



ski
&
art

KATIE
BAMBER

ARTISTS
INSPIRED BY
SKIING

Lannoo

Jill Richie



Danny Touw



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Pete Caswell⁰²²

Simon Charrière⁰³⁴

Thomas Danthony⁰⁴⁶

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Danny Touw²²²

Lamont Joseph White²³⁴

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The spirit of place

Thomas
Danthony



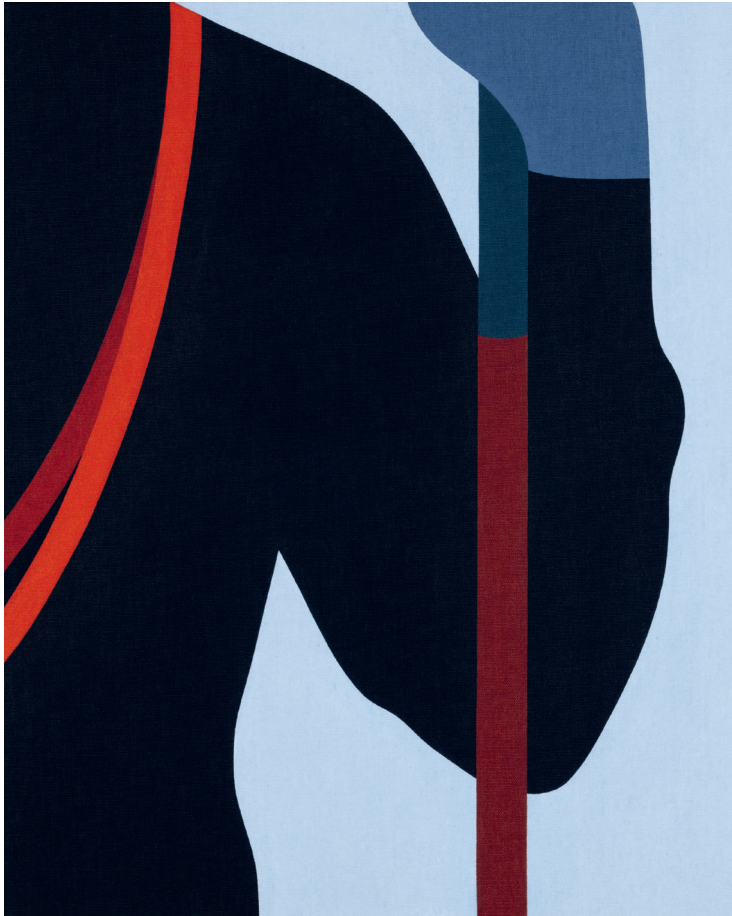
**French illustrator,
designer and artist
Thomas Danthony
works in high contrast
and atmospheric moods.
A climber himself,
his focus turns to
landscapes and climate,
reflecting on wilder
terrain and a quieter,
more deliberate way
of enjoying snow.**



‘Versatility is what has kept me going for so long: one day designing a stamp, the next a billboard.’







Q & A

Thomas Danthony

Barcelona, Spain

Can you tell us about your relationship with the mountains?

I was born in the south of France, between the Alps and the Pyrenees, but not really close to either. My parents used to do a lot of skiing so I learned early and grew up Nordic skiing every winter in the Massif Central and the Alps. These days, I am mostly a climber. There was more rock than snow where I grew up, so it gained the upper hand. Then, when I lived in London and Barcelona, my outdoor time was spent climbing. Now I split my time between Barcelona and a small village in the French Pyrenees that sits at 1,750 metres (5,700 feet) of elevation, so backcountry skiing is on the cards.

Your piece 'Mézens' refers to the mountain and ski area in the Massif Central where you spent time as a child. Why did you turn it into a subject?

Mézens is an iconic mountain in the Massif Central; it's pretty wild but with a small Nordic ski area at its base. My family is originally from the area, and it's where my parents first skied in the 1970s. It's also where I took my partner to ski for the first time. It's a place that can have very harsh winters and it's common for trees on the mountain to be caked in ice and snow.

You've created film posters for Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and *The Birds*. Beyond those, what have been some of your most rewarding collaborations?

Each one is rewarding in a different way. Sometimes it's by working with institutions I respect, like *The New Yorker* or the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation.

My collaboration with Magnum won several awards; it always feels nice to get a little validation from the industry.

Then, for the covers I illustrated for *Summit* journal – the relaunched mountaineering publication – I got to combine two of my life's passions: climbing and image making. It's also always rewarding to spot my work when I'm out and about, like on a book cover or metro advertisements. But I also get a sense of reward from good collaborations, well-executed projects or just receiving well-made prints.

From travel-inspired paintings to film posters and editorial illustrations, your output is wide-ranging. What do you make of this versatility?

Versatility is what has kept me going for so long: one day designing a stamp, the next a billboard. *Variety is the spice of life*. I love that I can have a commercial practice and take commissions, while also pursuing my own projects with a completely different mindset.

Your work is often linked to Art Deco or Film Noir. Do those feel like traditions you're working within or points of reference?

I love early 20th-century posters and really admire the level of craft involved in the old days before computers. That said, I don't really see myself working within these traditions. For example, I am often attached to the Film Noir aesthetic, but this might come from the fact that I like high contrasts and atmospheric moods, which landed me commissions for illustrations related to this particular topic, but it's not a point of reference.

You've created work inspired by locations around the world. What makes a place visually compelling to you?

There are no rules and the desire to make an image can surprise me; sometimes places I love don't inspire me that much creatively. It often starts with a particular detail, an atmosphere or the need to bring together a global experience. Sometimes it is also a way to visit places virtually, through research and books.

Colour is a striking aspect of your work. What's your starting point when choosing colours?

Colours have always been very difficult for me – they come at the cost of millions of iterations, and choosing them is often the most painful part of the process. They are extremely important for setting the mood and at the same time they are less systematic than the composition; they have a lot to do with feelings.

How do you balance digital tools with analogue techniques, and what guides those choices?

On commercial projects, I mostly work digitally because it's faster and more flexible. But I really value working in an analogue way, and

over the last ten years I have been trying to spend less time in front of a computer. Experimentation and learning new techniques has been a core part of my practice. I usually have a precise idea of a final look and will experiment until I find my own way to achieve it. And when it comes to printing I really like prioritising non-digital techniques like screen printing, stencils, letterpress, etc. While digital tools can be extremely powerful, they need to stay tools in a process and I don't feel as satisfied when the final form of a project is digital. Commercial projects have a very structured process. For personal work it's very different: I try to have no precise rules and am guided by gut feeling. Another big difference is that there is no outside input until the piece or project is finished, which can be very challenging.

Has there been a particular project, place or period that has significantly shaped your journey as an artist?

I think moving to London after my studies completely opened my mind in terms of what is possible as a creative career. I moved there after studying industrial design in France, and discovered the world of illustration, which I was already practising but without ever thinking of it as a potential career. London in the 2010s was very vibrant and dynamic.

Have you got a parting message?

There are few places where climate change is more visible or rapid than the mountains. I think it's our duty – as skiers, mountaineers and mountain artists – to promote a more sustainable practice: wilder landscapes, and a new narrative where enjoying snow isn't tied to industrial, soon-obsolete installations. One that values effort, restraint and special moments over consuming slope after slope. • 055

Photography portrait pictures

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Self portraits

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Cover image

Danny Touw, *Skiers in front of the Dents du Midi*

Back cover image

Simon Charrière
Sangwon Lee, *Ski Resort detail*
Pete Caswell, *Chair 22 Vail*

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