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Mimi Vu, "Witty Watercolors by Konstantin Kakania," T Magazine, July 13, 2018.

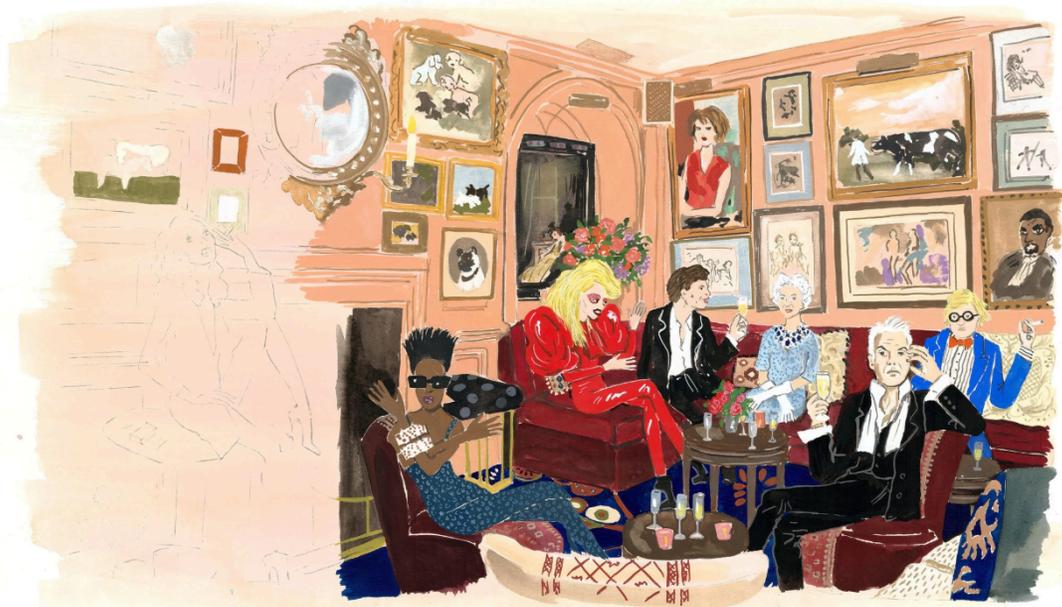
T THE NEW YORK TIMES STYLE MAGAZINE

THINGS EDITORS LIKE

Rainbow Furniture, Nighties and More Things T Editors Like Right Now

A by-no-means exhaustive list of the things our editors (and a few contributors) find interesting on a given week.

July 13, 2018



Konstantin Kakania's "Chez Annabel's," 2014. Credit: Courtesy of the artist and Gavlak Gallery.

Witty Watercolors by Konstantin Kakania

In 2012, Deborah Needleman, then the editor of T magazine, approached the artist Konstantin Kakania for a special commission to illustrate the standout heels of the

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season, from the likes of Louis Vuitton, Giorgio Armani and Christian Dior. The sketch he delivered, called “The Cat’s Meow” — in which a black cat delicately paws past a lineup of black stiletto pumps, gazing at them with bemusement — perfectly embodied Kakania’s playful view of the fashion world.

So began a fruitful relationship between Kakania and T, which produced what the artist calls a “kaleidoscope of drawings” numbering in the hundreds. Some 60 of these gouache, watercolor and pencil illustrations — often made in transit, at hotels and in friends’ homes, and then dispatched by post to the magazine — have now been gathered for a show, called “The Times,” which opens on July 21 at the Gavlak Gallery in Los Angeles.

The work of the Greek-born, L.A.-based Kakania has been a fixture in various sections of The New York Times since 1989. His most famous sketches depict his imaginary alter ego, a bouffant-haired, aquiline-nosed doyenne named Mrs. Tependris, as she flits about fashion shows offering up amusing observations and *bons mots*. At T, where he served as a contributing editor for five years, Kakania has been tasked with illustrating everything from a simple handbag to imaginary scenarios inside famed establishments. In one such *mise-en-scène* (pictured above), David Hockney, Grace Jones and Lady Gaga hobnob with Queen Elizabeth II inside the legendary London nightclub Annabel’s, an image that made the magazine’s cover.

For Kakania, the fashion world has always been a rich source of sociological insight. “I went to the Givenchy show, and I was absolutely fascinated by the seating,” he says of one particular presentation, where V.I.P.s sat in a large circle of outward-facing seats, as if playing a game of musical chairs. “I didn’t even see the show. For me, I would rather draw the seating or the entrance — that’s where the really interesting stories are.” “*The Times*” opens on July 21 at the Gavlak Gallery, 1034 North Highland Avenue, Los Angeles, gavlagallery.com — MIMI VU