

Creative Control

The burgeoning trend of transshopping is pushing the boundaries of both the way you shop and the way artists create **BY KRISTY ALPERT**

ORIGINALLY STARTED in Frankfurt, Germany, as a social experiment to see how different forms of creativity arise from different means of communication, transshopping has become an underground retail experience that is quietly spreading to every continent.

Here's how it works: First, a shopper brings an item — a shirt, an heirloom, a photograph, etc. — to an artist, aka a “transformer.” The shopper sets their budget, and then, supplementing with other creative materials, the transformer creates something new, completely of their choosing, out of the given item. Beloved T-shirts become sofa covers, vintage perfume bottles dangle from chandeliers ... the only limit for a transformer is their own creativity.

“There are two simple, basic rules,” explains Ifuz, artist and founder of Transshopping.org. “One side cannot tell what to bring, and the other cannot tell what to make out of it. Both influence

the process, but no side has complete control. It is a creative way to support local artists, but it's also experimental, ecological and fun.”

There are now somewhere between 50 and 100 transformers around the world, many of whom work on their own trash-to-treasure projects in between works commissioned from shoppers.

“Transshopping is still a new and unknown concept,” Ifuz adds. “Do not wait until you stumble over an artist offering it. Take the initiative yourself.”

The adventure is in the unknown, however, so make sure that you choose an artist or designer whose work you enjoy, so that your grandmother's handkerchief comes back to you as a one-of-a-kind work of art you're proud to display.

RIGHT: Isabel Ott, a pioneer of transshopping, is the owner of Trashroyal.de in Berlin, where she regularly creates fresh, functional pieces out of discarded items for her clients. Medusa is a transformed work she crafted from eyeglasses, doll heads and billions of beads.



NOT-SO-SWEET SURPRISES

It's **National Ice Cream Month**, so let's all scream for (truly unusually flavored) ice cream **BY TODD AARON JENSEN**



LOBSTER ICE CREAM

Ben & Bill's Chocolate Emporium
Various locations in Maine and Massachusetts
TASTES LIKE: a buttery, salty cream with hearty chunks of lobster meat
Benandbills.com



BEER & COOKIES

Max & Mina's
Flushing, New York
TASTES LIKE: robust craft ale mingled with crunchy brown sugar and cocoa-charged cookies
Maxandminasicecream.com



DILL-PICKLE SORBET

Salt & Straw
Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon
TASTES LIKE: a light, refreshingly tart treat with dulcet dill and fennel-cucumber accents
Saltandstraw.com



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