

MILIEU



Welcome to Milieu,

Milieu marks the second instalment of what I'm calling a trilogy and, if you've been paying attention, you'll notice the titles are all 'En Français'. But hey, don't read too deeply into that - it's just a little playful tease for now. Trust me, it'll all make sense once we hit box set 3.

Similar to Début, this box set features 8 of my own artworks, split in half, with the second half reimagined in the style of artists who hold significance either historically or personally.

I've really pushed the envelope with this collection, tackling artists I felt too daunting to include in earlier editions. But you know what? Embracing that fear has led to even bolder interpretations and a collection that's, dare I say, stronger overall.

Oh, and did I mention turquoise and teal are two of my absolute favourite colours?

Just a little bonus for you.

Cheers!

FinDe



Luoro Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024



Jean-Michel Basquiat (December 22, 1960 - August 12, 1988) was a trailblazing American artist whose meteoric rise from the graffiti-covered streets of New York City to the international art scene defined the Neo-expressionist movement. Drawing inspiration from diverse sources such as African art, jazz, and street culture, Basquiat's paintings are characterised by bold colours, frenetic lines, and enigmatic symbols. His tragically short but prolific career not only addressed socio-political themes but also challenged the boundaries of the art world, making him a symbol of artistic freedom and cultural rebellion.

Self-Portrait, 1984

Acrylic and oil stick on paper mounted on canvas, 100 x 70 cm
Yoav Harlap Collection. © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat/
Licensed by Artstar, New York

Untitled, 1982

Acrylic, spray paint and oilstick on canvas, 183.2 cm x 173 cm
Private collection

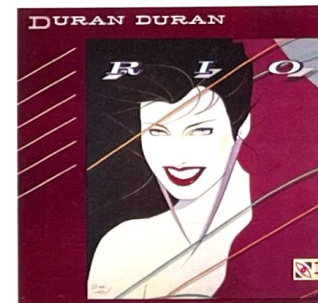
Basquiat stands as a key influence for a vast array of graffiti and street artists, myself included. His journey, from early street tagging and poetry to his impactful explosion onto the contemporary art scene of 1980s New York, solidified him as the quintessential 'cool artist'.

While Basquiat was always on the to-do list for the **Redux/HomEage** project, I initially hesitated, grappling with how to harmonise his raw, gestural style with my own more controlled portraiture. However, as this project has evolved, I've found myself increasingly at ease with embracing artists whose work starkly contrasts my own or is entirely unfamiliar.

Paradoxically, navigating these Redux interpretations has bolstered my confidence in pushing my own work into exciting and uncharted territories.



Sonyeo Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024



Lady in Blue, 1990

Acrylic on canvas

Duran Duran: Rio, 1982

EMI Records, studio album cover

Patrick Nagel (November 25, 1945 - February 4, 1984) was an American artist and illustrator known for his iconic and stylised depictions of glamorous women. A prominent figure in the 1980s pop art and new wave movements, Nagel's work often featured bold lines, minimalistic compositions, and a distinctive use of flat, vivid colours. Best known for his collaboration with the band Duran Duran on the cover of their album "Rio," Nagel's sleek and fashionable aesthetic became synonymous with the visual culture of the era.

Growing up in the 80s, Nagel's art was everywhere - it was practically woven into the fabric of the era.

An artist who defined the times, his creations adorned music album covers, singles, and even found their way into the pages of Playboy Magazine. It was a no-brainer that he'd be one of the first artists I paid **HomeEdge** to; the impact of his 'in-your-face women with big elaborate hair' on my work is undeniable, and he rightfully earned a spot in my inaugural batch of Redux artworks in 2020.

If I consider that I portray women in a bold and distinctive way, Nagel is a major reason for that, standing alongside influences like Beardsley and Mucha.

That my work would become as synonymous with a certain time and place as theirs did? Well... that would be the dream.



Quansho Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024

Julian Opie (October 11, 1958 -) is a contemporary British artist renowned for his distinctive approach to portraiture and urban landscapes. Embracing a minimalist and stylised aesthetic, Opie's work often features bold black outlines, flat colours, and simplified forms reminiscent of digital graphics. A leading figure in the New British Sculpture movement, Opie's visually striking and accessible art blurs the boundaries between traditional and contemporary artistic mediums, creating a unique dialogue between fine art and popular culture.



Blur: The Best Of, album cover, 2000

Top left: Graham, guitarist

Chromogenic print on paper laid on panel, 86.8 x 75.8 cm

Top right: Alex, bassist

Chromogenic print on paper laid on panel, 86.8 x 75.8 cm

Bottom left: Damon, singer

Chromogenic print on paper laid on panel, 86.8 x 75.8 cm

Bottom right: Dave, drummer

Chromogenic print on paper laid on panel, 86.8 x 75.8 cm

National Portrait Gallery, London

Ann Blinking, 2007

Continuous computer animation on 46in LCD screen,

110.5 x 66 x 11.5cm. Private collection

Opie was one of the artists featured in the first four Redux images I created during the initial COVID-19 lockdown in 2020.

My introduction to his work happened through my love for music, specifically his striking cover for the British band Blur - an artwork that I later got to appreciate up close at the National Portrait Gallery in London.

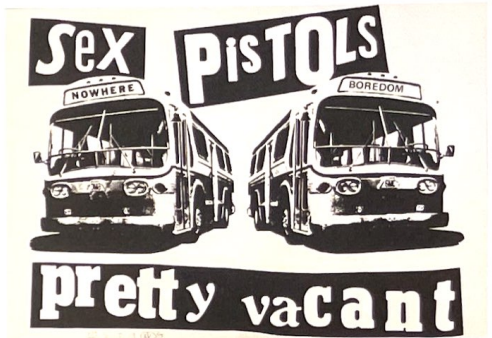
What I love about Opie's work is that even though it looks deceptively simple, there's an emotional undercurrent in his pieces, a characteristic that I find both intriguing and challenging. It's like the hidden gem of straightforward brilliance: nuanced simplicity.

The ability to convey so much with seemingly so little is what makes Opie's work a compelling influence on my own artistic expression.



Child Of Seditonaries 1 Redux, Millieu boxset, 2024

SEX PISTOLS



The Sex Pistols logo, 1977

Sex Pistols: Pretty Vacant (black & white colourway), 2007
Screenprint, 73.5 x 101.5 cm

Jamie Reid (January 16, 1947 - August 8, 2023) is a British artist recognised for his ground-breaking work within the punk rock movement. Best known for his iconic collaborations with the Sex Pistols during the late 1970s, Reid's visual style combines cut-and-paste collage techniques with bold typography, creating a visual language that perfectly encapsulates the rebellious and anarchic spirit of punk. Through his innovative approach to graphic design, Reid not only shaped the aesthetics of punk rock but also became a key figure in the larger realm of countercultural art.

Reid's graphics are punk's unofficial logo, akin to the sartorial imprint of Dame Vivienne Westwood on the same scene. Those who follow my work are possibly aware of my numerous art pieces which serve as a fusion of these two influential creative forces: intricate garments presented with a graphic flair.

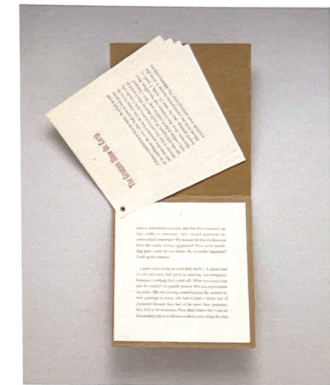
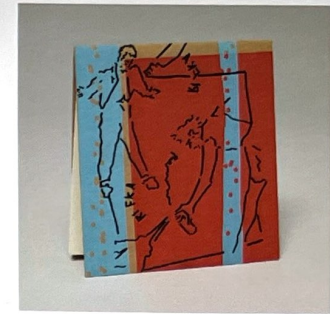
After Reid's passing in 2023, I omitted him from the list of potential inclusions. However, my business partner astutely pointed out that my artwork "Child Of Seditonaries", which depicts a garment inspired by the now also deceased Westwood, could serve as an **HomeEdge** and a poignant tribute to both of these giants of British design.

Reflecting on this now, I'm grateful for the change of perspective.





Sansho Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024



Judy Rifka (September 25, 1945 -) is an American artist associated with the Neo-Geo movement in the 1980s. Known for her dynamic and multidisciplinary approach, Rifka's work often incorporates geometric forms, vibrant colours, and a blend of abstraction and figuration. A pioneer in the fusion of digital technology with traditional art, Rifka's diverse body of work, including paintings, drawings, and digital art, reflects her commitment to pushing artistic boundaries and exploring the intersection of technology and visual expression.

The Greatest Show on Earth (cover), 1982

Illustration for show catalogue, essay written by Rene Ricard for The Judy Rifka Show, 19.69 cm x 21.91 x 0.32 cm
Publisher: Brooke Alexander, Inc.,
offset lithograph on paper, cardboard, metal

The Greatest Show on Earth (inner), 1982

Rifka, part of the second batch of Redux artworks from 2022 spotlighting influential New York artists of the 80s, stands out as a multi-disciplinary artist with a rich and varied career. From painting to sculpture, printmaking, and video, her diverse body of work has navigated distinct artistic periods.

While she may be best known for her 'single shape' plywood artworks, for this project I chose to focus on what's referred to as her 'nervous line' technique.

In a delightful twist, Judy Rifka reached out on Instagram when my artwork was initially shared, expressing gratitude for the homage to her distinctive style. I take it as a testament to the power of art and social media to create unexpected connections and bridge the gaps between admirers and artists.



Gensui Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024

Ralph Steadman (May 15, 1936 -) is a British artist and illustrator celebrated for his distinctive and often grotesque visual style. Best known for his collaborations with author Hunter S. Thompson, Steadman's work is characterised by frenetic lines, vivid splatters, and darkly humorous depictions. His anarchic and satirical illustrations, particularly in works like "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," have left an indelible mark on countercultural art, showcasing a unique ability to capture the chaotic energy and absurdity of contemporary society.

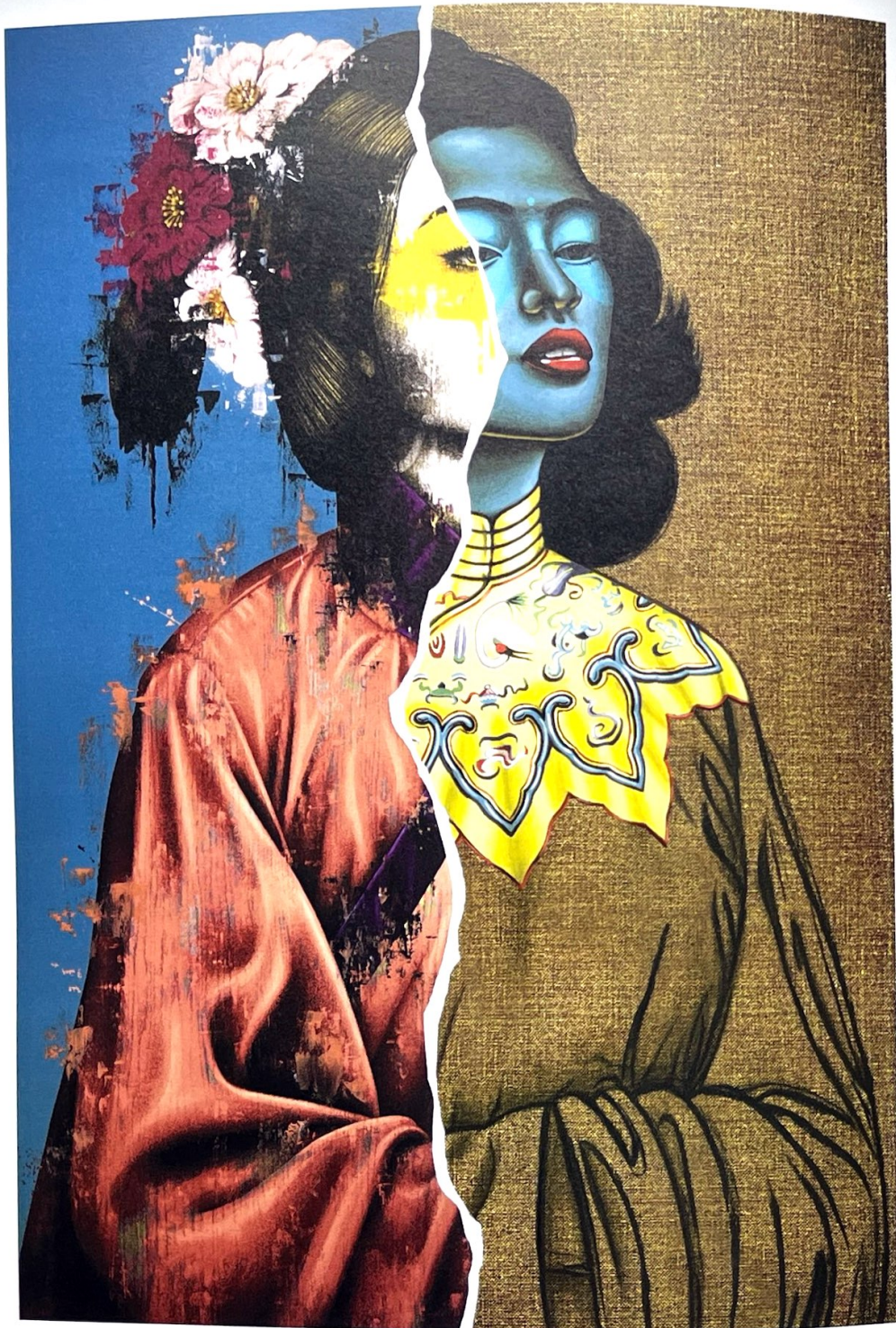


Portrait of Walter White

Illustration for limited-edition Blu-ray box set for the Breaking Bad series, Season 1 released in 2015

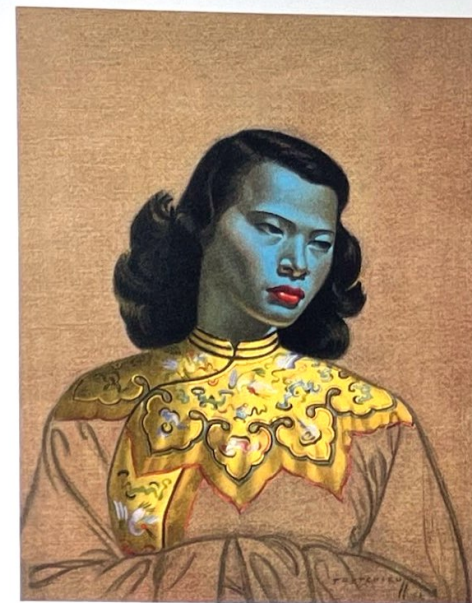
Steadman's art found its way to me through an alternative medium - literature. His unmistakable style is forever tied to the writings of Hunter S. Thompson, adding a vivid visual dimension to Thompson's novels and articles. My teenage self first encountered Steadman through my favourite Thompson book, "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," marking the beginning of my enduring admiration for this incredible artist.

Now, all these years later I have a modest collection of Steadman's own books on my shelf including the crown jewel: the 50th-anniversary edition of "Animal Farm," beautifully illustrated by the man himself.



Shangsheng Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024

Vladimir Tretchikoff (December 26, 1913 - August 26, 2006) was a Russian-South African artist recognised for his popular and commercially successful paintings. Best known for the iconic "Chinese Girl," Tretchikoff's work is characterised by vibrant and exotic colours, often depicting enigmatic women against lush backgrounds. With a unique fusion of realism and romanticism, his art enjoyed widespread popularity in the mid-20th century, making Tretchikoff a notable figure in the realm of popular and kitsch art.



Chinese Girl (aka. The Green Lady), 1952

Oil on canvas
Private collection

Tretchikoff's "Green Lady" is one of those images that felt familiar long before I consciously knew about it, if you know what I mean. It's interesting how post-war Britain embraced it, turning it into a ubiquitous poster print available at the popular high street department store Woolworths (RIP).

"The Green Lady" ended up on the walls of countless friends and family, almost like a quirky, distant relative's portrait. It was my first exposure to a portrait of a real Asian woman, though the peculiar facial colour always left me puzzled.

Back in those days, they'd label it 'exotic,' and for sure the portrait has faced its fair share of criticism. Yet, despite that, it stands tall as one of the best-selling images ever.

I've included it in this collection because, throughout my career, people have commented that my work had echoes of Tretchikoff's - an observation that still puzzles me to this day.



Luyou Redux, Milieu boxset, 2024

Kitagawa Utamaro (c. 1753 - October 31, 1806) was a Japanese ukiyo-e artist and printmaker during the Edo period, recognised for his masterful depictions of beautiful women, or bijin-ga. Utamaro's prints are characterised by exquisite attention to detail, delicate lines, and a keen observation of the female form, capturing the elegance and grace of the women of his time. As a leading figure in the ukiyo-e genre, Utamaro's legacy endures through his significant contributions to Japanese woodblock prints and his enduring influence on subsequent generations of artists.



Courtesan Smoking (1), 1790
From series: Ten Studies
in Female Physiognomy,
woodblock, 22 x 31.5 cm



Funya no Yasuhide, 1800s
Triptych, from series: The Six
Poets and Today's Children,
woodblock, 36.7 x 24.6 cm

Ukiyo-e or Japanese woodblock prints, hold a special place in my artistic heart, being my initial and enduring 'art love'.

Utamaro's distinct choice to focus on crafting single portraits of women in half-length has undeniably left an imprint on my own artistic trajectory.

His influence extends beyond my own work, reaching many of my favourite artists, and in drawing inspiration from him, I find myself treading in the footsteps of these artistic giants.

Interestingly, my journey with Utamaro took an unexpected turn when I acquired a box set of his works for my own art collection. Little did I know that this acquisition would plant the seeds for the creation of my own art box set and setting a standard that I aspire to match in my artistic endeavours.

F I N