

Eldar
Krainer

eldar.krainer@gmail.com / eldar-krainer.com / [@e.l.k.r](https://twitter.com/e.l.k.r)

stand  out

The *Standouts* feature on Hinge® reveals a list of 20 potential lovers, uniquely tailored for each user. The only way to unlock this list and get access to your potential lovers is by sending them a digital rose. To be on someone's Standouts, the app must recognise you as their type. You enter a pool with others that the algorithm has deemed similar based on profession and appearance. To enter such a pool, you have to become a cliché of yourself. You externalise the characteristics that "set you apart from the rest" in order to, ironically, enter a "restricted" list with other copies of yourself. It honestly makes you feel quite basic.

The list is renewed daily, which gives you a relatively short amount of time to decide if you are keen to spend £3.99 for a digital rose and send it to your most likely to be future partner, in addition to £165.98 for the premium subscription of the app; on top of this, nothing assures you that he will actually fancy you and even if he did that he wouldn't ghost you after two messages. While calculating your move and saying to yourself, *There he is! The man of my dreams! The one I've been waiting for all this time! Am I willing to let him disappear in 24 hours, just like that?!* You are blaming yourself for once again purposely sabotaging an opportunity for a match when it feels closer than ever. *It's only £3.99!* You try to convince yourself; then you remember that tomorrow is the first day of the month and you have to pay rent and bills, which have risen disproportionately since Covid ended, and you think of all of your part-time jobs

that are failing to cover your monthly expenses and that, in the midst of all this you are supposed to make art, because in the end if you don't show anything how could you expect someone to discover you one day? So you take a screenshot of your Standout and try to find your Prince Charming on other social platforms. His Instagram® profile is private, so you send him a message that goes directly to the requests inbox and pray that maybe one day, even though he has 10k followers, he will open your message without thinking that you're a total creep while being mesmerised by your cross-app magic charm and go on a date with you.

In the meantime, you've figured that the screenshots of all the guys that "if-you-had-enough-money-you-would-have-probably-given-them-a-whole-bouquet" are actually good material for a new work of art. You won't use their faces because it's too explicit. You also don't want to come across as this pathetic-miserable-horny artist, so you'll try a more sophisticated way to represent them by showing your ambivalence toward the app's interface and its vast possibilities and dream of a utopian scenario where they will all come to your opening to see this piece of art, which is essentially a portrait of themselves and fall in love with you as they recognise all has been dedicated to them.