

Sai

The designer famous for his insta viral 'Hot Wok' tops and signature technicolour tie-dye designs

A



Ta



ASAI TA British-Chinese-Vietnamese designer, A Sai Ta, has asserted himself as a cryptic fashion force to be reckoned with. A conundrum of talent - he allows few to enter into his circle and leaves many knowing little about him. At least not of him as an individual, or as the face that's behind the ASAI brand.

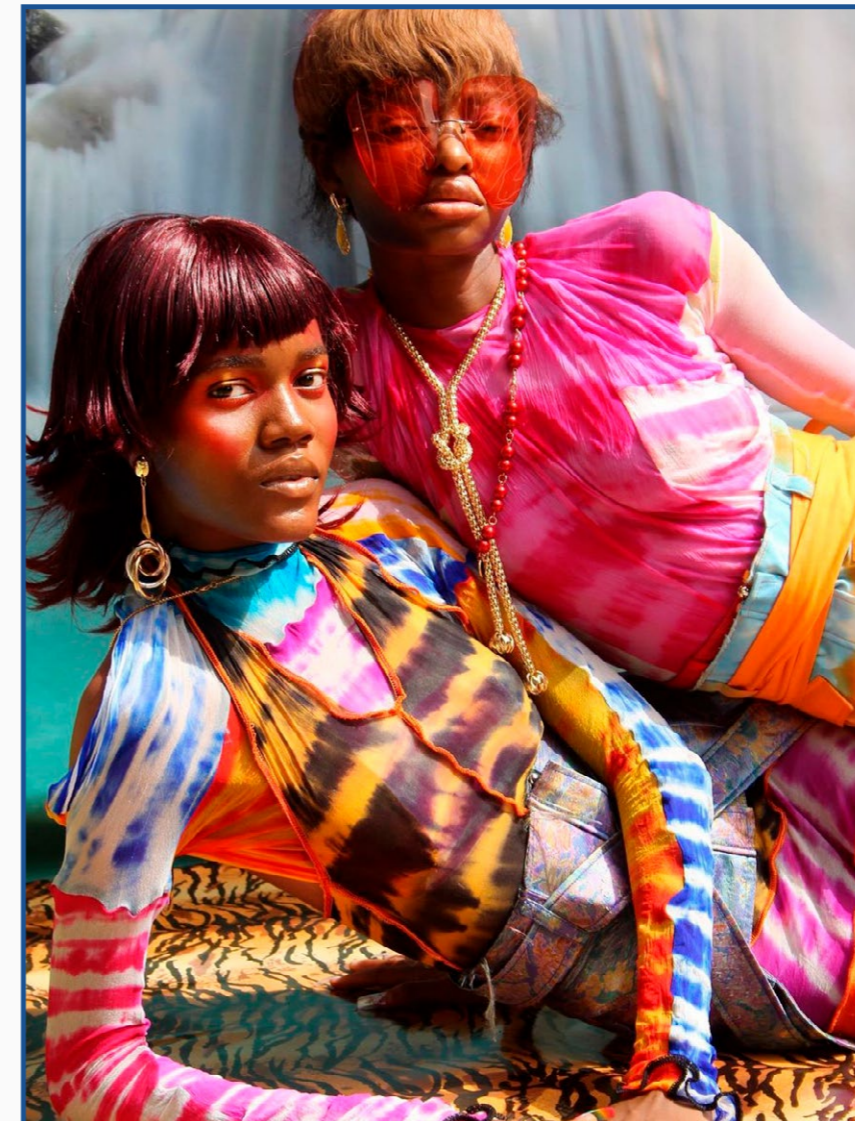
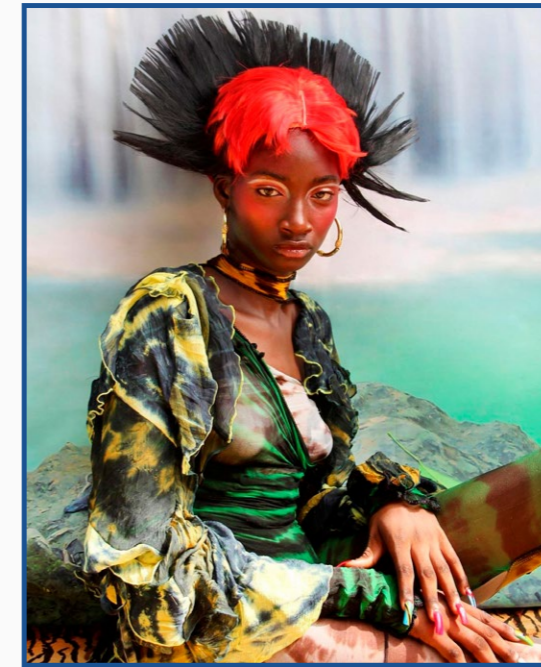
Since stepping boldly into London's fashion scene in 2017; Ta, who was first picked up by Lulu Kennedy's non-profit fashion support scheme, Fashion East, has rapidly harmonised his brand and its messaging into the mainstream fashion world. The scheme, which typically only supports a designer for 3 seasons, supported Ta for 4 collections, and enabled awareness of the brand to expand expeditiously.

ASAI's messaging carries many meanings in its plurality, from; 'Actively Seeking Alternative Ideas' to 'Actively Standing Against Injustice'. The encapsulating acronymization of ASAI, moulds itself to the political, cultural landscapes and the fashion zeitgeist of the time.

His signature technicolour tie-dye designs that stand out in a kaleidoscopic ensemble of vibrancy,

pattern and texture, have inundated Instagram's explore page of late. Appearing on a variety of pop culture fashion moguls, from influencers to music artists. His talents have acquired him an impressive roster of celebrity clients and collaborations, including a collection in partnership with the OG Fashion Killa herself, RiRi, for her Fenty brand. Jorja Smith, Dev Hynes, Teyana Taylor, all feature among others to have worn his brand.

Though the fame has never gotten to his head - perhaps alluding to the fact he actively takes a back seat stance in performing in a public fronting role for his brand. Those who've been around since the emergence of his career know the face behind ASAI, and those who've only recently become aware of the label likely know very little about him. Which, I think, is the way he likes it. His humble approach, breathes fresh air into a suffocating, fame-led construct fashion finds itself in at present. Rather the reverse of any kind of ego inflation from the fame of his brand, for Ta, it seems to have humbled him even more: "I'm inspired to create; to explore; to express; to change; to grow; to see; and just to be."



HERITAGE AS IF AN IDEA TO BE ACHIEVED

RIGHT PAGE
SHOT FOR: ASAI
PHOTOGRAPHER: DANIEL OBASI
STYLIST: DANIEL OBASI
MAKE UP: VISAGE DE COULEUR
HAIR: SEUN
MODELS: DAMILOLA, TOLU SOETAN
& TEMIDAYO SANUSI

Ta places heritage at the forefront of his womenswear label, but regularly showcases that his creative exploration goes beyond this: “Heritage plays a huge part at times, in the sense that it’s ever present. But in reality, it is such a small part of the expansive worlds that I explore and have displayed; that go beyond heritage,” he says.

He has continued to defy all fashion conventions, sticking to an authentic style and sense of self, that has transcended into all of his collections. “Fashion is the most inspiring when it’s just an idea or feeling that exists in my head,” he explains, whilst working tirelessly on completing his Spring/Summer 2022 collection.

His kind natured approach has set a precedent - that you can be as successful and remain true to yourself, and the core messaging of your brand. Going back to his roots, Ta’s experiences of otherness as a person of colour and second generation immigrant, growing

up in Britain, have shaped his outlook on life. He gives me an insight into what this was like for him: “I grew up being called Andrew, for assimilation to my western surroundings in London.” The distance he felt in an effort to assimilate into a community that naturally he wasn’t a part of, birthed ASAI: “A Sai was what I saw on paper, and it felt distant to me.” He continues: “In choosing to be called A Sai, I guess I questioned the space between the A and S, and chose to close it for myself.”

The former Fashion East designer who’s raw talent is ever evolving, talks of his place in life right now: “I’ve been learning to come closer in becoming A Sai / ASAI and understanding what that word means to me both; conceptually and culturally,” he says. Whilst many of us await impatiently for the next collection, I ask him when we can next expect to see ASAI on a Fashion Week schedule, to which he replies: “Never expect anything. Every street’s a catwalk!”

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**“NEVER EXPECT ANYTHING.
EVERY STREET’S A CATWALK!”**





“I’M INSPIRED TO CREATE;
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TO CHANGE; TO GROW; TO
SEE; AND JUST TO BE.”

LEFT PAGE
SHOT FOR: ASAI
PHOTOGRAPHER: OLIVER HADLEE PEARCH
HAIR: CYN DIA HARVEY
MODELS: AALIYAH, IMARI, BLÉS NYA & ELIBEIDY