

Digital Beauty

With an endless sea of possibilities in the digital realm, one artist is combining 3-D art and makeup with stunning results.



WITHIN THE DIGITAL WORLD, surprises lie hidden in almost every corner. Some manifest in the form of obnoxious and pesky computer viruses, while others can take the form of fascinating image filters. And on Snapchat and Instagram — with the latter being the axis of life for the millennial generation — new sources of amusement are ubiquitous. Amongst its wide ecology, the phantasmagorical, three-dimensional face makeup filters, created by Parisian digital makeup artist Ines Marzat, are becoming a sensation in recent times.

Marrying face tracking technology with enchanting face filters, Marzat, who goes by the moniker Ines Alpha on Instagram, is known to create surreal and futuristic-looking digital face masks (or as she calls it, “3-D digital makeup”) that can extend, bloom and sprout on the screen. For her recent project with Bimba y Lola, entitled “This is Human”, the Spanish label, which has been a regular supporter of emerging creatives, taps into Marzat’s ethereal aesthetic to create a series of six videos, which stars model and artist Soraya and features carryalls from the brand’s Fall/Winter ’19 collection, as well as an Instagram and Snapchat face filter.

Envisioning a future where digital beings and humans can co-exist in harmony, Marzat constructed a serene and make-believe reality that coalesces humans with the fantastical — and in this case, a naked and “raw” Soraya with an infectious, adorable “pet”. “In this new augmented reality, the human is newly born and she is welcomed by this cute pet. He is there to bring her love and offer her company in this foreign environment,” Marzat says.

In a world where the use of prosthetics in makeup and unorthodox cosmetic practices are becoming increasingly prevalent, digital makeup artists, like Marzat, are further pushing the boundaries of modern beauty with digital creations that blur the lines between reality and the augmented realm. The 34-year-old former advertising art director shares that the filters she creates use a combination of 3-D digital editing as well as real makeup effects.

“I started learning how to do 3-D makeup myself because I thought it would be fun. I was looking for a way to express myself and I have always been drawn to augmented reality. The most interesting for me was when I started adding 3-D elements to people’s faces. And to me, it’s 3-D makeup, it’s makeup for the future,” says Marzat. “And people were interested in that. I started having more collaborations and it was super exciting.”

While much of Marzat’s bewitching ornamental face masks stem from her fascination with the surreal and sci-fi world, Marzat, who is based in Paris, also draws inspiration from modern drag culture. “Drag queens are super creative and talented; they can do makeup, they can do hair, and they can even do comedy and dance,” she explains. “People can be very traditional, but I am not. I like difference. I like funny. When I see people on the Internet using makeup in a different way, I get excited and I am inspired to use makeup in a crazier manner.”

With close to 120,000 followers on Instagram and an impressive portfolio of collaborations, including English singer-songwriter Charli XCX and LGBT+ activist Munroe Bergdorf, Marzat’s continuous foray into the beauty industry has not

only transformed her attitude towards beauty standards, but also completely upended all notions of what makeup could be.

Rather than having people look a certain way with filters, Marzat hopes that her creations — running the gamut from filters that grow fins out of flesh to filters that blossom flowers out of the heads — can lead individuals to be more accepting towards different standards of beauty. “I think I’m definitely more mature about my art now. My works go beyond just having fun. I want to talk about beauty, beauty standards, and how we can push the boundaries of makeup further. I also want to talk about how people can express themselves. And I want to give more tools to people to be more creative and to do whatever they want to do. Even if they wear nothing, it’s cool too.” — Sng Ler Jun

Top and bottom: Stills from the campaign for Bimba y Lola’s “This is Human” campaign which was shot on the Galician coast and primarily featured model and artist Soraya.

