



WITH MY 2 HANDS



STUDY SNAPSHOT:

30 PROGRESSIVE YOUNG MELBOURNE MEN
THE BRIEF: PHOTOGRAPH 'COOL'
THE METHOD: CROWD INTERPRETATION



the lab

1 WEEKEND 300 PHOTOS

WHAT WE LEARNT

The guys are highly engaged with the current craft movement. They have observed that what was once common knowledge has now become rare and specialised and therefore highly prized. Relearning how to do things the good old fashioned way - starting from scratch with a reliance on manual effort, gives them a new sense of validation. This sentiment extends across a spectrum of ability from roughly hewn crafts to perfected mastery. Having tangible achievements makes it easier to see the literal worth of their work.

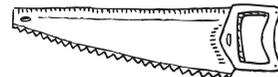
"Building things yourself and maintaining that knowledge is cool purely because you're staying self-reliant. It's very important in this day and age because we have everything pre-packed and prepared for our ultimate convenience...A lot of people wouldn't know how to light a fire without matches let alone build something with their own hands." - Marc (21)

WHAT'S DRIVING THIS

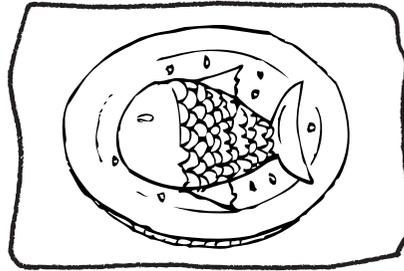
As Australia has transitioned into a predominantly service economy and much of the hands-on day-to-day aspects of life are outsourced e.g. food preparation, car servicing and odd jobs around the house, a nostalgia has emerged for manual work.

The shadow of ongoing economic uncertainty has heightened this desire to obtain practical skills. They hold a deep respect for those who demonstrate self-sufficiency by using trade or mere ingenuity to fashion the needs of life from the resources at their disposal.

Producing things by hand also serves as a creative outlet - an avenue to give physical form to their thoughts and feelings. What they make holds significance on 2 levels. Firstly as a proof point of their own capability, and secondly for it's scarcity being one of a kind.



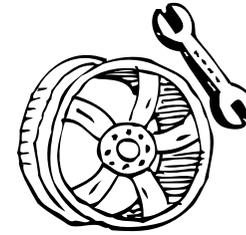
HOW THIS WAS EXPRESSED



CREATIVE EXPERIMENTATION

"I think there is a desire for many people to create something which has seemingly not been done before, to experiment and add their own personal values and ideas. A dish that follows a recipe will be very similar to every other dish that follows that same recipe." - Justin (20)

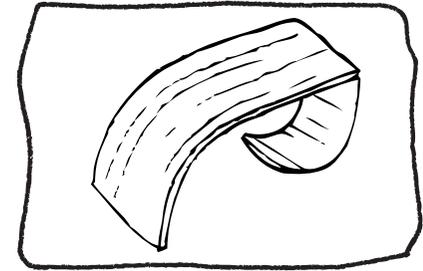
During times of high stress they seek out spacious, still surroundings to help re-equilibrate.



TAKING A RISK

"It's extremely rewarding to see it [a car] come together, and know that me and my mates helped build it from the floor up" - Joshua (22)

Deciding to DIY in the face of ready made options exposes themselves to risk and requires self belief. This heightens the sense of excitement and achievement when they pull it off.



PATIENCE THE ULTIMATE VIRTUE

"It's the table I just finished building today. It took me 1 month to make it ...I'm proud to say that I made it myself." - Ivan (18)

Pictures of pursuits that demonstrated the greatest degree of planning, complexity and determination won the greatest admiration.



HOW CAN BRANDS SERVE THIS TENSION

As mass marketing continues to dominate fashion, food and many other industries, hand made goods and personalised service is become increasingly valued. Brands that have a story of traditional process or hero the maker are highly prized. Kretel One vodka's line "do one thing well" celebrates their 11 generation family history and stands as a motto for customers to live by.

Alternatively, brands that cast the consumer as co-creator can tap this trend. Converse sneakers have long been used as a blank canvas for self expression while IKEA cuts costs and adds value through self-assembly. These aspects of self-production build a greater sense of achievement and connection towards a purchase as it displays their skill and individuality.

