyed during the war in Bosnia, but it has been faithfully reconstructed and functional since 2004.

Little shops everywhere, the air smelling of lavender and kebabs, and tourists from all over the world strolling around the stone-paved alleys. Some people braved the river's icy waters and some whacko dived in from the bridge. We saw so many things.

We didn't want to return. The Balkans, where the landscape changes constantly, are the joy of those who love to be on the road. They are a place with the unique ability to turn grey into a thousand colors and stereotypes into continuous surprises. You don't need rose-tinted glasses, in the Balkans, to make everything feel like a movie.





LIGHT BLUE: MY MOTHER'S HUE

Words: Maria Kinti - Zervou

Photography: Fay Papanastasiou

I am sitting in the back seat of the car. I look out the window and try to hold back tears. I isolate myself from the sounds around me. My gaze falls on the sea, over its endless blue colour. Its tranquillity reminds me of my mother. Oh, how I'd love to run towards her and hide in her embrace.

I am not sure who to blame about the relationship we have formed, circumstances or fate. I only know that my mother is a protagonist in my life. Sometimes actively and sometimes passively, she watches me grow, mature, dream, choose right or wrong, fall down and get back up again. I remember her always processing any information I bring forth and setting limits in whatever situation presents itself. Then, almost magically and as effortlessly as possible, putting my chaos in order and listening to me for hours without complaint.

"You are a difficult person," she often tells me, referring to all those times I bitch and moan and lash out against her, when in fleeting arguments. It seems to be true that we always hurt the people we love. Even so, she hides her anger and disappointment. She puts anger aside and persists. When my storm has calmed, she will take me by the hand, like when I was a child, and she will give me balance, answer all my whys with honesty and without hesitation or untruth. Yet another time.

She hardly ever loses hope. In our walks, in our trips to the beach, our phone calls. No matter the time and place she insists on passing her virtues on to me. All those ideals and values that will transform me to the woman she knows I can become. "You still don't understand your own worth, child?" she tells me very often lately. She despairs that I still care about what people say about me. She gets upset that I overthink it all, while her ways of acting are much different. She lives proudly and joyously, a life that she herself chose, unaffected by others. I envy and admire her so much for it! "You are nothing like me!" she says frustrated, while still believing that I will change when the time is right.

We are walking side by side when out of nowhere, what none of us expected, happens. We reverse roles. We step in each other's shoes. Natural way of life or instinct? I suppose both. I used to think my mother was unbending. But reality came to prove me wrong while I was still a child. Since then, and only under extenuating circumstances I play her part. A part very difficult and full of obligations and rules. Will I ever be able to act like her? I wonder constantly. Until I get my answer, my mother rises to her role, better than ever and more devoted than ever. Devotion. This word belongs to her.

I am now home. I say goodnight to her over the phone. "All is well, rest. Goodnight." Her reassurance fills me with relief. I refuse to think of my life without her. In my mind, I bring that endless light blue I saw earlier, her favourite colour. That which brought her close to me.



THE CAT LADY

Words : Jennifer Ray

Photography: Yiannis Ampatziadis

Art Direction: Ioannis Argyris

There are those nights, you know? The ones that feel heavy on the heart. When you see the worst pieces of shit humanity has to offer parade in front of you, I guess at times everything good in the world feels like it's been snuffed out.

Comes with the career, I suppose. 'To serve and protect'.

I met her on such a night.

I was sitting at the bar of a grimy, hole-in-the-wall pub, staring at my drink for what felt like hours. I heard the bell on the door ring and absently turned to look towards it.

Her hair fell red and loose below her shoulders. She was much older than me, mid-forties I'd reckon. But time had been kind to her, caressing her forehead and laugh lines, gently kissing her eyes. I dragged my gaze to her Roman nose, to her lips, stained a deep red and sculpted in a feline grin. She wore a plain dress, deep green or black, I couldn't tell in the dim lighting.

She slipped between the patrons and the furniture gracefully and sat next to me.

After all these years, I can't remember what she ordered. She propped her elbow on the bar and rested her head in her palm, staring at me almost in fascination.

Shivers travelled down my spine, like someone walking over my grave. I stole glances at her and she only sat there, grinning.

"You seem as if the weight of the world is on your shoulders, boy." Smooth voice, deep and velvety.

It took me a moment to find my words. "Could say so."

I turned to face her, inviting the conversation. Her eyes were light, almost seemed to be shining. She had something sharp and dangerous and affectionate about her. Bad news all around.

"Penny for your thoughts, love. Indulge an old girl." She sipped her drink, never looking away.

"Bad day at work, you could say", I shrugged.

"What is it you do, love?"

"I'm a police officer, ma'am."

"Ah, what a terrible decision then!", she teased, laughing. There was no bite behind it, just the same unexplained affection and mischief. I liked hearing her laugh. I found myself joining her.

"Certainly feels like it right now." It felt good to talk. "It gets hard, some days."

"You see bad things? Things that get you down?"

"Something like that. It's like there's nothing kind in the world anymore, nothing pretty, nothing--"

"Feels as if there's no magic in it anymore?" She'd caught the canary, I could tell. Had something she wanted to share, it was in her body language. Or maybe it was I who needed to listen.

I could use some magic.

"Something like that." We sat in silence, drinking. She watched me patiently until I felt uncomfortable. I tried to break the spell.

"You believe in magic, ma'am?"

Her grin grew wider, white teeth gleaming almost menacingly.

"Would you like to hear a story, love? Might answer your question. Might even lift your spirits a little?"

"Does the dog die? Will it make me sad, I mean."

"Maybe. Maybe not." She shifted more comfortably in her seat and drained her glass. "Tell you what, boy, buy me a drink and I'll begin. Stop me if... If 'the dog dies', yes?"

Two drinks were set in front of us. She brought her chair closer, sat down and leaned into me, intimately. I could smell her breath, sweet, probably from her drink. Almost sickly so.

I draped my hand over her shoulders, holding her close. In retrospect, I can't tell you why I did it. It felt natural. She leaned her head against mine, we were almost cheek to cheek.

"Let me begin by saying that I always had an affinity for cats. Ever since I was a child, living in a small flat with my mother, I would herd them around me. Growing up, I found no greater pleasure than their company, not even in human relationships."

"Never was a cat person myself", I muttered. "They're too distant for my taste, come and go as they please."

"And humans don't?" She turned to me, mirth and secrets in her voice. "I've had cats show me affection upon the first contact. Much like you."

Her eyes trailed the small distance between us pointedly.

"Some kept their distance, alert. Others have bitten, scratched and hissed at me. Same with people. They show affection or they bite and scratch and hiss. Cats on occasion kill for sport, much like humans, as you know. All in all, I think I've enjoyed from them the same pleasures and pain any human relationship has offered me."

She nudged me playfully with her shoulder, grin blooming on her lips. "Now hush, it's rude to interrupt an old lady while she talks."



That rich laugh flowed like molasses again. I could hear nothing but her voice, as if we were the only two people in this shady little bar. Hell, the only ones in the world.

She leaned her head onto mine once more, almost speaking into my ear.

“When mother died, I moved here. Worked odd jobs here and there to make ends meet. Rented a flat. It was mouldy, the wallpaper flaked off the walls and the wiring was faulty. Awful deal really. Cats would gather in the alleyway below it. I took to feeding them and soon they’d climb all the way up to the balcony. I used to leave the windows open so they would come in for shelter.”

“Dangerous thing to do. What about robbers?” I couldn’t stop myself. She just sighed.

“I know. Learned my lesson, as you will see. Anyway, eventually, I was known only as the Cat Lady. Funny beasts we are. To others I no longer had a name, they didn’t care to find it out. They knew I was the Cat Lady and that was enough. I didn’t mind.

“About a week ago, I came home earlier from work. Found a man in my flat. Poor fucker was looking for money, not realising I was probably as poor as him.”

I stiffened at that, felt my heart beating faster. I unconsciously tightened my hold on her shoulder, fingers digging into it. But she didn’t seem to mind.

“I think he was more scared than I was to find him in my apartment. He had a knife in his hand. I remember the light from the streetlights reflected on it before he stabbed me. We stared at each other in horror, until he pushed me away with a cry. I fell on the floor. Last thing I remember, my cats had gathered around me, staring at me with big eyes shining. There’s not much after that.”

By then the drunken bellows had all become white noise to me. I only felt the vibrations of the loud music in my ribcage, like a monstrous heartbeat. For a moment I wish I could feel hers instead, to calm me. This ridiculous woman, who left her windows open for fucking cats was sitting here, leaning against a perfect stranger after being stabbed, telling the story as if it were nothing. What was she doing out of the hospital? How was she so calm about it all? Why did I care for a woman whose name I didn’t know?

“I don’t see the magic in this story, ma’am.”

My voice sounded hoarse and thick. I tried to swallow the lump in my throat. She laced her arm around my waist, holding on to me.

“I’m getting there. This part I overheard from the nurses gossiping. Eventually, I was found by a neighbour, a young girl that lived next door. She called the landlord, insisted they get into my apartment, that something was wrong.

“The cats were howling and screaming. They screamed and screamed, and the neighbour said they sounded almost human. The girl, they said, came to complain about the ruckus, really, but upon reaching my door she felt a chill seeping in her bones, as if death settled upon her.”

“And the thief?”



The chuckle that escaped her lips left me cold. I didn't dare look at her, struck by the unreasonable fear of what I would see on her face. Who I would see.

"Glad you asked. A man was admitted to the hospital that night. He'd been hit by a bus as he was running out of an alleyway, right in the middle of the main road. There were scratches and bite marks all over his face. Almost unrecognisable, they said, as if mauled by cats. He was dead when he got there."

"He was the one from your flat?" The cold never left me. She moved out of our embrace, drained the last of her drink.

"The fingerprints matched. What I mean to say is, there is such a thing as karma, boy. You might feel that the evil in the world goes unpunished, but sometimes cruel deeds are answered in kind. Not all magic and justice are gone from this shithole of a world, is how I see it."

She got up. Turned to leave.

"I want to see you again." I blurted out. I was drawn to her, yet I also felt like something was very wrong. I feared her answer. She smiled again, white teeth gleaming.

"You will, love. Sooner than you might think."

I looked around the room. The colours looked more vivid, almost feverish.

"At least let me walk you home. It's dangerous to walk alone at this hour." Never say chivalry is dead.

She looked at me for what seemed like forever. Her grin softened, sweet and sad.

"That no longer matters." She was gone.

I should have run after her. I didn't. I still couldn't shake the feeling I'd seen a ghost.

She was not wrong, though. I felt lighter of heart, in a dizzying way.

The hangover I had the next day was not kind to me. My thoughts still ran to the strange Cat Lady and her even stranger story. I needed to find out if she was telling the truth. Call it professional curiosity. Worst case scenario, she was lying, right? That or I'd be able to find her again. I looked into the cases that matched the date she'd told me.

I found it alright. Female, mid-forties, red hair. My Cat Lady was staring at me from the picture on her case file. She'd been murdered in her apartment a week ago, stabbed and bled to death before anyone found her. Her murderer, identified by his fingerprints, was also deceased, run over by a bus. Coroner's notes said his face was covered in scratches and bite marks. Died before even reaching the hospital.

I stood there, shaking. My mind refused to process the information.

"Not all magic and justice are gone. Not all magic and justice are gone."

I whispered it like a mantra and it felt truer each time. I felt like crying. In relief and hope. In grief.

The hair at the back of my neck stood up, like someone was watching me.

I turned towards the window.

Sure enough, there was a cat sitting on the window sill.

Her eyes were light, almost seemed to be shining.

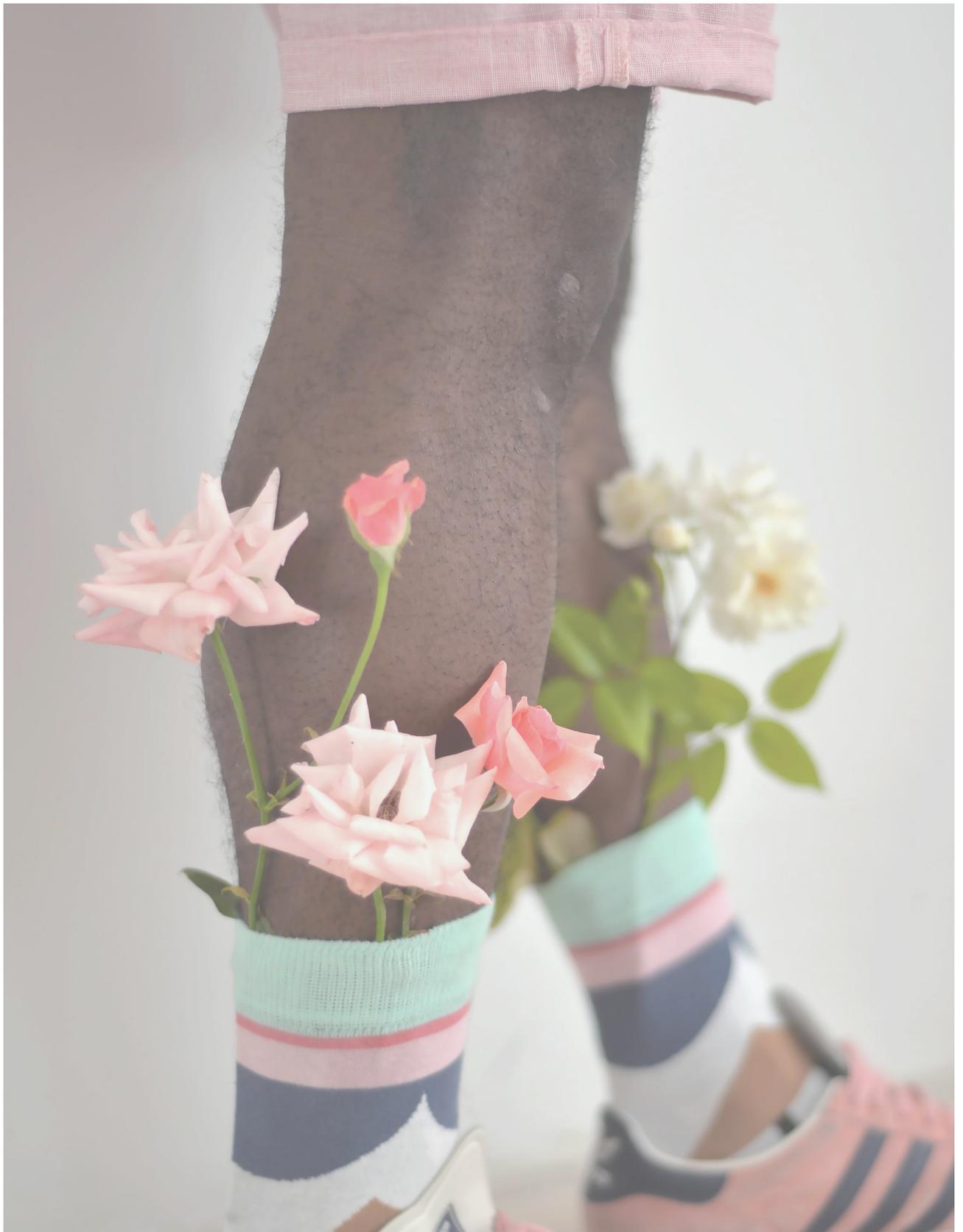




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