





GRAND MASTER OF THE DJ PORTRAIT

Foreword by
PIM MILO

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Krijn van Noordwijk's studio overlooks the Vondelpark in Amsterdam, where city racket is replaced by twittering birds. Two spic and span work desks each with a large Cinema HD display. Open cabinets filled with books. On the floor: A Fender Stratocaster from 1974, a Gibson Les Paul Deluxe and a proper museum piece: a Gretsch White Falcon.

Krijn van Noordwijk (Rotterdam, 1958). Baggy jeans, hanging low on his hips coupled with a loose black t-shirt, finished off with a fresh pair of kicks, laces stretched wide across the tongues. No bling bling, just a dog tag round his neck and a pair of 'Loc' sunglasses on his face. Street wear and a tough demeanor; black cap pulled down over his ears covering a bleach blonde Clooney cut. He is the spitting image of Catweazle with his long goatee, but then with a preference for hoodies. Hiphopper (producing, DJ'ing, graffiti) at heart and fan of tagger Marc 'Ecko' Milecofsky, The Man Who Tagged Air Force One. When it comes to what's hot Van Noordwijk's finger is right on the pulse. Krijn studied in Rotterdam at what is now known as the Willem de Kooning Academy. He loved the idea of being up to his elbows in paint and clay so he went on to become a painter. Two years later the department of visual communication was introduced. He was intrigued and kept dropping in to the department. When he realised that he felt more at home there he made the transfer from art to commerce. Rotring pens, gleaming attaché cases, cameras... it was all so fascinating to him. A fine trade that touched on every one of his interests: concept development, design, typography, film and photography.

Van Noordwijk was, as creative director for Ogilvy in 1994, responsible for the famous Ford 'shark fin' ad campaign. An image of a shark fin cutting through the asphalt of an urban road. It won silver and an award for work in the field of photography from the Art Directors Club Nederland (ADCN) and at various international festivals. The to-scale road surface measuring two by three meters made of rough asphalt marked with white road lines, with a shark fin protruding from it found a new function as Noordwijk's worktop at Ogilvy. He didn't get to make much use of it though, as he spent most of his time on planes and in meetings rather than behind his desk. He had hoped that the clients were also his clients to a certain degree that he would be in a position to really do great work for them. But where there was too much fear. The courage to take risks was lacking and every step was taken with a hesitant caution. It was a full-on struggle against the tide.

In 1996 Van Noordwijk started up Laboratorivm with a partner, it soon became a hotspot avant la lettre where art and commerce could prosper side by side. The initiative brought back the days from the academy. A creative cell can quickly anticipate, find answers, get straight to the point, find direction. Decision makers and creatives sit opposite one another. It wasn't too far away from something like Andy Warhol's Factory: A fusion of art, music, graphics, photography, commercial direction and advertising. Creatives gravitated towards the project. Anyone and everybody started turning up. A book of own work was put together that earned international cult status and Van Noordwijk's signature was soon in demand.

After ten years at Laboratorivm Van Noordwijk surprised the advertising world by leaving his ad agency behind in favor of continuing as a photographer. He wanted to take a step

back from what he was doing. Was he on the right track? Wasn't it becoming routine? Wasn't there something else? Was he losing touch with his craft? When, as art director, he contracted in a photographer he felt as if he was painting with another mans hands. One thing became clear; Van Noordwijk would become a photographer and threw himself into taking portraits of people. Unlike many photographers who see the task of getting a picture as sufficient and lose themselves and sacrifice beauty in that process, Van Noordwijk is all about form. He searches for the kind of language of iconic imagery that you see in the work of the likes of Annie Leibovitz, Carl Fischer and George Hurrell. Poster sized portraits. This is where his background as graphic designer emerges from the shadows: the need to make things that cry out for attention and say something in the blink of an eye: Crystal clear, unambiguous information that stands out and intrigues. Verging on vignettes the images are taken back to their essence, borne of the notion behind the much loved ad agency principle KISS; 'Keep It Simple, Stupid'. The same kind of simplicity that could be found in Van Noordwijk's advertising work: A body of work testament to a mission for simple, succinct imagery.

At the exact moment that Van Noordwijk strode into a bar one night, the landlord's hand slipped and put the music system on full blast. The mishap was sorted in a second, but the damage had already been done. In the blurry mind of one of the guests the two incidences were inextricably linked. With a pool cue in his hands he stepped up to Van Noordwijk, who, in all his innocence was good-naturedly pulling up a bar stool. 'Ever had a severe blow to the head?', he growled at Van Noordwijk.

This is the kind of impact Van Noordwijk has on people. With an idiosyncratic substantial presence, broad shoulders and an easy going look in his eyes he moves with measurement, always close to himself. This self awareness can ruffle others and he takes full advantage of that fact. There are a lot of types of photographers. Some try to make themselves as inconspicuous as possible, doing their best not to be noticed. Van Noordwijk is at the other end of the spectrum. He ruffles. He disrupts. Van Noordwijk's presence creeps into his portraits to the point where it seems like pure power play, a kind of macho game, a kind of cock fighting. He makes the portrait persona as big and broad as possible. The models sometimes retreat into their shells, making themselves small and humble. But you always see Van Noordwijk staring back at you, searching eyes demanding and challenging the viewer. There is always an attentiveness in the portraits, the models are not self absorbed, or concerned about their image, they are there – in that moment, in that confrontation.

Yet there is also an undeniable recognition in the eyes. The DJ's see their own independence reflected back to them by Van Noordwijk. They are literally set aside from the masses, in their elevated podium overlooking the dancing crowd. Just like Van Noordwijk they are not partaking but spectating. Spectating is their way of partaking, always from a distance in their very own bastion. Their carefully cordoned off bastion dripping with their own sweat is their well protected territory. Van Noordwijk has to find a way into that territory for every shoot. It starts with finding a date in the diary and weeks, sometimes even months, of attempts to reach the right person. He has to get through the wall of Managers, record companies, impresarios and PAs. When he finally sets the

date, it can mean hours of waiting until the DJ has finished his set. The mobile studio is set up in a container hours in advance. The time for a shoot is limited. Helicopters await, blades spinning, the entourage pressing the DJ to get aboard. The macho ones tell the photographer he's got a few minutes. One DJ told Van Noordwijk 'You get one click'. Van Noordwijk, no stranger to provocation himself, did indeed complete his session with one take. In Eindhoven one DJ was yanked off his stool by bodyguards to leave. Van Noordwijk's relaxed, easy-going personality means he always gets his shot.

Van Noordwijk has an enormous image bank stored in his head. He finds his favorites in bygone eras: Man Ray, Lee Miller, Joel Peter Witkin, Richard Avedon, and Art Kane. They stand side by side with the likes of David LaChapelle, Martin Parr and Dewey Nicks. All this information has been saved and he's there with his model, ready to take a portrait. Within a few minutes or a couple of hours, it has to happen: Then and there. Exciting stuff. On the other hand there's the shoot. Just how will he go about it? He goes in with an idea and in the following hours he gathers the material. Then he's the one who's shot, both physically and mentally. But that same afternoon or evening when he looks back at his shots and selects his material, it all comes together. He gets a buzz and his battery instantly reloads. Van Noordwijk considers his computer to be a dark room. That is where photography materializes, just like back in the day. He seeks the best grade for each photo, the finishing process. Color or black and white? Darker or lighter for this one? Each photo demands its own approach. He finds this part of the process equally as exciting as the shoot itself. From half finished he takes it to the end product. In that process he feels like a child the night before its birthday.

Van Noordwijk's odyssey to immortalize contemporary DJs is reminiscent of the work of George Hurrell. Between 1930 and 1932, Hurrell captured every star contracted to MGM in striking black-and-white portraits. With his Rembrandtesque lighting and dramatic poses, Hurrell transformed the actors into icons. Among them were Myrna Loy as well as Robert Montgomery, Jean Harlow, Joan Crawford, Clark Gable, Carole Lombard and Norma Shearer, who was said to have refused to allow herself to be photographed by anyone else. He also photographed Greta Garbo. Hurrell was dubbed the 'Grand Seigneur of the Hollywood Portrait'. His work set a new standard for Hollywood portraits that has never been equaled. It even inspired a new name for the genre: glamour photography.

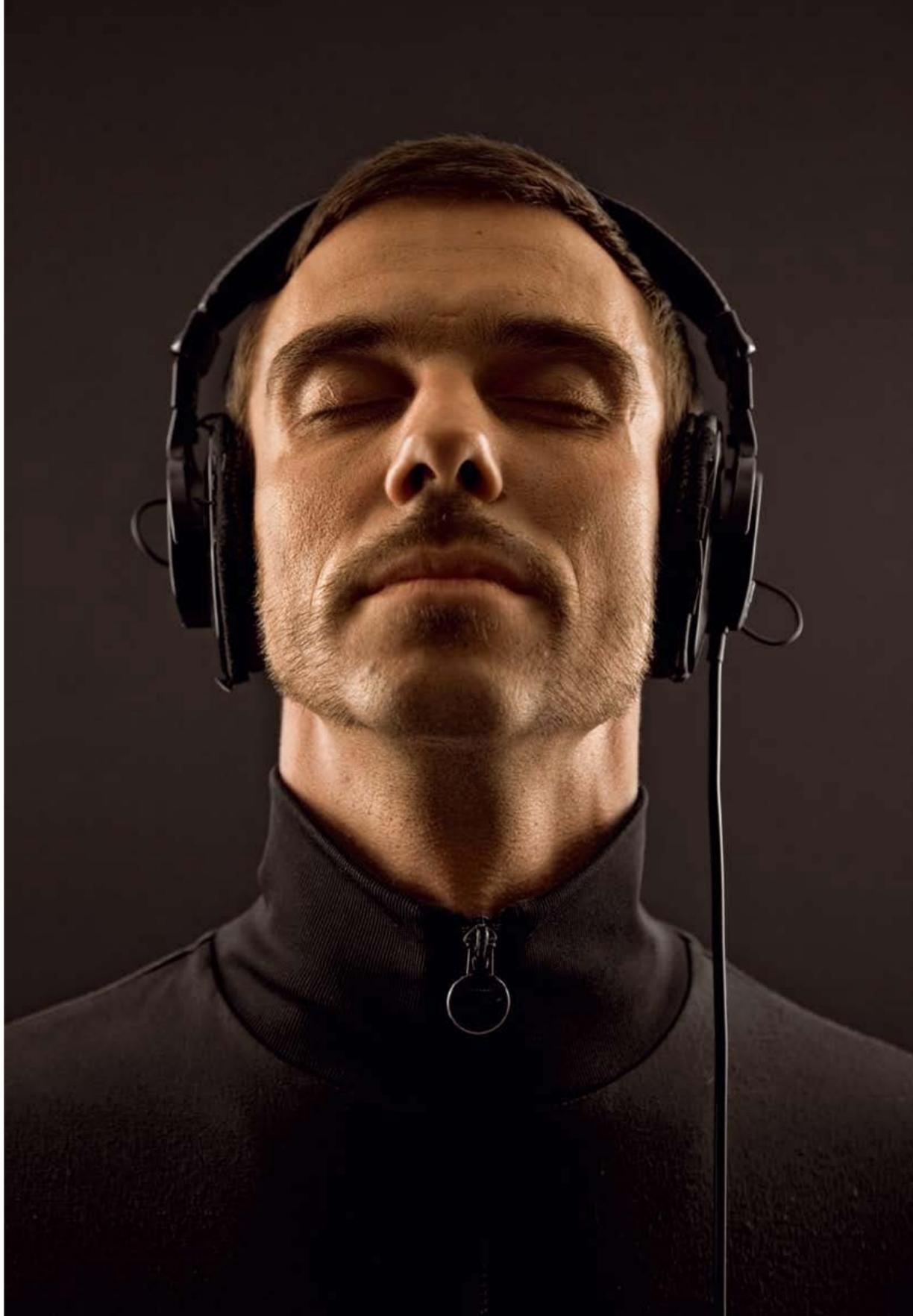
Just like George Hurrell Van Noordwijk keeps the lighting simple. What is used on location in the improvised studio does not differ in nature from the home studio situation: Three one thousand watt lamps, one or two of which he puts into use, continuous light instead of a flash. A flash is too noticeable, like the crack of gunfire or a rap on the knuckles. Instead of this overly contrived technique, he prefers one light source. One key light shines on three quarters of the face, and an oblique one is positioned behind for a bit of counter light. All relatively simple and totally classic means. The true power of Van Noordwijk's work lies in the way he manipulates the portraits. He lets the models be themselves and subordinates his own vision of the portrait. Iconic images from the icons of our time.

Pim Milo





Armin van Buuren



Steve Bug



Richie Hawtin



Tom Holkenborg - Junkie XL



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Orlando Voorn



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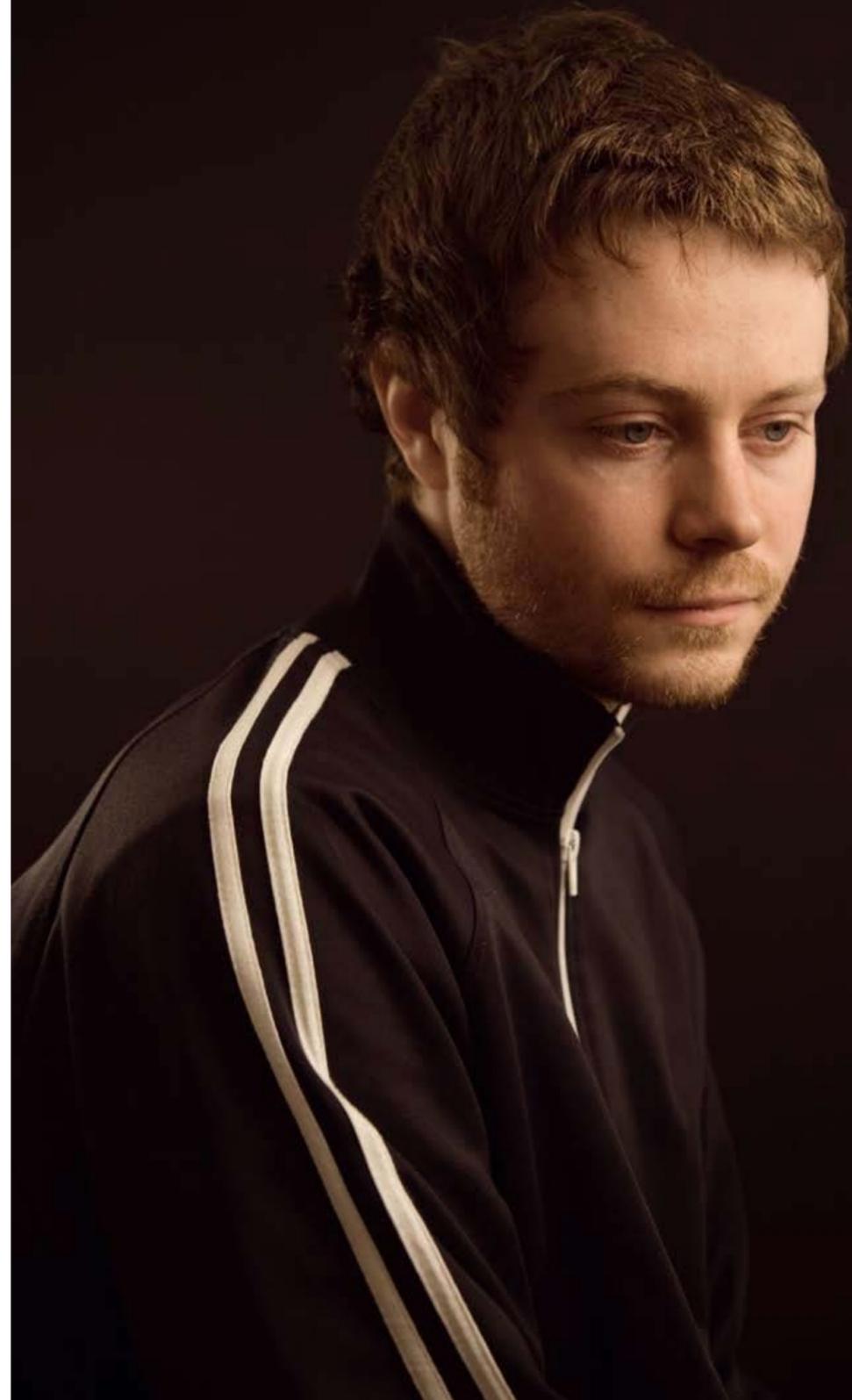
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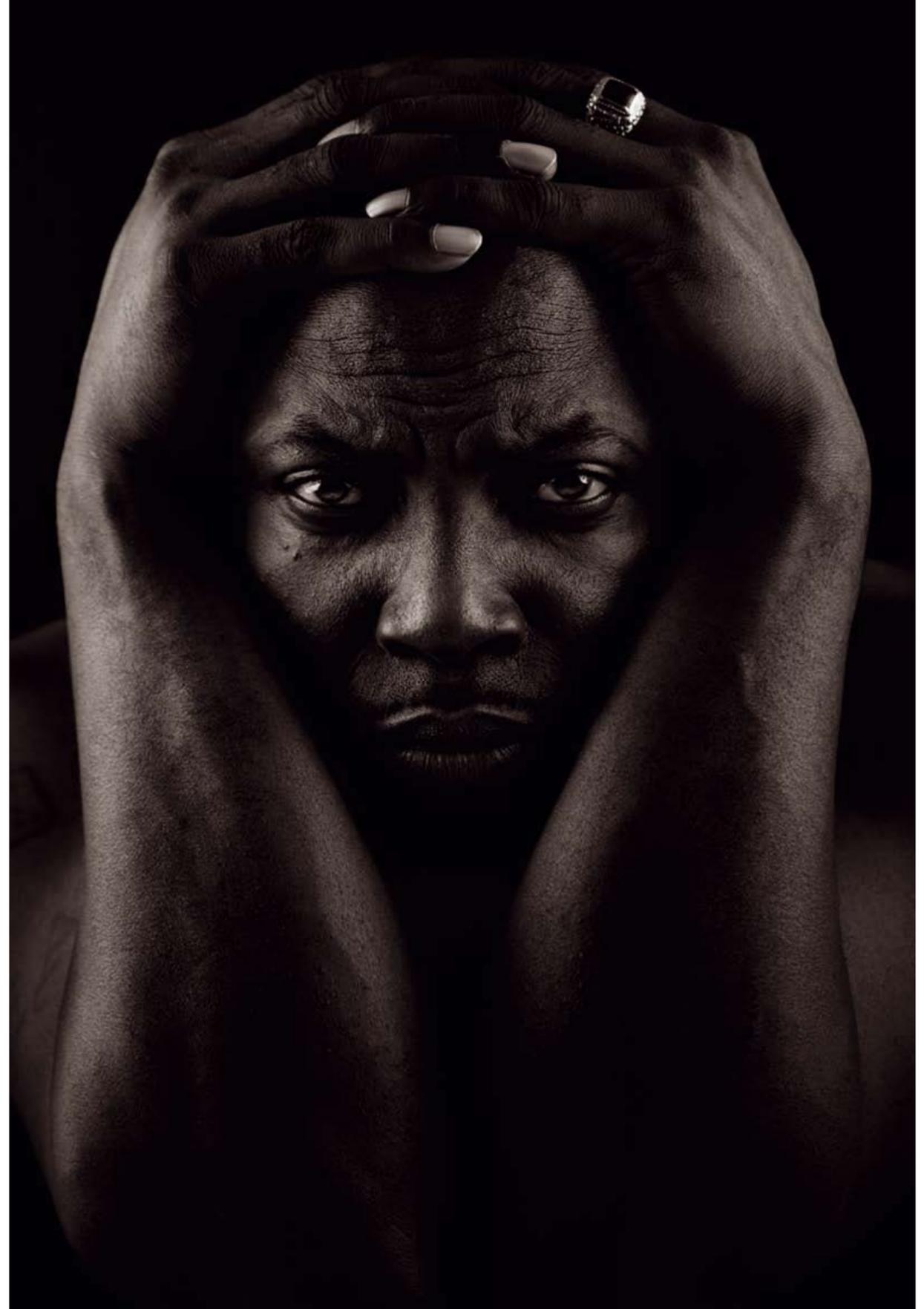


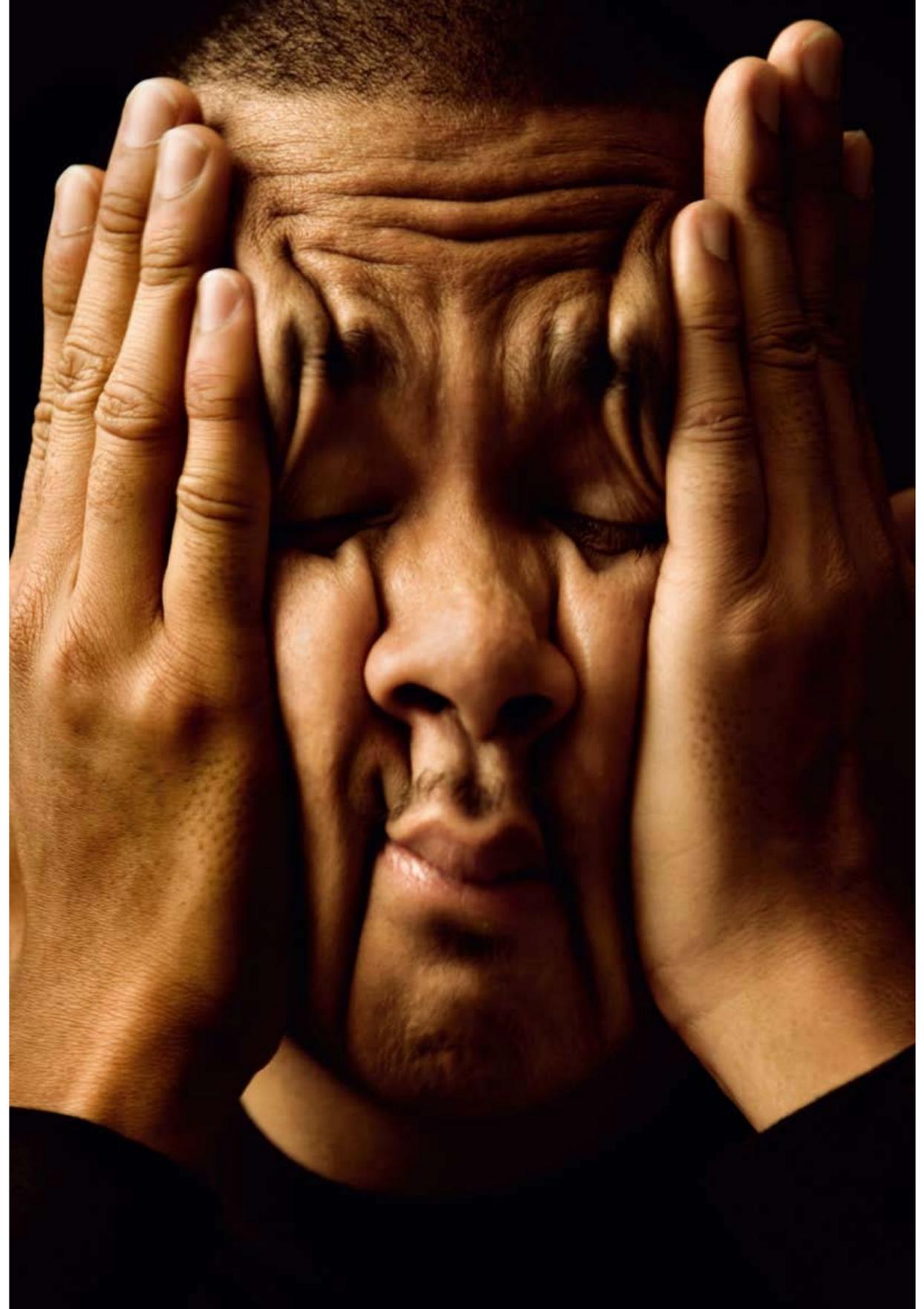
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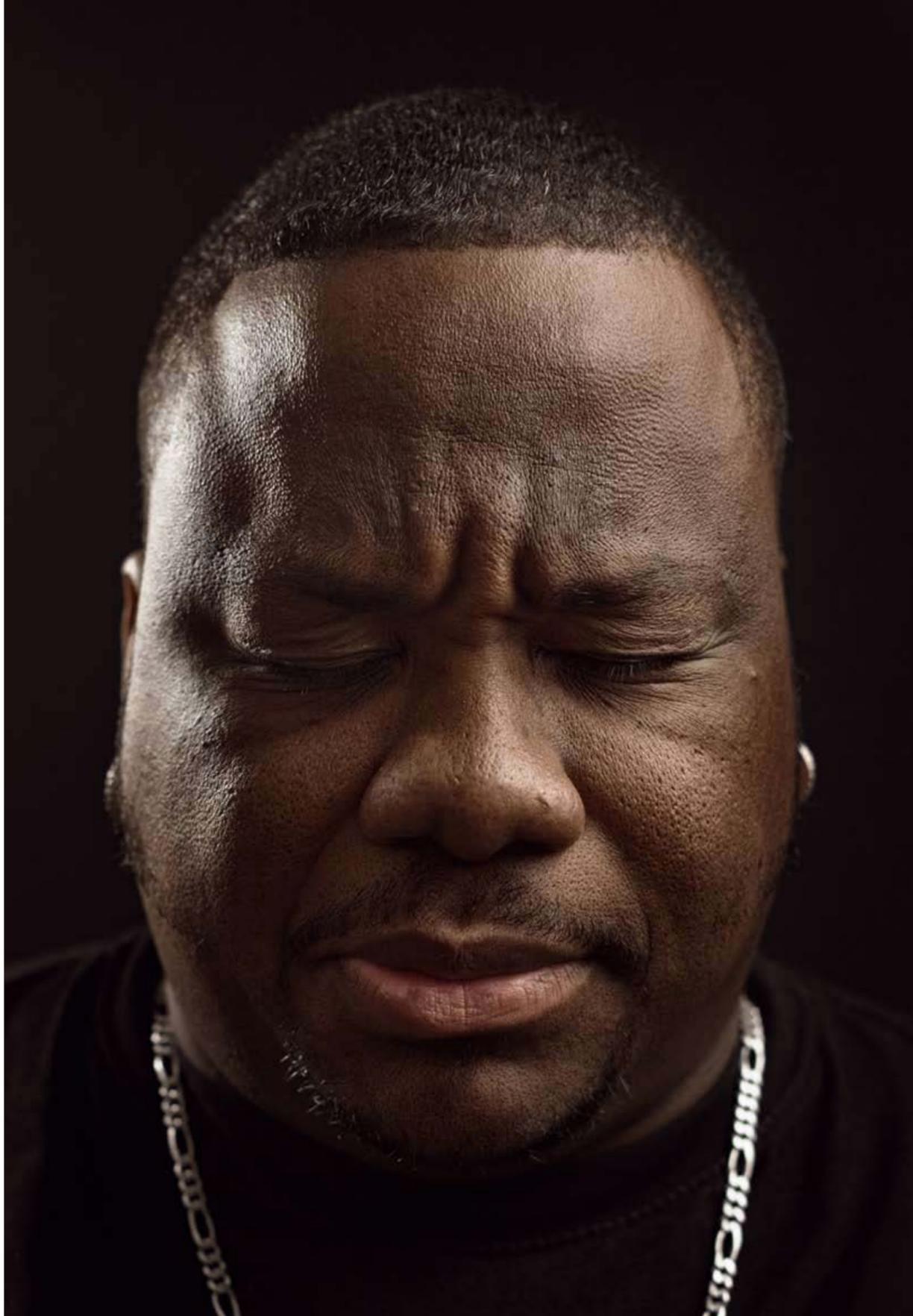


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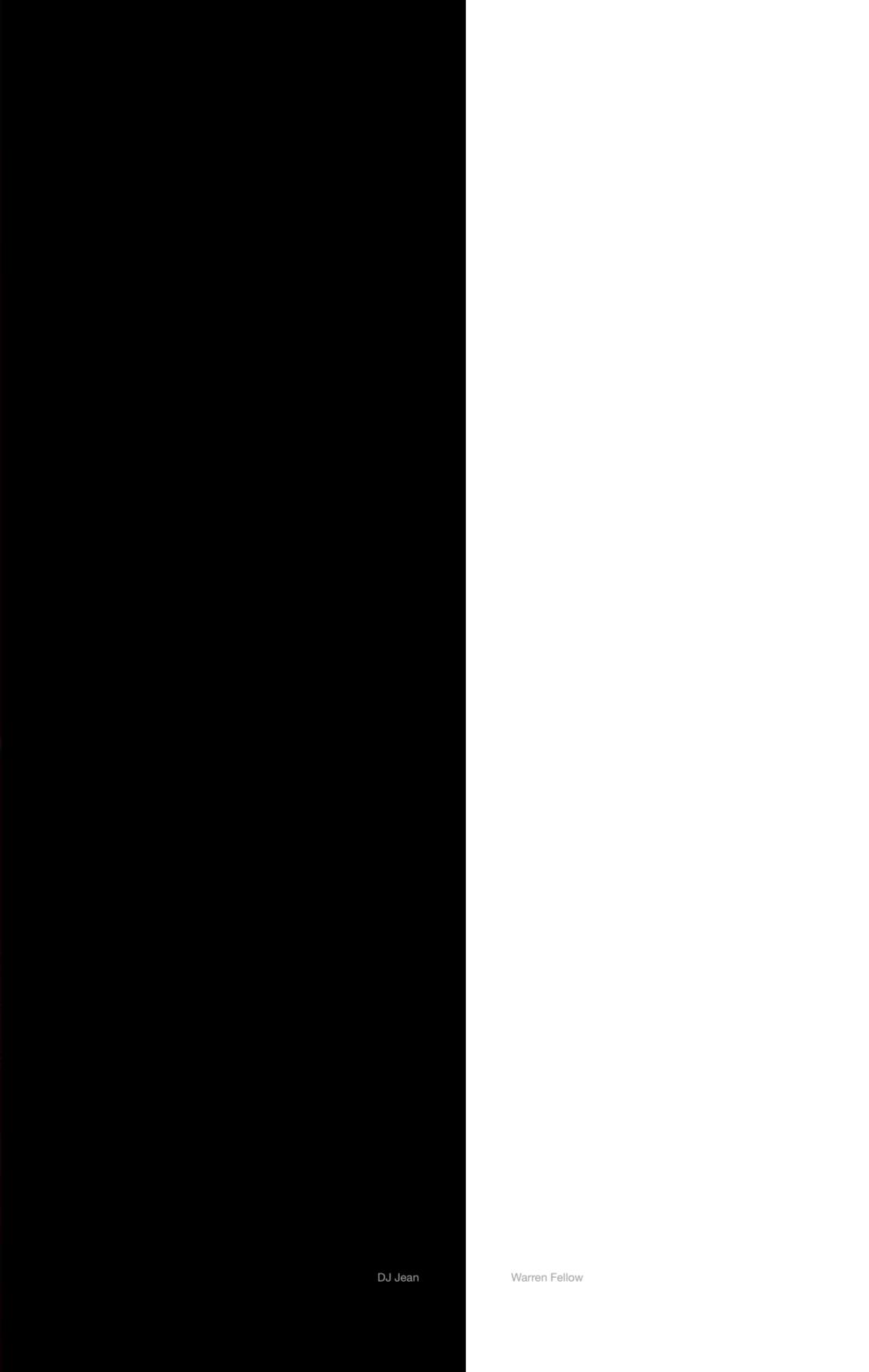
Ron Carroll



Tom Novy



DJ Jean



Warren Fellow





Play Paul



Kraak & Smaak





Johan Gielen



Secret Cinema



Jamie Cullum



DJ Ginger



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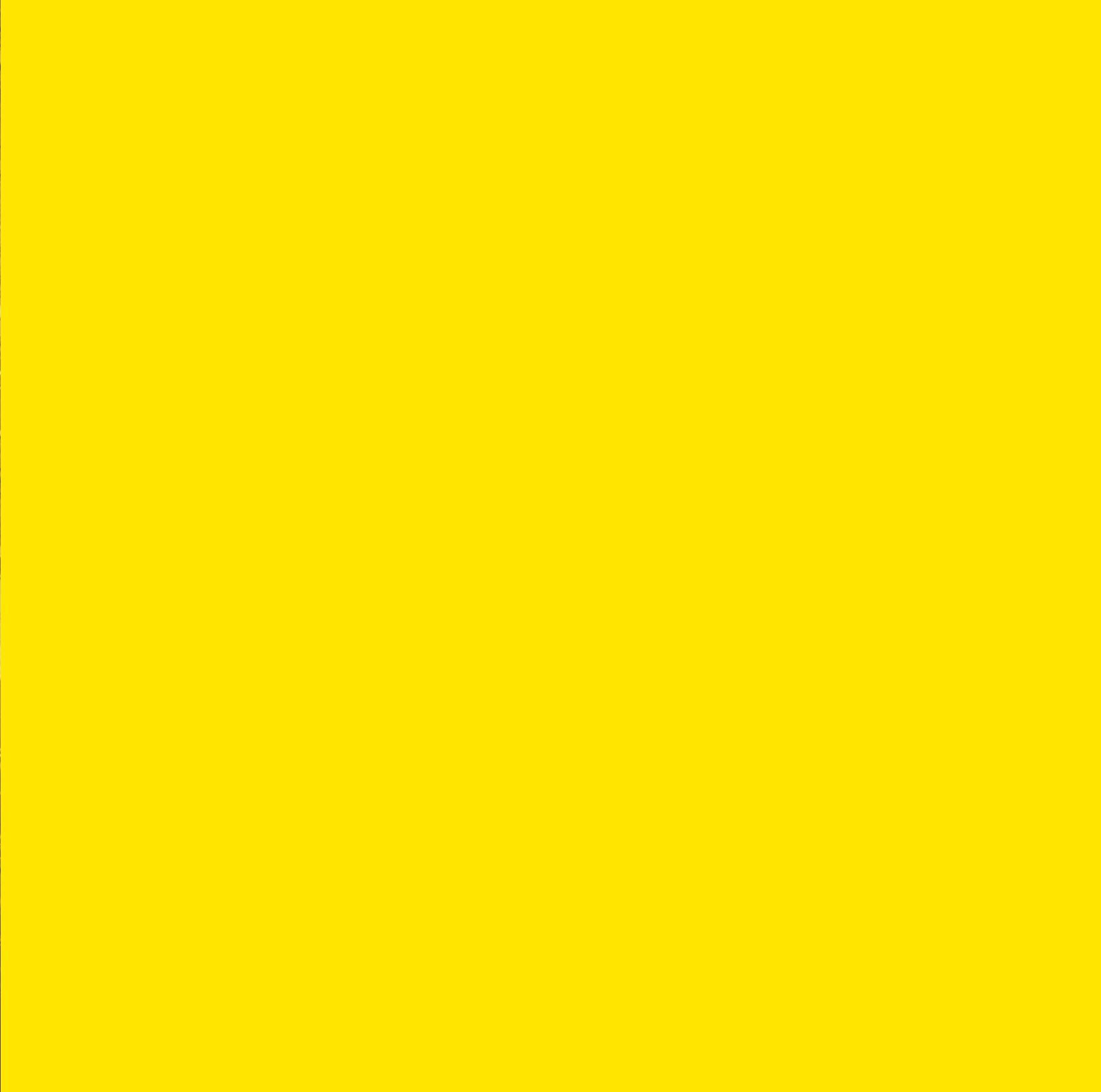
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Putting an icon to the idol.

The DJ is today's musical hero. But most of the time, your average person in the audience only catches a glimpse of the artist, standing behind a pair of decks on a vast distant stage. We never get a closer look. This book shows some of the personalities close up. It puts an icon to the idol. A face to the name. By no means does this book try to be a complete catalogue for the dance industry, nor is it a who is who in DJ country. It is a collection of some of the best portraits I have taken of the DJ's I have met over a period of two years. To me, DJ's are an interesting species. Four transatlantic flights in one week is no oddity. Two sets per night four days a week is not an exaggeration. I bow my head to this tribe in entertainment land for bringing pleasure to thousands, and for living their dream as today's wandering musical adventurers.

This book is a tribute to the DJ.

Krijn van Noordwijk, photographer.

