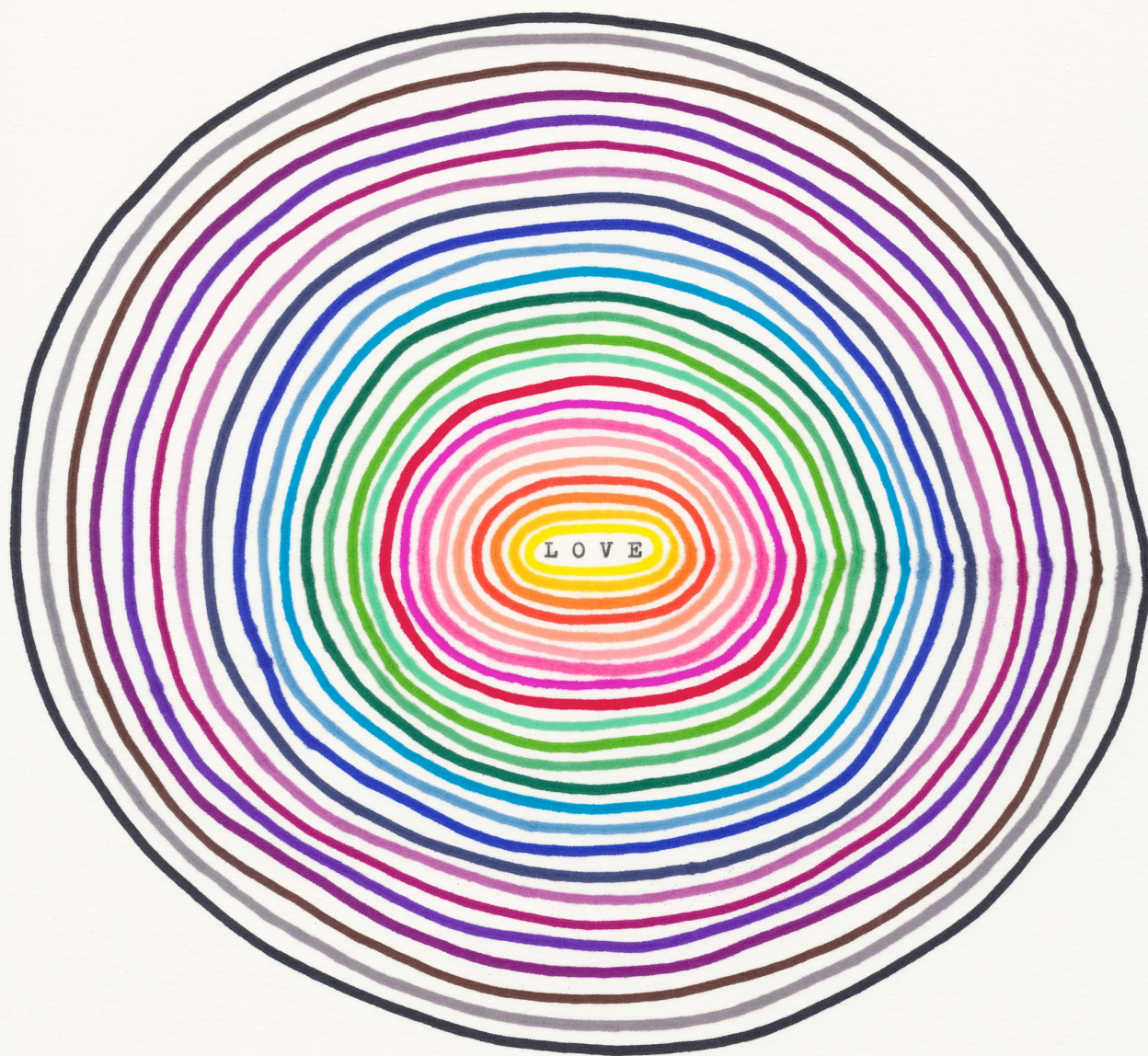


FREE FASHION TRAVEL PEOPLE IDEAS BEAUTY

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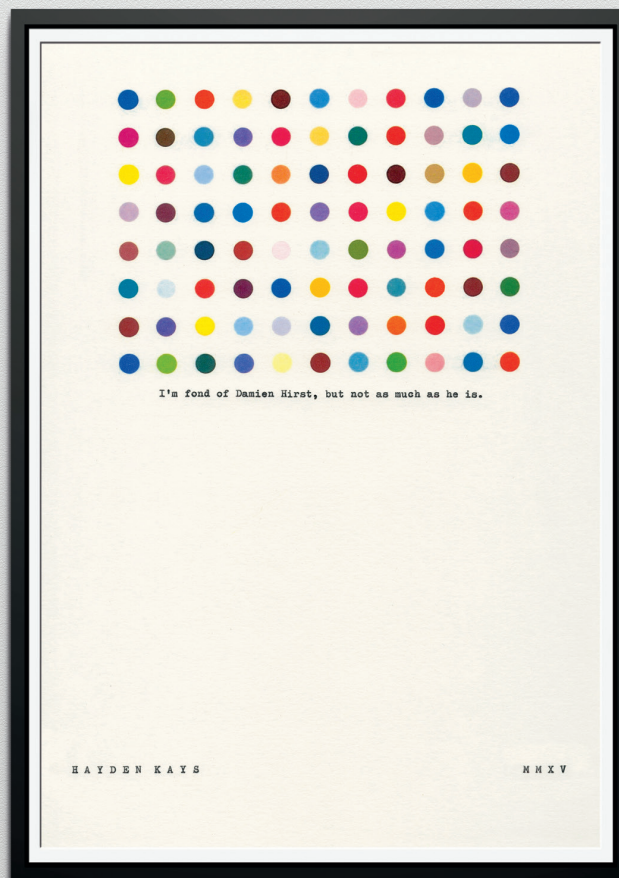
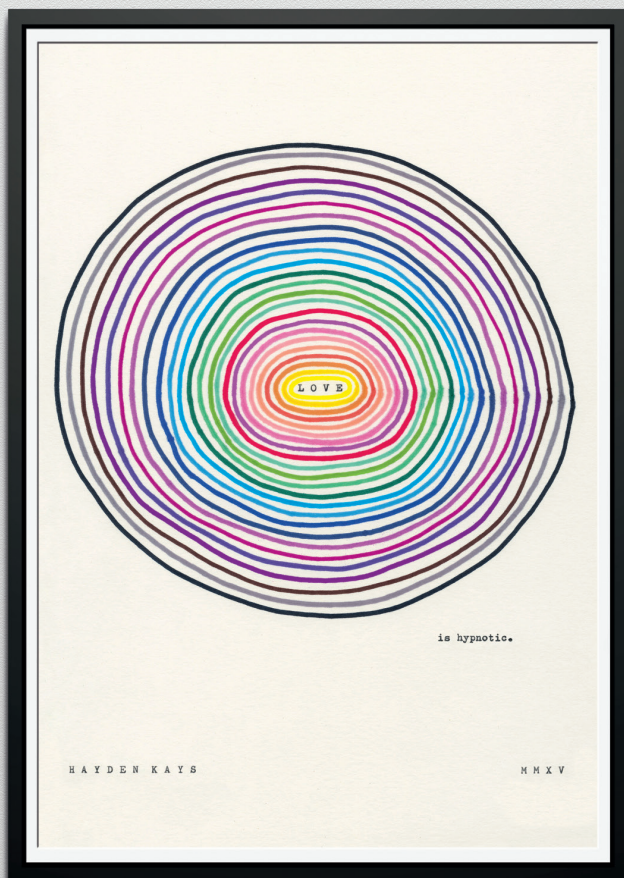
ARABIA

ISSUE 29
5 MAY 2015
STYLISTARABIA.COM



is hypnotic.

When Stylist met (and fell for) artist Hayden Kays



THIS MAN'S ART WILL HYPNOTISE YOU

Banksy, Andy Warhol, Damien Hirst: please move over. *Stylist's* editor Devinder Bains meets Hayden Kays, the man who's giving them all a run for their money

ARTWORK: HAYDEN KAYS PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK FIELD

Damn, I just missed Jarvis! That's pretty much my first words when I meet the rather lovely Hayden Kays at his studio at the Cob Gallery in Camden, London. He's telling me about indie legend Jarvis Cocker, who popped into the gallery where Hayden's showcasing his *The Top Ten* exhibition, before it

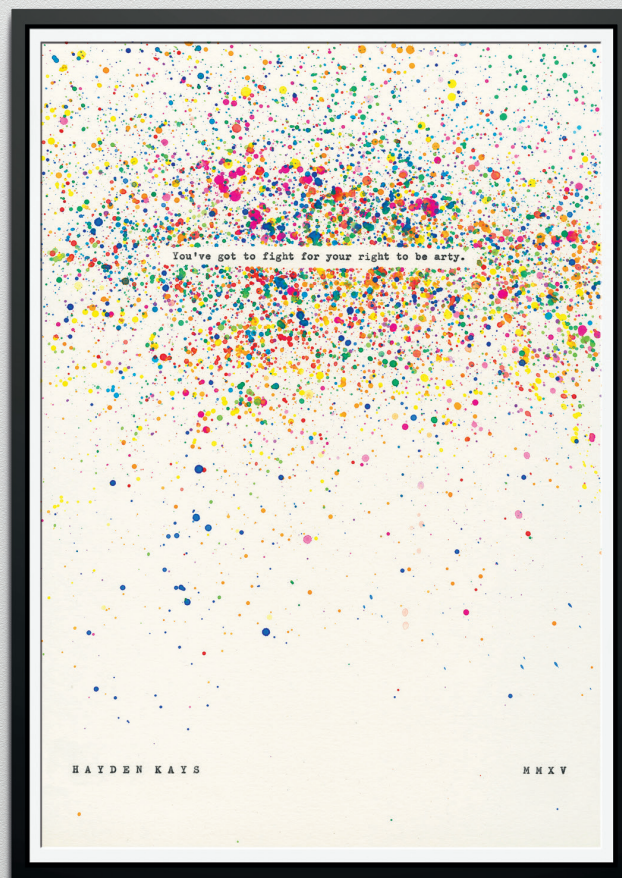
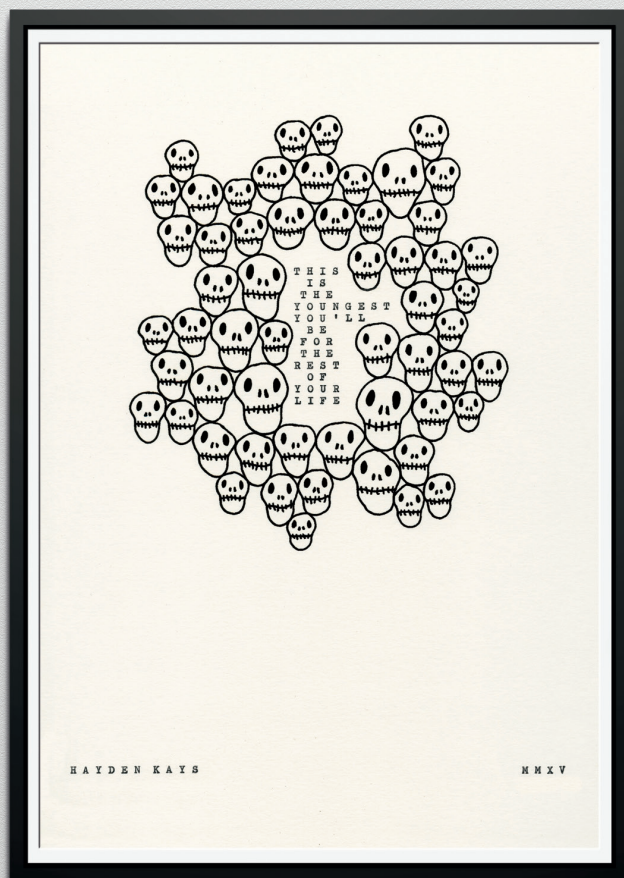
closes and heads to Dubai.

I'll be honest, I like famous names. Which is just as well, because, if pushed, Hayden, 29, has quite a few to offer. The long list of celebs who collect his work include Jude Law, Matt Smith, Douglas Booth, Noel Fielding, Billie Piper, Chris Martin and Lily James. When One Direction's Harry Styles bought 20 pieces, it made

headlines all over the UK. When our interview is over, Hayden and his agent are heading to Sharleen Spiteri's house to drop off a sculpture she's just purchased. Um, can I come?

So what's the fascination? What made art luminary Jake Chapman want to swap work with Hayden, and made rock band The Kooks ask him to design the artwork for their

latest album and single. Well, for me (yes, I'm a big fan), it's the juxtaposition of witty words (written on a typewriter) and powerful imagery. I like writers who test my brain with their words and art that is beautiful or provocative. Hayden merges all these elements in perfect unison. So, ahead of his visit to Dubai, I caught up with him to find out what he's all about...



How did you know you wanted to be an artist? From an early age I knew I wanted to make things for the rest of my life. To be an artist you've got to be possessed; you don't decide to be an artist, it can't be forced. Either you are or you aren't.

You're always referred to as a 'pop artist'. Is this an accurate description? My work is certainly becoming more popular. I don't think I can be labelled as a particular type of artist yet, I'm only 29. Label me when I'm dead.

How would you describe your work? Critic Daniel Barnes once described me as 'classically trained but ruthlessly contemporary'. I'm only concerned with being now, being new and being me.

Is controversial a fair word? People call me controversial when they don't want to confront the honesty in my work. Give me a newspaper and I'll show you a hundred more

controversial things than me.

Tell us about the typewriter. I remember hearing as a child that every typewriter is unique and has a 'personality'. Police are able to identify when a particular typewriter has been used. The strength of the punch, font, the ink, the placing of each letter, everything about them is

“PEOPLE CALL ME CONTROVERSIAL WHEN THEY DON'T WANT TO CONFRONT THE HONESTY IN MY WORK”

particular - I love the idea that my work may be analysed in the future to identify whether or not it is authentic.

How do you think your work will be received in a more reserved place like Dubai? I think it will be received extremely well. Dubai is world famous for its style, elegance and good taste.

Have you had to be selective about which pieces you're

going to bring? I've never wanted to upset people with my work. I liken it to joke telling and knowing your audience. I wouldn't dream of telling the same joke in a meeting that I've told at a dinner party.

Where do you get your inspiration from? I'm never off. Being an artist, my brain is

constantly churning information and ideas around.

Why should we buy your art? You shouldn't buy my art, you should invest in it.

Are you planning to create any special pieces to exhibit in Dubai? I will be producing a collection of unique hand embellished artworks that will only be available in Dubai.

Have you faced much

negativity about your work?

I get loads of awful messages about my work, but I've also sold work all over the world. I choose not to focus on either.

What's the best compliment you could get? I'm very British when it comes to compliments.

Who are the artists that inspired you? Growing up I particularly loved British and American art. Growing up in London with the YBAs dominating was excellent for my confidence, they confirmed living as an artist was a viable existence. Banksy is consistently creating excellent ideas, I'm always eager to see what's next.

You recently did an art swap with Jake Chapman. What did you take of his, what did he take of yours? We've done a couple of art swaps in the past, but this swap was for one of my sculptures, *This Is Not A Brillo Box*. I got from him a wonderful artist proof print and a little crucified Ronald McDonald. ➡

HAYDEN KAYS AT THE
COB GALLERY IN LONDON



Who would be your dream artist to do an art swap with? Dead or alive?

Walt Disney, his extraordinary vision blows my mind.

You're part of Stylist Talks on accessible art – what makes your art accessible? My art is accessible because I'm alive and producing, and I have artwork

“A LOT OF MY ART IS ABOUT WOMEN, BECAUSE A LOT OF MY ART IS ABOUT LOVE. I'VE LOVED AND LOVE WOMEN”

available to buy. Some more established artists won't have available work. The artworks I'm exhibiting in Dubai are limited edition, signed and numbered Giclée prints on Hahnemuhle German etching paper. The editions will be very small and I will also be including a few entirely unique hand embellished artworks, available at the event.

What should people buy? Something they like.

Why are people obsessed with making money from art? Because there is a lot of money

to be made from the correct investments.

What would be your advice to any budding artists? Don't even bother unless you're possessed.

Do you have a favourite piece of art? The caveman that scratched the very beginning of

human history onto his wall.

What are you hoping to get from Dubai? A tan. I also want to meet people that enjoy my work, I want my work to be globally recognisable.

What can people expect from the exhibition? Humour, beauty, romance, love and art.

Any interesting anecdotes of celebs who have bought your work? Harry Styles has purchased several pieces from *The Top Ten* exhibition which was great, it gave me an entirely

new audience for my work.

How important is it to have celebrity fans? It depends on what sort of artist you want to be. If you want people to know your work, having famous collectors of course helps.

What's the life of an artist like? Again, it depends on what sort of artist you want to be. I imagine my life is very different from that of a watercolour artist painting landscapes. I live in a capital city, my art and lifestyle reflects that.

What's the most important thing for an artist? For me it's longevity, I want to be creating art my entire life.

What is the role of women in your artwork? I'm the youngest of four siblings and I spent my formative years playing with and being cared for by the older sisters and my mother. A lot of my art is about women, because a lot of my art is about love. I've loved and love women.



STYLIST
talks

NOW, MEET HAYDEN...

He's heading to Dubai especially for our Stylist Talks session

Want to see Hayden in the flesh, check out his artwork and hear more of what he has to say? Well, here's your chance. Be part of our second *Stylist Talks* event on 13 May at Tribeca Bar and Kitchen in JBR. The subject is 'Your Guide to Accessible Art', and Hayden Kays will be joined by speakers from Meem Gallery, Drawdeck and Dubai-based artist Dina Saadi. They'll all be filling you in on



everything you need to know about buying art in and outside the region. For a chance to win one of ten pairs of tickets for the invite-only event at Tribeca, email us at stylistarabia@appgulf.com with 'Stylist Talks Art' in the subject line. Ten winners will be chosen at random on 10 May 2015.