

NEW REGIME

IN  
WITH  
THE  
NEW

For our fourth annual New Regime Portfolio, *BlackBook* presents an explosive mix of curatorial savants, razor-sharp comedians, genre-defying musical acts, screen saviors, fashion visionaries, literary geniuses, and one of the *Glee* kids, each of whom would like you to know that, despite global warming, the global financial crisis, and the global embrace of a girl named Snookie, this new year will, in fact, be better than the last.

## THE NEW IMAGIST

A Hitchcock blonde in a meringue-colored dress crouches on a roadside embankment. She looks ready to pounce. Or flee. Such is a typical photograph by 30-year-old Angeleno Alex Prager, whose Popsicle-hued prints look like noir thrillers brought to vivid life. A self-trained lenswoman who spent a chunk of her high school years selling knives in Switzerland, Prager was included in MoMA's seminal "New Photography 2010" show. "I kind of took the side door," she says of her art-world entrée. "My intention was just to show my pictures. I wanted some feedback."

Prager doesn't read reviews of her work ("unless they're amazing"), but the response to her heavily stylized photographs has been glowing. She's enlisted actor Bryce Dallas Howard and model Jessica Joffe to star in her short films, and has collaborated on fashion editorials with *W* and *i-D* magazines.

Still, hers isn't the sort of success you can easily begrudge. When she returned to Los Angeles from Europe, Prager worked a string of unenviable jobs at a mall food court, a French Connection boutique, and "a place called Modern Data Products," she says. "I realized my whole life could be an endless, mundane string of shitty jobs." It was an encounter with William Eggleston's work at the Getty Museum when she was 20 that persuaded Prager, instantly and beyond a doubt, to pursue photography.

Over the next seven years, Prager took photographs with and of her friends, largely for kicks. Eventually, her images, like film stills sliced out of a reel, began to be included in group—and later solo—gallery shows. "Because I don't really know what's right or wrong, I simply make images that I think are cool, and it so happens that people agree with me right now," she says. "I want others to like my pictures. If they don't want to look at them, then everything I've done is wasted." —MEGAN CONWAY

DRESS BY ODYLYNE BRACELET BY FALLON FOR W  
HOTELS' GLOBAL GLAM COLLECTION  
STYLIST'S OWN EARRING

PHOTO BY MARK SQUIRES  
STYLING BY CHRISTOPHER CAMPBELL  
HAIR SARAH SISTA @ SEE MANAGEMENT  
MAKEUP MIN MIN MA @ SEE MANAGEMENT  
USING DIOR BEAUTY  
LOCATION INDUSTRIA SUPERSTUDIO, NYC

# AT EASE, SOLDIERS

They're busy, sure, but they're not *always* working. Even the strongest regiments need to recharge every now and again.

## CHIDDY BANG LIKES...

### Koko



1A Camden High Street  
Camden Town, London



+44-87-0432-5527

Housed in a historic, Victorian-era theater, Camden's three-floor cultish music venue is done up with Art Deco trimmings and velvet-clad walls. Upper floors, each equipped with their own bar, offer dizzying views of top-notch performers from Grizzly Bear to Mr. Hudson.



## ALEX LIKES...

### Café Stella



3932 Sunset Boulevard  
Silver Lake, Los Angeles



323-666-0265

A charmingly Euro back-alley bistro with nightly specials scrawled on a chalkboard, Café Stella used to provide refuge from the mad, mad world. With its increasing popularity, said world intrudes. Order the Dijon lamb chops and chocolate soufflé. With service this slow, escargot-loving French waiters must be what they eat.

## DAVID LIKES...

### Barbuto



775 Washington Street  
West Village, NYC



212-924-9700

This converted garage is at its best in the summer, when its facade rolls up and the scene spills out. Simple Italian fare includes Barbuto's signature roasted chicken, pappardelle with pancetta, and rigatoni with veal-and-pork ragout.

## SIKI LIKES...

### No. 8b



91 East Seventh Street  
East Village, NYC



212-228-5062

A brick-and-mortar subset of their first store, Project No. 8, No. 8b expands on the independent retail ethos of co-owners Elizabeth Beer and Brian Janusiak. The airy, gallery-like space sells menswear and furniture from cult designers such as Bless, Maison Martin Margiela, Tom Scott, and, yes, Siki Im. Go for one-of-a-kind pieces, some (but not all) with hefty price tags.

## BENJAMIN LIKES...

### Urth Caffé



8565 Melrose Avenue  
West Hollywood, Los Angeles



310-659-0628

Stargaze and fantasize about models over organic coffee, soft bagels, and baked banana bread. Despite its confusing lines, Urth's food is healthy and its employees perfectly congenial. Order a Spanish latte, which is, along with the café's myriad other hot drinks, garnished like a work of art.



## ROSAMUND LIKES...

### Philippe



33 East 60th Street  
Upper East Side, NYC



212-644-8885

In New York, Mr. Chow made its star chef, Philippe Chow, a legend. After 26 years, he sexed up his image with Philippe, but don't let its first-name relaxedness fool you—the UES mainstay is very expensive and posh. Inventive Chinese dishes (drunken sea bass, red king crabs) will cost diners at least \$60.

## THE SUZAN LIKES...

### Brooklyn Bowl



61 Wythe Avenue  
Williamsburg, NYC



718-963-3369

With a 600-person concert venue for rocking and 16 lanes for rolling, Brooklyn Bowl makes the Gutter look like Milano's Bar. The space boasts vintage signs, swank black settees, and bowling balls in every color of the rainbow. Although bowling isn't for everyone, the oyster po' boys and pork ribs served fresh courtesy of Blue Ribbon will be right up your alley.



## OH LAND LIKES...

### Juliette



135 North Fifth Street  
Williamsburg, NYC



718-388-9222

Vintage posters and Parisian decor set the vibe in this cozy, multi-level bistro. Juliette's unparalleled liquor selection is guaranteed to kick off a wild night, while their Bloody Mary-infused brunch is perfect for the morning after. Act like a true Parisian and wash your meal down with wine and cigarettes on the rooftop terrace.

## MEN LIKES...

### The Echo



1822 Sunset Boulevard  
Echo Park, Los Angeles



213-413-8200

Red vinyl booths and mirror-lined walls create the chill vibe at this former Latin disco. Its stage, custom-built for mariachi bands, hosts live shows that inevitably lead to dancefloor diasporas.

PHOTO OF ALEX PRAGER BY MARK SQUIRES  
PHOTO OF BENJAMIN MILLEPIED BY SANTIAGO SIERRA  
PHOTO OF OH LAND BY MARK SQUIRES