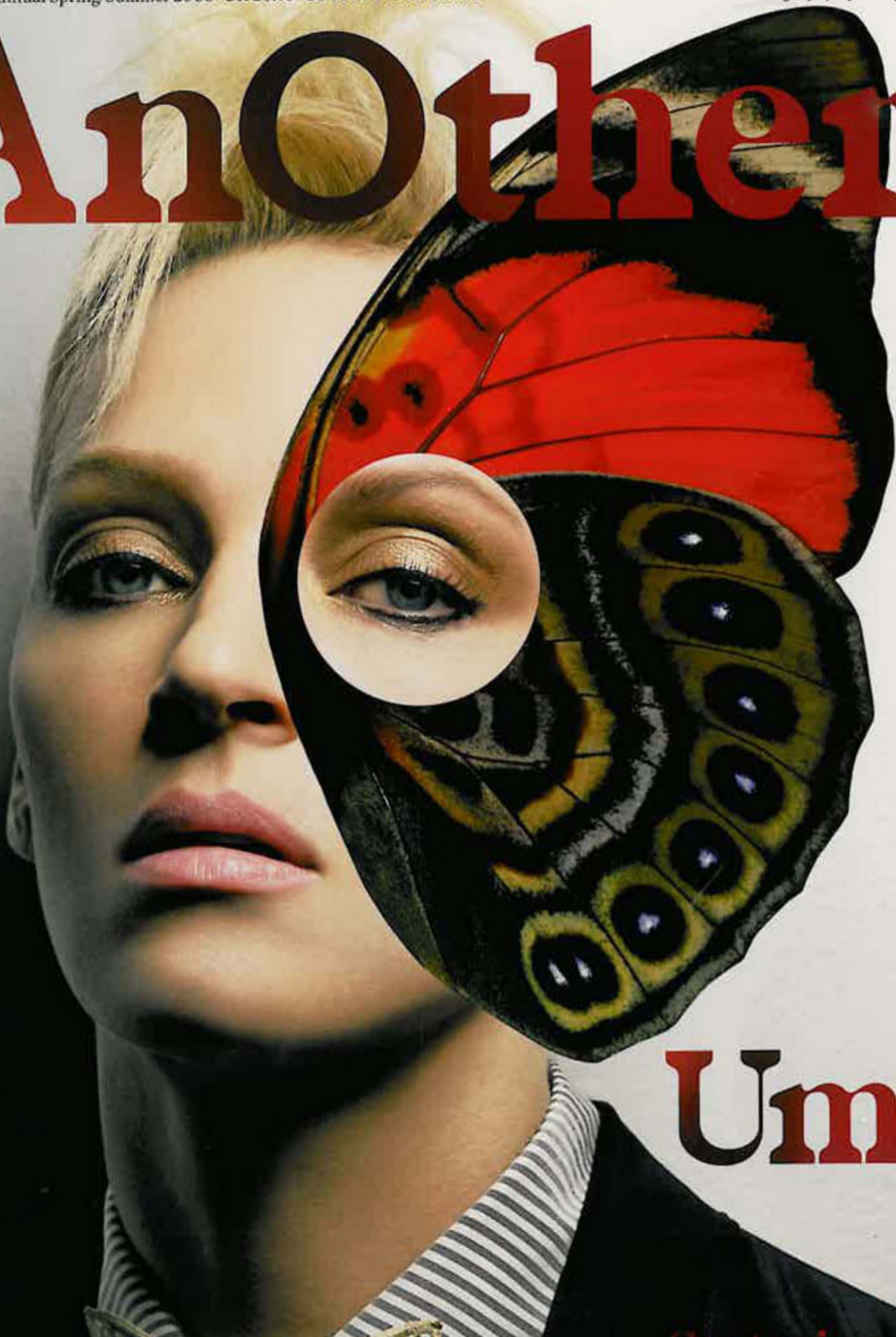


Another Magazine



Uma

Another thing I wanted to tell you

Text Ana Finel Honigman

Photography Jeremy and Claire Weiss

Shamim Momin

Sees the other side of

Venice Beach

“Beautiful surfer boys and gorgeous pollution-sunsets”

“Despite a decade of regular visits to Los Angeles, I’d always thought of Venice Beach as merely a relic of its own mythologised past; a sanitised, commercialised, version of a subversive community or a kind of cheesy iteration of cliché. After spending weeks there last summer on a writing retreat at a friend’s beach house, however, it’s now my favourite place in the US, save Manhattan. Venice has the small-town best, without the small-town part – an urban community with a beach mentality that is a concentrated reflection of the contradictions and tensions that make LA so fascinating. While the hyper-plastic sunny-Hollywood view pertains, LA is made rich by its darkness; the sunshine/noir trope that actually holds. It is eccentric and bizarre just when you think it couldn’t be more homogenous; it is a series of fractured neighbourhoods linked by largely-failed urban

infrastructures, pretending to be a single city. From my terrace in Venice, I watch dolphins jumping in the waves between beautiful surfer boys and gorgeous pollution-sunsets, and I can see clear to Malibu after the rain. It can be scary walking on what feels like a familiar tourist boardwalk and suddenly seeing a crack-head beat up his girlfriend. But it’s also amazing that when my car wouldn’t start at dawn, my neighbour gave me a lift (and dealt with the pick-up truck as well) without batting an eyelash. It’s just my kind of place.”



With a sterling intellectual pedigree, compelling chic, ten years as a curator with the Whitney Museum of American Art and an immediately recognisable signature aesthetic, Shamim M Momin is one of America’s key young tastemakers. She is held to be significantly responsible for the astronomical career trajectories of such artists as Terence Koh, Banks Violette, Mark Grotjahn and Ellen Harvey. A regular on juries and panels in the US and abroad, she is also an adjunct professor of contemporary art for the Williams College 2007

Semester Program in New York, and is a doctoral candidate in history of art at CUNY. As the associate curator of the Whitney Museum and branch director and curator of the Whitney at Altria, Momin relates comfortably with artists, while enabling their ideas to be realised. When seen socialising with New York’s golden-boy enfants terribles, Momin displays the cool glamour of Anne Margaret among the Rat Pack, but in her day job she is the author of some of the most sober and salient essays to accompany major museum shows.