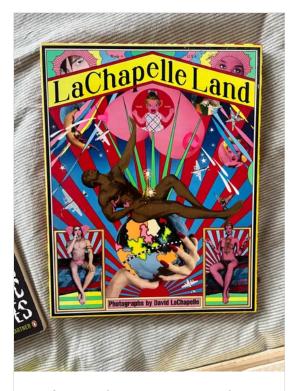


Taglines: Open to ... Open for ... Let's make something together.



Playful, subversive commentary on celebrity culture and consumerism.



I watched a five-year old playing this with her Dad and fell in love with Djeco's games. They are simple, colourful, and, most importantly, fun to play.



Zsuzsi Gartner's absurdist disections of middleclass life are some of the best writing on the theme in Canada. She doesn't write enough.



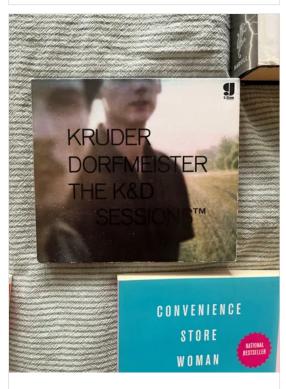




The legendary photographers of saints and dreamers.



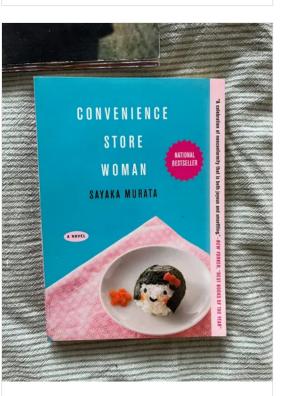
Murakami writes in a style I call flat and I mean that positively. It's almost as if the writer isn't there. I love the simplicity



Some brilliant remixes, especially of Bomb the Base's "Bug Powder Dust". The album is also here because of the artwork, which I always have to tell myself is not Jurgen Teller.



A truly distinctive sound and dark soundtrack to a 90's English summer all the way from Trendy Wendy to Maggie this, Maggie that / Maggie means inflation.



Murata share Murakami's "flat" style, but it is her attention and love of the banal that sets her apart from him and Gartner. The Convenience Store Woman's bewilderment at the status-seeking obsessions of her peers is refreshing.



Bjôrk is here for her sense of play and constant ability to reinvent herself.



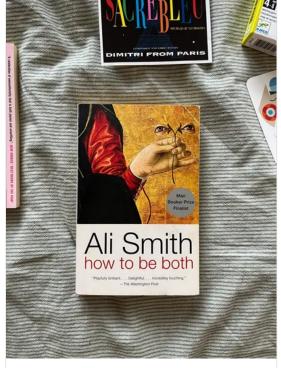
I love the eclectic set of patterns in this image. I also love the freshness of Vietnamese cooking and the open intelligence of Kim Thuy. As you can see, I've been inspired to start my own collection of bowls.

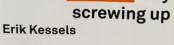


A favourite album, conceived of as course in language instruction teaching listeners how to speak to and be understood by hipsters, jazz musicians, beatniks, juvenile delinquents, and the criminal fringe. The bonus track - a soundscape of Paris - takes me straight to the Porte Saint-Denis circa 1996.



Memeco Arii is here to show that complex themes - trauma, responsibility, and male emotions - can be addressed in a simple joyous form. Her's may not be the best - that's Akimi Yoshida's Bananafish – but Hitorijime My Hero – gives everyday comfort.





PHAIDON

Erik Kessels's agency is creator of some of the funniest campaigns I know. His book is here to remind me to take risks and reject perfectionism, at least in the process. (Hemingway: Write drunk. Edit sober.) I also love the simplicity of his writing style and that his introduction is a compelling piece of copy.

Not Bjôrk again, but Another Magazine. This issue has a conversation between the magazine founder, Jefferson Hack, and the actress Tilda Swinton about the late 80s and early 90s. The risks they and others people (Leigh Bowery and Derek Jarman) took seem inconceivable today. So the magazine is here nostalgia for the last days of punk which I was too young to enjoy and saw from afar, but also an inspiration to take risks and what I missed out on.

Simple, playful, and incredibly complex.

Other stuff, in my head, not my hands



Banksy - the consummate rule breaker. This may be the first Banksy I saw, walking along London's South Bank in 2000-01. Unseen here is the tagline "Take me to your dealer", a brilliant pun in a city of leaders and dealers in money, drugs and arms.



Leigh Bowery in 1994.





Utagawa Hiroshige is here for the principle of craftsmanship and the mixing of the ephemeral with the eternal, the commercial with the high-minded. More personally, though I have never seen the city of my birth and only remember Mitsukoshi's London store in Piccadilly, the Mitsui logo was always in our house as my father worked with the company and had a book on the company and my mother spoke about the related department store, Mitsukoshi, pictured here in an earlier form.



KesselsKramer's "Donald Diesel" campaign subversively calls attention to just how mediated our ideas of happiness. This brilliance is put into service for Diesel Jeans. The brilliance!





Vivienne Westwood, photographed by Juergen Teller in 2017.





Ghost in the Shell (1995) - because we're all Mokoto now, wondering what the value of the soul is in a hyperconsumerrist society. The film went onto inspire French designers Pierre Huyghe and Philipe Parreno to "rescue" an anime character and initiate an exploration of modern alienation, manufactured and disposable identities.



The Clash generally and "Lost in the Supermarket" specifically. The the alienation, consumerism, colonialism, racism war and fascism are as relevant today as they were in 1979.

The music is as relevant too, and I was once inspired by a Vietnamese student wearing a London Calling T-shirt to do a class on "Straight to Hell" and MIA's "Paper Planes".



Tilda Swinton in Derek Jarman's The Last of England (1987)

Gorillaz because they are eclectic, playful and pointed in music and imagery. Somewhere behind this is Monkey Magic, a Japanese TV adaptation of Wu Cheng'en's Chinese classic, Monkey King. Beloved by many children of 80s Britain, it inspired Albarn and Hewett to make Monkey Journey to the West in 2007 and became an unexpected point of contact with my students from Japan, Korea and Vietnam, all of whom know the story and, depending on age, joined in childhood reminiscence.



G https://youtu.be/m8GuedsQnWQ?si=9uyfqnNdSL38 IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE Official Trailer 20th Anniversary Restoration

I fell in love with the film the moment I saw the trailer at the Curzon on Shaftesbury Avenue. The acting is naturalistic and the camera perfectly placed for a plot which largely takes place off screen and hardly talked about on screen. The filiming was eternal, the editing is incredibly complex. It is the most beautiful film ever made and a reminder of how complex simplicity can be.

There is actually a DVD of In the Mood for Love in my house, but having no means to play it, it's in a deeply buried box of items I cannot bear to part with.



Between 1992 and 1994, I fell asleep to Brent Banbury and Patti Schmidt, now of MUTEK, hosting this show on CBC Radio. It was as loved in Canada as John Peel's show in the UK, and mourned as much as his passing. Fate ended one show, vandalism ended the other, a fact which in true Canadian fashion, the broadcaster manages to both acknowledge and ignore.

Like Jefferson Hack's magazines Dazed & Confused and Another, it connected me to a world of creation and experimentation.