Modefabriek, Online, 1 October 2012
By Igor Guinau

PAPER CUT

In today's digital world the use of paper is slowly but surely declining. A recent study shows that paper use by the magazine, newspaper, book and other publishing sectors will fall up to 21% by 2015 compared with 2010 levels. Despite the unprecedented growth of the iPad and other tablets, I find it hard to imagine a paperless society. Nothing beats the smell of a freshly printed magazine, and no matter how razor-sharp the iPad screen may be, it doesn't have the same impact as a beautifully printed fashion editorial. And have you ever tried reading a long article or interview on a tablet? OK, as a magazine junkie I am a bit biased here, but I am surely not the only one who believes that paper is not doomed. Especially in the fields of art and fashion I couldn't help but notice a re-appreciation for this humble material.

Thomas Demand, Pacific Sun, 2012, Single channel 4K video projection with stereo sound, © Thomas Demand, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn, Courtesy Sprüth Mager Berlin London

Thomas Demand, Control Room, 2011, Chromogenic print on photographic paper and Diasec, © Thomas Demand, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn, Courtesy Sprüth Magers Berlin London

German artist Thomas Demand (Munich, 1964) re-creates famous media images out of fragile materials such as paper or cardboard. He illuminates the space-encompassing, original-sized models with clear, sharp light and photographs them with a large-format camera; afterwards he destroys the models to save space. Until October 20th, Berlin gallery Sprüth Magers presents a solo exhibition by Thomas Demand. On display are a new film project and a group of current photographic works by the artist. The two-minute-long film Pacific Sun is based on a video on YouTube, showing the footage of a surveillance camera from the dining room of a cruise ship during turbulent sea conditions. Demand constructed the interior space and objects out of paper on a scale of 1:1 and reenacted the exact choreography of the incident and photographed every minimal movement of the objects.

Amy Flurry and Nikki Nye's custom-made paper art installations are fueled by a love of fashion and an appreciation of the grace and nuance of this humble material. Under the moniker Paper Cut Project, the US-based duo creates highly crafted installations in paper for window installations, runway, catalogue and advertising campaigns. Over the past few years, Flurry and Nye have been commissioned by the likes of Cartier, Hermès and Italian Vogue to create exclusive collections. For the upcoming V&A exhibition, Hollywood Costume (opening October 20th), they made sixteen paper wigs of iconic film characters, including Sweeney Todd (Johnny Depp in Sweeney Todd) and Bill "The Butcher" Cutting (Daniel Day-Lewis in Gangs of New York).

Berlin performance artist slash entrepreneur Cantemir Gheorgiu's range of accessories is all made of paper (well, actually carton). In his online PAPP UP store you can find cardboard watches, bags, and even cardboard bowties. Cantemir chose carton as the material of his products, "because it's environmentally friendly and it pokes fun at our throwaway society," he said.

For his Spring/Summer 2013 men's collection, Japanese designer Issey Miyake was inspired by washi, the traditional Japanese paper. This paper is bonded with rayon and the surface is laminated in order to make it washable. A water repellent treatment is applied to make it durable against wind and rain. The zippers of some of the clothes are also partially made of paper (!).