

FT Weekend

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

SATURDAY 6 MAY / SUNDAY 7

THE AESTHETE



Brüggemann's home in Ibiza. On the walls is his installation *Hyper-Palimpsest*, 2022; the sofa is by Afro and Tobias Scarpa for Cassina

Stefan Brüggemann

The Mexican-German artist on collecting tables, wearing Vivienne Westwood's "drunken trousers" and taming wild cats

INTERVIEW BY AIMEE FARRELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANIEL SCHÄFER

MY PERSONAL STYLE SIGNIFIER is vintage band T-shirts. I've worn them since I was a teenager. It started with the Sex Pistols. Now I buy them at flea markets or gigs whenever I can. I have about 80, including Joy Division, Dead Kennedys and Alan Vega. I especially love my New Order T-shirts, for the Peter Saville graphics. I like what these bands represent in English culture. Music is one of the reasons I moved to London from Mexico City in 1997.

THE LAST THING I BOUGHT AND LOVED was 3,000 *Eremophila nivea* plants to fill the garden I'm cultivating at my home in Ibiza. They have this silken texture and purple flowers. They contrast beautifully with the concrete blocks of my brutalist-style house, and the landscape of red Ibizan earth and dark-green pines. I want them to dominate so that it feels like you're inside a cloud.

AND ON MY WISHLIST is land. I'd love to buy a plot so I can experiment with farming and work on outdoor sculpture. I have my eye on a *fincas* in Sant Mateu d'Albarca.

THE BEST SOUVENIR I'VE BROUGHT HOME is an *escapulario* – a silver chain with Catholic iconography from a religious store next to the Mexico City Metropolitan Cathedral. It reminds me of home.

THE BEST BOOK I'VE READ IN THE PAST YEAR is *Intelligence for Dummies*, a collection of essays and writing by the late American journalist and editor Glenn O'Brien. He was a friend. He wrote the text for one of my exhibition catalogues, and reading this is like hearing his voice again.

A RECENT "FIND" is the San Miguel Chapultepec neighbourhood in Mexico City. It's a new creative area filled with galleries, art and design studios, close to Bosque de Chapultepec, the biggest urban park in

Latin America. It's where all the artists are living. There's no real food scene, but it has a very traditional canteen, *Cantina el Mirador*, which has a male-only drinking area with the atmosphere of an old-school pub, and a restaurant that's frequented by artists and politicians. I'm going to



UNTITLED VIEW, 2022, BY BRÜGGEMANN



HIS WILD IBIZAN CATS AT HOME



Above: a few of his vintage New Order T-shirts. Left: his bespoke stone table by Habitación 116. Below: Brüggenmann among the *Eremophila nivea* plants in his garden



Above: Brüggenmann's art studio, with 1964 chairs by Pierre Chapiro. Right: his favourite recent read. Left: a look inside Brüggenmann's fridge. Below: the artist on the balcony of his Ibiza home



start work on a project to build a studio house there with my neighbour, the architect José Juan Rivera Río of JJRR Arquitectura.

MY FAVOURITE ROOM IN MY HOUSE is my brutalist living room in Ibiza. The house was the first European project of the Mexican architect Alberto Kalach and he designed this room with lots of little windows that connect it to the pine forest and the environment outside. It's a site-specific art installation, featuring the words from my poems inscribed in gold leaf onto the walls, and played over speakers in a recording voiced by Iggy Pop. The gold is reactive to any shifts in light; even a cloud passing by. At night, the space glows like a metallic fire. The more you look, the more it reveals. It's a place of contemplation.

MY STYLE ICON is Iggy Pop. He's provocative, innovative and disruptive. I find the idea of someone who has navigated multiple disciplines across art, music, architecture and politics so inspiring. In 2019, I asked him to read all 45 of my poems and aphorisms. Sometimes singing, sometimes speaking and then screaming, he's unmistakably Iggy.

THE BEST GIFT I'VE GIVEN RECENTLY is one of my paintings from a new series called *Untitled View*. Every birthday my girlfriend, Fabiola Quiroz, gets an artwork. The work is in gold leaf, with a dark void-like rectangle at the centre in super-matte black. It's like a view to infinity; an escape portal.

AND THE BEST GIFT I'VE RECEIVED RECENTLY is a pair of Birkenstocks from Rick Owens, of his own design. They have black and silver straps with a cork-latex sole. I've never had a pair before. I love that they don't look like I'm a boring German nature lover – they're avant-garde, challenging and super-comfortable.

MY MORNING ROUTINE IS TO GO INTO THE GARDEN, PICK A LEMON AND DRINK THE JUICE



THE LAST MUSIC I BOUGHT was "Sweetest Chill" by Siouxsie and the Banshees. I've always loved that band and I've heard they're going to release a new album soon. I hadn't heard that song in so long. It transported me to when I was working very hard to try to get to London so that I could come and explore this new idea that was the punk movement.

I HAVE A COLLECTION OF tables. I can live without a sofa or even a bed, but I have to have a big table to sit at and work. The one in my Ibizan home offers all these functions and is also a sculpture in itself. I had it made for the space by the architecture and interior design studio Habitación 116. It's 6m long, forged from sandblasted stone and weighs half a tonne. It took 30 people to get it inside the house. I love that it's not a fragile antique. I also have one by the Italian architect Carlo Scarpa that sits outside on the terrace, and I'm eyeing up another by Donald Judd.

IN MY FRIDGE YOU'LL ALWAYS FIND probiotics. You have to keep switching

them up but I use Bio-Kult a lot. Also lemons – my morning routine in Ibiza is to go into the garden, pick a lemon, then drink the juice before breakfast. We always keep fresh chipotle sauce from the local Mercado Medellín market in the Roma district of Mexico City. We have it with everything from scrambled eggs to tacos to rice.

I'VE RECENTLY DISCOVERED Mostyn, a contemporary gallery and arts centre in the seaside town of Llandudno in north Wales. I have a solo survey of my work there at the moment titled *Not Black, Not White, Silver* until 17 June. The gallery space is filled with beautiful natural light – and it's been wonderful to discover the wild nature of that part of the world.

AN INDULGENCE I WOULD NEVER FORGO is my cats. They're wild cats that would hang around when the Ibizan house was still a construction site; the builders fed them. Now they're part of the family. One of them recently had kittens that we've named Warhol and Basquiat.

THE LAST ITEM OF CLOTHING I ADDED TO MY WARDROBE was a pair of Vivienne Westwood's "Drunken" trousers in denim. I love their lopsided cut. I've worn her trousers for years. They're radical but comfortable; traditional yet alternative at the same time.

AN OBJECT I WOULD NEVER PART WITH is a pair of midcentury armchairs by French designer Pierre Chapiro that sit in my studio. They're very desirable. I picked them up from the 20th-century design dealer Galeria Tambien in Santa Gertrudis de Fruitera in Ibiza.

THE ONE ARTIST WHOSE WORK I WOULD COLLECT IF I COULD is El Greco. His paintings have an aura very few artists can produce. The works are so full of luminosity and mysticism. If I could take a few from the Prado, I would.

THE GROOMING STAPLE I'M NEVER WITHOUT is Mad et Len Graphite scent, which I always carry when I travel. It's such a deep, intense smell. For me, it's the olfactory visualisation of grey concrete. And a friend of mine from Cyprus recently gave me a big bottle of pure Ayurvedic oil, which I use on my body and my beard. It leaves me feeling relaxed but energised. €140 for 50ml EDP



MAD ET LEN GRAPHITE, €140 FOR 50ML EDP

IF I WEREN'T DOING WHAT I DO, I WOULD BE an architect. As a kid I dreamt of working in architecture, but I soon realised it involved a lot of compromises and restrictions. My parents were both archaeologists and I was raised looking at churches and pyramids across Mexico. I find that marriage in architecture between space, society and politics fascinating – it embraces the whole story of humankind. ■HTSI