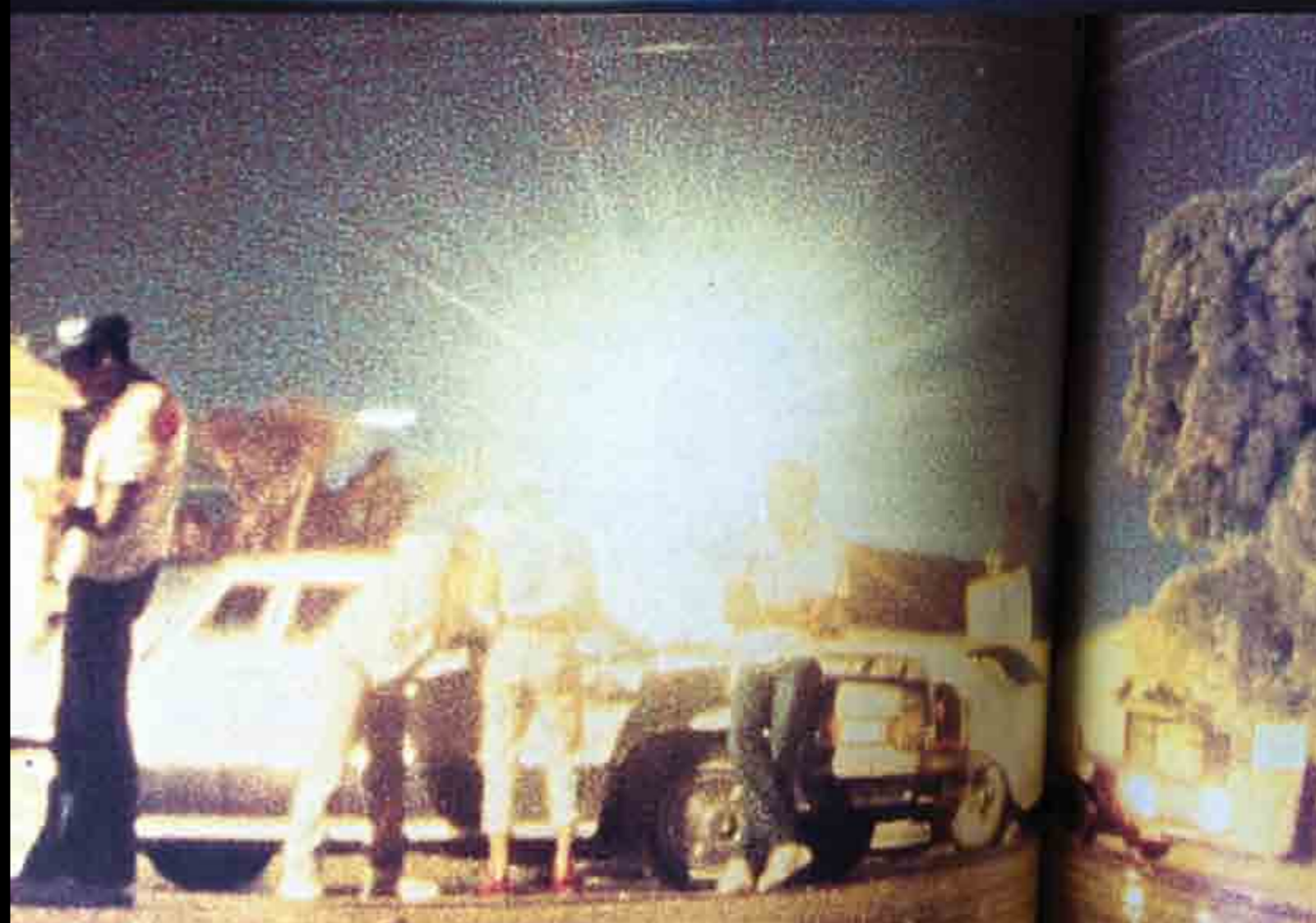


**ARIES**  
**ARISE**





We met just after college, I was working at Slam City Skates. My job as a designer for the skate label “insane” had ended a few months before and my employers either hadn’t realised, or didn’t care. It is possible that my wage was so small it didn’t matter and I did fold tees in stacks of ten more accurately than the many skaters employed, like Stewart, whose piles were always eleven or nine.

I also spent a lot of time making origami cranes, like in Bladerunner. My desk was full of them.

I am not sure what or who brought Fergus in, he just came in one day and then almost every week, bringing new ideas, graphics, logos. Life was so slow then, everyone just hung out ... We spent our time talking about making things: clothes, objects, going to comic fairs and we became really good friends.

Slam was an amazing place to work - we were given complete freedom. I never knew if it was apathy or trust, but we were left to experiment and make mistakes. It was a very anarchic environment.

It was my first job after graduating from St Martins and I was in charge of production and design. I would buy hundreds of meters of fabric, with no supervision at all and make whatever I wanted. It was great, the best training any designer could dream of.

One year when the owner, Paul, a sweet and very introverted older skater who seemed to prefer dealing with computers to any human being, went to a trade fair in California, I decided it would be fun to graffiti the warehouse. It was a box-like building, purpose built with very little character that felt too sterile... We all contributed, Ferg, James Jarvis, using a black spray can drawing and writing messages like you would find in an abandoned house. I loved it. Paul, when he got back, wasn’t as impressed, but still never said anything and no one ever repainted it.

The first label we collaborated on was Holmes. It was Russell’s idea to start a new label. Russell and I later left to start Silas.

Ferg would bring thousands of graphics, he would just come in every week and bring more drawings on little bits of paper. I can’t remember ever asking him to, or Slam paying him for them. He had so many ideas. We shared a counterculture and punk aesthetic that was quite unfashionable at the time.

All skate labels then were American. We did try to make Holmes look American, but a lot of our references were very British, or even Italian, and this made it quite different.

During all this I was still very influenced and obsessed by fashion. Real fashion had become very unfashionable then, dominated by big brands and big business, but the energy that had attracted me to it at the beginning - punk, Vivienne Westwood, i-D, the Face and the more extreme designers like Body Map, Leigh Bowery, Christopher Nemeth - had now moved into street wear.

In the same way as Richard Torry cut those crazy first Seditary tee shirts which had straight armholes and an off-centre neck hole - the product of an original, naive and anarchic approach to pattern cutting - skaters were making their own boards and clothes independently of the big business that had dominated the sportswear market until then.

It was also around this time that we met Luca Benini. Luca shared our interests in art, design and street culture and played a really important role in importing British and American underground movements to Italy and mainland Europe.

All three of us kept in touch over the Silas years, Fergus collaborated with Silas on his label Tonite and finally in 2010 we decided it was time to start a new project.

Aries

I had struggled with reconciling my love for fashion, beautifully made and cut clothes, and sartorial experimentation with the love for street wear, anti-fashion youth movements and trash culture in general so, as we sat writing our first manifesto, we decided that Aries should encompass all these elements.

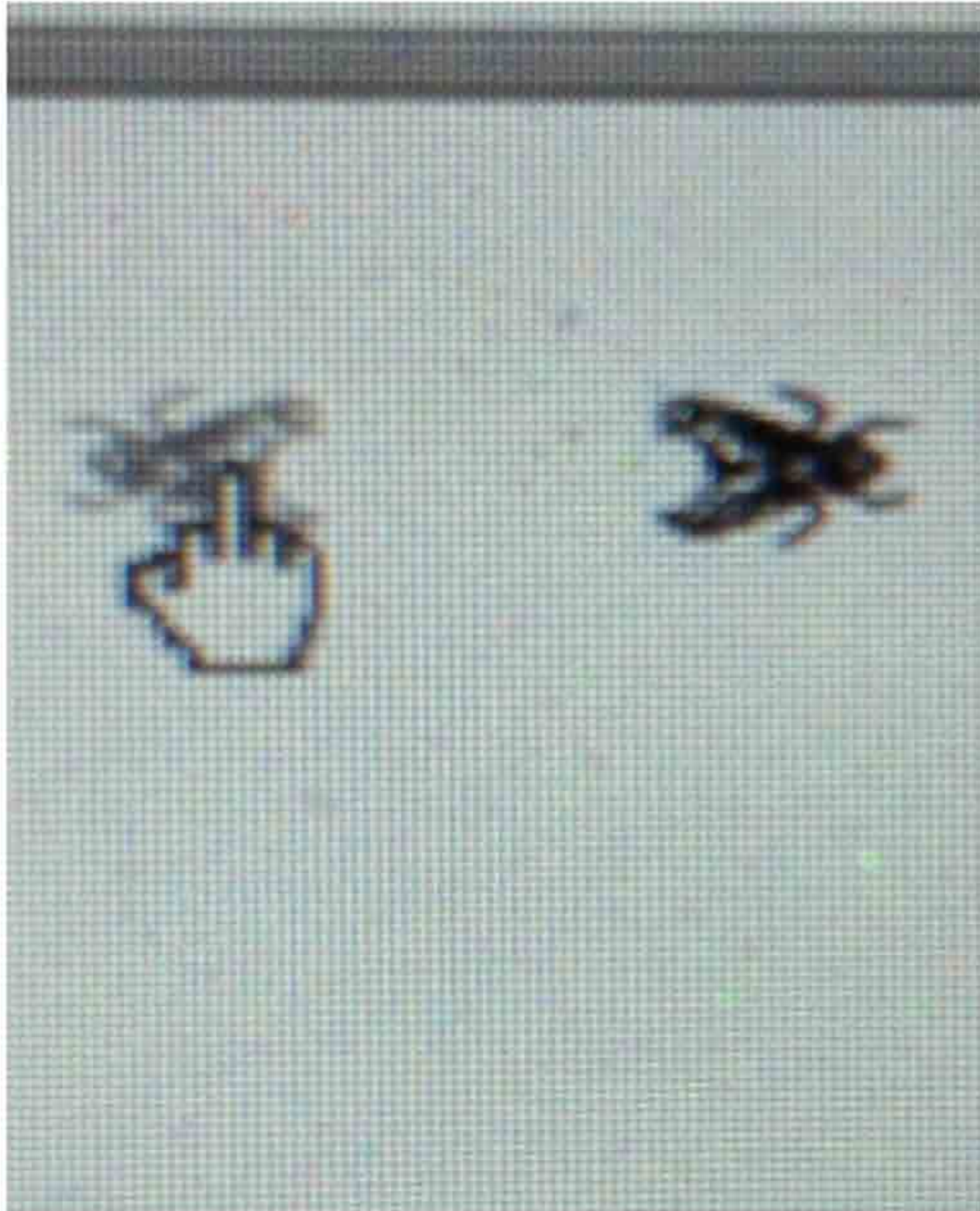
We wanted Aries to be a return to that 80s sensibility where street wear was fashion and vice versa. I make most of our patterns myself and we hand dye and hand print in the studio. I like going against conventional pattern-cutting rules. I love that we can create pieces with first hand experimentation which would be almost impossible to make within the constraints of a high street brand. We can also be a lot less wasteful - using off cuts of leather to make jeans labels, reusing leftover fabric and denim to patch jeans.

This is the challenge for any new brand now - to keep it original, experimental and a little subversive while still being able to survive in a crowded market, constricted by the demands of big generic retailers and sweat shop prices.

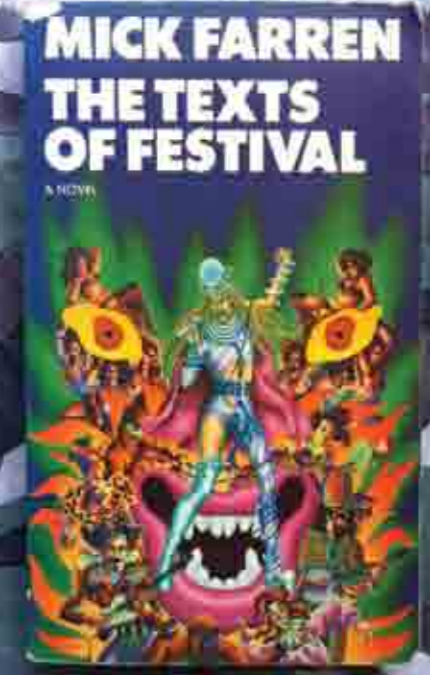
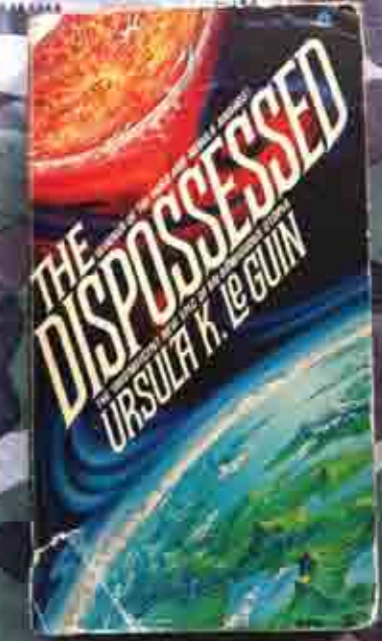
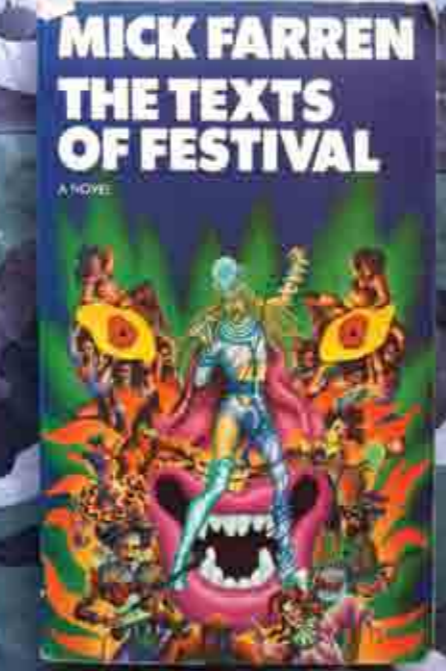
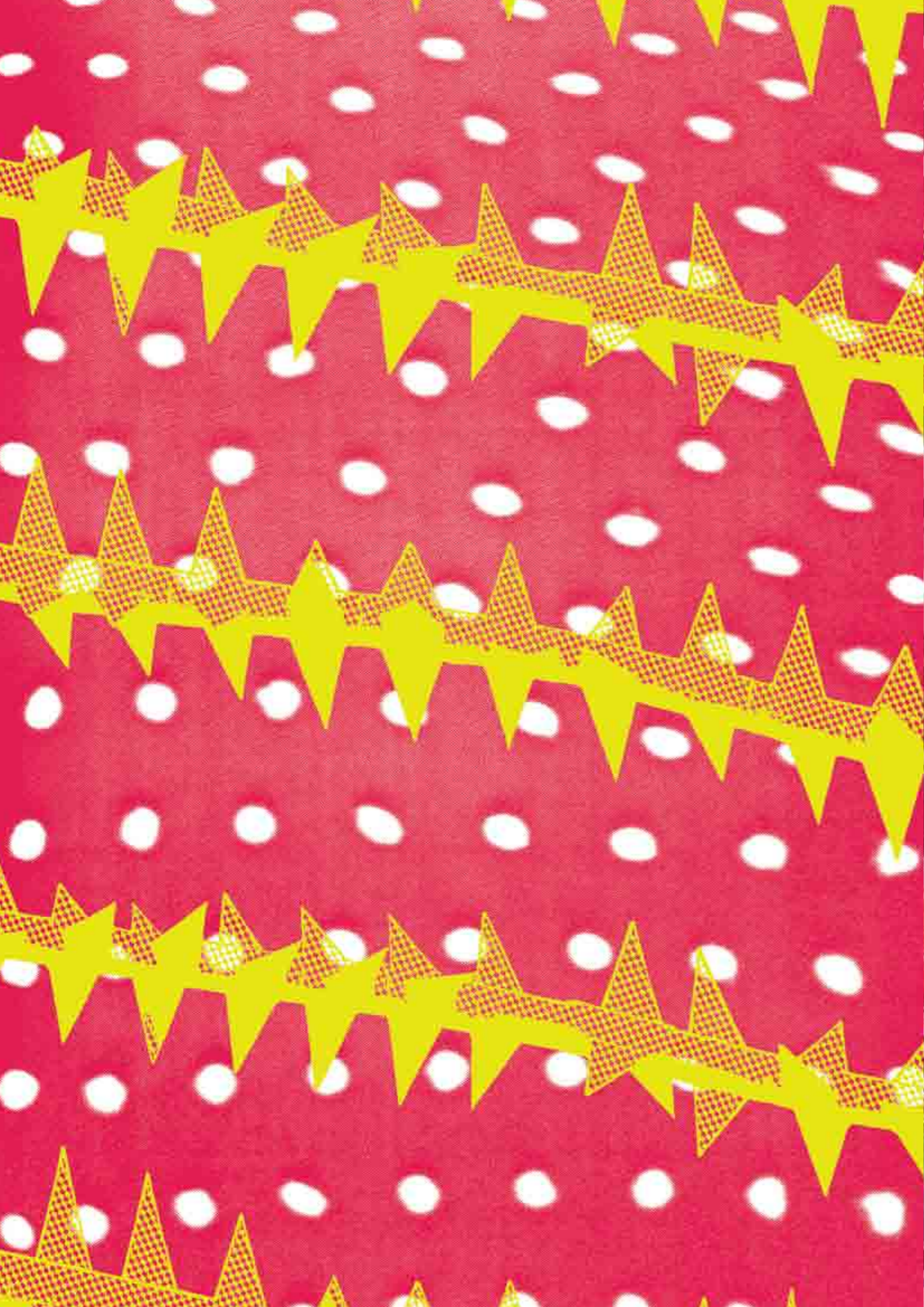
Recently Ferg and I were in Milan and, after ordering breakfast in a bar, we were asked to pay up front. I was carrying an expensive designer bag and while paying I turned the bag round so the logo was visible. The waitress immediately apologised. I’m not sure who she thought we were before recognising the luxury branding, or why it made any difference, as the bag could have been fake or stolen. But for me it summarised how fashion can be so defining. It made me realise why I have always been so compelled by it. Whether we like it or not, it influences the way we live our everyday lives. And this made me feel even more strongly about making the essence of Aries so undefinable. Some sort of subtle challenge to the way we all read each other’s appearances.











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I'M into the following bands: Underdog, Gorilla Biscuits, Wide Awake, Judge Breakdown, Bad Brains, SSD, Ignition, Soulside. I need to buy/trade the following records: Personality Crisis "Creatures" LP, Negative Approach 7", SSD "Get It Away" 12", The Abused "Loud And Clear" 7". Please send trade/want lists also just correspondence to: C D via Col a 6612 Ascona (TI), SWITZERLAND.

17-YEAR-OLD male thrasher wants interesting people to write to. I'm into Anthrax, D.R.I., Slayer, C.O.C., Megadeth, Exodus and all other metal except glam. I will answer all letters from females. y Ave., Halfway,

16-YEAR-OLD Slayer fanatic seeks thrashers from all over the world (especially females) other fave bands include Infernal Majesty, Metallica, Sacred Reich, Vendetta and Megadeth. Insane rattleheads especially welcome. All letters answered fast. If possible send photo to: 2 Park Bromby, Mirral, Mer, IT, ENGLAND. P.S. Metallians from my area especially required for head to heads!

21-YEAR-OLD Hardcore punk wants to trade tapes of hardcore and thrash LP's with anyone from anywhere. Fave bands are Black Flag, Conflict, M.D.C., Circle Jerks, 7 Seconds, D.I., Ramones, Dead Kennedys, Minor Threat, Cro-Mags, Misfits, Angry Samoans plus load more cool U.S. and UK bands. I'm a straight-edge vegetarian also into horror movies, so if you wanna trade or just write, please do! 15 Road, Colchester, Essex, ENGLAND.

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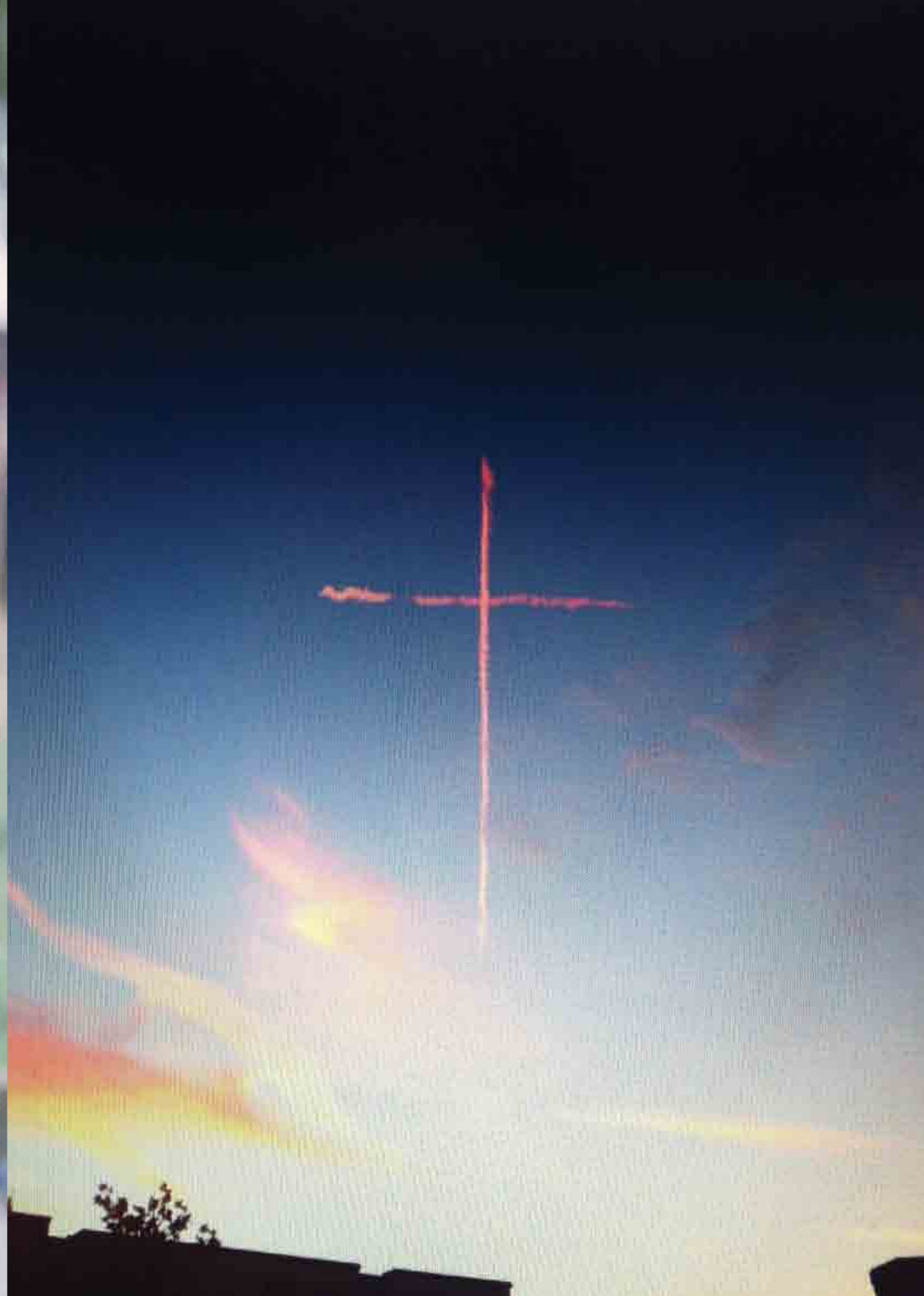
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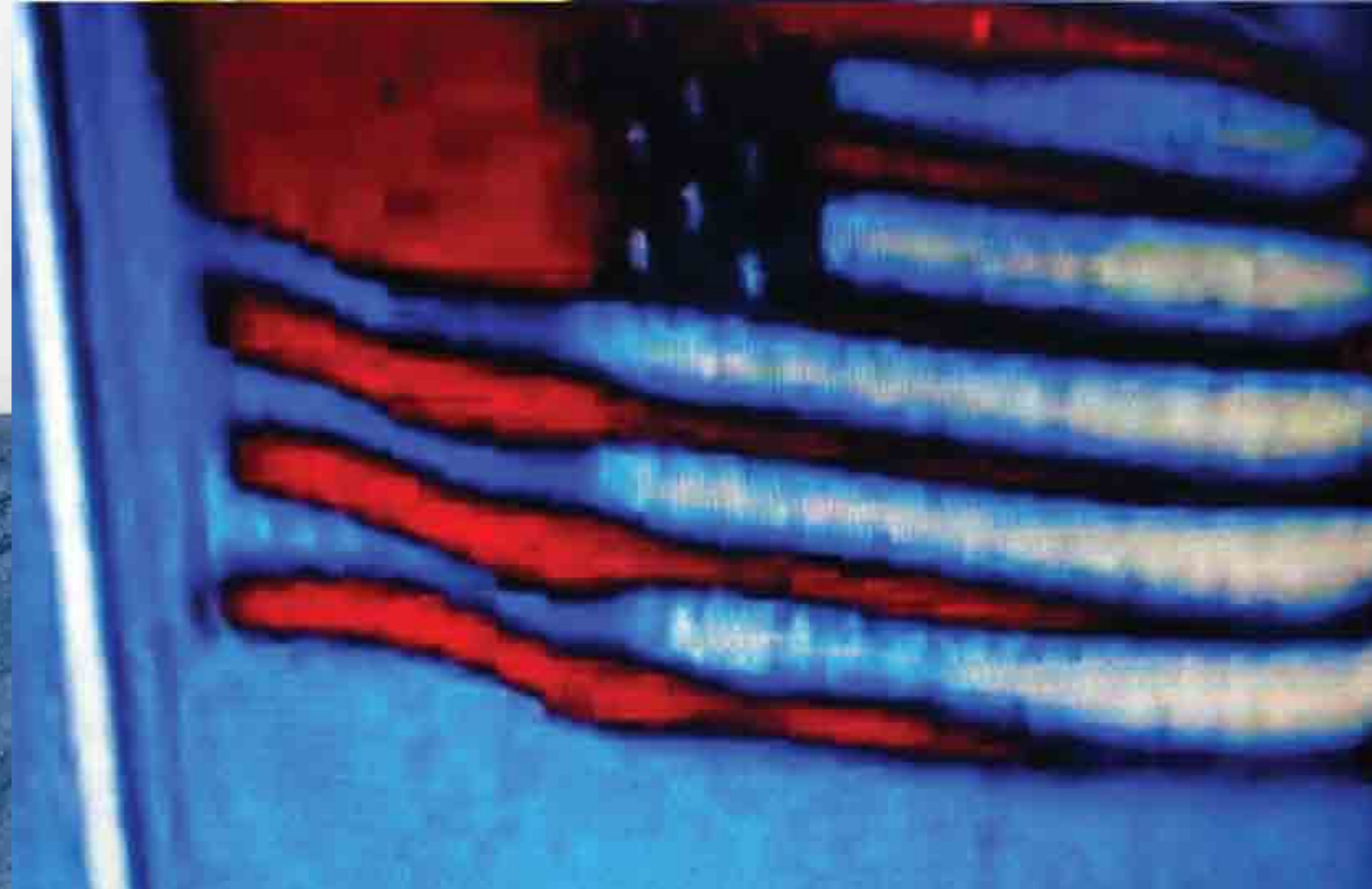




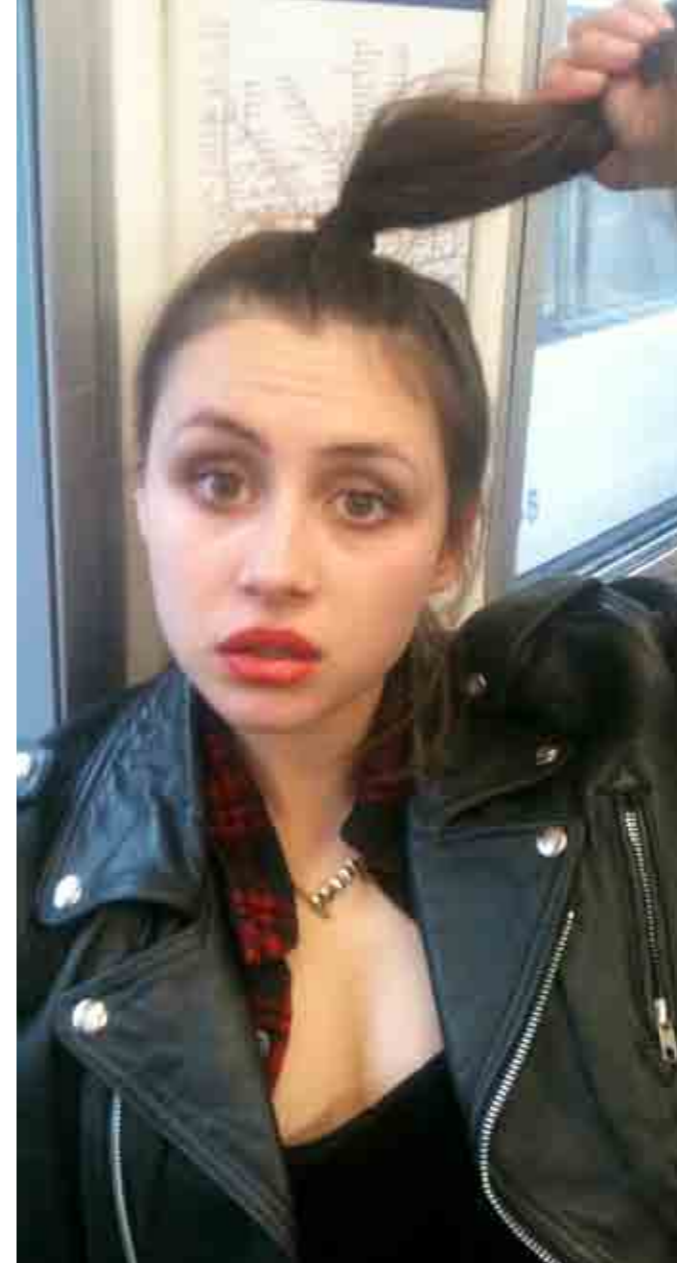
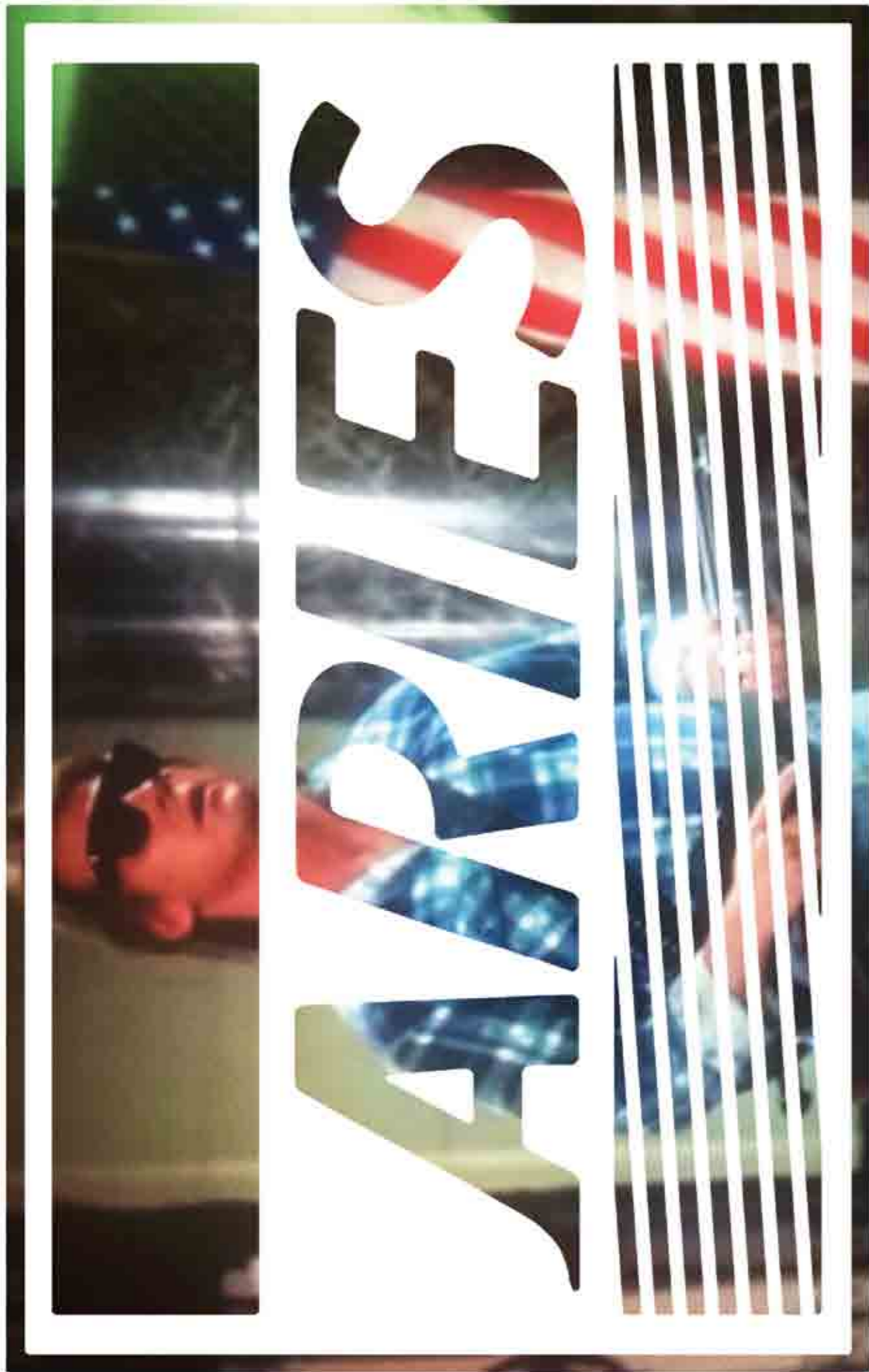




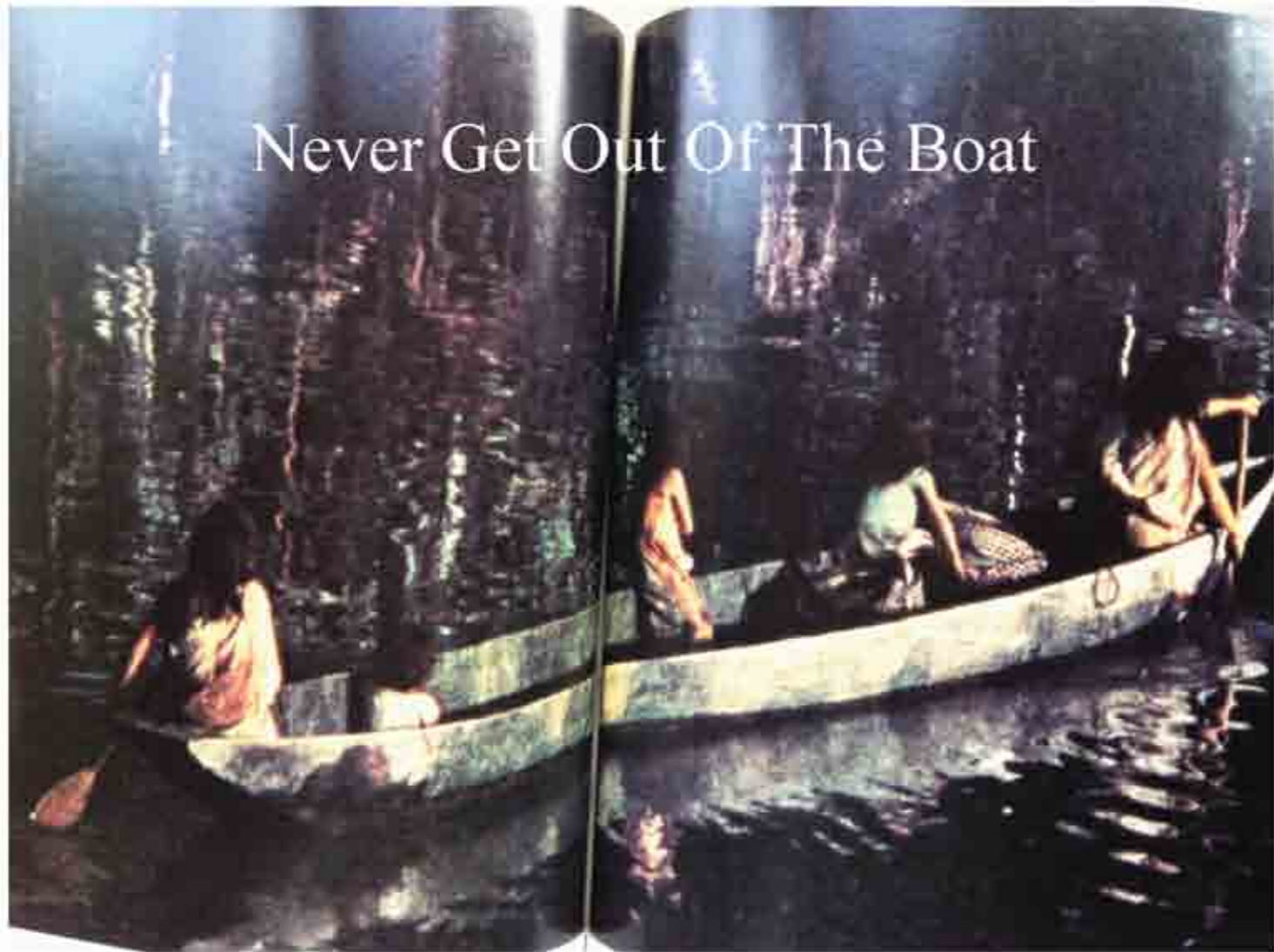








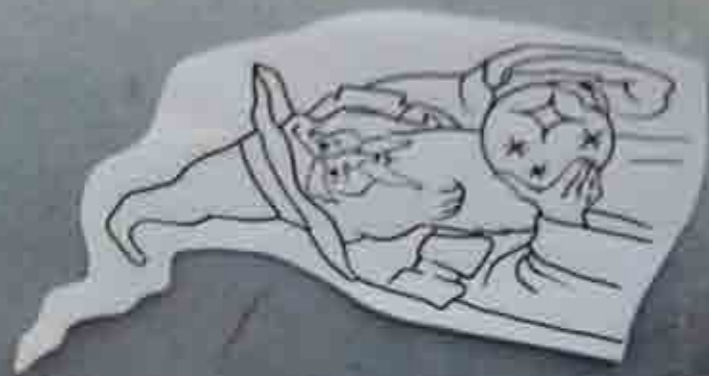
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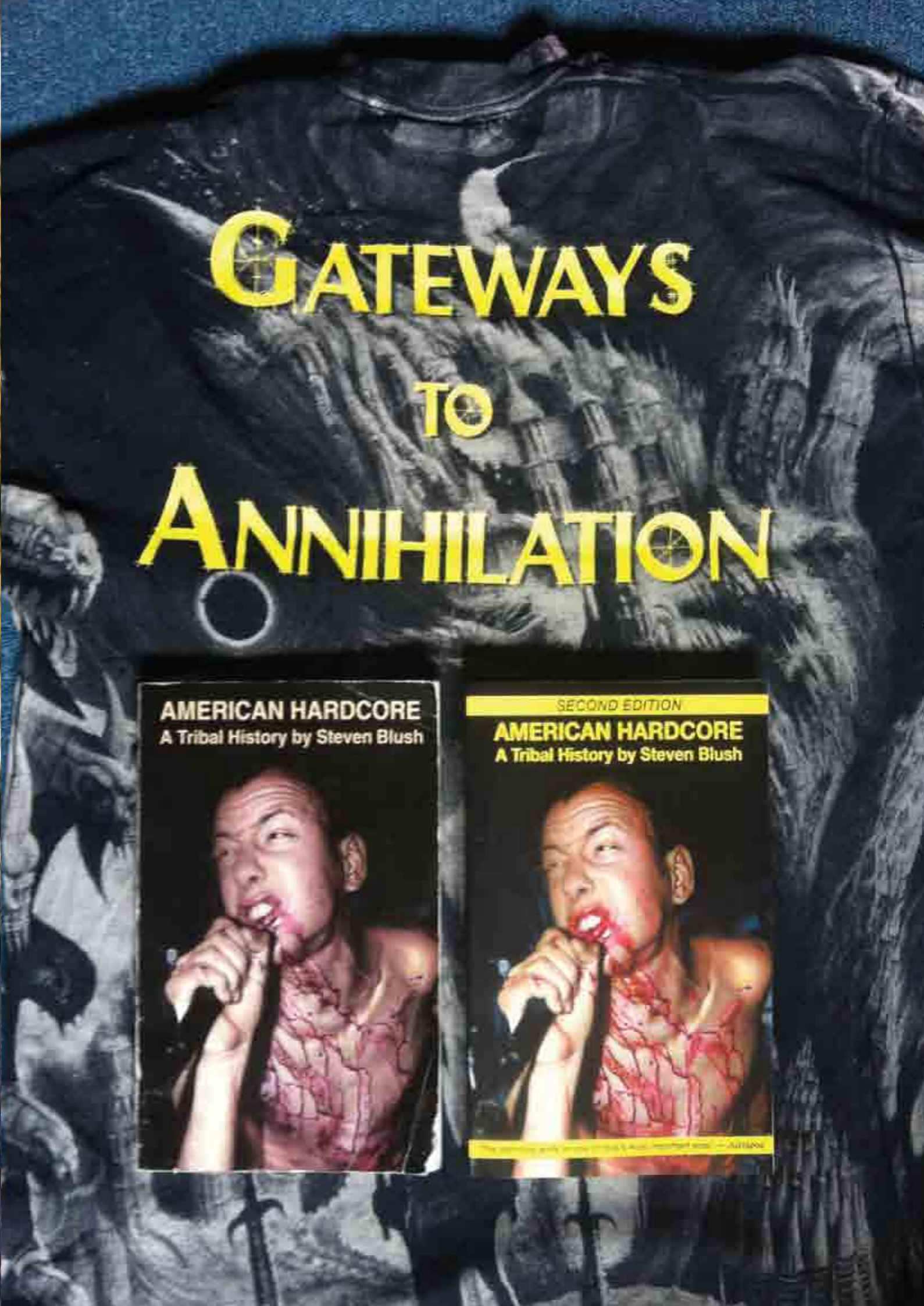


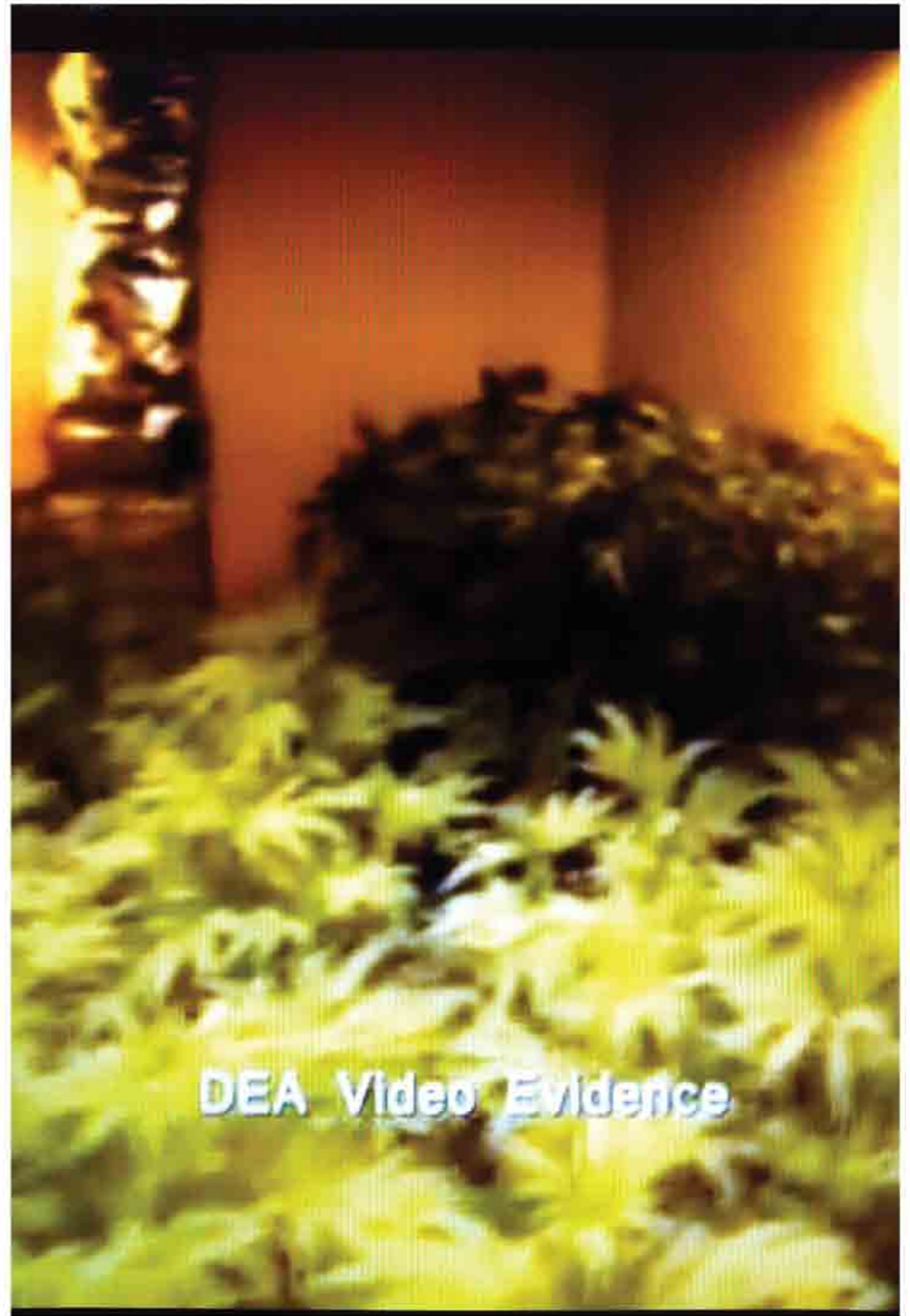
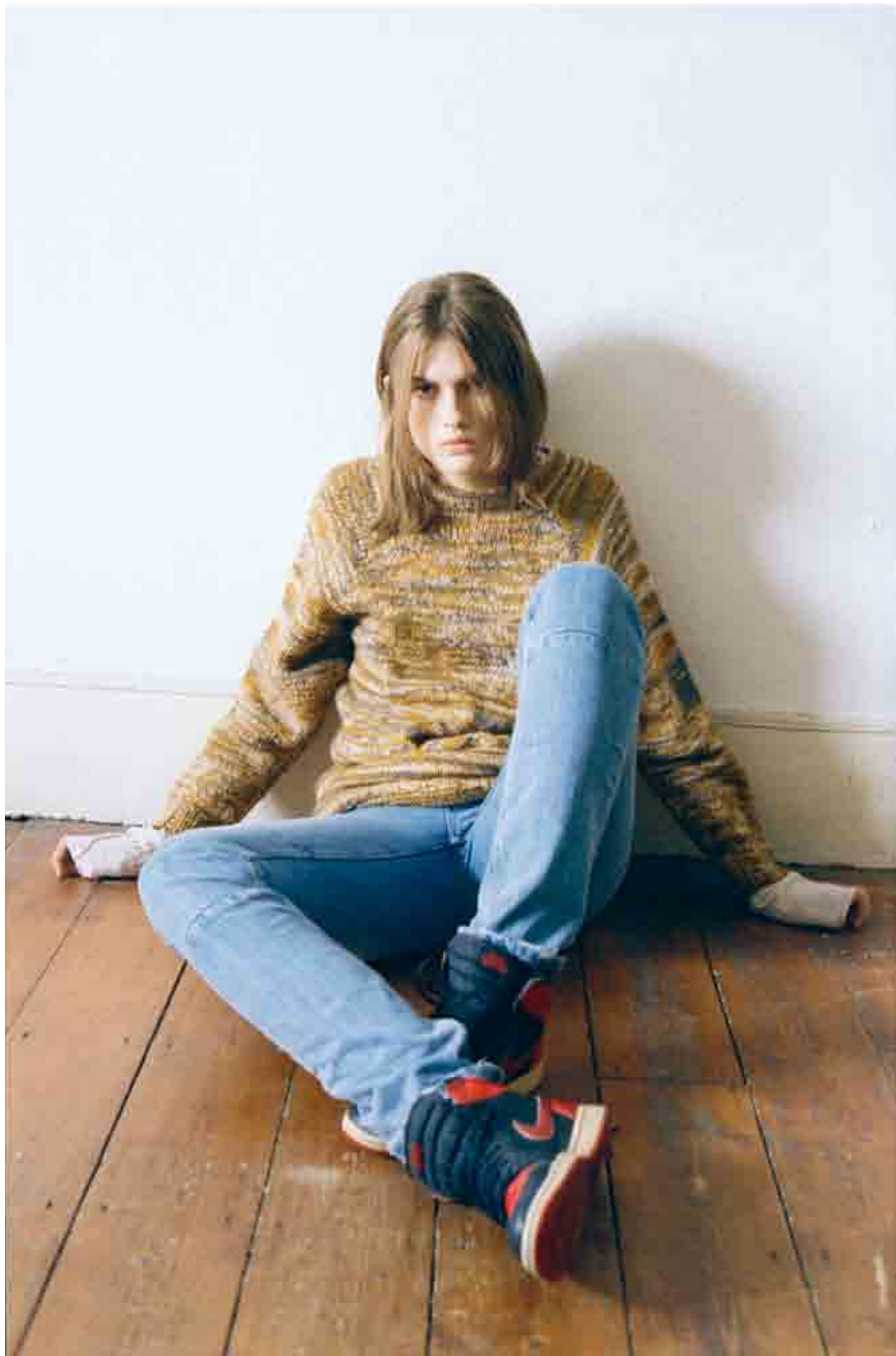




Bourgeois  
or  
Bizarre?









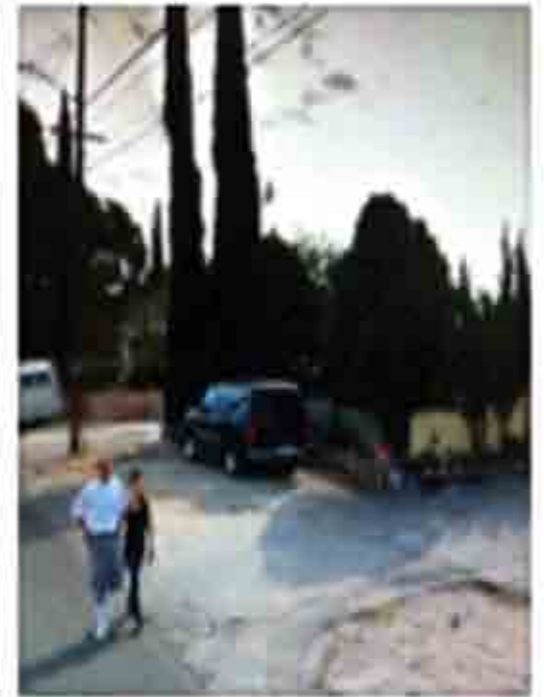
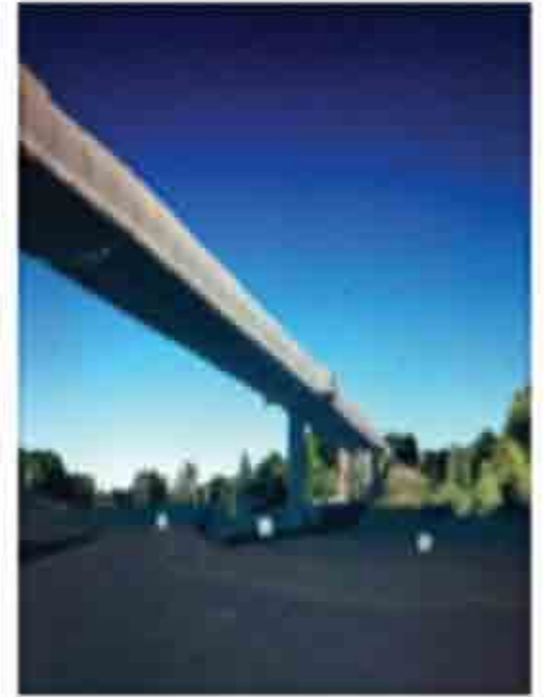
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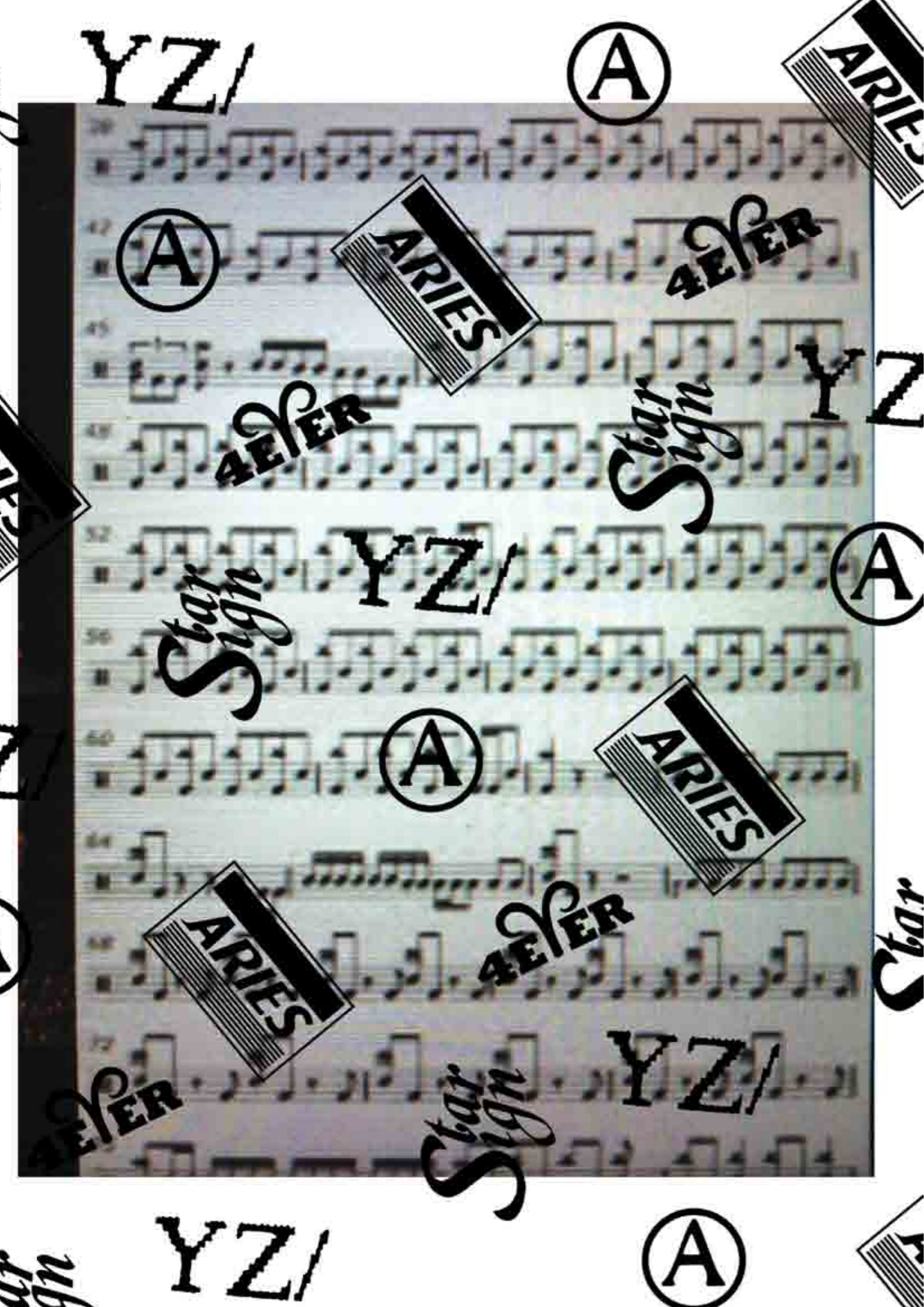








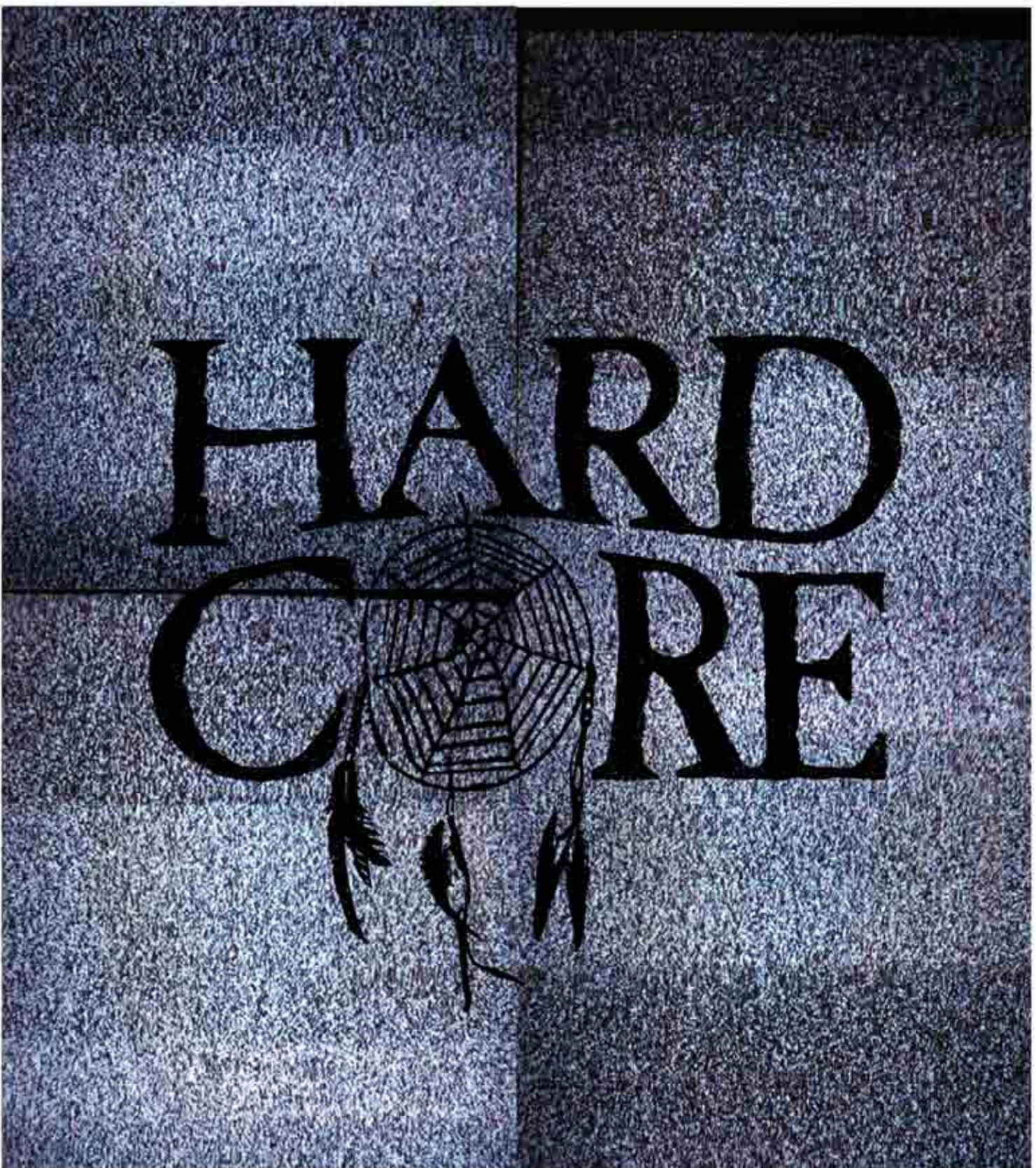












With the help of:

Clare Shilland - Michele Rafferty - Jane How - Alasdair McLellan - Ronald Dick - Milena Silvano - Kerry Shaw - Gilded Birds - Jeremy Abbott - Conny Pranter - Sarah Gregory - Selena Middleton - Giuliana Riccio - Kerri Davenport Burton - Natalie Moran - Lev Tanju - Paul Jonas - Alice Charity Goddard - Luisa Le Voguer Couyet - Mercedes Seccoomar - Isabel Mallet - Joni Kamen - India Rose James - Georgia Moot - Nancy Williams  
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