

# PEPE VILLEGAS

ARTIST. DESIGNER.

## Pepe.

Pepe Villegas, a native of Puerto Rico, began a love affair with the arts that would take him from universities to magazine covers, and to some of the world's most prestigious galleries and museums. A self-taught artist, Villegas' creative journey has always embodied a search, a sublime process of unveiling beauty in the unconventional.

What began as a love of drawing, sketching and mapping floor plans and buildings from a nearly age, would soon lead Villegas to study Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of Puerto Rico. He won first place in a national poster competition for The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. His design became the official image of the agency's calendar and was reproduced nationally.



## The Emergence of an Artist

In 1985 Villegas attended a summer program at the Basilica Palladiana in Vicenza, Italy, where he experienced up close the work of Andrea Palladio and the renaissance period, particularly the spatial grandiosity of the Pantheon interior. This experience planted the first seeds which would inspire Villegas' drive to embark on his artistic journey.

In 1987, Villegas transferred to the prestigious Pratt Institute School of Architecture in New York where he finished his architectural degree. After graduation he worked for the late landscape architect Bruce Kelly, and for I.M Pei in the early 90's. His experiences at these levels would soon bring him to the realization that he had little interest in the corporate aspects of architecture as



## MEDIA KIT

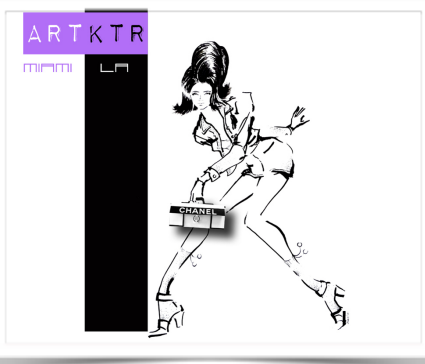


*"I choose to see only with eyes of love."*

## Current Projects

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Pepe is the founder of ARTKTR, a wearable art collaborative and experimental platform based in Miami.



## Media inquiries:

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a business, and he relocated to Miami to work at a smaller firm in Coconut Grove at the beginning of the South Beach cultural and social revival. There he found a thriving and vibrant community, becoming friends with the late artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and fashion designer Thierry Mugler. This environment motivated a shift in direction of creativity and self-expression. A chance-in-a-lifetime opportunity landed Villegas on Bruce Weber's Vogue Magazine's 100-year anniversary editorial, a life-changing event that positioned him among the most reputable agencies in the modeling world. This opportunity of traveling and exposure brought forth Villegas' innate fascination with the human spirit and his passionate artistic voice.

In 1993 Villegas relocated to Chelsea in Manhattan where he shared a studio and launched his artistic career. He became part of an alternative creative community vibrating outside the gallery and museum system, in the fashion and music subcultures, and the subways and the streets of New York.

## On Exhibit

Villegas' work is exhibited in prestigious galleries and museums such as the El Museo de las Americas in San Juan, Puerto Rico, The Parrish Museum in Southampton; the Gagosian Gallery, and the Charles Cowles Gallery, New York, which represented him. Cowles, whose personal collection features Villegas' work, donated more than 100 iconic works to the Perez Art Museum Miami.

His multimedia work has resulted in collaborations, exhibitions, and happenings around the world. From murals for Heineken and Verizon, to designs for perfumers at Symrise, his work has been featured in *The New Yorker*, *Artforum*, *NYArts*, *Time Out New York*, *Bloomberg.com*, *Zink* and London's *The Artist Magazine*, and many others.

