

Endless Frontiers

Atlanta accessory designer delivers chic, eco-friendly travel gear

By Rae Penza 12.01.2009



Courtesy of Malcolm Frontiers

Finding travel gear or even an accessory to serve as a to-and-from work carryall can be a challenge. Usually products are either fashionable (read that as impractical) or functional and horribly masculine (zip cords and netting anyone?), but it's rare to find a bag that fills both voids. Sure, women (and some men) usually choose fashion-forward bags, large enough to store a pony, but despite the ample space, lack any reasonable system of organization. Unorganized, disgruntled fashionistas can now rejoice with travel gear genius, **Malcolm Frontier**. Chic and undoubtedly modern, this eco and animal-friendly line of bags, wallets, and other travel gear packables takes the organizational hassle out of travel. *Buzz Entertainment Magazine* caught up with the fashion-forward line's creator and namesake, **Malcolm**, to get the inside dish on his inspirations and laid-back lifestyle.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: When you're designing each product, what inspires you?

Malcolm Frontier: I love seeing objects, or people, that are versatile and comfortable in any setting. When I spot it, I am obsessed with that person or thing's styling and energy and how to capture the same effect in our own line. It may all stem from my extremely varied interests that range from furniture design to motorcycles and adventure travel.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Why is being "green" so important to you?

MF: To us it's more of a personal commitment so that we can feel good about what we are doing at the end of the day. Because of this, we don't try to jump on every green band wagon- instead we set up a solid plan to create responsible products and constantly improve and reduce the impact of the line and our business over time.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Who is your target patron?

MF: We really connect with a forward thinking and ambitious audience. These "go-getters" appreciate the unique aspects of our line and the design details that make our products suited for life on the go. This same group is often well traveled and spread out all over the world so we aimed for a global appeal from the start.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Your logo is so simplistic and modern, why the two rectangles?

MF: The shape is a simple representation of my first and last name, which are similar proportions. At first, I was reluctant to use a logo at all because I really wanted the design to speak for itself. The "Double Rectangle" serves as an understated yet recognizable logo that could pass as a design detail and actually adds to the look rather than just labeling it. For the full, but slightly embellished story, check out our blog: <http://doublerectangle.com/index.php/about/>

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: What void in current accessories are you seeking to fill with your line?

MF: Most bags are suited for work or play- we offer products that do both equally well so you can carry them seven days a week.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: How do you choose the fabrics for each line?

MF: Everything is very hands-on; I have personally been to Hong Kong three times to source materials and hardware. We always look for unique, modern materials that are pleasant to touch, but they also have to be durable, animal-friendly, and non-toxic.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Which ranks higher when you're designing: form or function?

MF: In the studio we call it "style and substance" and they are considered equally for every piece in our line. We are creating products that you will live with everyday for a few years. Like dating: one or the other may be fine for one day or night, but for the long haul you really need both!

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Do you have a favorite bag among your collection?

MF: The Entertainer is my personal favorite. I am all about traveling light so the Entertainer carries everything I need, including my computer, without being bulky. I lugged mine to about six different countries last year and I use it daily around Atlanta whether I am on my bike, motorcycle, or in a car; it's perfect everywhere.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: What is the best compliment you've received about the collection?

MF: I love when someone find's our line hard to categorize. To me, it means that our diverse inspirations and global influences are all playing a part in the final designs. Of course, it's always great to hear from customers that are still excited about their purchase months after buying.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Each piece seems pretty minimalistic, but you sometimes put in a fun "twist." What are a few ways that you try to lighten up your designs?

MF: We try not to take anything too seriously in the studio and I think the fun environment we work in finds its way into our line. Sometimes it's on an interior detail, the packaging, or the names. When we get to the final details of a product, if we step back and look at it and decide it's too serious we will rework it. We are going for a seven-day a week look, so anything that is too serious will never cut it on the weekend or your next vacation.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: I understand you somewhat recently became a dual citizen between the U.S. and Belgium. Has this newly found freedom inspired your designs?

MF: I did. I don't know if it has made its way into our designs yet, but it has made it into our planning. When we started the line, Gabrielle (my wife and partner) and I, worked from Brazil for a while. It was a great experience that we'd like to repeat. We're looking into working in Europe for a period to take advantage of my new Belgian/EU citizenship and the great design energy there.

Buzz Entertainment Magazine: Where would you like to see the line go in the next few years?

MF: We'll continue to roll the great feedback we get from our fans into new styles so that we can offer a wider range of styles and features. Eventually, we'd like to become known as *the* accessories of choice for practical, approachable modern style among our core audience- worldwide.