

# ONE NEW WORLD

a r t f a s h i o n m u s i c

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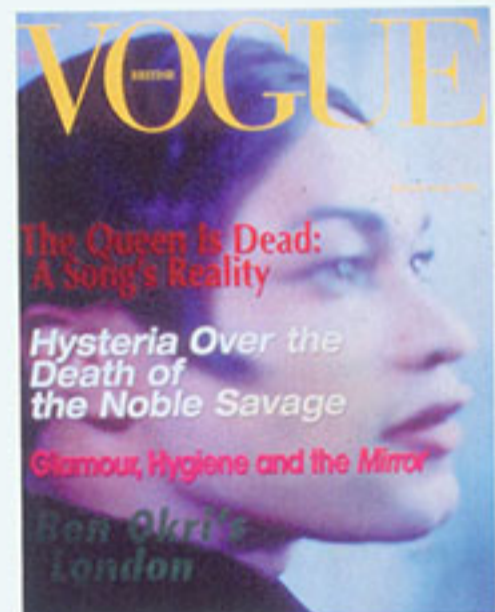
## The Millennialists

by WAYNE STERLING

*As we speed toward the year 2000, a discernible tension begins to spiral through a society where sensibilities forged in the late nineteenth century, concerning race, class, gender and sexuality, begin to clash with an individual's urge to forge his identity on his own honest terms. Artists are in many ways the shamen and oracles of our social psyche and it has been quite invigorating to notice a crop of creative individuals, whose collective antennas are tuned in to the day when that primitive ideal collapses. In addition to having that radical vision, they lie way beyond the usual silk-screen commodity games of "Gee..anybody could do this," that has rendered much of post-60's art so deadly boring. Remember now, formal rigor and intelligent discourse are chic again. We therefore present four "Millennialists," not because they are the "hottest" artists on the scene, though some wouldn't mind being indicted of this sin, but, because their works resonate with a challenge; a challenge for us to construct a social future in which being oneself is not an oppositional position.*

**IKÉ UDÉ,** Nigeria, conceptual artist

To call Ike Ude a profound, unrepentant narcissist is not to damn him with faint praise but to vindicate his tactic of using extreme self love as a barbed form of cultural intervention. What that means is he is interested in transcending mere self-absorption and developing a love of self that takes on symbolic and universal cultural value. His statement is that he is as an intelligent, empowered, man of Ibo-Nigerian descent, alive and well in the dwindling days of the twentieth century, and all who are like him in appearance and spirit should initiate a similar ceremony in themselves. He is equally committed to erasing the line between the masculine and the feminine and disinvesting the idea that this has any sexual ramifications. Bill T Jones, a performer par excellence, made the observation that when he is in Ude's company, the lines between life and art begin to vibrate and blur in the most fascinating way. It is this seductive vibratory capacity that has made him the poster boy (or is that Cover Girl) of the cosmopolitan intelligensia set including, but not limited to, bell hooks, Greg Tate and Lyle Ashton Harris, all co-conspirators in his forthcoming aRUDE, a magazine dedicated to clearing a historic social space. His newfound notoriety mushroomed after his Cover Girl installation at Exit Art and his participation in "Narcissistic Disturbances" with Lyle Ashton Harris at the Jack Tilton Gallery in LA. Legendary. In his contempt for anything or anyone "colonial," Ude serves an attitude in which polysyllables are the new obscenity and post-modern dandyism the new punk. He is a definitive futurist and Millennialist because he harkens to an entirely new way of conducting the dialogue across racial and gender lines. It is one in which we speak to each other not in the language of oppression and complaint, but in a language of resounding clarity.



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