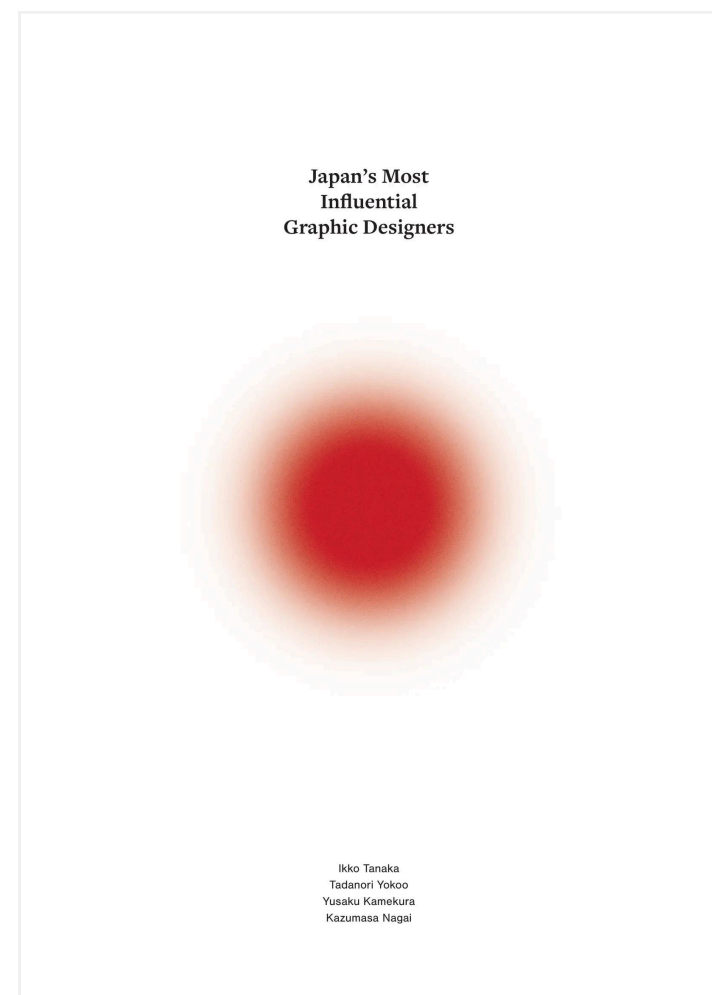


Japan's Most Influential Graphic Designers Editorial Design

This short editorial project aims to celebrate the influence of Japanese graphic design, from covering major events to not well known collaborations. The editorial uses a playful, bold typeface along with a highly legible body type, keeping in line with graphic design themes represented in the editorial.



Ikko succeeded in marrying past and present in graphic compositions that were strong and clean, colorful and playful and precise. He borrowed the simple shapes and patterns of ancient arts and incorporated them into designs that were definitely of his time and place.

Cover Nihon Buyo, 1981

Bottom left: Heating a Flower album cover by Haruo Hosono for Tanaka's Muji, 1984



Tanaka's work is renowned for its modernist simplicity, utilizing strong geometrical forms as the basis for bold, communicative imagery with a distinctive Japanese twist. His poster designs in particular frequently make reference to traditional Japanese art forms, from the painted faces of geisha to the devious markings of calligraphic brushwork.

Later in his career Tanaka was responsible for creating the brand ethos for the now universal homeware manufacturers Muji, bringing the restrained aesthetics of Japanese homes to a vast global market.

In 1984, Muji's directorship under Ikko Tanaka commissions YMO member and progressive electronics wizard Haruomi Hosono to compose "Background Music" for in-store play. An ultra-rare cassette entitled "Heating a Flower" contains the 3 tracks originally composed for the project (only one of which was used). The tracks are bobbing and hypnotic, embracing peaceful, melodic synth lines, side-stepping the overwrought grandiosity that plagues so many "new age" outings.

One of his best-known posters, conceived in 1981 for the dance troupe Nihon Buyo Performance and reused for various purposes, features an abstract version of a geisha. Rather than a classic realistic rendering, Ikko created the head and shoulders out of stark geometric forms on a grid; squares and rectangles make up the hair and face. It is typical of Japanese simplicity, but innovative in its angularity.

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Tadanori Yokoo

Tadanori Yokoo's work was a revolution that crossed the line between conceptual art and pure design. If his colorful, psychedelic pop art aesthetic seems familiar to you, it is probably because his work is the definitive visual counterpart to the 1960s counter-culture movement. The clash of motif, the apparently nonsensical collage of images, reveals a poetry that moves beyond pure aestheticism into social commentary.

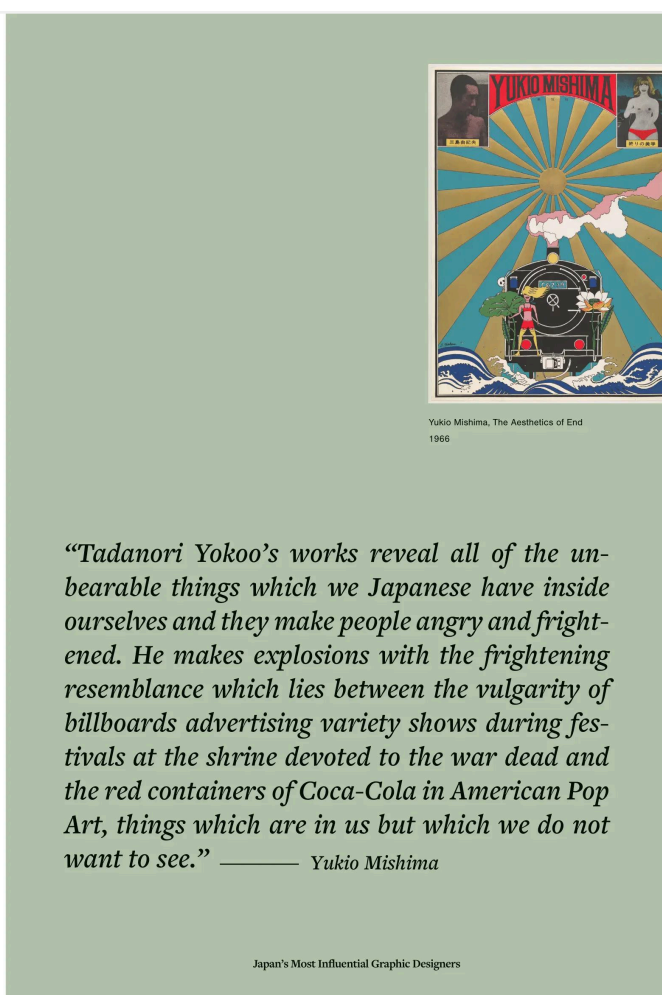
Born on June 27, 1936 in Nishiwaki, Japan, Yokoo began his career as a set designer for avant-garde theaters in Tokyo as a young man. The artist's first poster designs came out in the mid-1960s, and he gained international acclaim later in the decade. Over the years that followed, Yokoo designed posters and album covers for The Beatles, Carlos Santana, and Cal Stevens, making a lasting contribution to popular culture. He currently lives and works in Tokyo, Japan. Today, the artist's works are held in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, and the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York, among others.

Beginning his career designing flyers for theatre productions, Yokoo scandalized the graphic design world when his self-titled poster appeared at the 1965 Persona group exhibit in the Matsuya Ginza department store in Tokyo. Yokoo's contribution featured a dead man hanging from a noose with the phrase "Having reached a climax at the age of 29."



Left: Poster for a Happening, 1968. Right: Made in Japan, Tadanori Yokoo, Having Reached a Climax at the Age of 29, I Was Dead, 1965

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"Tadanori Yokoo's works reveal all of the unbearable things which we Japanese have inside ourselves and they make people angry and frightened. He makes explosions with the frightening resemblance which lies between the vulgarity of billboards advertising variety shows during festivals at the shrine devoted to the war dead and the red containers of Coca-Cola in American Pop Art, things which are in us but which we do not want to see." — Yukio Mishima



Yukio Mishima, The Aesthetics of Death, 1966

You will rarely find a poster penned by Yokoo that does not have the Shinkansen bullet train hiding somewhere in the chaos. Clearly Yokoo was suspicious of rapid technological advancements. They propelled Japan into a mechanized, technologically-mediated future. Japan's Shinkansen bullet train would prompt a wave of urbanization that would revolutionize the movement of bodies in the country.

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While the "Hinomaru" flag has represented Japan on ships and in international events since the late 19th century, the red circle on white was only made the national flag by law in August 1899. Due to the powerful connection to the Japanese state in the war years, the occupying leadership group overseeing Japan's occupation after the end of WWII - The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or SCAP - restricted display of the Hinomaru significantly.

The restoration of national pride that was staged in 1964 involved the deliberate rehabilitation of classical national symbols, especially the sun itself (the emperor), the Hinomaru (or Rising Sun) flag, the kimigayo ("His Majesty's Reply") anthem, and the army. The method of their revival was to free them of their wartime associations and present them instead as symbols of peace. This was made

possible by embedding them in the Olympic Games' own narrative and by introducing new national symbols. "I drew a large red circle on top of the Olympic logo. People may have considered that this large red circle represented the Hinomaru, but my actual intention was to express the sun."

When the Olympic flame arrived in a plane at Naha Airport in Okinawa from Taipei, the headlines claimed that the torch had arrived in Japan. Thousands of torch bearers had signed up to carry the torch for five days in Okinawa, and all of the torch bearers in Okinawa and throughout Japan would be wearing Kanekura's design on their white tank-top shirt.

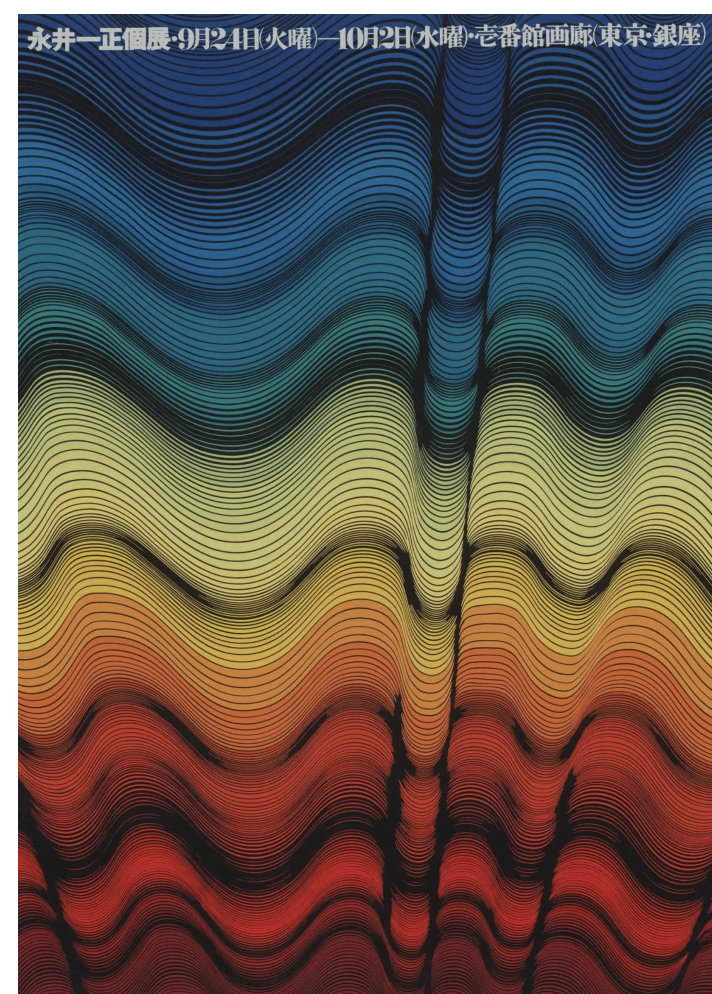
The Weight of the Olympic Torch

When the first runner pulled into Onoyama Stadium after securing the flame at Naha Airport, 40,000 spectators were there to cheer him on, witness the lighting of an Olympic cauldron, the holding of the Hinomaru flag, and the playing of the national anthem, Kimigayo. It would take another 8 years before Okinawa was returned to Japan by the United States, but in 1964, it appears, that thanks to the power of the Tokyo Olympics, and perhaps Kanekura's famous first poster, the Hinomaru flag and Kimigayo had been returned to Japan amidst the golden glow of the Olympics.

And yet, there was, apparently support by the Japanese public for an eventual return of the

Right: Tokyo Olympic Games, 1964

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A Q&A with Kazumasa Nagai

What did you want to do when you were growing up? I wanted to be able to make something, for instance paintings, sculptures or architecture.

What was your favorite subject at school? Japanese and Art.

When and how did your professional career start? I enrolled in the department of sculpture at Gensai (Tokyo University of the Arts), but modeling required physical capacity and my overwork during and after Second World War caused me to fundal hemorrhage. I was told that I would have lost my sight if I had not had a rest. It was when I was back to my hometown, Osaka that the printing company Daewabo offered me a position and I started working on graphic design for posters and booklets. However, I studied sculpture and I had no experience on graphic design, though I could imagine the design works. Therefore, I asked an assistant and drew rough designs. This is how I have started in graphic design.

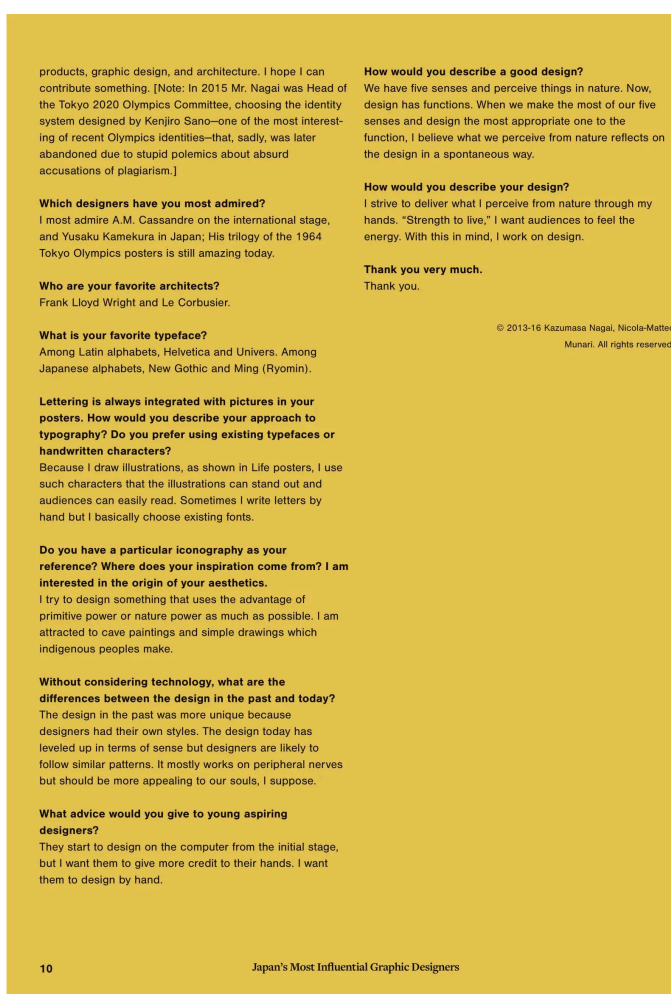
How has your design evolved since that time? In the first stage it was abstract and geometric, then it changed to imagined scenery combined with photos, and lastly it became more concrete with animals. This is only a brief summary and actually 62 years of change.

Which project do you remember with the greatest pleasure? It includes Life series as well, but the most memorable are joining the Tokyo 1964 Olympics project, and designing the emblem of Sapporo 1972 Winter Olympics.

What do you currently want to design? I do not think I can be directly involved due to my physical condition, but as Tokyo hosts the 2020 Olympics I would love to join the project. It covers all fields, ranging from

Cover Poster for Kazumasa Nagai One Man Show at Shinkansen Gallery, 1968

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products, graphic design, and architecture. I hope I can contribute something. [Note: In 2015 Mr. Nagai was Head of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Committee, choosing the identity system designed by Kenjiro Sano—one of the most interesting of recent Olympics identities—that, sadly, was later abandoned due to stupid polemics about absurd accusations of plagiarism.]

Which designers have you most admired? I most admire A.M. Cassandre on the international stage, and Yusaku Kamekura in Japan. His trilogy of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics posters is still amazing today.

Who are your favorite architects? Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier.

What is your favorite typeface? Among Latin alphabets, Helvetica and Univers. Among Japanese alphabets, New Gothic and Ming (Ryumin).

Lettering is always integrated with pictures in your posters. How would you describe your approach to typography? Do you prefer using existing typefaces or handwritten characters? Because I draw illustrations, as shown in Life posters, I use such characters that the illustrations can stand out and audiences can easily read. Sometimes I write letters by hand but I basically choose existing fonts.

Do you have a particular iconography as your reference? Where does your inspiration come from? I am interested in the origin of your aesthetics. I try to design something that uses the sublimity of primitive power or nature power as much as possible. I am attracted to cave paintings and simple drawings which indigenous peoples make.

Without considering technology, what are the differences between the design in the past and today? The design in the past was more unique because designers had their own styles. The design today has leveled up in terms of sense but designers are likely to follow similar patterns. It mostly works on peripheral nerves but should be more appealing to our souls, I suppose.

What advice would you give to young aspiring designers? They start to design on the computer from the initial stage, but I want them to give more credit to their hands. I want them to design by hand.

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Poster for Ueno Zoo, Tokyo, 1964

Top: Poster for Kazumasa Nagai exhibition, Tokyo, 1975

Bottom: Design Forum Exhibition poster, 1993

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Poster for Lloyer Co., Ltd., Tokyo Kazumasa Nagai, 1974

colour-it-in

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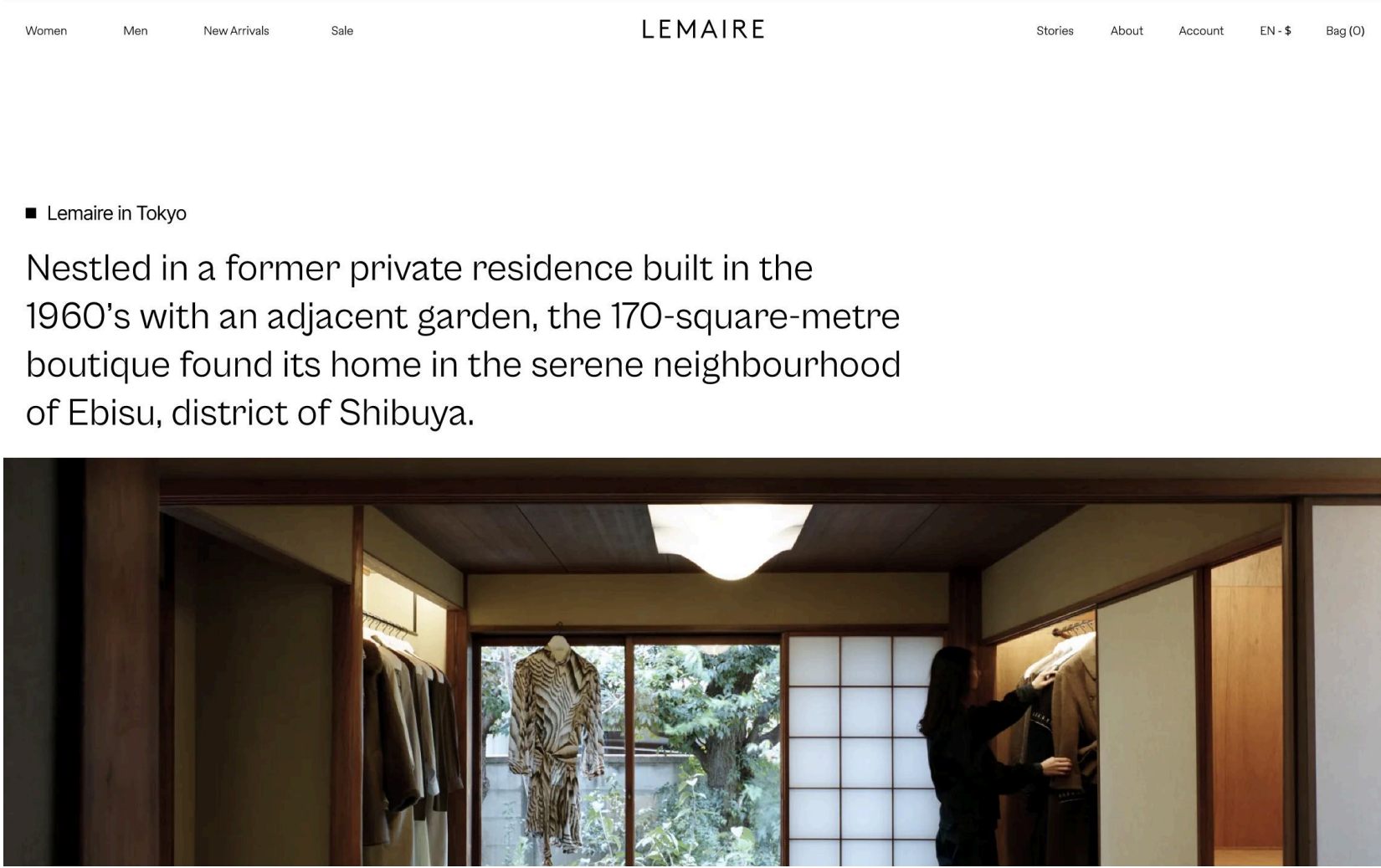
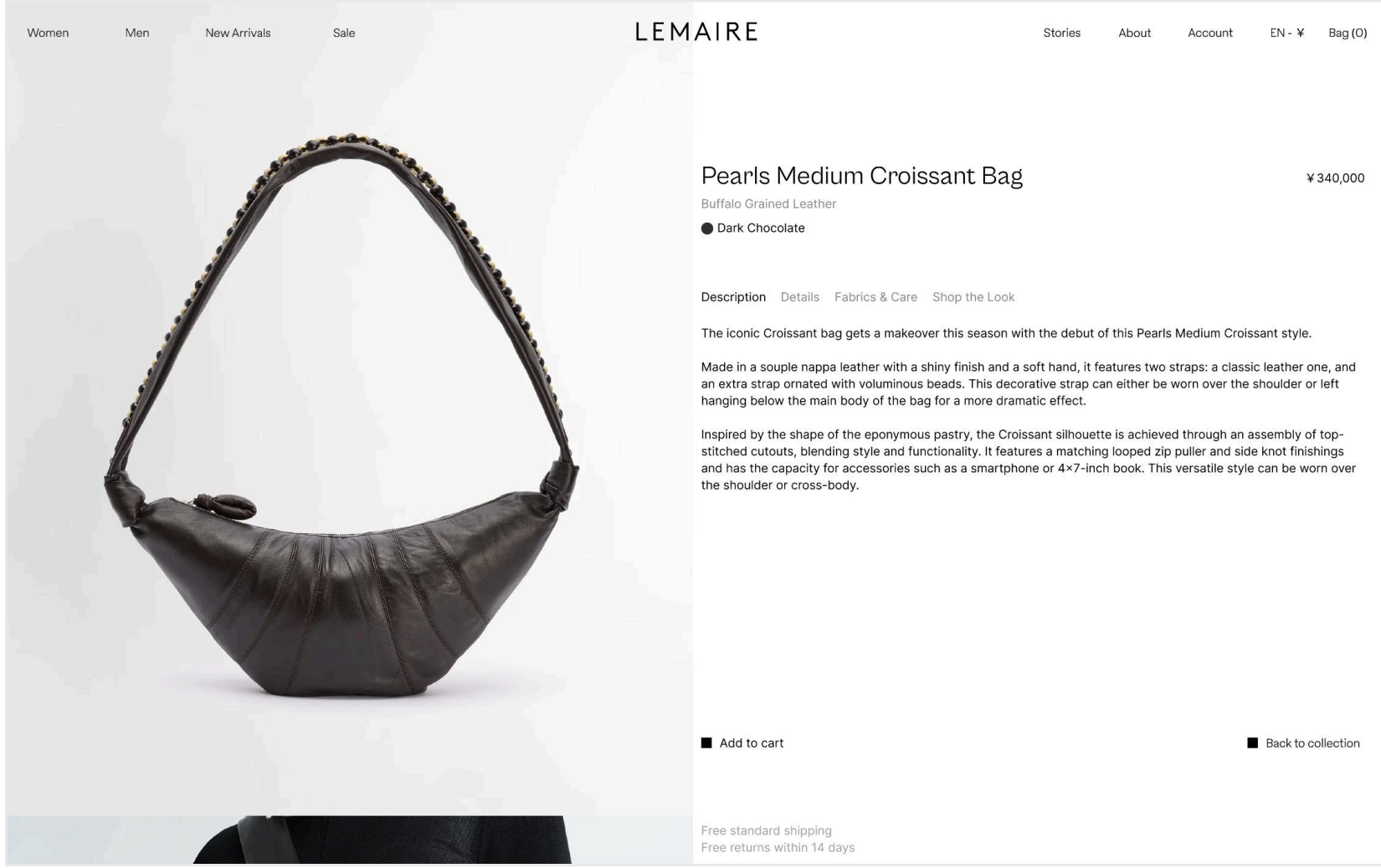
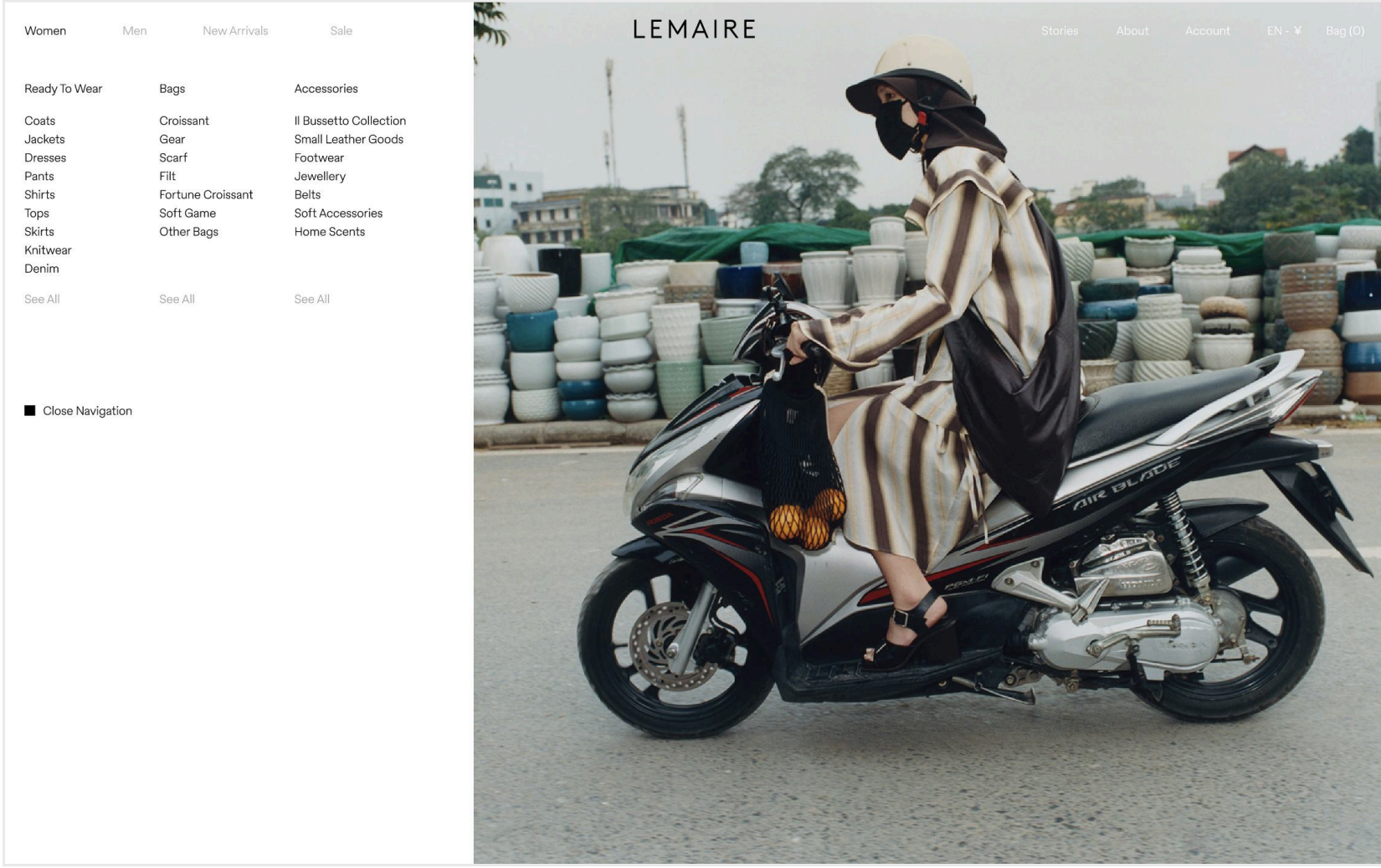
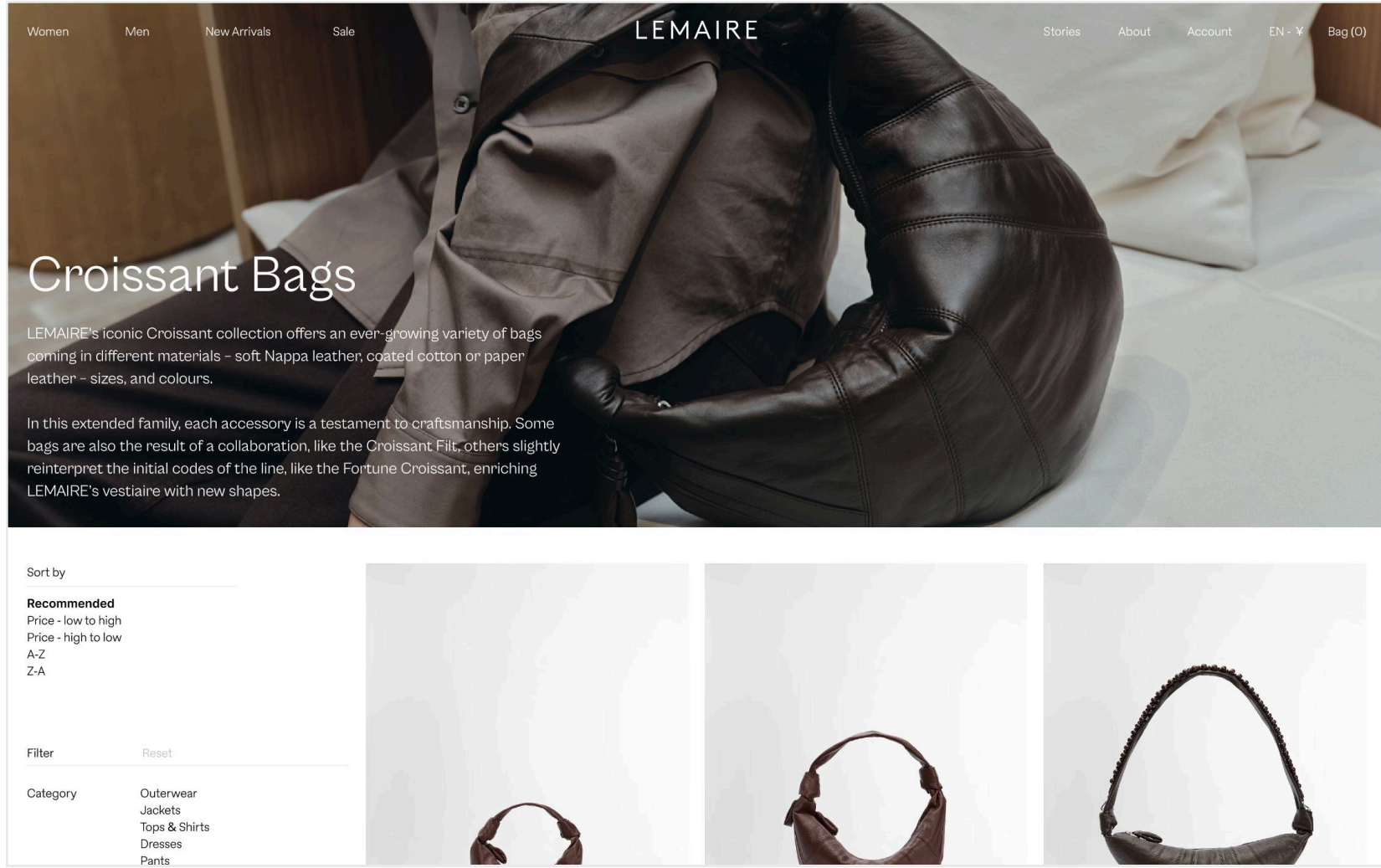
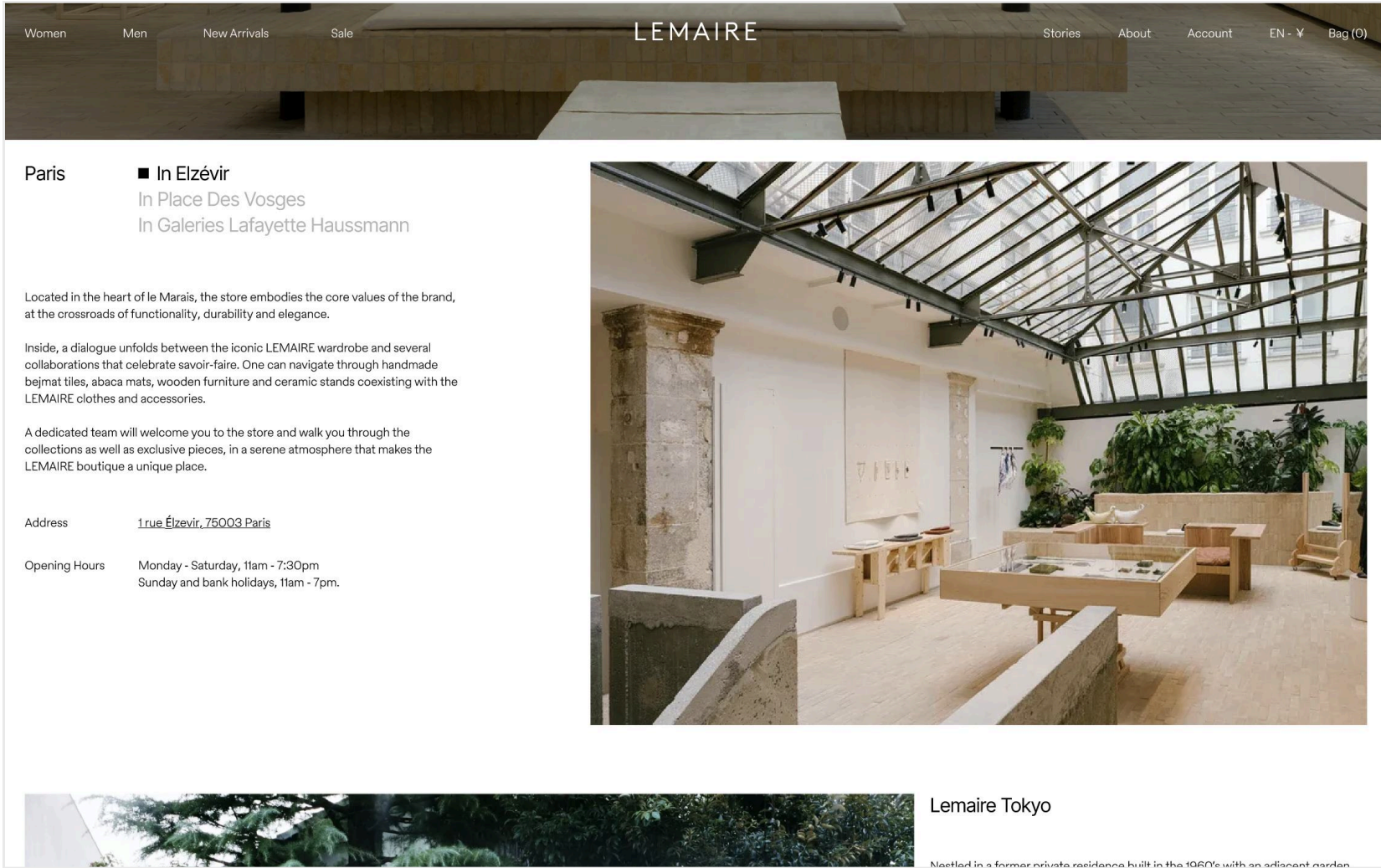
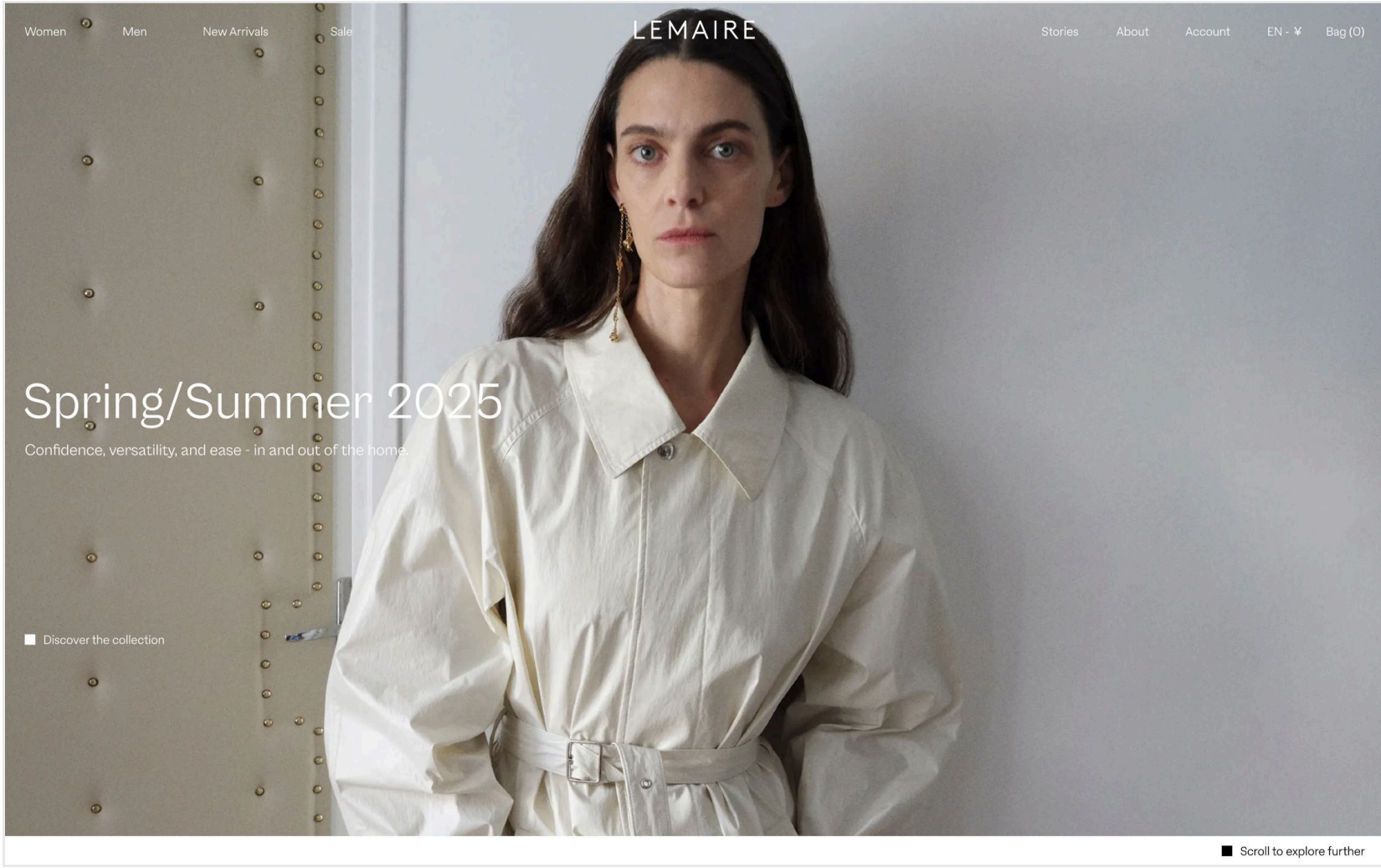
Lemaire Website Redesign

Lemaire's stores are known for creating atmospheres that reflect the unique character of the cities they inhabit, seamlessly blending the brand's minimalism with local sensibilities. Lemaire's Ebisu store is a prime example - minimal, tactile, and thoughtfully curated, with a quiet elegance that mirrors Japanese design.

While their Instagram and physical spaces tell this cohesive story, the

online store has room to embrace that same intentionality.

The redesigned e-commerce experience now aligns with the brand's other touchpoints: generous whitespace, immersive imagery, and a grid that balances asymmetry with harmony. The result is a site that feels less like a catalog and more like an extension of Lemaire's world, where each piece has space to breathe, much like in their Tokyo store.





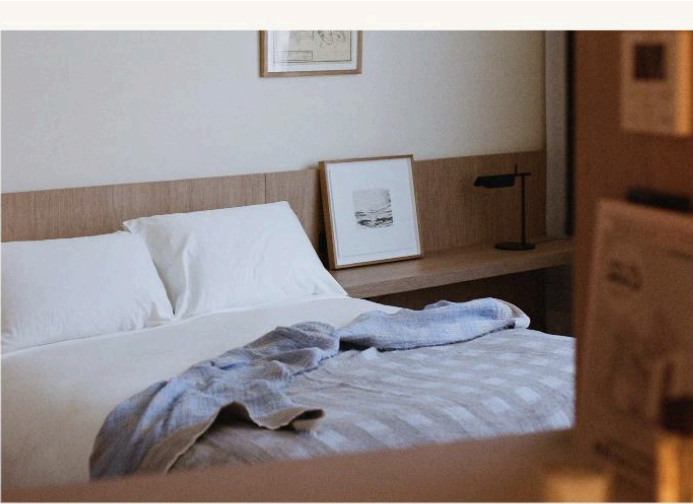
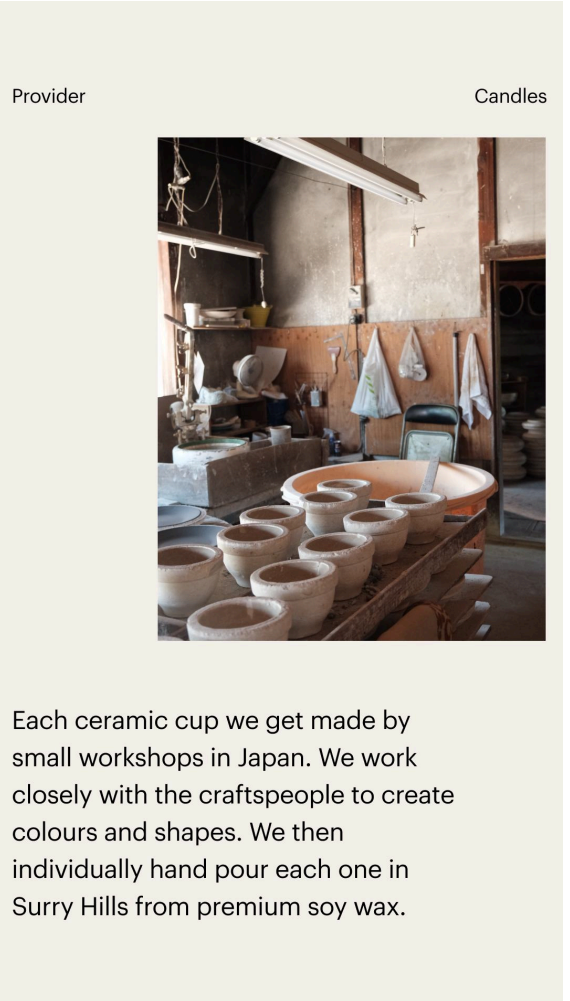
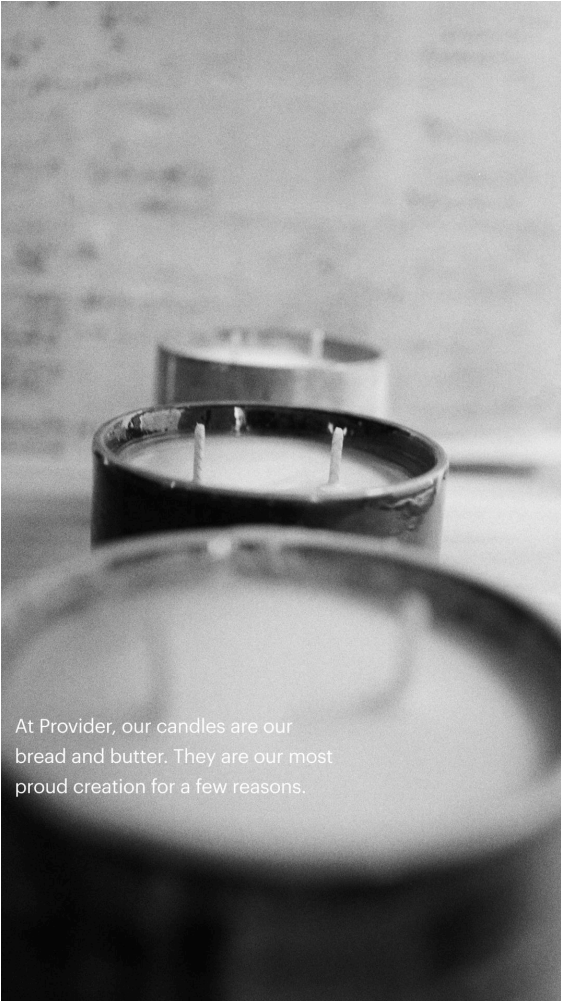
**The Provider Store**  
Socials & Newsletter Design,  
Art Direction

Since 2014, Provider Store have been creating and acquiring pieces for the home, chosen with the purpose to be both artful and functional.

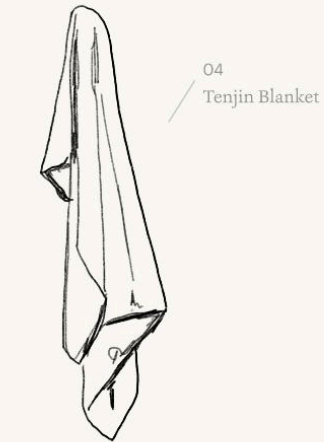
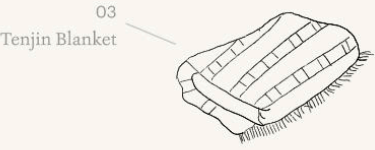
The aim is to slow down and focus on what's important, championing sustainably sourced and slow-made products. Whether handmade in our studio or by like-minded creatives, each finely curated piece tells a story inspired by travel, art and connection.

As the creative lead for the store's Instagram, TikTok, and weekly newsletter, I was brought on to revitalise engagement by reimagining the brand's social media presence.

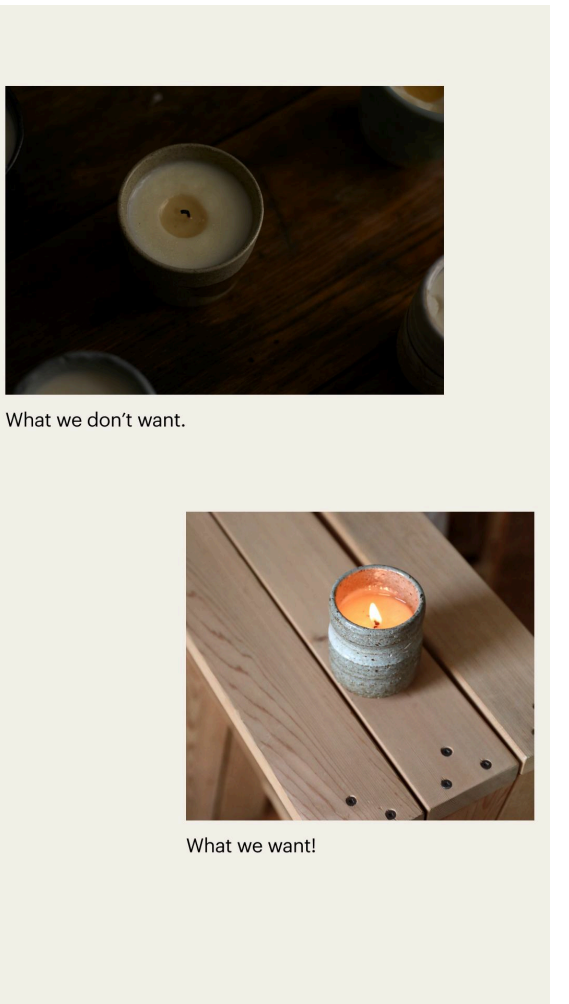
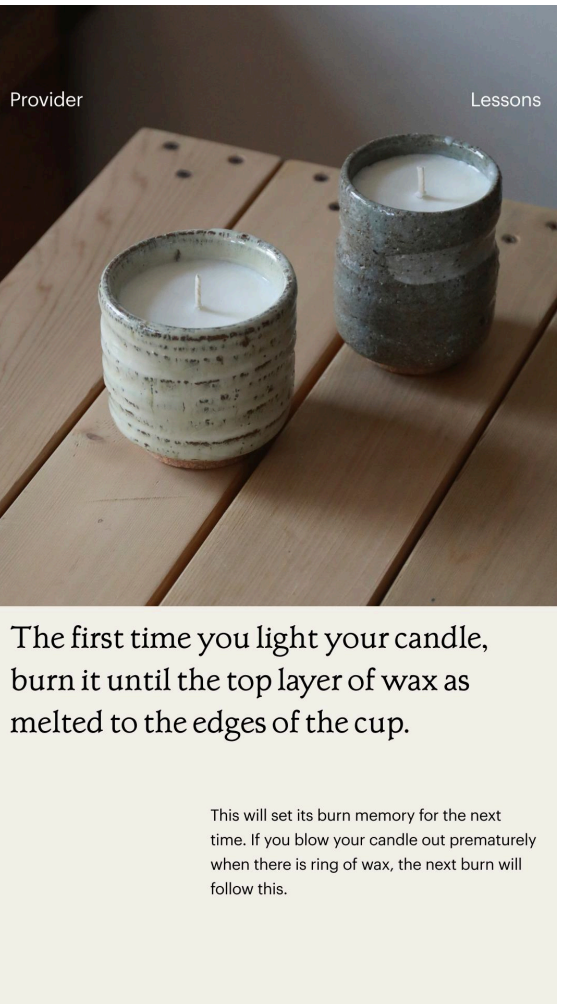
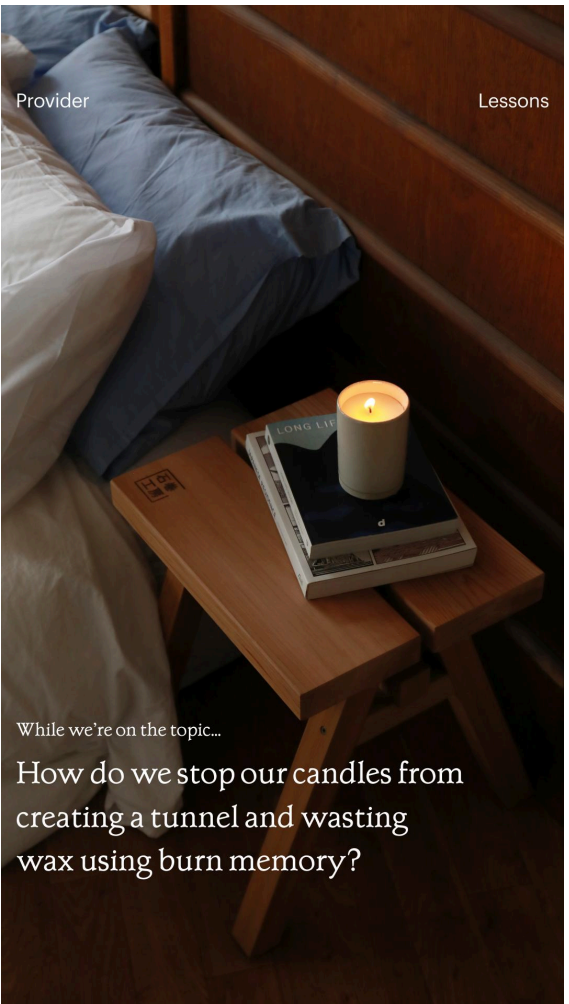
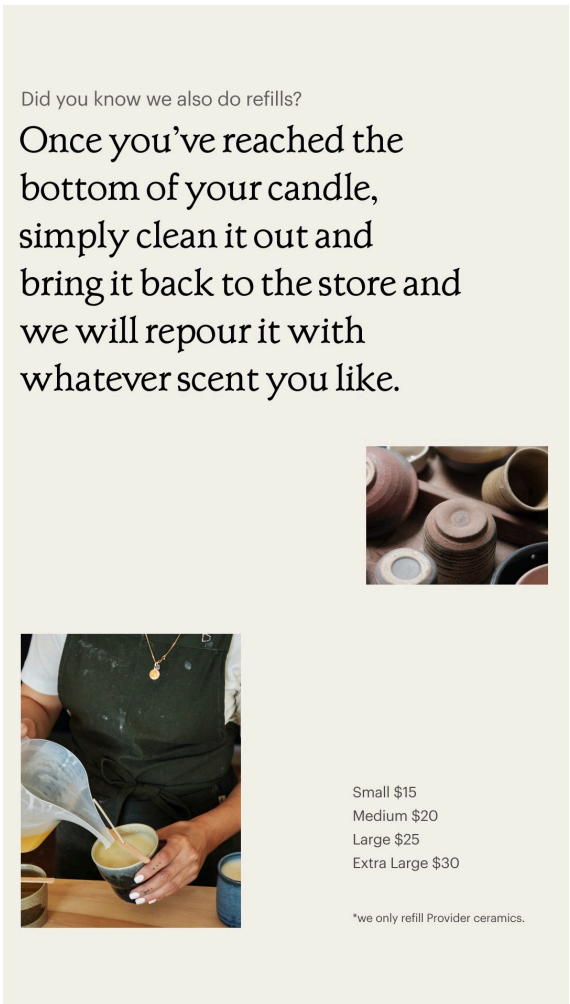
Drawing inspiration from Japanese design aesthetics—minimalism, balance, and intentional storytelling—I crafted visually compelling content and strategies to elevate the store's digital identity and foster deeper audience connections.



Tenjin's special linen items are created for daily life. They weave fabrics and make each blanket, tea towel and bag with comfort and practicality in mind.



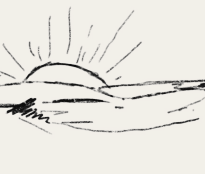







05 Tenjin Tea Towel



**2. Our Signature Fragrances**

We work with Australian scent makers to create our eight boutique aromas.

<p><b>Tabako</b> Leather · Tobacco · Cardamom · Clove</p>  <p>A smokey and woody aroma that has been our bestselling candle fragrance for several years. The hints of cardamom and clove, balanced with leather makes this the scent ideal for winter.</p>	<p><b>Sakura</b> Cherry Blossom · Vanilla · Tonka Bean · Woody</p>  <p>Japanese for Cherry Blossom, this light scent is one that will fill your home with a fresh and clean ambiance.</p>	<p><b>Hikari</b> Sandalwood · Bergamot · Fir Needle · Oud</p>  <p>Meaning light, Hikari is an entrancing daytime aroma that blends woodiness with delicate citrus notes and the fresh greenery of fir needle. Hikari is true to its namesake.</p>
<p><b>Dāku</b> Fig · Oak · Caramel · Patchouli</p>  <p>Translating to Dark, this is the opposite of Hikari and to us, resembles the aroma and feeling of drinking a late-night whisky at a dimly lit bar.</p>	<p><b>Kumo</b> Leather · Peony · Peach · Smoke</p>  <p>Cloud. Envisage a warm Australian summer evening with a pink sunset and smokey haze in the air.</p>	<p><b>Komorebi</b> Hinoki · Pine · Incense · Cedarwood</p>  <p>"Light filtering through trees", this complex fragrance was designed around a Japanese pine forest with hints of incense drifting in the air.</p>
<p><b>Onsen</b> Cedar · Frankincense · Sandalwood · Hinoki</p>  <p>A Japanese hot spring. When creating this scent, we wanted you to be transported to a little mountainous ryokan, soaking in a hinoki tub.</p>	<p><b>Kyuka</b> Spice · Amber · Pomegranate · Armoise</p>  <p>In much need of respite. For those of us who need a vacation, this fragrance will give you a moment of peace.</p>	