



Eli Russell Linnetz

ERL

Guest Designer di Pitti Uomo 104

**is bringing his creativity
into the heart of the Fortezza da Basso**

Californian designer Eli Russell Linnetz, - Guest Designer at the summer edition of Pitti Uomo with a fashion show scheduled on Thursday, June 15 – founder and driving spirit of the ERL label, as well as a multifaceted artist, creative and creator of worlds, will also be transforming the main forecourt of the Fortezza da Basso into a theatrical set that expressly refers to a famous Hollywood cut movie. Between imagination and creation, between the true and the probable, Eli constructs stories in Technicolor which we can view as spectators and take part in as actors. It is the game of “make believe”, of the dream, and not just the American one, in which to intensely believe.

*“The theme this year is **“Make Believe”** - says Eli Russell Linnetz - which holds many different meanings for me. The world of “Make Believe” is closely tied to cinema and film-making. Hollywood. Artisans coming together to make magic — making dreams. The willingness of an audience to suspend their disbelief. Also the word “Making” is very important — Pitti for me is so deeply connected with the “Making” of garments and craftsmanship.*

*“**Make Believe: The Making of Planet of the Apes**” serves as a catalyst for imagination and story telling. Have we time traveled to the past? Are we seeing into the future? How has this object arrived here today? Have we been teleported to another dimension? The viewer is confronted with the full scale model of a face known round the world.*

The sculpture itself was created in Paris before journeying across the ocean to America where it’s lived for over a century. Now the statue has returned to Europe, finding its current resting place in Florence, Italy —a surreal artifact that will be sure to challenge and excite its audience.

Is it being built? Is it being taken down? What exactly are we looking at and what does it mean?

It has been incredible working with talented artisans of my hometown, Venice Beach, as well as the artisans of Florence as we prepare for the festival. More will be revealed as we get closer to the show but there has been a great commitment to working with local artisans — from opera, to theatre, to film. The Pitti team has been incredible in their ability to facilitate our most fantastical spectacle that will be unveiled on June 13th.”