

SEANKELLY

Mule, Marissa. "Melo X: A New Face in Contemporary Art," *Scene*, March 2014.

SCENE **melo x: a new face in contemporary** **art**

MeLo X is a mixed-media artist. His work intersects the worlds of art, music, fashion and design. Downtown Manhattan he spins his latest EP Yonce X – a play on Beyonce's recent Visual Album. In January 2014, he released, GOD: Piece de Resistance.

MeLo's inspirations and inner emotion lead the way into his artwork. Images of faces and representation fulfill the artists' body of photography work – symbolized and morphed with grainy 35mm film. In the age of up-coming artists, unable to afford state of the art equipment, MeLo turns to dated music equipment, vintage film cameras and obsolete computer programs to create. His most recent exhibition, *A Movement in Africa*, featured photographs taken during his travels to Equatorial Guinea.



Marissa Mule: Where are you from?

MeLo X: I'm from Brooklyn, New York. My parents are from Jamaica.

MM: When did you first become interested in the art world?

MX: I became a creator at a very young age. In elementary school I became interested in music, poetry and art. I would buy albums, and their covers really got me interested in photography and design. At the age of 22, I started DJing in the city. I was meeting new people in the downtown New York scene, and made beats out of Amy Winehouse' full album. In putting out more of an effort to DJ, I then started taking photos for artist's downtown. I released my first mix-tape in 2008, with remixes, instrumentals, and original music.

MM: What inspires your work?

MX: I'm inspired by music and hip-hop. In elementary school I got MTV, which turned me onto Nirvana, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. I was intrigued by the music videos – hip-hop videos have a specific look to them. I collected comic books and early Dragon Ball Z inspired me. I was inspired by anime.

MM: Do you have any up-coming shows or projects?

MX: I've always wanted to showcase my work in a certain light, so I shoot everything in film. I have boxes and boxes of photos. My most recent exhibition centers on my trip to Equatorial Guinea. I went with fellow creators who I collab with. I document every trip I ever go on, and the trip to Africa happens to be very special to me. It's an inspiration. For the exhibition, I documented and developed photos that brought me back to Africa. I'm also working on a project called "**Creative Faces**," in which I took portraits with contrast and asked a person to draw something that symbolizes them. I wanted the image they drew to represent who they are.

