



David Alexander **FLINN**

Photography CRAIG McDEAN Styling KARL TEMPLER

THE NEW YORK-BASED ARTIST WITH A SLEW OF NEW PROJECTS FINDS INSPIRATION IN HIS MEDIEVAL ITALIAN ROOTS

DAVID ALEXANDER FLINN IN NEW YORK, APRIL 2014. COAT: RAF SIMONS / STERLING RUBY. PANTS: DIOR HOMME. ALL JEWELRY: FLINN'S OWN.

I didn't know what to expect from a model-turned-artist who was getting ready to direct his first horror film (inspired by cult Italian horror directors Dario Argento and Mario Bava) in northern Italy. But to understand 26-year-old David Alexander Flinn, you have to understand his formative roots growing up between New York and Turin, spending his summers roaming the secret passageways, moats, and towers of his family's castle, Lisignano, outside Piacenza. This "manly and brutal fortress," as Flinn describes it, was originally built by the Holy Roman emperor Frederick Barbarossa in the 1100s, and it's where Flinn came into his own creatively this past year. Unable to focus in the chaos of New York City, he went back to his roots. "I wrote, I got my vibes; it was really great," Flinn says. "I put on 10 pounds. I listened to the stories about the castle and spent a lot of time with my aunt, who is turning 96 this year."

Flinn has a strong connection to the past. "All my tattoos have medieval influences," he says. "I wasn't born in the right time." His grandmother Maria Teresa Maestri, the family matriarch, hid his partisan grandfather along with hundreds of others in the castle's attic during World War II. "She had high tea with the Germans and put a hole in the ceiling so that the partisans could listen to the conversations." That grandfather later became a historian and biographer, so it's no wonder that Flinn inherited a roving creative impulse. "Everyone in my family works really hard," he says. "That's how I was brought up. But it was hard to translate that ethic to art, because there are no real parameters. If I make 10 pieces in a week, is that working a lot, a little, too much?"

For his first feature-film project, he's drawing on the moody atmospherics of classic Argento thrillers, which he saw for the first time in an old farmer's house by the castle. Filming is set to begin in the coming months and will star model Jamie Bochert. In the meantime, Flinn is keeping busy with an online gallery

that he curates called the Infinity Pool; every month, he offers the virtual space to a different artist. He's also continuing his own sculptural compositions for several upcoming shows, including one solo show. Flinn's sculptures tend toward raw, organic abstractions that mix natural elements like feathers or teeth with more industrial matter like poured concrete. He finds much of his source material by the ocean. "I go to the beach, roll the dice, and see what's there," he says. "It's a place that allows you to remember who you are. That stone in the water is getting hit by a wave every second—whatever happens to your life won't affect it. You should just enjoy the ride." —CHIARA BARZINI

"I WASN'T BORN IN THE RIGHT TIME."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: DAVID ALEXANDER FLINN'S EX, 2013, PLASTER, STAINLESS STEEL. MONOLITH, 2013, STAINLESS STEEL, ALUMINUM, STONE. TRAIL, 2013, SOLID ALUMINUM, ALABASTER. PHOTO: ADAM IANNIELLO. ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND ENVOY ENTERPRISES. HAIR PRODUCTS: PHYTO, INCLUDING WET SCULPTING GEL. HAIR: ORLANDO PITA/ ORLO SALON. GROOMING: DIANE KENDAL. SPECIAL THANKS: PIER 59 STUDIOS. FASHION DETAILS PAGE 143.

