

K CRUSH

AMERICA

SEOUL FASHION
WEEK 2023
SPECIAL EDITION



Beyond Closet

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BUT DUE TO MY SCHEDULE, I MOSTLY SHOP ONLINE.



KCRUSH  INTERVIEW
WITH BEYOND CLOSET

Korean designer Ko Tae Yong launched Beyond Closet in Seoul in 2008 and has since been active as the brand's CEO, continuing to be active in the domestic and international fashion industry.

1. Please introduce the 'Beyond Closet' brand to KCrush readers who are enthusiastic about Korean culture. We also want to know behind the scene stories about the name and the story of the brand that started with 5 million won.

During my college years, I happened to transfer to a fashion-related department by chance, and watching a fashion show for a project became a turning point in my life.

'Beyond Closet' literally means to go beyond the closet. Inspired by my childhood memories of favorite clothes that were always kept outside of the closet, we launched the brand with the motto of creating favorite clothes that we love to wear frequently.

While attending college, the 5 million won I gathered from an online shopping mall became the funding for my first fashion show, and now it has become a 16-year-old brand.

2. What is the brand philosophy and vision of 'Beyond Closet'?

To reinterpret classic styles with wit and express a new classic look.

Drawing inspiration from American classic, Parisian vintage, and other styles from the past, contemporary items expressed in traditional ways still pique my interest.

We pursue clothes that can be worn regardless of age.

3. What are your plans for this Seoul Fashion Week 2023?

The theme for 2023 FW is 'Gallery Nowhy,' which

means there is no right answer in art. We will present a story of how what we create is perceived not just as simple forms of clothing but as forms of art. All of the inspiration for what we create comes from chance, and this will be showcased through various clothing, styling, and performances at the show.

4. Could you tell us who are the main target audience of 'Beyond Closet'? What if you try to describe them by such as gender, age, and character?

Audience of 'Beyond Closet' are those who know how to mix classic and trendy styles, those who are interested in art works expressed through vintage and handmade items, women who can stylishly wear men's tailored jackets or oversized Oxford shirts, and those who enjoy mixing past and contemporary styles.





5. Do you enjoy shopping online when purchasing clothes, or do you enjoy shopping offline so that you can see the clothes yourself?

I prefer offline shopping, but due to my schedule, I mostly shop online. Additionally, I often search for vintage items or archives of my favorite brands online.

6. I heard that among the brands that recently participated in The Hyundai Pop-up Store in Seoul, 'Beyond Closet' ranked first in sales. Please tell us what collections you introduced and what made them popular.

The brand has built a fandom over time through its long history and numerous works. Despite various social issues, such as COVID-19, the fans were finally able to meet us in person after a long time. Moreover, we held a sample sale of one-of-a-kind pieces from our collection, which generated competition among customers to purchase them.

7. It seems that online sales such as Naver Fashion Town, Musinsa, and your own mall are the main focus. Is online sales more than offline sales? How is it known among online customers, and what keywords make them find 'Beyond Closet'?

We operate the brand with two labels, among which the second label is the one that the general public easily encounters and practically responsible for the brand's sales volume. 80% of our sales comes from online sales of the second line. Recently, our collection line has also received quite a good response, and sales are increasing. Beyond Closet is well known for cute logo embroidery on knitwear and t-shirts that are the main point of attraction for customers. However, lately, tailored jackets with unique linings have become increasingly popular.

8. Please introduce the main product categories. What products do you have strengths in?

We specialize in knitwear, t-shirts, and more recently, jackets.

9. I heard that you run a YouTube channel and do marketing yourself. What is the reaction? How are ideas conceived? Is this mostly your idea?

I have been in charge of all planning for over two years running our YouTube channel, which has around 12,000 subscribers. We provide easy-to-understand content on fashion and also cover various other cultural topics. Recently, we signed a contract with a famous Korean YouTube company and will soon be launching a new season.

10. You recently entered into the sector of meta fashion as well. What does meta fashion mean? What activities are you planning in regards in the future?

Meta fashion refers to a new attempt under the government's support program. It is an interesting way of collaborating with experts to access new markets and offer what individuals cannot achieve alone. I have always introduced new and exciting ways to approach this, and in the future, I plan to continue exploring and expanding my activities in this area.

11. You also opened a cafe and wine bar called 'Yard Seoul' in Seoul Forest. Can you please introduce this place to our readers?

Two years ago, the theme of our collection was YARD. While preparing for a fashion show on organic life, we opened a cafe and wine bar in front of Seoul Forest, the most natural space in Seoul. We showcase various things, not just food, such as wine rings made of buttons and coasters made of fabric, which were presented at the fashion show. It's a sensory space filled with contemporary art pieces we collected and handpicked music.

12. You are doing so many different things! Are you particularly inspired by any cultural contents?

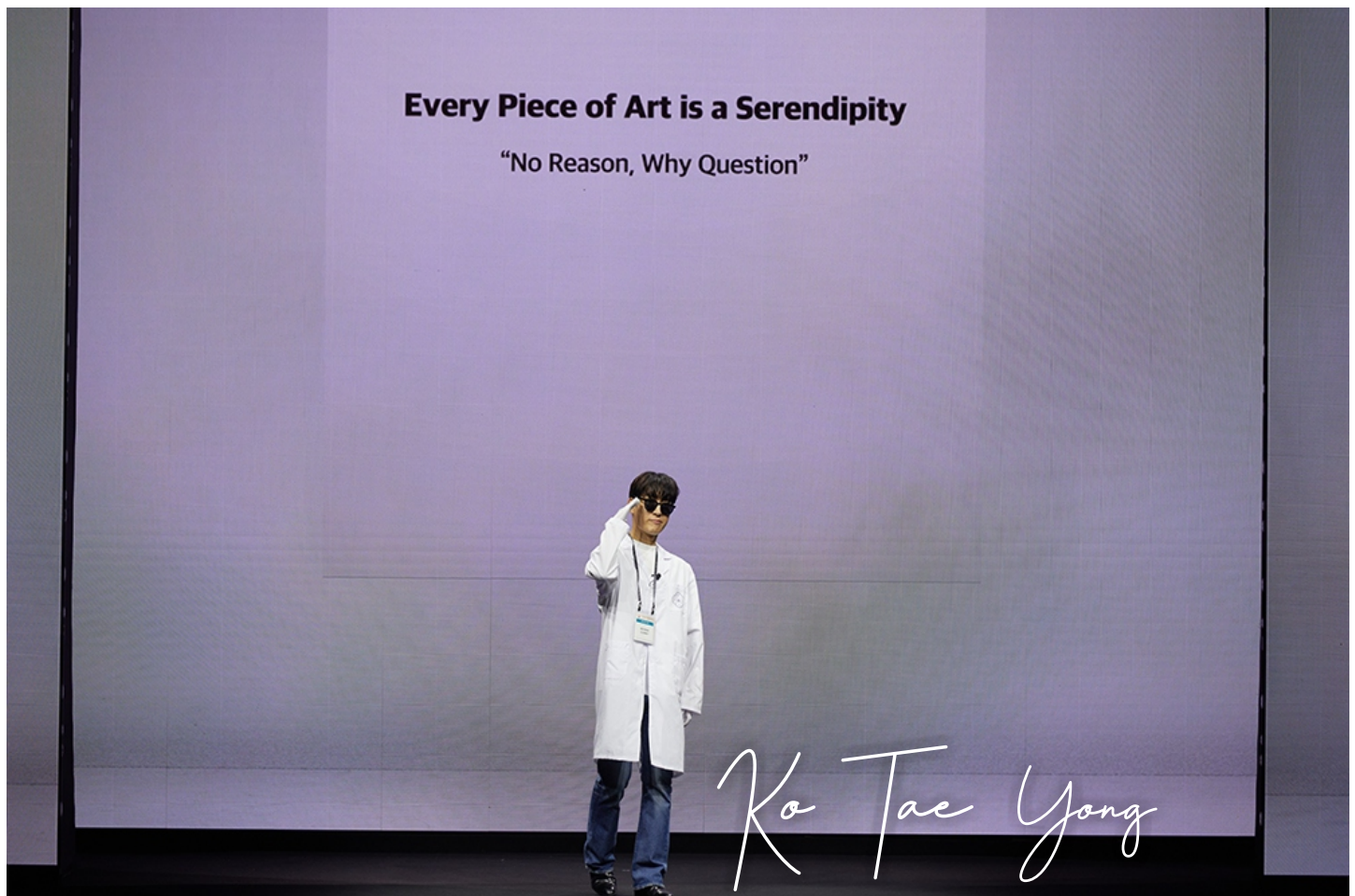
I find inspiration in everything in my daily life - movies, music, travel, and the people I meet. Recently, I have been inspired by contemporary art. However, what inspires me the most are vintage products.

13. Signature lines such as I Love Pat, which is called the 'Nation-wide Dog T-shirt', and Nomantic with the Heartbreakers symbol are famous for being worn by stars such as BTS, IU, and Lee Jong-suk. If you were to pick a K-pop musician that you think best expresses Beyond Closet's style, which singer would you be eyeing?

Recently, it seems like the girl group NewJeans will be able to digest our brand's classic yet witty preppy look well.

14. Please say something for our readers who support K-Culture around the world.

K-Culture has been a market that has shown good results through steady work. I am very grateful and fortunate that these things can now receive attention. I am confident that if you come into contact with various cultures in Korea, you will fall more in love with Korea.





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