

TOWN & COUNTRY

OCTOBER 2023



VENDETTA CHIC

Inside Capote's Battle Royale

STARRING SWANS DIANE LANE, DEMI MOORE, & CHLOË SEVIGNY

The New Creative ARISTOCRACY

Artificial intelligence is calling into question
 the legitimacy, and economics, of human ingenuity. The talent
 in these pages is keeping it regally, outrageously alive.

BY CARL SWANSON

How do you succeed as a young creative person today? How do you make it? What does it even mean to make it now?

The old models, pathways, and rules—some not even that old—have been scrambled and upended in the past few years, as the traditional gatekeepers and arbiters are replaced by the herky-jerky algorithmic democracy of social media. In place of the lowbrow-highbrow divide, we spend much of our lives immersed in one of several competing popular cultures—*Oppenheimer* vs. *Barbie*?—that demand that you pick sides to participate. The question is no longer so much whether you should sell out, but how to sell at all, and to whom.

For much of 2023 Hollywood has been on strike because of the fear that the suits, who always found the creatives the least reliable part of their business, would replace them with artificial intelligence, which presumably operates autonomously, like those creepily polite Waymo cabs scurrying about San Francisco. The studios—especially those owned by tech companies, which understandably have an ingrained sympathy for robots—would love it if ChatGPT could just rustle up a new script in the style of something that succeeded in the past at little or no cost. Maybe starring the digital avatars of actors who have been uploaded to the cloud without asking about their character’s motivation. *M3GAN*, but starring an all-CGI cast.

It’s not likely to stop there: The legitimacy,

or at least the economics, of human creativity itself is being called into question by AI and the math-nerd moguls who own and hype it even as they blithely warn us of its dystopian consequences. (What do they care? The drones will protect them, after all.) As OpenAI’s Sam Altman wrote in July on what used to be called Twitter, “everything ‘creative’ is a remix of things that happened in the past, plus epsilon and times the quality of the feedback loop and the number of iterations. People think they should maximize epsilon, but the trick is to maximize the other two.”

Is that the trick? To leave cultural innovation to hallucinating machines? Except all AI really does is try to fool us, predicting the next most likely thing based on having ingested massive quantities of what has come before. And yet, as the talent in these pages shows, it’s the unpredictable that moves the culture forward.

“You can’t manufacture cool,” says the Farrar, Straus and Giroux book editor Jackson Howard (see page 107), pointing to *100 Boyfriends*, the singularly outrageous book he nurtured and edited by the punk musician, performance artist, and author Brontez Purnell. Safety-pinned by Purnell’s candor and humor, the scrapbook of filthy freeform essays is in its fifth printing and was longlisted for a 2022 Mark Twain American Voice in Literature Award. “AI can’t find someone like that and unleash them on the world.”

It’s why Whitney Mallett (page 107) created the *Whitney Review of New Writing*: to give space to the daring, the smutty, the inimical,

and the frankly weird. “Everybody is so bored with the standardized voice of journalism that AI is good at” (or, one imagines, will be soon), she says. “Everybody wants to read a personality. All I wanted were strong voices.”

Taking things too far requires courage, though. Like when Jacolby Satterwhite (page 105) was asked to be the second artist ever to do a takeover of the Beaux-Arts Great Hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

When I get him on the phone, he’s been busy, having spent the day scanning Solange Knowles, who had to zip herself into a motion-capture suit so she could co-star in the multichannel video installation that will be on view at the museum this fall. She’ll join a digitized posse of his scanned pals, including the artist Raúl de Nieves and the musicians Serpentwithfeet and Moses Sumney, who will scamper around the hall’s walls (“each wall a different film genre”) and spiral up into the three domes. It wasn’t easy.

“I had to fight tooth and nail and turn into Azealia Banks,” he says, referring to the stunt-queen rapper. “All the bureaucracies are at war with each other.” AI, for Satterwhite and other artists, is just a tool to exploit; it’s interesting because it has such potential to create cultural mayhem. “AI is a scarier thing than climate change,” Satterwhite tells me, half-joking. But he doesn’t seem that stressed about it. Scott Rothkopf (page 107), the incoming Alice Pratt Brown Director of the Whitney Museum of Art, takes the long view. “Throughout history new technologies have threatened individual creativity,” such as ➤➤➤

WILLY SOMMA (LACEY); XAVIER SCOTT MARSHALL/COURTESY THE ARTIST AND MITCHELL-INNES & NASH NEW YORK (SATTEWHITE); CHRIS MCANDREW/CAMERA PRESS/REDUX (FERRARI); GETTY IMAGES (DAVIS, MAJOK, CARROZZINI, RIOS, DOMONT); TONIE THILSEN/REDUX (WOOD)



MAXIMILIAN DAVIS

Fashion designer making Ferragamo red hot again.



CATHERINE LACEY

If her *Biography of X* isn't the novel of the year, at least carrying it is the literary flex du jour.



SHIONA TURINI

Get in formation: She's the stylist behind Beyoncé's blockbuster Renaissance world tour.



MARTYNA MAJOK

Yalie playwright with Pulitzer for *Cost of Living* is adapting *The Great Gatsby* for Broadway.



JACOLBY SATTERWHITE

Artist provocateur taking over the Met's Great Hall with performance, video, and music.



BEE CARROZZINI

Fashion publishing scion with an eye for smart theater, including Tony-winning *Parade*.



PATSY FERRAN

After playing Blanche DuBois in the West End, she tackles Eliza Doolittle this fall.



ISSY WOOD

Painter who turned down Gagosian Gallery got Lena Dunham to direct her music video. Hari Nef stars.



MANU RIOS

Spanish heartthrob muse for Saint Laurent and Almodóvar. The next Antonio Banderas?



ADAM CHARLAP HYMAN & ANDRE HERRERO

Founders of namesake multihyphenate design/architecture firm out of NYC and L.A. that touches everything from opera sets and art galleries to luxury boutiques.



CHLOE DOMONT

Her debut feature film *Fair Play* sparked a bidding war at Sundance and lands on Netflix this month.

the invention of photography. Artists, he adds, will find “something interesting and optimistic by using these new tools.” Awol Erizku (page 107), for instance, uses AI to test ideas. “The robots are only as good as the prompt,” he says. In other words, in a world where the entire history of art and culture is available on the all-you-can-eat metaverse buffet, it takes an original thinker to scramble the prompts and break through—not code.

Consider Greta Gerwig, who brought a mumblecore auteur’s sensibility to Mattel and improbably humanized an inanimate symbol of American consumerism to the tune of \$1.34 billion, Warner Bros.’ highest-grossing movie ever. Meanwhile, *The Flash*, the studio’s focus-grouped-to-death attempt at a new four-quadrant franchise? Audiences shrugged. Who will follow in Gerwig’s footsteps? Or those of the late iconoclast William Friedkin, who cut through the crumbling studios in the 1970s, another moment of industry transition, to make such generation-defining films as *The Exorcist*? Perhaps it will be Chloe Domont (page 105), who got Netflix to cough up \$20 million for *Fair Play*, her sly update on an all but dead genre, the 1990s erotic thriller. Or Celine Song (page 109), whose *Past Lives* is a deeply felt adult romance in a pool of shallow superhero movies aimed at teenage boys.

Most of the people you see here are in their twenties and thirties, which means they grew up oblivious to a time when highfalutin tastemakers stingily meted out judgment or acclaim. Instead, they could choose to toy with the conventions of the establishment, or subvert them for their own purposes. It’s why a painter like the Brit Issy Wood (page 105) resisted the old-fashioned come-on of Larry Gagosian, the most powerful art dealer the world has ever known, to go her own way, plot with her own crew of bandits, and define success on her own terms. “I can do both,” she sings in a recent single. Even as corporate content types try to outsource originality—make it predictable and predictably profitable through a content echo chamber of automated Mad Libs, the truly eccentric can never be replicated—they’re the first of their kind. Or as Ice Spice (page 107), the rapper who remade “Barbie World” with Nicki Minaj this summer, put it in another single, “How can I lose if I’m already chose?” “You can’t create Ice Spice in a lab,” says Howard, the book editor. “That is something that came out of distinct human circumstances. Yes, *Barbie* is corporate. But it is a wink and a nod to all humanity, our secret habits.” **T&C**



The former president and CEO of United States Artists now works on Mellon Foundation initiatives supporting artists and cultural institutions.

Deana Haggag

PROGRAM OFFICER FOR ARTS AND CULTURE, MELLON FOUNDATION

“I think of Deana as the future. She’s so in tune with what the field needs and will immediately take action to figure out how to serve those needs. We’re living in a new world and have to come up with new ways to serve communities. Deana is visionary in doing that.”

—Sarah Arison, president, Arison Arts Foundation



Awol Erizku's show at Sean Kelly Gallery in New York, "Delirium of Agony," is on view through Oct. 21. *Mystic Parallax*, his first major monograph, is out now.

Awol Erizku, ARTIST

“Awol and I have been friends and collaborators for a decade. He is constantly pushing his ideas forward through photography, sculpture, painting, sound, and film in unexpected ways. This yearning to evolve has made his practice deeply engaged in the rich art and cultural histories of Black peoples throughout the African diaspora, and I am really appreciative of the way he has committed to acts of reclamation, making overlooked Black icons visible.”

—Antwaun Sargent, curator and director at Gagosian Gallery



Rising with Rothkopf are Marcela Guerrero, Drew Sawyer, and Meg Onli, co-curator with him on a 2026 Roy Lichtenstein centennial retrospective.

Scott Rothkopf WHITNEY MUSEUM DIRECTOR

“Besides being a ball of positive energy, Scott is a cultural savant. He knows where we’re going and who (along with him) is leading the charge. His own shows are illuminating, giving a deeper understanding of art we think we know. He is, in himself, an art treasure.”

—Brooke Garber Neidich,
Whitney trustee



◀ **ALEX ROTTER**
Christie's star sold \$922M in art this spring. •

COURTNEY WILLIS BLAIR Director at White Cube's first U.S. gallery, opening this fall. • **THEO BAKER** *Stanford Daily* reporter's exposé led to school prez's resignation. • **SARAH MEYOHAS** Artist's "Bitchcoin" was acquired by the Centre



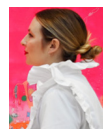
Pompidou. •
◀ **JESSICA GEORGE** Brit's debut novel, *Maame*, is

TV-bound. • **WHITNEY MALLETT** Co-edited an architectural survey of Barbie Dreamhouses—i.e., your next



coffee table flex. •
◀ **JACKSON HOWARD** Dynamo FSG editor's writers

include Catherine Lacey and Brontez Purnell. • **LIZ HOFFMAN** Former *WSJ* reporter turned must-subscribe



Semafor read. •
◀ **PAM EVELYN** Pace Gallery's youngest artist, at 27. • **TEDDY**

SCHLEIFER Who's afraid of Elon Musk? Not this Puck reporter. • **ALANA CASANOVA-BURGESS** "La Brega," her podcast about the Puerto Rican experience, is required listening. •



◀ **SHAUNTE GATES** The Louis Comfort Tiffany grant recipient's solo show closes

Oct. 28 at Sperone Westwater. • **BRANDON TAYLOR** Booker Prize finalist's sophomore novel, *The Late Americans*, is out now. •



◀ **ICE SPICE** Rapper entering peak era after Taylor Swift and Nicki Minaj collabs. •

KIARA NIRGHIN The Stanford grad won the Google Science fair at 16 and now has a CAA agent. • **ARAN BELL** *Piano Concerto No. 7* opens American Ballet Theatre's fall season. He's the one to watch.



Cailee Spaeny stars as Priscilla Presley in *Priscilla*, out Oct. 27. Next up: the *Alien* reboot.

Cailee Spaeny, ACTRESS

“Cailee has the quality of great actresses: You can’t take your eyes off her. I can’t wait for people to see her in *Priscilla*—and I’m curious to see her in *Alien*, which is so different from what we did.”

—Sofia Coppola, director of *Priscilla*



Alex Edelman’s one-man show, *Just for Us*, recently wrapped a lauded run on Broadway. Where will he go next?

Alex Edelman COMEDIAN

“Apparently, Alex asked comedians who came to the show to give him their notes. By the time I saw it, I didn’t have any for him. There wasn’t a false move. Is it standup or is it theater? It’s both, and ultimately it’s great storytelling. He has a big future.”

—Nathan Lane, actor

The long-awaited cultural hub at the World Trade Center site opened to the public on Sept. 19.

Khady Kamara EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PERELMAN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

“Khady has an outstanding track record of leadership in the performing arts, in both the nuts and bolts of management and the heart and soul of production. She’s the perfect person to lead the Perelman Performing Arts Center as we open its doors.”

—Michael Bloomberg, chair of the Perelman Performing Arts Center board of directors



COURTESY CHANEL (SPAENEY); STEVE EICHNER/SHUTTERSTOCK (EDELMAN); WASHINGTON POST VIA GETTY IMAGES (KAMARA)

Colman Domingo stars in the biopic *Rustin*, out Nov. 3, and a film adaptation of *The Color Purple* stage musical, out Dec. 25.



Colman Domingo

ACTOR, PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR, AND PRODUCER

“Colman has a sense of joy when working. He’s astonishingly charismatic and full of heart, and you cannot as an audience *not* look at him, listen to him, trust him, and become enthralled by him. He is good at what he does, and he has a light that shines from within.

In old-school terminology, he’s a star.”

—George C. Wolfe, director of *Rustin*



◀ **SAMMI CANNOLD** Whiz kid making Broadway directorial debut with *How to Dance in Ohio*. •

• **CHRISTOS NIKOU** The director’s latest, *Fingernails*, makes case for sci-fi rom-coms.

• **HONEY BALENCIAGA** Breakout backup dancer in Beyoncé’s summer tour. •



◀ **JACOB PADRON** Long Wharf Theatre artistic director staging *The Year of Magical Thinking*. •

• **CELINE SONG** *Past Lives*, her Sundance hit, was a master class in quiet power, onscreen and off. • **JACK SERIO**

Hailed for directing *Uncle Vanya* in a Manhattan loft. •



◀ **JULIE BENKO** *Funny Girl*’s favorite standby leads *Harmony* cast on Oct. 18. • **LUCY**

PREBBLE *Succession* writer followed the Roys with *The Effect* at London’s National Theatre. •



◀ **LUKE GILFORD** The fashion photog turned filmmaker hit it big at SXSW with

National Anthem. • **GORDON VON STEINER** Made the boys swoon with music video debut, Troye Sivan’s “Rush.” •



◀ **YUJA WANG** Pianist whose three-and-a-half-hour Rachmanoff marathon slayed

Carnegie Hall. • **DOMINIC SESSA** Alexander Payne’s latest discovery debuts in *The Holdovers* opposite Paul Giamatti. • **REBECCA FRECKNALL** West End phenom’s *Cabaret* starring Eddie Redmayne gets Broadway *willkommen* next spring. •



◀ **LAURA KUGEL** Deputy director at historic Parisian *antiquaires* Galerie Kugel, the sixth

generation in the family business. • **JAYLEN BROWN** Boston Celtic getting NBA rookies to invest in art.



◀ **SABATO DE SARNO** Casting Daria Werbowy as Gucci's new face before his runway debut? Bravissimo. •



◀ **RAUL LOPEZ** CFDA's Accessories Designer of the Year closed NYFW with label Luar. • **PETER DO** Minimalist New Yorker remaking Helmut Lang. •

TIBERIO LOBO-NAVIA, ROBERT WRIGHT U.S. duo taking Moroccan carpets DTC. •

COLIN KING He'll arrange their Beni rugs just so. •

LUDMILLA BALKIS Designer at Phoebe Philo's Céline turned ceramist with first NYC solo show at Roman and Williams's Guild Gallery. • **JASON McDONALD** Solange Knowles's go-to glass artist. •



◀ **LINA GHOTMEH** French-Lebanese architect's 2023 coups: Ateliers Hermès and Serpentine Pavilion, on view now. •

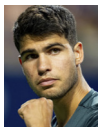
SOFIA ZEVI MIT alum's design gallery on Via Ciovasso is Milan's next Nilufar. •



◀ **LIANA SATENSTEIN** #Neverworns creator made rummage sales cool again, with Chloë Sevigny's help. •

DEVIN HALBAL Former Frick intern turned TikTokrat @hal.baddie is now repped by WME. • **QUIL LEMONS**

Speaking of Met Gala Behavior: Followed this year's class pic with fall solo show, "Quiladelphia," at Hannah Traore Gallery. • **HUNTER ABRAMS** Gen Z's Ron Galella. •



◀ **CARLOS ALCARAZ** Tennis star's latest grand slam: Louis Vuitton house ambassador. •

GIORGOS SAMOILIS President Obama's fave restaurateur in Sifnos, Greece. •



◀ **KWAME ONWUACHI** Chef behind NYC's toughest dinner rez, Tatiana. •



Frida Escobedo is also working on Dasha Zhukova's first residential real estate venture, Ray Harlem, set to be unveiled in 2024.

Frida Escobedo, ARCHITECT

“It’s no wonder why Frida recently landed her largest commission yet: the \$500 million renovation of the Met’s modern and contemporary galleries. Through her public-oriented, historically sensitive, and ecologically minded work, she has become one of the most quietly powerful architects on the planet. The museum is lucky to have her.”

—Spencer Bailey, T&C architecture & design contributing editor



Aimé Leon Dore's concept shop recently moved into its refurbished flagship and café at 224 Mulberry St.

Teddy Santis

FASHIÓN DESIGNER

“Teddy and I both grew up in New York. He embodies the city through and through, a Queens boy carrying the torch for homegrown fashion talent. His nostalgic, timeless pieces bring us back to Aimé Leon Dore season after season and make New York City style even more global.”

—Maxwell Osborne, designer and founder of *AnOnlyChild*



Omar Apollo's debut, *Ivory*, earned him a Grammy nomination for Best New Artist. His new EP, *Live for Me*, is out Oct. 6.

Omar Apollo

SINGER-SONGWRITER

“There are artists who eventually become cultural leaders through their sincerity. Omar did it with his first album. When I first heard his music, I was moved. He touches us with simple phrases and harmonies, but it's by baring his soul that he caresses ours.”

—Willy Chavarria, designer and founder of *Willy Chavarria*



Christina Najjar, aka Tinx, hosts SiriusXM's *It's Me, Tinx Live*, and published the best-selling book *The Shift*.

Tinx

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CREATOR

“A cunning social anthropologist, Tinx is brilliant at translating societal norms and associative attributes into witty comedy.”

—Gwyneth Paltrow, founder of *Goop*