

# FINE PRINT

THE CREATIVE WUNDERKIND BEHIND NEW YORK'S WALLCOVERING UPSTART, VOUTSA, GEORGE VENSON USHERS IN A WHOLE NEW GENERATION OF DESIGN LOVERS WHO BELIEVE PATTERN MAKES PERFECT.

WRITTEN BY BRIELLE M. FERREIRA / PORTRAIT BY CHRIS GLOAG

"No one can pronounce it," says George Venson, with a laugh, in reference to the name of his devil-may-care design house, Voutsá—an abridged version of his father's family's pre-Ellis Island Greek surname. And while that might be mostly true (for the record, it's I voot I - sä), it's had no bearing whatsoever on the company's rapid ascent. Venson's bold, at times risqué, wallpapers almost instantly found their niche after Voutsá's launch in 2013, and his devotees have hardly let phonetics get in the way of translating the brand's whimsical prints into statement-making backdrops for daring interiors.

Voutsá's painterly collections feature wild and fantastical illustrations—from giant watercolor lips and coral-grazing goldfish to elegant birds-of-paradise and Russian dancers in mid-waltz. They're all fun and eye-catching, but if Voutsá's nearly meteoric rise can be attributed to any one thing, it's to Venson's own sheer force of will: his aversion to trends and his self-professed interest in charting his own course. "I have no desire to make the typical, expected things," he says. "I want everything I do to have a bit of a twist, something no one sees coming."

It seems obvious, then, that a year after his first wallpaper collection premiered to great success, the artist-turned-product designer was on to the next thing: a capsule fashion line—in collaboration with Paul Marlow, the couture mastermind behind the retired menswear collective Loden Dager—rendered from Voutsá's most popular patterns, which he's currently traveling to promote in a series of international pop-up shops, like his latest in London, at right. "When I first started working with Paul, I told him I wanted to create clothing that represented my ideal look—from head to toe," Venson explains. "We did tunics and shirts and bandannas, focusing on well-made pieces with classic cuts that could fit different body types."

For Venson, though, it's not just about outfitting a body or a room; it's about capturing a lifestyle—regardless of if that life is being carried out in a New York City apartment or in the Oval Office (a name he drops when asked for his dream commission). "I have a wonderfully diverse base of people interested in the work I do at Voutsá," he says. "Whether it's one of my wallpapers getting selected for a high-end project by a big decorator or a printed scarf going home with someone in Wyoming, I love that each person can take away a piece of this fantasy world I've created."

