

FOOD *for thought*

As much as we (think) we know our great big, **beautiful world**, there's still so much to learn. There's nothing more powerful than ***sbaring*** and ***understanding*** different cultures, so I occasionally like to embark on a digital tour **AROUND THE WORLD**.

Text Isabelle Vander Heyde

Here's a selection of tastemakers, creatives, and activists I like to follow to broaden my horizons. Fair warning: because I'm a fashion journalist by day there may be a clothing brand or two in there. I'm also a very firm believer that ethical clothing is woven within the stories of people and cultures. With that said, be prepared to take a dive down the rabbit hole!

1 @orientalissima

Archivist, ethnologist, researcher, and model Valentine Valero documents everything from Middle Eastern witchcraft talismans, 70s girl bands in Western Java and tips on how to raise stick insects to Iranian feminists, strongminded fashion brands, decolonised poetry, sarcastic Barbie fiction, and Hong Kong crime movies, just to name a few things. This self-proclaimed cabinet of curiosities truly lives up to its name, as it will leave you more curious than ever about the world.

2 Google Arts & Culture

The risk of losing track of time whilst sourcing through Google Arts & Culture is exceptionally high. The platform strives to gather artworks and virtual renders of exhibitions from museums worldwide. The result being a bottomless pit of colours, shapes, and tales. The corresponding Instagram page isn't that satisfactory to be honest, but the website is. Whether you're after traditional Maori hairstyles and their significance, the folklore of the Crimea peninsula or the contemporary ballet scene in the Philippines, this is your go-to destination. (Fun fact: I randomly conducted a "*hedgehog*" search and ended up reading a story about ancient burial practices in Western Europe. It turns out bronze and stone hedgehogs were supposed to bring peace to the deceased... I don't know about you, but I love these little nuggets of unexpected knowledge.)



1 @orientalissima



3 @cheyennekanani



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I never really went along with the typical "*surf & aloha*" image of the Hawaiian Islands. Still, I could never have imagined the world of cultural beauty and heritage hidden behind the archipelago's touristy image. Kanani's feed translates myths and legends, speaks of ancestral kalo farming and paniolos (cattle drivers on horseback who would drive cows right into the sea, through the surf, and up to steamships!), of modern-day lifestyle, and raising children in a unique place that testifies both of nature's majesty and vulnerability.



2 Google Arts & Culture

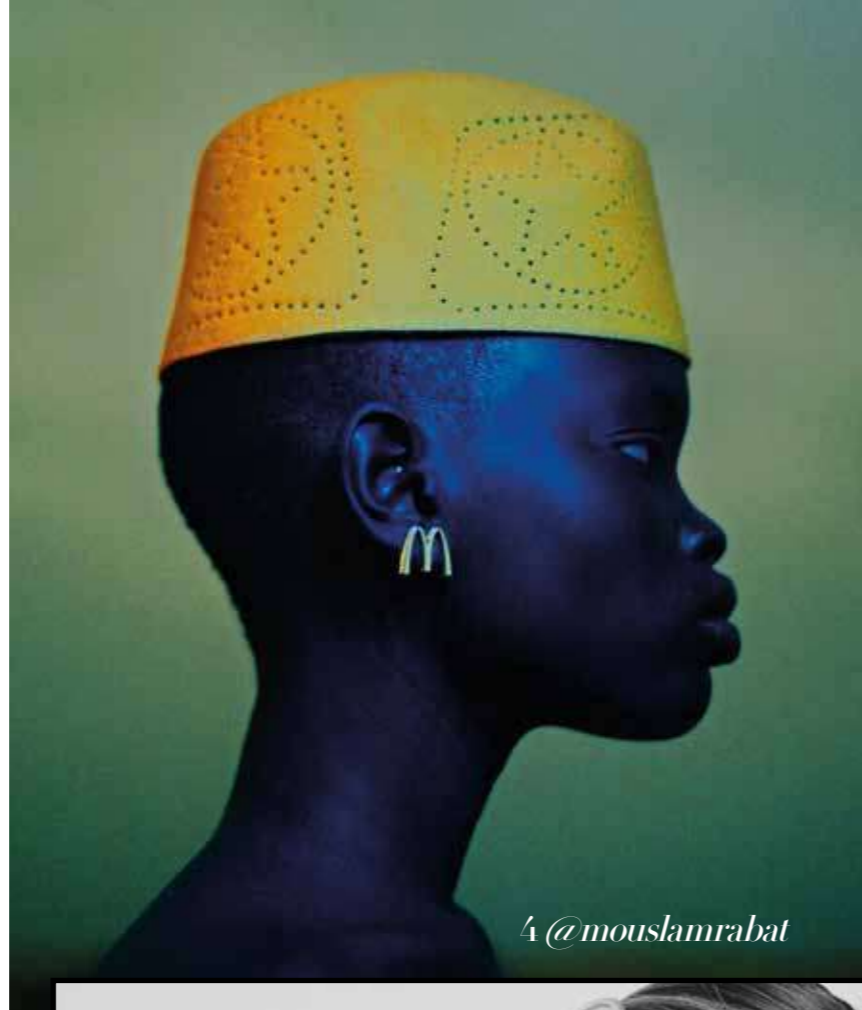


1 @orientalissima

Photos DR

4 @mouslamrabat

Mous Lamrabat's work is a celebration of cross-cultural identities. The Belgian-Moroccan photographer explores themes of belonging and identity through powerful portraits, using traditional symbols and humour to stir the conversation on racism, human rights, and religion. He likes to point his lens towards Morocco of course, but also journeys to diasporic communities in Brazil, Mexico, and India among others. The underlying message in his colourful pop pictures is to embrace your own identity no matter what it is or where it comes from.



4 @mouslamrabat

5 @rushemybotter

Another holiday cliché crushed to magnificent pieces. At Caribbean Couture brand Botter, Rushemy Botter and his partner Lisi Herrebrugh bring much more than just pretty (fabulous) clothing. They weave a tale of their combined heritage - Curacao and the Dominican Republic - and collaborate with interesting local profiles. Their combined work proves the Caribbean isn't just about crystal clear water and white sandy beaches. Through tongue-in-cheek imagery and ironic details, they tackle climate change and cultural misconceptions. In short, interesting to look at and even more so to overthink!



5 @rushemybotter

6 @Jeannedekroon

Aka the gateway, as over the years she has let me discover so many interesting individuals and organisations. Jeanne is a partner of the UN Ethical Fashion Initiative and runs the craft-oriented fashion project Zazi Vintage, which has her tour around the globe to connect with local creative communities in Tajikistan, Brazil, Afghanistan, India, and so on. She shares and documents every encounter, challenge, and piece of wisdom along the way, which leaves her followers with quite an extensive directory when it comes to conscious journeys and beholding the world with different eyes.



6 @Jeannedekroon



7 @marinatestino

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As director of strategic partnership at Earth Partner, Marina Testino leverages creativity to raise awareness, stir the conversation and inspire action on conscious fashion and consumerism. Whether she strips down completely in a sea of plastic, only wears thrifted yellow clothes for a month, or lends her platform to underexposed voices targeting the climate crisis, her work serves as a friendly reminder that change is possible and within our reach.

8 @norlha_atelier

Tibet has been on my radar forever, even though I haven't had the chance to visit yet. When the day finally comes, I'll keep all the knowledge from this account in mind. Norlha is the Tibetan Plateau's first yak khullu atelier based in the village of Ritoma, a nomad settlement comprising of 230 families, 6000 yaks and 20,000 sheep. All employees are members of nomad families who have spun, woven, and felted for generations. Besides bringing the world surprisingly modern designs, Norlha shares valuable facts and stories about traditional life in the Himalayas.



8 @marinatestino

9 @whereisthecool_magazine

Another excellent starting point for endless searches on the world wide web. Startling images of haenyeos (female Japanese pearl divers), telling paper aeroplanes collected in 1960s Manhattan, or even -be prepared- the very political uniforms worn by Lithuania's basketball team at the 1992 Olympics: Where Is The Cool doesn't need many words to put ideas into my head and get me scrolling, googling, and taking notes for hours.



9 @whereisthecool_magazine

10 @frederikbuyckx



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