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Steve Aoki

Infiniti QX80

designs by elizabeth

Chanel West Coast

Lincoln MKC

Ann Arbor

XXIV Karat

Bruce Springsteen

Virgin Hotels

MAAZ Products

TORA Clothing

Jane Weitzman





Compendium

Winter/Spring



The African Golden Cat

One of the most elusive cats in the world, the African golden cat is about twice the size of a domestic cat. Its rounded head is very small in relation to its body size. It is a heavily built cat, with stocky, long legs, a relatively short tail, and large paws. Body length usually varies within the range 61 to 101 cm (24 to 40 in). Tail length ranges from 16 to 46 cm (6.3 to 18.1 in), and shoulder height is about 38 to 55 cm (15 to 22 in). The cat weighs around 5.5 to 16 kg (12 to 35 lb), with males being larger than females.

The African golden cat is able to climb, but hunts primarily on the ground. It mainly feeds on rodents, but also includes birds, small monkeys, duikers, giant forest hog piglets, and small antelope in its diet. These cats have also been known to take domestic poultry and livestock.

The exact population is unknown, but it is assumed to be dwindling in Africa. These cats live up to 12 years in captivity, but their lifespan in the wild is unknown.



Bruce Springsteen

35



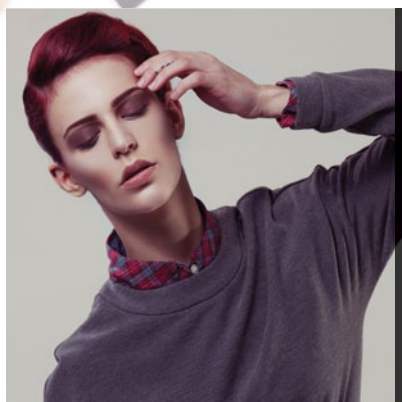
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Golden Cat Issue**

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Black Beauty

Photography: MANICPROJECT
Model: Levea @NIYAmodels @fordmodels
Styling: MANICPROJECT + Megan Beckham
Makeup/Hair: Sunny Park
Assistance: Nichole Anderson





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SPOTLIGHT ON: Social Decay



Social Decay (socialdecaybk.com) is a celebration of everything right and wrong with our times. From Brooklyn, NY, they print by hand, using high quality screen printing and specially developed soft hand reflective inks.

They also produce small quantities of limited edition Shibori-dyed Women's garments (made with the traditional Japanese binding and dying processes) and use a cotton/modal-blended fabric for premium quality, super-soft garments. Teaming up with creative agency, The Plug LA (theplugla.com), they have launched a new lookbook of their current collection, shot by Mike Le (@lemike).



Modeled by Jason Blake Rotramel (@ohheyjason) and Mandee Bence (@mandeebence), the images capture the care-free rock'n'roll attitude of Social Decay, linking the East and West Coast through the collaboration of creativity. Social Decay is available at Rebel Circus, Inked Shop, Nylon Shop, and various boutiques in New York.



The Brown TLV Hotel + KOLBOKOOL



The Brown TLV hotel, a stylish boutique property in the heart of Tel Aviv's cultural epicenter and the city's only member of the esteemed Design Hotels, have partnered with KOLBO for an exclusive "KOLBOKOOL" design gift shop. An in-house gift shop featuring a diverse array of meticulously curated design, household, tech and clothing items from around the world, opens now through April 20, 2015.

The first-ever collaboration of its kind in Tel Aviv, the "KOLBOKOOL" gift shop brings forth a new selection of artisanal design products and accessories from Italy, the U.K., Netherlands, Belgium and the U.S. to Israel's micro-metropolis on the Mediterranean. Brands and items featured in the "KOLBOKOOL" design gift shop include: Friends headphones; Smart Turnout; Ozaki iPhone chargers; Fatboy animal sculptures; Safe-T matches; Izola bamboo toothbrushes and candles; XL Cork's wine cork stools, and design-brain-games from Neo-Utility, among others.

The Brown TLV offers 30 well-appointed rooms and suites that have been carefully designed to maximize your comfort. Located adjacent to the art and cultural hotspots of Neve Tzedek and Rothschild Boulevard, and a short stroll to the Mediterranean, the Brown TLV offers a beautiful sun deck overlooking Tel Aviv, a spa and business facilities, two stylish bars, complimentary bicycles and free access to a nearby gym. Guests of the Brown TLV enjoy a diverse local experience with breakfast being served in several neighboring cafes, each popular Tel Aviv establishment. The hotel and its staff strive to redefine and upgrade the Tel Aviv boutique hotel scene.

For more information about KOLBOKOOL, visit kolbokool.com.
For more information about Brown TLV, visit brownhotels.com.

Location
Brown TLV hotel
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Tel Aviv, Israel 65165









SPOTLIGHT ON:
Tora Clothing
toraclothing.com

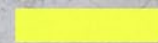




Collection



Heat



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She Waits

Photography: MANICPROJECT
Model: Levea @NIYAmodels @fordmodels
Styling: MANICPROJECT + Megan Beckham
Makeup/Hair: Sunny Park
Assistance: Nichole Andersons

Tel Aviv's pristine shoreline is bordered on one side by the exquisite Mediterranean and on the other by a modern city known for its excellent restaurants, diverse population, and a lively night scene.



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Broken Glass

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Model: Georgie Badiel / Major Models
Makeup Artist: Angeliq Turner
Hair: Sculptural Glass Headpiece Designed by Niko Weddle
Fashion Stylist: Claire Marie Thornton
Photography Assistant: Andy Merchan
Dress: Roberto Cavalli
Ring: Stylist's Own Bangle: Desigual





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The Boss

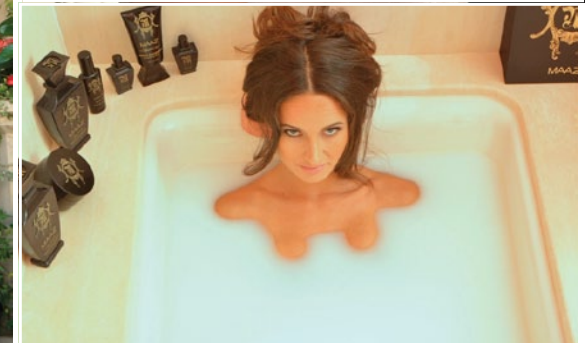
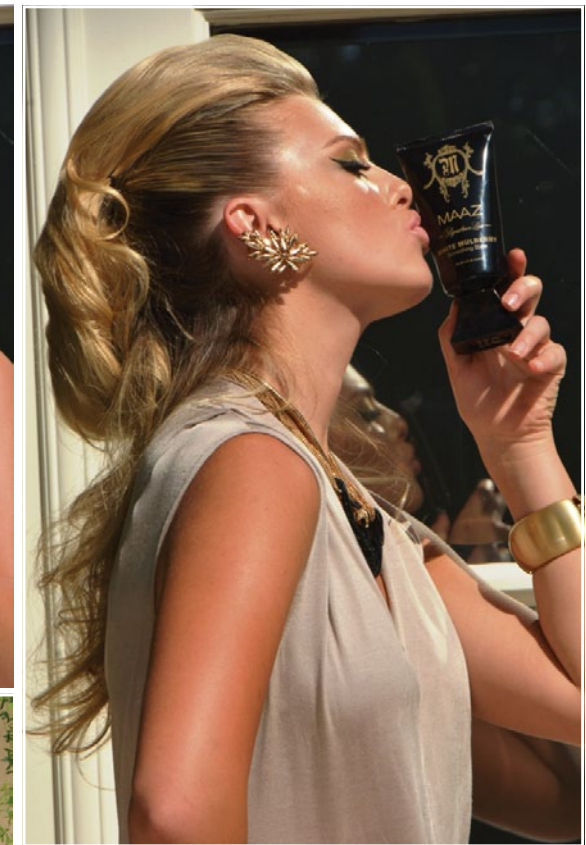
Nicknamed "The Boss," Bruce Springsteen, 65, is famously known for his poetic songs that deal with social and political issues as well as lengthy and energetic stage performances (his set list changes every night). His recording career spans more than forty years, beginning with 1973's Columbia Records release *Greetings from Asbury Park, N.J.* He has released eighteen studio albums, garnered twenty Grammy Awards, won an Oscar, has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, was a 2009 recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors and was named 2013 MusiCares Person of the Year by The Recording Academy. Springsteen's newest album *High Hopes* (Columbia) was released in January 2014, which debuted at #1 in the United States and in 9 other countries.

This marked Springsteen's historic 11th #1 debut on the Billboard 200 in the US, and it was his fourth consecutive chart-topping debut. In the UK, Springsteen has led the chart 10 times since 1984, and now joins the ranks of musicians including the Rolling Stones among artists with 10 #1 UK albums. *High Hopes* also reached #1 in 30 countries on the iTunes album charts.





MAAZ Products has recently launched five new products from its Signature Line including the White Mulberry Invigorating Shampoo and Conditioner, Smoothing Balm, Silk Oil and Masque for the ultimate hair regimen. MAAZ Products refuses to offer conventional hair treatment products that have been "no-other-choice" industry standard products: MAAZ Products has stated that it is determined to change the industry and how hair care products are presented to consumers. "Hair treatment products should not be produced. They should be discovered," said MAAZ Products' President Leo Hairapetian. "We are here to revolutionize the hair care industry with breaking discoveries and deeper sources of healthier and stronger hair. Otherwise, we are all going to go from the same products expecting different results."



With time and age working against us, it is important that we turn to nature and modern technology's partnership to keep the health and beauty of our hair, just like silk: "We look to nature's perfection for beauty. Our products are void of parabens and sulfates, which damage hair. MAAZ Products' White Mulberry line is a nurture product that focuses on the well-being of your hair so that you have beauty and health. Because health is beauty, and feeling beautiful is healthy," Hairapetian added.

maazproducts.com

2015 Lincoln MKC A New Star Shines in the Luxury Small SUV Segment

Shin Takei

Occasionally, we review cars that surprise us like the 2015 Lincoln MKC, which dashed our expectations, and our previous impressions of the Lincoln marque were pleasantly overturned. The MKC is a newcomer in the highly competitive and crowded small luxury SUV segment that includes the Acura RDX, Audi Q5, BMW X3, Cadillac SRX and the Infiniti QX50. These are well-established names that have been around for a while so it was not easy for Lincoln to break in. In other words, they had to do it right and be just as good as or better than the established marques to even get noticed and move towards targeting a younger, more diverse customer.



To start with, the unique twin-grille front end works better on the MKC than on other current Lincoln offerings and succeeds in differentiating it from the others. Walk towards the MKC and the Approach Detection system responds by illuminating Lincoln logo “welcome mats” on the ground next to both front doors. Simultaneously, headlamps, tail lamps and door handles glow with soft lighting – complementing the vehicle’s exterior color. The width of MKC’s track has been set to minimize body roll and give the vehicle a sporty feel. Optionally, a panoramic, all-glass Vista Roof allows available outside light to come inside, and the wrap around tailgate is equipped with the hands-free power open feature with your foot sweeping across. The very comfortable seats and interior are covered in leather with French stitching, and Bridge of Weir leather is available with real wood trim. SYNC with MyLincoln Touch enables owners to personalize their MKC by using voice-activated commands or simple touch controls with an 8-inch touch screen, and the 14-speaker THX II Certified Audio System sounds great.

The MKC comes standard with a 2.0-liter EcoBoost four-cylinder turbocharged engine with 240 horsepower at 5,500 rpm and 270 lb.-ft. of torque at 3,000 rpm – which comes in front wheel drive (FWD) or all-wheel drive (AWD) with 18” wheels. An optional 2.3-liter EcoBoost turbocharged four-cylinder with 285 horsepower and 305 lb.-ft. of torque comes only in Intelligent All-Wheel Drive with 19-inch wheels. Both engines are mated to a 6-speed SelectShift push-button gear shift with paddle shifters if you wish to manually shift gears. EPA figures for the 2.0-liter EcoBoost are FWD: 20 city/29 hwy/23 combined MPG, and for AWD: 19 city/26 hwy/22 combined MPG. For the 2.3-liter EcoBoost AWD turbo, that’s 18 city/26 hwy/21 combined MPG. To help with fuel efficiency, Active Grille Shutters deploy when appropriate.





The MKC comes loaded with safety features like collision warning with brake support, a Lane-Keeping System, Blind Spot Information System and the active Park Assist/Park Out technology to help drivers avoid common accidents.

Recently, Lincoln launched the Lincoln Black Label to further upgrade the MKZ and MKC. Available at only 32 dealers in six states for an additional \$5,995, the Black Label features a dedicated area with a concierge within the dealership. There are four distinctive interior themes with special Venetian leather and Alcantara accents along with exotic wood finishes. Longer warranties, vehicle service, pick-up and free loan cars are included. The exterior is purposely understated as the comfort level is emphasized inside the MKC Black Label.



On the road, the soft plush seats were very comfortable with just the right amount of support even for long distances. The push-button shifter on the center console incorporates the Start/Stop button and is more aesthetic than practical even if they are relocating it to the top. The only gripe we had was the AWD, which behaved very American and kept hunting to drive straight. (A FWD with the 2.3-liter EcoBoost turbo would be fun if Lincoln offered it.) We found this engine to be more than adequate and made us forget that it was just a four-cylinder. Overall, we were more than impressed with the 2015 Lincoln MKC. We now have readjusted our opinion of Lincoln, and if the MKC is any indication, we look forward to their future models.

For more information, visit lincoln.com

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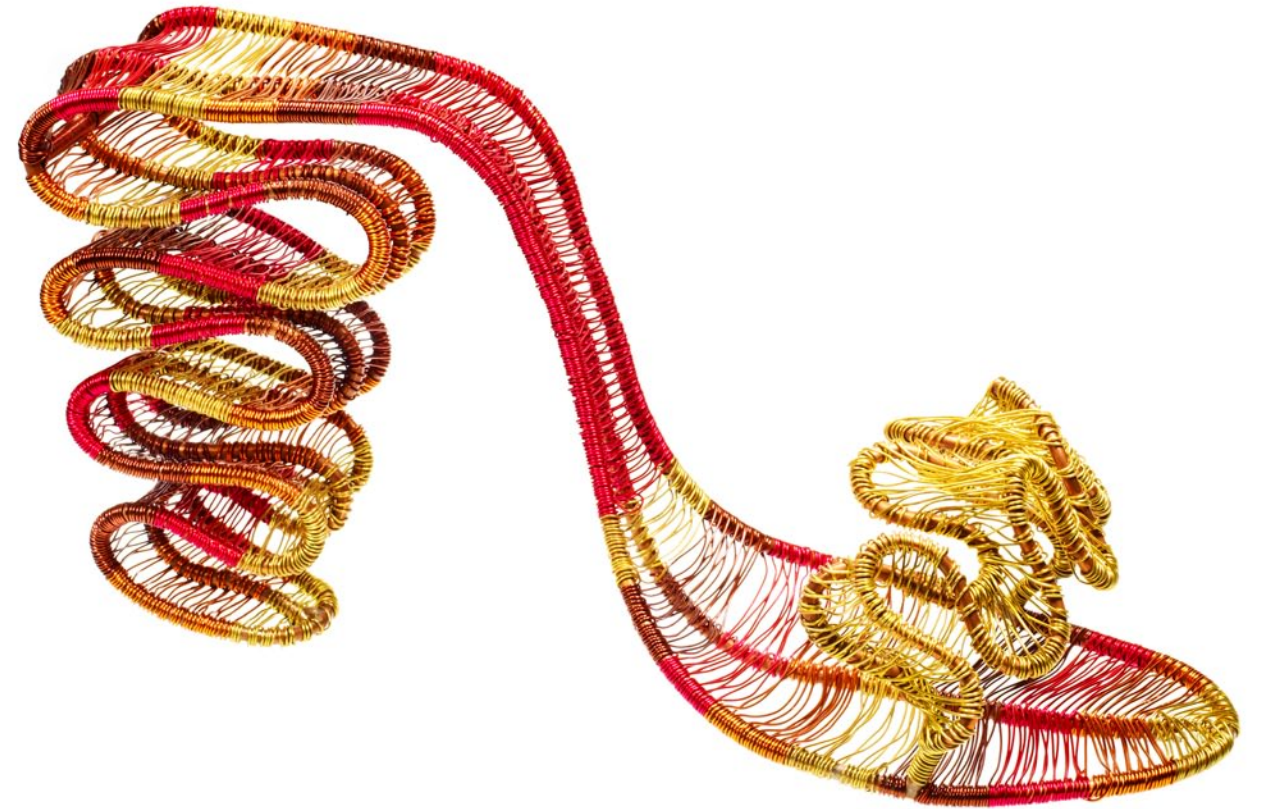
Jane Weitzman



The perfect book for shoe lovers, fashionistas, art aficionados, and a timeless treasure, Jane Gershon Weitzman's *Art & Sole* features shoes made from highly unique materials — feathers, paper, ceramic, metal, resin, playing cards, corrugated cardboard, Swarovski crystals, even fresh flowers and frosting — with remarkable intricate construction.

Art & Sole showcases approximately 150 shoes of the more than 1,000 Jane Weitzman discovered and commissioned for the windows of the first Stuart Weitzman retail shop on Madison Avenue in the mid-1990s. Using the best of this collection, many of the shoes are in printed form for the first time.





With an introduction by Jane Weitzman, the shoes are featured along with brief, identifying captions, in an impeccably designed and graphically compelling package, making it a perfect Valentine's Day gift. Author Jane Weitzman is continuing her cross-country tour where she has had speaking engagements at over 40 locations nationwide including the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh and the Mint Museum in North Carolina. Throughout her tour, she has been speaking at book fairs and for charities such as the AIDS Fund Philly, and local Breast Cancer events, as well as many others.

A vibrant red cloth case with an elaborate crystal shoe embossed in detail on the front cover, gilded edging and a satin ribbon marker make this book an irresistible treasure and great conversation starter for the shoe lover, art enthusiast, or interior designer worldwide.

Jane Gershon Weitzman was the Executive Vice President of Stuart Weitzman and the first Vice President of Stuart Weitzman Retail. She spearheaded philanthropy for the company by generating funds to support breast and ovarian cancer research and awareness. Her efforts were brought to life through innovative charity events on the brand's website, such as the Stuart Weitzman Celebrity Breast Cancer Shoe Auction, and its retail stores. She serves on the Trust Board of the Boston Children's Hospital.



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The After Party by Johny DAR

Artist / Body Art / Artistic direction - Johny Dar - johnydar.com
Photographer - Oliver Rath - rath-gallery.com
Stylist - Cristina Chirila
Model- Teresa Pieta
Model - Marina Arsangerieva
Model - Nadja Nave
Model - Kai Rixrath
Makeup Artist - Yvonne Wengler - using Mac and Dermalogica
Makeup Artist assistant - Jennifer Galle
Hair Stylist - Alexander Weber
Nail Varnish provided by Uslu Airlines
Body Makeup provided by Kryolan

Scarves: Johny DAR



Top: Ashish
Shoes: Fyodor Golan



Shoes: Ashish x Topshop
Skirt: Wood Wood
Shirt: Peter Jensen
Bag and bracelet: Johnny DAR
Hat: Bernstock Speirs



Shoes: Ashish x Topshop
Chain bra: Drapes by Ashley Scott, Top and bracelet:
Johnny DAR



Scarves: Johnny DAR



Scarf + Bracelet: Johny DAR
Shoulder piece: Drapes by Ashley Scott
Pants: Ashish
Hat: Bernstock Speirs



Scarf: Johny DAR
Chain dress: Drapes by Ashley Scott
headpiece: Perlensau
Shoes: Fyodor Golan



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Steve Aoki

Eiko Watanabe

Photographer: Nelson Blanton
Stylist: Marc Littlejohn
Hair: Sara Tintari
Makeup: Daniela Grasso
Special thanks to supperclub los angeles + XXIV Karat

"I'm having a real life right now. The difference between humans and animals is that we think about the future; we are constantly looking forward. I'm excited to live," says EDM virtuoso Steve Aoki, 37, who recently released *Neon Future I* (including his celebrated Gold-selling single "Delirious (Boneless)") and is soon releasing *Neon Future II*. "I wanna always be cognizant of what makes me 'me' and always try to make my life and all the life around me better as much as possible."

Growing up in a white neighborhood (Newport Beach, CA), he was an outcast surrounded by non-Asian people. "When you are a child, when you are really young, kids have no filter, so they say what they are accepted to say. Whatever is accepted in their homes, they are gonna be able to say it in public. And, that's when you really see racism dead-on in the face, which led me to violence and fights," Aoki looks back on his upbringing. "But, that made me stronger and have a thicker skin, and they pushed me away from where all the general kids were playing."

"My mom would pack onigiri (meaning 'rice balls' in Japanese) with bonito flakes in my lunchbox, and the kids would be like, 'What the hell are you eating? This stuff is moving and you're eating worms!' (The steam makes bonito flakes move.) So I would always hide in the corner and eat by myself," Aoki recalls. "It's just not fair. When you are a kid, you just don't understand why someone is making you feel different, like, 'What did I do to be treated this way?' I think it should be one of the more important subjects – racial tolerance and understanding cultural differences. We live more and more in a multi-cultural world."





Eventually, he got into hardcore/punk music ("That was where all the outcast kids were hanging out"), listening to the bands like Gorilla Biscuits and Born Against, playing guitar and singing in bands, and hosting shows in his apartment. At age 19, he created Dim Mak Records "to support the same bands that would come and play in my living room. What was more of an outlet of expression turned into a business, later on." As the business was taking off (i.e. 350,000 physical units sold for Bloc Party's *Silent Alarm*), Aoki – who was a businessman/occasional DJ – gradually established himself as an artist by "remixing the bands on Dim Mak, and then people started liking my remixes. Then, I started DJ'ing outside LA, and the rest is history."

Since he was playing "Millionaire" by Kelis featuring André 3000 at that moment, Aoki's DJ moniker was Kid Millionaire (other candidate names considered: Mama Millionaire and Papa Billionaire). "Then I realized that people kept thinking of that name like, 'That's the son of Rocky Aoki of Benihana, making fun of himself being rich and sh*t.' By 2005, I got rid of the name. This was not the kind of representation I wanted for myself," says Aoki.

Ironically, though, his father's passing in 2008 influenced him to create what would later become *Neon Future*. "It was a very heavy, heavy blow to me so I started reading books on cancer and health. I've always had feelings of regret in what I could've done when he was alive – I could've educated him on learning how to change your body by eating and living healthier. As I was diving into this kind of stuff, I started reading towards all the technological development in health and research," he explains. "I love science fiction so I started reading about ideas like singularity. I was like, 'Wow, this book is about these science fiction ideas that actually could be real science and happen in our lifetime.' And I wrote the song 'Singularity' in 2011, and then started my album process; I put out *Wonderland* and then I started working on *Neon Future*. It all came full circle."





He defines "Neon Future" as a positive outlook on human progress and technology, looking forward to a bright, colorful utopia (*Neon Future I* even features the acknowledged futurists like Ray Kurzweil and Aubrey de Grey). "If you sit in a room with someone you love that's dying, you don't think like, 'Oh, we are gonna have overpopulation issues so just let them die.' You are not gonna think that way. You are gonna be like, 'What can I do to save his/her life? What can we do to enrich our lives?' We wanna have happier, healthier, longer lives. Well, everyone. And then, we think about these ideas of overpopulation and/or a lack of natural resources and things like that," affirms Aoki, who's also supported brain research through his own Steve Aoki Charitable Fund ("I'm raising awareness on a brain. We all need to understand it more").

Besides the forthcoming *Neon Future II* release ("The album's general feeling is a bit darker and more emotional"), he's going to launch the Dim Mak eyewear range (entirely designed by Ksubi co-founder George Gorrow) as well as the 50-piece PARCO x Dim Mak collection. "I'm going to Japan and launching the collection in Japan first," Aoki says of the latter. (Aoki and PARCO released a photo book *EAT SLEEP CAKE REPEAT* last year.)

In the next 10 years, while he admits that he's excited to see some major technological advances in the field of brain science, he suddenly pauses when asked about his personal goal. After a quick brainstorming session, however, he shares with a laugh, "I wanna have a kid, two, three, four, a couple of kids."



LIVE LIFE ALL IN



XXIVKARAT.COM

Mezzevino Restaurant

with Chef Brent Courson

Mezzevino offers imaginative cuisine, wine and cocktails influenced by the traditions of the Mediterranean. To them, the word “mezze” means an array of small plates placed before guests creating a display of colors, flavors, textures and aromas. Enjoying mezze may be as simple as sampling small plates or making an entire meal of their creative cuisine.

Mezzevino honors the Mediterranean tradition of sharing the “family meal.” Your time spent with family and friends at the table allows you the opportunity to create your own array of dishes to share. Everyone will discover new favorites.

Their menu puts a new modern spin on classic favorites from Greece, Spain, Italy, France and other countries around the Mediterranean.

Photographer: Benjamin Weatherston



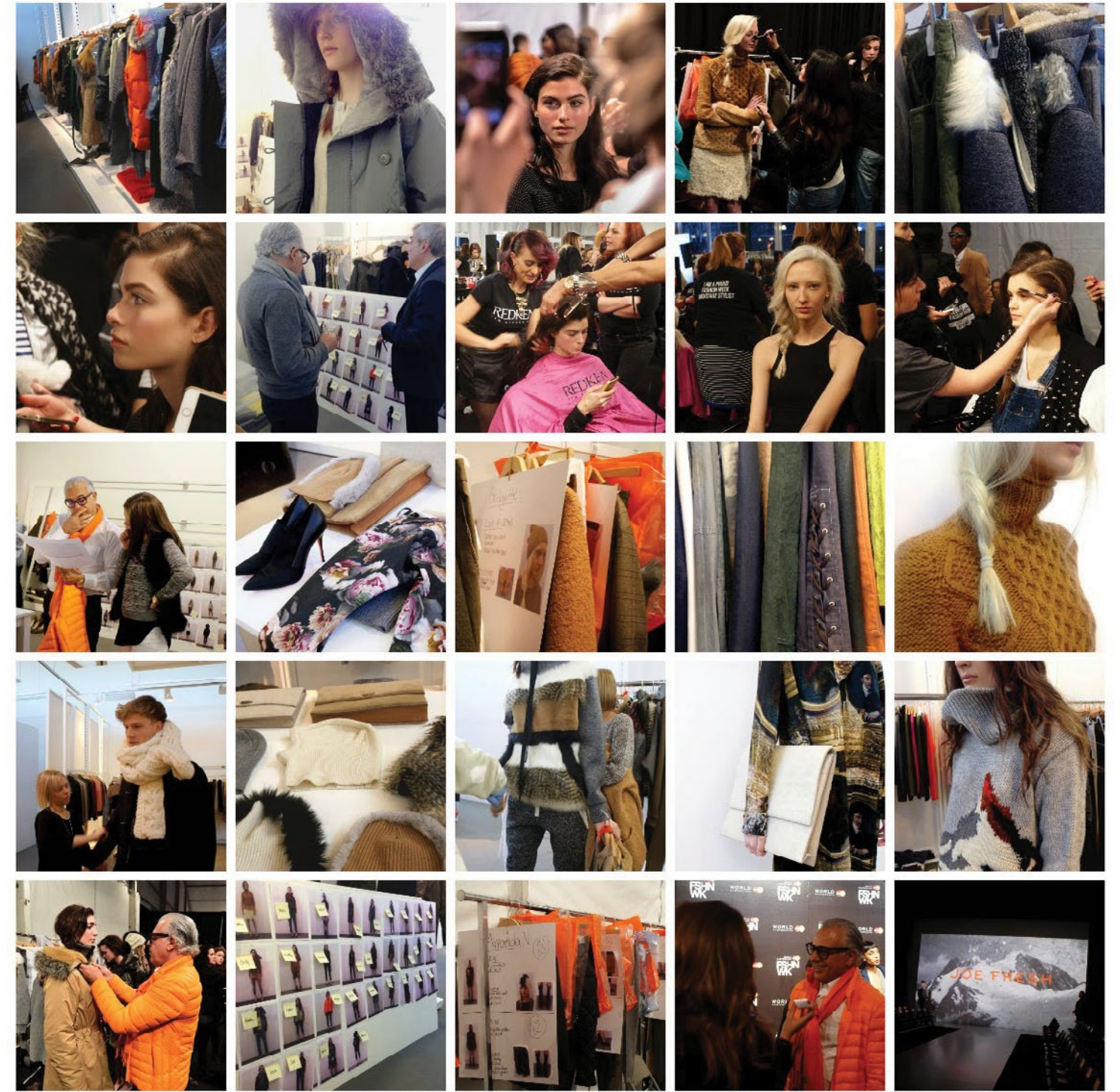


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2015 Rolls-Royce Wraith The Ultimate Bling Thing

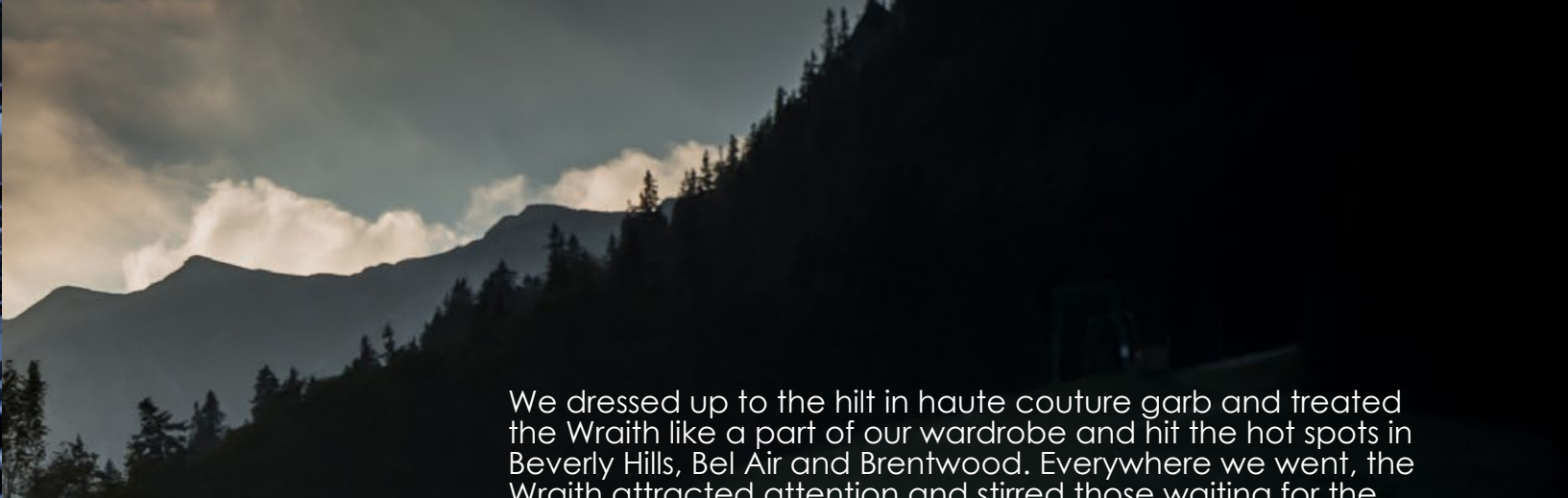
Shin Takei

Are you into the bling thing? If so, the 2015 Rolls-Royce Wraith is the ultimate “bling thing.” Chances are that the Rolls-Royce Wraith is probably the third or fourth vehicle in your garage. You would already own a big European sedan, an upscale SUV and perhaps a super sports car or two; the Wraith is your going-out-to-town vehicle like going out to a dinner at a fancy restaurant, a concert or a show, or a red carpet event at an upscale hotel. This is one place where the 2015 Rolls-Royce Wraith is at home and completes your ultimate “bling” evening.

Powered by a twin-turbo V12 with 624 bhp at 5600 rpm and 590 ft-lbs of torque available at 1500 rpm, the Wraith is no slouch and is the most powerful Rolls-Royce manufactured. Mated to an 8-speed ZF Automatic transmission, 0-60 mph arrives in just 4.4 seconds. The self-leveling, roll cancelling air suspension system is not just for comfort but engineered to provide excellent composure during cornering, and the Satellite Aided Transmission (SAT) “sees” and anticipates the proper gear ratio for the next corner, reading driver input, before it gets there: It's also the most sporting Rolls-Royce ever.

The bold two-door fastback coupe styled with carriage doors is a standout for the top-tier luxury segment and shouts out “I'm here” when you arrive anywhere. Inside, generous use of Canadel Panelling decorates the soft supple leather and Wilton wool carpeting, a similar feeling to the Phantom Drophead Coupe with the rear teak deck. Canadel is a cove in South France where Sir Henry Royce and his engineers spent their winters. The jewel-like switches are like they're from a musical instrument, and they complement the elegant interior. There's so much space in the back seat, and the comfort level is exquisite with a low noise level.





We dressed up to the hilt in haute couture garb and treated the Wraith like a part of our wardrobe and hit the hot spots in Beverly Hills, Bel Air and Brentwood. Everywhere we went, the Wraith attracted attention and stirred those waiting for the valet into smiles, and at one hotel, the valet even thanked us for bringing the car. They always parked the Wraith in front. Afterwards, as we sat in the car, we were treated to the beautiful glimmer of the Starlight Headliner with 1,340 fiber-optic lamps hand-woven into the roof lining, a perfect ultimate "bling" evening with the 2015 Rolls-Royce Wraith. Whether you deck yourself in nice clothes or just a T-shirt and jeans, the Wraith can give you an extraordinary experience because it's the ultimate "bling thing."

For more information, please visit: rolls-roycemotorscars.com



Virgin HOTELS CHICAGO

Recently, Virgin Hotels Chicago – located in the heart of Chicago's Loop district in the historic Old Dearborn Bank Building at 203 N. Wabash Ave – joined a stellar portfolio of hospitality companies led by Virgin Group and its founder Sir Richard Branson.

The 26-story Art Deco building, a Chicago landmark, offers 250 guest rooms, including 40 one-bedroom suites and two Penthouse Suites.

At the heart of Virgin Hotels Chicago is The Commons Club, a dynamic space where guests can dine, drink, work and mingle, as well as attend the nightly hosted Social Hour. The vibe is one of a private members club, without the fees, where guests and locals alike are welcome.

Virgin Hotels Chicago will feature a two-chamber room layout, with small touches that make traveling for business or leisure an easier experience. All guest rooms are divided into two spaces by sliding doors, complete with a peephole. The dressing room includes a full vanity, make-up desk and mirror, an extra-large shower with a bench, and his and her closets designed by Poliform. Slide open the privacy door and guests will enter the lounge with a red Smeg mini-fridge, LG Smart TV, custom-designed table that swivels and a Poltrona Frau task chair. Tired of searching for an outlet, guests can look no further than their bedside to find ample outlets for their smartphone, computer or other electronic devices.



Virgin Hotels is a lifestyle hospitality brand that combines heartfelt service, straightforward value and a seamless, personalized hotel experience with the track record of innovation and smart disruption that Sir Richard Branson's global Virgin Group has pioneered for over 40 years. Each property will inter-mix a passion for food and beverage with music and culture, fusing with the local landscape and providing a vibrant and inclusive environment for travelers and locals, alike. Chicago opened in January 2015, with New York City (in the fall of 2017), Nashville (in the summer of 2016) and others to follow. The team will announce two additional locations by the end of 2016, as well, with the brand hoping to have 20 locations by 2025.

For more information, please visit virginhotels.com.



Chanel West Coast

You might recognize Chanel West Coast as the sharp, sweet, and vivacious blonde from such MTV hit shows as Rob Dyrdek's *Fantasy Factory* and *Ridiculousness*.

Born Chelsea Chanel Dudley, music has always been at the forefront of her life. Growing up, she split her time living between North Hollywood with her mom and New York City with her father, a local DJ who would bring his then eight-year-old daughter along with him when he spun at packed nightclubs throughout the city. "I've always been around music, and I knew it's what I'd do for the rest of my life. I didn't have a choice," she says.

West Coast avidly pursued singing and dancing lessons from a young age. At 17, she launched her first MySpace Music page in hopes of sharing her personal recordings with the world.

2012 proved to be one of West Coast's biggest breakthrough years. Multi-platinum recording artist/Young Money Entertainment founder, Lil Wayne personally invited West Coast to his Miami studio to play him some of her music. Impressed by what he heard, the budding music impresario immediately signed West Coast to his popular Young Money label – home of such superstars as Drake and Nicki Minaj. The first taste of her Young Money affiliation was the irresistible "Karl," the first single from her *Now You Know* mixtape.

Following the success of her mixtape, West Coast continues to release music and other various contents weekly via her popular web series: *West Coast Wednesdays*.

She has most recently appeared on *Young Money: Rise of an Empire* and is currently working on her debut album (due out early this year) – including her latest track "Miles and Miles."

Ann Arbor

Vaughn Lowery + Stella Dugall

Ann Arbor, a historically progressive city, found it fitting to invite 360 Magazine to disrupt their usual hubbub of activity. Ann Arbor has been known as being a podium for major presidential announcements and strong political activism since the '60s. Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) have aimed to build an articulate left wing voice in universities, and influence political activism among citizens in surrounding communities, according to Kirkpatrick Sale, author of *SDS: The rise and development of the Students for a Democratic Society*.

We began our tour at Ayse's Turkish Café (aysesturkishcafe.com) where Chef/Owner Ayse Uras prepared for us tasty Turkish delicatessens and rich coffee. Soon after, we visited the Arbor Brewing Company (arborbrewing.com) to taste a brewski or two. Arbor Brewing Company (ABC) has a warm atmosphere that immediately elicits comfort to the sampling experience. Matt and Rene, Owners of ABC, showed us a wonderful presentation, sharing the history of the brewing company as well as the struggles they had along the way. Today, ABC is a multi-million dollar franchise with exquisite beer flavors, and has expanded their business as far as Bangalore, India.

From beer tasting to wine swirling, we attended the beautiful reception at VinBar (vinbara2.com) located at 111 W. Liberty Street. There, Mary Kerr – President and Chief Executive Officer of the Ann Arbor Convention and Visitors Bureau – warmly welcomed us. This venue looks modern and chic with its slate bar but feels homey with its wooden fixtures and mahogany finished floors. Afterwards, dinner was at Logan (logan-restaurant.com), an American bistro located at 115 W. Washington Street. Thad Gillies (Chef/Co-Owner) and Kevin Hobart (Sommelier) worked in tandem to prepare the most exquisite pairings.

The next day, our tour guides gave us free time to roam downtown where we had breakfast at TeaHaus (teahaus.com) and learned a little about the Ann Arbor culture as we conversed with locals. Tourists may assume by the architecture that the city is entirely cosmopolitan; however, the local farm-to-table movement is absolutely strong.



President CVB of Ann Arbor, Mary Kerr



Our creativity was hugely inspired at Motawi Tileworks (motawi.com) where we enjoyed a hands-on experience designing colorful tiles. *Motawi Tileworks: Contemporary Handcrafted Tiles in the Arts & Crafts Tradition* author, Anne Stewart O'Donnell explains that Motawi Tileworks was founded by Nawal Motawi and her brother Karim

in 1992. Together, they have fashioned a premier spot for studio tile artists and art lovers to visit. Most Motawi tiles are handcrafted and individually treated. Next, we stopped off at Bigalora Wood Fired Cucina (bigalora.com) – which has Farrah Fawcett painted across the walls in the men's restroom: That alone is reason enough to #VisitAnnArbor.

Nothing energizes you more than being around young and eager scholars. The mini tour of the University of Michigan (umich.edu) included the Wolverines football stadium, "The Big House," which seats around 100 thousand and is the home of superstitious "M" block located in the locker room.

Brandon Johns, Owner and Chef of Grange Kitchen & Bar (grangekitchenandbar.com), sat at our table and delighted us with a little chat – his huge personality fueled interest and electrified our conversation. Grange Kitchen & Bar offers seasonal menus that help sustain the Ann Arbor economy by buying locally. If you are from Brooklyn and are craving Dirty Martini, come here first.

If you are looking for a restaurant with a little more edge, check out Aventura (aventuraannarbor.com) and order their roasted pig (not easy on the eyes, but rich in taste).

Finally, for the night crawlers, make sure to drop by 327 Braun Court (brauncourt.com), aka The Bar where the drinks and live bands will excite you. They specialize in cocktails crafted by locally produced spirits, and their artsy fixtures, such as the tree branch-inspired lighting, contribute to the fun-filled atmosphere.

Ann Arbor is full of American culture splashed with a bit of international presence that makes the entire city flavorful. The street art on the side of vintage buildings and bridges is also edgy and elegant. All in all, Ann Arbor is a beautifully developed metropolis interwoven with modernization.

Other must-see spots include:
The Ark (theark.org)
Purple Rose Theatre Company (purplerosetheatre.org)
Schmidt's Antiques (schmidtsantiques.com)
Cherry Republic (cherryrepublic.com)

For more information, visit visitannarbor.org.



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SONICBIDS WINNER:

Danielle Taylor

Danielle Taylor is a pop pianist/singer-songwriter from Los Angeles, CA. With a background in classical music and a heart rooted in pop tunes from legends like Elton John, Taylor found herself quickly drawn to the piano. Being ever so determined, she taught herself the basics and jumped into LA's music scene with both feet. Though relatively new, Taylor quickly began to make a name for herself around town. Her first EP, *Don't Turn On The Light* sold over 500 copies in its first month and is currently streaming in 13 countries. Her efforts with that release also attracted the attention of Don Grierson, former SVP of Epic Records, who would later become her mentor.

Taylor's success with *Don't Turn On The Light* helped her connect with Grammy-winning engineer and producer, Erich Talaba, who worked with Taylor on her upcoming release, *The Chase* (due in March). The first single off this new release is called, "Fearless" with the theme of taking chances, being bold and chasing dreams.

In 2014, she scored opening slots for the likes of Ari Hest, Dick Dale, Jonny Lang, Aaron Carter, Steve Tyrell, Leon Russell, Colby O'Donis, Marc Broussard, Marc Cohn, Wilson Phillips and Howie Day.

At the close of 2014, Taylor signed with Sony RED, and her new single "Fearless" is the first of many to be released through them.

Taylor's electric personality and incredible vocals may be what pull you in, but it's her content and melodies that keep you around.

danielletaylormusic.com



ZARA



zara.com

Infiniti QX80

Vaughn Lowery

Of late, we had an opportunity to take a road trip from LA to Las Vegas in the Infiniti QX80 (formerly QX56). The results are in and we are all “hands-up” for this 400-hp 5.6 Liter V-8 with 413 pound-feet of torque.

This broad, opulent vehicle has room for 7 comfortably, but 8 to 9 small people can fit in this baby with no problem. The profile of this vehicle made us feel like a wealthy father towing his 2 collegiate children along with a few friends to a welcome back dinner. Although this vehicle weighs in as one of the longest and heaviest SUVs of our generation (8,500 lbs), it proceeds like a tigress clawing at her prey. This vehicle is nimble and quick – 0 to 60 in under 7 minutes. It handles corners like an NCAA athlete during nationals. The exterior is frighteningly gorgeous. Side fins add a signature of class, and 22-inch sport wheels add curb appeal on the limited edition model. The aerodynamic grille is gorgeous, complete with LED fog lamps and pronounced grill (almost identical to its older sibling, the QX50, but bigger). The side-view mirrors fold down once you back up and collapse inward with the jolt of a button for compromising parking spaces and alleyways. Moreover, the vehicle has camera feeds for all four sides, lane departure warning system, intelligent brake assist (she slowed as we approached a vehicle in the same lane traveling at a slower focal ratio), ventilated seats (no more sweaty backs), birds-eye view navigation, moonroof (it could've been slightly larger or even panoramic so we could enjoy the stars) and front/second-row bucket seats available (felt like flying in first class on Virgin).

The cabin felt like the “Veep’s office” at an Ivy League school – plush yet regal. The leather appointments were ideal, and chrome accents around the dash dazzled. The dark wood trim added an extreme facelift, coupled with truffle brown light leather interior. The technology/media package was the icing on the cake. We popped in a DVD and enjoyed a comedy movie for some of our drive to and from Vegas. The back of the driver’s and passenger seats are outfitted with huge crystal-clear TV monitors. We chowed down on nachos with cheese and hot dogs loaded with chili. Cup holders were readily available throughout the vehicle doors and embedded into the arm rests, offering our dry mouths immediate gulps of Diet Coke. Essentially, it was like hanging out in our living room on a 4-hour drive: lots of leg room and seats reclined with ease. Although I couldn’t catch the film while driving, I got to listen to it with the premium audio system and subwoofers. Don’t fret; watching a movie has nothing on pushing this big beast. It has more torque than horsepower. It was such a delight to drive around. It almost feels like you’re in an oversized sports sedan. We were always reminded of this as we had to literally climb into the cabin.



The refreshing re-design of the interior/exterior is extremely admirable but the truck – which is a hair shy of \$80,000 fully loaded limited edition – is a must-have if you’re in the market for an exclusive vehicle that’s overly responsive. Infiniti did a phenomenal job once again. Finally, here’s a car company that knows how to fuse power, technology and design into one.

Infiniti really thought it through, making sure they hit the necessities while soaring us to a higher level of sedan luxury. There are cross-bars that have been wind tunnel tested and illuminating Infiniti logo kick plates for a glowing guide for in and out of the car. They pack a first-aid supply kit behind the nylon-cord cargo net behind the back seats. Infiniti sculpts the vehicle with chrome finishes just about everywhere, making anyone riding in it feel like a million bucks. For those who are super outdoorsy types, at retailers’ request, they can install a 10 x 10’ zippered-tent that will convert the cargo area of the QX80 into a sleeping area.

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LA Brownies

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The LA Brownies' sound takes you everywhere from a mood of "Don't Tread on Me," all the way to sublime, atmospheric, rhythmic and somehow existential, melodic musings. With a love of all music in mind, this is an aural experience that satisfies your deepest soul. The distinctive sound of the band is catalyzed by the mixture of different styles of music that they are all influenced by, such as funk, blues, rock, hip-hop, punk, grunge and even more technically sophisticated and complex genres like jazz and metal. The resulting music is full of dynamic sounds ranging from clean guitars, wah-pedal infused solos, funky bass lines, and seventies-flavored drums: all the way to distorted guitars, ambient effects, super rhythmic bass chords, and huge drum rolls.

All of these tonal qualities form a broad base of musical accompaniment upon which diverse vocals – full of rap, soul and rock elements – are laid down. The Brownies' unique sound sends a motivational, socially attentive, and contemplative message via their songs, which are conceptually augmented in their thoughtful and intricately planned videos.

The story of the LA Brownies is full of substance; it is ripe with the intention held by each band member, and this sentiment is what carries through into their music and performances. While listening to the Brownies, you cannot quite put your finger on the precise quality that is so refreshing about the band – there is an aspect of comradeship and musical kinship amongst the band members: vocalist/bandleader/bassist Krishna Katukota; guitarist Daniel Hernandez; and drummer Michael Delgado. This charismatic quality is what gives the music its passion, and it is also what fuels the substantial meanings behind the songs.

<https://www.facebook.com/LABrownies>



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Miri Ben-Ari



Presented By: **THE SEJOUR GROUP**

Miri Ben-Ari, a classically-trained violinist known for her revolutionary fusion of classical soul and dance music, has worked with artists such as Kanye West, Jay Z, Alicia Keys, Wynton Marsalis, Donna Summer and Armin van Buuren. Originally from Israel, Ben-Ari is a "Goodwill Ambassador of Music to the United Nations Associations of Brazil," Global Brand Ambassador for Harman Kardon, a featured blogger for the Huffington Post and the CEO of the non-profit organization Gedenk, which promotes tolerance to safeguard a peaceful society based on lessons learned from the Holocaust and other genocides. (She has partnered with the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for a campaign sponsored by Gedenk to educate kids about tolerance.)

Ben-Ari has been the face of many promotional campaigns, including Reebok's "I Am What I Am" global print and TV advertisements, Vodafone, Pepsi, Coca-Cola and now Harman Kardon. She was honored as an "Apollo Legend" by New York City's Apollo Theater; she won the International Jewish Woman To Watch of 2007 Award; the 2008 Israel Film Festival Visionary Award; the American Society for Yad Vashem Award; the Young & Powerful for Obama 2011 Rising Star Award; the Martin Luther King Award (from former Israeli President Shimon Peres); the 2012 Big Vision Award; and the 2014 Aviv Award by the America-Israel Cultural Foundation.

Additionally, in 2011, Ben-Ari was invited by First Lady Michelle Obama to the White House for a special performance and to be honored as a "Remarkable Woman," and in 2012, Ben-Ari was invited to perform for President Barack Obama.

Ben-Ari spent much of 2014 in the studio, creating a new sound for her comeback album in 2015.



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