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A portrait of Dua Lipa with short dark hair, wearing a black blazer and large diamond earrings. She is looking directly at the camera. The background is a blurred fire. The word 'LIBRE' is written in large white letters across the middle of the image.

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ELLE

April 2020



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FRANK, FUNNY AND
COMPLETELY HONEST:
SOPHIE TURNER OPENS UP

The COVERS

SOPHIE TURNER

NEWSSTAND COVER

*Dress, Louis Vuitton. Hair
bow, stylist's own.*

SUBSCRIBER COVER

*Coat, top, hat and brooch,
all Louis Vuitton.*

PHOTOGRAPHS: Arthur Elgort.

STYLING: Beth Fenton. **HAIR:**
Christian Wood. **MAKE-UP:** Lisa

Storey. **NAILS:** Millie Machado.

TAILOR: Susie Kourinian.

FASHION ASSISTANTS: Cathleen

Peters, Megan King, Julia Harvey

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BOLD SILHOUETTES,
BOLDER COLOURS: HOW
TO MAKE A STATEMENT,
THE SS20 WAY



Photography: Drew Jarrett.



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ELLE

Question of the month WHAT'S THE HOTTEST TICKET ON YOUR CULTURE RADAR THIS MONTH?

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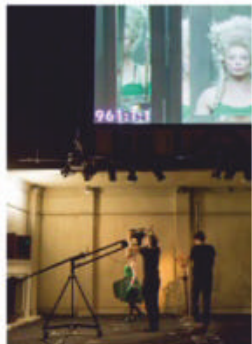
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'THE STORY MUSEUM IN OXFORD, WHICH IS REOPENING AFTER A MULTIMILLION POUND REFURBISHMENT – I'LL BE FIRST IN THE QUEUE. THIS QUIRKY, UNDER-THE-RADAR SPOT ALWAYS COOKS UP CREATIVE WAYS TO TELL STORIES – AS A JOURNALIST, I'M TOTALLY ON BOARD WITH THAT.'
The Story Museum, Oxford, reopens on 4 April



'I STUDIED VIRGINIA WOOLF AT UNIVERSITY – HER WRITING TAKES ME BACK TO COMPETITIVE ESSAY STATUS UPDATES ON FACEBOOK CIRCA 2007, SO I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THE BARBICAN'S LATEST PRODUCTION OF *Orlando*.'
Orlando is at the Barbican, London, from 2-5 April



'THE NEW ADAPTATION OF *The Secret Garden*. MY SISTER AND I WATCHED THE ORIGINAL FILM ON REPEAT AS KIDS, FANTASISING THAT THE PUBLIC PARK NEAR OUR HOUSE WAS OUR VERY OWN SECRET GARDEN.'
The Secret Garden is out 17 April



'AFTER PRACTISING BALLET AS A CHILD, I SWITCHED TO BOLLYWOOD AND CLASSICAL INDIAN DANCE TO CELEBRATE MY CULTURE. I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE CHOREOGRAPHER AKRAM KHAN'S FUSION OF BALLET WITH KATHAK (A TRADITIONAL INDIAN DANCE).'
Creature by Akram Khan is at Sadler's Wells, London, from 1-8 April

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'I HAVE SEEN EVERY JAMES BOND FILM IN THE CINEMA SINCE I WAS A CHILD AND THE NEW ONE LOOKS TO BE THE BEST YET. I'M FASCINATED TO SEE HOW SCRIPTWRITER PHOEBE WALLER-BRIDGE (*Fleabag*) LIGHTENS THE FRANCHISE'S USUAL DARKNESS.'
No Time To Die is out 3 April



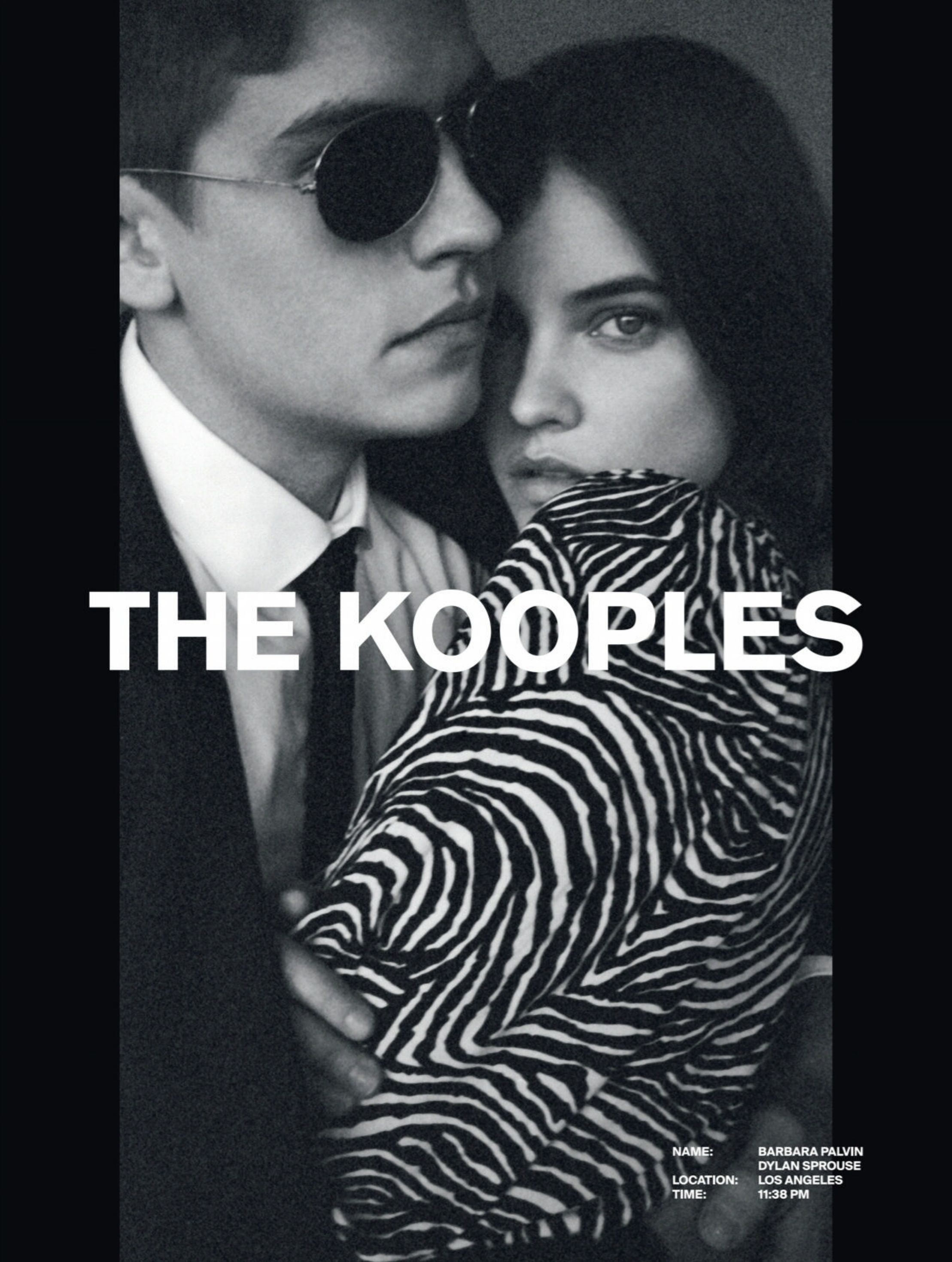
'I HOPE THAT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY INSPIRES GLOBAL ACTION TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE. THIS YEAR, I'M CUTTING DOWN ON MEAT. WE ONLY HAVE ONE EARTH AND IT NEEDS TO LAST US FOREVER.'
Earth Day is on 22 April



'AT CONVENT SCHOOL, I WAS EFFECTIVELY DELORIS – THE NAUGHTY NUN IN THE FILM *Sister Act*, PLAYED BY WHOOP! GOLDBERG. THE NEW MUSICAL PRODUCTION WILL TAKE ME RIGHT BACK TO THE CHOIR ROOM.'
Sister Act The Musical is on tour across the UK from 21 April and at London's Eventim Apollo from 21 July



'MY BEST FRIEND IS POLISH AND UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT HER CULTURE IS IMPORTANT TO ME, SO *The Yellow Bird Sings* IS AT THE TOP OF MY READING LIST. SET IN POLAND DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THIS BOOK WAS INSPIRED BY THE TRUE STORIES OF JEWISH CHILDREN IN HIDING.'
The Yellow Bird Sings by Jennifer Rosner is out 2 April



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The stylist CHARLOTTE HARNEY

Charlotte's interest in fashion began with her grandmother's vast jewellery collection. She studied Fashion Styling and Production at London College of Fashion before becoming ELLE's fashion assistant and co-ordinating *City Slicker* on p162. **WHAT WAS THE FIRST ITEM OF CLOTHING THAT HAD AN IMPACT ON YOU?** 'The Avril Lavigne-inspired buckle miniskirt I wore with a one-shouldered vest top on my 10th birthday.' **MOST VALUABLE STYLE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED?** 'If you can't find it, make it. My nan taught me to be creative.'



The interviewer BECKY BURGUM

After graduating from Central Saint Martins, Becky joined ELLE as features assistant and founded *Galchester*, a magazine celebrating the creative women in her hometown of Manchester. This month, she profiles fashion's most stylish women on p94. **GREATEST STYLE TIP?** 'Never wear a bra. Comfort is the boldest statement you can make.' **THE FIRST ITEM OF CLOTHING THAT HAD AN IMPACT ON YOU?** 'I begged my mum to collect me daily from primary school in her red leather Karen Millen jacket. It started my eBay addiction with the brand.'



Page 94

The writer HANNAH BETTS

Hannah taught Renaissance Literature at the University of Oxford, before moving to London at age 28 to become a journalist. Now an award-winning writer, she explores how much ambition one relationship can take on page 102. **STRANGEST WRITING HABIT?** 'I wear noise-cancelling ear defenders to drive others away. Looking like a lunatic is great for scoring double seats on trains.' **WHAT MOTIVATES YOU ON A BAD WRITING DAY?** 'Getting to ask questions about peoples' lives and learning from them. Talking to Jennifer Petriglieri for this feature proved life-changing.'



The face ALICIA BURKE

One of the top 50 highest-earning models last year, Alicia originally won Pulse Models' Caribbean Model Search in 2014 and has since fronted campaigns for Tom Ford and Gucci. This month, she appears in our summer dressing shoot on p162. **ONE ITEM YOU COULD NEVER THROW AWAY?** 'My grandma's pink silk nightgown. It keeps me connected to home in Jamaica.' **WHAT'S THE MOST SURPRISING ITEM IN YOUR HANDBAG?** 'Hot sauce. I need those spicy Caribbean flavours.'



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The image maker TOM SCHIRMACHER

As a 15-year-old growing up in Connecticut, Tom bought a camera to photograph his friends skateboarding. Twenty years later, he has gone on to shoot Shailene Woodley and Michelle Dockery, plus campaigns for La Mer and Tommy Hilfiger. Tom shoots *City Slicker* on p162. **TOP PHOTOGRAPHY TIP?** 'Don't be afraid to get things wrong. The most amazing moments happen by mistake.' **ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?** 'Be critical of yourself, but don't let that keep you from putting photographs out in the world.'

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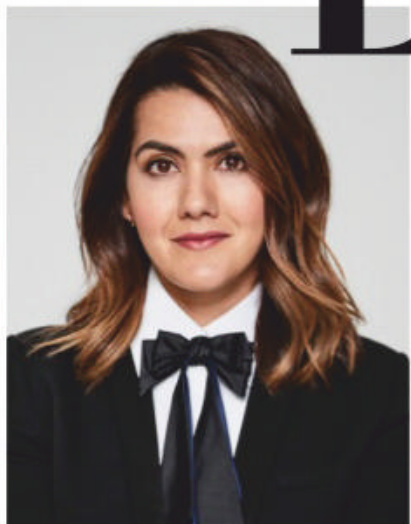
A fashion advertisement for Vagabond Shoemakers. The image features four models in a minimalist studio setting with a solid blue background and light-colored geometric platforms. On the left, a model stands wearing a beige short-sleeved button-down shirt with a green scarf and a long, pleated beige skirt, paired with brown leather sandals. In the center, a model sits on a platform wearing a vibrant red long-sleeved top and matching pants, with a light blue scarf, paired with black sandals. To her right, another model sits wearing a white long-sleeved top and pants, paired with black sandals. On the far right, a model stands wearing a blue long-sleeved dress with a black scarf, paired with white sandals. The brand name 'VAGABOND' is prominently displayed in large white letters, with 'SHOEMAKERS' in smaller white letters below it.

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ELLE



Public life VS REAL LIFE

One of my favourite things to do is dine alone. Give me a table by a window and a compelling book and I am deeply content. I have long attributed this slight quirk – for a woman who chooses to eat alone, particularly after dark, is still a quizzical sight – to being an introvert. After all, being on the outside of things is where introverts are happiest. But over the years, I have discovered that there is, in fact, another reason. The conversation. That is... *other people's* conversations. I call it the aural equivalent of 'people watching'; you'd probably call it good old-fashioned 'ear wiggling'. Whichever way you dress it, it's fascinating. Because here is the truth: what people admit in private is very different to what they admit in the wider world.

Look at social media and you could be forgiven for thinking that everyone, or at least everyone you know, feels the same about the big issues as you do: feminism, Trump, the idea that Greta Thunberg may in fact be The Messiah risen again in a Swedish teen's body... you all agree on these things, right?

Yet, away from the crowds, it is amazing how differently people feel about things. I know women who bristle at aspects of fourth-wave feminism, yet fear there would be a clarion call for their head on a spike were they to voice this. I know others whose political views bend slightly to the right, an admission of which, they tell me, would have

them seen as censorious radicals. What have we ended up with? A world of seeming sameness, where intellectual honesty is banished to the corners and people's public and private lives differ greatly.

The job of journalists, editors and stylists has always been to explore difference, and it is something, I am proud to say, ELLE has been doing for more than 30 years. Whether it's how to wear clothes

in an unexpected way or a new perspective on the cultural conversation – month in, month out, that is what we aim to do. This issue is no different.

Take, for example, Hannah Betts' brilliant feature that begs the question: how much ambition can one relationship take? The general belief is that we should seek a partner who is equal to us, in all respects. The reality, however, can be somewhat different, as Betts explores on page 102. The same is true of Jennifer

George's story *How Pulling Out Became The New Pill* on page 182: a frank (and funny) look at why many are choosing the teenage 'hope-for-the-best' pull-out method as contraception. Is it dangerous, or an empowering way for women to take control of their bodies?

In the rest of the issue, you'll find other wonderfully individual female voices, from the inimitable Donatella Versace to supermodel Aweng Chuol and writer Alice Vincent, united only in their difference from one another. What could be more interesting than that?

"INTELLECTUAL
HONESTY
IS BANISHED
TO THE
CORNERS"

ON MY RADAR

WHAT'S CAUGHT MY EYE (*and heart*)
THIS MONTH...



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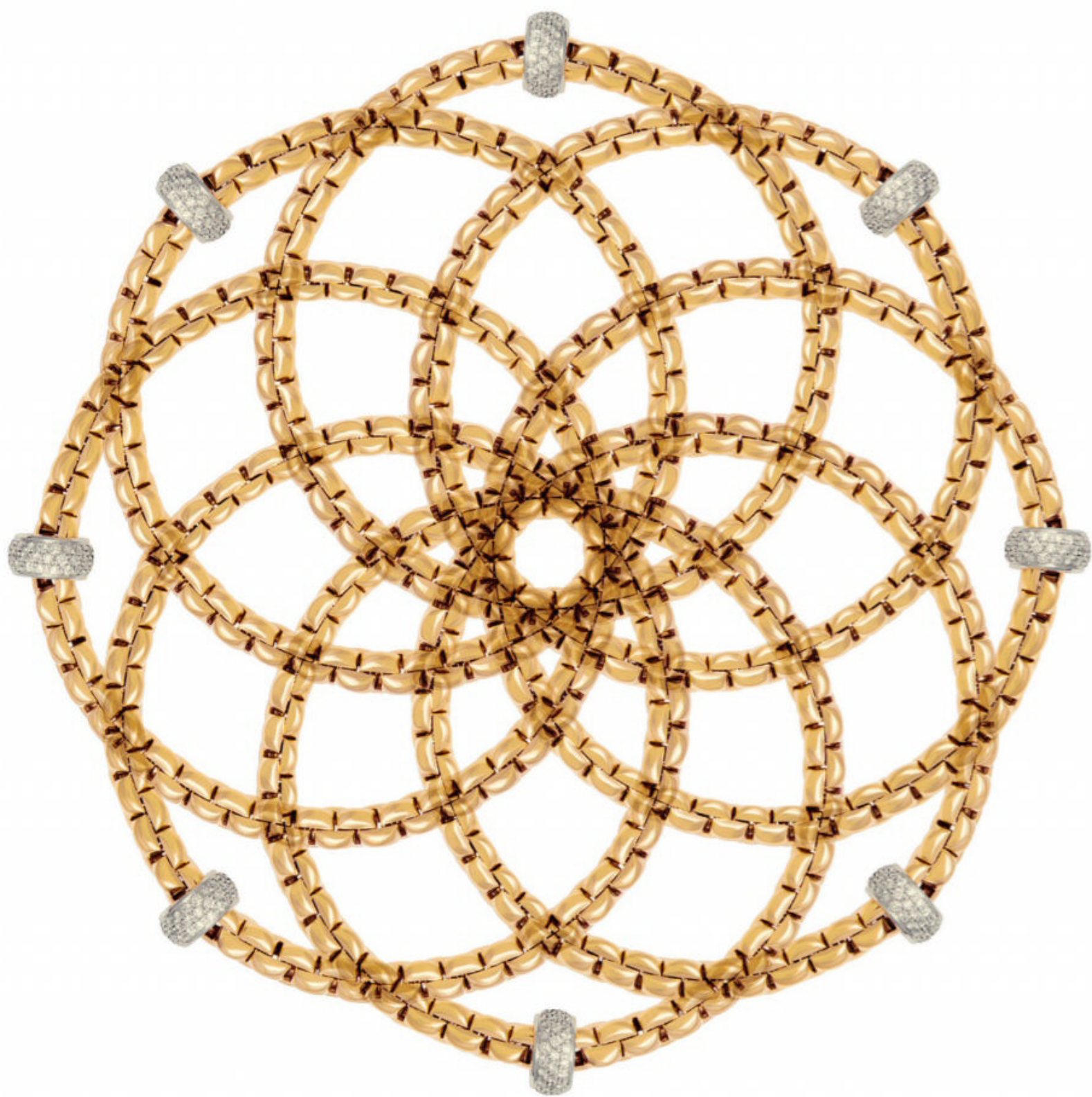
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The REBOUND

IN THE THROES OF HEARTBREAK, *Alice Vincent* FOUND SOLACE IN THE MOST UNLIKELY OF PLACES, AND SET ABOUT PUTTING DOWN ENTIRELY NEW ROOTS

PHOTOGRAPH *by* MARTINA FERRARA

As I neared the park, I felt my lungs expand. The cold air filled my throat, fine rain misted my face. In one direction, hordes of commuters in polished brogues and heels walked towards the train station. I, in my mud-encrusted worker boots, walked in the other direction, towards a place that, over the past few months, had become my sanctuary.

The community gardens were easily missed, hidden behind a high Victorian wall. But beyond the ancient bricks lay a magical world where a grapevine-filled greenhouse crested over a sea of carefully tended allotments, all crafted by volunteers.

Both tradition and romantic comedies dictate that in the wake of a break-up, one should spend time in a fugue state of misery and hangover, the whispers of cocktails and regret on every breath. Instead, I'd been pushing a spade through heavy soil and nestling precious bulbs into the dirt with my bare hands.

I had tried it, the hedonism; at least for the first few months. The summer blasted by as I shrugged off the settled life I had grown used to and tried on different versions of myself in an attempt to feel

better. I was too anxious to be alone in the beginning, too afraid of falling asleep without him. I went out with friends, drinking under fading skies until the laughter turned to tears. I was 27 and single for the first time in five years. So much of the person I'd become was entwined with someone else, it was a struggle to work out what was left of me. How was I to recover from the fact that the man I thought I would marry had walked out of the home we had made together, having told me he had fallen out of love with me?

We'd been a little ahead of our time, Josh and I. We met in our early twenties and ended up falling into a long-distance relationship that existed in precious, cut-off worlds – weekends spent on the expanse of the Pennines, hours tapped out through Gchat. I was living in London trying to make it as a journalist, while he was still a student up north. We quickly became the most grown-up couple in my social group, eventually buying a flat together.

On paper – or rather, on Facebook – it looked idyllic: bargain mid-century furniture and dinners from the posh butcher, while our friends stumbled messily through their early twenties. We fell ►

into a domestic rhythm – joint Picturehouse membership, Sunday supermarket trips and, for me, gardening.

I'd never been interested in horticulture before, and yet I found myself addicted to growing things. Anything, really: Crayola-bright geraniums picked up at the supermarket, cheap little succulents found on the high street. Before long, our balcony was filled with colour, fragrance and possibility. Hours would vanish out there, my mind quietened, giving me an unexpected peace I'd never found in London before. There was such a deep satisfaction in seeing things growing, fronds unfurling, buds fattening – life's most beautiful processes right in front of my eyes.

But as my little oasis grew, my relationship constricted. At first, I wrapped myself up in a denial that was constructed from the sheer ease of what we had. When it was just the two of us, we were really good at making each other happy, delighting in our in-jokes and keeping the rest of the world at bay. But in company, we fractured – he found me irritating, while I resented his stubbornness. We would row about it, until I realised it was easier for us to socialise alone.

Ultimately, we struggled. I pushed for more: more adventure, more fun, more friends. He pulled back, wanting life to settle. As the years went on, the space between us grew.

When it all fell apart, one cool June morning, it felt like an avalanche. What grounded me – the solidity of him and the future of which I was so certain – was reduced to rubble. I could barely breathe through the dust. He walked in as I was eating breakfast and told me we needed a break. The crunch of cereal between clenched teeth is what I mostly remember.

And so it started with a break. Not one that had been calmly and mutually decided upon, but something that sort of happened when he packed a small suitcase and wheeled it out of the door. He never came back.

It's funny, how practicality can subsume heartbreak. The few I told were fascinated by what would happen to our home, where each of us would live and what we would do with the long-haul flights we'd recently booked. (Perhaps it is more difficult to look into the teary eyes of the recently heartbroken and ask, instead, when they think it might stop hurting.) What's more, Josh and I are practical people and we got on with the practical details – working out what we'd do with the newspaper subscription, how we'd pay the bills, how we'd eventually sell our flat.

I sublet a room in a grey high-rise next to a dual carriageway. Much of the joy in those following months was synthetic, fuelled by alcohol and desperation, but occasionally I would catch glimmers of pure happiness in seeing small green shoots of life

push through pavement cracks. To see something growing in such trying conditions – of scorching heat and arid concrete – offered hope. If those plants could be beautiful, maybe I could recover too.

Josh and I took turns in the flat until we figured out what to do with it. I was still partying hard at the weekends, but I'd find myself tending to my pots and window boxes mere hours after I'd come back to the empty flat, eyes black with last night's make-up. I loved how my plants carried on growing regardless of the drama in my life. In watching them function – the way the flowers turned to follow the course of the sun; how they swelled after a good quench – I began to appreciate the necessities of life. In watching them survive a hot summer, I realised I could, too.

Walking through Brockwell Park late one Sunday afternoon, I stumbled upon the community gardens and it felt like an answer. There were vegetable beds, cut-flower patches, fruit trees and pleasingly productive compost heaps, all linked by pretty winding paths. It was beautiful. The next day, I signed up as a volunteer.

Over the next six months, as I bent and twisted among the flower beds, the heartbreak seemed to settle. I'd felt so useless for so long, but in the community gardens I felt useful again. The weeding I'd done one Saturday morning allowed another volunteer to plant something new. The tasks I was given forced me to use new tools and move my body in new ways. I'd come home cold and tired, but happy. With the fresh air and crumbs of soil came a realisation that renewal – of the earth, of plants and of my own life – was inevitable.

That day, I was digging – heavy, physical work. With two other women, I shifted clods of soil into a wheelbarrow and pushed it down the garden. As we worked, the director of the gardens told us about its history – how the place had been transformed from a rubbish tip with locals jumping over the walls. It had

taken 20 years of strangers' hard work to create this love-filled place. As she spoke, I unearthed a chunk of Victorian fireplace tile, the glaze shining beneath the mud.

For months, I'd wrestled with how I'd failed in our relationship, going over the same painful parts of our story to see if I could have done anything better. I carried so much from losing it all, but I could also actively help things grow. Hearing how the gardens came to be as I literally unearthed a piece of its history, I realised that everything that had passed between Josh and I had been necessary in shaping the woman I was becoming.

We dug for hours. The conversation moved on, the drizzle faded. But I left the gardens feeling lighter that day. Everything has a history. Soil keeps secrets, but it holds new beginnings, too. □
Rootbound: Rewilding a Life by Alice Vincent is out now



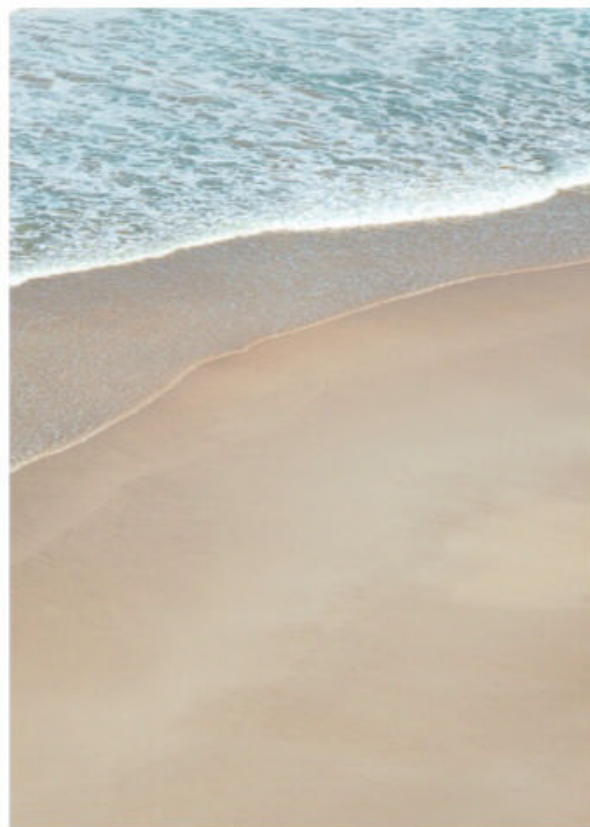
"I LOVED HOW MY PLANTS CARRIED
on growing
REGARDLESS OF THE
drama in my life.
IN WATCHING
THEM SURVIVE,
I realised I could, too"



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TODARE**

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BLACK BAY
36 S&G



ELLE *Upfront*

THE NOW, THE NEW, THE NEXT



The mood... BREAST IN SHOW

Good news: it's time to retire the heavyweight winter coat. Bad news: you need to stow away your jumper, shirt and possibly your bra. It's breasts a-go-go for spring, with sheer tops, sans underwear, on the runways of Armani, Celine by Hedi Slimane and Loewe. And if that all sounds a bit nippy, you can just wear a semi-sheer bralette, as per Alberta Ferretti and Dior. Free the nipple.

EDITED by LENA DE CASPARIS AND SARA McALPINE

MAKE ROOM FOR OUR NEW
BALLOON JEANS

Levi's®

One good turn...
EDGAR-JONES (RIGHT)
UNDERSTOOD THE ENORMITY
OF THE ROLE SHE WAS TAKING
ON IN BBC'S ADAPTATION
OF SALLY ROONEY'S *NORMAL
PEOPLE* – SHE'D ALREADY
READ THE BOOK FIVE TIMES

Introducing...

DAISY EDGAR-JONES

NORMAL PEOPLE WAS THE MILLENNIAL LOVE STORY MEGA-HIT ON EVERYONE'S BOOKSHELVES LAST YEAR. NOW, MEET THE ACTOR SET TO STEAL OUR HEARTS IN ITS ON-SCREEN ADAPTATION

WORDS *by* KATIE O'MALLEY PHOTOGRAPH *by* JOSEPH SINCLAIR

Daisy Edgar-Jones is a new Guinness fan. Well, sort of. 'I have to have it with blackcurrant juice, which is probably a bit of a sin,' she laughs. The actor became accustomed to drinking a pint, or three, after moving to Dublin for six months to film the TV show that's about to grip the nation – *Normal People*. Which, in case you managed to miss it, is the

highly anticipated upcoming TV adaptation of the bestselling 2018 novel by Irish writer Sally Rooney – 'the first great millennial author', according to *The New York Times*. The BBC Three 12-part drama, out this month, sees Edgar-Jones star as book-smart loner Marianne opposite newcomer Paul Mescal (the sporty, popular Connell) in a startlingly relatable, witty love story set in and around Ireland's capital.

Today, Edgar-Jones is on the orange juice. We're back in her hometown of London, sitting in Dover Street Market's bakery midway through the 21-year-old's shopping trip. She says that playing Marianne wasn't so much of a job as a calling, given that she'd already read the book five times prior to shooting. 'I wanted the part more than anything,' she admits. 'I really felt like I understood Marianne. I really got her sense of humour.' ▶

Frantically filming her audition tape between shooting intense death scenes for the BBC sci-fi drama *War of the Worlds*, a week later Edgar-Jones found herself taking an early morning flight to Dublin for a 'chemistry test' with Mescal ('it was the most scared I've ever been'). 'I was totally in awe of Sally, because she's so incredibly talented,' she says of meeting the author, Rooney.



"YOU CAN NEVER SATISFY EVERYONE, BUT I love the book AS MUCH AS THE NEXT PERSON. I WANT TO DO IT JUSTICE"

It didn't take long before she developed a love for the Irish filming locations Dublin, Sligo and Enniskerry. 'The nightlife in Dublin is brilliant – it's much better than London,' she adds. To nail the accent in less than two weeks before shooting, Londoner Edgar-Jones spent hours chatting to her Irish cast mates and working with an accent coach. 'I listened to Sally's accent a lot,' she says, before rolling her 'Rs' and explaining the subtle differences between the word 'don't' in a County Sligo lilt and a Mayo one.

Growing up as an only child in Muswell Hill, in a 'really loving family', Edgar-Jones says her childhood couldn't have been more different to Marianne's solitary,

troubled experience. She caught the acting bug young, moving from her role as a hen in a carol concert at age six to joining the National Youth Theatre at 14, followed by minor TV roles in *Outnumbered*, *Silent Witness* and *Cold Feet*.

How did she find filming the novel's sex scenes, I wonder? She worked with an intimacy co-ordinator and a female director, and credits the show for not making the nudity gratuitous, as well as for its realistic depiction of the messiness of sex. 'Connell is lovely with her,' she says of the moment Marianne loses her virginity. 'He tells her they can stop and that there's no pressure. That's so important for people to see, because that's how it should be – a safe space with dialogue.'

As for the pressure of playing such a beloved literary character, she's trying not to overthink it. It was only after her flatmate, who works at Waterstones, reminded her that *Normal People* was the retailer's 2018 book of the year that she realised the enormity of taking on the role. 'You can never satisfy everyone, but I love the book just as much as the next person. I want to do it justice,' she smiles. And on the prospect of achieving success akin to Emilia Clarke and Emma Watson, whose paths to international superstardom began with much-loved literary adaptations, she shrugs: 'I haven't really thought about it. You never really know about these things; it might come and go.'

Fresh from a debut theatre performance at the Almeida in London and with her first leading TV role just weeks away from airing on the BBC, it's safe to say that Edgar-Jones is clearly cut out for the big time. We'll raise a Guinness to that.

Normal People is out this month



1. Kiyevskaya metro station, Moscow Florentine marble and granite mosaics tell Russia and Ukraine's complicated history.
2. Toledo metro station, Naples Themed around water and light, this piece was commissioned by former Venice Biennale director, Achille Bonito Oliva.
3. Olaias station, Lisbon Step inside a giant kaleidoscope of harlequin-style stained glass.
4. Bur Juman station, Dubai LED 'jellyfish' chandeliers hang from the ceiling of Dubai's busiest station.

Go see... UNDERGROUND ART

AS ARTIST LUCY MCKENZIE TAKES OVER SUDBURY TOWN TUBE STATION LATER THIS YEAR, WE HIGHLIGHT THE BEST ART-ADORNED CONCOURSES AROUND THE WORLD

£675, LOUIS VUITTON

£465, DOLCE & GABBANA at FARFETCH

£1,050, CHANEL

£165, SUSAN CAPLAN VINTAGE

£245, MIU MIU at MATCHES FASHION.COM

Price on application, TIFFANY & CO.

The original TAKE YOUR STYLE CUE FROM THE ORNATE ACCESSORIES OF 19TH-CENTURY PORTRAIT SUBJECTS, SUCH AS NANETTE KAULA (LEFT)

£9.50, MARKS & SPENCER

£225, ERDEM at MATCHES FASHION.COM

£58, BUTLER & WILSON

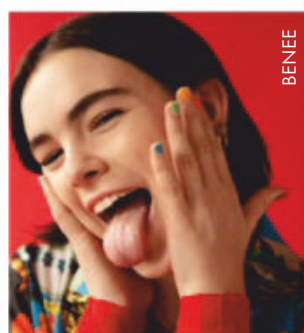
£270, 4 MONCLER SIMONE ROCHA

£180, ERMANNO SCERVINO

£670, GUCCI

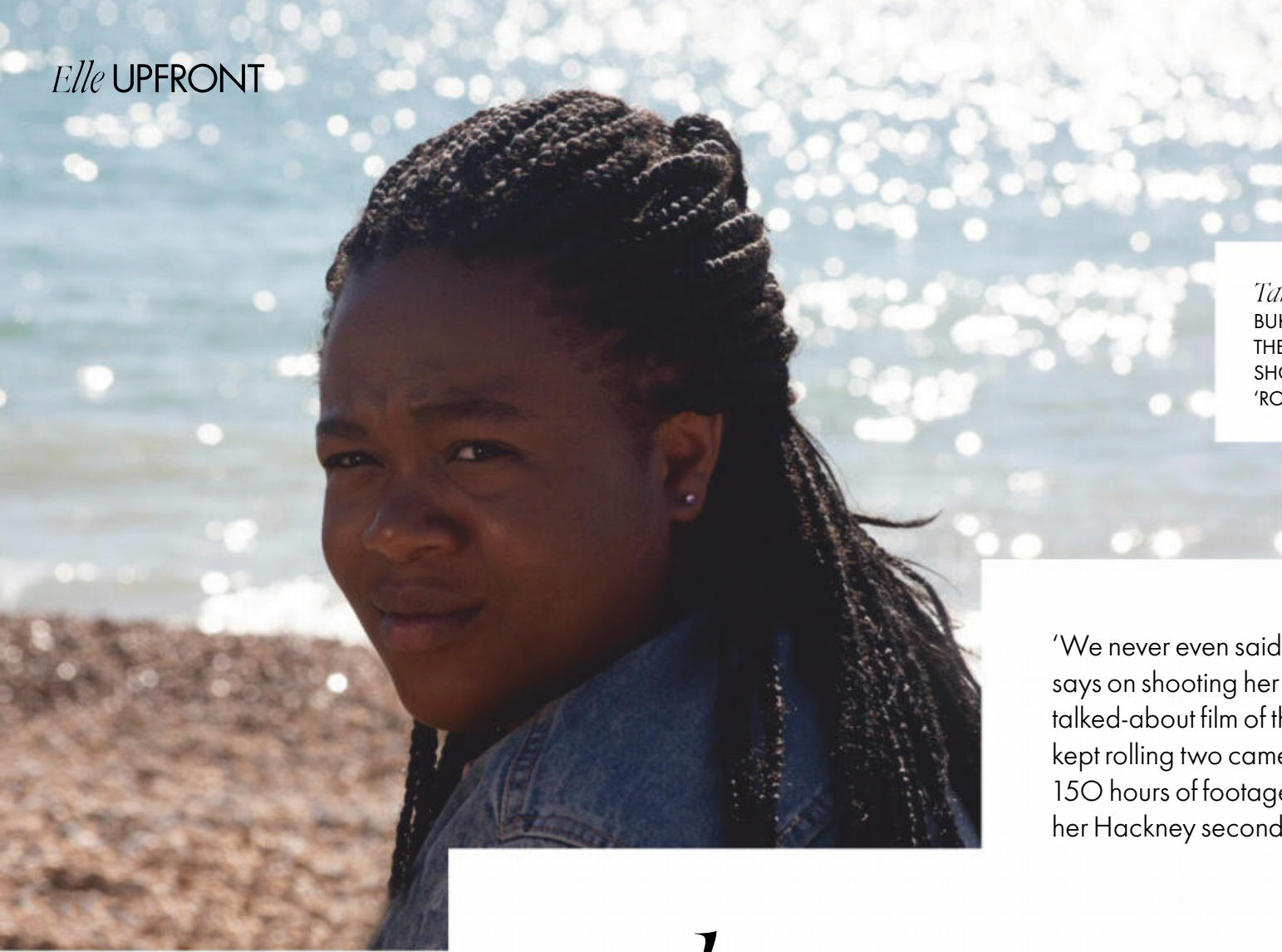
Inspired by... BIG BROOCH ENERGY

Lady Hale, former president of the Supreme Court, reignited interest in the brooch last year, showcasing a giant sparkly spider as she declared the pre-Brexit suspension of parliament unlawful. The accessory re-emerged as a hit on the catwalk, too. Designers sought inspiration from further back though, referencing Victorian portraiture of stern-looking women with serious embellishment. Start rooting through those family heirlooms, stat.



Sounding off...THE KIWIS ARE COMING

In the time that Lorde has been working on her third album, four other Kiwis have lined up to steal her *Royals* crown, from Robinson and NZ Music Awards Best Solo Artist Bennee to opera-trained Navvy and Aldous Harding. Get downloading now.



Taking the lead
BUKKY BAKRAY (LEFT) PLAYS
THE FILM'S PROTAGONIST
SHOLA – KNOWN AS
'ROCKS' TO HER FRIENDS



Uncovering talent
THE FILM SEES THE
ENTIRE CAST MAKE
THEIR ON-SCREEN
ACTING DEBUT



Welcome to... THE NEW SISTERHOOD

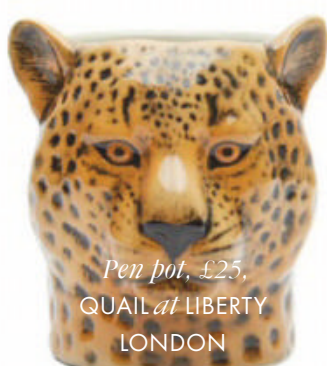
A CONTEMPORARY TALE OF GIRLHOOD IS EXPLORED
IN DAZZLING NEW BRITISH FILM ROCKS

'We never even said action,' director Sarah Gavron says on shooting her cast of school kids in the most talked-about film of the month, *Rocks* (out 24 April). 'We kept rolling two cameras endlessly and ended up with 150 hours of footage to work through.' Scouted from her Hackney secondary school, lead Bukky Bakray plays a girl in Year 11 (Rocks) tasked with looking after her lovable little brother Emmanuel (D'Angelou Osei Kissiedu) after their troubled mother abandons them. On the run from social workers, Rocks tries to prevent her brother from being taken into foster care, living off money she makes from working as a make-up artist after school.

Filmed on estates in east London, with every actor making their screen debut, *Rocks* is a tender exploration of the resilient spirit of girlhood and the transformative power of female friendships, with all the rawness of Larry Clarke's *Kids*. 'It was the noisiest set we ever worked on,' says Gavron. The crew was deliberately made up of 75% women, as the team wanted the cast to look behind the scenes and believe that one day they could become the camera operator, the writer or the director. 'Everything was a conversation. We included the girls wherever possible,' says Gavron. Even the score is an amalgamation of the girls' playlists, including dancehall, afrobeats and plenty of Rihanna.



Sculpture,
£27, ABIGAIL
AHERN



Pen pot, £25,
QUAIL at LIBERTY
LONDON



Plant pot, £36,
MATILDA GOAD



*Sweet
dispenser,*
£870, ALESSI



Lamp, £169,
MADE STUDIO

Inspiration... DESK PEACOCKS

This month, Marie Kondo's new book *Joy At Work* tackles our chaotic workspaces. We say, distract yourself (and everyone else) from the mess with a startling *objet d'art* instead – the ultimate power desk move.

GIOVANNI RASPINI

5, South Molton Street - London

LONDON MILAN ROME FLORENCE VENICE MONTE CARLO



The look... OFFICE ATTENBOROUGH

TURN TO SAFARI-STYLE TOPS FOR YOUR JOURNEY INTO THE CORPORATE JUNGLE, AKA WORK

Safari style is back, with dusky patch-pocket jackets and shirts – dare we say ‘shackets’ – all over the spring/summer catwalks, inspired by the return of Sir David Attenborough to our screens in *A Life On Our Planet* (out 9 April

on Netflix). Of course, the only trekking we’re likely to do is across the office to the printer, but that’s OK – the safari-style top, whether a shirt or jacket, is an easy staple for all occasions, cropping up in a range of neutral shades and understated earthy tones, such as dusky taupe, washed khaki and camel. It’s a crisp take on the utilitarian styles of last summer, with, importantly, patch-pockets.

‘It’s a great alternative to the white shirt you might ordinarily invest in,’ says Felicity Kay, ELLE’s fashion editor. ‘It’s easy and not as formal, and you can style it in multiple ways: leave your shirt open and wear it as a casual jacket over a slip dress, or button it up and wear it with relaxed tailored trousers and Stan Smiths. You’ll definitely get more than one season’s wear out of it.’

If you’re looking to update your utility-inspired styles from last season, accessories are an easy shortcut. Try a wide canvas belt with rectangular buckle. Style your safari-style jacket and shirt with a matching lower-half in the earthy shades too: cargo pants or tailored ones with a crisp knife-pleat, as seen at Max Mara, or with a patch-pocket midi-skirt, as seen on the runway of up-and-comer Rokh. And if you want to go the whole nine yards with safari style, add a touch of animal print, with zebra or tiger-striped accessories. Attenborough would be proud.





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Inspired by the ancient Chinese concept of Jing, representing calmness, stillness and tranquillity, The Ritual of Jing helps you to discover your path to inner peace and cultivate the art of calm and tranquillity. Create a personal sanctuary and achieve deep relaxation and restful sleep with meaningful routines.

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Co-ordinated finish
FAR LEFT: THE HOME EDIT EFFECT. BELOW LEFT: SPACE DESIGNER MELANIE CHARLTON. LEFT AND BELOW: BOOKS RECOVERED BY THATCHER WINE

Home style... DECO CURATORS

THESE PROFESSIONAL ORGANISERS TRANSFORM THE A-LIST'S STORAGE SPACES INTO WORKS OF ART. CAN THEY COME TO OURS, PLEASE?

For most of us, spring is the time to clean the kitchen cupboards and bang out the rugs. For others, however, decluttering is an elevated art form, one that requires the services of a professional. Meet the deco curators – experts whose job it is to create bespoke Instagram-worthy spaces, in which immaculate fridges are filled with labelled Tupperware, book jackets are given an arty makeover and wardrobes look like a designer boutique.

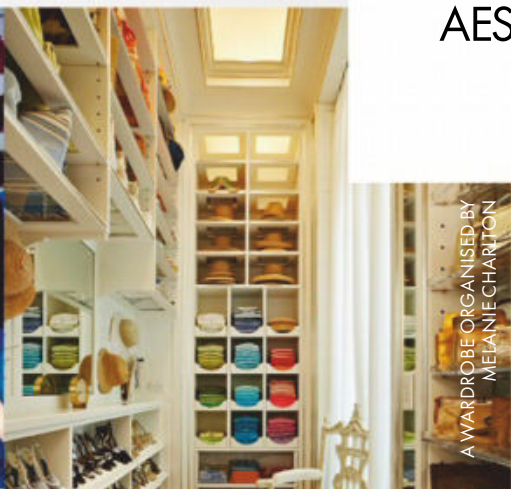
Thatcher Wine (yes, his actual name) is a book curator and founder of custom book jacket design company Juniper Books, who has spent years working in the homes of the Hollywood elite, including Gwyneth Paltrow. His job: to replace original book jackets with a painting, turning shelves into a bespoke work of art.

Wine's philosophy is that books should not only look good on the shelf, but reflect who you are.

Meanwhile, 'polished and functional' is the design aesthetic shared by Joanna Teplin and Clea Shearer, founders of organising company, The Home Edit. This Nashville-based duo, who have worked with Reese Witherspoon and Mandy Moore, are the pioneers of #pantryporn on Instagram. Whether it's shoes or cereal packets, everything has its dedicated, colour-coded place. 'We want to showcase the magical sweet spot that exists when spaces are efficient, user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing,'

they say. Then there's 'functional space designer' Melanie Charlton, whose company Clos-ette creates wardrobes for Beyoncé and Liv Tyler. Charlton suggests organising your wardrobe by folding, rather than rolling, clothes (sorry, Marie Kondo) and organising them by type (so all jumpers are together) and then by shade, with the lightest colours on the left and darkest on the right. We know what we'll be doing this weekend.

"WE WANT TO
SHOWCASE THE
sweet spot that
exists WHEN
SPACES ARE
EFFICIENT AND
AESTHETICALLY
PLEASING"



How to... LOOK CHIC IN A STORM

THREE NEW-SEASON FIXES THAT PROVE DRESSING FOR APRIL SHOWERS IS ANYTHING BUT DRY



£790,
HERNO

1. Get a flash mac

The PVC mac might seem a risqué choice, but the high-shine waterproof style is your quotidian commute wet-weather friend – your dry-weather one too, in fact, as it's a sharp alternative to a trench coat. Designers such as Supriya Lele, the breakout star of the past few seasons, mixed slick 1990s New York City style with vivid draping, creating the ideal piece to amp up the energy of your more delicate daywear.



SUPRIYA LELE



£260,
GUCCI



£350,
MICHAEL KORS
COLLECTION



£25, RAINS

2.

Make a hat trick

Last spring, the humble fisherman-style rain hat finally made its way to the front row. Brands such as Lanvin and Gucci have now realised the importance of this wet-weather trend, giving it an asymmetric or printed spin. The chicest way to keep dry this season.



3. Enter the boot camp

Wellies aren't your only option when it's hammering down. Chloé, Dior and Sacai all presented lug-soled ankle boots in metallics and zingy colours – think a slick take on 'bovver' boots. It's a style that works for the romantics among us, too, with Chloé showing how to make them work with gauzy white dresses and pleated skirts. Hard-wearing shoes that work for both casual and dressy get-ups? You'll be reaching for them even when it's sunny.



DIOR

SACAI

DIOR



£24,
NEXT



£450,
ATP ATELIER

And also...WET WET WET

From drizzle frizz to downpours that put waterproof mascara to the test, beauty and rain haven't traditionally mixed well. But if Versace's SS20 show taught us anything, it's that we should embrace the showers. Hair was artfully dishevelled, as if caught in a rainstorm, then frantically pushed back. While at Ashish, make-up artist Isamaya Ffrench painted outside the eye lines to create a dramatic smudge. Complexion-wise, it was all about the post-shower sheen, with models' skin gleaming backstage at Roland Mouret. Model Steinberg even showcased the 'just been caught in a downpour' scowl on every runway she stomped down. An easy to emulate beauty trend, if ever we saw one.



VERSACE

AUDREY HEPBURN IN
BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S

THE NEW FRAGRANCE

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the Parisians' lifestyle

ELLE
L'EDITION

Get ready for... DANCE FEVER

THIS MONTH, IT TAKES CENTRE STAGE, WITH POWERFUL FILMS AND AN EXHIBITION SET TO GET YOU MOVING

First up, get the popcorn ready for new movie *Ema* (out 17 April). It's *Step Up* meets *We Need To Talk About Kevin*: a dark, reggaeton-powered tale of young dancer Ema (Di Girolamo), who is caught in a toxic marriage to older choreographer Gastón (Gael García Bernal) and on a mission to get back her adopted son. Also on the big screen, *Cunningham* (out now) takes us on an journey through choreographer

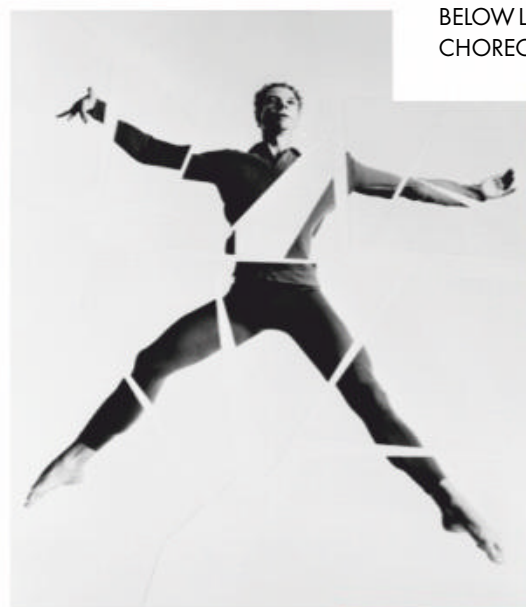
Merce Cunningham's 70-year career. The creator of more than 180 dances, he was undoubtedly the single greatest influence on contemporary dance. Meanwhile, at London's Design Museum, get your body moving as *Electronic* (on until 26 July) takes you to the dance floors of Detroit, Paris, Berlin and the UK. Discover how electronic music transformed from an underground movement to global phenomenon through the 3D Kraftwerk experience (which is like a genuine club night), a sound reactive visual installation, graphics from Peter Saville CBE, iconic DJ masks, fashion and a genre-spanning soundtrack by French DJ and producer Laurent Garnier.



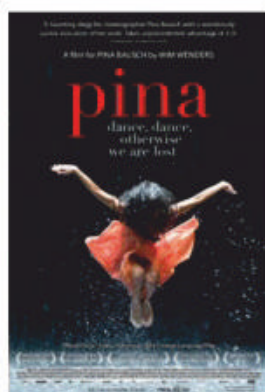
"ELECTRONIC TAKES YOU to dance floors in DETROIT, BERLIN, PARIS, CHICAGO AND THE UK"



The influence
ABOVE: A PERFORMANCE OF MERCE CUNNINGHAM'S SUMMERSPACE FROM THE NEW DOCUMENTARY. BELOW LEFT: THE CHOREOGRAPHER IN 1962



Music & movement
ABOVE RIGHT: DAFT PUNK'S ICONIC LOOK FEATURES IN *ELECTRONIC*. RIGHT: TITULAR CHARACTER EMA WITH GASTON IN PABLO LARRAIN'S NEW FILM



Also... FORGOTTEN DANCE CLASSICS

Dance has formed the backdrop for some of cinema's most compelling dramas, from 2018's dark *Suspiria*, featuring Tilda Swinton to 2001's MTV-produced *Save The Last Dance*.

The designer... MAME KUROGOUCHI

MEET JAPAN'S BREAKOUT FASHION DESIGN STAR WHO'S MAKING TRADITIONAL CRAFT COOL

Italian luxury brand Tod's likes to surprise. First came its dazzling collaboration with beloved designer Alber Elbaz. Now? They've done it all over again, this time partnering with up-and-coming Tokyo designer Mame Kurogouchi (right). Dubbed by critics as the next Sacai, Kurogouchi fuses romanticism with Japanese tradition in a way that's modern, layering gauzy dresses and silks over precise tailoring and bold floral prints. 'I want to open more doors for women and create something that fits into every lifestyle,' says the designer, whose real name is Maiko. The 'Mame' in the brand's name translates to 'bean' in English – a nickname she was given due to her diminutive size.

The intricacy of her craftsmanship is steeped in Japanese tradition, learned from Bunka design school, the alma mater of designers Yohji Yamamoto and Junya Watanabe, and Kurogouchi's time working with Issey Miyake before launching her own brand in 2010. 'My small but nature-rich hometown Nagano has always been at the root of my work,' she says. 'But I'm not insistent on Japanese craft, it's always been an organic choice. If there is any meaning in producing something new, it has to bear a certain value.'

Bag, £2,550, and sandals, £698, both TOD'S T FACTORY X MAME KUROGOUCHI



Need to know
KUROGOUCHI IS FUSING FORWARD-THINKING FASHION WITH CRAFT FOR HER TOD'S COLLABORATION



Shoes, £470, TOD'S T FACTORY X MAME KUROGOUCHI



That's what fans of Tod's signature styles, such as its gum-soled driving shoes, can expect from this collaboration, plus new accessories by Kurogouchi. 'Craftsmanship is the new logo,' she says. So the designs, like her own label, feature minimal branding, letting details such as a leather embroidery technique that echoes traditional *kogin zashi* embroidery stand out. 'Mame Kurogouchi is a small brand; I want to bring Japanese craftsmanship to a wider audience,' she adds. 'Tod's and I have that in common.'

Tod's T Factory x Mame Kurogouchi is available at tods.com



Consider...THE DECONSTRUCTED TRENCH

The catwalks and streets were awash with distorted trench coats – wear it cropped, slashed or spliced together with prints. Or simply update your trusty old favourite with a bright checked scarf in place of a belt.



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the Parisians' lifestyle

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ELLE



Point of view
THIS MONTH, TATE MODERN PRESENTS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE UK EXHIBITION OF ZANELE MUHOLI'S WORK (BELOW) TO DATE



MOROGORO BY KAPWANI KIWANGA, 2016



JALOUSIE BY KAPWANI KIWANGA, 2018

Past meets present
KAPWANI KIWANGA'S WORK (BOTH ABOVE) SERVES AS A FRANK, MODERN REMINDER OF AFRICA'S COLONIAL PAST



THE ENTRANCE TO ZEITZ MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART AFRICA

BONA, CHARLOTTESVILLE BY ZANELE MUHOLI, 2015

Trending... ART OF AFRICA

FIRST CAME CAPE TOWN'S CREATIVE REVOLUTION. NEXT? SOUTH AFRICAN ART IS MAKING WAVES IN THE UK

and Johannesburg, was pivotal in shaping this movement – and has opened a London outpost. There, you'll find Frieze-winning artist Kapwani Kiwanga's work, which reflects on Africa's colonial history (7 April to 9 May). Next up, Johannesburg-born Zanele Muholi presents 260 dramatic black and white photos at London's Tate Modern (29 April to 18 October), including their acclaimed series of self-portraits designed to celebrate individuality. South African artist Candice Breitz's *Love Story* comes to Tate Liverpool (9 April to 7 June), featuring actors Julianne Moore and Alec Baldwin performing fragments of real interviews by six refugees. The piece went viral after it was created in 2016, and was chosen to represent South Africa at the 2017 Venice Biennale.

With thriving design schools, such as the Michaelis School of Fine Art, and a booming gallery scene, sparked by the opening of Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in 2017, Cape Town has become the art capital every collector is talking about. The Goodman Gallery, initially based in Cape Town

Words: Becky Burgum. Photography: Courtesy of Zanele Muholi, and Stevenson, Cape Town/Johannesburg and Yancey Richardson, New York. Courtesy of Kapwani Kiwanga and The Goodman Gallery. Photograph of Morogoro by Emilie Ouroumov, 2016. Iwan Bann.



Perfect serve
THE IMPERFECT SHAPES
AND PASTEL HUES OF
SERVEWARE CREATED
FOR RESTAURANT FOLIE
(LEFT) AND DESIGNED BY
OTTOLENGHI (RIGHT)

£18, OTTOLENGHI

£120, OTTOLENGHI



£23, JARS

£18, OTTOLENGHI

On the menu... PRÊT-À-PORCELAIN

THE HOTTEST NEW RESTAURANT TREND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH FOOD, BUT WHAT LIES BENEATH

The 'plate lift' marks the moment you've been waiting for the entire meal: that minute when you've finished and can flip the plate to find out which potter created it and, more importantly, how you can get one for your own crockery cupboard. This is because restaurants are commissioning ceramicists to make tableware exclusively for them. And competition for the best crockery is getting fierce. Tommy Banks, chef director at Michelin-starred The Black Swan at Oldstead, works with Jane The Potter from nearby York. 'Jane's philosophy [mirrors the Japanese principle] *wabi-sabi*, which is all about imperfection. Diners will ask us where the plates are from and then visit Jane's studio,' says Banks. At Riviera-themed Folie in London's Soho, the ceramics are as authentic as the food: sourced from Jars, a 150-year-old pottery in the south of France. And old favourite Ottolenghi has brought out a tableware range. So if you're looking to inspire a 'plate lift' at your next party, you can bank on one thing – if you delight guests with pretty pottery, the food will taste even better.

Focal point
THANKS TO THE UNIQUE
POTTERY SEEN AT HOTSPOTS
SUCH AS FOLIE (LEFT), MANY
RESTAURANTS' CROCKERY
IS BECOMING AS SOUGHT-
AFTER AS THEIR FOOD



FOLIE

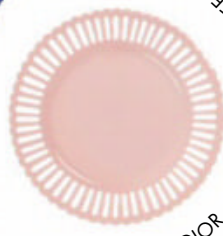
OTTOLENGHI



£26, VERA WANG FOR WEDGEWOOD // THE CONRAN SHOP



£39, PETER PILOTTO // MATCHESFASHION.COM



£130, DIOR



£26, VERA WANG FOR WEDGEWOOD // SELFRIAGES



£35, BITOSSI // LIBERTY



£37, MIA SAROSI // HEAL'S

Pssst... A LOT ON YOUR PLATE?

From pastel-tone ceramics by Peter Pilotto, to Mia Sarosi's Pollock-style hand-painted plates, it's time to make your table your canvas.

GEOX

THE SHOE THAT
BREATHES

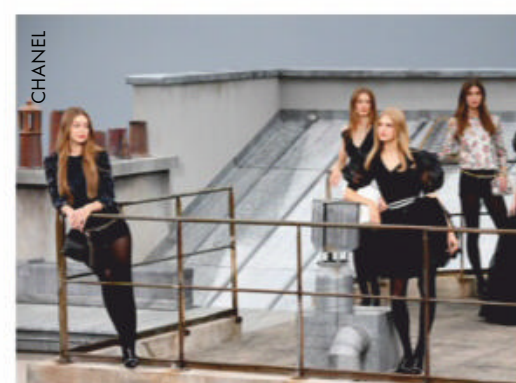
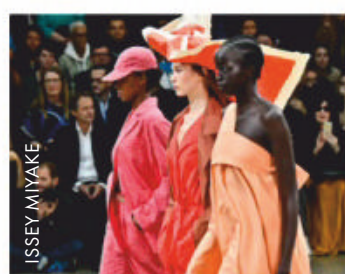
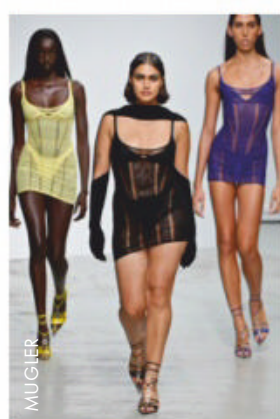


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And finally... YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE

The notion of 'the squad' has come a long way from Taylor Swift's crew of glossy pals. Today, every sphere – from politics (thank you, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) to music – understands the magic that takes place when women walk together. And none more so than the world of fashion, where the stern-faced, single-file catwalk format has been jettisoned, with models now stepping out of line – breaking the fourth wall in the name of camaraderie and fun. It's power walking, 2020 style.



London cafe

My London
with Gillian Anderson, Actress

Dune
LONDON
dunelondon.com

ELLE

Style

WHAT TO WEAR & HOW TO WEAR IT



The look... CRAFT WORK

They might be the product of age-old techniques, but there's nothing fusty about the crafty styles on this season's catwalks. Whether basket bags or raffia shoes, thatched and woven styles have been given a new-decade spin with leather touches and statement fastenings. So, take your look from homespun to high-end with these polished updates on your favourite accessories.

Dress, £16,100, shoes, £790, belt, £250, and bag, £3,200, all LOUIS VUITTON

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* CLAIRE BRAND

STYLING *by* MOLLY HAYLOR

Full THATCH

UPDATE YOUR CLASSIC STRAW HAT
BY MATCHING IT WITH
EQUALLY TACTILE CLOTHING

*Jacket, £3,600,
top, £1,300,
and hat, £760,
all DIOR*

Slick WEAVE

TOUGHEN UP YOUR SUMMER DRESS WITH
LACQUERED STRAW AND LEATHER



*Dress, £3,560, and
bag, £1,650, both
ALEXANDER McQUEEN*



Big BASKET

OVERSIZED BEACH BAGS WORK JUST
AS WELL IN THE CITY THIS SEASON

Shirt, £80, WITH NOTHING
UNDERNEATH. *Shorts*,
£610, *belt*, £700, and *bag*,
£1,010, *all* SAINT LAURENT BY
ANTHONY VACCARELLO

Bold BRAIDING

BREATHE FRESH AIR INTO YOUR SUMMER
BOOTS VIA PASTEL LEATHER PLAIDING

Dress (just seen), £250, JOIE.
Boots, £1,750, GIORGIO
ARMANI. Socks, £7.99, PRINGLE
at SOCKSHOP

Rogue RAFFIA

CLASH HOMESPUN AND POLISHED
METAL FOR A MODERN WEAVE

*Dress, £3,250, VALENTINO. Bag, £1,545, and belt,
£322, both VALENTINO GARAVANI*

Hair: Asahi Sano at Caren using Kiehl's. Make-up: Polly Mercer. Nails: Suzi Rezler.
Model: Sylvie at The Squad Management.



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Dress, £1,190, and corset, £2,075, both ANDREAS KRONTHALER FOR VIVIENNE WESTWOOD. Boots, £580, VIVIENNE WESTWOOD. Earrings, from left: £160 and £1,541, both WALD BERLIN X PAULA KNORR. Necklace, £790, CARTIER

The look NEW ROMANTIC

BILLOWY SILHOUETTES AND *delicate details* go *beyond* LITERARY HEROINE TERRITORY AS THE CLASSICS ARE GIVEN *a thoroughly* MODERN UPDATE

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* ANNA DAKI STYLING *by* FELICITY KAY SHOPPING *by* MOLLY HAYLOR

*Sandals, £220,
GANNI*



*Trousers, £1,090,
LONGCHAMP*



*Shirt, £295,
KATE SPADE
NEW YORK*



*Shoes, £415,
LANVIN*



*Top, £198,
THE KOOPLES*



*White top, £1,116,
and white trousers,
£378, both ISABEL
MARANT. Grey bra,
£43.50, HANRO. Beige
shoes, price on
application, PREEN BY
THORNTON BREGAZZI.
Gold, pearl
and diamond earrings,
£3,240, TASAKI*



The shoes...

BLACK, FOR SUMMER? YES – IT PERFECTLY PUNCTUATES DREAMY WHITES

*Sandals, £790,
CHANEL*



*Top, £209,
CLAUDIE PIERLOT*



*Top, £260,
VERONICA
BEARD*



*Sandals, £279,
WEEKEND MAX MARA*



*Top, £139,
HOBBS*



Dress, £225,
MICHAEL
MICHAEL KORS.
Necklace, £790,
CARTIER. Gold,
pearl and
diamond
earrings,
£3,240, TASAKI

Dress, £450, KATE
SPADE NEW YORK.
Earrings, from
left: £82 (just
seen) and £75,
both HERMINA
ATHENS

Dress, £60,
RIVER ISLAND.
Gold, pearl
and diamond
earrings, £3,240,
TASAKI

Dress, £75,
WAREHOUSE.
Earrings, from
left: £82 and £75,
both HERMINA
ATHENS

The fabric...

MAKE A SWEET STATEMENT WITH SUBTLE
CUT-OUTS AND BREEZY BRODERIE ANGLAISE

Dress,
£225, REISS.
Necklace,
£310,
GIOVANNI
RASPINI

Dress, £315,
MAJE. Earrings,
from left: £75
and £82, both
HERMINA ATHENS



Dress, £2,240, belt
£890, and earrings,
£420, all ALEXANDER
MCQUEEN. Bra,
£51.50, and briefs,
£23, both HANRO



Belt, £250, FRAME

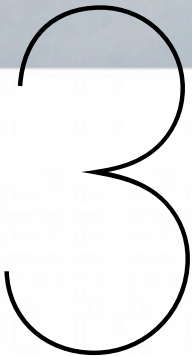


Dress, £345,
ESCADA SPORT

Dress, £99,
GUESS



Belt, £140, MAX MARA



The twist...

UPDATE SWEEPING LENGTHS: CINCH
THE WAIST WITH A BOLD BELT



Dress, £89,
WAREHOUSE



Belt, £755,
GIVENCHY



Dress, £68,
THE KOOPLES



Dress, £699,
POLO RALPH
LAUREN



Belt, £1,600,
CHANEL

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GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

4

The palette...

ETHEREAL IVORY LIGHTENS BOTH YOUR WARDROBE AND YOUR MOOD



Shirt, £915,
MIU MIU



Dress, £1,450,
4 MONCLER
SIMONE
ROCHA



Sandals,
£65, DUNE



Gold earrings,
£1,800,
TIFFANY & CO.



Bag, £185, GERARD DAREL



Coat, £359,
MARK CAIN



Dress, £1,900, TORY
BURCH. Sandals, £375,
REJINA PYO. Gold, pearl
and diamond earrings,
£3,240, TASAKI



Bracelet, £70,
DAPHINE



Earrings,
£9,99,
MANGO



Sandals, £89,
KURT GEIGER



Shirt, £239,
MAJE



Skirt, £99,
GUESS



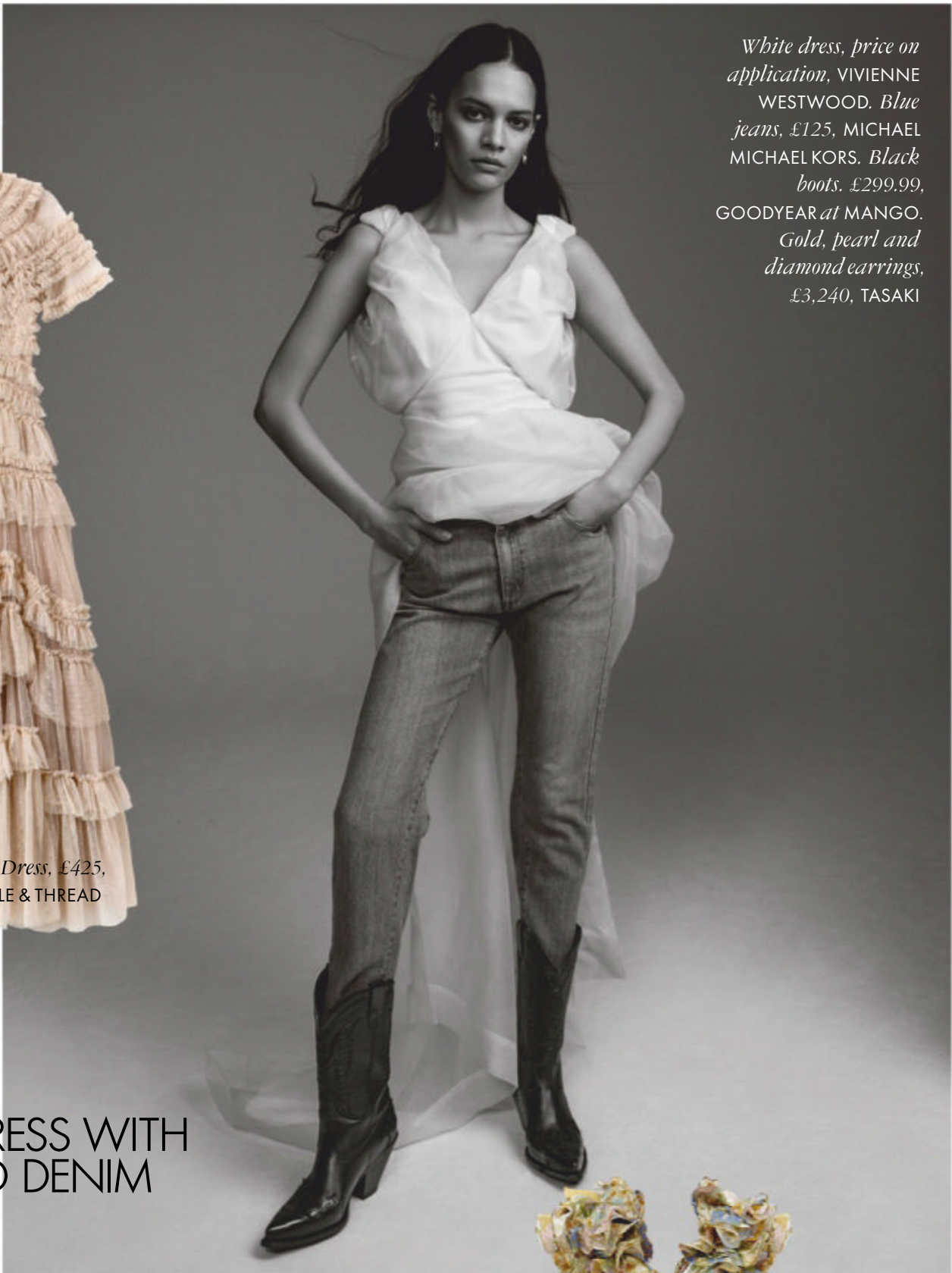
Boots, £570,
ISABEL
MARANT

Earrings, £5,
MARKS &
SPENCER

Dress, £425,
NEEDLE & THREAD

The mood...

TOUGHEN UP YOUR DRESS WITH COWBOY BOOTS AND DENIM



White dress, price on application, VIVIENNE WESTWOOD. Blue jeans, £125, MICHAEL MICHAEL KORS. Black boots, £299.99, GOODYEAR at MANGO. Gold, pearl and diamond earrings, £3,240, TASAKI



Earrings, £15, FRENCH CONNECTION

Bag, £35, MONSOON

Boots, £59, SIMPLY BE



Dress, £454,
PAUL & JOE



Boots, £495,
SOPHIA WEBSTER

Bag, £1,625
CHANEL



Dress, £1,450,
ZIMMERMANN



Boots, £49.99,
RESERVED



White dress, price on application, DIOR.
White gold and diamond earrings, £2,700, DIOR FINE JEWELLERY

Hat, £970, CHANEL



Bracelet, £3,250, VAN CLEEF & ARPELS



Blouse, £1,295, CHLOE



Earrings, £12.50, MARKS & SPENCER



Shorts, £2,754, ETRO



Blouse, £335, MAX MARA

The print...

KEEP PATTERNS SOFT WITH EARTHY HUES AND MUTED FLORALS



Skirt, £2,499, GIAMBATTISTA VALLI



Bag, £73, DUNE



Skirt, £1,400, GIORGIO ARMANI



Sandals, £525, GUCCI



Corset, £318, SHUSHU/TONG



Bag, £19.50, MARKS & SPENCER



The mix...

DRESS UP EVERYDAY DENIM WITH PUFF SLEEVES AND A HINT OF GOLD





Earrings, £365, MAGDA BUTRYM

Shirt, £16, RIVER ISLAND

Earrings, £75, LILY & ROO

Shoes, £890, LOUIS VUITTON

White gold and diamond earrings, £1,720, TASAKI



Black and white dress, £1,435, MIU MIU. Crystal and pearl earrings, £395, SIMONE ROCHA

Earrings, £300, ANNI LU

Brooch, £260, MIU MIU at BROWNS FASHION



Dress, £380, SELF-PORTRAIT

Shoes, £120, DUNE

Earrings, £385, DOLCE & GABANNA at MATCHES FASHION.COM

The finish...
EMBELLISH EVERYTHING FOR
A DECADENT FLOURISH

Hair: Hiroshi Matsushita. Make-up: Amy Conley at Stella Creative Artists using CHANEL Desert Dream Collection and CHANEL Le Lift. Model: Mavaro at Elite London. Fashion assistant: Jack O'Neill.

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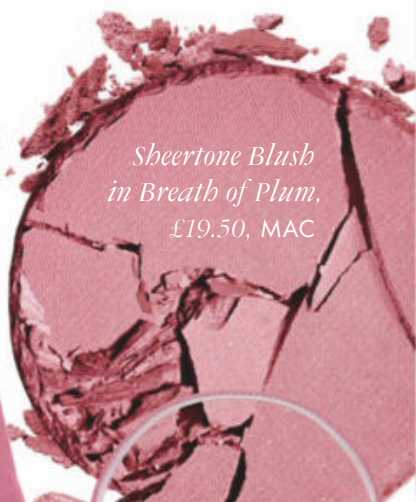
Nudesse candle,
£46, OVEROSE



Dress, £475,
EQUIPMENT



Sheertone Blush
in Breath of Plum,
£19.50, MAC



Sunglasses,
£99,
KOMONO



Bag, £180,
JULIA SKERGETH



THE *sweet* SPOT

PINK'S TIME TO SHINE IS FAR FROM OVER, THANKS TO THESE BOLD NEW TAKES ON THE SACCHARINE HUE

Ruby-pink shades are in the spotlight this season thanks to Giorgio Armani, Christopher Kane and Chloé, which made the vivid hues their palette cleanser of choice for the SS20 shows. A striking alternative to the soft millennial pink you know and love (or love to hate), these bold iterations fall in the sweet spot between radiant orchid and Barbie pink, and are designed to make a statement. Sharp suiting and classic silk dresses get a fresh modernity in bold shades, while everyday essentials like sunglasses, trainers and knits become head-turning pieces. And it's not just the fashion world paying homage to the hue: the trickle-down effect has seen it splashed across beauty, food and lifestyle offerings, too. Anissa Kermiche's Love Handles vase (homeware's It accessory, according to the Instagram feeds of design tastemakers) has a gorgeous pink rendering. Even your favourite dessert has a new look, with the launch of Magnum Ruby, the first ice cream crafted with the newly discovered fourth type of chocolate, Ruby. Its delicate berry taste is irresistible and its distinctive colouring makes it the perfect summer fashion accessory to match your outfit. Reason enough to save room for dessert.



GIORGIO ARMANI



CHRISTOPHER KANE



CHLOÉ



Hardwired
Eyeshadow in
Melrose, £17,
NARS

Jacket, £895,
THE MIGHTY
COMPANY

Vase, £340,
ANISSA
KERMICHE



Shoes, £290, KALDA



Audacious
Lipstick in Anna,
£26, NARS

Knit, £295,
EQUIPMENT



Cushion,
£50, LOAF



Single stick
ice cream, £2,
MAGNUM
RUBY

Hair clips,
£6 for two,
MONKI



A NEW DISCOVERY

EXPERIENCE THE EXTRAORDINARY TASTE OF MAGNUM RUBY, A WORLD-FIRST PAIRING OF RUBY CHOCOLATE AND WHITE CHOCOLATE ICE CREAM, ENRICHED WITH A LUSCIOUS RASPBERRY-SAUCE SWIRL. FIND THE NEW MAGNUM RUBY IN STORES NATIONWIDE, AND DISCOVER MORE AT magnumicecream.com/uk

MAGNUM
true to pleasure

Trousers,
£720,
AKRIS





FROM LEFT Felicity wears: jumpsuit and sandals, both BOTTEGA VENETA. Earrings, LOEWE. All other jewellery, her own. Ida wears: hoodie, BOTTEGA VENETA. Skirt, VIKTOR & ROLF. Leggings (just seen), OFF-WHITE. Leah wears: jacket, FENTY. Vintage sandals and jewellery, all stylist's own. Tights, SAKS POTTS. Hattie wears: dress, PACO RABANNE at BROWNS FASHION. Boots (just seen), GANNI. Monikh wears: jacket and shorts, both THE FRANKIE SHOP. T-shirt, JAMES PERSE. Sandals, GIANVITO ROSSI

WHAT *fashion's* MOST *powerful* PLAYERS WEAR

THEY ARE THE BUYERS, STYLISTS AND EDITORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CLOTHES HANGING IN YOUR WARDROBE. BUT WHAT DO THEY KEEP IN THEIR OWN CLOSETS?

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* CONNOR LANGFORD WORDS *by* BECKY BURGUM
STYLING *by* FELICITY KAY



Earrings, £350,
ALIGHIERI

Jumper, £455,
CHARLES JEFFREY
LOVERBOY

Coat,
£1,065,
ROKH

Boots, £497,
GANNI

Bag, £315, BY FAR

The EDITOR...

HATTIE HAWKESWORTH, 36,
IS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AT FARFETCH

Barbara Cartland meets Dolly Parton meets Jayne Mansfield, that's my style. I gravitate towards bad taste – anything that's a little bit off: think old lady dresses, excessive leopard print, strange hats. I like the ultra-feminine and my favourite colour is pink. My wedding dress was a dusky rose and I gave birth in a bright pink hoodie.

Earrings are a weakness of mine. I bought a pair of Alighieri pearl cluster drops for my wedding day and, at home, I must have more than 50 pairs in total – the more Pat Butcher, the better. This is probably influenced by my journalist mother and graphic designer father's eccentric friends, who were photographers and fashion folk. I loved visiting their houses, watching their beauty routines and marvelling over their dressing tables and jewellery boxes.

My teen years in Hove during the Noughties consisted of me smothering my face in Vaseline before applying streaky fake tan, and wearing crochet

tops with low-rise jeans, mimicking Britney in her *Slave 4 U* era. Just before I moved to London, I began vintage shopping in Brighton.

At fashion college, everyone wore black – and I did, too. I used to wear my boyfriend's black Fred Perry jumpers with pleated John Lewis

PE skirts, accessorised with silver chains and cowboy boots. We slashed tights into tops – it was very DIY. Then came my 1940s phase: all granny bags and cardigans. Now, I mix vintage with new-season designs, from Bottega mules to my black Wardrobe.NYC trench coat. I spend most of my money on blazers with big shoulders and narrow waists.

I buy quality items, with my most expensive piece being a hand-embroidered sequined Ashish dress with huge sleeves that I bought for a spate of weddings. But my most loved item is far simpler: last season's over-the-knee Ganni cowboy boots, which I wear almost every day. I've always worn cowboy boots, even when they weren't in fashion, because I learned to dress for fun. It makes me feel good. F*ck what everyone else says.

The look
ABOVE: HATTIE
WEARS VINTAGE
JACKET AND
LEGGINGS, STYLIST'S
OWN. SANDALS,
BALENCIAGA.
JEWELLERY, HER OWN

I am a magpie. I want to be the person who buys lots of sensible clothes that coordinate, but then I get distracted. There's always something shiny or brightly coloured that I can't resist.

There was a time in my fashion management degree at London College of Fashion that I adhered to the all-black fashion uniform, but as soon as I returned to my grandmother in Sweden, she scoffed, 'Are you going to a funeral?' I was hugely influenced by my grandmother's style and as a child would stomp around in her Chanel and vintage Pucci. Emerald green and fuschia pink were her signature colours and she wore bright pink with pearls, diamonds and platinum dyed hair right up until the day she died. It's probably why my own wardrobe is a rainbow explosion.

I've always found shoes to be an essential element of any outfit. I can still remember the first pair that I bought, aged 12 – a pair of bright white stilettos. I have more than 300 pairs of shoes in my wardrobe and I go to bed or wake up with a pair in mind. Once I've decided which ones I'll wear that day, I can then play around with the rest of the outfit.

I buy new shoes each season but I also rewear a lot, especially my Balenciaga Lego shoes and original Prada flame shoes. I still think about the pair of Miu Miu knee-high boots I missed out on years ago – the perfect hybrid between a biker boot and pixie point that only Miuccia [Prada] could come up with.

As a buyer, it's thrilling to see the Bottega or Loewe collections, but young designers have an energy you don't get from esteemed showrooms. At the moment, I'm so excited about Maisie Wilen, who is backed by Kanye West and has some crazy graphic leggings. Also Lagos-born Kenneth Ize, who reinterprets traditional West African fabrics and Nigerian craft techniques. He's captured Africa's incredible culture of colour so well and was a well-deserving LVMH Prize finalist.

A large section of my wardrobe is also vintage. I love the idea of renting designer pieces, but I'm not an 'easy' shape, so it isn't really an option for me.

I have small legs, but I'm big and chesty on top, which means I always have to try on items. For a long time, I found it tough working in fashion without being model-sized, but I have learned to like clothes that suit my body. Skinny trousers, leggings, miniskirts and anything that distracts from the waist area are my friends. I no longer succumb to the sample sale adrenaline rush, buying items I love that don't suit me. I'd rather pay more and invest in a piece that I'll love forever. To me, not compromising on items that don't quite fit or aren't exactly what you're looking for is a kind of sustainable buying. ▸



The BUYER...

IDA PETERSSON, 41, IS BUYING DIRECTOR AT BROWNS FASHION



The look
RIGHT: IDA WEARS
SHIRT, ASCENO.
SHORTS, PLAN C.
SHOES, GIANVITO
ROSSI. JEWELLERY,
HER OWN



The TASTEMAKER...

FELICITY KAY, 31, IS
ELLE'S FASHION EDITOR

One summer in my teens, I bought a crochet table cloth and turned it into a poncho with a belt. That's how inventive growing up in rural Suffolk forces you to be. Car boot sales were the best of a bad situation, given our nearest store (a not so fashionable M&Co) was an hour away. Shopping became a fun challenge, and the extreme lack of options led me to work within the constraints I had, mixing men's pyjamas with granny silk gowns and turning jumpers into dresses. Fashion magazines were my only point of access and, looking back, I can see the influence they had on my style.

Aged nine, I remember pairing my mud-covered field boots with a crepe floral dress and thinking it was the coolest thing anyone had ever done. I thought I was a style maverick, rebelling against my sartorially conservative family. I've kept this idea of styling softer pieces with something a bit tougher into adulthood, although over time I've become more minimalist.

For my first day as a fashion assistant at ELLE, I wore vintage leather trousers, a white shirt, black ponyskin loafers and a pink coat. The aim was simple and understated, which is always my go-to if I feel nervous.

Being a fashion editor means experimenting, especially with where you find inspiration. Part of your job is to find style in unexpected places.

I used to wear PVC leggings bought for next to nothing from a sex shop long before wet-look leggings were everywhere. I still love to shop in unorthodox places and my most complimented piece last summer was a satin lace-trimmed slip skirt from the lingerie section at M&S, which was a steal at £2 in the sale. I wear it as clever layering with oversized men's shirts to create a more office-appropriate look, but still with a feminine contrast.

I'm a lot less trend driven than I used to be. The coolest thing you can do right now is have a more conscious approach to fashion, and I'm definitely proud of wearing the same items repeatedly. My late mum's leather pencil skirts are timeless and I've been wearing the same men's vintage blazer for the past six years. If I can't get eight outfits out of a piece of clothing then I won't buy it: it wouldn't be working hard enough for the money and its impact on the planet.

Last December, I got married in an Ellery dress I already owned – it was £30 in a sample sale. Our wedding was three weeks after my boyfriend proposed, so there wasn't time to agonise over what to wear. If you've never imagined yourself in a bridal gown, try Cecilie Bahnsen, Simone Rocha, Shrimps or The Vampire's Wife for a dress you can wear more than once.

My first pair of Céline shoes, gold-plated knee-high brogue boots, are the only thing in my wardrobe that I feel guilty about not wearing enough. But my general attitude is that if I love a piece, I'll wear it to death.

The look
LEFT: FELICITY WEARS JACKET, TROUSERS AND SANDALS, ALL BOTTEGA VENETA. TOP, H&M. EARRINGS, LOEWE





When I first moved to London from Bristol, I was 18 and took a job as a sales assistant in a vintage shop on Brick Lane. Working there made my style louder and taught me to embrace contrast and clashing prints. Every morning, the team (with varying tastes, from 1960s pin-up to full tracksuits) would go through the clothes delivery and play dress-up. For a while, my uniform was bright jumpsuits. Funnily enough, it was while I was wearing one that Jorja Smith (who was recording her first EP at the time) approached me about helping with her style.

I still mix vintage with new, and expensive with cheap. For my last birthday, I bought myself a new-season Prada bag, which is definitely the most expensive item I own, but I get an equal number of compliments on my newspaper print ASOS bag.

I prefer to dress slightly scarily rather than conventionally 'sexy'. True sexiness comes from personal swagger. If I'm unsure about an outfit, I go brighter, which is why I live in my bright green Saks Potts coat. People tend to hide behind black, especially if they're self-conscious about their body, but I think a loud coat or jumper works

The STYLIST...

LEAH ABBOTT, 25, IS A STYLIST FOR MUSICIANS SUCH AS JORJA SMITH

better. My love of clothes comes from being a curvy woman – the more you learn how to dress your body and find flattering styles, the better you feel. It's a self-love thing. I'm not a loud person, so my outfits enhance my presence.

If someone raided my wardrobe, they'd be surprised by how many sunglasses I have – more than 40 pairs, most of which are oversized and clear, so I can wear them at night and inside. I have Versace shield shades in red, green, blue and black – and I would get another colour if they released one. They're the same ones that Aaliyah used to wear and I'm heavily influenced by music videos.

I watched MTV for hours and hours when I was a child, and I remember thinking what a special moment Beyoncé's neon orange and fuchsia pink dress was in the *Crazy In Love* video.

I wasn't used to seeing such black confidence on mainstream music TV channels, but equally, I was mesmerised by the sense of contrast; the dress that didn't conventionally 'match'. It's had a lasting influence on my own style. ▸

The look
LEAH (ABOVE)
WEARS: JACKET-
DRESS, MIU MIU.
BOOTS, MAISON
MARGIELA.
JEWELLERY,
STYLIST'S OWN



Earrings,
£255, CHLOÉ

Bag, £530,
BY FAR

T-shirt, £320,
BURBERRY

Jeans,
£70,
LEVI'S

Sandals,
£945,
CHANEL

The INFLUENCER...

MONIKH DALE, 31, IS A STYLE INFLUENCER AND BRAND CONSULTANT



I like to look laidback and I always prefer to be underdressed. You have to have a lot of confidence to wear a minimal outfit, so I like that challenge. For me, there's nothing sexier than a simple T-shirt and jeans with an incredible jacket. It's something I learned from my parents, who were casually cool ahead of their time. My dad's smart look was a pair of really expensive jeans with a T-shirt and oversized blazer. People told him he was scruffy but 10 years later, everyone was doing it. My mum would pair her *Matrix*-style floor-length leather coat with baggy mom jeans and a vest – that effortlessness has definitely rubbed off on me. My parents made me realise that if they don't mind dressing differently, why should I? I'm not scared to wear something, even if other people don't like it.

A few years ago, I became obsessed with Chanel's chunky grandad sandals. At first, my sisters mocked me for wearing them but now they're both walking around in high-street versions. I spotted the SS18 quilted sandals in an airport and resisted the initial urge to spend hundreds – but I couldn't stop thinking about them. When I finally went to a store to buy them three months later, they were gone. I pride myself on being able to find any item (from

Bottega pouch bags to first release Saks Potts coats), but I spent the next nine months searching online to no avail.

In the end, I resorted to contacting Bettina Looney, who owns a concierge company that finds the unfindable items. Bettina found them in Texas and got them shipped to a friend in LA. That friend sent them to her boyfriend, who brought them to London. I wear them all the time and often get comments from strangers on my Instagram saying, 'Eugh, I'm so bored of those shoes,' and it's actually the best feeling. I worked hard to pay for them, they've been on one hell of a journey and I'm going to wear them 'til they die.

I started out as a personal shopper for Topshop and now create online edits for companies and fashion brands, as well as working as a stylist and running my website. I encourage my 138,000 followers and blog readers to buy better and, over the past few years, I've invested in more timeless items, such as handbags from The Row. I am still partial to a trend piece, but I know what resells (Gucci bags and anything from The Row) so after a few weeks, I'll put it up on Vestiaire and get some of my money back. I wanted the Gianvito Rossi kitten heels I'm wearing today for a year before I bought them, so I'm rarely impulsive.

Even though I'm only 5ft 1in, I embrace my size. I don't feel I need heels to have more authority – I feel more confident in flats. Equally, I would never put on a suit to feel powerful. If I need a boost, I'll wear an ankle-skimming dress from Albus Lumen or Mara Hoffman, with flat sandals and my natural linen By Far Rachel handbag. □

The look

LEFT: MONIKH WEARS DRESS, ALBUS LUMEN. SANDALS, GIANVITO ROSSI. BAG, THE ROW

Photography: Connor Langford at 2DM Management. Hair: Asahi Sano at Caren. Make-up: Gina Blondell using Marc Jacobs Beauty. Fashion assistant: Lois Adeosun. With thanks to Bourne & Hollingsworth. Shopping: Julia Harvey.



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A SPRING
IN YOUR
STEP

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WILL
AMBITION
TEAR
YOU
APART?

RELATIONSHIPS IN WHICH BOTH MEMBERS MAINTAIN ALPHA STATUS ARE RARE... BUT, ASKS *Hannah Betts*, IS IT EVEN WHAT BOTH SIDES REALLY WANT?

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* ALEXEY MENSCHIKOV

My father was a doctor, my mother a nurse – both brilliantly talented: he a medal winner, she an assistant matron by her mid-twenties. Then they had me. He went on to be a world leader in his field: saved lives, published books, won prizes. She went on to be a mother of five: frustrated, resentful, with a sphere so small it felt sour to her; always telling me not to make her mistake. She was less the power behind the throne than an insurgent forever threatening rebellion. She would divorce him, she would abort the next baby, we would wake up one morning to find her gone.

I'm crying as I write this because these are hard truths. I loved my mother, I felt for her and I feared what she might do. I identified with her rage, but I decided to be my father, so work has always been how I defined myself. Unsurprisingly, I have found myself attracted to men who feel the same: driven, with interesting jobs, putting their ambition before all else. At times, this has led to the uncomfortable question: how much ambition can one relationship take? And, more specifically, which one of us is going to yield and handle the domestic stuff, the emotional stuff, and be what would once have been called 'the wife'?

Relationships in which both members of a couple maintain alpha status are rare. There are the bankers I talk to who take it in turns to prioritise their careers, so one takes a job somewhere in the world and the other follows for three years, then it is the first one's turn to look after their children. However, the reason this feels remarkable is because it is (and being as rich as Croesus is a help). A friend tells me that she and her husband – both famous in their respective spheres – are 'like rivals, rather than partners'. She adds, 'It feels like an exercise in world domination, with us on opposing sides. Our ambition was exhilarating at 28. Now it feels like a war.'

The stereotype used to be that men left an 'equal' partner for an 'easier', less career-minded 'trophy wife'... cue eye-rolling all around. And one does not have to look far to find examples: I give you the friend who left a fellow lawyer for a succession of student girlfriends. However, I also know a good many women who are sick of high-flying husbands and slinging their respective hooks. 'I'd been doing it on my own for years,' says one thirtysomething divorcee I interview. 'Why not formalise the situation? Then, one day, I might meet someone at least prepared to have dinner with me occasionally.'

The most successful executive of my acquaintances maintains 'a happy loafer' of a husband. He walks the dog, picks up the dry cleaning and has 'a job so part-time it's virtually non-existent'. She refers to him as her 'sanity saviour', in the way that former UK and Australian prime ministers Theresa May and Julia Gillard are said

**"IT FEELS LIKE AN
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domination, WITH
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WAS EXHILARATING
AT 28. NOW,
IT FEELS LIKE WAR"**

to think of their 'civilian' spouses. Film star Julia Roberts found happiness when she ditched fellow celebrities in favour of a camera operator happy to let her take the limelight.

In my own case, if my parents' relationship taught me to be wary of love as a vocation vanquisher, then so did my romantic forays. Throughout my life, I have adored men – as friends, as lovers, as what I optimistically referred to as 'partners' – but, in myriad ways, said partners have stood in the way of my ambition. However alluring my drive, the moment I became romantically entangled with them, men have put their objectives first and mine very much second.

My Oxford University boyfriend paid lip service to respecting my goals, yet there was definitely a sense that his career was the more pressing. I remember explaining to his mother that academia could take me anywhere: Dundee, say, or Chicago. 'But, you'll have to follow his work,' she exclaimed, mystified that I could interpret matters any other way, despite my better degree and prospects that, at the time, seemed rosier.

Worse was to come when I was a young newspaper writer, in the form of a City boy who began by declaring himself in love with my intellect only to become threatened by it. Our relationship quickly became a power struggle. 'You're so clever,' he would





say, adoringly. But then another time, embittered: 'You think you're so clever.' Our romance ended not long after he demanded, 'Why wouldn't you want to give up your job to bring up my children? What makes you think you're too good for that role?' Afterwards, he called to inform me that I needed to help him forge a political career. Even once things were over, I was expected to play cheerleader.

And, yet, when I had a boyfriend who declared himself unambitious, people told us we didn't match. He told me we didn't match. And so I embarked on a course in which my erotic and professional lives were kept as separate as church and state. I was interested in my lovers' professions, just as they were interested in mine, but at arm's length. They were lovers, not partners. Partnership didn't work.

When I was 43, and he 40, I met Terence, a management consultant with whom I am compatible in all things. A partner, at last. My lone life became a shared life. And, while this brought many positives,

it also meant I was entering the danger zone: could our mutual aspirations coexist, a balance be achieved? Ten months in, he took a sabbatical in Cambridge. People shocked me by asking whether I would be moving, too. It hadn't even crossed my mind. My job was in London. My job was what mattered.

A year ago, we moved in together, my time eaten into by an endless round of chores he didn't see the need for. Sociologists have identified the 'mental load' that women take on in heterosexual relationships: the planning, the organising, the emotional labour. I felt quashed by all this, and more. And we didn't even have children. I'm self-employed, while Terence balances several jobs, plus studying on the side. Our schedules were frequently incompatible – he getting up at 6am to work, me slogging into the night – meaning we often failed to cross paths. At weekends, one of us would be working, while the other was left to do things on their own. At times we felt like mere flatmates; at others, actual impediments to one another's progress.

Enter Dr Jennifer Petriglieri, associate professor at the renowned business school INSEAD, near Paris, and the author

of *Couples That Work*, a book designed to change the conversation around the aligning of personal and professional ambition. As someone who grew up convinced that the personal must never be allowed the same status as the professional, it is no exaggeration to say that Petriglieri changed my life.

Inspired by Facebook executive Sheryl Sandberg's declaration, 'The most important career choice you'll make is who you marry,' Petriglieri spent five years interviewing more than 100 couples to find out what makes their work work. This was a revolutionary approach. As she notes, 'The tendency has been to treat careers as if we're all flying solo, no strings attached. It's all about you as an individual, as if you don't have a partner. Or it's been about work-life balance – nothing about how careers can interact. The emotional component didn't seem to exist.'

Couples tend to start out mutually supportive of each other's ambitions,' Petriglieri continues. 'But then something happens (for example, sharing a home or having children) to tip the balance in favour of one of them (often, but not always, the man). It's important to recognise that ambition is not a zero-sum game: there's no inevitable winner and loser. You can have a lot of ambition in a couple.'

Petriglieri found that the key is full and frank discussion, enabling the building of what she terms a 'couple contract'. 'Oh, god!' I wail. 'I'm too English to acknowledge my ambitions, let alone have a conversation about them.' 'OK,' replies Petriglieri, 'let's reframe it as desire. What do you want out of life? What is meaningful to you? What would make this a good life? Don't think, *This is my career versus your career*. Instead think, *This is our life*.'

'Isn't that codependence?' I worry. 'No, it's interdependence, and the two are very different,' argues Petriglieri. 'Making us fear interdependence is the biggest mistake feminism made.'

We're not designed to survive independently. Interdependent is what human society is. You've probably got a circle of close friends – I bet you're interdependent with them. Feminism meant we started to see our partner as an adversary, which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Tit for tat is the path to hell. Couples who are willing to build interdependence do really well.'

As simple as this may sound, this advice has had a radical effect on my life. And by this, finally, I mean *both* our lives – mine and Terence's. The impact was as instant as it was seismic. Both of us became massively happier after merely acknowledging that

this was something that needed to be addressed. Each of us has been repeating the phrase, 'I've done X because we're a team,' not satirically, but meaning it. I am supporting his aspirations, and he mine. Now, it feels as though we're becoming not rivals, but allies. So, how much ambition can one relationship take? The answer – brilliantly – feels like a f*ck of a lot. □

"MAKING US FEAR
interdependence
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INTERDEPENDENT
IS WHAT
human society is"



PHOTOGRAPHS *by* PIER NICOLA BRUNO

The woman WITH *the Midas* TOUCH

FEW DESIGNERS CAN LAY CLAIM TO HAVING BROKEN THE INTERNET, REIMAGINED THE LBD AND KEPT THEIR BRAND AT THE FOREFRONT OF MODERN CULTURE FOR DECADES. HOW DOES DONATELLA VERSACE DO IT?

WORDS *by* VÉRONIQUE HYLAND

Shortly before I interview Donatella Versace, I ask my colourist to bump up my already-straining-credulity blonde by a shade. That's the effect Versace has on you before you even meet her. Some people make you stand up straighter in their presence; she has a way of drawing out your inner Italian bombshell. In a world taken over by penitent Marie Kondo-style bloodletting of our gladdest glad rags, she is a beacon of maximalism, an old-school practitioner of Fashion with a capital F, a full-throated defender of glamour. And isn't that refreshing? Today, when so much high fashion looks like what you'd wear at a particularly progressive

convent, when we're apparently expected to don outfits that resemble scaffolding on a Brutalist building, don't you want to be a little sexier? Flashier? Versace-er?

JLo definitely does. For the house's spring/summer 2020 show, she rewore her 2000 Grammys look – a jungle-print dress that didn't so much break the internet as remake it, spurring Google to create its image search function. With her bronzed, toned body and her confident strut, JLo, if I may, made that dress her bitch. And the audience raised thousands of iPhones in tribute. 'There was so much energy in the room, and you could feel the power of us creating a special moment in time,' Lopez says. 'The power of women behind it, the power of fashion behind it, the power of putting beautiful things out into the world and celebrating beautiful moments in life – that's what it was.'

Or in Versace's own summary of that moment: 'I'm here. Look at me: I'm not afraid, I'm not 20 years old, but I'm much better.' That's the kind of empowerment ►



On the runway
LEFT: DONATELLA
WITH JENNIFER
LOPEZ AND
THAT DRESS



Fashion elite
LEFT: DONATELLA
WITH ELTON JOHN
AND JENNIFER
LOPEZ. RIGHT:
WITH GIGI HADID



"TO SPOT
A SUPERMODEL,
YOU HAVE
to have an eye
TO SEE BEHIND THE
WAY THEY LOOK.
I LOOK FOR WHAT
they represent"



Diamonds are forever
LEFT: WITH PRINCE
CHARLES. ABOVE: ERIN
O'CONNOR,
NAOMI CAMPBELL,
KATE MOSS, DONATELLA
AND AMBER VALLETTA



Role model
ABOVE: DONATELLA WITH HER BROTHER
GIANNI IN 1993. BELOW, L-R: CHRISTY
TURLINGTON, NAOMI CAMPBELL, CINDY
CRAWFORD AND LINDA EVANGELISTA
AT VERSACE'S AW91 SHOW



Best-dressed
RIGHT: AT A NEW
YORK PARTY IN
1997. FAR
RIGHT: WITH
IRINA SHAYK



Gold standard
BELOW, L-R: CARLA BRUNI, CLAUDIA
SCHIFFER, DONATELLA, NAOMI CAMPBELL,
CINDY CRAWFORD AND HELENA
CHRISTENSEN AT THE SS18 SHOW IN MILAN



Donatella Versace, 64, stands for. Not necessarily the bland boardroom, PowerPoint connotation of the word, but the ability to say, 'Hey, world: I'm 50, I'm fabulous, and I'm here.'

Versace's kingdom, I'd hazard a guess, has room for the inner circle of fashion Illuminati and the people who – like Elizabeth Berkley's character in the seminal film *Showgirls* – pronounce it 'Versayce'. She has a self-professed knack for spotting people on their way up. 'You have to have an eye to see behind the way they look. I look for what they represent,' she says, offering Gigi Hadid, who has walked many of her shows and starred in several Versace ad campaigns, as an example. 'I met Gigi when she was 16, and she was gorgeous, of course, but she wasn't a typical model at that moment. But there was something there: a kindness, a tenderness, the beauty inside her, not just outside. One of her first fashion shows was for me.'

So many designers start out modestly – the perfect white shirt, a little black dress, a wide tie – and build from there. When Gianni Versace founded the house that would bear his name in 1978, he was thinking in epic terms, doing what a science fiction author would call 'world building'. Growing up in Calabria, Italy – a former Greek colony that retained its classical motifs as well as its Roman glory – he drew on the might and myth of those traditions. He would make Medusa his logo, and dress his 'girls' like some combination of (sex) goddess and gladiator. His sister Donatella was his muse and right hand – he dedicated his perfume *Blonde* to her.

The vision has only got bigger. Now you can stay in a Versace hotel, lounge in a logo bathrobe with a Barocco-printed belt and matching slippers (next to Fido in his coordinating dog bed), and – if your vice so decrees – flick cigarette ash into a Medusa-head ashtray. They've truly thought of everything.

The brand is larger than life, and so is its current figurehead. Given her standing in our culture – there are few designers well-known enough to be identifiable by a first name, let alone a *Saturday Night Live* impression – it was hard to believe the received wisdom that Donatella Versace is shy. ('That's the most uncomfortable thing for me,' she later tells me, of her own celebrity.) But it's true. She is softly spoken, small wristed, elfin.

When we meet, it's hard to put this petite woman in the context of the sprawling hotel penthouse she's sitting in, let alone the massive international brand she sits at the helm of. Her voice is subdued, the discreet growl of a domesticated

tiger. She excitedly talks about her recent pilgrimage to see the *Downton Abbey* movie. (Imagine Donatella Versace at the ticket counter saying, 'One for *Downton Abbey*, please.') I like the Crawleys as much as anyone, but none of this jibes with my conception of Milanese excess. Where are the gold Medusas? The gold safety pins? The... other gold things? But then I ask for tea, and it's conveyed to me in a gilded Versace cup with a winged handle, and I'm officially whisked off to Versace-land.

So I say hello to the woman behind the curtain of pin-straight platinum-blond hair and the daytime smoky eye – who, it seems, actually is deeply introverted. At least, according to the woman herself. She conceived the look as armour, 'so people would talk about how I look, not about what I have inside'.

There were, she says, 'things happening in my life, and I didn't want to explain'. She retreated even further into the image during the most difficult season of her life, Gianni's 1997 murder, which thrust her into the spotlight as she took over the brand. (Her brother is never far from her mind; her spring 2018 collection was a tribute to him on the 20th anniversary of his passing, and today she's wearing a navy sweater imprinted with his signature.)

She developed a tough outer shell as a coping mechanism – not just the hair and make-up, but the whole package. At one point, she kept the same personal trainer for 18 years. She imitates herself whining, not wanting to do another rep: 'He didn't listen to anything I said! I love

that.' But despite her protestations, fitness gave her discipline and mental clarity. Ever image-conscious, she would even take the trainer on vacation with her. Recently, though, she's felt more comfortable being herself. On Instagram, she kicked back in a pair of novelty turkey slippers (Caption: 'You see... I don't always wear high heels!!'), and she made an appearance in a campy soap opera for the brand's holiday campaign. You might say she's embracing her extra-ness. 'Toned-down, that's not me,' she shrugs. 'Take it or leave it.'

She contributed to the rise of the supermodel, hardly a toned-down creature. Long before Gigi was a glimmer in her mother Yolanda's eye, models were sharply divided into 'print' girls and 'runway' girls, but Donatella chafed against the distinction. 'I brought them to Milan, and Gianni would say [she imitates their easy sibling back and forth], "She can't walk." "Doesn't matter." "She's not tall enough." "Doesn't matter. Put that dress on her and you'll see that she's going to be tall enough."' ▶

"SHE CONCEIVED
HER LOOK AS
armour
'SO PEOPLE WOULD
TALK ABOUT
HOW I LOOK, NOT
ABOUT WHAT
I have inside'"

When I mention the period in the mid-1990s when designers opted for scores of anonymous, interchangeable models, she sputters, 'Oh God, I couldn't take it anymore!' The Versace girl has always been a supermodel. For the house's AW91 show, a band of mononymic glamazons – Linda, Cindy, Claudia, Naomi, Carla – strutted to the strains of George Michael's *Freedom!* '90 (a watershed moment Versace nodded to more than 25 years later by reuniting those same women at her spring 2018 show). Versace was prescient about that, and many other things, too. She foresaw the friends-with-benefits relationship that would spring up between pop music and fashion, forging alliances early on with Madonna and Prince. The latter made CDs of then-unreleased music especially for the Atelier Versace couture show in 1995.

This clash of culture was very interesting to me,' she says. 'And I thought, *If fashion doesn't go into this world, it will become irrelevant.*' And before politicians and fashion mingled so seamlessly, she invited Chelsea Clinton to her spring 2002 catwalk show and gave her a mini-Donatella makeover. ('I saw her recently. I adore her. She's a smart girl,' she says of Clinton.) Her interest in politics hasn't abated. She imitates her phone going, going, going with its fusillade of push notifications. Her morning news-gathering routine goes like this: Politics first, 'then fashion, and then music, and then art'. She has a lot to say about, for example, Greta Thunberg. 'I'm very happy a 16-year-old girl said, "How dare you take my future away?" I really like the youth in this moment; there are a lot of young people with great ideas.' They remind her of her student days at the University of Florence: 'I was into protesting. I was outside in the street.'

She's also been outspoken regarding the #MeToo movement. ('I've always defended women. I'm finding a lot of women more interesting than men right now.') While she says she didn't face sexism when assuming her mantle at the company, she acknowledges that this is probably because she 'was in a [more] privileged position' as a family member. When I mention the wave of covered-up fashions that followed in the wake of the #MeToo allegations, she purrs, 'Not on my runway.' She's a firm believer that a woman should be able to dress however she likes. She wants to live in a world where you can command the upper echelons of business in a corset. And why not?

Versace is an ardent supporter of LGBTQ+ rights; because of her brother's legacy, she says, 'I can't not be.' Last year, she

was named a Stonewall Ambassador and appeared at New York City's Pride march in a rainbow sequined dress and matching go-go boots. We commiserate for a bit about the rollback of LGBTQ+ rights in the US. 'I wish people would fight more. People fight in New York, people fight in LA, but the other places in America – they need help,' she says. 'They need to be pushed to fight, because this is not right. The country is not moving forward. It's going backward.'

One thing that is going forward, in a big way, is the house of Versace. In 2018, the company was acquired by luxury group Capri Holdings, the parent company of Michael Kors and Jimmy Choo. 'I was very careful about deciding something like this, which could change my life completely,' Versace says of the sale. 'I think the company needs to move ahead. I'm very happy about my choice, because Versace can grow faster.' Indeed, Capri is pursuing an aggressive expansion of the brand, with plans to open dozens of stores each year.

Beyond that, she doesn't know what the future holds. 'I cannot live forever. I'm not going to be here forever, and things change in fashion. I'm the first one open to changes.' But there are none on the horizon just now. She jokes, 'Nobody wants me to step aside, and that's terrible!'

Instead, she's gone full throttle to align the brand with her beliefs. Versace ceased to use fur in 2018, and the company is striving to be more sustainable, having just opened a new green headquarters in Milan constructed from ethically sourced materials. As they're opening all those new stores, they're asking all the nitty-gritty questions. 'Where do

you source the materials? How do you recycle the water?' she says. 'How can you use less electricity? All of these aspects are taken into consideration now.'

She's also taking steps in her own life. This famous jet-setter? She says she's no longer flying privately. And, when it comes to her designs, she sees quality and craftsmanship as the antidote to the fast-fashion mind-set. 'We cannot forget the value of heritage, because today fashion is like, *Wear today; throw it away tomorrow,*' she says. It's rare to see someone who's so squarely a part of the old-school fashion world and yet so engaged with everything new. She says she keeps herself surrounded by young, creative employees, a posse of anti-yes men and women. 'It's so easy to surround yourself with people who think like you, who say yes [to everything]. That's the moment you should retire. You should go and do something else.' □

"I CANNOT LIVE FOREVER. I'M NOT GOING TO BE here forever; THINGS CHANGE IN FASHION. I'M THE FIRST ONE open to change"

Jennifer Lawrence

'SHE WAS CRITICISED FOR WEARING THIS IN WINTER [2018], BUT THAT MADE IT MORE SPECIAL. TO WEAR THAT DRESS, I WOULD HAVE STOOD WITH BARE FEET IN THE SNOW. AND THAT'S HOW JENNIFER IS. SHE SPOKE HER MIND IN RESPONSE TO COMMENTS THAT SEEMED TO LIMIT HER FREEDOM TO DO WHAT SHE WANTS WITH HER BODY. I ADMIRE THAT.'

Cindy Crawford and Kaia Gerber

'CINDY WORE THIS IN 1992, WHEN SUPERMODELS WERE THE NEW CELEBRITIES. IT WAS FROM THE BONDAGE COLLECTION. LAST YEAR, KAIA WAS ABOUT TO CELEBRATE HER 18TH BIRTHDAY WHEN SHE TEXTED ME TO CREATE A NEW VERSION OF THE DRESS HER MOTHER WORE. IT'S ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HOW GREAT FASHION NEVER GOES OUT OF STYLE.'

The icons...
THE LBVD (LITTLE BLACK
VERSACE DRESS)

FORGET THE LITTLE BLACK DRESS. VERSACE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LEGENDARY BLACK DRESS. HERE, DONATELLA TALKS US THROUGH THE HEADLINE-MAKING LOOKS

Angelina Jolie

'THIS GOWN IS RELATIVELY SIMPLE, BLACK VELVET WITH A BOW AT THE BACK. WHAT MADE IT MEMORABLE IS THE SLIT, AND HOW ANGELINA AND THAT LEG MOMENT BROKE THE INTERNET. THIS IS WHAT I LOVE ABOUT WOMEN: WHEN THEY ARE SELF-CONFIDENT AND JUST GO FOR IT. ANGELINA CAN DO ANYTHING AND MAKE HEADLINES... AND HEADS TURN.'

Rosie Huntington-Whiteley

'ROSIE IS A GODDESS. THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN AT THE 2018 BRITISH GQ AWARDS, WHEN I RECEIVED THE AWARD FOR BEST DESIGNER. IT'S FROM THE SS91 ATELIER COLLECTION – AN ARCHIVE DRESS THAT HIGHLIGHTS ROSIE'S INCREDIBLE BODY. I LOVE HOW NONCHALANTLY SHE WORE IT, CONSIDERING SHE WAS ALMOST TOPLESS.'

Diana, Princess of Wales

'THIS IS THE MOST SIMPLE, ICONIC VERSION OF THE LBD. IT WAS 1995 (AND PEOPLE SAY FASHION IS DISPOSABLE – I WOULD TOTALLY WEAR THIS TODAY!). GIANNI AND I WERE VERY CLOSE TO PRINCESS DIANA AND SHE WORE VERSACE A LOT. WHAT IS SO SPECIAL IS EVERYTHING: HER, THE WAY SHE WORE THE DRESS, HER WILLINGNESS TO BREAK THE RULES AND HER COMMITMENT TO BEING TRUE TO HERSELF.'

Elizabeth Hurley

'"THAT DRESS" AS IT'S NOW KNOWN, WAS GIVEN TO LIZ AS SHE WAS BEGINNING HER CAREER. HUGH GRANT ASKED FOR SOMETHING FOR HIS GIRLFRIEND TO WEAR TO THE PREMIERE OF *FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL*. IN 1994. WE DIDN'T KNOW HOW PEOPLE WOULD REACT. GIANNI'S GENIUS WAS THAT HE WAS THE FIRST TO UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF CELEBRITIES AND THE RED CARPET.'



Jacket, BALENCIAGA.
Earrings, LAURA
LOMBARDI

A THOROUGHLY *modern* SUPERMODEL

AWENG CHUOL IS THE SUPERMODEL NAME ON EVERYONE'S LIPS...
BUT THE STORY OF HOW SHE REACHED THE TOP IS THE STUFF OF A HOLLYWOOD FILM
SCRIPT. HERE, SHE SHARES HER INCREDIBLE STORY

AS TOLD *to* HANNAH NATHANSON

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* TIFFANY NICHOLSON



THIS PAGE AND
OPPOSITE *Jacket, shirt
and trousers, all
SIES MARJAN. Necklace,
LAURA LOMBARDI*

'HI, WELCOME *to McDonald's*.

MY NAME IS AWENG.

HOW CAN *I help you?*'

The woman stood in front of me. And stared. She was well put together – with manicured hands, long groomed hair – not a typical customer in this quiet branch of the Golden Arches in Sydney's western suburbs. I stared back at her. 'Oh my god, you're *beautiful*,' she said. I looked down, embarrassed, then she repeated, 'You're beautiful,' as though in a trance.

I was tired, I'd been working for hours and was about to leave for my shift at the KFC down the road. I had multiple jobs to pay for college. A strong work ethic was something my grandparents, who'd emigrated to Australia from southern Sudan five years previously, instilled in me. Since I'd begun working aged 14, I'd been approached several times by people claiming they could make me a star – mainly alleged Disney agents and model scouts.

I told the woman that my shift was about to end; that she was the last person I would serve. She didn't seem flustered by my abruptness, but instead carefully placed a business card on the counter. Sliding it towards me she said, 'Here's my friend's card. You're going to be a superstar. You'll thank me one day.'

Two weeks later, I was on a plane to Paris to walk for one of the most exclusive fashion houses: Vetements. That evening, after my work shifts, I'd given the card to my mother. Flattered as I had been by all the attention before, it had never been the right time – I was set on finishing school and going to university to study law, join the debating team and maybe get my heart broken along the way. But things were different this time. I had just turned 18 and was in my second year of university. I was in control of my own schedule. My mother was the one who pushed me into following up the offer of the woman in McDonald's. She was tired of having a superstar daughter who didn't want to be a superstar. It turned out the friend of the woman who'd come into McDonald's was a model agent. After I met her, she immediately made me an offer: if she could fly me out of Australia within two weeks, then she would sign me to her agency. If she couldn't, then I could get on with my regular life.

It was surreal to be leaving home on my own – up until that point I'd never even bothered to get my Australian passport. I'm the eldest of 12 children, so it felt like I was abandoning my siblings, some of whom were like my own children. My ticket was only one way, so no one – including me – knew whether I'd be coming back. I arrived at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport in the freezing cold one February morning and looked around in total disbelief as crowds of people swirled around me. The last time I'd seen this many people in one place was in the refugee camp of Kakuma. ►



**"A MODEL AGENT MADE ME AN
offer: if she could fly me out
OF AUSTRALIA WITHIN TWO WEEKS,
she would sign me. If not,
I COULD GET ON WITH MY LIFE"**

I was born in Kakuma, a refugee camp in the northwestern region of Kenya, which was a haven for anyone from east Africa trying to find safety during the civil war in Sudan. Over the years, it had grown to accommodate tens of thousands of refugees, as civil war raged in neighbouring southern Sudan and political instability continued in Ethiopia and Somalia. Kakuma has become well-known in the fashion world because a lot of models were born or raised there, including Halima Aden and Adut Akech.

My mum arrived in Kakuma with her entire family in 1996, from what is now recognised as South Sudan. Two years later, she fell pregnant with me. The daughter of a pastor, her pregnancy at age 15 was not well received. The advice she was given, like many girls her age, was to abort the child as there was no way they would be able to raise children in that environment. There were certain leaves growing in a nearby field that could be used to 'wash out' the child, without any pain, by bringing about labour prematurely.

My grandfather asked my mother to walk to the field where they grew the leaves. When she arrived there were several young girls sat eating these 'magical' leaves. My mum still cries when she recalls the scene today. The message was clear: if you keep this child, it will suffer, and so will you. My mum decided there and then that she wouldn't eat the leaves; she was met with a chorus of women asking her what in god's name she thought the child would eat. Her reply was simple: the child would eat whatever she ate. When my grandfather heard the news that she hadn't eaten the leaves, he was irate. He said it would bring shame on the family and that it was the wrong decision – he was more worried about his reputation than about his daughter.

For most of my first year, I had no name. My grandparents wanted me to be called Atonge, but my mum was set on Aweng. Everyone wanted something different for me, so I was just called 'Baby' and then 'Girl' for the first year of my life. I was brought up to know that I was beautiful, especially by my mother. At the back of my mind, I always had an idea of my beauty, but it wasn't until the end of my teens that I really grasped how striking I was. With the same rebellion my mother had shown by keeping me, she snuck Aweng onto my birth certificate without telling anybody. And that was that. 'Aweng' translates as 'cow' in our culture and cows are sacred, so there is a deep significance to my name.

People assume I have bad memories from growing up in Kakuma, but the opposite is true. It was home to me – as homely as you could make a one-bedroom camp with six siblings and a pregnant mother. Of course, it was traumatic in the sense that there was a civil war in Sudan, but I was raised without anything being hidden from me. Despite all the blood and all the running, my parents were always honest with me.

I was about to turn eight when my grandfather had finally had enough of all the running away and insisted we move to Australia, where he felt the climate would suit us better than the US. And so we left Kakuma. My mum was pregnant when she travelled alone across the world with six children under the age of eight. She was 22. My father refused to come with us – he'd been a child soldier and wanted to die in Sudan – so she left the only man she'd ever known to start a new life on the other side of the world, and I watched it happen. I watched the phone calls from Kakuma ▶



"I WAS BROUGHT UP TO KNOW THAT *I was beautiful,* ESPECIALLY BY MY MOTHER. IT WASN'T *until my teens that* I GRASPED HOW STRIKING I WAS"



THIS PAGE *Jacket*, GIVENCHY
OPPOSITE *Jacket*,
BALENCIAGA. *Earrings*,
LAURA LOMBARDI





"I NEVER WANTED MY STORY
to be about the refugee girl
WHO BECAME A SUPERMODEL
overnight. I wanted to shape
MY OWN NARRATIVE"

Jacket, top and trousers, all SIES MARJAN. Earrings, LAURA LOMBARDI. Shot on location at Harlem Shake, New York. PHOTOGRAPHY: Tiffany Nicholson at Print & Contact. STYLING: Lilli Millbiser at See Management. HAIR AND MAKE-UP: Ashleigh Ciucci. PRODUCTION: Nida Nizam. FASHION ASSISTANT: Lauren Walsh. Aweng Chuol is represented by Models 1

to Australia, I watched the phone being thrown in anger as my parents rowed about going. I watched as another phone was brought, so we could get in touch with my grandfather who was already in Australia. As young as I was, I was watching it all. It was hard on everyone.

When we arrived in Sydney, my mother never changed the script of our childhood. I grew up in a South Sudanese community, and had a happy childhood integrating well into this new Australian world.

So when I stood there, 10 years later, in a white studio in front of Demna Gvasalia [the founder of Vetements], meeting his entire team, I didn't feel nervous or scared. In fact, I felt at home. As soon as I walked in, he said, 'Oh, Miss Australia is here!' It immediately broke the ice. There was a lot of laughter as we did a fitting for the show that evening. I really had no time to be nervous. Everyone kept telling me to breathe, but the first time I stepped out onto the catwalk, for the Vetements AW18 show, all I could think was, *I have a law assignment due in two hours!* But right then I knew I had to focus on walking. I wasn't used to walking like a model and my velvet trousers went all the way over my shoes, so I constantly felt as though I was about to fall.

Walking exclusively for Vetements was just the beginning. After that first show, I raced back to my hotel, finished my law assignment, sent it in and then fell asleep. I woke to news that I'd been signed by agencies in Paris, Milan, New York and London, all in one night. Since then I've seen the world, shooting with industry legends and working with fashion houses such as Burberry.

Fashion has always been an art form for me; I'm in it for the art. I've always admired how someone could sit down with a plain white piece of paper and come back with all this colour and shape. One of my favourite designers has always been Alexander McQueen – I love the way he embodied a woman's figure. As a child, I never knew the names of all the biggest people in fashion, but when I saw a photo that Peter Lindbergh took of Kate Moss in a magazine, I knew that was beauty and I cut it out and stuck it on my bedroom wall.

As I've settled into the industry, what I love most is that it gets reborn each season. But I never imagined myself actually working as a model. I thought I'd do one show, then go home and finish university, and that would be it. So to have options, and to be shot by someone like Nick Knight – who's always been one of my top photographers – is still surreal. When they said, 'Nick Knight wants you,' I replied, 'I'm on my way!'

Above everything else, it's been important to be honest to myself and to the world. I never wanted my story to be all about the refugee girl who became a supermodel overnight. I wanted to shape my own narrative. After all, I worked to make the best out of the situation. Most people who came from Kakuma have a different perspective of the camp. For some, it wasn't the safe haven I saw it as, but that is their story, for them to tell. For me, I found an escape from reality. You can't change the past – all you can do is grow from it. □

The awakening of SOPHIE TURNER

HOW DID A QUIET SCHOOLGIRL FROM WARWICKSHIRE BECOME
ONE OF HOLLYWOOD'S MOST INTERESTING – AND OUTSPOKEN – PLAYERS?
Mike Sager SPENDS AN EXPLETIVE-FILLED WEEKEND FINDING OUT

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* ARTHUR ELGORT

STYLING *by* BETH FENTON

*Coat, £4,100, shirt, £1,300, shoes, £850, and
brooch £750, all LOUIS VUITTON*





*Coat with brooch, £3,350, shirt, £1,300,
and hat, £850, all LOUIS VUITTON*

The Queen of THE NORTH

is sitting regally in a make-up chair on the ground floor of a vast poured-concrete house hunkered beside the boardwalk in Venice Beach, California – a radiant monarch on a makeshift throne, ready to set to work.

Outside the large front windows, a river of humanity streams past: walkers, joggers and riders of all manner of wheeled conveyance. Beyond them stretches a wide expanse of the finest white sand and, beyond that, you can see the curve of the earth, right where the dazzling Pacific Ocean sits against a Crayola-blue sky.

Inside the house, Sophie Turner, 24, submits to the ministrations of her attendants. Though her hair is back to its natural blonde, she is immediately recognisable as the English schoolgirl who first appeared on our screens nine years ago, at the age of 15, in the beloved and much-decorated HBO series *Game of Thrones*.

As the ginger-haired Sansa Stark, Turner portrayed with gathering skill the coming of age of a young woman who suffered greatly over the course of the show's nine seasons, yet prevailed mightily in the end, leading her kingdom to independence. In 2019, the show's final year, Turner was nominated for an Emmy for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series.

Between going to school and shooting *Game of Thrones* for five or more months every year, she somehow found time to cram in several films (the *X-Men* series, *Barely Lethal* and *Josie* – the latter two memorable only for Turner's performances) and, of course, settle down with a pop superstar. Much has been made of her relationship with Joe Jonas, whom she married in May last year; even more of the triumvirate of Jonas wives she is now a part of, known as the J Sisters. It comprises actor and singer Priyanka Chopra Jonas (who is married to the youngest member of the group, Nick) and reality star Danielle 'Dani' Deleasa Jonas, wife of the eldest brother, Kevin. It is a long way from the small Warwickshire village where Turner grew up.

Suddenly, there is movement. The make-up artist paints a final coat of electric blue shadow across her lids, while the hairdresser holds out his hand to accept a final hank of silken blonde hair extension from his assistant.

Turner wears a relaxed dark grey suit, a colourful wool sleeveless jumper and a shirt with an oversized collar – all by Louis Vuitton, for whom she is a brand ambassador – the effect of which is to transform her into a young Twiggy right before our eyes.

Finally, it is time. We proceed in single file out of the side door – the production assistant in the lead, followed by Turner, her publicist, her make-up artist, her hairdresser, the hairdresser's assistant and myself. At the back of the house, we reach an alley where a large black car is waiting. Six of us load in. Because it's a little crowded, the assistant hairdresser volunteers to walk. Turner insists I take the front passenger seat. The production assistant turns the key and the vehicle purrs to life. Gingerly, we begin to roll forward.

'How far are we going?' Turner asks.

'Just to the corner,' indicates the production assistant, pointing through the windscreen to the knot of people and equipment at the end of the alley, no more than 200ft away.

'I think I could have walked,' Turner deadpans. Everyone makes noises of agreement.

'I feel like a such a dick...' she says.

The shoot wrapped, the next day we meet at Chateau Marmont. The Chateau is the Dorian Gray of hotels. The ghosts of infinite celebrity interviews inhabit its lobby, and yet it has somehow managed to maintain its shine and currency over the decades. We're at a small round table with plush, high-backed chairs. The sun slants through the window from the garden restaurant, enveloping the Queen of the North in a haze of celestial light.

Sophie Belinda Jonas – her legal name – is in a comfortably worn pair of white Umbro sport shoes with a heather grey sweatshirt and jogging bottoms ensemble of the thick cotton, hanging-around-the-house variety. It's emblazoned on both chest and leg with the word 'Erewhon', the name of a high-end organic grocery chain in LA. Only the sweats aren't made by Erewhon. They're made by a company called Pizzaslime. ('Pizzaslime is a creative project by two idiot savants who fulfill your need to disappoint your parents,' its website explains.)

'It's ironic, you know, like this would be a really douche-baggy thing to wear out, because Erewhon's so expensive, and that's kinda why I like it,' she says.

And so it proceeds for the next 90 minutes: the wisecracks, the nimble comebacks, the laughter that ricochets across the room, the swearing that she worries may be a little less PC than most would like, 'because English people are perhaps a little more OK than Americans with being sarcastic and rude to each other'.

The village of Chesterton is famous only for its windmill and its proximity to Leamington Spa, the Regency town south of Birmingham. But this is where Turner called home for most of her childhood. Her father Andrew was a manager at a company that distributed pallets for a shipping business. Her mother Sally was a special needs teacher. There are two brothers, both older – one a lawyer, the other a doctor. And Sophie had a twin, who sadly died before birth. ('My therapist has come to this conclusion [that's why] I constantly have to twin with people,' she says.) ▶

"MY FRIENDS AND I WERE
huge Busted fans. Then
JONAS BROTHERS COVERED
YEAR 3000 AND BUSTED
broke up. So we hated them"

Turner says she was 'really, really shy as a kid. I wouldn't say hello, or goodbye or anything. I was cripplingly shy. So my mum sent me to this drama school, the Playbox Theatre Company. I started there when I was three and stayed until I was about 17 or 18. All my friends started going there – we were together all the time and it was like our church, we loved it. We did plays together and it was just... it was magical.'

I ask whether she was a Jonas Brothers fan growing up.

She smiles. 'My friends and I were *not* Jonas Brothers fans. We liked Busted. They had a hit called *Year 3000*, it was amazing. We were huge fans. Then the Jonas Brothers covered the song and made it massive, and Busted broke up. It was all the Jonas Brothers' fault. So we hated them.'

Fast forward to 2016, when Turner was working on a film and one of the producers, who had once lived next door to the Jonas Brothers, told her, 'You should meet Joe Jonas, I feel like you would really get along with him.'

Not long afterwards, she says, 'I went to a meeting and Joe's agent was in the room. And he was like, "You remind me of one of my clients. I bet you two would really hit it off."'

That same year, the Jonas Brothers were touring the UK, which is when Joe sent her a message.

'I was living with friends in Camden, in a really rough flat – people were always climbing in and out of the windows. When I told my friends, they were like, "Yes! Joe Jonas! That's hilarious. You have to do it. And you have to text us everything he says."'

'I expected him to show up with security and everything. I thought he would be such a dick. I took all my guy friends with me to meet him, because in the back of my mind I was worried he could be a catfish, or... I don't know what. I just wanted my guy friends with me. I had my rugby boys. I was safe.'

They met at a bar in Camden. 'It was just this local shitty bar. It's kind of the worst, but it's also kind of the best – dirty with great music and people throwing up everywhere. It was that kind of place.'

'The best thing was that he didn't bring security. He brought a friend and they drank just as hard as the rest of us. I remember us two spending only a couple of minutes on the dance floor, and then we found a space in the far corner and we just talked. We talked for hours, and hours, and hours. And I wasn't bored. It wasn't contrived, it wasn't small talk – it was just so easy. Soon, we were inseparable. And then I went on tour with him.'

The couple were engaged on their first anniversary. She is wearing the ring as she speaks, a solitaire pear-cut diamond set on a double pavé band in white gold, with a matching pavé wedding ring. They were married twice. The first time, on 1 May 2019, by an Elvis impersonator at A Little White Wedding Chapel in Las Vegas. Two months later, they had a second, more formal, ceremony in the south of France. (And their fairytale continues – as ELLE went to press, the internet was ablaze with rumours of Turner expecting the couple's first child.)

*"WITH JOE, I ALWAYS FELT
like I was the one who
WAS PUNCHING WAY
above my weight. And
I STILL FEEL LIKE THAT"*

'With Joe, I always felt like I was the one who was punching way above my weight. And I still feel like that. He's so handsome, he's so talented, he's so funny, he's so charismatic. How am I with him? So... I don't know. I'm really lucky to be with him and have someone like

him want to be around me and spend time with me.'

How is being married different to a committed relationship? 'I feel as though the only thing that's changed for me is having this incredible sense of security. Just the word 'husband' and the word 'wife' – they solidify the relationship. I love being married. I think it's wonderful. I'm sure we'll have our hiccups, but right now the security and the safety are everything.'

'It's also nice to have built-in friends,' she adds, referencing the J Sisters. 'They are actually really cool, and I can hang out with them. We can talk to each other about how crazy the boys' lives are – we can relate on so many different things. It's, like, *thank god*, because you never know about your in-laws.'

'With Pri, especially, it's kind of crazy. You have to remind yourself that she's had a 20-year career in Bollywood already. She's the biggest thing in India right now. When we went there for her and Nick's wedding, we were treated like royalty. They worship her over there. It's crazy. But she's just the nicest person, and they only live 10 minutes away. And even though Kevin and Danielle live in New Jersey, we see them all the time. We're all one big family because the boys are best friends.'

If the past year has focused more on Turner's marriage than her acting career, then all that looks set to change as she takes on an ambitious new project, which premieres in April. *Survive* is a 12-part drama series based on the critically acclaimed novel by Alex Morel. In the show, Turner plays a suicidal young woman who becomes one of only two survivors (along with Corey Hawkins, from *Straight Outta Compton*) when their plane crashes into a remote, snow-covered mountain.

So far, so Hollywood. Except *Survive* will be featured on a radical new entertainment platform created by a tech and entertainment start-up called Quibi (the name is derived from the phrase 'quick bites'). It's a subscription-based service that will offer movie-quality shows lasting 10 minutes or less to ►



*Dress, £6,900, and shoes, £790,
both LOUIS VUITTON*

watch on your mobile phone. Quibi hopes to do for the commuter crowd what Netflix has done for the at-home audience.

'The second I finished *Game of Thrones*,' Turner says, 'I wanted to go straight back to some form of television. I just love the atmosphere that you get on set; I love the arc you can create over a number of episodes. When I found out about Quibi, it was one of those things where you say, "I don't know if this is going to work, but I want to be a part of it." And then I read the script and I fell in love with it.'

'In *Survive*, my character has been in rehab for an entire year,' Turner says. 'And I suffer with depression. I suffer with anxiety and eating disorders, too – there's a good amount of stuff in my family. It felt like I knew so much of that world.'

I ask if doing the series has helped Turner with her own issues. She shrugs her shoulders and takes another blueberry from the bowl of mixed berries she has ordered for breakfast.

'I suppose, yes, at the time it's very therapeutic, because I'm not thinking about myself. But then afterwards, not so much.' She pops the blue orb into her mouth. 'What happens is, I've been so obsessed with portraying this other character's problems that I haven't worked on me.'

Our time together is quickly coming to an end. Across the lobby, I see Turner's publicist taking a seat on the couch. She gives me a little sharp nod that signals an imminent wrap-up. I launch one more question her way: 'What did you think about the *Game of Thrones* ending?'

'I didn't watch it,' she says.

There is a silence.

'I began watching when the last season started,' she continues. 'I was planning to watch the rest, but then I fell behind. And then I started reading all these comments online...'

'And you didn't want to ruin it?'

'I feel like not everyone can be satisfied with the ending. Especially a show that's been going for 10 years at that point. People have so many ideas about how they want it to end. You can't make every fan happy.'

'But how does it feel to have been part of one of the greatest shows of all time?'

'Pretty much since season three, we've been hearing, "*Game of Thrones*! It's a phenomenon!" I've been trying to comprehend that. But when you're in it, you can't see it.'

'Now that I'm out of it, I'm only starting to realise how incredible it was, and what a revelation it was for television. I'm like, *Oh my god, I've been blessed*. When it's happening, you don't realise you're among greatness.'

'The people I was around; the atmosphere; the way they worked. I was spoiled by that show completely. And I'll never have anything like it again. Nothing will be the same as that. And only now am I realising that.' □

Survive launches on Quibi on 6 April

"I SUFFER FROM DEPRESSION. I SUFFER
with anxiety and eating disorders,
TOO—THERE'S A GOOD AMOUNT
of that stuff in my family.
IT FELT LIKE I KNEW THAT WORLD"

Coat, £4,100, LOUIS VUITTON.
Bow, stylist's own





THIS PAGE *Jacket*, £2,400,
sleeveless jumper, £1,500, *top*,
£1,300, *trousers*, £1,000, *and*
shoes, £850, *all* LOUIS VUITTON.
OPPOSITE *Sequinned top*,
£1,500, *top (worn underneath)*,
£3,500, *and skirt*, £2,500,
all LOUIS VUITTON

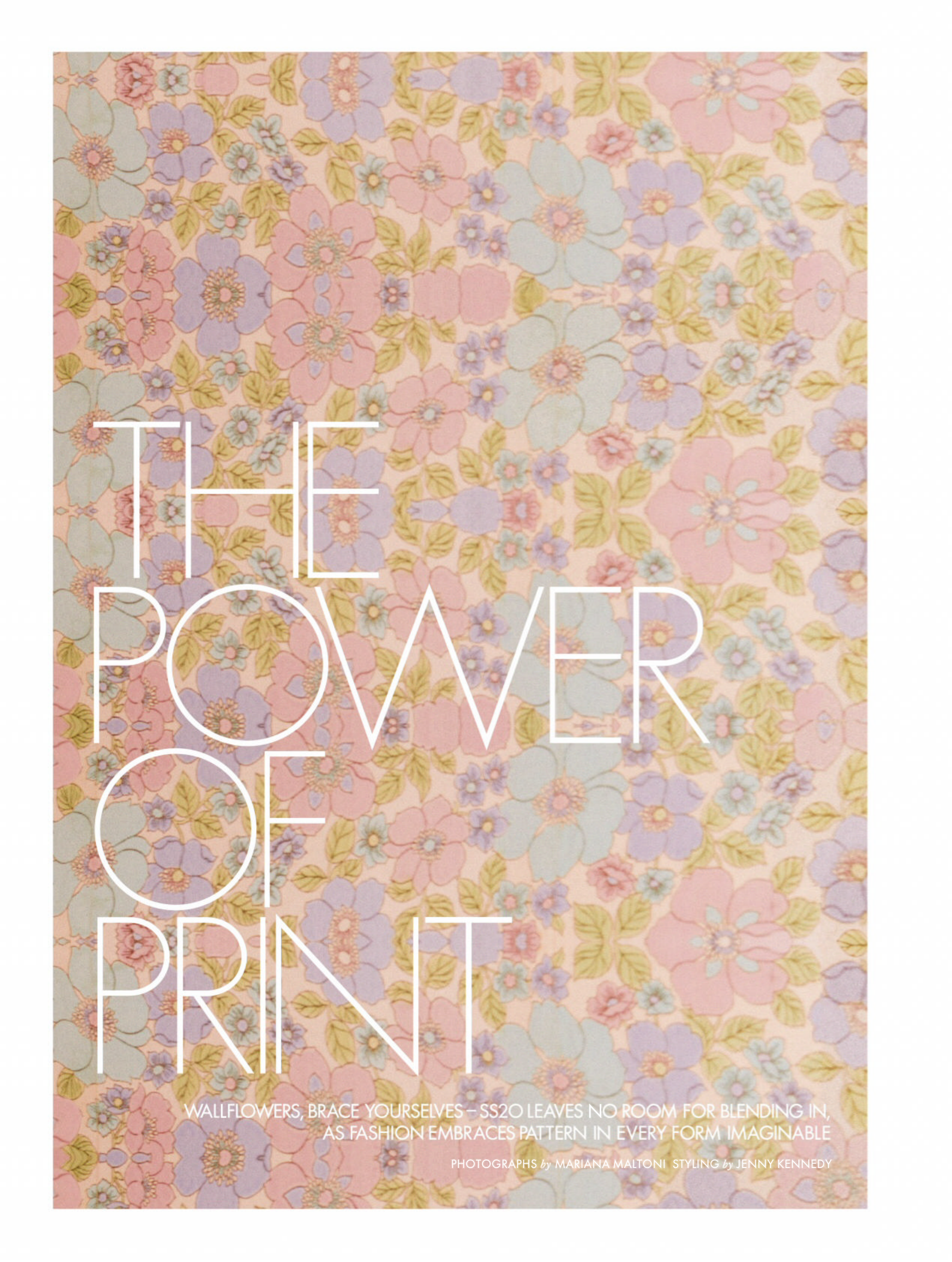




THIS PAGE *Coat (with brooch),*
£4,700, top, £1,300, and
shoes, £850, all LOUIS VUITTON.
Hair bow, stylists own.

OPPOSITE *Coat, £4,700, top,*
£1,300, and hat, £850, all
LOUIS VUITTON. HAIR: *Christian*
Wood. MAKE-UP: *Lisa Storey.*
NAILS: *Millie Machado.* TAILOR:
Susie Kourinian. FASHION
ASSISTANTS: *Cathleen Peters,*
Megan King and Julia Harvey





THE POWER OF PRINT

WALLFLOWERS, BRACE YOURSELVES – SS20 LEAVES NO ROOM FOR BLENDING IN,
AS FASHION EMBRACES PATTERN IN EVERY FORM IMAGINABLE

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* MARIANA MALTONI STYLING *by* JENNY KENNEDY



Bodysuit, £430,
MARQUES'ALMEIDA



*Green floral jacket, £995, and
matching skirt, £645,
CHRISTOPHER KANE. Green
tights, £5.99, JONATHAN
ASTON at UKTIGHTS.COM.
Earrings (worn throughout),
model's own*



Coat, £2,350, and skirt, £845, both
DOLCE & GABBANA. Shoes, £798, VALENTINO.
Latex stockings, £130, ATSUKO KUDO



THIS PAGE Dress, £5,350, GIORGIO ARMANI.
OPPOSITE Belted dress with brooch, £4,050, and shoes,
£790, both LOUIS VUITTON





THIS PAGE Dress, £2,325, RICHARD QUINN.
Shoes, £790, LOUIS VUITTON. Tights,
£9.99, PAMELA MANN. OPPOSITE Dress, £8,150,
and sandals, £1,400, both VERSACE





Red patterned dress,
£2,049, GIVENCHY





THIS PAGE Dress, £4,340, MIU MIU. Top (worn underneath), £200, NORMA KAMALI. OPPOSITE Top, £1,230, skirt, £1,280, and gloves, price on application, all EMILIA WICKSTEAD





THIS PAGE *Black and gold top, £2,850, and matching leggings with boots, £2,450, both BALENCIAGA. OPPOSITE Jumpsuit, £2,890, shoes, £490, and gloves, price on application, all MOSCHINO*







THIS PAGE *Bodysuit*, £430, MARQUES'ALMEIDA.
OPPOSITE *Green and brown shirt*, £980, and
matching hat, £650, both FENDI. HAIR: *Asabi Sano*
at Caren. MAKE-UP: *Celia Evans at One Represents*
using the CHANEL Desert Dream collection.
NAILS: *Nichole Williams at Beautii*. MODEL: *Charlotte*
Carey at The Hive Management. SET DESIGN: *Nicola*
Bell. FASHION ASSISTANT: *Julia Harvey*



*Jacket, waistcoat, top, trousers, boots
and scarf, all price on application,
MARC JACOBS. Hat, price on application,
STEPHEN JONES for MARC JACOBS*

SPLASH

UNSURE HOW TO APPROACH THE SEASON'S PAINTBOX PALETTE? DIVE RIGHT IN
AND WEAR THE BRIGHTEST SHADES YOU DARE FROM HEAD TO TOE

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* DREW JARRETT

STYLING *by* PAUL CAVACO



THIS PAGE Coat, £1,965, and boots,
£710, both DRIES VAN NOTEN.
OPPOSITE Dress, £1,300, VERSACE





Dress, £1,595,
STELLA McCARTNEY





THIS PAGE *Coat*, £3,060, *top*, £1,390,
and hat, £585, *all* PRADA. OPPOSITE *Dress*
with brooch, £3,250, LOUIS VUITTON





*Coat, £2,450, and boots,
£1,450, both BALENCIAGA*





THIS PAGE *Dress*, £5,550, VALENTINO.
OPPOSITE *Jacket*, £1,290, *shirt*, £390,
trousers, £720, *scarf*, price on application, and
belt, £220, all MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION







THIS PAGE Dress, £4,795, ERDEM.

Scarf and sandals, both stylist's own.

OPPOSITE Dress, £780, ALBERTA FERRETTI.

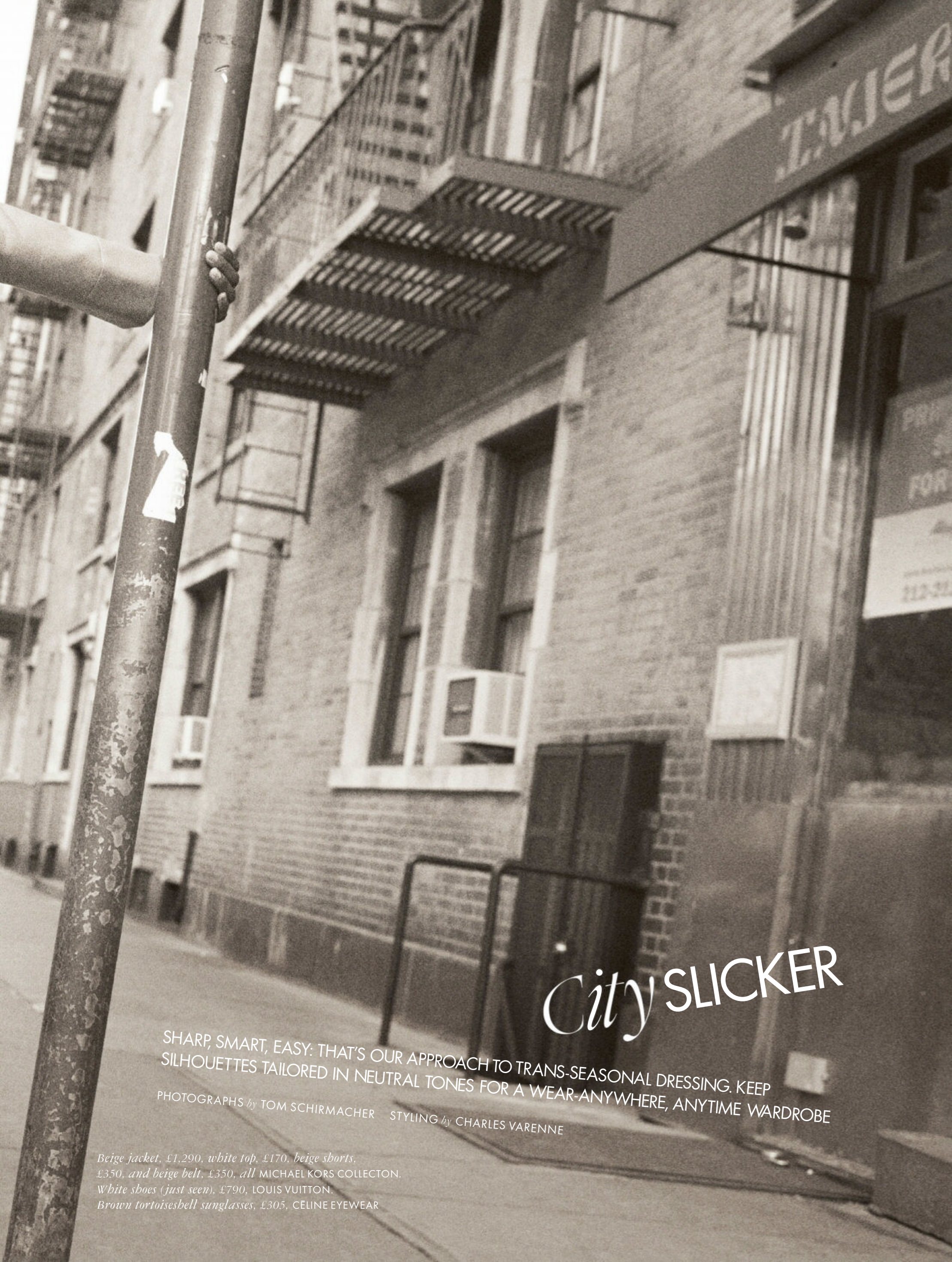
HAIR: Peter Gray at Home Agency using Shu Uemura

Art of Hair. MAKE-UP: Dick Page

at Statement Artists. NAILS: Isadora Rios. MODEL:

McKenna Hellam at IMG



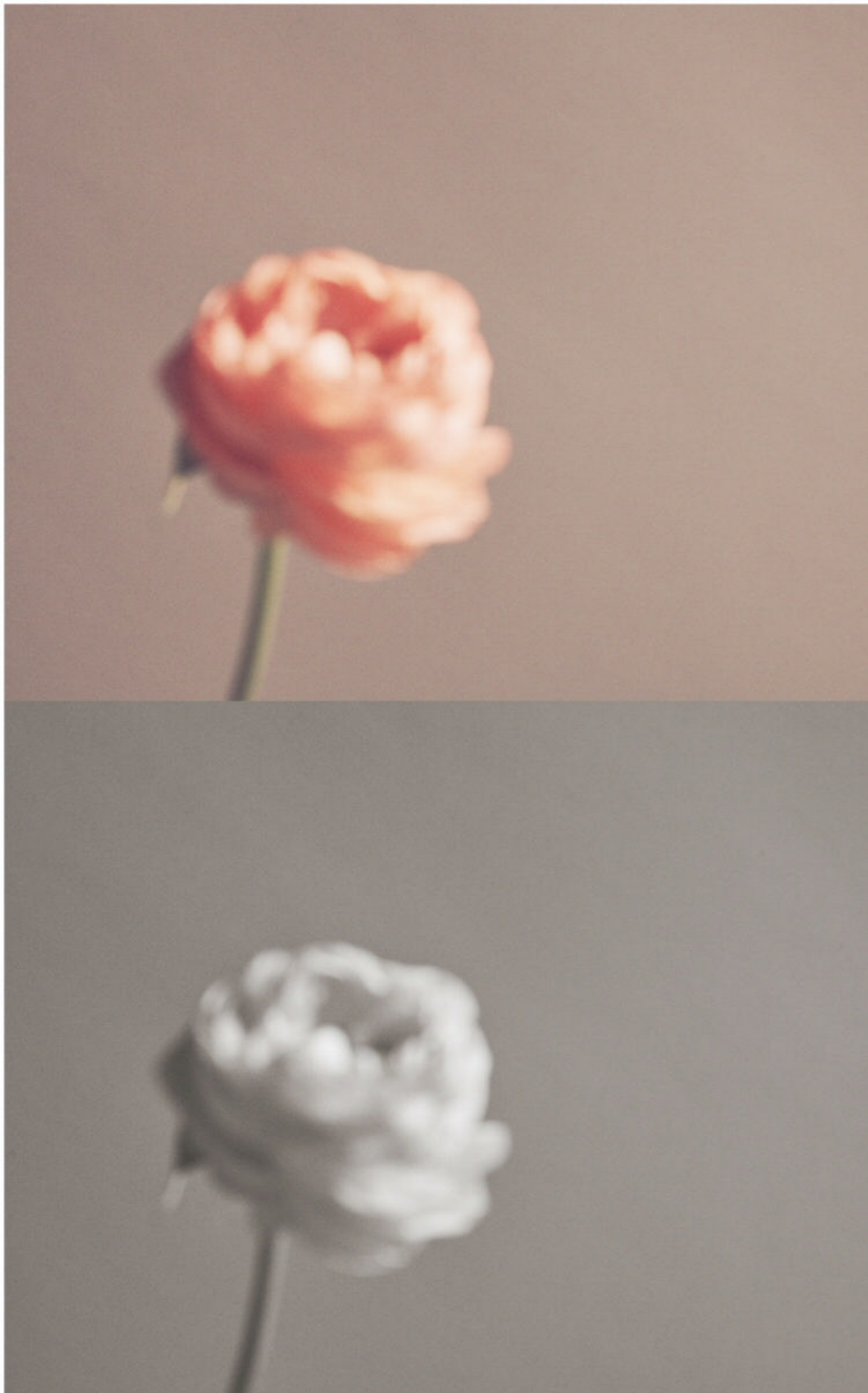


City SLICKER

SHARP, SMART, EASY: THAT'S OUR APPROACH TO TRANS-SEASONAL DRESSING. KEEP
SILHOUETTES TAILORED IN NEUTRAL TONES FOR A WEAR-ANYWHERE, ANYTIME WARDROBE

PHOTOGRAPHS *by* TOM SCHIRMACHER STYLING *by* CHARLES VARENNE

*Beige jacket, £1,290, white top, £170, beige shorts,
£350, and beige belt, £350, all MICHAEL KORS COLLECTON.
White shoes (just seen), £790, LOUIS VUITTON.
Brown tortoiseshell sunglasses, £305, CÉLINE EYEWEAR*



*Shirt, £980, and shorts, £525, both VALENTINO. Shoes, £690, FENDI.
Hat, £1,150, and earring, £340, both DIOR. Belt, £322, VALENTINO GARAVANI*







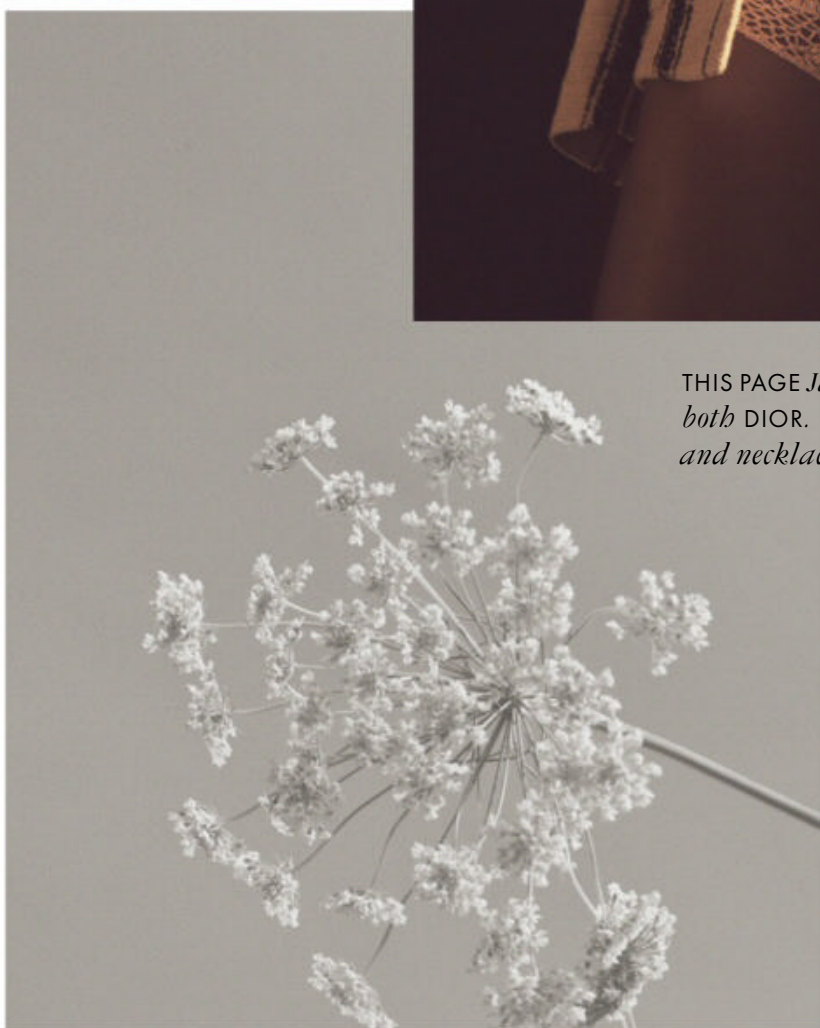
THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE *Top*, £2,990, *skirt*, £1,790, and *bandana* (worn around neck), £1,390, all GIVENCHY. *Shoes*, £690, FENDI





THIS PAGE Dress, £775, and belt, price on application, both ISABEL MARANT. Sandals, £1,225, BOTTEGA VENETA. Bag, £840, PIERRE HARDY. OPPOSITE Beige jacket, £1,750, and matching trousers, £980, both FENDI. White earrings, price on application, PRADA. Belt, £322, VALENTINO GARAVANI





THIS PAGE *Jacket, £3,600, and shorts, £1,050, both DIOR. OPPOSITE Top, £325, skirt, £605, earrings and necklace, both price on application, all PRADA*



Coat, £3,350, sleeveless jumper, £1,450, shirt, £1,300, trousers, £1,650, and shoes, £790, all LOUIS VUITTON





*Dress, £2,090, and bag, £2,515,
both BOTTEGA VENETA*



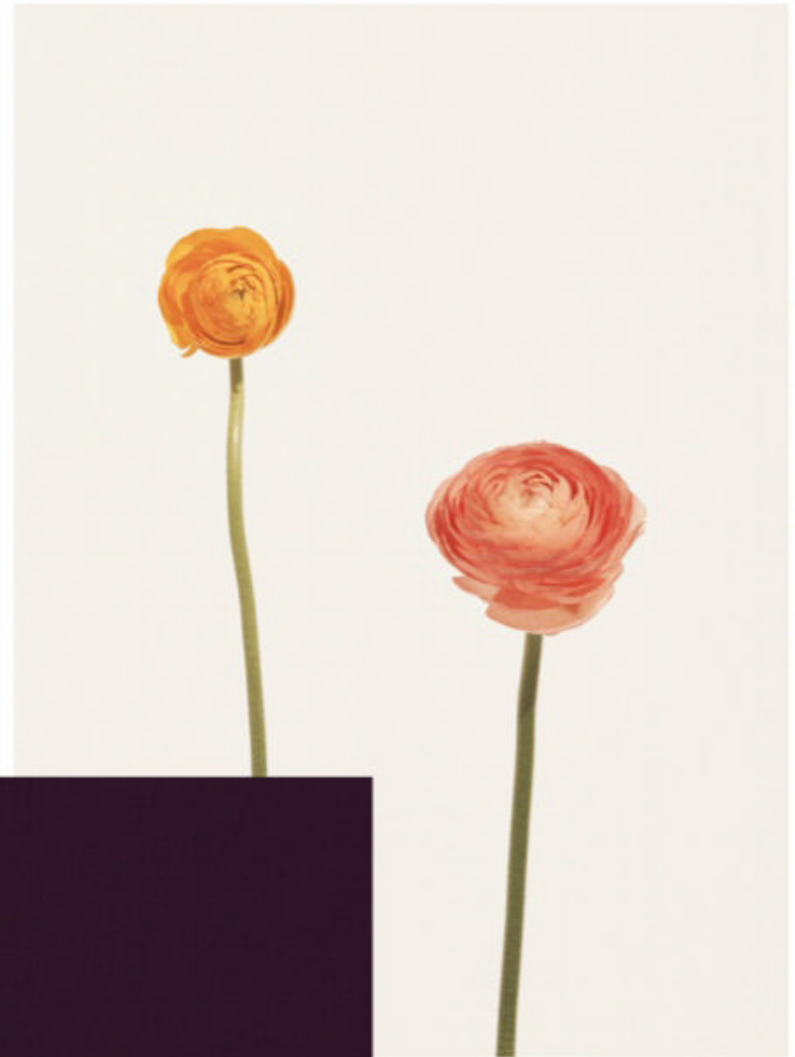


THIS PAGE *Burnt orange jacket, £2,030, matching trousers, £785, and beige shirt, £1,150, all GUCCI. Leopard-print bag, £550, PIERRE HARDY. OPPOSITE T-shirt, £1,600, skirt, £2,350, and bag, £1,550, all TOD'S*





THIS PAGE *Shirt, £625, and shorts, £625, both DOLCE & GABBANA. Bag, £1,095, JIMMY CHOO. OPPOSITE Grey shirt, £505, trousers, £935, socks, £35, hat, £300, and tie, £35, all MAX MARA. White shoes, £690, FENDI. HAIR: Gavin Harwin at The Wall Group. MAKE-UP: Mariel Barerra at The Wall Group. MODEL: Alicia Burke at Models 1. FASHION EDITOR: Charlotte Deffe. FASHION ASSISTANTS: Merrit Rea, Charlotte Harney*





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ELLE *Beauty*

GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND THE SURFACE

The look... STARRY EYED

If glitter and glamour aren't your bag but you still want to make a statement, try this minimal but magical look, seen at Anna Sui. Created by Pat McGrath, the ethereal creation was her take on 'Nouvelle Bohémienne: dreamy colours, very airy and fresh, for a free-spirited, modern woman.' The key is a considered colour palette (a fluorescent pastel base, wash of shimmer, stark white liner) and precise application. Keep the rest of the face fresh and the lips naked for maximum impact.

EDITED *by* KATY YOUNG



HOW *pulling* OUT BECAME *the* NEW PILL

IT REQUIRES IRON WILLPOWER, A DEXTEROUS PARTNER AND A VERY RISK-AVERSE MINDSET. JENNIFER GEORGE EXPLAINS WHY SHE, AND EVERY WOMAN SHE KNOWS, IS TURNING TO THE WITHDRAWAL METHOD

PHOTOGRAPH *by* PAUL ZAK

'Doesn't it kill the vibe a bit?' 'But where does it, you know, all go?' 'Do you think that, maybe, you're infertile?' All common reactions from my friends when I admit that, for the past 10 years, my husband and I have been

having sex using the old-fashioned pull-out method instead of any actual contraception. It's not that we're trying to have a baby, it's just that we don't like any of the other options that prevent the arrival of one. As for my friends' reactions, the most common one is the rhetorical question: 'Are you CRAZY?'

Maybe we are. Pulling out (known as the withdrawal method or, more colloquially – brace yourself – 'spray and pray') means around 4% of women are likely to fall pregnant. And that's if ►

the method is practised perfectly (avoiding highly fertile days and using a spermicide). But nobody's perfect, of course, especially in the throes of passion. So, in reality, 18-28% of women will conceive using this method in the first year. Risky business? You bet.

It's not just us though. In the past four years, around half a million women in the UK have switched from using contraception to pulling out.* Although the Pill and LARCs (long-acting reversible contraceptives, such as intrauterine devices and implants) still reign strong as the top choices, in a straw poll with friends and colleagues, the vast majority admitted – albeit sheepishly – that they, too, have practised, or are currently practising, unprotected sex. And this isn't just twentysomethings, it's also midlife mothers who don't want more children. Given there's so much at stake, from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) to unplanned pregnancy, what is going on?

Most women tell the same story: they used to be on the Pill, but they don't want to take it any more. And I'm no exception. I reached the point where I'd had enough of messing with my body. I'm not a 'clean living' person by any means (my diet consists mainly of sugar, meat and caffeine) but in my twenties, after a decade-long on-off relationship with the Pill, I became increasingly aware of the hormone-affecting chemicals I was pumping into my system. Although my weight gain could have been attributed to my aforementioned diet, I found that when I came off the Pill my jeans felt that little bit looser. I also found that my mood swings became less extreme.

My husband – who was keen that I give the medicine one more chance (for his ease of mind, I suspect) – suggested I try a different prescription, but with a history of aggressive female cancers in my bloodline, when I saw that research had discovered the use of the combined Pill is associated with a 50% increased risk of developing breast cancer (in comparison with the average risk when not taking it),*** that was enough to seal the deal. Time to bin those blister packs forever. I could have turned to the implant or intrauterine device (coil), both over 99% effective against pregnancy, but neither of these alternatives held much appeal. Friends who've used the implant complain about spotting, hormonal acne and irregular periods, while a colleague who had complications with her coil described it as 'feeling like a tiny ball of

"IN THE PAST FOUR YEARS, AROUND *half a million* WOMEN IN THE UK HAVE SWITCHED FROM USING CONTRACEPTION *to pulling out*"

barbed wire was up my...', which immediately put me off. Dr Helen Munro, of the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH), says women are often confused by, or wary of, contraception. 'Some might not be aware of all the different methods, while others are afraid of the side-effects. There are many myths and misconceptions, too.'

Dr Munro can understand why many are turning to apps, such as Natural Cycles, that aim to boost the user's understanding of how their fertility changes throughout the cycle (also known as natural family planning). Natural Cycles claims that, with perfect use, only one in 100 women will become pregnant over a year. However, Dr Munro warns that these cycle-tracking apps come with many potential problems. 'They are restrictive when

it comes to women's sexual activity, as they require women to abstain on fertile days. Perfect use is very difficult, as users need high awareness of their bodies and cycles. They might forget to input all of the information required.' Any slip-ups, such as recording the wrong temperature, and the failure rate can rise dramatically. What's more, none of the methods mentioned above – pulling out, the Pill, LARCs, the apps – prevent STIs. Only condoms can help with that.

Early on in our relationship, my husband and I both got checked and were each given a clean bill of sexual health, so STIs haven't been a worry. We've had no serious pregnancy scares, either. But are things too good to be true? Could our drama-free decade be due to infertility?

Dr Munro increased my fears by confirming that, yes, 'pre-cum' is not an urban myth, but an actual thing. 'Pre-ejaculate, released during any kind of stimulation, will often contain enough sperm to result in a pregnancy,' she says. Luckily, a quick and painless fertility check at The Lister Fertility Clinic in London confirms my ovaries are in good nick. Lots of lovely follicles, if we did ever want to start a family. So maybe we are (or, more precisely, my husband is) just really good at pulling out.

That, or we're just very lucky. Accidents can, and still may, happen. But for us, and a growing number of couples, the withdrawal method – no pills, no chemicals, no hormonal disruption – feels like the best option, so we'll continue to throw caution to the wind. That is, until the male Pill is finally invented. Then they can have a taste of *that* medicine. □

TEENAGE KICKS REVISITED

THE OLD-SCHOOL WAYS THAT HAVE MADE A COMEBACK



Lo-fi highlights

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*Pull and pray or extra protection? Contraception, RK Jones et al (2014). **Contraceptive Use By Method, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). ***Recent Oral Contraceptive Use by Formulation and Breast Cancer Risk, Cancer Research, EF Beaber et al (2014). Photography: Getty Images.

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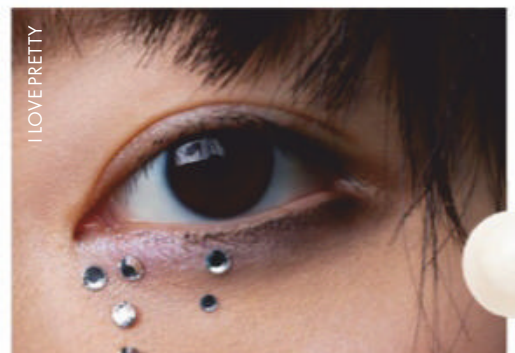




Look book ROCKS OFF

WE'RE BACK TO EMBRACING
THE BLING—HERE'S HOW TO
SHINE BRIGHT LIKE A DIAMOND

WORDS *by* CHARLOTTE BITMEAD



The NAIL FILES

At Simone Rocha, manicurist Ama Quashie placed pearls on the tips of models' nails. To DIY, apply a nude shade (ELLE loves *Nails.Inc Polish in Duvet Day*, £15, right) as a base, then add *Hobbycraft Adhesive Pearls*, £1.50 for 440 (far right) using nail glue. Simple – and a good excuse for not doing the washing up.



The KEY

We left the look to Cher previously, but with the likes of Valentino and *Euphoria* championing gemstone-encrusted eyes, we feel confident to give it a whirl. Dot crystals and sequins around the eyes using eyelash glue and tweezers, or apply at the corners, as seen at Adeam, for a subtle glint. Trust us, it's easier than getting perfect liner.



The SKIN BASICS

Most of us have combination or oily skin, so leaving behind last season's matte finish can be daunting. Luckily, there is a way to compromise. Start with *Sisley Black Rose Eye Fluid*, £108 (above right), to brighten the eyes. This provides hydration where you need it most, so you can go in with *Bobbi Brown Skin Longwear Fluid Powder Foundation*, £28 (above left), to keep your T-zone oil spill at bay. To get the shimmering finish, go for a silver highlighter, instead of the usual peach or gold, to add even more luminosity – try *Illamasqua Beyond Powder in Daze*, £34 (above centre). The cooler tone will make your cheekbones look pleasingly sculpted.

The Inspiration NINA SIMONE

The musician and civil rights activist did it best when she placed diamante crystals along her winged liner and arch of her brow to create the ultimate bejewelled eye look (above). Follow her lead and pair with lashings of mascara, such as *Gucci Beauty L'Obscur Mascara*, £30 (right), to balance out the showstopping glitz.

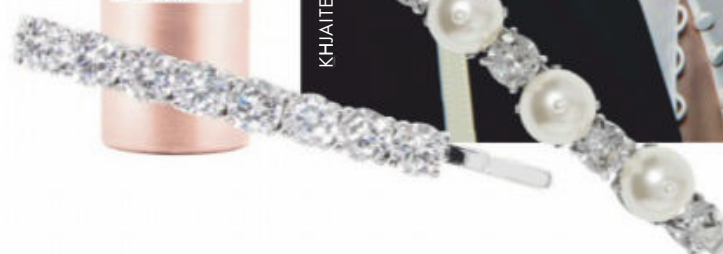
The ENDS

The crown was deconstructed at Khaite, where models' heads dripped with gemstones. Have a go with a scattering of crystal hair slides (ELLE loves those by *Kenneth Jay Lane*, £90, below left, and *Simone Rocha*, £120, below right) then spritz *Ouai Hair and Body Shine Mist*, £25 (below), all over for an expensive-looking glaze.



The SCENT

If you're bold enough to pull off the bejewelled look, you'll need a suitably va-va-voom scent as an accompaniment. *Miu Miu's* latest, *Twist*, £87 for 100ml EDT (right), is a sophisticated blend of cedar wood and amber accord. And its retro-glam glass bottle will look suitably majestic on your dressing table.



10 of the best... NEW FRAGRANCES

FROM FRESH AND FLORAL TO SMOKY AND SPICY, SPRITZ YOURSELF
HAPPY WITH THESE JUST-RELEASED SCENTS

PHOTOGRAPH *by* PAUL ZAK BEAUTY *by* JENNIFER GEORGE

MARC JACOBS
Daisy Dream Daze, £59
for 50ml EDT



DOLCE & GABBANA *Shine*, £88 for 75ml EDP



CHLOË *Nomade Absolu de Parfum*, £79
for 50ml EDP



JIMMY CHOO *Blossom Special Edition*, £49 for 60ml EDP



LANCÔME *La Vie Est Belle Intensement*, £82 for 50ml EDP







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HAVE WE FORGOTTEN HOW TO *be* HUMAN?

TECHNOLOGY HAS PUSHED US TO OUR
PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE LIMITS. THE CURE?
RECONNECTING WITH OUR PRIMAL
ROOTS VIA A REVOLUTIONARY NEW PRACTICE

PHOTOGRAPH *by* FLORIAN SOMMET

In a low, cavernous room with stone floors and a single window, through which daylight is peeping in, several bodies lie inert. Some are covered in woollen blankets, others fortified by pillows. Some just lie there, motionless, feet bare, palms curled skywards – undulating diaphragms the only clue they are in fact alive.

Most of the people in this room are high flyers fallen to earth. There is an exhausted TV reporter who nips around the globe on a weekly basis, and a famous garden designer whose knee twitches with pain. There is a doctor, too, whose days start at 4.30am and go on long into the night, as well as a glossy magazine editor, whose phone and mind buzz with stories, leaving

her on the verge of panic. Ostensibly, their lives have little in common, but they share one fundamental desire: to reclaim their body and mind. They want to breathe again, move again – in short, they want their mind to move at the same rate as their bodies. They want to salvage the last vestiges of what it means to be human.

The teacher who stands at the front of the class understands this only too well. After all, she has spent her entire life searching for this very answer. Thirteen years of research and constant, painstaking experimentation has finally resulted in Nahid de Belgeonne discovering a solution that may just save us all from a life of chronic pain and burnout. Its name? The Human Method. Its promise? To teach us how to become humans all over again.

To understand why something like The Human Method even exists, let alone why it is quietly practised by everyone from Hollywood stars (Gemma Arterton is, among others, a fan) to some of the country's most influential leaders, you first have to understand what has happened to humankind over the past

several decades – but, more precisely, what's happened to us over the past 20 years.

It could be argued that the more culture advances, the more degraded the human experience becomes. Technology has affected our long-term memory, while phones have distorted our posture. And social media, with its relentless tide of inflammatory messaging and vanity-puffing commentary, has pulled the plug on our mood-moderating mind chemicals.

'Human downgrading' is the term used by Tristan Harris, a prominent Silicon Valley thinker, who believes

that technology has, at last, overwhelmed human limits. As a result, we have shorter attention spans, increased levels of narcissism and we live in a perpetual state of stressful moral outrage. (A study by New York University found that every word of moral outrage added to a tweet increased the amount of retweets by 20%.)

Facetune apps and filters, meanwhile, threaten to leave us scarily out of touch with the human aesthetic, while sedentary jobs and constant mobile phone use are causing neck strain, shoulder stiffness and tension headaches. Furthermore, mobile phone ►

use is playing havoc with our elbows – keeping your arm bent for sustained periods of time increases pressure on the ulnar nerve, eventually causing severe pain, numbness, tingling and muscle weakness in the hands and arms (known as cell phone elbow, or cubital tunnel syndrome).” These changes don’t just feel out of sync with our evolutionary template, they are setting us up for a dramatic collapse.

‘The real problem of humanity is the following: we have paleolithic emotions, medieval institutions and god-like technology,’ as eminent Harvard professor and evolutionary biologist Edward Wilson said. The upshot is a world in which being a human no longer works. And, as we attempt to keep up with that world, we are no longer working as human beings.

Nahid de Belgeonne knows this only too well. In the late 1990s she worked as a computer programmer.

She was deskbound; shoulders hunched over a computer for hours on end. It was a template for the modern office environment and de Belgeonne experienced side effects that would afflict increasing numbers of us as the years passed. Her body ached, her eyes were fatigued, she was in a constant cycle of fight or flight as cortisol soared through her body. She believed the antidote to the technological world in which she found herself was exercise. She kickboxed and ran to obliterate the stress. At first it worked. Until it didn’t.

‘High-intensity exercise was my response to working in a very stressful environment,’ she says. ‘I just didn’t know what to do with these feelings of being overwhelmed. In the end, the work I was doing and the exercise I was pushing my body through meant that I burned out.’ Nahid left the world of tech and for the next 20 years practised as a successful yoga teacher. She ran her own fitness studios in London, where she became known for her inventive form of restorative yoga. It was slow yoga: small, undramatic movements, deep breaths by candlelight and bolster cushions to support wonky skeletal frames. It wasn’t yoga as most people would recognise it. This was, after all, the Noughties. People wanted to push their bodies as much as they pushed their minds. It was a time of extremes. Exercise became another method by which to test the limits of human potential. CrossFit, a high-intensity form of exercise that purported to use exercises that mimicked ‘real’ movement (bending, squatting, carrying a 15kg kettlebell on your shoulders) boasted of pushing its disciples to the edge. Its mascot was Pukie the Clown – a nod to the exercise-induced vomiting many experienced. Spin-class instructors talked gleefully about overwhelmed clients crying (a form of ‘release’, they said), while yoga studios were offering new forms of the ancient practice – hot yoga, ashtanga – that promised to push clients’ bodies into advanced poses in record time. Exercise, the thing that was supposed to alleviate the stress of modern life, was in fact aping the very culture people were trying to escape.

‘I realised that everyone had forgotten how to be human,’ says de Belgeonne. ‘We had become human *doings*, not human

beings. Yoga, once about pausing, had become about movement. I had clients who had been doing it for years, but were still stressed.’

Many of her clients were on the edge of burnout, suffering from digestive issues, skin disorders, anxiety and extreme fatigue. De Belgeonne realised that she needed to get them out of their heads and into their bodies. She wanted to create a sense-based movement that would allow clients to reconnect with themselves. ‘Your body tells you everything you need, but if you’re disconnected from it, how can you know what it is that you need?’

The Feldenkrais Method is a mid-20th century technique devised by Israeli physicist and mechanical engineer Moshé Feldenkrais that has been adopted by many who experience chronic pain. It is, in a way, an ‘end of the line’ solution, meaning most arrive at Feldenkrais when nothing else has worked. Its methodology is relatively simple: teach the body how to move in less stressful and more natural ways through repetitive movement. This creates new neural pathways, leading to long-term changes.

De Belgeonne thought Feldenkrais could be the answer for many of her clients. She started to incorporate it into her restorative yoga practice. Clients living with long-term pain and anxiety began to report dramatic changes, not only in their wellbeing but in how they moved and breathed, too. They became more mindful, and this allowed them to move their bodies in the correct way.

‘I realised I was holding my breath every time I wrote and sent an email,’ says Catherine, a client who has worked with de Belgeonne on and off for six years and now practises The Human Method every week. ‘My sessions don’t stop me from holding my breath, but they make me realise I do it. I wasn’t behaving in a human way: I didn’t breathe correctly and never used my distance vision, as I was sat in front of a computer all day. I didn’t sit normally, either. I clenched my teeth when I was doing a task that required my full attention. I was putting my body under all sorts of unnatural stress because I wasn’t connected to it. It was just something that needed

to keep pace with the mental stress I was working under. Now I feel back in sync with my body, the benefits of which have been incredible: deeper sleep, a body that doesn’t ache 24/7 and a freer mind.

The Human Method, which de Belgeonne teaches in west London and at retreats around the country, isn’t whizzy or glamorous. A lot of time is spent curled over cushions and covered in weighted blankets as breathing work is conducted.

She encourages clients to walk barefoot as much as possible, in order to stretch and work the often-forgotten muscles in the feet.

She makes clients explore the movements of their hands, toes, elbows... all the overlooked muscles and ligaments that our ancestors used every day. She helps clients to stretch their skeletal systems and press pause on minds that fizz with information. It doesn’t burn calories or leave you drenched in sweat. But what it will do is transform your mind and body for the long-term, and reconnect you to that most fundamental part of who you are: your ancient self. Your body that was built over tens of thousands of years. thehumanmethod.co.uk ■

“YOUR BODY TELLS
YOU EVERYTHING
YOU NEED –
BUT IF YOU’RE
disconnected from it,
HOW CAN YOU
KNOW
what that is?”

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— JAZMIN SAWYERS

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plumps and firms for bouncier,
more resilient skin.



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What I use... VITAMIN C SERUMS

WHEN YOU GET PAID TO TEST BEAUTY PRODUCTS FOR A LIVING, WHAT DO YOU ACTUALLY PAY TO USE? ELLE'S BEAUTY DIRECTOR *Katy Young* COMES CLEAN

When I first read the marketing spiel about vitamin C serum I was wary. This was back in the early Noughties, when most of us thought microdermabrasion was the thing to give us glossy, radiant skin. (Hands up who thought sloughing your face off with a bowl of crushed apricot kernels was good for us. Yes... We've all been there.) Then along comes this little serum that says it can do all that with just a few drops applied to the skin every day.

Here we go... I'd hit my thirties. Pigmentation spots were starting to scatter themselves along my hairline, while my youthful skin, once so glowy it looked like I had two 40-watt bulbs inside my cheeks, had long departed. I'd tried peels. I'd tried more-than-punchy scrubs. Then I tried vitamin C. A month later and the chocolatey spray of 'freckles' around my hairline started to fade, while my skin tone immediately began getting its light and bounce back. I was converted. Today, I bung it on in the morning before my moisturiser.

Essentially it's an antioxidant, which means it fends off cell-damaging free radicals whenever stress, pollution or the sun shows up. But new research has shown it may be even more than that. A study at Semmelweis University in Budapest suggested it could defend against pre-cancerous cells caused by UV damage. While it's too soon to take that as gospel, it's certainly worth buying sunscreen that contains it. Its acidity triggers the production of skin-plumping

collagen, but it also 'regulates the production' of the pigment in our skin, melanin – which means it is excellent at fading pesky dark spots.

Vitamin C must be treated with respect, otherwise it downs tools and goes on strike. The first thing to remember is that it's incredibly light sensitive, so any brand that sticks it in a clear glass bottle should be avoided. Not only will your serum stop working, it will probably start to smell and go brown. Seek out opaque packaging or dark brown glass jars.

The other thing to consider is your product's percentage. Vitamin C in skincare is usually within the range of 8-20%. Of course, baby steps are best when using active ingredients, so find a product at the lower end of the scale and work up as you build your tolerance. After 30%, there is an efficacy plateau so there's not much point in further upping the ante.

There's another thing. It's an acid (ascorbic acid) and your skin's ability to benefit from it is hugely dependent on the pH of the formula. Sensitive skin take note, as anything below pH 5 or 6 will aggravate your face, whereas normal skin should be quite happy with a low pH of 3.5. I told you it was temperamental – sorry.

I could go on, but you'll probably lose the will to ever give this wonderstuff a go. The most important rule of thumb is to watch your packaging and percentage and, if you crave a glow so good that *JLo wants in*, it's all about remembering your daily vits.

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IMMEDIATELY
BEGAN GETTING
ITS LIGHT AND
bounce back.
I WAS CONVERTED"

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Women's Health

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FRIDAY 3RD

11.25-12.10

**Science &
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Can you fight against
your genes?

12.00-12.45

Sweat Studio

Go for gold with
Jessica Ennis-Hill's
full-body sweat

15.45-16.30

Sweat Studio

The ultimate full-
body workout with
Gemma Atkinson
and Gorka Marquez

16.45-17.30

Yoga Studio

Jessica Olie's
signature flow

SATURDAY 4TH

10.30-11.15

Yoga Studio

Candlelit hip-hop
yoga

11.25-12.10

**Science &
Nutrition Clinic**

How to make
your hormones
work for you

13.15-14.00

Sweat Studio

Full-body dance
cardio with
Simone De La Rue

15.30-16.15

Yoga Studio

The power of
breath with
Richie Bostock

SUNDAY 5TH

10.15-11.00

**Science &
Nutrition Clinic**

Orgasm anxiety to
low body confidence:
overcome every sex
hurdle

10.15-11.00

Yoga Studio

Full moon flow with
Kirsty Gallagher

15.15-16.00

Beauty Stage

Acids: skincare's
hottest ingredient
explained

15.15-16.00

Sweat Studio

Turn up the
HIIT with Jillian
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In the bag HAIR HEROES

SAY GOODBYE TO THE DAILY TOPKNOT AND EMBRACE 24/7 GOOD HAIR WITH PRODUCTS THE PROFESSIONALS TURN TO EVERY TIME

PHOTOGRAPH *by* CAROLINE LEEMING



The classic
AN OLDIE BUT A GOODIE – THE BRISTLES ARE DESIGNED TO STIMULATE THE SCALP AND PROMOTE HAIR GROWTH

The hydrator
DON'T BE SCARED OF HAIR OILS. THIS LIGHT FORMULA LEAVES THINGS SMOOTH AND GLOSSY WITHOUT A HINT OF GREASINESS

The finisher
SUITABLE FOR EVERY HAIR TYPE, THIS CREAM TAMES FLYAWAYS, ADDS TEXTURE AND HOLDS STYLES. A TRUE BEAUTY EDITOR SECRET

1. TORT Cora Clip in Pastel Marble, £22. 2. HAIR BY SAM McKNIGHT Cool Girl Barely There Mini Texture Mist, £10. 3. NEXXUS Emergencée for Damaged Hair Travel Size Shampoo, £4.99. 4. OUAI Rose Hair and Body Oil, £26. 5. ORIBE Mini Shampoo for Beautiful Color, £18.
6. Aveda comb, stylist's own. 7. MASON PEARSON Large Boar Bristle & Nylon Brush, £97. 8. LIVING PROOF Mini Restore Conditioner, £10.
9. BOOTS Blending Grips, £1.50 for 30. 10. TRESEMMÉ Colour Shineplex Serum, £6.10. 11. ANYA HINDMARCH In-Flight Case, £195. 12. VIRTUE Moisture-Defining Whip, £34. 13. LARRY KING A Social Life For Your Hair, £23. 14. Boots Standard Ponybands, £2.50 for 30

“SOMETIMES,
I CAN’T STOP
SCRATCHING”.

NATALIE, UK

2x

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FROM ITCHING*



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Boots
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FLORENCE BY MILLS
Glow Yeah Lip Oil,
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Cheek Me Later Cream
Blush in Glowing G,
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THIS WORKS
Deep Sleep
Pillow Spray,
£19.50

FLORENCE
BY MILLS
Built To Lash
Mascara, £14



The vanity diaries MILLIE BOBBY BROWN

I WAKE UP AT... 6am. When I'm shooting, I normally have to be on set pretty early.

THE FIRST THING THAT PASSES MY LIPS IN THE DAY IS... Water. I leave a glass by my bed at night to drink in the morning. And if not water, it's tea – I'm British, so it's a given!

MY MAKE-UP ROUTINE... Is quick! At home, it's 10 minutes max. I use products from my own brand, Florence by Mills, like Built to Lash Mascara and Cheek Me Later Cream Blush on my lips and cheeks.

MY DIE-HARD BEAUTY HABIT IS... Lip balm – my lips are *always* chapped.

MY WORST BEAUTY HABIT IS... Not washing my make-up brushes often enough.

THE LAST BEAUTY PRODUCT I BOUGHT WAS... A fun manicure with nail art. I try to keep my nails in good condition and cover

FROM A 10-MINUTE MAKE-UP ROUTINE TO ADVICE FROM HER MUM, THE ACTOR SHARES HER BEAUTY STORIES

them in cuticle oil – I bought an Essie oil at Boots the last time I was in the UK.

MY CURRENT STATE OF BEING IS... Mellow – it's my day off! I try to switch off as much as possible, by doing something creative like singing or baking, or watching Disney films with my little sister.

I FEEL MY MOST RELAXED WHEN... I finally get into bed. I spritz some This Works Deep Sleep Pillow Spray and put on my sleep mask.

I FEEL SAD WHEN... I think about all the bullying and toxicity on social media.

THE WEIRDEST THING IN MY FRIDGE IS... My skincare – I have under-eye gel patches chilling at all times. Oh, and guacamole, no matter what.

MY BIGGEST BEAUTY INDULGENCE IS... A hot bath with essential oils. Lavender is my favourite scent – it really calms me.

TELL US A BEAUTY SECRET... Being yourself is the best way to feel beautiful. This really hit home after I shaved my head [for *Stranger Things*] – people looked at me differently. But I realised that my hair doesn't define me. Shaving it off made me more confident to experiment with my look.

THE BEST BEAUTY ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED IS... Moisturised skin is the key. Luckily, my mum taught me that early on.

THE LAST BEAUTY TREATMENT I HAD WAS... Getting hair extensions. I like having the freedom to change things up.

THE TEACHER WHO INSPIRED ME

FROM FEMINISM TO
FRENCH LITERATURE, THE
ELLE TEAM REFLECT ON
A TEACHER'S ABILITY TO
SPARK LIFELONG PASSIONS

Perhaps their lessons stuck with you long after you left the classroom – a poem memorised that you can still recite word for word, or a rhyme that helps you remember the periodic table. Maybe they challenged you to think differently or showed you the power of using your voice. Or maybe they simply inspired a teenage love affair with Joy Division and Jean-Luc Godard films.

Our teachers can have a huge impact on our lives. The best ones can change our futures, helping us to grasp opportunities that we thought were out of reach; to decide which colleges or universities we want to study at or what career paths we follow. But more than that, they can help to shape the type of people we become. Here, ELLE writers and contributors think back to their school days and remember the teachers who inspired them the most.



'Sherry Ashworth wasn't like other teachers. She sat on the desk, cracked jokes and told us about feminism. She was also a published novelist. And she told me I could write. Years later, after she retired from teaching, she set up a publishing company and published my first novel when nobody else wanted it. She changed my life twice. I'll always be grateful to her for believing in me.'

EMMA JANE UNSWORTH,
author and ELLE contributor



'Ms Gordon was my English teacher from year nine to sixth form. She's the reason why I became so obsessed

with words and stories. She was so passionate about poetry and always made us read lines from her favourite poet, John Betjeman, out loud to make sure we understood the lyricism. Now, whenever I read Betjeman poems (I have to read them out loud because of her!), I think about her.'

HANNAH NATHANSON,
features director





'The teacher who inspired me most at school was my head of sixth form and French teacher, Mr Donovan

(or "Dono" as we called him). He was an Oxford-graduate linguist who had so much passion for French culture and history. He was the reason I studied languages at university. He taught us about the likes of French Resistance fighter Jean Moulin, director Jean-Luc Godard and writer Simone de Beauvoir. His own love of teaching inspired me to become a language assistant in France for a year, and I owe a lot of my love of travelling and learning to him.'

KATIE O'MALLEY,
digital news editor

"MY POLITICS TEACHER TAUGHT ME THAT I HAVE A VOICE, AND THE POWER I HOLD WHEN I USE IT"



'Mrs Richards had a brilliant mind and an informal style. She told us once that she liked to go to bed with *Othello*, and there

were occasional updates from her marriage counselling. But these were deliberate ploys to make us feel mature and valued – hard feelings to come by when you're 16. She sought to build us up while she taught us things. Whip-smart and unpredictable, she was thrilling company. I often think of her with a sort of wistful, inky romance.'

SUSIE BOYT, author and ELLE contributor



'When Mrs Fildes joined our art department in secondary school, she brought such an energy to the classroom. She really supported our work, even my more "conceptual" art projects, and always pushed us to be creative. She was the one who encouraged me to study an art foundation course at Central Saint Martins – without her, I might have succumbed to the pressure of going on to work in finance, law or medicine, instead of taking a more creative route. She was the reason I applied for my fashion journalism course, which ultimately led me to ELLE.'

BECKY BURGUM, features assistant



'My politics and economics teacher, Mr Richards, always made sure we used the classroom to have open debates about politics and the world we live in. He taught me that I have a voice and a point of view, and the power I hold when I use it. He also sparked a passion for Joy Division.'

LENA DE CASPARIS, associate editor



'My sixth form RPE (religion, philosophy and ethics) teacher showed me how to think critically. A lot of other

subjects were about learning through text and memorising facts, whereas she encouraged freedom of thought. Being able to challenge multiple perspectives is incredibly relevant to my work now as a journalist. I might not have even realised it at the time, but her passion and dedication made a real impact.'

LIV LITTLE, CEO of gal-dem and ELLE contributor

Teachers have a unique opportunity to inspire the next generation, helping them to feel empowered and engaged. To find out more about the different ways you can train as a teacher, search 'Get Into Teaching'

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Checking in... TO THE DESERT

Home to the modish InDnegev music festival every October, the ancient plains of Israel's Negev desert are set to welcome another stylish contender when Six Senses Shagarut opens this spring. Interiors feature sand-blasted neutrals dotted with native cacti and wild blooms, and there's a camel stable to help you explore the otherworldly landscape. By night, gather around the fire pit to feast on fresh produce supplied by local farmers, before an alfresco film screening under the star-studded sky. Simply divine...

EDITED *by* SUSAN WARD DAVIES



P a r a d i s e I S L A N D

A TROPICAL TEARDROP IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, *Sri Lanka* has everything
for the perfect getaway: CULTURE, ADVENTURE AND AN INCREDIBLE FOOD SCENE

WORDS *by* LENA DE CASPARIS

The air is balmy, the sky is blue. Monkeys sing in palm trees dotted around the bay and I'm sitting waist-high in bath-temperature, azure sea waters with an icy mango lassi in one hand, a novel in the other. Welcome to Christmas Day in Sri Lanka. Last year, there was no tree, no turkey and no fighting over the final purple Quality Street. Instead, we – me, my boyfriend and our 18-month-old daughter – swapped it all for deserted beaches, beetroot curries and weather that averaged 32°C, spending three weeks trailing the southern coast of Sri Lanka (otherwise known as the Pearl of the Indian Ocean). Needless to say, the island has far more to it than its coastline but, keen for some R&R, we chose to leave mountain hiking and visiting tea plantations for another trip and aimed simply to sniff out the best beaches the country has to offer. Be it sweeping stretches of warm sand or coves of rolling waves lapping at surf schools and shacks selling açai bowls, Sri Lanka has something for every kind of beach lover – from the adventurous Kate Bosworth in *Blue Crush* surfer aspirants and Attenborough-aping explorers to the 'lie back and lose yourself in Zadie Smith' types. Not to mention a host of chic hotels, the best crab curry on the planet and a slower, kinder island way of life, all at affordable prices. And, after the shocking terrorist attacks in April 2019, the Foreign Office has declared it safe to go back.

THE BEGINNING *B a l a p i t i y a*

On landing in Colombo, we meet our driver Silva and head off in his Nissan to our first stop – The River House (*doubles from £105 per night B&B, mrandmrsmith.com*). This riverside jungle hideaway, just outside the village of Balapitiya, might just be the greatest place on earth to recover from a long flight. Set on the banks of the Madu Ganga river, it's a natural paradise. With just five rooms, this boutique hotel feels more like a decadent villa. Bedrooms big enough to cartwheel in come with indulgent four-poster beds, plus your own butler who will set up coconut curries and deadly G&Ts on the private terrace. Days are spent lounging by the pool, visiting pretty Balapitiya beach or river kayaking, keeping watch for crocodiles.

THE CITY *G a l l e*

This historic walled fort city, right on the island's southwestern tip, is home to a lighthouse, a Dutch fort and boutiques worth paying excess baggage for. You can splurge on traditional fabrics, local art and herbal skincare at KK The Collection, Exotic Roots, Stick No Bills Poster Gallery and Spa Ceylon. Once you've worked up an appetite, head to Fort Printers ►

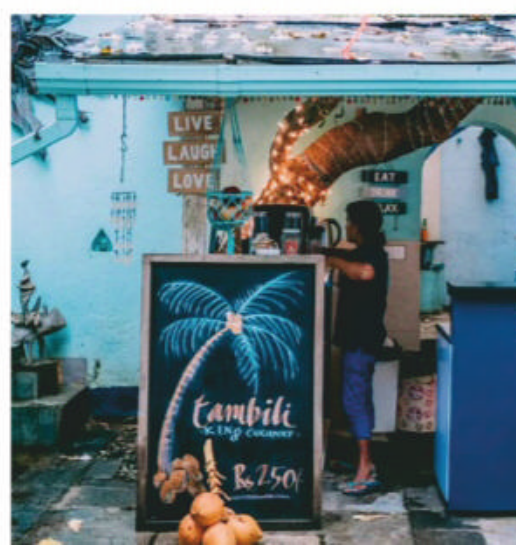
"WITH SWEEPING STRETCHES OF WARM SAND AND COVES OF rolling waves, SRI LANKA OFFERS A SLOWER, KINDER island way of life"



Diverse settings
ABOVE: GALLE'S Lighthouse.
BELOW: THE RIVER HOUSE, BALAPITIYA



Laidback vibe
BELOW RIGHT: LE GRAND HOTEL, GALLE. BELOW LEFT: LOCAL TREASURE POONIE'S KITCHEN





Buena vista
LEFT: THE PALM HOTEL.
RIGHT: THE RUNCIBLE
SPOON RESTAURANT
WITH SPECTACULAR
SEA VIEWS



Elegant design
LEFT: BEDROOM AT
BOUTIQUE HOTEL THE
KIP. RIGHT: THE PALM
HOTEL, INSPIRED BY
ART AND TRAVEL



THE COAST *T a l p e*

We jump on the train at Galle and about an hour later we're in Talpe, where Silva meets us. The nearby Mihiripenna Beach is one of the prettiest I've seen. No big waves here, rather warm pools that are ideal for a day of relaxation. Or three, perhaps. Be sure to spend an afternoon catching rays at WB Villa, where bowls of seafood spaghetti are brought straight to your sun lounger and you can swim off your lunch in the private crystal cove. Head for drinks and dinner at The Owl and the Pussycat

hotel's Runcible Spoon restaurant and bar, where the sea views are almost as charming as the house cocktail, Arrack Sour – made from Sri Lanka's national beverage (pressed from the flower of the coconut) shaken with ice, syrup and lime. It's the perfect aperitif ahead of the juicy jumbo prawns and fish thali on the menu.

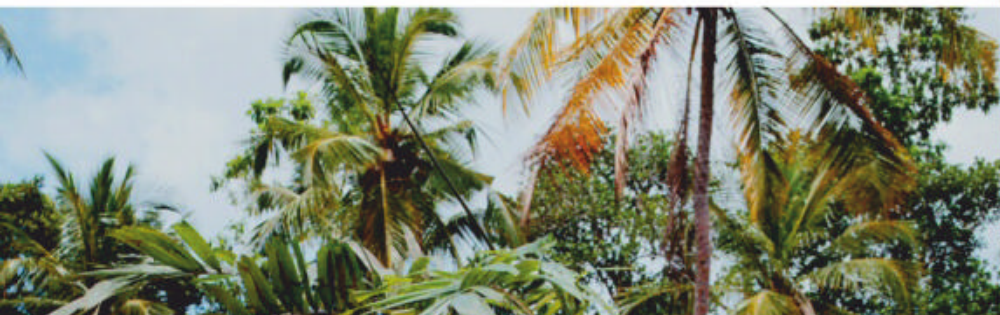
THE HIPSTER HANGOUT

A h a n g a m a

Just a few miles east along the coast is this cool surfing town that's fast becoming Sri Lanka's hipster hangout, with new boutique hotel openings, including Palm Hotel and Abode Ahangama. The sandy bays offer the most consistent – and possibly the best – surf in the whole of Sri Lanka. We check in at The Kip (£62 per night, thekipsrilanka.com), where owners Phoebe and Seddy (from Australia and Italy) make us feel immediately at home. Four airy rooms face a pretty planted courtyard complete with rattan daybeds and

private hotel, where the day's catches are served. Try Poonie's Kitchen for lunch, set in a pretty courtyard with turquoise walls. They serve vegan Thai salads and carrot cake to make you weak at the knees. We spend a few nights at Jetwing Lighthouse (£350 per night, jetwinghotels.com), with epic sea views and rooms designed by celebrated Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa. Then, we head further down the coast to Le Grand Hotel (doubles from £106 per night B&B, legrandgalle.lk) for a few nights of modern luxury. The hotel is a short walk from Galle station (trains from Colombo take two hours and cost £3) with huge rooms full of mod cons and even a hot tub on the veranda overlooking the ocean. After a day of exploring, there's no better place to unwind than in the infinity pool or spa.

"AHANGAMA IS
FAST BECOMING
SRI LANKA'S
hipster hangout,
WITH THE MOST
CONSISTENT
(and best) surf
IN THE COUNTRY"



Slow motion
LEFT: GENTLE WAVES
AT HIRIKETIYA BEACH.
BELOW: THE KIP
HOTEL'S RELAXING
SWING AREA



Soft shade
ABOVE: THE PALM
HOTEL, WHERE NATURE
AND ARCHITECTURE
COLLIDE. INSET: LUXE
HIDEAWAY THE KIP

"DAYS ARE SPENT
TAKING SURFING
LESSONS AT
sunrise, lazing
ON THE VERANDA
AND JUMPING
IN AND OUT OF
THE INFINITY POOL"

THE RESTING PLACE

Hiriketiyā Beach

Our final destination is a small surf bay surrounded by coconut trees, complete with a sandy beach break for beginners like me. Boards can be hired at the water's edge for just a few pounds and bronzed bodies with salt-tangled, sun-streaked hair dot in and out of the water all day. We started with a coffee hit at The Grove Lanka, run by a couple from Byron Bay, Australia,

who serve breakfast tacos and rosti eggs benedict. We meet some friends, who are also visiting the island, and all check in at the secluded Saffron House (*from £400 per night B&B, saffronhousevilla.com*). With three acres of beautiful tropical gardens, this luxe four-bedroom villa comes with a chef (result!) and is just a short stumble from the bay. Rooms are painted brilliant white, have polished concrete floors and are dotted with fresh flowers. Our final days are spent taking surfing lessons at sunrise, lazing on the veranda and jumping in and out of the house's infinity pool. A Christmas cracker? You bet.

GETTING THERE *Sri Lankan Airways offers direct flights (11 hours) to Colombo from £600 in off-peak season. We booked a driver for the trip, Silva (+94776 409661) for £35 per day* □

hammocks. (The couple's impeccable interiors aesthetic will have you filling your house with wicker and linen sheets when you get home.) We enjoyed breakfasts of berries, coconut yogurt and homemade granola, before walking a few minutes to a secluded beach cove for a morning swim. For lunch, we head to Ceylon Sliders down the road in Weligama to try their house smoothie, the Salty Island, made with coconut, peanut and treacle (sounds weird, but tastes wonderful), paired with avocado toast. We also buy surf souvenirs in their chic boutique. Those less lazy than us may like to try a yoga class, which are held at dawn and dusk on the rooftop, with beautiful beach views. Dinner, meanwhile, comes in the form of fish tacos and margaritas at Cantina Lanka, a diddy joint that wouldn't look out of place in trendy east London. Their philosophy: life is too short for mediocre food. Can't argue with that.



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Cabin fever
RIGHT: CABÜ'S
GRASSLAND SETTING.
BELOW RIGHT AND
INSET: THE HEATED
POOL AND HOTTUB

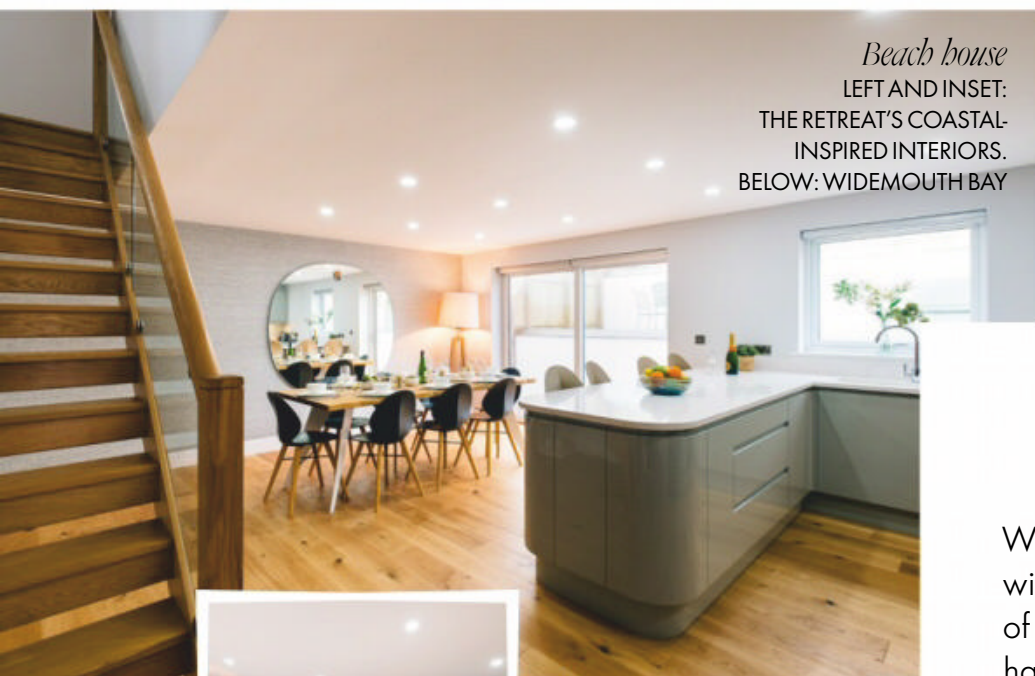
CABÜ BY THE SEA *Kent*

This grassy 10-acre plot fronting the beach at St Mary's Bay was once a rough-and-ready children's summer camp. Now the scruffy huts have been replaced with 13 stylish larch-timbered cabins, sleeping up to six, and an outdoor heated pool and barbecue area. As well as being the south coast's coolest glamping retreat, it doubles as a showroom for the cabins, which you can have made to order – but unfortunately the Scandi chic furniture is not included. Self-catering is no hardship when the main CABÜ house stocks farm-made pies, smoked salmon, Kentish cheese and freshly baked bread. Doze off to the sound of the waves, wake to bunnies frolicking and be sure to visit Dungeness to see late filmmaker Derek Jarman's haunting garden. *Cabins from £290 for two nights (minimum stay)*



Where to go for... RURAL RETREATS

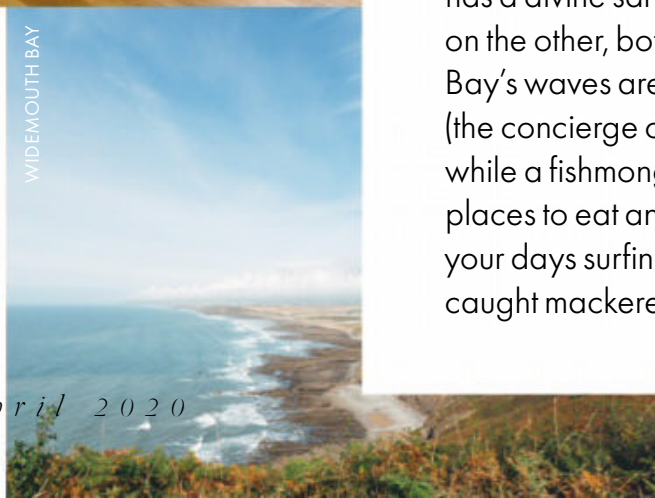
SPRING BREAKS ARE ALL ABOUT MUDDY WALKS, WILD
BRITISH BEACHES AND CURLING UP BY THE FIRE



Beach house
LEFT AND INSET:
THE RETREAT'S COASTAL-
INSPIRED INTERIORS.
BELOW: WIDEMOUTH BAY



WIDEMOUTH BAY



THE RETREAT WIDEMOUTH BAY *Cornwall*

Want to go rural but hankering after sea air, too? You don't have to choose with The Beach House Company's Retreat Widemouth Bay, three miles south of Bude in north Cornwall. This stylish, contemporary, four-bedroom house has a divine sandy beach on one side and fields of cows and hay bales on the other, both set against a backdrop of dramatic cliffs. Widemouth Bay's waves are wild enough to sustain a string of small surf schools (the concierge can book lessons) and there's a sleepy beachside café, while a fishmonger and deli rounds out the local amenities. You have more places to eat and drink in neighbouring Bude, but mostly you'll be spending your days surfing – or trying to – and evenings barbecuing freshly caught mackerel. *Sleeps up to eight, £900 for three nights (minimum stay)* ►



Woodland escape
LEFT, BELOW AND
INSET: THE COSY
GLAMPING PODS AT
WOOTTON PARK

WOOTTON PARK *Warwickshire*

Who doesn't love a treehouse? In the heart of the Warwickshire countryside, 16th-century Wootton Park is set in 360 acres of rolling fields where alpacas, horses and deer roam. In the grounds, there are nine cosy wooden glamping pods, two of which are high in the treetops and fitted with shower rooms, tiny kitchens and decks. Most of them have private hot tubs and underfloor heating, so there's no slumming it here. By day, have a go at wakeboarding (onsite) or horse riding, then head over to nearby Stratford-upon-Avon for a culture fix. Alternatively, try a glass of locally brewed Mad Goose or Bunny Hop in the beautiful Bull's Head pub in tiny Wootton Wawen, just down the road.

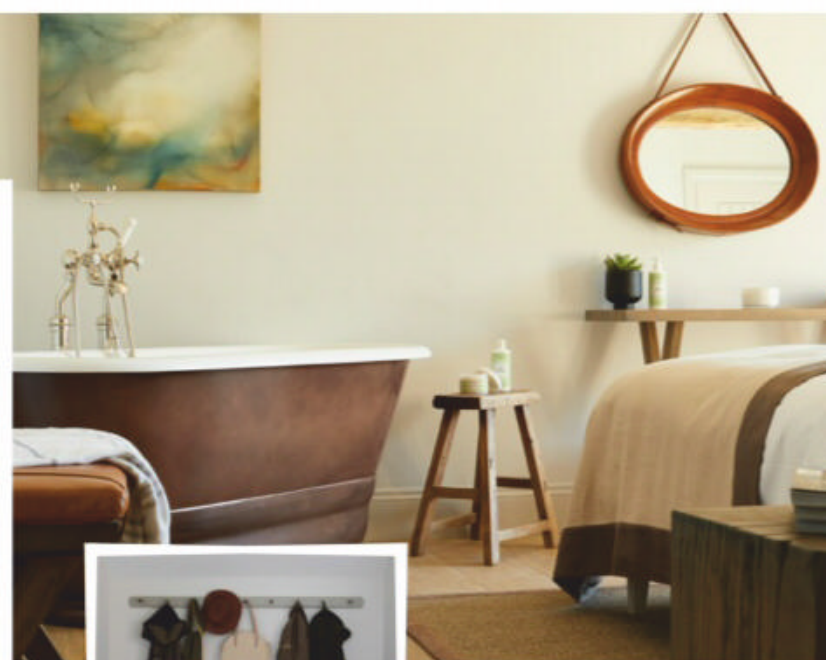
Pods, sleeps two, from £95 a night



Farmhouse luxury
LEFT: ONE OF THE BIBURY
FARM BARNs. BELOW RIGHT
AND INSET: THE BARNs'
ELEGANT INTERIORS

BIBURY FARM BARNs *Cotswolds*

Just outside the pretty Cotswolds hamlet of Bibury is Bibury Farm, whose barns have been converted into five luxurious self-catering retreats. Ranging from the Grain Store (sleeps 10) to the Bull Pen and Cart Shed (each sleeps six), they've been transformed by interior designer Pippa Paton in a soft palette of greens and greys, with log-burning stoves and original beams. Each has a small walled garden for privacy, and everything is ultra high spec, from rich thread count bedding to Sonos sound systems. The concierge service can book everything from pub lunches to horse riding, and Daylesford farm shop is a 30-minute drive – plus, you have medieval villages right on your doorstep. *Barns from £1,050 for two nights (minimum stay)* □



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BIJOUX EDIT

TASHI JEWELLERY

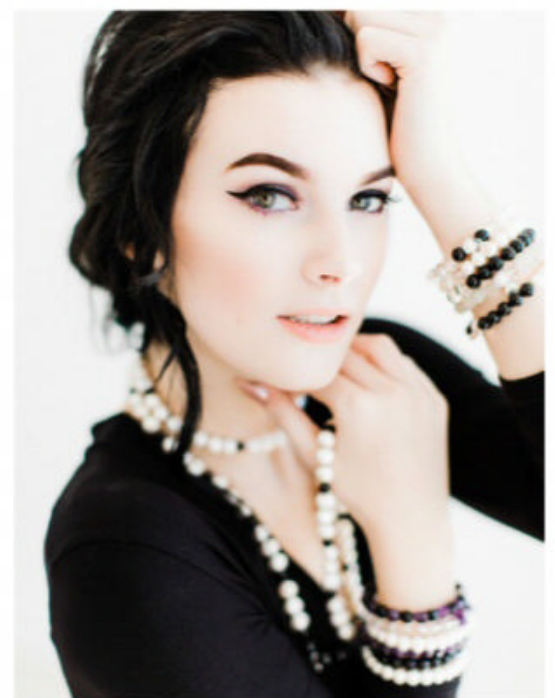
Wearing a piece of Tashi jewellery is about feeling empowered and having fun. Drawing from ancient and traditional cultures, colour, mythology and intuitions. Each piece is handmade with its own unique character, reminding us the beauty of being perfectly imperfect and still feeling fantastic.



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We love the positive vibrations resonating from Lisa Young Lee's luxury healing jewellery! Canadian-made and supercharged with Reiki energy, their opulent designs of natural gemstones and pearls can help you in different ways: feel calm, grounded and optimistic; attract luck, love and so much more. Worn by Hollywood celebrities.



Visit www.lisayounglee.com and follow @lisayounglee on Instagram and Facebook. Elle readers quote: SAVE20%

SCÉONA

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Made of 18kt recycled gold and lab-grown diamonds, Scéona pieces combine uncompromising quality, exquisite designs and a great deal of respect for the planet.

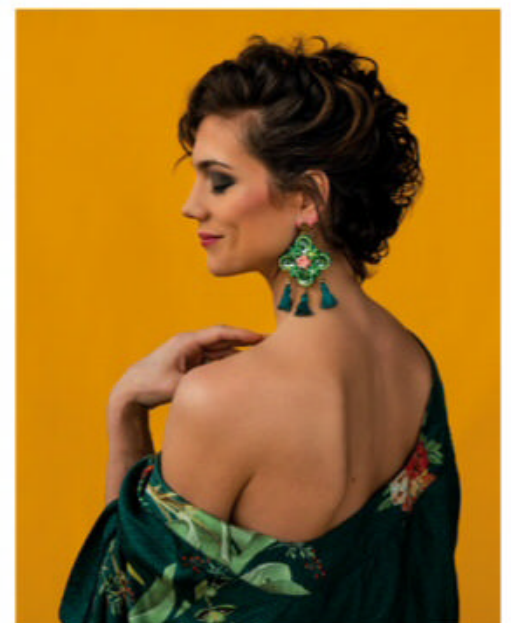


Its minimalist aesthetic is never an obstacle to creativity: Scéona is very much committed to pure lines, elegant proportions and subtle details.

Visit sceona.com

NIKKOTAKKO

The midnight magic of the North, the colours and contrasts of nature and different cultures, the asymmetry and absurdism found in literature and art are all never ending sources of inspiration for designer Katri Juva. Materials are sourced responsibly and each piece is unique and handcrafted locally in Finland. Express what you love and go crazy with colour!



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Photo by Valentina Morales Buschmann

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Misremembered landscapes

Matt Jukes' large-scale, one-of-a-kind monotypes on paper are misremembered landscapes and nearly forgotten memories. Each work explores colour and texture as the layers build over and over again, producing a discussion within the piece. Slowly, a memory of an emotion and a place will emerge, creating a space for dialogue with the viewer to explore their own emotions and places.

His work can be found in rooms of the British institution, Claridge's Hotel and across private collections – from Sri Lanka to Australia.

 @mattjukes

 www.mattjukes.ink

My fashionable life KATHARINE HAMNETT

THE DESIGN VETERAN, 72, ON BOARDING SCHOOL STYLE, MEETING NELSON MANDELA AND WHY SHE WISHES SHE'D CHOSEN A LIFE OUTSIDE OF FASHION



I REMEMBER FIGHTING WITH MY MOTHER ABOUT WHAT I WORE. When I was four I wanted to wear one dress all the time. It was a blue and white checked smock with a twee velvet collar that she'd probably made. I used to fish it out of the wash and put it on wet.

WE MOVED TO FRANCE WHEN I WAS FIVE. It was the 1950s, so of course French *Vogue* was on the table the whole time and we were surrounded by fabulously chic French women. By default, it gave me an extraordinary fashion education.

BOARDING SCHOOL TAUGHT ME TO LOVE UNIFORMS. I was there for 10 years and I still often dress in a uniform: I have six identical jumpers and five pairs of trousers, all black. It sounds boring, but it depends on the shape of the piece. It gives my mind space to be creative – get over it, you look fine, it's what you do that's important.

I HAVE BEEN MAKING MY OWN CLOTHES SINCE I WAS 12. I was the only person doing needlework in my physics and chemistry classes. When I was young, I made sexy things. The kind of things my mother wouldn't allow me to wear: tight, straight skirt numbers.

THERE'S NO ROOM FOR EGO WHEN IT'S YOUR BUSINESS. Your clothes have to sell. When I set up Katharine Hamnett London, as well as designing, I was in charge of marketing and advertising – even debt collecting. We had to make a profit from day one or we were dead. I had to go to the shops that hadn't paid their invoices and hurl furniture. And when a collection didn't sell, I'd think, *Oh my god, I've f*cked up here*, and go back to the drawing board.

IF YOU CAN MAKE A STAND, YOU HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO MAKE ONE. When I wore the T-shirt [saying '58% Don't Want Pershing' in reference to the US Army's controversial Pershing II guided missile being deployed in West Germany] to meet Margaret Thatcher, it was totally appropriate. Things need to be protested.

I'VE ENJOYED GETTING OLDER. You no longer spend two hours changing out of 20 outfits like when you're a teenager. You know what feels right, you put it on and then you can forget about it.

THE MOST STYLISH MAN I'VE MET WAS NELSON MANDELA. His shirts were hysterical, very Versace. My friend made an ad with him for Telecom Italia and invited me to Johannesburg to meet him. Years afterward, at an NGO meeting in West Africa, I put my hand on the table and asked, 'Who wants to shake the hand that shook Mandela's?' The table was covered in arms, it was beautiful.

I'VE GOT A DOG WITH A TASTE FOR SHOES. He's called Arthur and he loves calf leather, Isabel Marant and Jimmy Choo. Even Converse. It's really annoying, I've lost many great pairs of shoes.

CHOOSING FASHION AS A JOB WAS A MAJOR MISTAKE. Every single process comes at an appalling price for the planet. My first dream was to become a film director, I should have done that.

WHEN I DIE, I PLAN TO BE SERVED ON A PLATTER TO TIGERS. I don't want to be buried and the poor tigers at the zoo look hungry. I won't need clothes for that – freedom from fashion at last.



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