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SURFACE

DESIGN DISPATCH

Bottega Veneta breaks the mold, Virgin Galactic's mirrored spaceship, and remembering 5pointz.

FIRST THIS

"It's okay to not be perfectly defined."

Paul Chan

HERE'S THE LATEST



**In Lieu of
Instagram,
Bottega Veneta
Debuts a Digital
Mag**

What's Happening: Bottega Veneta launches the inaugural edition of *Issue*, an audiovisual magazine that replaces the Italian label's social media accounts.

The Download: Bottega Veneta turned heads when, earlier this year, its social media accounts disappeared without a trace. Instead of posting into the void, the Milanese fashion label will focus on publishing a quarterly online magazine that creative director Daniel Lee hopes will offer “more progressive and thoughtful” content than scrolling through an Instagram feed.

The magazine, called *Issue*, will comprise a series of audiovisual experiences across fashion photography, music, and video, but no text. Highlights from the inaugural edition include footage of Bottega's most recent catwalk show at Sadler's Wells in London narrated by Neneh Cherry, a thrilling short film that captures the rooftop stunts of British parkour collective STORROR, and a newly commissioned video for Missy Elliott's classic 1999 track “Hot Boyz” shot by Derek Blanks.



While the pivot away from Instagram may be seen as brazen during a time when Instagram has replaced the glossy magazine as fashion's most visible platform, perhaps Bottega is onto something. The label reported 4.8 percent revenue growth in 2020, a year otherwise marked by severe financial losses for luxury brands.

In Their Own Words: “This wasn’t about a room full of executives talking about marketing strategy. Social media represents the homogenization of culture,” Lee tells *The Guardian*. “Everyone sees the same stream of content. A huge amount of thought goes into what I do, and social media oversimplifies it.” He laments a “mood of playground bullying on social media” and instead wanted to seek a more inclusive, uplifting alternative. “We’re not just a brand, we’re a team of people who work together, and I don’t want to collude in an atmosphere that feels negative.”

Surface Says: In an age where self-worth has become determined by likes and followers, we have to hand it to Lee and Bottega for setting an example and reclaiming how their work is presented.

What Else Is Happening?



Virgin Galactic unveils a new spaceship before resuming test flights in the New Mexico desert.



The Loewe Foundation and Studio Voltaire launch an award to uplift independent artists.

- ✓ RIOS leads a \$1.25 billion expansion of the Television City studio complex in Los Angeles.
- ✓ Harvard Graduate School of Design debuts the publishing imprint Harvard Design Press.
- ✓ Google Maps will start suggesting the most eco-conscious routes by default.
- ✓ After a year of harsh criticism and pandemic shutdowns, LACMA is preparing to reopen.
- ✓ A mushroom leather maker raises \$60 million for a suite of fashion, food, and foam products.

NEED TO KNOW





Jessica Lichtenstein Turns COVID-Induced Anxieties Into Works of Art

After COVID-19 altered the world as we knew it, the New York artist Jessica Lichtenstein began collecting a disparate assortment of musings from romantic poetry, pornography, Instagram, newspapers, comic books, diaries, and other sources until she amassed 4,000 of them in an Excel spreadsheet. She then took the independent thoughts and expressed them collectively by etching the words onto thousands of lockets ordered on Alibaba.

They now star in her solo exhibition, which features the series of concrete hearts with engraved lockets embedded inside bursting cracks. It's not only Lichtenstein's first sculptural body of work, but a departure from her figurative art. Here, she uses objects associated with sentimental meaning and reappropriates them with honest feelings—a metaphorical act of making something beautiful from “a perfect storm.” That analogy is also the apt title of her show at Winston Wächter Fine Art, which features her digital, sculptural, and installation work that responds directly to pandemic-induced disruption.

[READ THE INTERVIEW](#)

DESIGNER OF THE DAY



With a hands-on approach to design storytelling at all scales from chairs to hotels, Jun Aizaki paints the bigger picture to solve design problems that breathe new life into anything he works on. His multidisciplinary firm, Crème, has recently gained renown for moving the needle on eco-friendly product design, perhaps best exemplified with an initiative to repurpose flowering gourds into drinking vessels.

[READ THE INTERVIEW](#)



ICYMI: Edward Granger Wouldn't Mind If You Stopped Liking His Selfies

The artist Edward Granger recently called out his 80,000 followers for rarely challenging themselves to engage with his paintings—dazzling abstract canvases that feel like vivid color-rich universes rendered into two dimensions. The previous night, Granger, an architect by training, had posted a snapshot of an in-progress work and asked his followers to respond to a simple question: What do you see?

To his dismay, only a few people responded. “It leads me to think if most of my followers have

fallen asleep,” he wrote. When pressed for more insight, Granger said that his selfies often receive more than two or three times the engagement than images of his art. (Granger, a former model, often posts pictures of him at work in the studio.) While it may seem like a superficial complaint at first, and perhaps a product of insidious algorithms, Granger’s concern speaks to a disillusionment with how we interact with one another and our openness to embrace new ideas in the quarantine era.

[READ THE INTERVIEW](#)

SOCIAL



This 5-star Eco-Floating Hotel created by Hayri Atak Architectural Design Studio is slated to be built in Qatar, but has the potential to be travel to different areas thanks to its mobile feature. The project focuses on minimum energy loss and zero waste. It generates electrical energy by rotating around its position according to the water flow, affording visitors views from different perspectives.

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Member Spotlight: Achille Salvagni Atelier

Achille Salvagni leads his eponymous, multidisciplinary, and award-winning architecture and design firm with offices in Rome, London and New York. In 2013, Salvagni founded Achille Salvagni Atelier, a studio devoted to the production of his limited-edition furniture and lighting. Though an avowed modernist, Salvagni's work consistently bears the weight of history—not in overt references, but in his material richness, craftsmanship, and deeply layered narrative, resulting in work that is both philosophical and romantic.

Surface Says: One of the most versatile designers working today, Achille Salvagni wields a passion for craftsmanship that takes the lead in

every project, from sumptuous apartments in Rome and an eponymous line of clean-lined furniture to his award-winning yacht interiors.

LEARN MORE

AND FINALLY



Today's Attractive Distractions

Comme des Garçons refreshes Converse's classic Jack Purcell sneaker.

Chipotle will be giving out free burritos and bitcoin on National Burrito Day.

Before and after pictures show the stale high-rises that replaced 5pointz.

LinkedIn adds “creator mode” so more of its users can become influencers.