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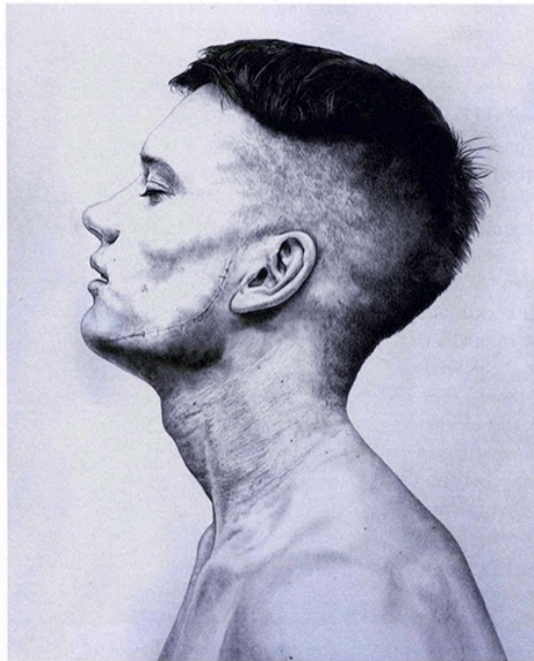


THE KID

PLATEA MAGAZINE, Summer 2016

PARIS-BASED ARTIST THE KID'S WORK DEPICTS SOCIAL DETERMINISM AND THE THIN FRONTIER BETWEEN INNOCENCE AND CORRUPTION.

Text by CHIARA PADOVAN



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ruises, scratches, tattoos, Band-Aids, and a recurrent US flag. This is no skater flick. Visiting The Kid's atelier feels like a primal scream on loop. As London celebrates 40 years of punk, in Paris we sit down with a young artist who is just as focused, eloquent, and cultivated, as he is political. The distressed jeans and street appeal make him nothing less poised; he assures us that all this – the large paintings, the drawings, and the larger-than-life statue, a modern pietà featuring a young skater dying on a lion – is truly his own way of breaking eggs, rather than creating a perfect omelet. The Kid is self-educated, but he must have also been demanding of himself. "I don't

like things that come easy" he says – and it shows. His works are both complex in detail and yet thoughtfully reduced to the essentials. He spent months preparing for his solo show at Paris Art Fair last April, where he presented not just new oeuvres, but a new technique as well, a mix of oil and egg tempera inspired by Caravaggio. Across one of the paintings, the title of the exhibition screams in bold red letters: "I go alone". The Kid's story is one of a kind: raised in the Netherlands, constantly struggling with the structures set around him, he left in his teens to travel the world. He ended up living in the United States for a longer period of time, doing multiple jobs

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PHOTOGRAPHED by THOMAS SING
Paris, 27th February 2016

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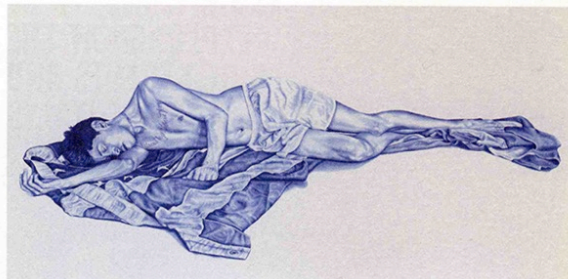
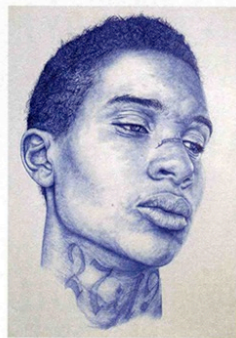
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You can see a selection of his works on The Kid's website (www.thekid.fr) or through his gallery: Gallery Alb Anouk le Bourdieu, 47 Rue Chapon, Paris, www.galeriealb.com



to survive. It felt like home at first, but with time he came to realize that the American dream is, in fact, pretty broken nowadays, "especially for those born unprivileged".

And unprivileged are the faces carrying The Kid's vision into the world now. Putting the marginalized front and centre is nothing really new in the arts. And yet this time, they are not disguised as saints or virgins like in Caravaggio's work. They carry the marks of their social environment blatantly on their skin like a manifesto of our times. They are young, wild and beautiful – the way Pasolini's borgatari were – but here, they are taken out of their habitat and singled out "in their defining moment, forever caught between innocence and corruption." Floating on white screens they become symbols. There is no dramatic lighting, no heavy shadow. And yet, there is nothing peaceful either. The hyperreality is at once beautiful and violent. Just like the portrayed youth, in all the light we are left with nowhere to hide, face to face with the darkness within.

"Every time I work on a new exhibition, I want to create an immersive experience that triggers emotions and provokes reflections," he says. Although he quotes Oscar Wilde as early inspiration, this is no art pour l'art and by no means just a bohemian exercise in subculture aesthetics. "I want to question the audience about social determinism, the equality of chances and the fading lines between right and wrong in our modern societies." Unsurprisingly, The Kid is a supporter of Human Rights Watch; striking both the man in the streets and the most seasoned collector with his work, he has also found a way of giving back. For "art should be for everyone, just like education and freedom!"