ABOUT

The Collaborator Studio, established in 2020, is a remote residency and rotating artist showcase that oversees the creation of limited, co-designed products with creatives curated based on a mission parallel to the Elena Velez brand. The studio serves as both a hero-product test kitchen as well as a vehicle for expanding into vertical creative markets such as furniture, product design, crypto art, interiors, accessories & wearables, sound design, & performance.

The studio focuses on democratizing creative and entrepreneurial resources for makers outside of typically established creative capitals and provides a pipeline to the industry for small brands through sales opportunity and circulatory access to our influencer network. The residency is best suited for creative entrepreneurs and product designers in fashion-adjacent industries who are interested in developing an experimental concept, building a brand through initial access to our established online sales and influencer network, or designers looking to beta test for data on market viability.

BRAND MISSION
RECONTEXTUALIZING ICONIC REGIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP THROUGH FASHION.
6 DAYS - $2,468 IN SALES
$1 AD SPEND - $47.38 GROSS
IG ACCTS REACHED +129.7%
118% ROI
"WORKING WITH ELENA VELEZ HAS OPENED DOORS THAT I DID NOT KNOW EXISTED. WHEN WE BEGAN WORKING TOGETHER, I WAS WORKING IN A METAL SHOP AND CREATING JEWELRY IN MY FREE TIME... IT WAS ELENA THAT VALIDATED THE WORK AND ENCOURAGED ME TO GROW THIS CONCEPT INTO A POTENTIAL BUSINESS.

OVERALL, BEING A CREATIVE IS FILLED WITH SELF-DOUBT AND REASONS NOT TO EXECUTE IDEAS. WORKING IN THE EV COLLABORATOR COMMUNITY HAS NOT ONLY HELPED ME TRUST AND DEVELOP MY IDENTITY AS AN ARTIST AND MAKER, BUT HAS ALSO RESULTED IN WORK OF ART THAT I AM PROUD TO BE A PART OF."

- @NELS.STUDIO

"There is so much artistic potential in the trades," agreed Nelson Kies, a metal worker who grew up in Milwaukee with Velez and is creating accessories, such as rings, necklaces, earrings and even tiaras to complete her looks.

"I just started messing around with scrap materials—waste products—in the metal shop and came up with various pieces," he said. Like Velez’s designs, his accessories combine the "dirtiness" of machinery with the elegance of high fashion.

Kies, who now runs his own brand, Nels Studio, calls his process “cladding,” which in construction refers to the act of placing layers of material over a building to either provide protection or improve its appearance. The same, he said, can be said for the role of accessories and clothes on a body.
"HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO COLLABORATE WITH ELENA AND HER BRAND HAS REALLY HEIGHTENED MY CAREER. I FEEL THAT BRINGING IN ALL OF US COLLABORATORS BROUGHT SUCH A UNIQUE ASPECT TO THE BRAND AND TO THE SHOW. I HAVE GAINED SO MUCH KNOWLEDGE AND CREATIVITY FROM THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE." - @EMCASTNAILS
"Elena is opening a very important door for our community of Midwestern designers, makers, and artists. Immediately following our collaboration for NYFW, our company broke ground with celebrity stylists, major design publications, and luxury eCommerce brands that are interested in our footwear designs. Elena has let us into her network, and in sharing her platform, she has truly elevated our voices. The opportunity to work with Elena Velez has been an immense benefit for our studio."

@Morph.Design
FAQ

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The collaborator studio is an 8-12 week long virtual artist residency during which products are codesigned with the Elena Velez team for the purposes of either limited run retail or professional press exposure at New York Fashion Week. In exchange for product development services we offer, where applicable, access to Fashion Week placements, press coverage, brand development consultation, sales data, access to our e-com clientele, promotional materials, celebrity/influencer seeding & gifting when relevant, co-branded recognition, marketing services, distribution services, branding assets and PR services.

IS IT PAID?

Although time and labor is unpaid, the brand assumes all costs related to materials, parts, promotional coverage, celebrity & influencer seeding, press acquisition, production costs, branding materials, paid advertisement, marketing spend, retail fees, and shipping & handling.

WHO CAN SELL THE PRODUCT?

Elena Velez has exclusive sales rights through www.elenavelez.com and guarantees full collaboratorial recognition & royalties as agreed upon contractually by both parties in the Wholesaler Agreement. This ensures authenticity, financial uniformity, and keeps branding and marketing cohesive.

RIGHTS

Exclusive rights to the reproduction of final products and ownership of all process materials belong to the Elena Velez company. Collaborators have access to borrow items on loan, pending availability. We will never produce without recognition and royalties.

CAN I TERMINATE?

Collaborators are free to terminate at any point, but the company is free to continue development of the product and is entitled to recover items & expenditures incurred in prototyping.
AS A SMALL CITY KID WITH A DREAM OF BIG CITY FASHION, I STARTED THIS BRAND AS A WAY TO BOTH RECONTEXTUALIZE ICONIC REGIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP AND REIMAGINE MY OWN UNIVERSE OF HIGH FASHION THROUGH THE GRITTY, INDUSTRIAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE MAKERS ACROSS THE AMERICAN RUSTBELT. THE WORK HAS BEEN FEATURED ON SOME OF OUR FAVORITE CELEBRITIES OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS BUT IN THIS NEXT STAGE OF GROWTH, WE GET TO DRESS THE IDOLS THAT MEAN THE MOST TO US: PEOPLE WHO SHARE THE CULTURE AND LIVE THE VISION LIKE YOURSELF.

THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW EV COLLABORATOR STUDIO SERIES ENABLES COLLABORATION ON BESPOKE, HIGHLY LIMITED PRODUCTS WITH SKILLED LOCAL ARTISANS WHO INTERPRET TRADITIONAL REGIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE WAY. IT’S OUR OWN TINY BUT NOT INSIGNIFICANT ACT OF REBELLION IN THE PUSH TO DEMOCRATIZE CREATIVE PERSPECTIVES IN THE ELITE WORLD OF ART AND DESIGN. ALL PRODUCTS ARE HANDMADE WITH LOVE AND SOOTY HANDS RIGHT HERE IN MILWAUKEE, WI AND WE HOPE YOU’LL CHECK BACK IN SOON TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR NEXT COLLABORATOR RESIDENCY OR REACH OUT TO BE CONSIDERED YOURSELF.

WE’RE SO THANKFUL AND PASSIONATE ABOUT ALL THE AMAZING PROJECTS THAT ARE SUSTAINED THROUGH YOUR SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY DURING SUCH PRECARIOUS TIMES, AND WISH YOU A HAPPY AND HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON!

P.S. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR YOUR PIECE AT THE PRESENTATION OF OUR NEXT COLLECTION, RELEASING THIS SEPTEMBER 2021 AT NEW YORK FASHION WEEK

WWW.ELENAVELEZ.COM | @_ELENAVELEZ