

surface



The
ENDORSEMENTS

Our second annual
SURVEY OF RISING TALENTS
nominated by 14 leaders of design

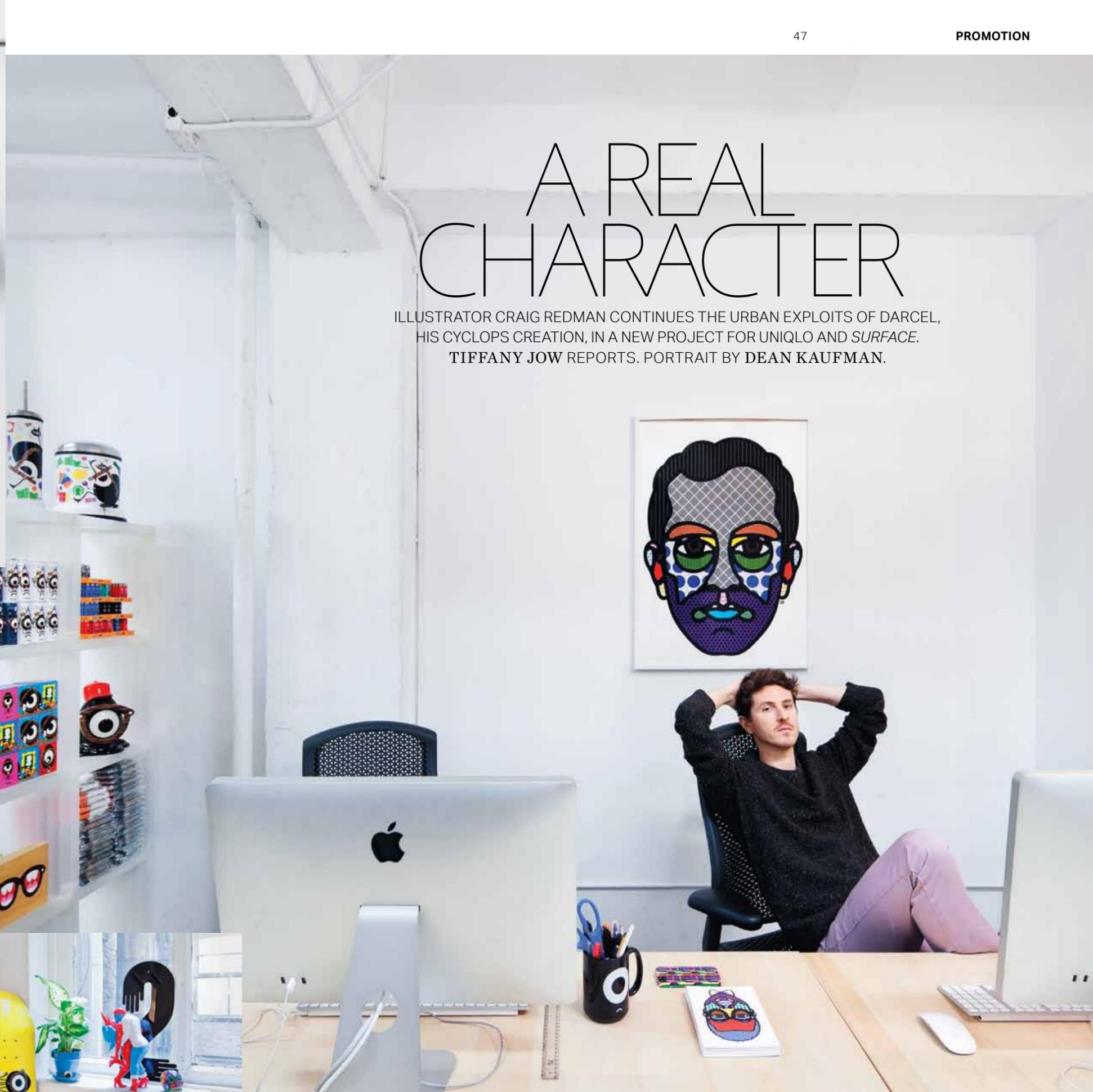
An ovate Cyclops named Darcel is the star of illustrator Craig Redman's blog *Darcel Disappoints*, which the 34-year-old Australian started after winning a U.S. green card through an online lottery in 2007. The project was Redman's way of recording grumpy observations about sixth-floor walk-ups, tedious coffee queues, awkward subway encounters, and drunken art openings—all elements of his current home, New York. "Darcel experiences the same trivialities as everyone else in a city, but with an optimistic sense of humor," Redman says. Today, the egg-shaped fashion-world habitué commands a cult following.

In Redman's tee for Uniqlo and *Surface*, Darcel is depicted struggling to deflect pieces of a skateboard he's broken during a disastrous fall. He's rendered in vivid colors and basic shapes, like most of Redman's creations. "Darcel helped me simplify my work," Redman says. "I realized I didn't need to be so convoluted to get an idea

across." His pared-down approach caught the eye of Sarah Andelman, creative director of Colette, for which Redman has crafted a number of Darcel-covered objects such as lighters, Christmas cards, iPhone cases, and a shirt for its Chanel pop-up shop. Last February, the Parisian boutique celebrated its 15th anniversary with a showcase featuring Redman's portraits of style icons including Yves Saint Laurent, Björk, and Steve Jobs. Redman has also launched projects with Adidas Originals, Project No. 8, and the French furniture brand LAQ.

Redman grew up in New South Wales and dreamed of becoming an architect. As a youngster, he would trace images by Australian artists Norman Lindsay, Albert Tucker, and Albert Namatjira from his father's art history books. "I carried a gridded pad everywhere," Redman says. "I always knew I wanted to do something creative."

While studying design at Griffith University in Brisbane, he met the illustrator Karl Maier, with whom he founded the design studio Craig & Karl in 2011. Despite their disparate geographical locations—Maier lives in London—the duo creates murals, typography, housewares, textile patterns, and illustrations for the likes of LVMH, Google, Nike, and *The New York Times*. Bold, witty, and color-happy, their eclectic influences range from the Renaissance to Memphis design to John Baldessari. "We brainstorm over Skype and swap artwork," Redman says.



A REAL CHARACTER

ILLUSTRATOR CRAIG REDMAN CONTINUES THE URBAN EXPLOITS OF DARCEL, HIS CYCLOPS CREATION, IN A NEW PROJECT FOR UNIQLO AND *SURFACE*. TIFFANY JOW REPORTS. PORTRAIT BY DEAN KAUFMAN.

Outside of Darcel, Redman's solo work is equally transfixing. He's continually creating renditions of his psychedelic portraits, which began in 2009 as a black-and-white series of his friends. They've evolved into a multicolored extravaganza that boils celebrity faces down to their most recognizable parts and covers them in blown-up geometric patterns. "I prefer to meet with the subject and take photographs," Redman says. "Otherwise I pull together reference images and 'Frankenstein' them together until I reach a composition I'm happy with." The colors tie into the individual's personality: a portrait of New York Knicks forward Carmelo Anthony is detailed in his team's blue and orange, while Valentino Garavani is in red—a riff on his signature dresses.

This year Redman will tackle a capsule collection for Kate Spade, glassware for Coca-Cola, and pieces for a Colette/Vipp collaboration. Despite his wide-ranging client base, Redman plans to continue the art of visual and narrative reduction he's mastered, thanks to Darcel. "My work seems simplistic at first. But if you dig deeper, the complexities reveal themselves," Redman says. "Darcel shows there are two sides to every story." uniqlo.com

(TOP TO BOTTOM) Redman's T-shirt design for *Surface*'s collaboration with Uniqlo. A Darcel skateboard Redman created for Colette. (OPPOSITE) Redman in his New York studio.