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Z I N E

MY MERSEY PARADISE

Collaborative exhibition which demonstrates how Liverpool is in a league of it's own when it comes to the obsession with footwear.

WE ARE FASHION

in collaboration with *transalpino*

We talk about The Fashion of Counter Culture, Obsession, Style and Place with the UK's leading dead stock specialist.

TRAINERS
SNEAKERS
KICKS+WEBS
STRIDES+SOLES
CREPS+BEATERS
TRABS+TRAINEES

Whatever you call your footwear, there is a particular tribe who are obsessive about theirs.

volume 01 / paradise
summer 2020



image from Scottie Press archive

with

@transalpino liverpool

IN CONVERSATION WITH

transalpino

MY MERSEY PARADISE

In 2015 Transalpino established itself in a new retail space amongst a crowd of other independent traders on Bold Street, Liverpool. It wasn't long before they became one of the UK's leading destination stores for rare and vintage trainers.

Liverpool is now acknowledged as the birthplace of Terrace Fashion and has an ongoing fascination and obsession with trainer culture. For those who have never heard the story, Transalpino was named after the Liverpool travel agency of the early 80's of which many students and Liverpool FC supporters who would book their trips into Europe. We've been told, with a bit of ingenuity you could buy a ticket from Liverpool to Berlin for a few pounds, but armed with a little break fluid and an ink rubber the ticket could be changed to any destination in Europe you wanted... hello Oostende, Munich and Madrid.

In 1981 Liverpool had reached the European Cup Final to be played in Paris and travelling by Transalpino was the only way. During this time there were many local lads setting off on regular inter-continental trips, following the beautiful game they brought back an array of premium fashion labels, from Sergio Tacchini and Fila to Lacoste, along with what became some of the most iconic fashion items of Terrace Casual Culture, adidas Munchens and Trimm Trabs.

Fast forward to 2020 and the boys of Transalpino are still hunting for the rare and the vintage, but now to satisfy a global market. Their stock now finds itself heading towards countries as far flung as Russia, Mexico, Japan, Argentina and Brazil, and of course, the locals are still following steadily.

One of the most interesting stories back when Transalpino opened its doors on the high street is the SL Loop phenomenon. We talk to Jockey about the Super Light and how important Casual Culture is over 40 years later.





Liverpool is credited with being the pioneers of the Terrace Casuals, how is that culture still relevant today?

Instagram:
@transalpinoliverpool

Size:
9

First Pair:
Gola Cobra 1976

Latest Pair:
adidas SL80

Holy Grail:
Mitre Memphis

PO: Hello Jockey, good to be talking with you again today. As you know since the Fashion of Counter Culture exhibition we did together back in 2018 we've been getting to know the trainer subculture in Liverpool. I'm fascinated by the stories but can you tell us a bit more about trainer culture?

BW: It all started when I was a kid, and I used to travel abroad with Liverpool using the Transalpino travel agency. But even before that, probably in around '78, I was only 12 is when I saw the lads here starting to dress differently. They started wearing branded jackets and trainees - and it's been the same since.

Around that time I think people started to notice something in Merseyside; because it was when all the clobber starting coming back from Europe. Lads were bringing back Tacchini, Fila and Trimm Trabs. And that look went onto the football terraces. It was a distinctive look, and people are acknowledging this now.

PO: So that culture has a strong history here in Liverpool?

BW: Oh yeah, those Liverpool lads where pioneers of style.

PO: Do you think the idea of wearing the sports shoe as a fashion statement started in Liverpool?

BW: Undoubtedly, it was part of that spirit of individuality.

PO: That pioneering and idea of individuality has since been commercialised, and the high street is cloned everywhere all over the world. So when it comes to trainer or sneaker culture today in Liverpool or Merseyside, how does that look?

BW: Well, the veterans are still here, and the collectors of course. But along with them are the teenagers and lads in their 20's and 30's also acknowledging that casual culture.

We re-launched Transalpino five years ago after doing the first Laces Out. I knew Rob who was organising the trainer festival and still had some old stock from the previous shop, so gave it a go and couldn't believe the response. I started picking up more pieces and then an opportunity came along to have a retail space on the high street and took a gamble.

PO: So, is it safe to say that trainers are a staple fashion item in Liverpool?

BW: 100% and that's not just the love of three stripe, lads are wearing stuff from Nike, Lanvin and Valentino.

PO: I've heard about the queues outside the shop. It sounds like a Supreme drop. That wasn't for vintage was it?

BW: No, that was the SL Loop?

PO: OK.

BW: Through some of my contacts, we heard of a shoe in the US that wasn't really selling over there. The SL Loop, was a revision celebrating the original blue and white adidas SL72 from the 1972 Munich Olympics.

PO: So how did hundreds of trainer enthusiasts and fans get to know you had SL Loop here?

BW: Social media. The day we launched the SL Loop there was a queue outside the shop and the takings that day equated to the best ever day in the old Transalpino which closed in 2010. We ended up selling 2500 pairs from Bold Street. The scousers went mad for it. Demand was so high I ended up flying to America three times in a week to keep up.

PO: It seems Liverpool has something deeply rooted within it's identity with trainer culture, all of which started from those embryonic days of the late 1970's and early 1980's. Would you agree?

BW: Yes, definitely, Liverpool has always had a love affair with football and fashion. Just like we saw with our Counter Culture exhibition, Liverpool has an 'obsession' with 'style'.

PO: Do you also think that the subculture, arguably steeped in rebellion took the sportswear industry by surprise and that Liverpool as a city was responsible for raising the adidas profile away from the traditional sporting arena?

BW: Those young streetwise kids from Liverpool should be credited with being pioneers of fashion. I don't know why adidas are so big here, I suppose it's because of the early days of the Trimm Trab.

PO: So to finish, people will want to know if you have a particular favourite shoe?

BW: I don't really, it changes every week. But I do like the SL80 - Super Light, designed for the Moscow Olympics in 1980. It wasn't designed for the track, but for the athletes to wear around the Olympic village.

PO: Jock, thanks again. It's been great talking with you.

BW: Alright, thanks.



Z I N E

Love them or hate them, trainers are a huge part of today's **global fashion** industry, now tipped to be worth a projected \$95.14 billion dollar business* by 2025, nearly doubling from its \$55 billion dollar valuation in 2016. The high end brands have moved in on the action created by the **original Terrace Casuals**.

* www.fashionista.com/2019/03/sneaker-industry-market-trends-2019

SoleZine is a new project dedicated to recording trainer culture

This ongoing project starts with **My Mersey Paradise**, as we start to create an archive of stories from you.

From the football terraces to the city suburbs, we're digitally recording artefacts, collecting photography, interviewing and documenting other clobber that informed the **Terrace Casuals movement** and beyond to highlight impact and significance of **menswear** and **regional identity** starting with **Liverpool**.

The Casuals have transitioned deeply into **global mens' fashion culture** and psyche. We're interested in the OG and the new emerging style codes. So, if you have a story of a Samba, Mamba, Bamba or Kick, or even a Trimm Trab, Forest Hills or SL we'd love to hear from you.

Get in touch via **instagram @sole_magazine**

"Not for everyone, but the design details in this shoe are impressive - the vario lacing system particularly innovative."

#adidas Questar 1987
@refreshed.kicks

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Let's start talking trainers.



#MY MERSEY PARADISE

100 stories from you.

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Whilst in lockdown...



"It all started with a Kick when I was nine or 10 years old."

#adidas Kick
@grandadi_tony

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Whilst we're in lockdown we want your help.



#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Let's start talking trainers.



#MY MERSEY PARADISE

100 stories from you.



#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Whilst in lockdown...



"The comfy little flat."

#adidas Brussel
@dokeyp

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

"The first few pairs to arrive in Liverpool back from trips to Germany in '83-'84. People asking to buy them off my feet... by '84 they were very big in the city."

#adidas Waterproof 1983
@jezza1966

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Let's start talking trainers.



"19 years old on the dole, my love of trainees and fashion brought me up Slater Street."

#adidas Trimm Trab
@TrimmTrabTales

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Let's start talking trainers.



#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Archiving Subculture.

"Something that was a popular choice for Liverpool lads in the early 80's. Not considered special at the time, but super soft and now super rare."

#adidas Zelda
@vintage_trainer_repairs68

#MY MERSEY PARADISE

Archiving Subculture.



Liverpool has fashion deeply rooted in its identity. The Terrace Casuals were born in the late 70's on the terraces of Anfield and Goodison. This British Subculture went on to influence modern menswear as we know it today. Arguably it provided the first accessible space where the working-class man could engage with fashion in a positive format.

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