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Daniele Tamagni 'Global STYLE Battles' - Street Photography Captures Unique Personal Style

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Launching this evening at London's ARTECO Gallery, photographer Daniele Tamagni's 'Global STYLE Battles' takes us into the colourful and achingly hip worlds of 'The Flying Cholitas', 'Playboys of Bacongo', 'Havana Glam', 'Afrometal' and the original Django, spanning African hell riders and duelling Bolivian women.

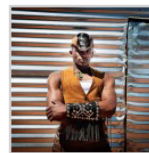
If you are in London, get down to ARTECO. But for those of you who are not in London, here are a selection of images by Tamagni whose style captures the essence of vibrant street life and style, focussing on the subcultures that define themselves through extremes of dress and fashion.



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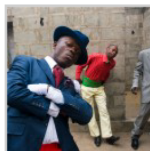
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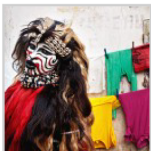
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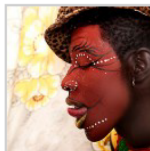
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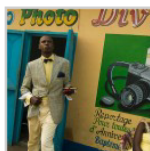
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Tamagni's documenting of street cultures seeks to connect with drop outs, lost kids and the poor all over the world in a search for identity and respect.

We first came across Daniele Tamagni through his books, 'Dandys: Sapeurs of Brazzaville', and 'Gentlemen of Bacongo' which feature the artist's most iconic and best-known series of images. Set in Congo's Brazzaville, the images explore the social and urban context of 'Sapeurs' which the photographer considers, "a revolutionary movement, because dressing up is a way to escape and forget poverty." These are juxtaposed by the Sapeurs of 'Afrometal' which also feature in his 'Afrometal' book. In their black leather pants and studded belts, boots and cowboy hats, the subjects could not be further removed from the brightly coloured suits of their counterparts but it is a passion to express themselves that joins the two groups.

How then, does an Italian street photographer end up in locations as exotic as Africa and Cuba? "I am interested in urban style worldwide," explains Tamagni. "Although I am Italian, I have always been open-minded about learning about and understanding different cultures. The last few years in particular have influenced my style and subject choices, producing portfolios which might generate a critical reflection on the identity of these people who consider elegance their main reason for existence inside a social reality so very different and so distant from that of our own."

Tamagni's iconic photographs are a mixture of the staged and the in situ. The costumes and dress, however, are all real, although Tamagni smiles and says, "if they appear to be constructed, then that is good, for I want to leave the viewer questioning what they see."

Global STYLE Battles is at ARTECO Gallery, Old York Road, London until 22nd June. See www.artecogallery.com (<http://www.artecogallery.com>).

For more on Daniele Tamagni see www.photodantam.com (<http://www.photodantam.com>). Look out for the forthcoming book, 'Global Street Battles' that will feature Tamagni's works to date.

