

2025

Studio

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Nicholas Schmidt Studio is a creative consultancy, strategy, and design practice shaping outcomes through a critical understanding of aesthetics and radical economy of form. We are dedicated to rigorous, broad-spectrum research and unambiguous representations of complex thought. The studio conceives functional design strategies for projects of all scales by conceptualizing nuanced forms, spaces, and narratives that adhere to a project's intent. Guided by the principles of simplicity, reflection, and non-reference, the studio establishes timeless and universally significant strategies.

Nicholas Schmidt was educated in Art History at Université Concordia where he studied the history, theory, and criticism of twentieth-century art and architecture, focusing on minimalism's redefinition of space and its transformation of the viewer's relationship to the art object and architectural space. He worked as Creative Director for catalog:three (2021–2024) and was Head of Design at Sporty & Rich (2019–2021). As Senior Designer at Saintwoods (2018–2024) he guided the spatial design for hospitality and retail projects, as well as providing visual strategy and design for a diverse range of clients.

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1. Services | Creative Consulting
Visual Strategy
Research
Creative Direction
Art Direction
Branding & Identity
Spatial Design |
| 2. Clients | Asics [™] , Apt. 200 [*] , AWGE, Basic.Space [*] , catalog:three, Cathcart [*] , Chez Josie [*] , Clarks [™] , Dime [*] , Double's Late Night [*] , Edition Hotels [*] , End Clothing [™] , Four Seasons [*] , Garage [*] , Helmut Lang [*] , Highsnobiety [™] , Holt Renfrew [*] , Loic [*] , Lou's [*] , MURAL Festival [*] , Name's [*] , Red Bull [*] , Retrosuperfuture [*] , Saintwoods, Selfridges [™] , Sporty & Rich, SSENSE [*] , The Webster [*] , Throwing Fits, Tik Tok [*] , Veuve Clicquot [*] |
| | [*] aff. Saintwoods, [™] aff. Sporty & Rich |

Our work is not a neutral service but a profound act of reflection.

Each project is approached as a form of mediation—between the self and the world, narratives and their contexts, the past, present, and future. The results do not represent the conclusion of formal exploration alone, but rather serve as a means of inquiry into the perceptions that define them. This approach resists dualistic distinctions, unifying concept and material, mind and body, idea and act. Embedding our work within this dialectic of theory and practice allows the outcome to function as a site of continuous negotiation, where meaning emerges not in isolation but as a perpetual duet with form.

Our practice engages with the world through a critical lens. This critique of the present is not an act of negation but a method of reflection. It is a generative act—an incessant investigation into what could be refined, reconsidered, and made more meaningful. Rather than incorporating critique as an end in itself, the work calls for transformation, offering a positive impression that shapes a more introspective and nuanced experience. We embrace the potential for growth not as an idealized abstraction but as a tangible possibility for a more introspective and meaningful world.

We reject the tendency to rely on allusions and references, speaking instead through a universal language of aesthetic expression, independent of external associations. Outcomes are non-referential, seeking clarity and simplicity that are inherently significant beyond predetermined iconography and its contemporaneous context. We are committed to moving beyond metaphor, representation, and allusion, seeking to construct propositions that are direct, objective, and self-contained. In this pursuit, we partake in a radical economy of form—distilling every element to its most essential expression. This is not minimalism for its own sake, but minimalism as a way of allowing meaning to emerge without excess. The ethos behind this approach is one of discipline, restraint, and respect for the material world. Through this radical economy, we allow space for reflection, enabling the work to unfold its significance in the mind of the viewer.

- | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| 1.
Asics
Research
2020 | 2.
Apt. 200
Graphic Design
2019 - 2024 | 3.
Apt. 200
Interior Design
2022 - 2024 | 4.
AWGE
Design Assistance
2023-2024 | 5.
Basic.Space
Design
2022 | 6.
catalog:three
Creative Direction
2021 |
| 7.
Cathcart
Creative Direction
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Chez Josie
Graphic Design
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Clarks
Design
2020 | 10.
Double's Late Night
Research
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Edition Hotels
Design
2020 | 12.
END.
Design
2022 |
| 13.
Four Seasons
Research
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Garage
Research
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2020 | 16.
HighSnobiety
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Holt Renfrew
Spatial Design
2020 | 18.
Loic
Research
2021 |
| 19.
Lou's
Research
2022 | 20.
Mural Festival
Research
2021 - 2024 | 21.
Name's
Research
2021 - 2022 | 22.
Red Bull
Research
2022 | 23.
Retrosuperfuture
Design
2022 | 24.
Saintwoods
Art Direction
2018 - 2024 |
| 25.
Selfridges
Design
2020 | 26.
Sporty & Rich
Design/Research
2019 - 2021 | 27.
SSENSE
Design
2019 - 2023 | 28.
The Webster
Spatial Design/Research
2021 - 2024 | 29.
Throwing Fits
Design
2020 | 30.
Tik Tok Canada
Research
2023 |
| 31.
Veuve Clicquot
Research
2022 | | | | | |

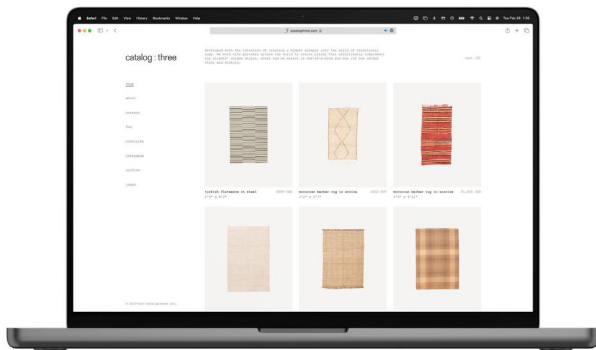
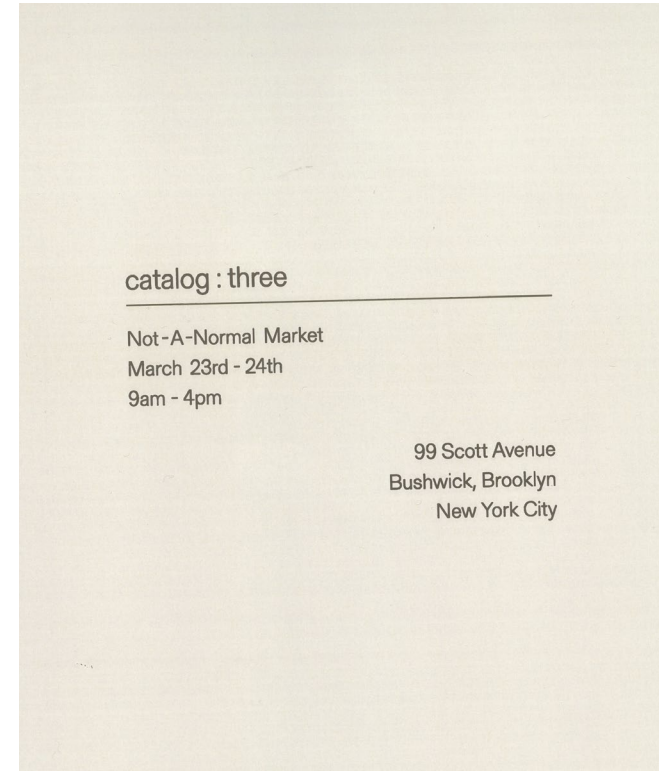


catalog : three

catalog:three was developed to create a modern glimpse into the world of traditional rugs through a partnership with the Torabi family, who brings over three generations of global rug sourcing expertise. With a focus on quality and authenticity, we sought to create an atmosphere for contemporary consumers that does not sacrifice historical methods of woven production. The branding emphasizes clarity and neutrality, creating a gallery-like experience that highlights the vibrant hues and intricate designs of the rugs, without the overwhelming stimuli of typical antique rug marketplaces.

*Creative Direction, Strategy,
Design*

2021





Shortly after their 10-year anniversary, Montreal's Apt. 200 embarked on a transformative journey, redefining its spatial narrative to mirror the shifting contours of its identity. Guided by the paradigm of residentiality, the project wielded the rich tapestry of European modernist architecture, channeling the spirit of Le Corbusier's illustrious dwelling in Boulogne-Billancourt. Here, the aim transcended mere aesthetics; it sought to curate an ambiance that seamlessly melds the familiar comforts of a modern home with the pulsating energy of a nightclub. Apt. 200 thus emerges as a spatial narrative, blurring the lines between domesticity and revelry, offering patrons an immersive experience at the nexus of comfort and vivacity.

Interior Design, Research

2024





Initially conceived as an annual print publication and Instagram moodboard, Emily Oberg's Sporty & Rich brand has organically evolved into one of luxury athleisure's prominent figures. Embracing its titular descriptors as guiding principles, the brand plays with dynamic interpretations of affluence and athleticism by using them in aesthetic conjunction. In 2019, when Nicholas Schmidt Studio first partnered with Sporty & Rich, we established the graphic framework for the brand, broadening its initial product offering to encompass a more comprehensive selection. Through the adoption of a research-focused approach, we curated a collection of graphics that encapsulated the dualistic yet unified ethos of Sporty & Rich and its expanding customer base.

Graphic Design, Research

2019-2021

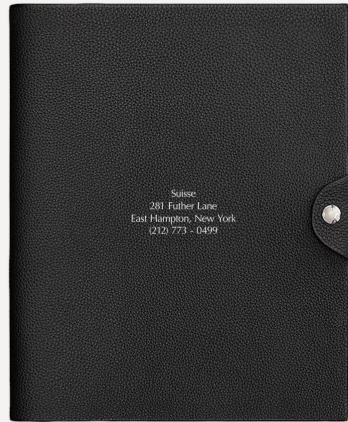
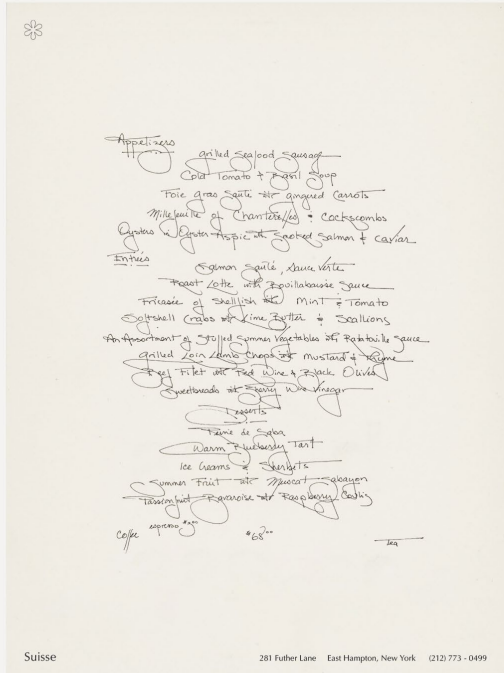




The branding functions as a manifesto of sorts, stripping away the superfluous in favor of an austere presentation of essentials. This reductionism is not merely an aesthetic choice but a philosophical stance, an affirmation of the restaurant's ideological commitment to purity and intentionality. In an era dominated by excess and overstimulation, the brand's stark simplicity acts as a counterpoint, resisting the commercial pressure to entertain or overwhelm. It invites the viewer into a contemplative space where the absence of distraction becomes a form of intellectual engagement, echoing the broader ethos of the restaurant itself—an embrace of the essential over the ornamental. A return to fundamentals.

Creative Direction, Design

2024





Suisse
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*Original campaign**

For Holiday 2020, Saintwoods and Helmut Lang collaborated on a capsule collection titled "See You Soon." Rooted in Helmut Lang's corporate code and the yearning for respite from the grind, the collection explores themes of escapism and daydreaming. Its graphic language, evocative of transportation and aspirational motifs, paints a picture of utopian longing. Drawing inspiration from 1990s Helmut Lang magazine editorials, the photography juxtaposes seamless backdrops with industrial settings, illustrating the contrast between the mundanity of work life and the lofty ideals of escapism. The inclusion of furniture from Studio Cicetti's perfumerie for Helmut Lang, alongside file cabinets from the Helmut Lang office space, adds a layer of authenticity to the visual narrative.

Art Direction, Research

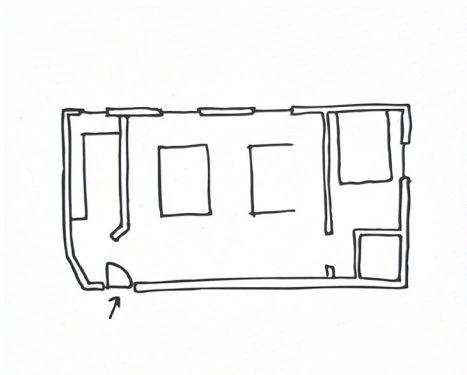
2020



The conception of this project came from the idea of using my existing apartment (a 1 bedroom + dining room on the first floor of a 14 unit building) as a template to explore notions of reduction. The idea was to keep the existing structure as it was built in the 1920s, but to remove any adornment and personal effects. The purpose of this experiment was to imagine how one can create a spartan lifestyle in their existing habitation simply through the limiting of ornamentation and the curation of mass and texture. Often does one imagine making a pilgrimage to the Abbey at Le Thoronet or the Ryoan-ji Temple, but not often do we get to engage with these monastic fantasies without the aspect of relocation. The project served to create a reductive beauty where I still reside, taking architectural features from Cistercian abbeys and incorporate them to a life that is not quite as austere. *One can want a place where it is possible to be still, without necessarily wanting to pray in it.*

Research, Interior Design

2023





Designed for an exclusive collaboration with Montreal based Saintwoods and optics brand Retrosuperfuture , the Virgo is an oversized silhouette characterised by carefully sculpted rims with an oblique finish around the lenses. It draws its form from the semiotic realm of European and American aristocracy, where oversized frames serve as shields against the pervasive gaze of the paparazzi. The product thus becomes a tool of spatial liberation, a barrier that redefines visibility and privacy within the public sphere.

Research, Design

2022

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