

Creativity 2.0



Creativity is constantly evolving, and social media, a relatively recent development, has democratized the creative process in a way that would not have been possible even 10 years ago. Everything around us has become a canvas for expression, from the clothes we wear to the images we post online. With the barriers to create and share content so low, too many have converted to conformity and forgotten about the creative potential of the internet. In an endless pursuit of likes and followers, we have created a vacuum of sameness that creatives are finding it hard to escape from. Now, opportunity lies in taking risks. To break free from the noise, brands and creators will need to look beyond engagement metrics and focus on the art of creating original, unique content.

The recent rise of TikTok supports this push for more creativity. Gen Z, the most digitally connected generation yet, is using the platform for artistic expression and to shed new light on important issues like mental health and climate change. Feroza Aziz, a 17-year-old from New Jersey, went viral last November after posting a TikTok masked as a “makeup tutorial”, in which Aziz stops after curling an eyelash to discuss the Uighur crisis in China. At just 16, Em Odesser also took a creative approach to activism with the creation of Teen Eye magazine, an online publication run completely by and for creators under the age of 19.

The drive for innovation and rally around sustainability is helping push the boundaries of creativity as we know it. A more



sustainable future depends on using what already exists to create something new. Faced with this challenge, companies like Evrnu are finding innovative ways to reuse resources that are already in circulation. Artist Gregg Moore approaches concerns over sustainable food consumption by using the waste bone of the cows to create elegant tableware for Blue Hill at Stone Barns.

True innovation and creativity lies at the intersection of disciplines, industries, and cultures. A new class of AI artists is redefining what it means to be creative in the digital age. At the same time, artist-in-residence programs at science and tech companies, like Integral Molecular in Philadelphia, are facilitating the creativity needed to solve some of the world's most complex problems. By thinking outside the box that many brands have created for themselves, they will be able to access ideas and connect with consumers that were otherwise out of reach. The future of creativity lies in cross-disciplinary collaboration.

MSCHF



MSCHF is a digital studio known for making unorthodox, viral internet products for the digital age. Their goal is to create things that get people talking, whether that's a Chrome extension that lets you watch Netflix at work by making it look like you're on a conference call, or selling custom Nike Air Max "Jesus Shoes" filled with holy water from the River Jordan. For founder Gabriel Whaley, MSCHF is part of a new golden age in creativity, where risk is really the only way to stay relevant.

Chloe Wise is a New York-based artist best known for her kitschy 2014 "Bread Bags" series which includes urethane sculpture works like the "Louis Vuitton Baguette" and "Moschino English Muffin". Wise recently collaborated with Jacquemus on a richly colored oil painting for the launch of his Spring 2019 collection, cementing her spot as one of the fashion industry's most beloved contemporary artists. Wise is known for taking a satirical approach to her work, often using food in contrast to the female form.



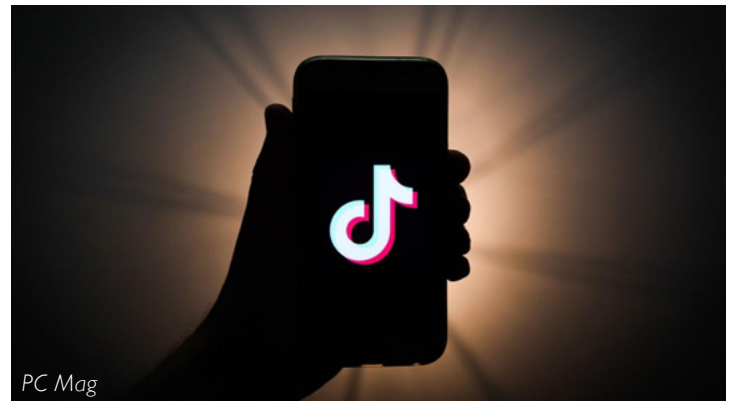
Chloe Wise

The Big Favorite



The future of fashion will be rooted in making new clothes out of old clothes. Eleanor Turner, founder and CEO of The Big Favorite, is bringing this future to fruition with a closed-loop business model. Launching in spring 2020, The Big Favorite is a new line of circular "first layer garments," like t-shirts, underwear, and leggings. Faced with climate change and a scarcity of resources, Turner is one of several creatives learning how to create something new out of what already exists.

— 01
**The
Golden Era**



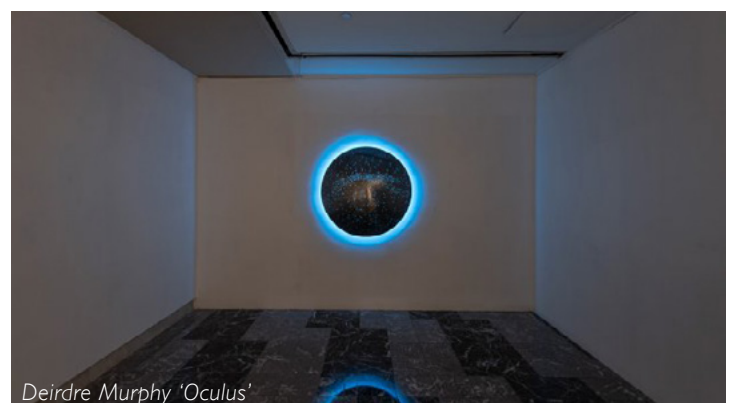
— 02
**Artful
Design**



— 03
**New
Normality**



— 04
**Uncharted
Territory**

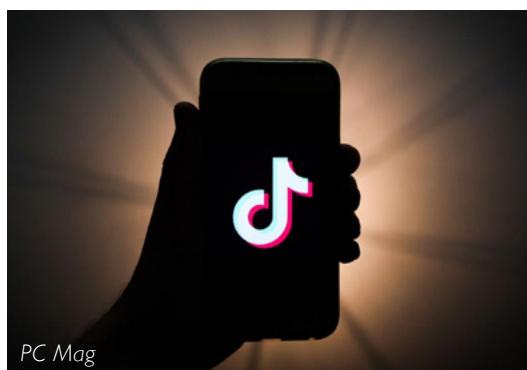


The rise of social media gave way to a massive surge of new content that continues today. Art has the ability to reach the masses with the click of a button, democratizing creativity in a way that would not have been possible even 10 years ago. Since its inception, social media and other digital tools have enhanced the creativity of future generations, giving them a powerful voice and the ability to build communities around their creations. Now, nearly a decade later, new platforms emerge and users continue to develop new ways to express themselves. At the same time, the unyielding demand for more content and desire for likes has created a vacuum of sameness that creatives find it hard to escape from.

Gabriel Whaley, founder and CEO of MSCHF, the company behind some of the most viral stories and products currently on the market, maintains his creativity by not taking things too seriously. Rather than focusing on profitability, MSCHF prioritizes making a product that people will share and ask questions about. Whaley predicts a new

golden era for creativity as a result of social media. “I think advertising got taken for a rough ride when the platforms emerged,” he said. “All of a sudden, it wasn’t about quality and storytelling as it was about constant shoving of content through tubes and targeting consumers at every turn through the Facebooks of the world. It sort of gave everyone tunnel vision, and we all forgot about the creative potential of the internet at-large. That said, I think we’ve hit a peak where the noise is so great on the platforms, and where the barriers to create and distribute content are so low, that it’s nearly impossible to stand out using conventional means. So I anticipate that creativity is about to have another golden era, this time on the internet, because brands and creators are going to be forced to be original again, and take some creative risk. I think MSCHF is one of the first to be part of that re-correction.”

The recent rise of TikTok supports this push for more creativity. Still relatively new, TikTok has yet to experience the same



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homogenizing effect as other social media platforms. According to Jeffrey Tucker of the American Institute for Economic Research, TikTok's success reveals three things: the world of social media is not static, monopolized, or predictable; the universality of technological innovation is inevitable; and there is untapped creativity in the human mind. TikTok's model relies on the artistic expression and freedom of its users, and thus provides a new terrain for fully democratized human creativity.

However, it is only a matter of time before TikTok becomes overrun with targeted ads and the pursuit of views turns what was once a diverse landscape of self-expression into a profit-driven marketing tool. Publicly available engagement metrics have a tendency to dilute creativity. Instagram's plan to remove likes has the potential to solve this issue, while creating a healthier online environment. According to [WIRED](#), social media researchers have argued that when users tailor their content to whatever garners the most engagement, the result is a radicalized environment that makes healthy, happy conversations almost impossible. Benjamin Grosser, an artist and assistant professor of new media at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, describes the limiting effects of metrics. "We create rules for ourselves about how to act within the system based on what the numbers say, but we don't realize we're doing this." Over time, we create only what the machine tells us to.

On the other hand, the competitive nature of social platforms can actually lead to more creative and original content. Take the streaming wars, for example. The rise of on-demand viewership has put pressure on entertainment brands to deliver unique content that will set them apart from their competition. Apple TV+ debuted in November 2019 with a slew of exclusive shows and movies. Shortly after, Disney+ hit screens with a roster of new buzz-worthy launches like *The Mandalorian*. WarnerMedia's HBO Max, launching in May 2020, has already signed movie production deals with Reese Witherspoon and Greg Berlanti. Even brands outside the entertainment industry are looking to capture consumers' attention with original content. In June 2019, Mailchimp unveiled Mailchimp Presents, an entertainment division dedicated to creating original series, films, and podcasts for entrepreneurs and small business owners. In September 2019, Procter & Gamble premiered *Activate*, a six-part documentary series created in partnership with National Geographic focused on inspiring global activism.

Doing something different will foster a loyalty that no amount of likes or followers can make up for. As the digital advertising market contracts and more ad dollars go to Facebook and Google, it is time for brands and publications to produce original content and tell unique stories that get consumers coming back time and again.

The line between art and fashion is blurring as designers find new ways to connect with consumers through mixed disciplines. Supported by the slow living and craft movement, there's an increasing demand for garments that double as handcrafted works of art.

A number of designers have collaborated with fine artists in recent years; a partnership made possible by social media's ability to connect burgeoning artists with the rest of the world. New York-based artist Chloe Wise painted Jacquemus' SS19 Campaign, making it more than just a preview of the French designer's forthcoming collection. London-born artist Venetia Berry's illustrations have appeared at Reformation's LA launch parties, on homeware sold at MATCHESFASHION, and on the surface of handbags designed by East London bag brand, Paradise Row.



Thebe Magugu

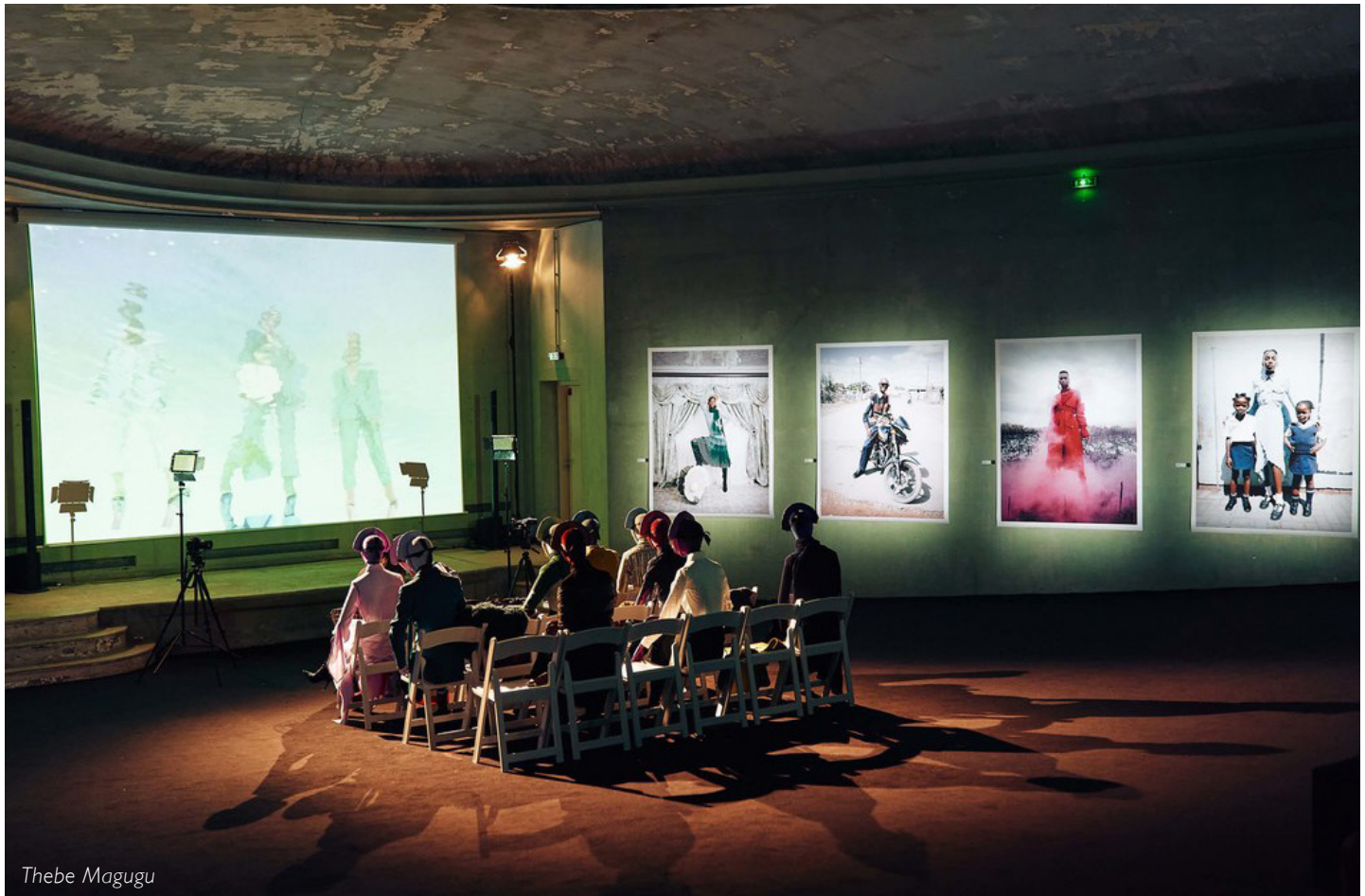
Designer Thebe Magugu effectively blends art and fashion. The most recent winner of the LVMH Prize showed his Autumn/Winter 2020 collection alongside an exhibition of large-scale, photographic portraits and a film shot in his home township of Ipopeng, near Kimberley, South Africa.

Connect, BTS

More pop and movie stars are venturing into the fine arts arena, including BTS. Their global "Connect, BTS" project aims to redefine the relationship between art and music with installations across 5 major cities by 22 artists. The New York installation is open from February 5 to March 27, 2020.

Lucy & Yak

Sustainable, indie brand Lucy & Yak collaborates with We Are Hairy People on limited edition, hand-painted dungarees featuring eco-inspired designs, from koi fish to otters.



Thebe Magugu

The list of collaborations goes on. Visual artist Christian Marclay collaborated with Hedi Slimane in his debut collection for Celine. London-based artist Isabella Cotier was tapped by Alessandro Michele to collaborate on a range of t-shirts and bags for Gucci. Louis Vuitton released six iterations of its classic Capucine bag reimagined and re-designed by six contemporary artists.

Dior also recently invited 11 artists to reinterpret the iconic Lady Dior bag as a unique piece of art, resulting in bags adorned with beaded portraits, hand painted with colorful florals, and reinvented

with 3D printing. These artists included Joana Vasconcelos, Rina Banerjee, Wang Guangle, Marguerite Humeau, Jia Lee, Maria Nepomuceno, Mickalene Thomas, Kohei Nawa, Eduardo Terrazas, Raqib Shaw and Athi-Patra Ruga.

Embracing fine art is a lesson in savvy brand-building. The art lends a deeper meaning to the product, while raising broader interest that sets brands apart from their competition. The fascination with fine art goes beyond just the fashion industry, and we expect to see more and more brands, consumers, and creatives take an artful approach to the challenges of our times.

More than 2 billion tons of waste is produced each year and resources are finite. Creatives are now faced with the challenge of making things out of what already exists in the world. “We need to get used to looking at things and understanding that nothing actually goes ‘away’ [when we throw it out]—there is no ‘away,’” says Stacy Flynn, the CEO of Evrnu. Evrnu is one of several companies trying to find innovative ways to reuse resources that are already in circulation. Flynn predicts a future of circularity, in which the value of a product is never lost, but rather regenerated when that product comes back as something new. “I actually think it’s one of the greatest design challenges of our century—how we take things from one form to another, with no loss of value.”

This philosophy is built into the foundation of Big Favorite, a new line of circular “first layer garments” launching in spring 2020. “Future generations will have to deal with a scarcity of resources and the consequences of consumerism in a way that we never have,” founder Eleanor Turner explains. Dr. Mark Liu and Charlotte Bialas are finding creative ways to implement a zero-waste approach to their work. Liu pioneered “Non-Euclidean Pattern Making,” a jigsaw-like technique that creates a more accurate design based on the mathematics of curved geometry, while Bialas uses vintage textiles and a geometric cutting pattern to reduce

fabric waste. A more sustainable fashion industry depends on using what already exists, eliminating the problem of clothing in landfills, and reframing the way we value our garments. But this circular way of thinking extends beyond the fashion industry.

Land is becoming scarce, as are building materials. Carl Elephante, the former president of the American Institute of Architects, predicts that by the middle of the decade at least a third of American architects’ work will be in repurposing, restoring, and refurbishing existing buildings. Aaron Betsky, president of the School of Architecture at Taliesin, believes the aesthetic of the next decade will be one of the New Normality, or the admiring of what we already have and the repurposing of the material that is around us.



Our agenda must be to reuse, rethink, reimagine, and relive our present.

Technological advancements are creating new opportunities for creative exploration. The STEM disciplines and the arts have never been mutually exclusive, but we are just now starting to explore the connection between the two worlds. A new class of AI artists are redefining what it means to be creative in the digital age. In November 2019, electronic musician Jean-Michel Jarre unveiled an “infinite album.” The project, called Eon, uses seven hours of Jarre’s music to create an evolving musical experience that is never ending and never repeated.

Innovation in the world of textiles is leading to breakthroughs in bio-fabricated leather, biodegradable textiles, closed-loop recycling, and e-textiles. Based on McKinsey analysis, companies around the world were set to file eight times as many fiber innovation patent applications in 2019 as they did in 2013. Bolt Threads, AM Silk, and Spiber have engineered artificial silk proteins and fibers. Modern Meadow developed Zoa, a lab-originated alternative to leather made

from collagen protein, while Tandem Repeat is producing fiber based on squid genes. In addition, Purdue University researchers recently developed “e-textile” technology that allows fabric to control electronic devices.

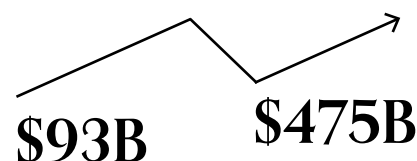
Just as innovation drives creativity, creatives are driving scientific innovation like never before. The artist-in-residence program at Integral Molecular facilitates creativity through collaborations between professionals in different fields. For years, the Philadelphia-based biotech company has invited artists to spend time in its labs, and create work that reflects some aspect of microbiology. The science inspires the artists and the proximity to the artists makes the scientists more creative problem-solvers. This intersection of disparate people, disciplines, and cultures is a popular strategy for creativity. Opportunities for exploration are endless as we look toward a future of space travel, deep ocean discovery, medical advancements, and sustainable solutions.

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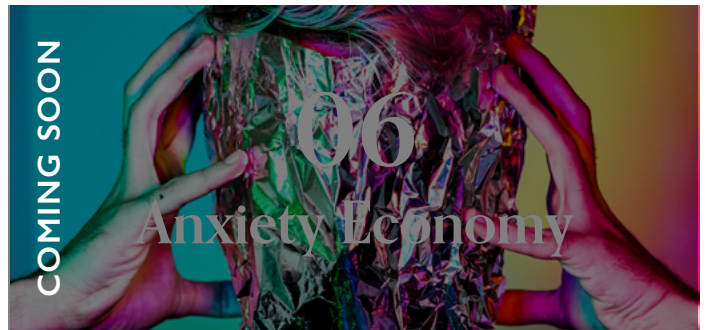
of apparel companies are looking to integrate more innovative bio-based materials.



The global smart-textile market is expected to grow from the current \$93 billion to \$475 billion by 2025

Source: [BOF The State of Fashion 2020](#), [“In The Future Your Clothes Will Be Made Out Of Pixels” Renwick, Dec. 31, 2019](#)







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