

METAL

BOY HARSHER

DARKNESS FROM WITHIN

METAL



METAL

oscillating between synth-punk, dark wave and industrial techno, deep and grimmy screamings. Boy Harsher is probably something in-between; no one has yet succeeded in defining what it is. Performing with guts, the American duo has become one of the most danceable voices within the experimental electronic music landscape, from Berlin to Kiev, to Amsterdam and Brooklyn.

I met Jae and Gus just before they killed the outdoor concrete dance floor of La Station in Paris last month. We went for a walk surrounded by brutalist buildings of the 19th arrondissement and talked about what does pain really mean. Keep reading to discover the ones making techno dark and weird again.

Boy Harsher "Country Girl" (official)



METAL

Augustus Mucci and Jae Matthews are the two people behind boy trasher. How did you two meet? How did you start making music together?

Jae: Gus and I met in Savannah (Georgia) six years ago. We disagree about our romantic inception, but I can tell you that Gus lived in my attic for one whole hot, southern summer. We became close. At some point, we had this idea to merge my writing with his score-making – the beginning of us making sounds. This culminated in a series of VHS pieces I created and we called it *Teen Dreamz*. But all of this content was pretty abstract and not really meant to go anywhere outside of our gallery.

Augustus: I really admired Jae. She was producing and directing some really cool video projects and I wanted to get involved. The *Teen Dreamz* things started because I was trying so hard to collaborate on something, I would've scored Jae eating breakfast if she offered.

Who were your teenage idols? Can you share with us the track that changed your life?

Jae: I was a total teenage shithead. The people I idolized were crappy hippies who wouldn't share their weed. Or Jerry G! Maybe it's easier now to discover worthy idols for precocious youth because of the Internet, but back then, it was tough to know who / or even how to like. A burnt copy of The Microphones' *The Glow Pt. 2* fell into my life when I was sixteen, which altered everything I knew about music and weaned me off the grub shit. Very important.

Augustus: I was really into skateboarding. I was a huge fan of Andrew Reynolds. Hearing DJ Shadow's *Organ Donor* in The End was huge for me. I got a lot of my music from skate videos.

How was it like growing up in Western Massachusetts as an electronic music artist? How is the scene like?

METAL

and that's refreshing.

Jae: I'm from Utica (New York).

Your style oscillates between dark-wave, synth pop, minimal, EBM, goth-trance, etc. We could go forever if we list all the genres you've been assigned to. How would you describe your musical DNA?

Augustus: I'm terrible at deciphering genres. We were referencing Suicide a lot for *Lesser Man*, and then Yello for *Yr Body is Nothing*; after that, it gets complicated. Recently, I've been drawing from 400 Blows, Severed Heads, and This Mortal Coil.

You are feeding a deep dark industrial aesthetic that talks a lot, visually. As you always perform live, have you ever thought about getting deeper into your visual concept on stage?

Jae: We're trying to think about what makes sense for a live show. We're playing bigger stages, which is exciting, but hinders our natural habitat of crowded, foggy places. At one point, I thought it would be amazing to work with friends of ours who choreograph and perform. We'll see.

Augustus: I am definitely interested in expanding the live set. I would love to incorporate lights and projections in a more deliberate way.

Your LP *Yr body is nothing* was released a couple of years ago with DKA Records. Since then, you've dropped two EPs, *County Girl* – with Ascetic House – and *Pain II*, which is not on a label. Why this choice?

Jae: The first ever release was this funny little tour split; our side was really bad. We dubbed it ourselves at home, I think. I guess 'the real' first release was *Lesser Man*, which we put out ourselves. We then worked with several small labels – Night People, DKA and Ascetic House. They are great, plus we appreciate what they gave us

METAL

mean? Contract territory is tough; I'm not ready to know who will I be in five years, and even less what my work will be.

Did you know that you track Pain is now part of the landscape of all the techno after parties in Paris, London and beyond? Can you tell us about how was this track made?

Jae: It's pretty nuts. My joke is that we'll be waiting outside of Berghain and we'll hear *Pain* (laughs). They'll think that's cool but they won't actually let us in.

Augustus: Totally accidental, really. It came together really fast. I had the hook in my head: "Pain breaks the rhythm" and went from there.

Boy Harsher – Pain



METAL

Jae: The emotion behind the song Pain is the cyclical, feedback loop of our abject heartache. We were in a real rough spot, hated one another but would always wind up sabotaging space by sleeping together / being really cruel about the whole thing. And as any crisis, it felt so close-up, extreme. It was a fucking mess. What makes me suffer now is different. My pain is ubiquitous and hard to define. That song came from such a specific moment – currently, the feeling of pain floats around in the big picture. Kind of threatening, but mostly just a fact of life.

You've been touring all around the United States and Europe during the last months/ years. Can you share with us the creepiest memory you had on tour?

Jae: Yes, it's pretty special that we've been invited to play all over. Kinda shocking, honestly. As for creepy experiences, I guess I've gotten the whole gamut of weird gestures. For example, one guy once stood in front of me pantomiming jacking-off during a whole show. Also, just recently, a guy offered me a "good fuck". I wish I had some more creepy/amazing things to add to the list.

After the show in Heidelberg (Germany) we had a relatively odd, but sweet night. We were invited to a forest party where we had to hike up a mountain to these open-face caves lit by candles. That was at three am or something. It was super beautiful – maybe a little lonely because we were strangers. But standing there, looking over the city inside the woods felt strange and nice. Or when I got food poisoning in London and this amazing person, Ali, brought me some of their mom's homemade stomach healing tea.

Augustus: I'm going to go with the person who stripped down when we started playing in Austin. Pure hedonism. They were rubbing their breasts all over Jae's monitor and ended up disconnecting our stage sound. What a trip.

Who inspires you the most every day?

METAL

encouraging her art. We're going through a lot right now with our neurotic and demented mother. Erica keeps me sane and grounded.

Augustus: I love a good underdog story. Anyone who can succeed against the odds.

What would your dream artistic collaboration be?

Jae: There are a lot! I would love to work with Essaie Pas, but like, what would they want from me? Or Schwefelgelb. It would be fun to lend my weird voice out to the dance champions. Even just a sample of me breathing in or something. Also, I dream of working with some heavy hitters like Anna Von Hausswolff or Jenny Hval – I could be their fake movie vocal sample. The rest is fantasy; why dwell on that right now?

Augustus: I would love to start getting into scoring for a film. I want to work with the Safdie brothers some day.

BOY HARSHER - Westerners (Official Audio)



You don't come from a cinematic background. If so, I would never have a movie, what would it be?

would it be?

Jae: I like to think of it as a perverse neo-noir, existing in some hot swamp city. *Like Body Heat*, by Lawrence Kasdan, but much weirder. Lynch's *Lost Highway* is maybe a cliché, but it's a confusing, erotic masterpiece. Plus, I hope Boy Harsher could be like that someday.

Augustus: Agreed.

I met you in Paris last month when you came to play at La Station Gare des Mines. It was your second time playing in the French capital. How did it go? What do you think about the young French electronic scene? Are you following any artists?

Jae: Yes, it was nice meeting you. Paris is fun. Truly, very happy to share a bill with Moor Mother. They are so major. I need to acquaint myself with Parisian musicians; I listen to Catherine Ribeiro and Alpes' Paix often, but that's from another time.

Augustus: The show at La Station was incredible. I'm pretty ignorant about Parisian music though.

What are your next projects on the pipeline?

Jae: We are working on another release at the moment. It's hard, exhilarating and totally scary. But hopefully, you'll hear something from us soon.

Can you share with us the last track you've been listening to today?

Jae: Sure. I was just trying to find the track ID of Ken Russell's *Gothic* trailer. Before, I was listening to Jaclyn Kendall's compilation *Never a Land Without People*, which is full of vibes.

Augustus: *Viper*, from E-Saggila's next record, is insane. Shows what punk techno can really be.

METAL



METAL



METAL



METAL

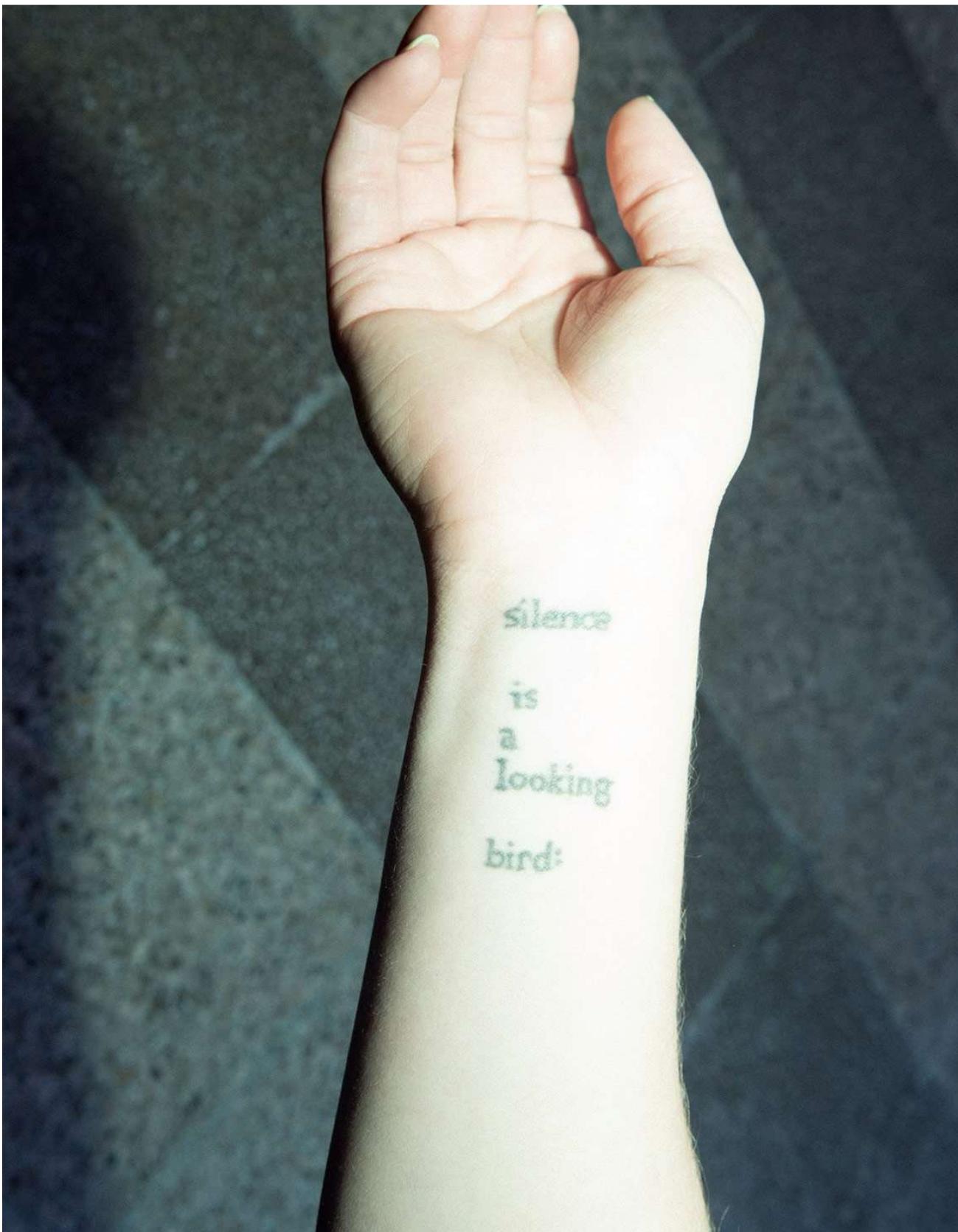
METAL



METAL



METAL



METAL



METAL

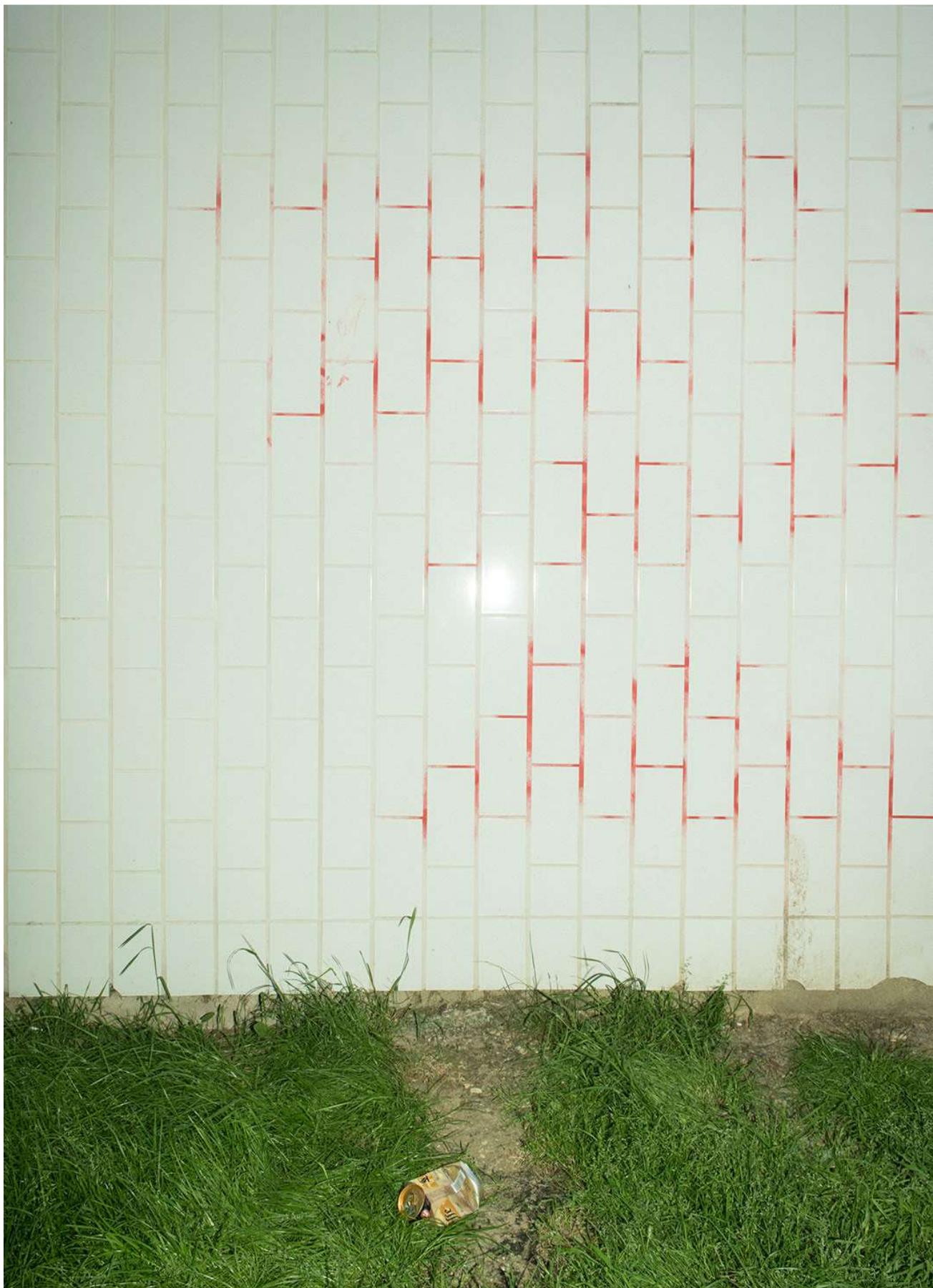


METAL



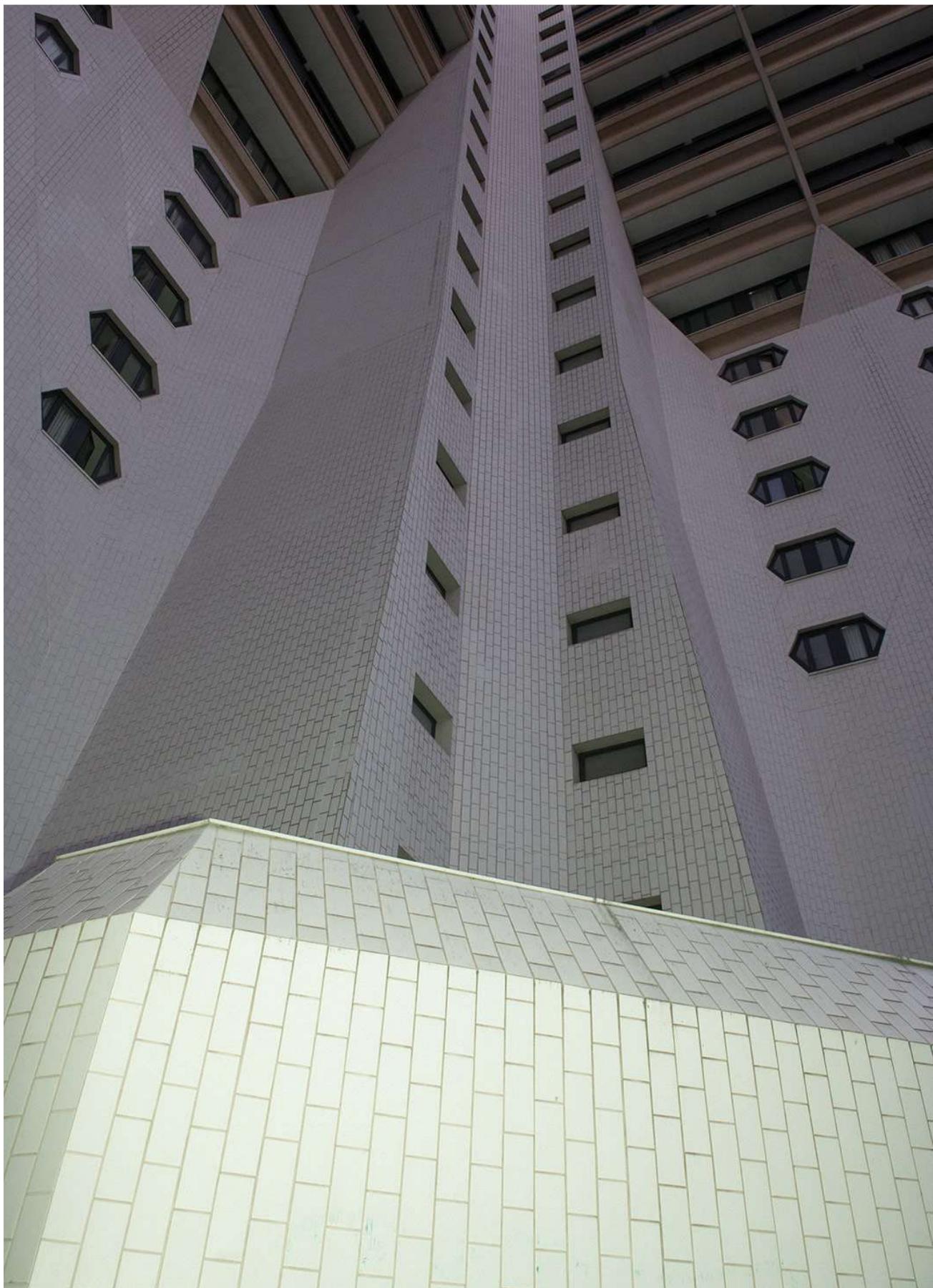
METAL

METAL



METAL

METAL



METAL



METAL

Photography
Simon Cecere

Styling
Lena Novello

Hair
Yann Turchi

Make up
Oceane Sitbon Ghoula



See comments

R E L A T E D C O N T E N T S



METAL

...REVIEW...
...QUEEN...

After a 6-year hiatus, the global superstar has released her seventh studio album "Renaissance," inspired by the origins of dance and house music.



Music

July 29, 2022

Salt Ashes

A new approach to the staple love song

Following the success of singles like "Body Says" or "Save It," the London-based singer/songwriter today premieres her new release, "Didn't See It Coming."

METAL



Music

July 29, 2022

MYKA

Soul searching

"American kids" is the artist's new release, an autobiographical single profiling him growing up in two places at eleven based on a personal experience.



Music

July 29, 2022

Tess Henley

It's not about having the solution

Having taken a hiatus following the release of "Wonderland," the singer now releases her new single, "Good For Me," and announces her "Paramount" EP.



Music

July 28, 2022

Morgan

Empowering through music

The UK-based singer songwriter discusses exploring her heritage in her music, the role of social media in her career and her journey towards self-love.



Music

July 27, 2022

Flow Festival Helsinki 2022

Finland's Summer calling

The Finish taste-makers storm a former power plant in August with a far reaching line-up and a taste for design. Their Artistic Director spills the beans

M O R E C O N T E N T S



METAL



Music

July 29, 2022

Tess Henley



Fashion

July 28, 2022

Ashlyn



Music

July 28, 2022

Morgan





Music - Activism July 26,

Slim Soledad



Fashion July 26, 2022

Public Serv-ce



Film July 26, 2022

People R Ugly

Short Film



Art July 25, 2022

Yumi Sakugawa

Fashion - Photography July 26,

The Jeweller's Dinn

Fashion July 26, 2022

Altaroma S/S 2023