



WON'T ALL THE TIMES

LOCK THIS GUY IN A BOX AND HE'LL CONQUER THE WORLD. **BOHEMIAN SOCIETY** STYLE.

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NEXT TIME YOU THINK YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL, HOLD UP. ODDS ARE IT HAS NOTHING ON VICTOR WILDE'S. AFTER GROWING UP IN MAFIOSO Brooklyn (across the street from his uncle's funeral home), being kicked out of film school (for having a plane flown in for a drug shipment?!), he turned tricks in NYC (as a street performer), ran for mayor, got a serious nod from SNL and endured being locked in a box for seven hours a day—all in the name of art, mind you. Now he's deconstructing the fashion world. And it has nothing to do with his "family" connections.

Kicked out of film school? My second year I wrote, produced, directed and starred in my own film—a big no no. I played a pimp named Kiki Cadero who runs off in the end with the hot girl cop who is out to bust him. I cast my girlfriend (at the time), as the opposite lead—a no no—all my instructors wanted to fuck her. I had '70s period costumes, car chases, karate fights, witty dialogue. I even had a real airplane flown in for the big finale where Kiki gets his big drug shipment. I thought it was brilliant. They immediately dismissed it and tossed me out. What a surprise.

Tell me about Mercury Men. After film school I got a job working at this rinky-dink film studio in Greenpoint. For extra cash they would rent the space out for bar mitzvahs, sweet sixteens, etc. There was a party with a Hollywood theme and they needed a couple of living silver Oscars instead of gold. I recruited my actor friend John, who had some street performing experience, to join me—the job paid more than I was making in a week. The silver guys were a big hit, but the studio managers gyped us out of our tip—we decided to liberate the silver costumes and makeup in return. A week later John decided to try the routine in the subway corridors. He made more in three hours than I would make in two weeks. I soon joined him underground.

The shtick? At first we would just sadistically stand there motionless, seemingly not blinking; when someone would drop a tip in our bucket, we would spring to life. I took to giving uplifting positive quotes to make people's day a bit better. John would maniacally sing TV theme songs like "Different Strokes." On the streets we performed separately; private, corporate, or gallery gigs we performed as a team. We usually stuck with complete stillness for non-street gigs. Living statues.

How did SNL come about? When you're standing still in a silver costume (in Times Square), you get seen. One day someone came up to me on the street and said, "Hey man, great job on SNL last night, you were great!" Funny thing was, I was not on SNL. Chris Parnell played a character in a skit named "The Silver Robot Guy from Times Square." John and I were enraged. We did a mock protest [outside NBC studios] demanding SNL let the real silver men stand proud on the show. The studio...thought we were crazy men. As the show let out, some laughed, others were mortified. The only guy who was actually cool with us was Will Ferrell. Parnell snuck out the back way; I think NBC thought we would hurt him somehow.

The Mercury Men ran for mayor of NYC? After getting harassed by the NYPD a few too many times we decided if we became mayor we would have the freedom to stand wherever we wanted. Our platform included: immunity for all artists, a plan to turn the subways into log flume rides, a parade every weekend and a plan to turn the Upper East Side into an amusement park. I wheat-pasted all of NYC with our campaign fliers. I arm wrestled the Green Party candidate on a girl's back on top of Trump Towers—I won. We started to get a nice little grass roots buzz going. Then 9/11 happened and Bloomberg took the election.

From NYC to LA to working at The Standard? I was doing the Mercury Man gig out in LA—it just wasn't the same. My girlfriend, a famous underground comics artist, knew the guy who hired at the Standard; I met him at a party. I was in full silver makeup at the time. Long story short, he hired me instead of her. She was not happy. I was there once a week and would transform "the box" into a different art installation—my crazy habitat for seven hours at a time. At first the Standard management were freaked out but by the time I left they begged me to stay.

Seven hours in a box? I was free to take a break...I usually stuck it out. I documented each performance with video and wrote a journal entry. Each performance usually reflected how I was feeling at the time. On the anniversary of my mother's death I dressed up in a crazy black-and-white striped suit that looked like a broken television and had full black-and-white makeup on. I looked like a crazy person. I was still for the entire time. Another week I played a fortune teller and set up the box like a storefront window—complete with my cell phone number written on the glass. People called in and I told them their future. That was a big hit.

Now a clothing line? I've always had a sense for fashion. It was in "the box" that I came up with the idea of making clothing. I also had some ins, in the LA fashion world, due to my new girlfriend being a big model. I used the connections and started producing funky t-shirts that were a hit and got the Bohemian Society a spot in LA Fashion Week.

What's behind the name?

The Bohemian Society is a club; a group of like-minded individuals who don't play by the rules of regular society. I also based the name on the group of world players and politicians that meet near San Francisco every year; apparently these guys get together and decide how the next year's world events will play out. Calling the shots. That is what interests me. I ultimately see the Bohemian Society as a multimedia, rock star monolith. I want to combine all my talents and interests under one

big umbrella: fashion, film, music, architecture, home furnishings, etc. I plan on purchasing a large building to be the world headquarters. Bohemian Island.

Fashion's future? I see fashion and technology melding more in the near future. If people wear a certain name brand across their chest, why not wear a fabric television screen that shows your favorite sitcoms or commercials? One touch and your red shirt turns green or whatever color, print, or image you fancy at the time. I see my clothing as a form of communication. A message to other members of the Boho Society saying, "Yeah I'm in, I know the score."

Look for Bohemian Society at: Fred Segal, J Ransom, Tryst, Black Market, Diavolina, A Mason, Work In Progress in NY, Shimmer in Jamaica, SoHo in Texas.

Who's wearing it: Sharon Stone, Dave Navarro, George Clinton, Steven Tyler, Ashley Simpson, Grand Wizard Theodore, Junkie XL, all the Wayans brothers, Melissa Etheridge, Cherry Monroe, Natalia Livingston, Seth Green, Handsome Boy Modeling School, Dominic Mounaghan, Omar Epps, Paris Hilton, etc.

