



ARKISTO

AALTO

ISSUE

WINTER 2019

THREE

EDITOR'S LETTER

FINLAAND

The AALTO AW19 collection and this fanzine celebrate the unique type of beauty that is born when cultures meet, clash and intertwine. My muses have been the non-conformist, strong and independent women breaking the molds of clichés to form their own notion of beauty – a new, hybrid voice nourished by an infinity of cultural influences. In Finland, my homeland, I can hear this strong new voice surrounding me and providing a never-ending source of inspiration.

It is in Helsinki that I first met Xafsa, Sahra and Aisha – young women portrayed in this fanzine by Helen Korpak. They are forging their own identities, mixing traditions that are only seemingly on the opposite poles: the oriental and the occidental; the modest and the extravagant; the age-old and the of-the-moment. I continue to admire the way they merge the best of both worlds to become embodiments of beauty nourished by diversity. Plurality, colliding

cultures, fluctuations of spirit – for me it is all about exploring moments of transition as revelations of beauty.

The garments in the AW19 collection layer a multitude of contrasting elements, or cultural fractions. Taking inspiration from modest wear, the silhouettes are covered, elongated and voluminous. Spacious pieces provide intimacy and a safe space in which to develop and nurture one's true self. They're designed to cover the body and embellish the face, which has long interested me as the reflection of the inner beauty. Shirts, hoodies, jackets and coats feature integrated hats—either berets or safari pith helmets—that bring focus to the face by playing with secrecy and veiling.

The FACES installation which accompanies the AW19 show further explores the face as a cross-cultural way of communicating our inner self to the world. In this project, Johan Sandberg and Karim Rahman take inspiration from

different ways of using face paint and make-up across diverse regions and traditions. These influences are then mixed, layered and combined shed light on the beauty that emerges from cultural clashes and encounters.

This issue of ARKISTO develops and expands the ideas of cultural fusions, identities and contrasts. On the pages that follow, the world-famous Finnish conductor, Esa-Pekka Salonen, delves on the new musical quality emerging from the clash of classical music and modern technology, while Banu Guler, co-founder of astrology app Co-Star discuss a different kind of constellations – not cultural, but celestial – and their influence on our sense of self.

TUOMAS MERIKOSKI

CREDITS AALTO

WINTER 2019

STYLING

JAMES VALERI

CASTING

ALEXANDRA SANDBERG

MAKE UP

KARIM RAHMAN WITH SHISHEIDO

HAIR

PAOLO SOFFIATTI USING MR. SMITH

MUSIC

MIMI XU

SHOW
PRODUCTION

BRACHFELD PARIS

POST
PRODUCTION

DANIEL LINJEPUNKT STOCKHOLM

ART DIRECTION

PIC

AALTO WISHES TO THANK GALERIES LAFAYETTE PARIS HAUSSMANN FOR ITS CONTINUOUS SUPPORT AND PROVIDING THE VENUE FOR THIS SHOW. A UNIQUE CAPSULE COLLECTION FEATURING AN EDIT OF THE SHOW LOOKS WILL BE LAUNCHED AT GALERIES LAFAYETTE PARIS HAUSSMANN ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH.

SPECIAL THANKS TO JOHN STERNER FROM THE GOTLAND-BASED CONCEPT KNITOTOLOGY FOR MAKING THE HAND KNITTED AALTO SWEATER FROM 100% ORGANIC WOOL, LE BERET FRANÇAIS FOR COLLABORATING ON THE CUSTOM-DESIGNED BERETS FEATURED IN THE SHOW AND ANDY WOLF FOR PROVIDING THE EYEWEAR.

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THE CONTRASTS WITHIN YOU

EXTRACTS OF A REAL CONVERSATION HELD ON AN IMAGINARY SOFA

BANU GULER

IN
CONVERSATION
WITH

AVIN JARJIS

We live in this rich world, that is full of external, and, occasionally and undeniably, internal contrast. How do we manage to make these contrasts co-exist? Understanding where and how we fit is a continuous quest. Perhaps accepting that there is more to learn than what you know is the key to curiosity. Sometimes we need to change perspective, to look around, and not only—sometimes we need to look up. What can we learn from looking up at the stars?

We spoke with Banu Guler, who together with Ben Weitzman and Anna Kopp founded the ever growing app Co-Star, with 1.7 million downloads to date and close to 300,000 followers on their Instagram @costarastrology. Astrology is the assumption that there lies a real relationship between the movements of stars and planets and the shifts in our inner worlds, and that the contrasts between the celestial and terrestrial are, in fact, not that far from each other.

Co-Star gathers raw data from NASA about where the stars were positioned on the exact time of your birth, and based on that, they create this sort of terracentric map to understand how the sky looked when you first gazed up at it. By using tech, they compare it to real-time data of how the stars are aligned each day, and, having learned to listen to the stars, they translate that to astrological insights that a human can understand.

Because, fundamentally, astrology is a language, Banu tells us. She recently read a statistic saying that in the US, 99% of Americans know their star sign. It's kind of amazing how big this thing is—people act like astrology is some kind of niche thing, but it's huge! Roughly, a third of American adults and half of the millennials say they believe in astrology. But then you have this other third, that engages with astrology-related content while saying that they don't believe in it. "You may or may not believe in it per se—but it works if you work it, you know?"

Astrology functions as a language for humans to talk to each other, and it can be seen as a shortcut to reaching common ground with complete strangers. A few months ago, Banu experienced a school-example of this. "I was in an elevator, and I found myself talking to this random woman. I mentioned CoStar to her, and she instantly was like 'Oh cool, I'm a Taurus', And I said 'Great, I'm a Scorpio, this means we're sister signs, and we should either totally love each other, or—'. And she instantly replied 'Yes, I know, my ex-boyfriend was a Scorpio. We were so in love, and it was crazy and beautiful and intense—and then he started being abusive, and stole all my money' ... And by then, we have only reached the fourth floor. It was so clear to me that this woman was just dying to talk about this with somebody, and astrology just offered itself as the framework for a chance to talk about this horrible thing that happened to her."

By finding mutual points of reference through astrology, it's just so much easier to connect with each other, compared to establishing common likes and dislikes.

The mere fact that you exist, and I exist, means that we have birthdays and ergo, star signs. This makes it possible to establish common ground by the fourth floor—which must be some sort of record.

"When you think about human loneliness, in general, I learned from a TED-talk that loneliness doesn't come from having a lack of people around you, loneliness comes from the feeling that nobody sees you, or that nobody understands you. Rates of loneliness have tripled since the 1980s, and today the most common number of close friends or components that the average American has is zero." "I'm afraid that that kind of loneliness can be correlated to the rise of social media. We all have a need of feeling seen and digitally seen, and the idea of the app itself 'seeing' you just feel good".

Astrology reckons with that idea, saying 'here's who you are, here's what you're feeling, and here is the astrological explanation why'. Banu tells me that their team, consisting of four full-time collaborators, and four part-time, receive a lot of really sweet feedback from the users of the app, who say that CoStar tends to feel like a therapist, or like a mean older sister who loves you to death.

We continue our conversation and ponder why astrology continues to intrigue us, and how it manages to keep its eternal relevance. "In general," Banu says, "I tend to assume that something that has stuck around for thousands of years, probably has done so because it carries some fundamental function." "Think of poetry by Sappho; these torn-up little bits of manuscript, that is just not written in the way we write anymore. But you read it. And you understand why it has stuck around for so long.

**"ONCE MORE LOVE STIRS
ME UP, THE LIMB-LOOSENER,
A CREATURE BITTER-SWEET,
BAFFLING."**

SAPPHO FRAGMENT 130
TRANSLATED BY GILLIAN SPRAGGS

The same argument can be made for texts of almost any religion, she continues. "There's a reason holy texts have stuck around for so long. If you just let go of the sort of cultural injunctions, it's just incredibly beautiful. That goes for Christianity, for Islam, Buddhism, Judaism—all these religions have these wonderful observations on humanity, that aren't that dissimilar to Sappho, or Shakespeare...or any of the poets we have been reading for thousands of years."

Even the form of the Bible and of the Quran are incredibly post-modern: one story, but told from all these different perspectives. The point is to capture

the complexity of human experience, and that there really isn't a single unified reality.

We come to the conclusion that the point of poetry isn't that it rhymes. The point is that it makes you feel something. Even the memes on @costarastrology can oftentimes be seen as just that; a form of modern, image-based poetry.

"I would make the argument that whenever you look at something that's really good, the same thing happens. Rei Kawakubo (Comme des Garçons) has this amazing quote that fits the way I think about clothes: 'What someone wears is an expression of oneself. When you're just comfortable with what you're wearing, you don't have new thoughts. I want people to feel something and think about who they are. You can't become truly free if you no longer think about clothes. You need to occasionally wear something strong, and that can feel strange. It makes you aware of your existence and can reaffirm your relationship with society. I think people feel a minute current running through them as they come into contact with something made by someone exploring the limits. When you put on clothes that are fighting against something, you can feel your courage grow. Clothing can set you free'." That's poetry, and that makes clothing, at it's best, multidimensional poetry.

"Identity is something incredibly powerful. The idea of using objects to communicate who you are isn't really a new idea. "I come from the fashion world", Banu reveals, "and I am 100% down for using clothes as an expression, or as an extension, of identity."

We continuously try to explain, with all vocabularies available, the chaos of what being human is, and astrology is no different. Astrology is a way of poetry.

"I think that one thing I find really valuable about full made chart astrology, is that you're not just a Scorpio, you're a Scorpio with a rising Pisces, and you have a Leo ascending. Through astrology, you are offered this rich language to talk about who you are, but you get to choose a little bit what to highlight. Take me for instance: when I meet people they're like 'Oh you're a Scorpio? I can see that you wear a lot of black ...but you don't seem all that much like one otherwise!' and then I can reply with 'Oh yes, that's right, I have Sagittarius in my chart too.' And that sort of flexibility is sorely lacking right now. Social media making everything bitesize and resizing everything into a single image has its limits.

To explore ourselves and understand each other, we can only benefit from this broader range of perspective that thoughtful astrology offers.

Find your hyper-personalized astrology on www.costarastrology.com



STAR TYC 3203-450-1 FROM THE THE CONSTELLATION OF LACERTA PHOTOBOMBS HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE OBSERVATION

© NASA GODDARD / GSFC

12/8/2017

EXPRESSING



IMAGES AND
INTERVIEW BY

HELEN KORPAK

THEMSELVES

XAFSA, SAHRA AND AISHA ARE EXPRESSING THEMSELVES BY MERGING THE ORIENTAL AND THE OCCIDENTAL; THE MODEST AND THE EXTRAVAGANT; THE AGE-OLD AND THE OF-THE-MOMENT. HELEN KORPAK MET WITH THEM AND DOCUMENTED THEIR TAKE ON FEMININITY, FASHION AND FINNISHNESS.

XAFSA

H **OW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FINLAND?**

Finland is small, but it's a place full of possibilities if you just know where to look or are able to create them for yourself.

W **HAT DOES FINLAND MEAN TO YOU?**

At the moment Finland is my home because it's where I was born and where I've grown up.

W **HAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING THING GOING ON IN FINLAND AT THE MOMENT?**

The fact that there's an increasing amount of girls in fashion that I can relate to because they look like me!

W **HAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU TO CONVEY THROUGH THE WAY YOU DRESS?**

How I dress is dictated by how I feel. One morning I might wake up feeling experimental and because of that put on a lot of really colourful clothes. The most important thing to remember is that there really are no limits when it comes to dressing up, one can wear any clothes and mix any styles as long as it makes one happy.

D **O YOU THINK FASHION IS RELATED TO ART?**

For sure.

W **HAT DOES THE WORD "FEMININITY" MEAN TO YOU – DOES IT HAVE ANY IMPORTANCE FOR YOU?**

For me femininity means a strong, independent, intelligent and beautiful soul. I like to emphasise my own femininity in ways that I find pleasant: through jewellery, make up or veils in different colours and styles.

AISHA

H **OW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FINLAND?**

Peaceful, quiet, outspoken, grey, gloomy, rainy, vivid and beautiful.

W **HAT DOES FINLAND MEAN TO YOU?**

Finland is my home and it's a part of my identity.

W **HAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING THING GOING ON IN FINLAND AT THE MOMENT?**

I study so hard that I haven't got a clue what's going on outside of university!

W **HAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU TO CONVEY THROUGH THE WAY YOU DRESS?**

I don't adhere to any particular style or fashion genre. I prefer to mix styles and the way I dress is usually related to how I feel. My own personal style is a way for me to be creative and to express myself.

D **O YOU THINK FASHION IS RELATED TO ART?**

Absolutely! It's a way of expression. I frequently look at art in order to get inspiration for my style.

W **HAT DOES THE WORD "FEMININITY" MEAN TO YOU – DOES IT HAVE ANY IMPORTANCE FOR YOU?**

For me the word femininity relates to a feeling or sensation, so I don't believe it has a lot to do with how I dress. It does however have an importance to me, because I feel like femininity is a part of the person I am.





SAHRA

H OW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE FINLAND?

It's like a small village in which the people are starting to get used to change.

W HAT DOES FINLAND MEAN TO YOU?

Somalia is my first home, but Finland feels like a second home since I was born and raised here.

W HAT'S THE MOST INTERESTING THING GOING ON IN FINLAND AT THE MOMENT?

The increasing acceptance of difference.

W HAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU TO CONVEY THROUGH THE WAY YOU DRESS?

I don't let anybody else's opinions have power over me! I dress however I want. My message to others is "always dress for yourself, because then you'll always be happy with the outcome".

D O YOU THINK FASHION IS RELATED TO ART?

I think fashion is art, because it has existed through the ages, for thousands of years.

W HAT DOES THE WORD "FEMININITY" MEAN TO YOU – DOES IT HAVE ANY IMPORTANCE FOR YOU?

Femininity to me means freedom. Freedom to express myself as a woman, freedom to be the me that I see myself as.



CLASSIC

Esa-Pekka Salonen is the conductor and composer who has gained worldwide fame for his work. His work succeeds in being both elegant and hardcore simultaneously, and he takes on the involving role of a conductor and the solitary role of a composer and makes the two co-exist.

TUOMAS Congratulations on your new position as the next music director of the San Francisco Symphony. It's also conveniently close to Silicon Valley, and your collaborator Apple. Could you tell us a little bit more about these changes and what they mean to you as an essential part of the modern classical music scene?

ESA-PEKKA For a while now, the main challenge has been on how to give an essentially European artform relevancy in a global perspective. To find the balance between staying true to the identity and the heritage the artform carries, while at the same time embracing other, newer influences.

We have to embrace technology and learn how to combine art and music in a world where tech is developing at hair-raising speed. How can we integrate what we do with the immersive technology for example? This is uncharted territory, and it's a fun challenge.

Going to San Francisco, I thought: all the latest technology is there. Silicon Valley is there. If I place myself there, I'll have more opportunities to connect with a field that focuses on creative thinking in a completely different way from me and my discipline.

TUOMAS How would you say that classical music positions itself in today's society?

ESA-PEKKA In my opinion, the fact that classical music is perceived with an insular character, comes down to bad PR. There lies an idea, a prejudice, that this art form is reserved only to a specific part of the population. This isn't true – in fact, we are a very approachable genre. More so than say, rock music, that is divided into subgenres, with subcultures, with sub-subgenres that come with very distinct audiences that can feel so specific they come across as excluding.

Whereas in the classical field, we don't have any restrictions, really. Our art is aimed at everybody. In most countries, the price of a ticket to a classical concert is comparable to the one of a pair of movie tickets.

But we haven't done enough to shake off that prejudice. I believe that by using technology, and by having a strong presence in the digital world, we can allow for classical music to become more approachable and appealing, especially to the younger generations.

TUOMAS How do you feel about online identity? Is online existence, especially on visual platforms such as Instagram, important to you?

ESA-PEKKA I'm on Instagram myself too. I was on there for years as a passive observer, but now I'm participating in a more active way and posting too. It's something I haven't done very much, but I realize that this is maybe the best way to reach your audience at the moment. I have some friends who

ESA-PEKKA

are very active on Instagram, and I've seen how far you can reach through that medium: my daughter, Anya, who is a painter, has been discovered by galleries and curators through her account @anjasalonen.

Today, most orchestras are starting to be present on Instagram as well.

TUOMAS I think Instagram plays such an essential part in conveying not only stories but also art and even music. And the digital universe overall – I recently read an article about how techno as a genre is, in fact, quite influenced by classical music. What do you think about that?

ESA-PEKKA Again, the categories are not that separate. Because if you talk to electronic music makers, many of them have models and heroes on the classical side. Many electronic music makers love the pioneering works that were made in the 1950s. Electronic music per se doesn't exclude classical composers. There is a lot of crossovers, even there.

If you listen to somebody like Björk, or Sigur Ros, or Radiohead for example, they have very much been influenced by classical music and by modern classical composers, and by electronic music by contemporary classical music composers. These fields are not at all insular. I don't see myself completely isolated from other disciplines within the area of music. I mean, we do live in a symbiotic world.

TUOMAS I was recently noticing that more and more women are emerging as "Chef d'Orchestre". The back of my mind says "this is new" because the field of classical music is traditionally perceived as having had a very masculine-lead field since ...forever. What are your thoughts on this?

ESA-PEKKA Right now, there are 2 consecutive generations of female conductors rising, with a talent of really remarkable talent – and still, in some parts, they are confronted with a glass ceiling they are forced to break through.

When I teach and give masterclasses, I would say that more than half of the students are women. I would predict that in the next 5-10 years, the gender balance on the scene of conducting and composing is going to be completely different. I wish we will see women in positions in classical music where they haven't traditionally had much representation, such as conducting, for instance.

TUOMAS How do you see cultural diversity being perceived in your field of work? Does the climate of the world affect what you do?

ESA-PEKKA As an institutional leader, I embrace the musical impulses that are different from the ones traditionally seen as influences to the classical music scene, and music that has been born in the African-American community is very important to me. I'm actively

HARDCORE SALONEN

trying to find non-European, non-white performers and composers and include them in the field.

TUOMAS The work of a composer is solitary, and the work of a conductor is participatory, but you inhabit both roles. How would you describe your way of working?

ESA-PEKKA It's about balance. Performing, live, surrounded by musicians, is something I really and truly enjoy. It brings me immense and irreplaceable pleasure.

At the same time, I feel that all composers share this solitary way of working. We are the only ones who are supposed to go in our studio, lock ourselves up and don't go out before we have the finished product. I find that very weird, and I feel completely alone in the big picture terms when looking at the overall way I work as a composer.

TUOMAS Would you say that you are entirely "digital" until you go down to the "pit" to perform when you are surrounded by all the musicians?

ESA-PEKKA I write my music on a computer, mostly. Sometimes I sketch by hand. Of course, I do a lot of work in my head. But in terms of the tools, I use computers. I use sequencers and electronic instruments in the conceptual part of writing music. I make my demos using algorithmic software. After all, I am currently discussing projects with AI and robotics specialists in San Francisco.

TUOMAS Do you see yourself as an entertainer or as an artist?

ESA-PEKKA The word entertainment is no swear word in my world. I think that if we manage to entertain people in a good way, that's already great. If we manage to go deeper and to evoke strong emotional responses or to stimulate new thinking, new thoughts, and all that, I think: even greater.

The maker of art can actually not decide that "this is art". It becomes art the moment it has been perceived as such.

TUOMAS How would you define art? Does art require functionality?

ESA-PEKKA I would argue that there is, in fact, at least a basic functionality to art. When an artist created an artwork, by definition, he will use paint and apply it to a canvas.

But everything past that is out of our control. We can't control, and we can never know how something is perceived. For me, the beauty of it all is that as the artist, the author, the creator, you make something. And then you put out that piece self-expression to the world and see what happens. I find this endlessly fascinating.

TUOMAS Beauty is something we affront daily, and we question, define and then redefine beauty continually. What is beautiful, what is not? How superficial it

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN WORLD CITIZEN ESA-PEKKA SALONEN AND FELLOW FINN TUOMAS MERIKOSKI

might be, how deep it might be. How do you see beauty in classical music?

ESA-PEKKA We can't even define human beauty, so how could we define beauty in other fields. The whole concept of beauty is tricky because it's not a status quo. It keeps changing over time. In a surprisingly short time, the idea of beauty can change radically.

TUOMAS Are there any situations professionally where the term "beauty" is understood the same?

ESA-PEKKA There is some theory about beauty in music, which I don't actually believe in, but there are theories about some mathematical relations that would somehow define beauty. The golden ratio, for instance, or the Fibonacci series. For centuries, people have been trying to find the recipe for beauty.

TUOMAS But there really is no such beauty that is easy to define?

ESA-PEKKA There is no such thing, no, and I think beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. I think beauty is in the mind of the receiver, i.e., the interface. And that is ever-evolving.

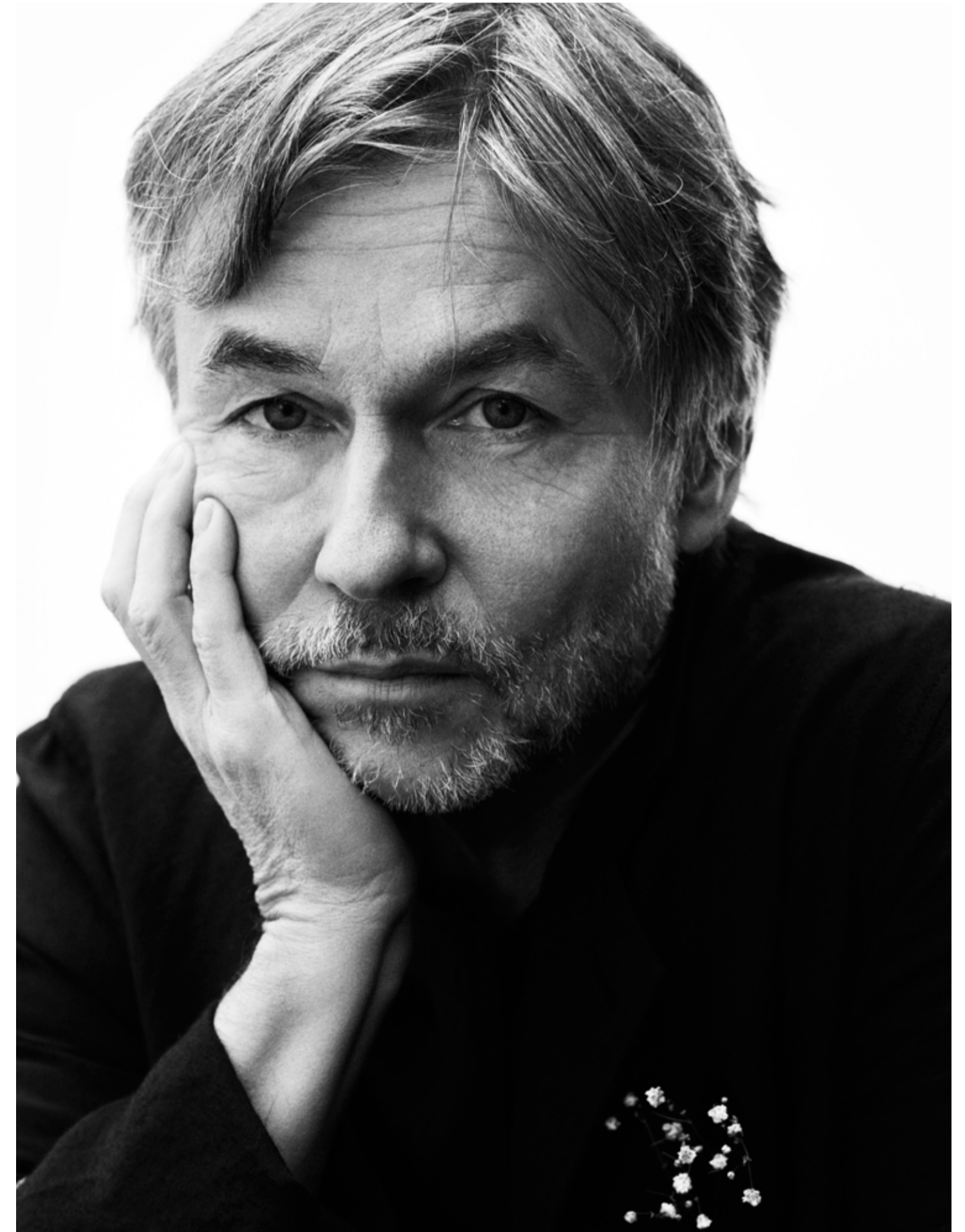
After a concert, or an opera performance, or after listening to any kind of music, I think that beauty is what comes from how I feel afterwards. If I feel deeply touched, shaken, stimulated, excited, upset maybe, that to me is beauty.

TUOMAS What drives you to do the work you do as a conductor?

ESA-PEKKA It's fun. That things and definitions keep changing. That even in a short space of time, new things happen. Things we used to take for granted, we no longer do.

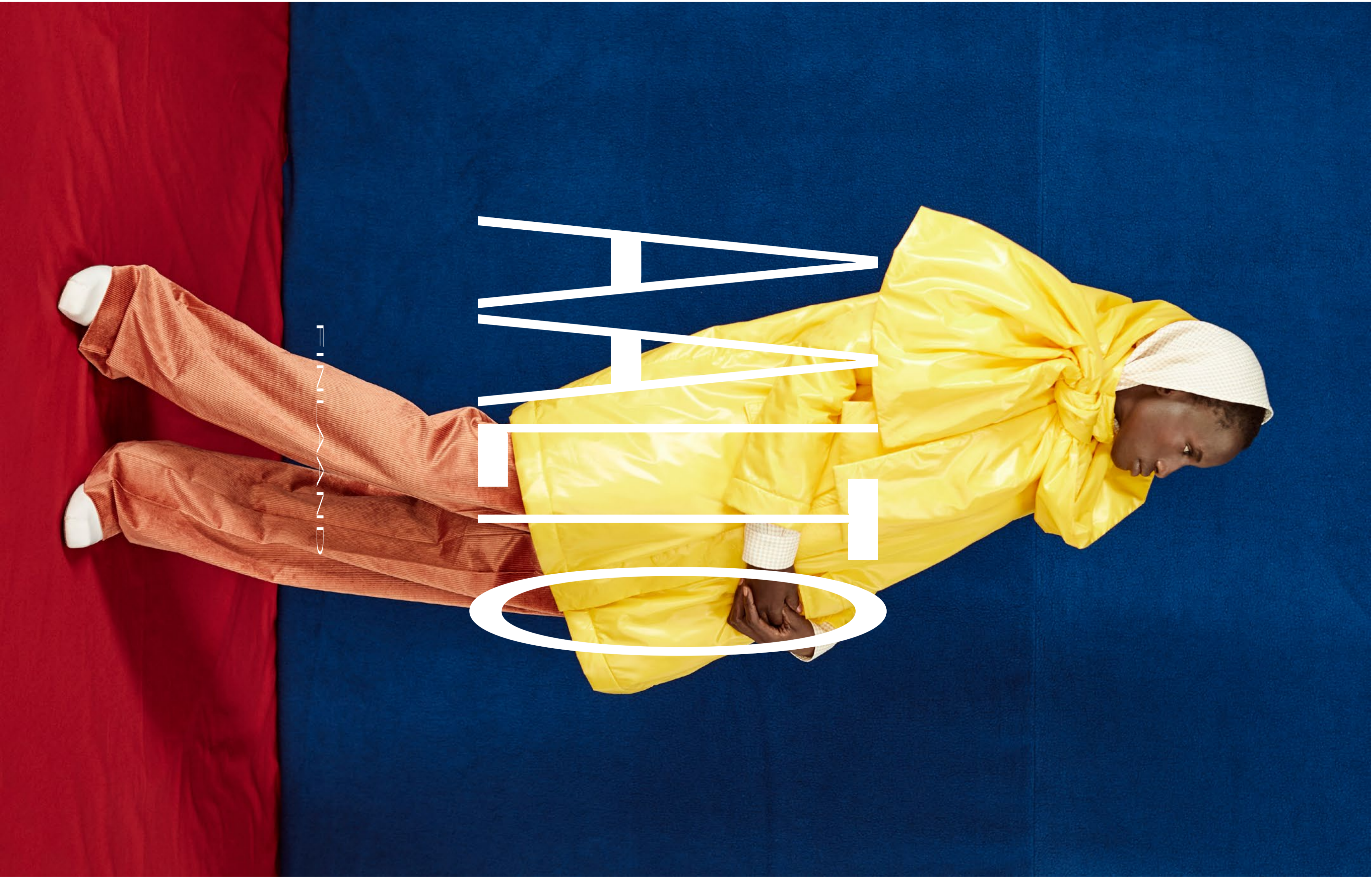
Yet, I think that there's some kind of hardcore of human experience that we all share. If a creator or a performer reaches to that hardcore of emotional experience, then we have succeeded.

TUOMAS I like the description of hardcore human experience, and I feel the reflection resonates with you and modern classical music. Elegance, perfection and nobleness co-exist in a hardcore way, and for me, that clearly holds some sort of undefined beauty.
Thank you.



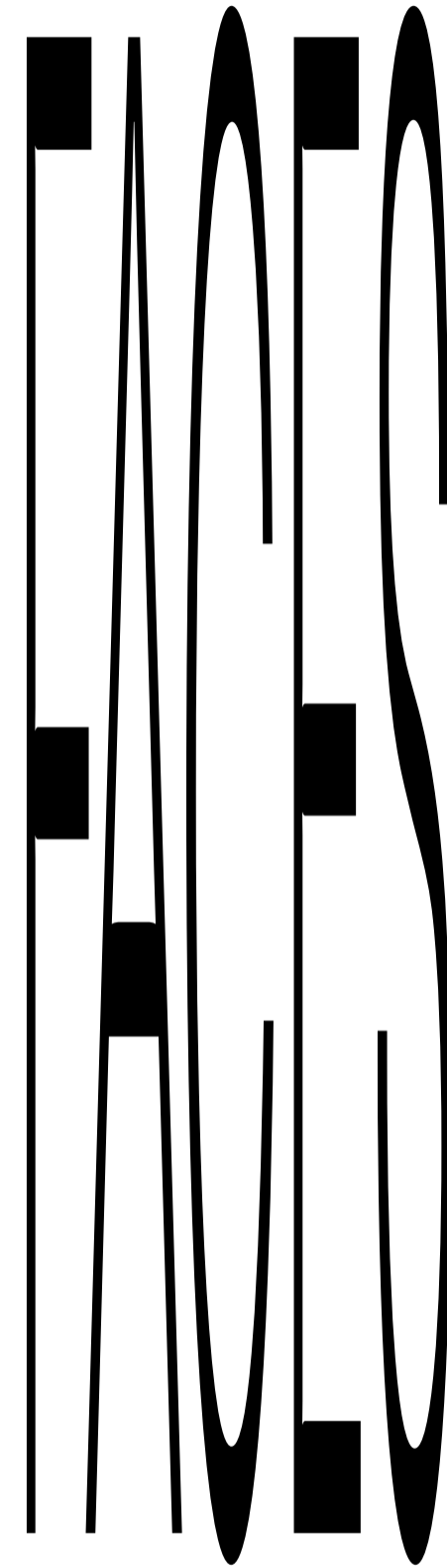
ESA-PEKKA SALONEN

PORTRAIT BY JOHAN SANDBERG



FAITH

FINLAND



MAKE UP

KARIM RAHMAN

HAIR

SERGIO VILLAFANE

PHOTOGRAPHY

JOHAN SANDBERG

Decorating one's face with painted patterns and shapes has been a part of the cultural codes of tribes and communities since the beginning of time. Now as much as then, the art of reinventing ourselves with make-up and masks remains a universal phenomenon. In this project, we explore and take inspiration from various ways of using face paint and make-up across diverse regions and traditions. These influences are then mixed, layered and combined to bring focus on the beauty that emerges from cultural clashes and encounters. Make-up is a strong form of self-expression, and, paradoxically, a powerful means of questioning beauty-related clichés.

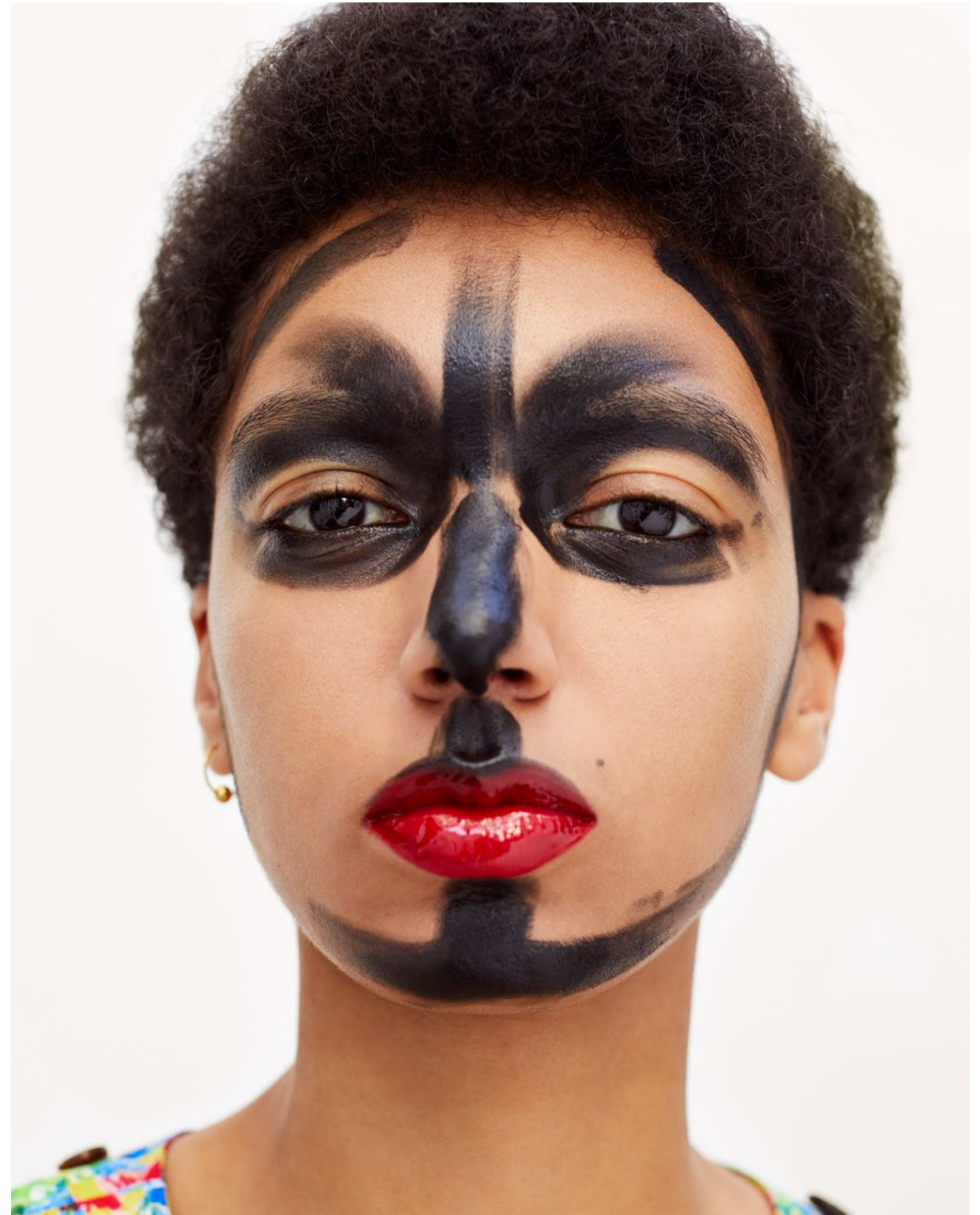
No matter how strong the make-up, it will always remain a layer applied on top of our faces' natural need and ability to express emotions. Across the world, the language of facial expressions is universally understandable, allowing us to communicate emotions where words fail us. Happiness, sadness, surprise, fear—we document and play with these facial expressions and forms of non-verbal communication to arrive at the conclusion that we are, in essence, all the same.

SPECIAL THANKS TO AALTOGIRLS MONA OTTO
ESTHER ATHINA MAO & YOM











AALTO

FINLAND