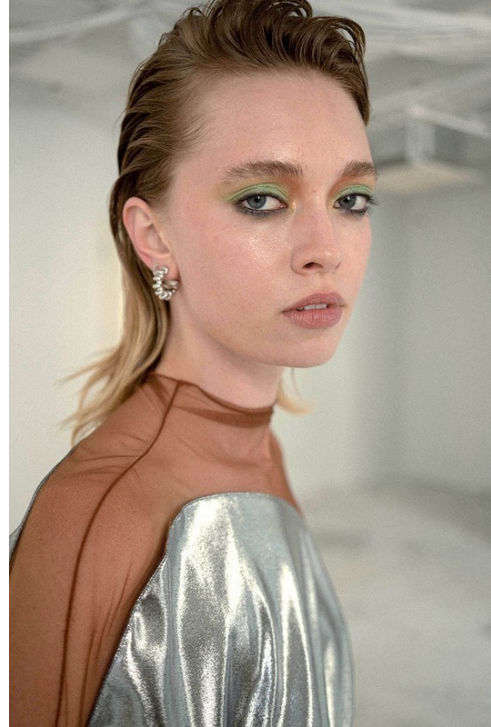


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Somewhere between
BLACK AND WHITE

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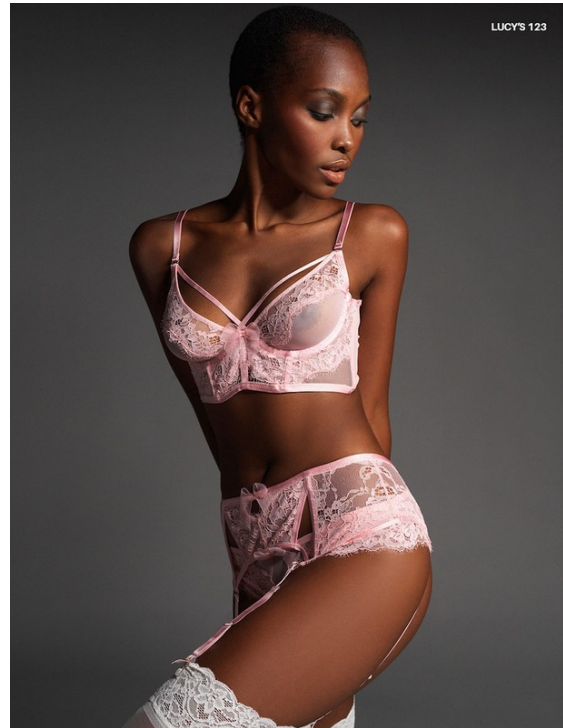
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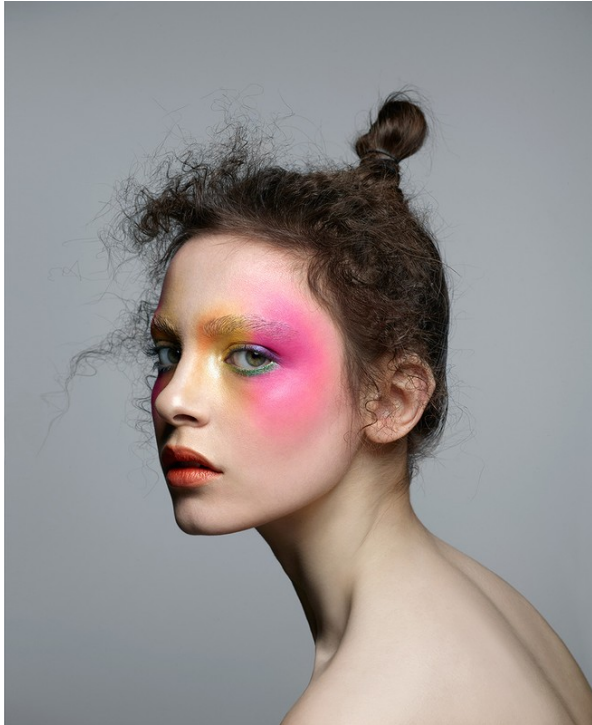
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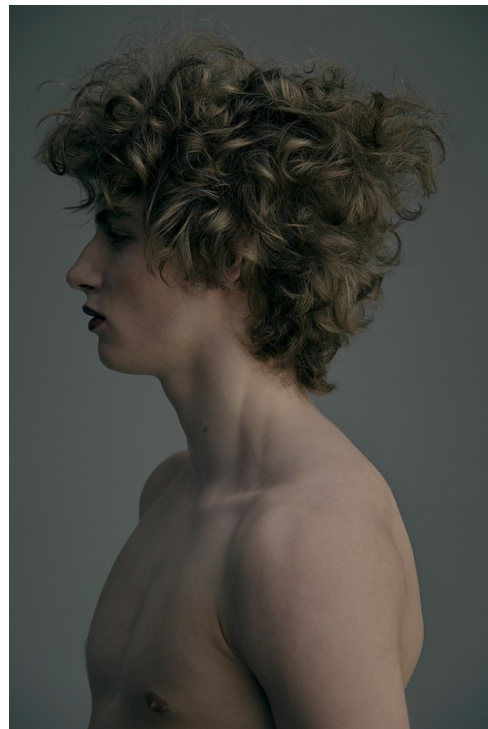
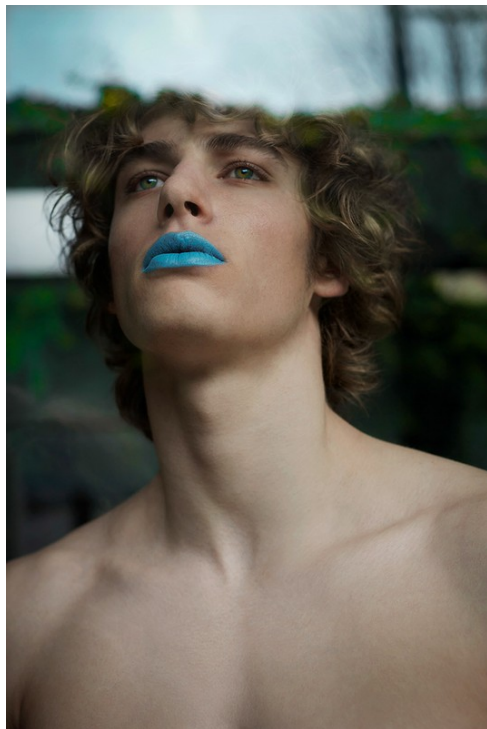
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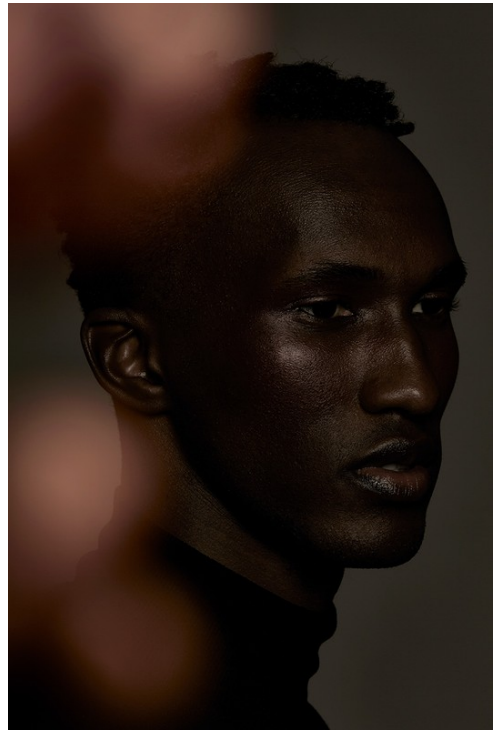
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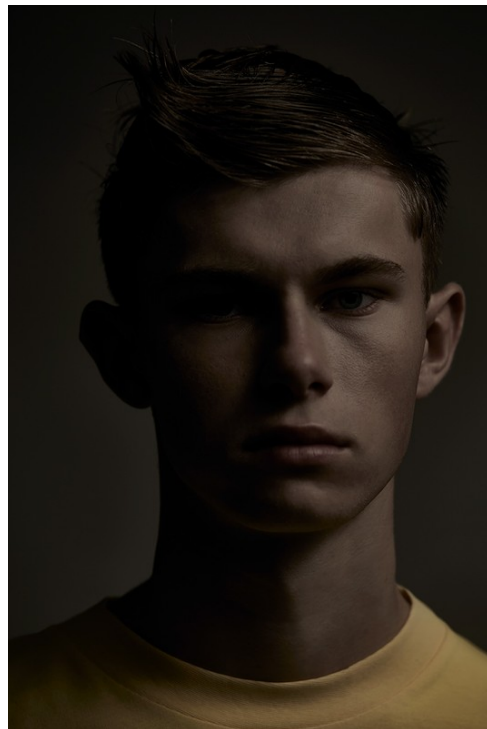
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COMME DES GARÇONS SHIRT
RUSCH SAKAMOTO WEARS
JACKET AND PANTS
COMME DES GARÇONS SHIRT
SHOES GLOU

ALWAYS RYUICHI

ON THE EVE OF A NEW ALBUM, OUT IN MARCH,
THE RENOWNED COMPOSER RYUICHI SAKAMOTO
REFLECTS ON THE ETERNITY OF SOUND

PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL CHANDLER FASHION RON HARTLEBEN
WORDS RYUICHI SAKAMOTO AS TOLD TO DOMINIC TEJA SIDHU

Transformation is a very real impulse that is inherent in nature. I like transformations, ever since I was a child. Maybe from the third grade or so, every time I came home from school, I was staring at the mirror not understanding what I was seeing or why I was looking. I used to just stare, in my Japanese state of mind, for a long time—not a practice, just a habit. What is this abnormality? What is this thing called Ryuichi?

Once I got on my mother's lipstick, she was very angry. Another time I tied my father's Lacoste tie around my neck, but it was too long, so I took scissors and cut it in half. In college, sometimes I would wear my girlfriend's outfits, it was probably the first musician in Japan to wear a skirt on stage in the '80s. I did makeup. I had a makeup box I would take with me—it was my everyday routine. Beauty is and has always been my interest—beauty as the strange mix of factors you like: what kind of sound you hear, what kind of face you want.

I used to be in love with my bad side, but two years ago I had a cancer, so I have been trying not to enjoy and exaggerate my bad side so much. All the negative qualities will help the cancer, I thought! It's kind of my joke. But it's not really this tendency that caused the problem. I have always had all these small brains inside my head. I don't have a big brain, I have 25 small

brains—or it could be less, maybe 12—many small personalities. I go back and forth between them and my personality changes. Sometimes, it's a persona or a character, sometimes I become pure machinery in the form of a man, I flip an internal switch, like robotics. Whatever the situation requires, I turn the switch from one brain to another. It can last for one second—very quick—or much longer. But particularly after heading the disease, I have had to learn to become one person, with all these different dimensions—only one. I used to have so many opinions, different moments and goals, but now I'm just one person with different layers inside of me.

I have a method to my music. According to this method, it's easy for me to write conventional music. I'm trained. But I am now evolving the method—I want no method. When I decided this, I didn't know where I should start, so I tried many different things. One of the things I tried is, as soon as I wake up in the morning, as usual I hear some pitch, some note. Sometimes it's a piece of music, existing music like Mozart, or sometimes something unknown, just a note. So I listen to me, inside, and there's a pitch, and I start creating, to tune my sixth sense to the pitch I'm hearing inside. Then, if I like, I add another pitch to go along with it. This morning I heard a pitch when I was charging. When you

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