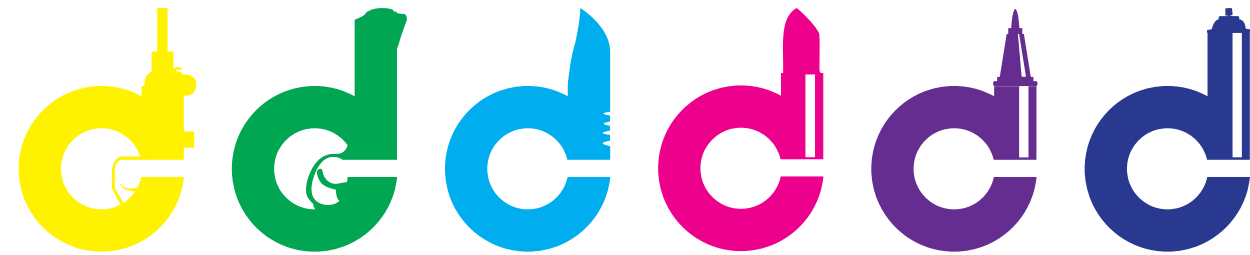
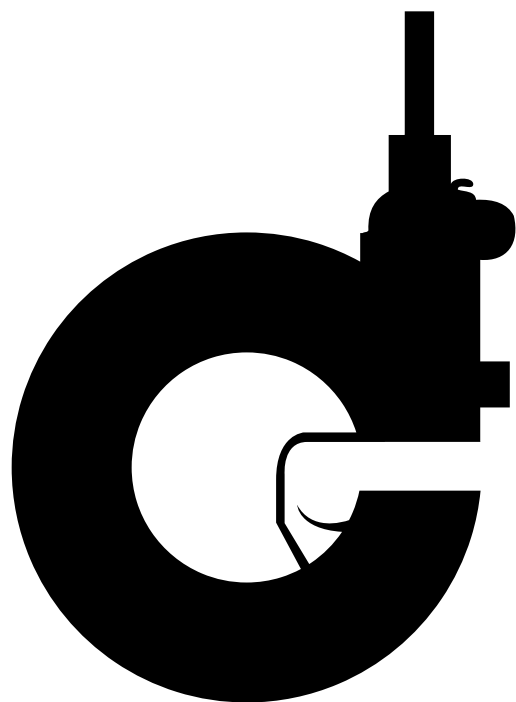


# 001





# CONTRA

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# 001:

YSL  
Trinkets  
Kolkata  
American Beauty?  
Protest Design Co.  
Red Development  
Western Girl  
Travel: Seoul  
Silhouettes

ideas. people. culture.

Beatnik, Chic

YVES SAINT  
LAURENT

Words: Shan Sarwar | Illustration: Gm





Photo: Chirstine Gucsi Exhibition Yves Saint Laurent - May 29 - September 28, 2008  
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Revolution, created by Yves Saint Laurent.

After climbing the last few carpeted steps leading up to the second floor of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, a large, mirrored wall comes into sight. Above it, the name 'Yves Saint Laurent' glows in hot pink. Reflected in the wall are mounted mannequins dressed in satin jackets, muslin belts and brocade boots; they take you to Africa, they take you to Spain and they take you to war.

The outfits are fabricated pieces of a retrospective, reflecting the end of an era in fashion and the end of evolution in design.

Saint Laurent was the leader of a creative transgression, laying the foundation for a new definition of femininity by way of visionary couture.

Marisa Minicucci, a Montréal-based prêt-à-porter designer, says Saint Laurent's innovation in design all came with change in his era; he happened to be in the right place at the right time.

"The fifties were very definite and I think from there, the sixties were just an era to say: 'I want something else,'" she said. "And Saint Laurent moved on with it. He did it with class. He did it while keeping the base in mind, which is fine tailoring, good quality and femininity."

To the left of the mirrored wall, an evening ensemble becomes visible: "Faïlle domino. Satin turban. Metal, rhinestone, cabochon and costume pearl pendant earrings. Leather and tulle gloves. Crepe and rhinestone sandals. (1984) Fall/Winter."

"Everything has been done in fashion. Now, It's just what you feel should be put together from the past, today. It's just a mishmash of all kinds of things," says Minicucci. "I think of Prada. I think of all the things she's done, but has she brought something new like he did, or is she just reinterpreting, in a modern way, what was?"

"Everything has been done," she repeats.

Against the far wall, a group of middle-aged women observe the bold patterns and bright fabrics of Saint Laurent's geometric pieces.

They then peer into a connecting room, where the androgynous tuxedo juxtaposes itself next to revealing evening gowns draped in satin and lace.

Diane Charbonneau, curator of contemporary decorative arts at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, says Saint Laurent was a visionary designer who set up, refined, and ended couture style when it was time to end it.

"He was revolutionary in the way he dressed women. He was always looking at different ways of transforming or dressing up women, within the parameter of haute couture," she said. "But he stopped doing haute couture because it became just fashion. He always said, 'fashion passes us, fashion ends, but style never does.'"

Charbonneau adds with a laugh that Saint Laurent was a craftsman of happiness who had a great respect for women and looked to empower them through his garments. He gave them the code of masculinity, but with a transparent blouse or high heel to give it a feminine touch.

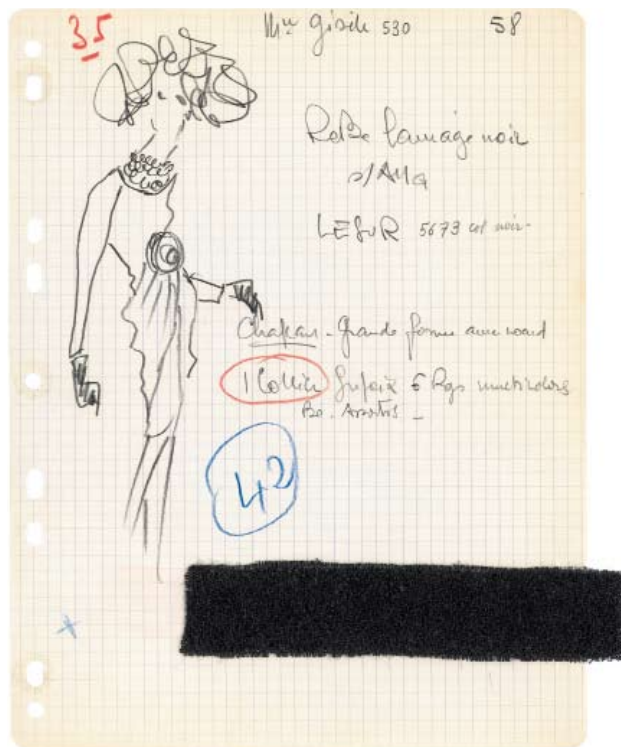
"These models, even after forty years, are still alive. And it's important to realize that nowadays, we live for the instant and don't look back into history," states Charbonneau. "But most of these designs... are timeless."

After 148 mannequins the mirrored wall appears again. To the right of the wall, images of Saint Laurent's past fade in and fade out. The pieces of the retrospective are still reflecting the end of an era in fashion and the end of evolution in design.

Saint Laurent was the leader of a creative transgression.



# YSL Original Sketches



The Formal Dress  
 from the collection sketchbook  
 Fall-Winter 1962  
 Graphite on paper, worsted sample  
 21 x 27 cm



The Cocktail Dress  
 from the collection sketchbook  
 Spring-Summer 1964  
 Graphite on paper, shantung sample  
 21.5 x 27.5 cm



The Wedding Dress  
 from the collection sketchbook  
 Fall-Winter 1988  
 Graphite on paper, gazar sample  
 24 x 32 cm



The Evening Gown  
 from the collection sketchbook  
 Fall-Winter 1997  
 Graphite on paper, silk satin sample  
 24 x 32 cm

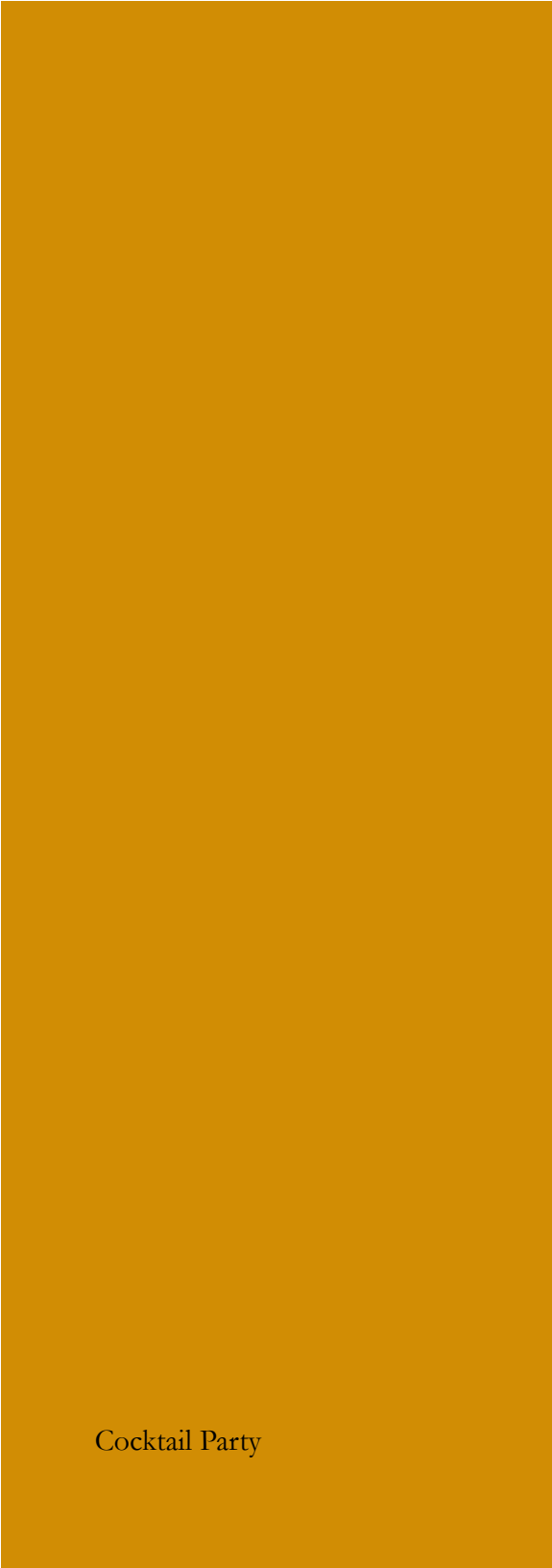
Illustrations by Roberutsu

**TRINKETS**

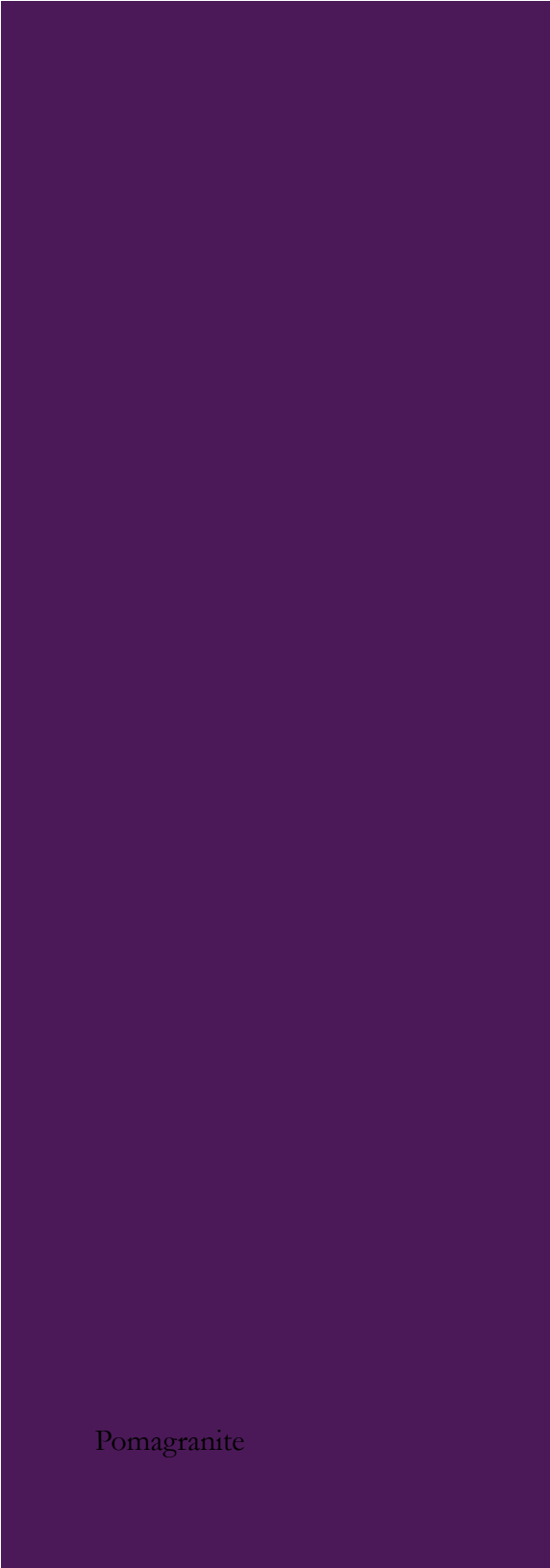








Cocktail Party



Pomagranite







# KOL KATA INDIA

Children of  
the Sex Trade  
Workers

Photography: Tess F. Words: Alex Avendano

Arriving in Kolkata, he immediately notices one thing: the darkness. But in the early hours of the morning, he, along with the four other men accompanying him, wake to a much different sight. There are children everywhere; instantly, they are claspng their small, unwashed hands around his arms and legs. They hardly speak English, yet their existence tells a story words could never convey.

These are the children of sex trade workers. Each of their parents relegated to tend to brothels instead of their own children, forced to walk the dirty back streets and alleyways in the districts in order to survive. Many would have little choice but to follow in their parents' foot steps without the food, clothing and education provided by the NGO that housed them. "It was kind of taboo, but [prostitution] had become engraved in [their] society. It was a way to make money, so you couldn't get rid of it," he said.

Working with the Durbar Mahila Saumayna Committee, Tess, born and raised in Toronto, had planned to document a three month trip to India. A deed that would remain undone due to problems that caused them to leave two months early. "I was okay with it. After a month, I was ready to go you know?" he said, reminding me of the headaches from the pollution and his inability to eat much of the food they were provided. He referred to it as prison food, worsened by preparation of unclean hands.

But escape from the polluted city streets and merciless poverty will never come so easily to the children here. "They mature a lot faster. They had to grow up just to survive. They're always selling something, begging for something – hustlers from day one," he said, turning back towards one of the computer monitors, where a picture of a young, Indian boy holds a small white ball as he looks up frowning.

Like many others here, he will never hold any other toy but the ones they are given to play cricket, soccer and volleyball. Games that would fall into their daily cycle of: wake up, eat breakfast, have tea, go to school, and do activities. Everyday stood to repeat the one that came before, with mandatory English classes being taught by those unable to speak proper English themselves, providing little education compared to the British instructors of the private schools.

Amidst busy traffic, billboards line the city. The advertisement models are not of Indian descent; with the exception of a few that are half, at most. Instead, the images more accurately depict an obsession with Western culture. But on the streets of Kolkata the homeless litter the streets. "Yeah, we have bums here but we shoot 'em off as an eyesore. The poverty there is fucking real," he said. "There were kids holding kids. No shoes, no nothing."





“There were kids  
holding kids.  
No shoes, no  
nothing.”

He remembers watching as the line separating the rich and poor would blur; the division forgotten. He talks about a store owner, who after closing his shop, walked over to talk to a family taking shelter on the street. An entire family, with nothing but the clothes on their backs and the cardboard boxes laid out underneath them, treated and spoken to as equals. Yet, for the children the divide was still clear. Donning a cubic earring, he recalls one of the boys looking at it and pointing. Seeing it, the boy automatically declared: “you are rich, and I am poor.” Words, he tells me, that completely changed his perspective.

From the downtown Toronto studio we are now sitting in, he gets up to pull back the curtain, taking a look outside the window before he glances back. He is no longer wearing a cubic. He sits down again and leans back in his chair, toying with his phone. Computers, cell phones and photography equipment are scattered around the room. “What is there really to complain about here? Nothing,” he said.



“They’re always selling something, begging for something – hustlers from day one.”







# AMERICAN BEAUTY?

Photos: Mayreese Creative: Th & Gm



In September 2003 the Middle Eastern country of Saudi Arabia outlawed the sale of Barbie dolls, saying that she did not conform to the ideals of Islam. The Committee for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice stated “Jewish Barbie dolls, with their revealing clothes and shameful postures, accessories and tools are a symbol of decadence to the perverted West. Let us beware of her dangers and be careful.”

source: Anti-Defamation League







Photos & Makeup: Mila Victoria

**PROTEST** **PDC**  
**DESIGN CO.** **(HONGKONG)**



Lord Grant Me The Strength To Change



Neck: Oopz



Model: Simone | Neck: Empty | Wrist: Coordinate





Model: Aaron | Neck: Cross | Wrist: Bill

*BC*



Model: Sandy | Neck: Boo

*Boo*

# RED DEV ELO PM ENT

(GOING GREEN)

Words: Yinsey Wang  
Illustration: Gm & Clara Goce



China. The world's factory, the dirty dragon and the "green peril." Images of toxic air, contaminated waters and repulsive piles of waste, pumped out to keep up with the world's demand for cheap goods in the name of economic advancement. However, it sometimes seems that the western media's view on China's policies favours a cause du jour. Dirty factories, toys with lead paint, Tibet, the air pollution in Beijing, web censorship, and MSG, it's no secret that the world's most populous country has its problems.

Now, with rising oil prices, loss of wildlife and global warming, the world is seemingly focusing on environmental issues and going green. Even while developed countries continue to debate over the Kyoto Protocol and play semantics on how CO2 data should be collected, the Chinese, have been working on developing an eco-city. A city that will produce its own energy from wind, solar, bio-fuel & recycled city waste.

The loss of its only freshwater Yangtze River dolphin, the severe pollution caused by many of its factories, and the devastation resulting from the construction of the Three Gorges Dam has angered many environmentalists. Since then, critics have been all over China's environmental records. Even President Hu Jintao has urged the need to be an "ecological civilization" and in 2004, they introduced "Green GDP" reports that review the costs of ecological devastation that runs along with growth. Additionally, provincial and local authorities are slowly becoming more accountable for the damages caused to the environment and regulations in major cities, including Shanghai and Beijing, are being enforced to encourage the use of solar power and investment in wind energy (predicted to have the largest wind energy output by 2020).

After failing to meet the needs of the local population in Huang-baiyu village, which was intended to be China's first ecologically sustainable centre in northeastern China, China still pressed hard to deliver success. With its innovative Dongtan project, in partnership with British organization, Arup, Chinese developers



Dongtan City - Artist Rendering - Courtesy of the world wide web

have excited the international stage in which the prospect of economic growth and ecological sustainability could actually go hand in hand. It is planned as an eco-city that will be built on Chongming Island for 500,000 residents, where 90% of waste will be recycled and CO2 emitting vehicles are illegal. It will use only local renewable energy sources, lit by solar powered LEDs and its ecosystem will be respected. London's mayor, Ken Livingstone, impressed by China's green leap forward, stated that, "global warming was created in the West, but it is increasingly the East to which we look to a solution." A change of heart? Even UK Prime Minister Brown was there to witness an agreement between Arup, SIIC, HSBC and Sustainable Development Capital LLP that hopes to lay the foundations for implementing Dongtan's initiatives in other cities, including 5 for the UK.

“It is important that the cat that catches the rat is green.”



# WEST ERN GIRL

Words: Felicia Mancini

# BLEPHAROPLASTY

“I don’t think I have erased my heritage because even in Asian communities our beauty standards are different.”

It has been said that the eyes are the window to the soul, but for many Asian women living in North America it is a source of concern, self esteem and even embarrassment. Blepharoplasty, meaning eyes and change in shape in Latin, is double-eyelid surgery and has been around as early as the 19th century. However, the controversial procedure did not become popularized in the Asian community until after World War II when women broke from the traditional habits and looks. An incision is made through the skin and subcutaneous tissue down to the Orbicularis Oculi muscle – which really just means that it’s a surgical creation of a double eyelid which allows the eyes to appear larger and rounder. Basically more westernized. While many Asians are in fact born with an upper eyelid crease, the eyelid is categorized by a lack of a superior Palpebral fold which most Occidental counterparts contain.

Twenty-four year old, Jane Chan\* is a Toronto University student from Hamilton, Ontario hailing from Hong Kong. Her relatives are still there and have no idea about the procedure she had several years ago and several thousand dollars later. She agrees to meet with me on one condition: that I conceal her identity and tell her story. Like over 4 million other visible minorities in Canada, Jane is amongst the seventy eight percent of Asian immigrants living in Ontario. As conducted by Statistics Canada, as of 2001, China was the leading birth country of immigrants however Jane hardly felt at home when she entered the country less than a decade ago.

There is no hint of an accent in her voice. She sits calmly across from me with silky long strands of perfectly coiled bleached blonde hair re-emerging through dark roots, defined cheekbones and ivory barely sun kissed skin. “Everywhere I go people have folds in their eyes. It’s not something everyone notices but I did for as long as I could remember,” she says quietly as she crosses her legs, fiddling with the hem of her blouse. After contemplating the surgery for the majority of her adult life, Jane went under the knife to feel more comfort-

able in her surroundings and her own skin. “I did it for me, I didn’t want to look like anyone else but like everyone around me, the way I always imagined I looked,” she says confidently during our conversation containing words like ‘White Washed’ and ‘Americanized’, but she dismisses any talk of ethnic altering. However she is persistent about making sure that I will not release her identity out of fear that her traditional family and friends will judge her decision. “Growing up in Hong Kong you knew women were under transformations but you never spoke about it, you never questioned it or brought it up,” she says quietly. “I don’t think I have erased my heritage because even in Asian communities our beauty standards are different. Honestly amongst my own friends and family having extremely slanted eyes was never really an attractive feature. I’m happy now, I just wanted to be able to do the little things like put make up on my eyes which I was never able to really do before.”

Hamilton Physician and Filipino Community Leader, Dr. Floridican Cabilan suggests that the surgery is part of a bigger problem and proof of an unhealthy obsession with the westernized definition of beauty and to avoid discrimination. “The issue is that the Asian patients are getting the surgery simply to look American in hopes to blend in with the culture around them which is unfortunate since we have such diverse and accepting communities in Canada,” says Dr. Cabilan who has been an active advocate and adviser in Hamilton’s expanding Asian community.

Jane with her petite 5’2 frame, lusciously long dyed blonde hair, ivory skin and almost almond shaped eyes, is undeniably attractive but says she is unsure if she will go under the knife again. With skin bleaching, tanning salons, ass and tit implants, hair relaxers and eye lid operations, what’s the difference between cosmetic beauty enhancements and race altering procedures? Beauty is all in the eye of the beholder but how about if the eyes looking back at you aren’t even your own anymore?



88 in miami...

# SEOUL

S. KOREA

Words & Photos: Dave Clancy





For travelers, a bar can be the terrestrial equivalent of a black hole. Like their celestial counterparts, a good bar seems to have a gravity of its own, sucking weary, road worn travelers into the swirling mass of energy and excitement that only the right mix of tropical heat, anonymity and intoxicants can produce. One can easily stumble in, order a singapore sling and faster than your mother can tell you that you've yet to make anything of your life, you're belched out of another equally interesting establishment half way across the world wondering where the hell all your money, youth and hair went. Such is the tragicomic life of the perpetual, international bar fly.

The forces that were influential in shaping my world perspective in my early years did me the dubious courtesy of telling me that I should try to spend my life doing what I love. Those passions happen to be drinking and traveling (in that order) and they just seem to fit together so well. (My third love "the Internal Mechanisms of Jet Propulsion" – that's right, I hope some day to be a rocket surgeon – has had to take the proverbial back burner.) But before I can understand what propels a rocket, I can only conclude that it would be wise to figure out exactly what propels me, or at the very least, people like me: my fellow chronic travelers. Which brings me to my point. I am in search of the motivators that push us on. Why do we do what we do? Why do we travel so much, for so long, so far away from home? (For all of those who just returned, crispy and bloated from a week at a Sandals in the Dominican, you can wait out in the hall.) This will not be an easy question to answer given its scope. With so many people going so many places, for so many different reasons, this project will take time. I submit for your consideration the first of (hopefully many) profiles of the chronic traveler. The inspiration of this article and the character I have dubbed: "the runner."

Moments of clarity are rare and special at best. At worst, they're nonexistent. I worried that for my new "friend," clarity was something that would remain forever just out of reach. Terrance (we'll call him Terrance) was an aging hippy law school dropout film critic from L.A. still running away from the expectations his undoubtedly overbearing lawyer parents placed on him. He was lean and long with curly hair and hungry eyes that revealed to anybody who cared to look that the party animal facade he had been putting on in the cramped little bar we were both patronizing was paper thin. He sat down with us after I shot him a dirty look for being a particularly belligerent ass to the nice Korean girls sitting at a nearby table, apparently he completely misread me. Within minutes he started into a diatribe about everything that was wrong with L.A., while at the same time doing his best to wow us with all of the famous people that his friends, cousins, agents, girlfriends, favorite valet attendants "knew". I bar tended for four years in a previous life so my patience for people who divulge their life stories in less time than it takes me to drain the last drops of my singapore sling and come up with a semi-legitimate reason to excuse myself is also paper thin. He wasn't tipping and I was doing my best not to listen. It did, however, give me a chance to think.

For some (and I lump Terrance in this group) traveling promises a set of fresh ears every night and unlimited chances at reinvention. The chance to be someone different has appealed to all of us at some point or another, for guys like Terrance it had become a lifestyle. Running from a disappointing reality toward an uncertain future is by far less disheartening than simply changing the facts, changing the audience and changing the venues.

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Sooner or later, we all need a drink.





# SILHOUETTES

Photos by Mayreese







