

make the trade axe the French once they endure. More than just a manual jects that were only meant to last a swapped for furs with the First profession, the forge is, for Collette, few years," says Savchev. Nations. "They would send thou- a spiritual experience. He cherishes sands of axe heads that were stamped, his workshop as a living study in red by the work of his apprentice minted like coins. They were worth contrasts: the temperature gap be- Savchev, he remains worried: "I a certain number of furs," explains Collette. This axe could be used to clear the forest, or simply stay alive in it.

The history of the forge goes back even further. It also separated sedentary from nomadic people, Collette says. The Iron Age marked the beginning of settlements—a requirement for the emergence of civilizations. There is a reason why metallurgy holds a special place in the human imagination—from Genesis to Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, and all through Greek mythology.

"The forge is the door that brings us back to values like sustainability, eco-responsibility, and buying local. Its mission can reach beyond the making of objects," adds the master blacksmith. By creating things that last, he wants to take a stand against a system that values novelty, disposability, and waste. "We can't keep

creation.

he adds. A nice banister made out of on it. The only time is now." the Pont de Québec? Or a knife made out of the Golden Gate Bridge? There's slowness, the close contact with mata certain amount of "melting loss" ter-that attracted Collette's "star" puthat occurs every time a piece is thrust pil, Ivan Savchev, seven years ago. The back into the furnace's internal tem- 29-year-old Montrealer had moved peratures. But even those residues up from mechanic to mechanicalcould be swept out of the ashes and engineering technician and was well melted back into iron ingots, the on his way to hitting a wall. "I'd lost blacksmith's raw material.

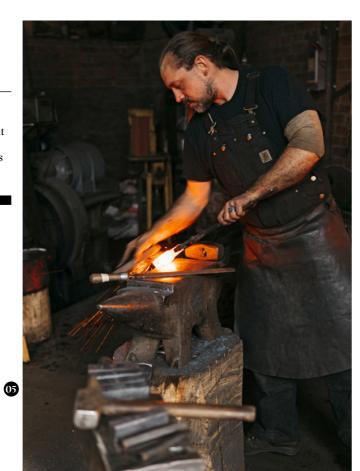
getting containers filled with shit— subdued lighting to avoid overpowsorry, I mean containers filled with ering the shining glow of the fire, the disposable things." Recycling met-stillness of the anvils from which als allows for a nearly infinite cycle of erupt incandescent shards of iron, the barrels of water to cool the burn-Collette is the kind of guy who day- ing metal. Working here becomes a dreams about the incredible things he form of meditation. "The window could forge with all the metal avail- for striking the iron while it's hot is able on the planet. "It would take us very short. I don't have the leisure to 400 or 500 years to reuse all of it," think of anything else; I can't dwell

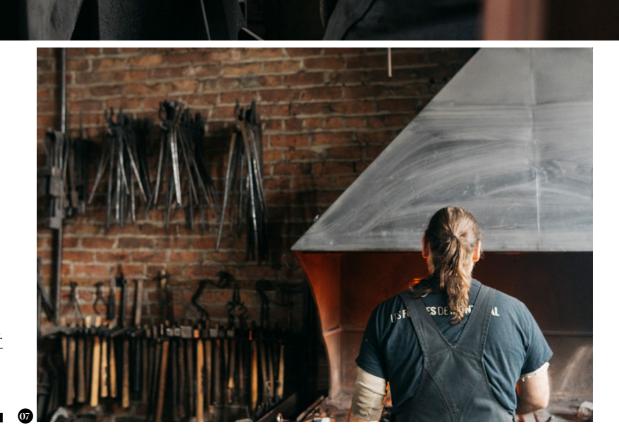
It's all of this—the meaning, the all motivation. I didn't want to work Collette's hands create objects that, just to cater to the interests of the in the future, will create others— Department of Finance, building ob-

While the master is frankly stirtween the hearth and the room, the might still have about 25 years

04 Collette reverseengineers traditional tools.

05 Collette knew from childhood that he would take up his family's ancestral occupation.





06 Metal can be recycled almost infinitely.

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07 The forge, for Collette, is a site of meditation.

> 25 MATHIEU COLLETTE