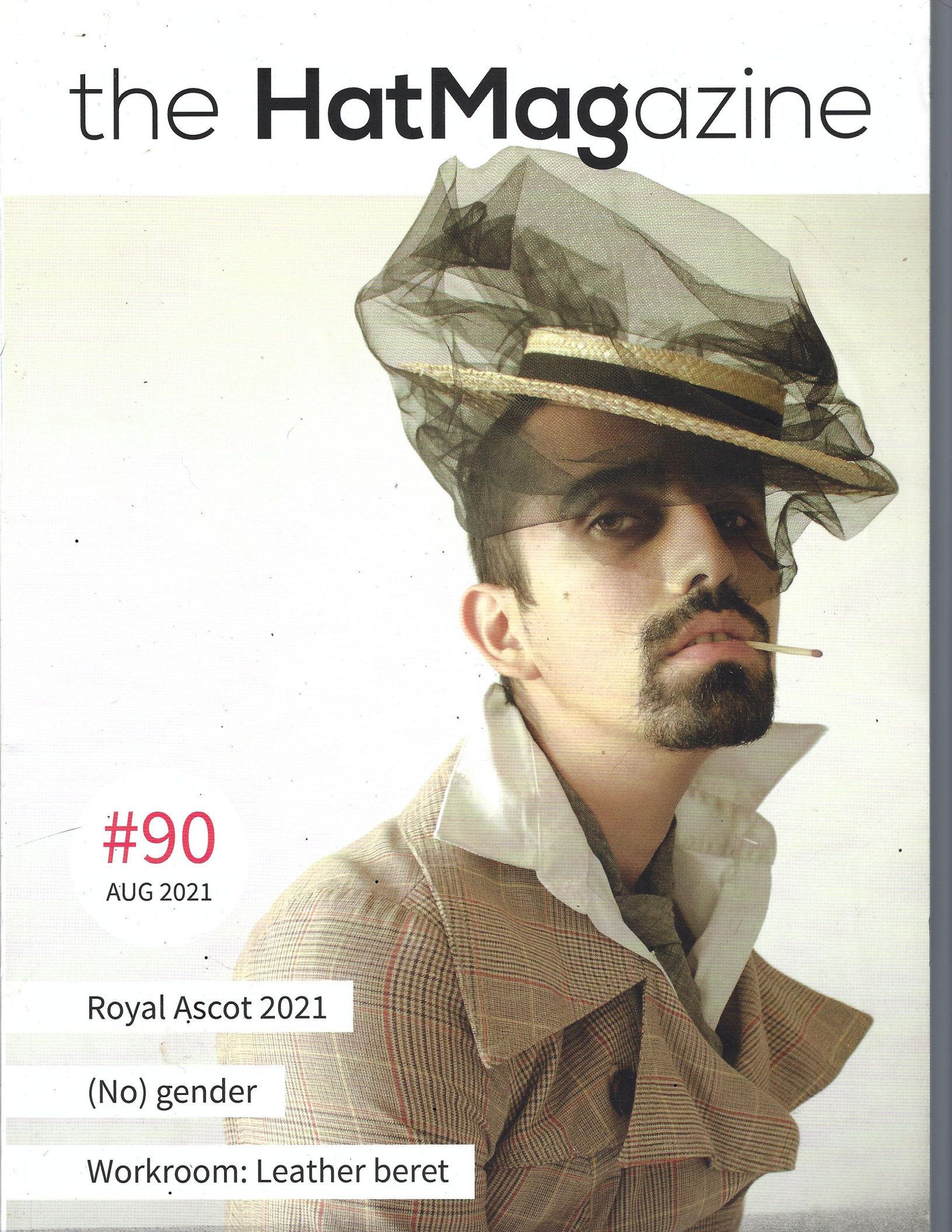


the HatMagazine



#90

AUG 2021

Royal Ascot 2021

(No) gender

Workroom: Leather beret

Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT)

227 W 27th St, New York, USA
www.fitny.edu

FIT, a State University of New York, is internationally recognised for its educational programme in design, fashion, art, communications and business. The college offers a set of millinery courses spread over a four-semester time span.

Melanie Koch

Melanie has maintained a lifelong passion for refined ostentation. Through a 20-year successful career in book publishing, she found she needed to add more sparkle. So, having never before picked up a needle, she dove headfirst into a fresh new path of learning and completed the Millinery Certificate programme at FIT this spring. Later this year, Melanie plans to launch her label MCK Millinery (mckmillinery.com).



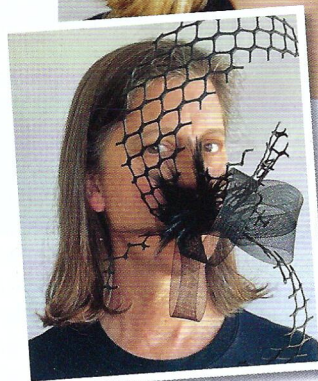
Photo: James Prinz

For her final collection, Melanie combined her personal interests in dark romantic fashion, nature's beauty, and the celestial. Entitled 'Saturnine Glamour', the collection offers a line of velour felts shaped with a 3D-printed block she designed with printer and hat toolmaker Randal Alan, a standard blocked felt overlayed in lace, and a series of large-framed buckram headbands in quilted fabrics, velvet and leather. The collection is tied together with adornments of mother of pearl, a shell she has always been drawn to for its transformative, glistening properties.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

36 S. Wabash Ave, Chicago, USA
www.saic.edu/about#saic

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) teaches art and design to undergraduate as well as postgraduate students. SAIC's Department of Fashion Design offers a programme which includes advanced-level millinery courses, and offers access to the school's much-prized Fashion Resource Center.



Allison Pasquesi

As part of her Bachelor of Fine Arts programme at SAIC,

Allison studied Sculptural Headwear and Advanced Millinery. "I returned to art school later in life after living many other roles. A sculpture student and a lifelong sewer and maker, I hunted around in the course catalogue and gave in to the urge to check out the fashion department. The word "sculptural" may have grabbed me, but also, I had increasingly been making performative wearable sculpture for the body. I studied dance in college in the '80s. The body and movement are never far from my thinking."

How does Allison's knowledge and learning inform the creation of her headwear? "Much of my work is driven by social criticism, snarky commentary or revealing the unseen self. A form of truth-telling about personal struggle, fashion and wearables become an exoskeleton: the truth leaks out. Maybe it's better that way. Combining that urge with beautiful materials and details in the role of adornment is a ridiculously fun challenge... And I do love alternative materials for their ability to contribute commentary."