

COVET

Tee Time

NLGX is one of our favorite Beijing lifestyle brands. Its new fall/winter tee collection is what we'd call 'haute streetwear', spanning a range of bold prints with a slant towards a grown-up kidult style. The label does 'utility cool' like few other around. RMB130-150.

> 33 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng 东城区南锣鼓巷33号 (6400 2133, www.nlgxdesign.com)



Nailing it

Self-adhesive nail wraps are the perfect alternative to polish, and these ones from Singaporean brand Gummi Nails have got some serious panache. We particularly like the collaboration with fashion label Depression. Called 'Don't be Silly', the wacky, retro-mod collection is inspired by a pair of 'dysfunctional lovebirds' and features ten unique designs, *pour femme* and *pour homme*. RMB79.

> www.yetang.com



MADE IN CHINA

Neo-Dandyism

Regardless of what your mates wear to go drinking at Cafe de la Poste (we're guessing plimsolls, crinkled tees and the occasionally mismatched pair of socks), an appreciation for good dressing is not just for women. On both sides of the Atlantic, bespoke cobblers, tailors and shirt-makers have seen sales soar, with smarter men spending more turning their workaday clothes into a lifestyle statement.

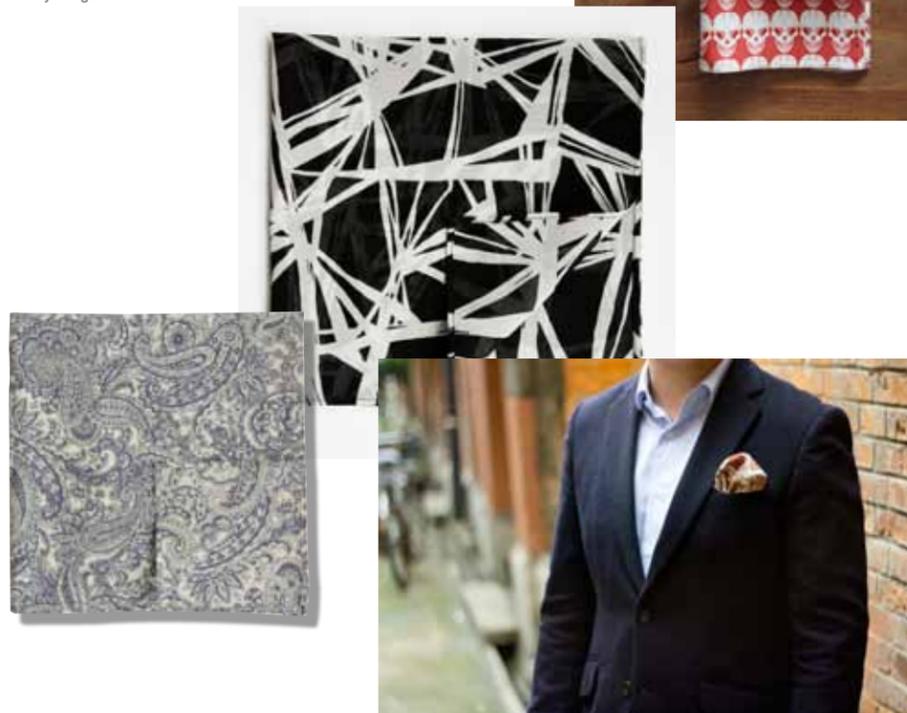
Riding the trend, Chinese menswear brands have also stepped up their game, offering interesting and well-crafted garments and accessories. Young Chinese Blood is one of them. Based in Shanghai, the label – currently only available online – was launched last spring by brother-and-sister pair Xing and Jenny-Jing Zhao as a lifestyle venture for the discerning gentleman.

Drawing inspiration from the dandies of yesteryear like Charles Baudelaire, Lord Byron and Oscar Wilde, as well as more contemporary icons like Andy Warhol, it offers accessories for the modern man that aim to embody flair and self-expression.

The brand's first collections feature two classic items that define a man of style: silk pocket-squares and cotton linen handkerchiefs. Made in limited numbers, each piece is individually named, and inspired by a work of literature, film or visual art, from Wong Kar-wai's film *Happy Together* to Daniel Hirst's most recognized work, *For the Love of God* (a platinum skull set in diamond).

Sometimes, the smallest things make the biggest difference. With its distinguished selection, Young Chinese Blood is set to elevate any outfit beyond a sum of its parts. RMB198-215.

> www.youngchineseblood.com



UNDER THE LENS

Masking in the Sun

The facekini is going to be all the rage next season. And not just in China. After gaining popularity on the beaches of Hainan and Qingdao, the swimwear piece has recently caught the attention of the international fashion set – so much so that former editor of *Vogue Paris*, Carine Roitfeld, has made it the subject of a glossy photo shoot.

Titled 'Masking in the Sun' and published in Roitfeld's magazine *CR Fashion Book*, the facekini-themed spread is basically a display of weirdo-chic, with rad neoprene jackets next to glam one-piece swimsuits, rash guards and, erm, Mexican luchador-style face masks.

Watch out for lots of fashionistas sunbathing in wrestling masks next summer.



SPOTLIGHT

Beatrice Leanza, Creative Director of Beijing Design Week



PHOTO BY NIOEMI CASSANELLI

On working on the fourth edition of Beijing Design Week —

This year has been all about changes. For the first edition, we had the novelty effect. Then came curiosity from the public and media. I joined as creative director last year and [now] our main objective is to assert Design Week as something with its own direction and autonomous identity. That's what we've mostly been focusing on: continuing what we've achieved while propelling the discourse to new levels of maturity.

On the event's significance —

[We want] Design Week to become a permanent creative platform rather than just a once-a-year initiative. The aim is to inspire experiences and ideas that last beyond the seven days of the event. Most of the projects we develop do not have a limited time frame.

We want to become an institution, if you will; a content producer for design in the capital that's closely tied with Beijing's specific traits and character. The idea is to tell people: 'Come to Design Week and you'll see something you won't see anywhere else in the world'.

On this year's main themes —

This year's program is all about giving voice to local context. We want to provide space for the creative forces that make up Beijing and have grown within the city. We've looked at city planning, manufacturing and academia, among other things. Most importantly, we've attempted to create a tight connection between the projects on show and the areas they'll be based in. Each component of Design Week 2014 will act around, and upon, its surroundings – be it Dashilar, Caochangdi or 751 D-Park.

On the new elements of the program —

There are too many to list really. Within our Design Hop program, we'll have a new area: Sanlitun. Here, we're going to run 'Taikoo Li Crossings', a series of events and exhibitions centered around Village South. There's going to be an Architecture and Design Film Festival with screenings, workshops and talks organized in collaboration with the Milan Design Film Festival and the Rotterdam Architecture Film Festival.

Another new element will be a series of projects we've dubbed 'Plug In Stations'. We have commissioned architecture and design studios in Beijing to create modular structures in different areas to encourage dialogue about their respective environments. Sans Practice has done the one in Dashilar; A4 Studios is in Caochangdi and Convey Society has worked on a station in Sanlitun. Each one has its own visual identity related to the history, needs and features of their locations.

On this year's guest city —

After London, Milan and Amsterdam, we have another European city to join Beijing Design Week: Barcelona. The Spanish metropolis has a strong tradition in design, and it's bringing a series of think-tanks and events under the theme 'Inclusive City' to display its creative input through time. There'll also be collaborations between Catalan and local designers, particularly in Dashilar.

On a typical day —

There isn't such a thing for me. I divide my time between meetings and writing, which I do mostly early in the morning and late at night. I have my rituals but no routine, if that makes sense.

On her favorite places in Beijing to go for inspiration —

Having lived here for 12 years, I can't say I have an area I prefer better than others when it comes to getting inspired. Moments, rather than places, are what spur my creative process. I cherish any occasion that triggers new encounters, in-depth exchanges and impromptu collaborations. It's those convivial, gregarious aspects of life in Beijing that really make a difference to me.

> Beijing Design Week runs September 26 – October 3 across Beijing. Check www.bjdw.org for the official schedule.