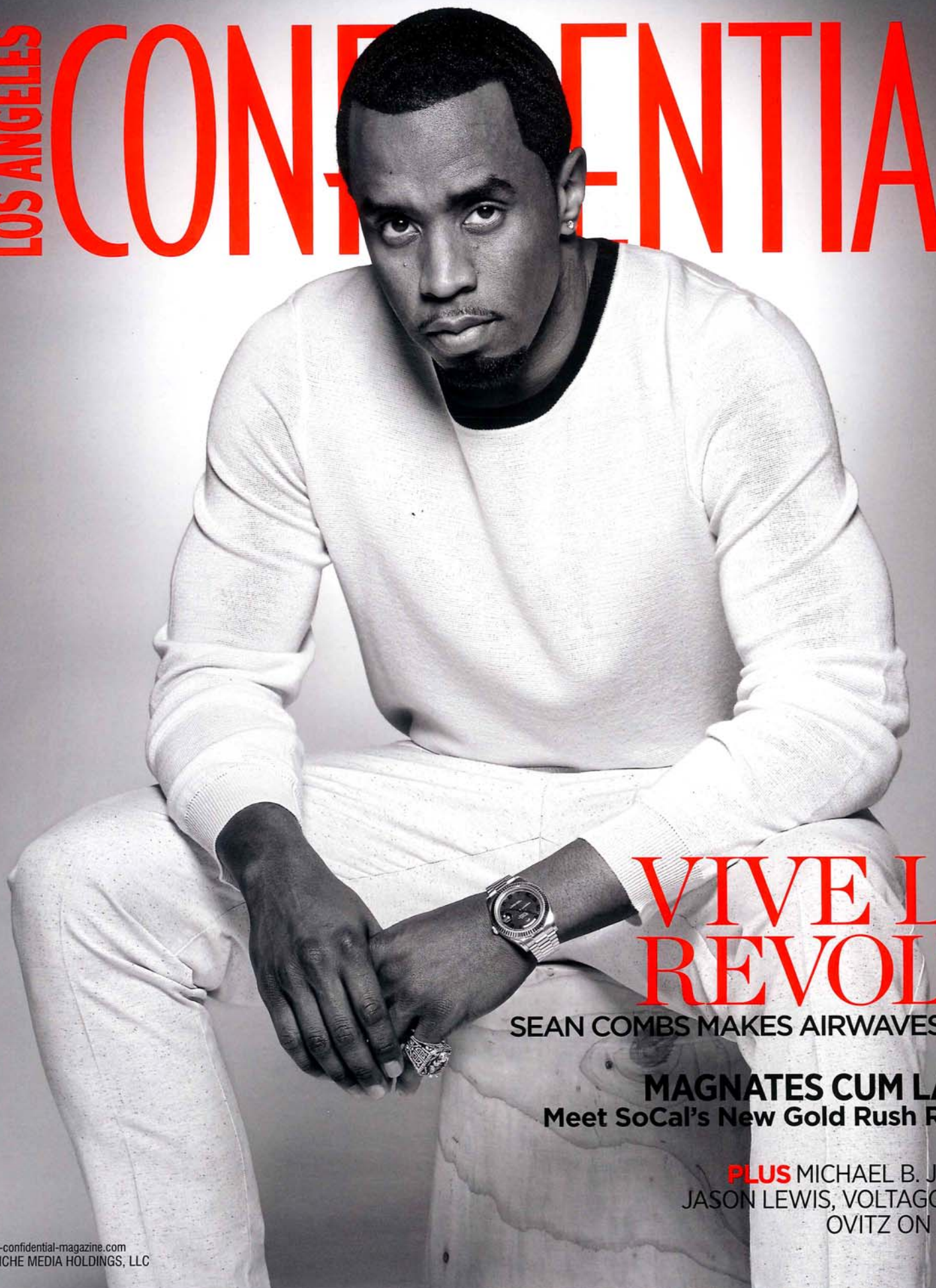


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Thomas Schoos's West Hollywood store is a multisensory menagerie for the aesthetically minded.

little shop of marvels

JET-SETTING DESIGNER/ARTIST THOMAS SCHOOS RETURNS TO WEHO WITH COLLECTIBLE DELECTABLES FOR THE HOME. BY JADE CHANG

It isn't Thomas Schoos's first foray into retail. His former Melrose Avenue store, Thomas Schoos Design, was a late-'90s celebrity magnet. "You'd have the cast of *Friends* sitting on sofas in the front and Madonna doing yoga in the back garden," says Schoos. But after the success of the celeb-laden sushi hub Koi Restaurant on La Cienega, the 45-year-old German-born designer with a flair for restaurant design shuttered the store to focus on his growing interiors firm, turning out expansive, eclectic spaces full of surprise and drama, like O-Bar, Tao (in Vegas and NYC), five of the restaurants of *Iron Chef's* Masaharu Morimoto, and residential projects for Will Smith, Courteney Cox, and Ellen DeGeneres.

Now he's back with Schoos Night, a jewel box in West Hollywood that opened this spring. Almost everything here is Schoos's own design—or a unique piece he has collected—but the influences are global. Some items are inspired by jewelry designer Melinda Maria's work. A delicate seed-pod bangle, for example, finds itself re-created as an accent table, a chandelier, and a door handle. Other pieces are rendered in a beautifully cured leather that turns out to be salmon skin, treated using a traditional

Inuit method. The store also serves as a showcase-cum-warehouse for pieces destined for one of his 20 ongoing hospitality and residential projects. As they cycle out, new offerings will arrive.

In the narrow hallway that separates the 950-square-foot store from his studio space, Schoos is painting a pig on a 16-by-5-foot canvas. When it's done, the handsome swine will hang on the wall of a Searsucker restaurant in Austin, Texas. A suite of abstract paintings was created for Morimoto Mexico City, and later this year Schoos will open his first solo art show, at the famed Dashanzi 798 Art District in Beijing.

A fan of those grand homes on the Mediterranean full of treasures from a lifetime of travel, Schoos brings the same approach to his designs. "I go from grunge to mixing colors to African with Indian and contemporary '60s mod, back to Hollywood glam to 'How can we do tie-dye with design?'" He looks down at his own shirt, ocean blue bisected by a tie-dyed slash of sunset orange, and laughs. "This is something design lives and breathes for—to be new every time." 8275 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, 323-822-2807; schoosretailstores.com LAC