ELLE JUNE 2026

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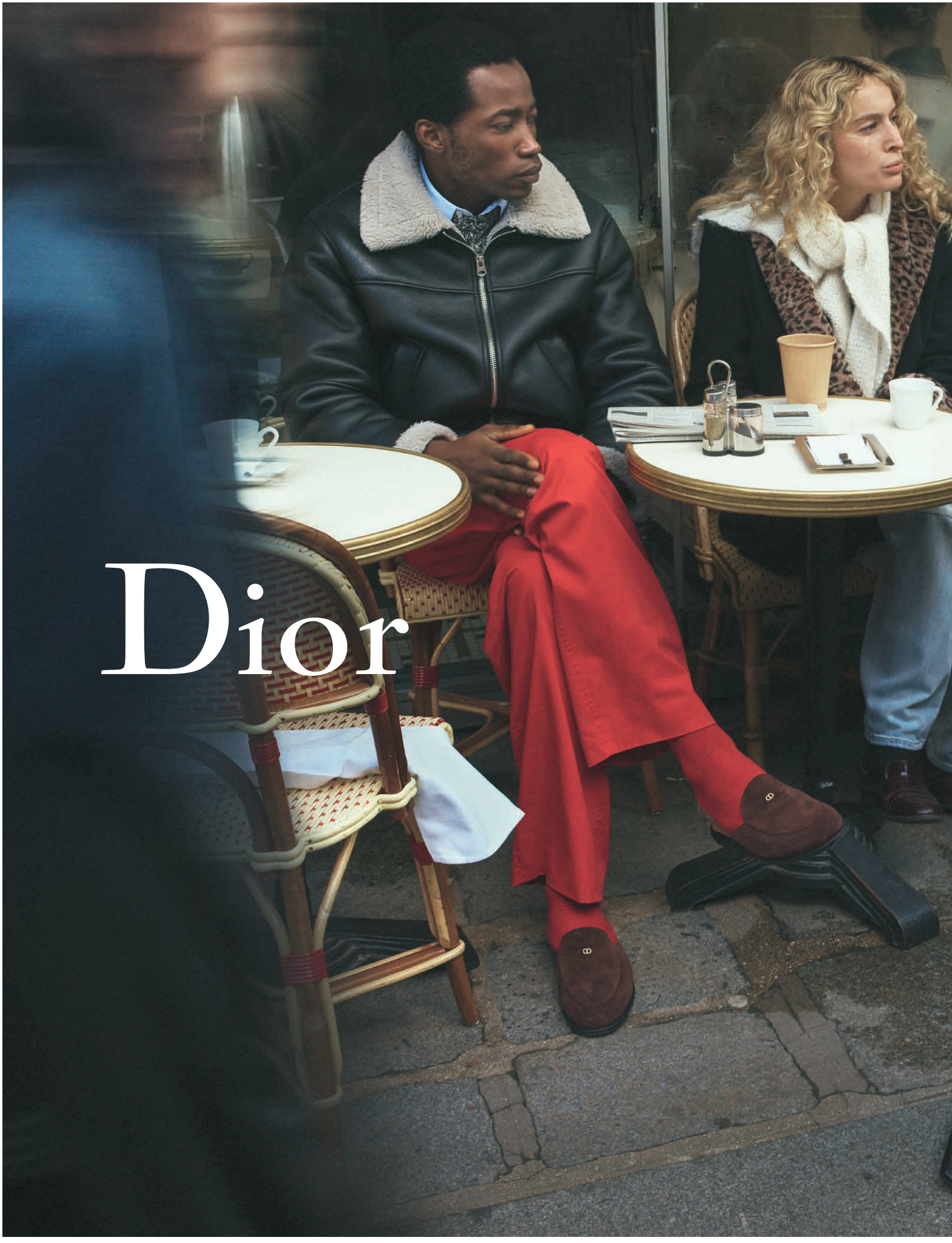
CHIC ESCAPES AND JOYFUL HOLIDAY DRESSING

THE MYTH AND REALITY OF BEING DOJA CAT

'I DON'T CARE, I PAINT THE TOWN RED' – DOJA CAT

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JUNE 2026



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FRONT AND CENTRE
AHEAD OF THE MUCH ANTICIPATED SECOND SEASON OF *RIVALS*, WE MEET ITS RISING STAR BELLA MACLEAN



ON THE COVER

DOJA CAT WEARS SHIRT, £6,400, AND SKIRT, £3,990, BOTH SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO. EARRINGS, PRICE ON REQUEST, SWAROVSKI. PHOTOGRAPH: LOUIE BANKS. STYLING: ANNA TREVELYAN. HAIR: J STAY READY AT CHRIS AARON MANAGEMENT. MAKE-UP: IVAN NÚÑEZ AT FORWARD ARTISTS, USING MAC COSMETICS. NAILS: SACCIA LIVINGSTON. SET DESIGN: FROSTY'S AT NEW SCHOOL REPRESENTS. TAILOR: SUSIE KOURINIAN. PRODUCTION: VIEWFINDERS. STYLIST'S ASSISTANTS: HADYA TUOFIQ, DAMIEN LLOYD AND FRANKIE BENKOVIC

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PHOTOGRAPHS: LOUIE BANKS, NIALL HODSON, MARC DE GROOT, IMAXTREE


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editor's letter





CAT'S MEOW IT'S COVER STAR DOJA CAT'S WORLD, AND WE'RE JUST LIVING IN IT

IF ANYONE EMBODIES THE MODERN POP STAR, IT'S DOJA CAT: an artist who had her first big break on social media and has since used its various platforms to build a persona that's shrouded in a riveting mix of mystery and old-fashioned, unfiltered TMI.

What makes her so fascinating is that none of it feels like music-industry machinery. Instead, it reads as a woman working out, in real time, how to live with fame: where to draw the line, when to push back against criticism and when to get away from the noise altogether. 'I am tough. But I'm not that tough. It is a mask,' she tells Kacion Mayers in his incisive interview on page 86.

Doja is currently on a global tour, with dates in London, Dublin, Manchester, Glasgow and Birmingham this month. Meanwhile, some of us at ELLE are embarking on a different kind of circuit as cruise-show season begins, taking us to Biarritz for Chanel, New York for Louis Vuitton and Los Angeles for Dior, among many more.

The fashion calendar never really stops, with shows running just about all year long. But what I love most about destination-show season is the way designers allow their imaginations to stretch far beyond the runway, dreaming up fantastical worlds that become the immersive backdrop for their clothes. Among my all-time favourites: Nicolas Ghesquière's Louis Vuitton show in Kyoto, staged at the Miho Museum at precisely 5.15pm, so that its suspension bridge caught the sunlight just so. Then there was Karl Lagerfeld's legendary Chanel show in Havana, where guests arrived in a cavalcade of vintage cars that wound across Cuba to the venue.

In a world of AI and bots, travel feels particularly special, and precious, now, because it demands that we get offline and step out into the world to explore a new place, culture or community. So, as the weather begins to warm up, our June issue feels like the perfect moment to celebrate the pleasures of escapism and the life-affirming power of travel in all its forms.

There is our annual Travel Awards on page 146, rounding up the most fashionable openings of the year, and Olive Pometsey's in-depth look at the growing movement of women uprooting their lives in search of better work, higher pay, less polarised politics, fresh dating possibilities – and, often, a whole new way of living.

Our fashion pages channel a different kind of wanderlust, whether you are headed to the beach or the city. There's been a return to joy in fashion, and the collections arriving in stores reflect exactly that: a sense of freedom, optimism and adventure.

But how to wear them? My advice: make it personal. The best moments of SS26 are wonderfully anti-algorithmic. Wear what feels good and looks great but, most importantly, wear what tells the story of you. In pursuit of an answer to the age-old question of what makes exceptional personal style, we invited some of the most fashionable people we know, including Kai Isaiah-Jamal, Candice Brathwaite and Mouchette Bell, to reflect on its ever-evolving meaning. Because a great outfit can be a form of escapism, too.

KENYA HUNT Editor-in-Chief

Travel delights



Taking...

SINCE ANOTHER TRAVELLER GRABBED MY SUITCASE FROM BAGGAGE CLAIM AT HEATHROW RECENTLY, I'LL BE FLYING WITH THIS UNMISTAKABLE NEON-ORANGE CASE BY RIMOWA FROM NOW ON.



Wearing...

I AM VERY INTO THE COLOMBIAN BRAND MAYGEL CORONEL'S LOCALLY MADE SWIMWEAR, WHICH LOOKS AS GREAT ON THE BEACH AS IT DOES WORN WITH JEANS FOR DINNER.



Packing...

HAMNET AUTHOR MAGGIE O'FARRELL'S ANTICIPATED NEW RELEASE *LAND*, SET IN 1865, USES THE STORY OF A FATHER AND SON IN POST-FAMINE IRELAND TO EXPLORE SURVIVAL, LOVE AND REBELLION.

PHOTOGRAPHS: FABIEN MONTIQUE, LOUIE BANKS. SUITCASE, £680, RIMOWA. SWIMSUIT, £295, MAYGEL CORONEL

contributors


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The stylist
ANNA TREVELYAN

Co-founder of London concept store Machine-A and senior fashion editor at *V Magazine* in the US, Trevelyan has worked with some of the world's most talented women, including Rihanna, Lady Gaga and Alicia Keys, and says: 'The level at which they work, create and perform will never cease to amaze me.' This summer, you'll find her in boyish culottes. 'I'm constantly searching for this shape that looks so sick with a heel, but also cool with trainers and long socks.' She styled Doja (left) for this month's cover, and describes the experience as 'iconic, unforgettable, inspiring and delightful'.



The writer
OCEAN VUONG

'I'm not really a "fashion girl",' says Ocean Vuong when asked about his style. But the award-winning author, whose latest book *Emperor of Gladness* is out in paperback this month, has become known for his signature look: a one-sided dangling earring, bowl cut and black military boots. The author, who lives in Massachusetts, also has lots to say about the concept of personal style; for this month's 'The moment' (on page 26), he explains why it is a force, rather than a set destination.



The profiler
ZING TSJENG

Ask author and journalist Zing Tsjeng to interview a fellow writer, and she will jump at the opportunity. One of her favourite interviewees was Zadie Smith: 'We wandered through a cemetery and she gave me advice on whether it was worth becoming a mother (which basically boiled down to: your life will change no matter what you do – children are just one part of it).' For this month's issue, she sat down with Booker Prize winner Douglas Stuart to talk about his new book *John of John* (page 36), and says: 'I fell in love with his characters – they're all so beautifully realised. I'm also a big fan of the bleak, black streak of humour running through all his novels.'



The photographer
NIALL HODSON

When a career in sport didn't work out ('I was going to be a professional footballer but then didn't grow tall enough'), Hodson doubled down on studying graphic design, making zines as part of his work: 'I became obsessed with learning how to shoot sophisticated fashion imagery and was hooked on photography after that.' He has gone on to work with Adwoa Aboah, Cate Blanchett and with clients including Chanel and 16Arlington. His favourite track to play on set is Beyoncé's 'Irreplaceable', which was on repeat when he shot Bella Maclean (right) for this issue.


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PHOTOGRAPHS: NIALL HODSON, OLIVER ABRAHAM, ROB RUSLING, LOUIE BANKS


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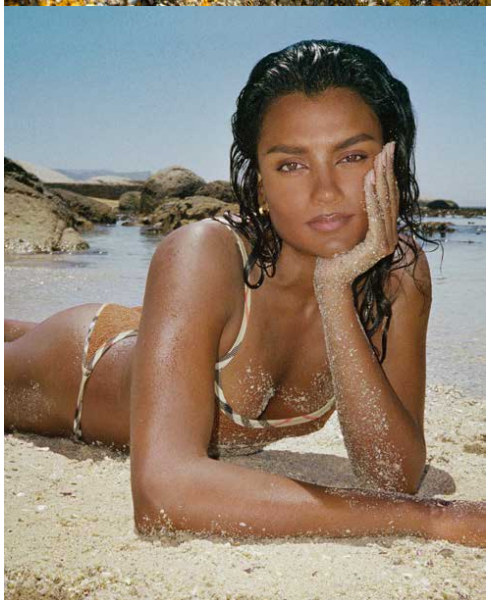

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agenda





Swimsuit and bikini, £325 each (including scrunchie), both **BURBERRY X HUNZA G**



wear: CHECK MATE: BURBERRY X HUNZA G

On your marks, get set, swim. This collaboration is shaping up to be everywhere this summer, combining Burberry's House Check with Hunza G's much-loved, fits-everyone crinkled swimwear. Each piece comes with a matching scrunchie, but we'll allow Simone Ashley (left) and Alva Claire (above), who headline its campaign, to further convince you of its appeal.

stay: ARTHOUSE GLASGOW

Who needs Capri? Arthouse, a new Glasgow hotel opening this month, proves the Scottish city is the ideal getaway. It's set within a 19th-century townhouse, with interiors by A-nrd Studio, the team behind London restaurants Kol and Canal. One of Glasgow's best spots for Italian food, Celentano's, also makes its much anticipated return within. Rooms from £99.





shop: RED SHOES

A far cry from Dorothy's storybook slippers, this season's ruby footwear is more subversive. Wear with summer dresses, sequined minis and everyday denim, as seen at (from left) Dries van Noten, Celine, Loewe and two looks from Stella McCartney. Find your favourites and don't forget to click your heels.

agenda

book: THE MISANTHROPE



A gender-swapped, contemporary take on Molière's 17th-century comedy of manners, *The Misanthrope* is set to be the National Theatre's must-see play of the summer. Sandra Oh stars as a sharp-tongued cynic, unafraid to speak her mind, temporarily filling the *Killing Eve*-shaped hole in our hearts. From 16 June at Lyttelton Theatre.

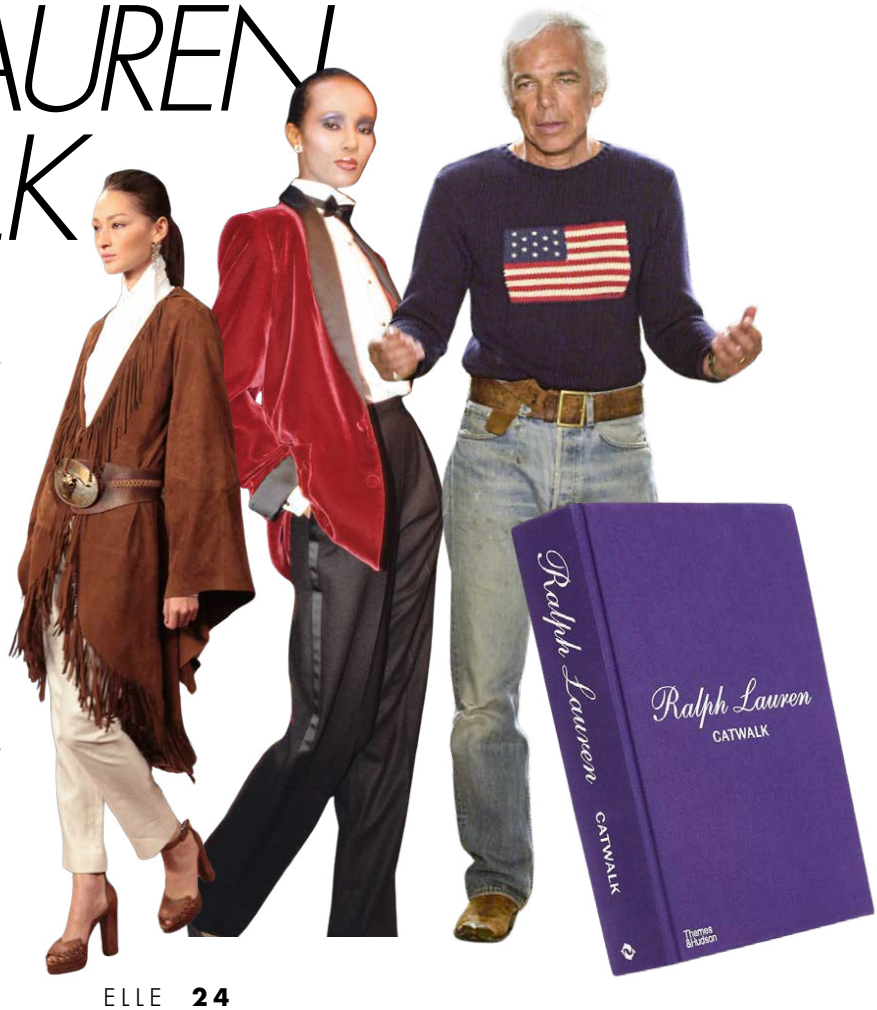


eat: THE SEA, THE SEA,

Beloved Chelsea fishmonger The Sea, The Sea opens its new shop and bistro on Pavilion Road this month – just across the road from its original site. It promises all the ingredients for a joyful summer-in-the-city dining experience, which obviously includes a sun-trap terrace, ice-cold white wine and creamy oysters. By evening, the mood shifts with an intimate 10-seater seafood bar – perfect for date night.

read: RALPH LAUREN CATWALK

Few designers are truly worthy of icon status, but Ralph Lauren certainly makes the cut. For almost six decades, he's drawn on classic styles – from collegiate prep and Western Americana to red-carpet Hollywood glamour – to craft immersive worlds through clothes. His creations are documented for the first time in 'Ralph Lauren Catwalk', an extensive overview of his womenswear collections since his debut runway show in 1972. Enjoy getting lost in the RL archives – we certainly will. On sale now.



WORDS: NAOMI PIKE, DANIELLE PARETE CLARKE, PANASHE NYADUNDU. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE


ISABEL
MARANT

A question of style

What happens when you see style not as a destination, but as a horizon you can never quite reach? Amazing creativity, says writer Ocean Vuong

AS TOLD TO HANNAH NATHANSON
PHOTOGRAPH BY OCEAN VUONG

BEING TOLD YOU HAVE A STYLE CAN BE AN EXCITING YET terrifying moment for a young writer. While it may mean your work is being recognised, it also usually means that you have produced a kind of 'attribute' in your writing that seems to work for your peers or your community. However, this is not your only capacity – there's probably a lot more you can do and learn. But if you've landed on a small set of attributes and then called it a 'style', what happens is that you start protecting that style, thinking, 'How do I replicate this? How do I make this my brand?', and, as a result, you stop growing. Your original desire for innovation and creativity, ▷



the moment



which got you that ability in the first place, stops; you cease moving towards that horizon.

This applies to the realm of fashion, too. When you look at designers with distinct voices – original Helmut Lang, Bella Freud, Tom Ford – you can see that they're chasing a specific vision, and that the resulting show or collection is an accretion of that pursuit. It's unimportant whether they've fully arrived at it or not (most likely not). I think any artist will tell you that the final work comes only close to what they were after.

When you free yourself from seeing style as something that is replicable or finite, then something else opens up: a more nebulous and, I think, infinite understanding of style. For me, desire is always ahead. It's really the questions that produce the style. What am I trying to do in relation to what came before me? What am I trying to solve? What am I trying to complicate? These existential questions can produce a more open willingness to accept all techniques and approaches.

I think of getting dressed as a kind of semiotics, a system of signs with its own rules, where the context changes the impact of the code. For me, the semiotics of working as a writer, for example, is wearing military boots and my pyjamas. I grew up in Connecticut during the Iraq-Afghanistan wars – and also in a very economically depressed environment, where there were very few options for upward mobility. This meant a lot of my friends entered the army for the salary. They were very ambivalent about war, but it was a viable economic choice. And so, when you saw somebody wearing military boots and fatigues in high school, it wasn't because they were in the ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps), it meant they were going to war.



'I love fashion in the same way one loves painting and sculpture'

When Nike started producing SFB military boots, they became imprinted in my mind in relation to escape, work, possibility and agency; I saw these young people suddenly feeling so proud putting on military gear. I now associate those boots – perhaps it's a kind of working-class imposter syndrome – with the idea of really clocking in and clocking out. It also feels like I'm going somewhere, like I'm going to work when I tie up my boots at two in the morning and pace around my studio. I think putting on those boots aligns me to this Pavlovian sense that we have a long way to go still, and a lot of work to do.

Then there's my now 'signature' earring, which started when I was a baby writer and had my first university gig. I was very self-conscious about my wardrobe and not having a real suit, and therefore not being a real writer. So I took some string, put a paperclip in and made a little earring. I liked the off-kilter look with one side dangling, and also the idea of the paperclip becoming part of the detritus of the writer: it looks like a cartoon of a writer coming out of a pile of pages with a paperclip stuck to his ear.

People loved it. It was a school talk, so all these young, much cooler-looking people in the signing line were like: 'Oh my gosh, that's so cool. Where'd you get that?' And I said, 'I made it in the green room.' But I was so taken by that and, a bit later on, when I'd saved enough money, I asked my mother to help me get one made at a Vietnamese jeweller. Then people started sending me dangling earrings. The one I wore on Bella Freud's podcast *Fashion Neurosis* is from Cleopatra's Bling, an Australian jeweller who makes everything out of wax moulds. It's been a thing ever since, but it came out of self-conscious anxiety, perhaps like most things. The thing I love most about it is that there's weight to it and I can feel it swinging. It feels like me, blowing in the wind.



I love fashion in the same way one loves painting and sculpture. A lot of stuff, I wouldn't wear because it becomes too conspicuously 'fashion' to me. I'm resistant to that, but I love seeing fashion on people. I love the art of it – it's like moving sculpture. I don't get much thrill wearing the same clothes that I'm looking at – I prefer to look at them. It's kind of like furniture. To me, it's like, 'Oh, that's a beautiful Eames chair, but now I can't sit in it because I want to look at it.' *Ocean Vuong will be in conversation with Kenya Hunt on 25 May at Soho House. For more information, see page 82. Ocean's novel 'The Emperor of Gladness' (Vintage) is published in paperback on 28 May.* □

PHOTOGRAPHS: OCEAN VUONG, GETTY IMAGES

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Johnstons of Elgin, textile manufacturing, Scotland. Shot by Sam Walton

ELLE

FIRST LOOK

EDITED BY NAOMI PIKE



FIRST LOOK

Wink for PINK

Designers injected shades of rose, cerise and fuchsia with a rebellious spirit for spring/summer 2026. Styled with zip-up leather jackets at Prada, bleached denim at Knwls and Space Age supersize sunglasses at Balenciaga, pink hues have a new-found edge. There's no right or wrong way to style it, but for a uniquely 2026 spin, try going full top to toe, as seen at Fendi.

WORDS: NAOMI PIKE. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE



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INTRODUCING

THEVXLLEY

What happens when a creative florist turns his hand to fashion? As Daniel del Valle proves, something truly magical, writes *Naomi Pike*

DURING LONDON FASHION WEEK THIS FEBRUARY, THERE WAS one name on everybody's lips: Thevxlley (pronounced 'the valley', inspired by 'impossible to pronounce' Latin flower names) became the breakout of the season. Its couture-like sensibility cut through the noise with a fresh creative promise.

Its designer Daniel del Valle launched the project (he doesn't see it as a fashion label) this year, after letting his curiosity lead the way. He describes the move as an act of fate. 'I've always been this way. As a child, I didn't play games or sports, but I was always painting,' he tells me from his home-cum-studio in north London, which he shares with more than 40 species of orchids.

Del Valle grew up in Pilas, a town outside of Seville, and moved to London nine years ago. The plan was to work as a waiter to improve his English before enrolling at fashion school but, instead, he ended up working in floristry. His design skills are entirely self-taught.

Thevxlley remains a passion project, which he balances with his day job as a florist. 'Thevxlley is more than a brand,' he says. 'It's a place where I can be completely free creativity-wise. The collection I showed at London Fashion Week took me three years, because I was only making it in my free time.'

He turns to his community of friends and family to fill his knowledge gaps. His social set spans designers and production specialists, who have all contributed to making Thevxlley what it is today. 'I've had help from everyone since the beginning. Because I haven't [formally] studied fashion, there are some things I don't know, so they've all helped me.'

His fashion-week debut was an elegant affair that showed imagination and immaculate execution, with the show experience as considered as the collection. His floristry expertise was most visible in the living fashion pieces: gerberas bloomed out of a porcelain vase strapped to a torso, and tulips decorated the neckline of a conceptual evening gown. He showed painterly versions of florals too, in addition to mossy landscapes rendered as tank tops.

While certain pieces had a wearability factor, del Valle has had to let would-be shoppers down; he won't put any of the collection into production. 'I approached it like artwork,' he says. 'So that's why it's challenging to make people understand why it's not going into production. There are pieces made with porcelain flowers that my grandmother gave me when I was at school – there is no way I can replicate that.'

It's safe to say the industry appreciated his exacting eye, with del Valle securing a coveted semi-finalist spot on the 2026 LVMH Prize shortlist. 'I didn't expect all [the praise],' he says. 'It felt like a very rewarding experience after those three years of hard work.'

But he's not sure if he'll do a fashion show again, or if that's the end of Thevxlley's fashion chapter as it metamorphoses into another pursuit (del Valle hints at furniture next). It's why he never called himself a fashion designer in the first place. 'If you call yourself a designer, you're just making clothes. But if you position yourself as an artist, then it's accepted that you can do sculpture, painting, photography and garments. It's very open, and I love that freedom.' □





FLORAL DISPLAYS
ABOVE AND LEFT: LOOKS FROM THEVXLLEY'S NEW COLLECTION. ABOVE RIGHT: DANIEL DEL VALLE

PHOTOGRAPHS: KITO MUÑOZ









STREET STYLE

SKIRT *the* RULES

The skirt is the piece to have the most fun with this season. Whether yours is adorned with sequins, prints, florals, oversized design details or is simply voluminous, lean into the playfulness and drama. Just ensure it's long enough to make an impact and short enough to pair with a stylish shoe. It will become your summer wardrobe's greatest source of joy.






WORDS: NAOMI PIKE. PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES

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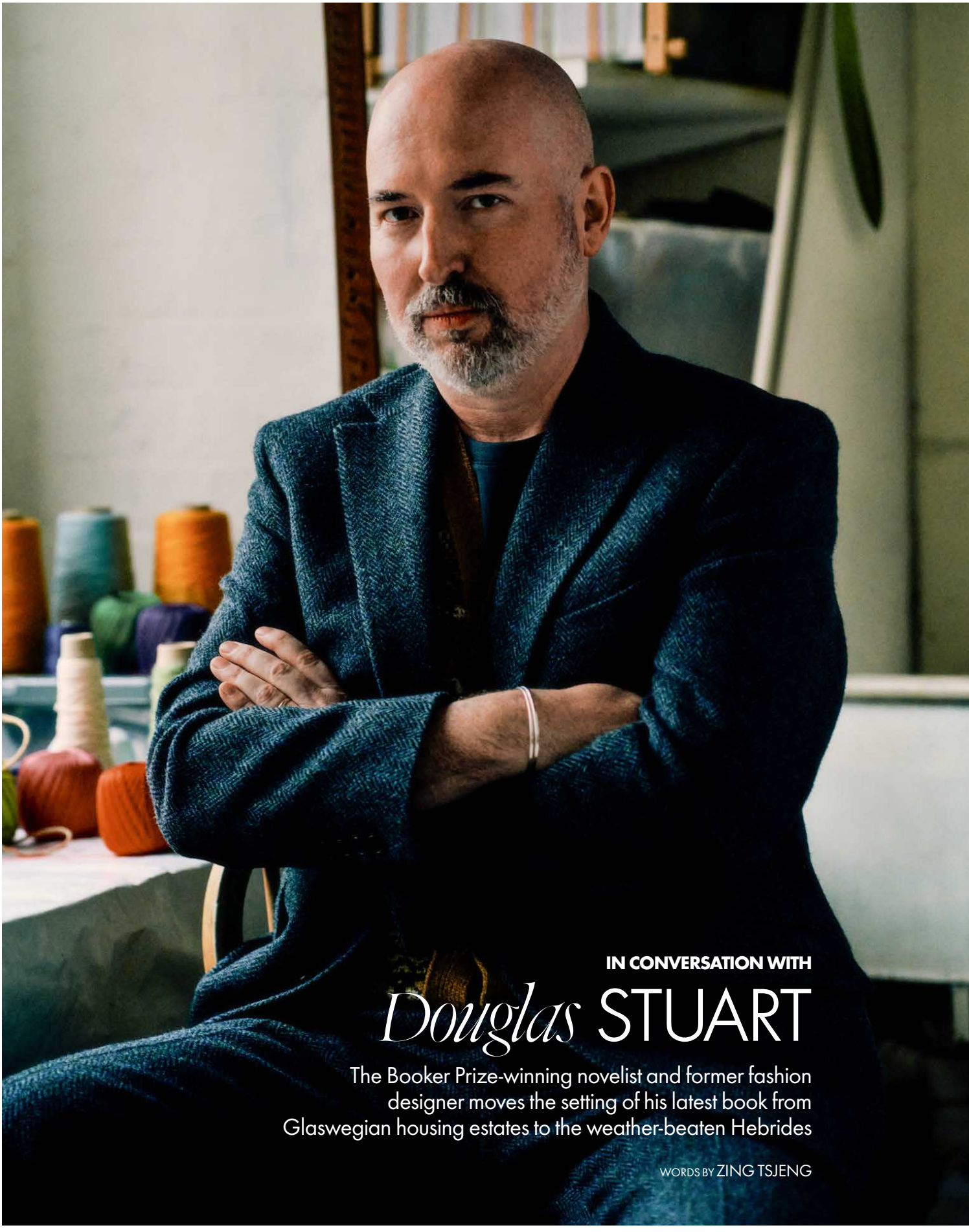
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IN CONVERSATION WITH

Douglas STUART

The Booker Prize-winning novelist and former fashion designer moves the setting of his latest book from Glaswegian housing estates to the weather-beaten Hebrides

WORDS BY ZING TSJENG

SCOTTISH AUTHOR DOUGLAS STUART IS picking out all the subtle colours in his smart, single-breasted Harris-tweed coat. 'There's a bright red in there that I saw the other day, and a purple,' he says, his grey eyes twinkling as he sits in front of me in a café just a few yards away from his publishers' office. To my untrained eye, the coat is slate blue, but colour-matching has been Stuart's secret superpower ever since his days as a fashion designer in New York. It's a rare skill that's also woven through his latest novel *John of John*, a dizzyingly triumphant follow-up to 2022's critically acclaimed *Young Mungo* and his Booker Prize-winning debut *Shuggie Bain*.

Set on the wind-blasted island of Harris in the Hebrides, *John of John* follows Cal Macleod, a long-haired, queer art-school graduate who reluctantly returns home to face the disapproval of his strict Presbyterian father John. A repressed sheep farmer and weaver, John is only ever emotionally open when he is singing in church or sat at his loom – but the two men have more secrets in common than either would believe.

The unforgiving landscape of Harris is a far cry from the rough-and-tumble Glaswegian housing estates that Stuart is known best for. In 2020, he became only the second Scot ever to win the Booker Prize, for *Shuggie Bain*, a heart-rending account of a mother-son relationship based partly on his own childhood as a working-class boy growing up in the 1980s. 'I don't know that I believed that the book was going to be published,' he says.

At the time, Stuart was firmly ensconced in the upper echelons of fashion, working in New York for labels including Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren. But he grew increasingly disillusioned with fashion, and began writing *Shuggie Bain* as a way to reconcile himself with his past, which he had long suppressed in his journey from the council estate he grew up on. 'The community around me was thrown onto the bonfire of progress,' he explains. 'While people in London were making buckets of money from privatisation, the working class that had driven the country for a hundred years was forgotten about and abandoned.'

His own mother drank herself to death when he was 16. 'I left in the morning,' he recalls plainly, 'and when I came home in the afternoon, she was dead.' The wildly charismatic and self-annihilating Agnes, the mother in *Shuggie Bain*, is partly inspired by her. Stuart's manuscript – which at one point ran to more than a thousand pages – was turned down over 40 times. 'I understood, because of my experience in fashion, that I was so outside of the trend [in publishing] and that was driving a lot of the rejection. Who cared about Thatcherism, Glasgow and alcoholism?'

Quite a few people, as it turns out. Once *Shuggie Bain* was sold to publishers, it topped the *Los Angeles Times* bestseller list and has since sold over 1.5 million copies. Former Scottish National Party leader Nicola Sturgeon is a fan, as is Dua Lipa, who chose it as her inaugural Service95 book-club pick. He has nothing but praise for her. 'I love Dua Lipa,' he declares loudly, leaning in close to my dictaphone to emphasise his point. 'In a modern world, you could spend your time doing anything, and yet Dua spends her time encouraging people to read.' He shakes his head in disbelief. 'To be in her presence is just incredibly magnetic.'

'I love Dua – she spends her time encouraging people to read'

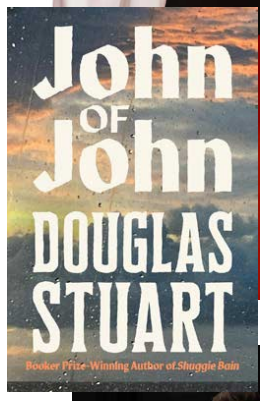
For his third novel, Stuart knew he wanted to switch it up from Glasgow and explore the lives of the rural working class. 'I wanted to write about loneliness,' he explains, 'and what it would be like to be a gay man who grew up somewhere suffering from depopulation.' The Outer Hebrides has lost around 45% of its population over the past hundred years, he adds.

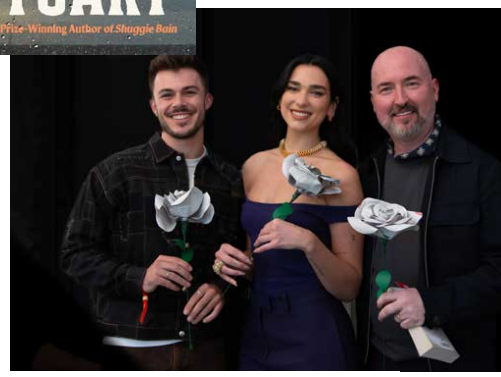
Stuart spent 16 weeks exploring the islands in the run-up to the publication of *Shuggie Bain*. He knew two locals from his fashion days working with Harris weavers, and they introduced him to several more. Stuart accumulated one hundred hours of interview recordings about the intricacies of island life and chipped away at *John of John* for the better part of half a decade.

Reading Stuart's vividly imagined latest novel is like a full-body immersion into Hebridean life – I can already picture the windswept cinematography of a film adaptation. *Young Mungo* and *Shuggie Bain* have been optioned by A24, although Stuart says both projects are currently still seeking funding. But he does have one suggestion for *John of John*: 'Everyone keeps saying to me that Stephen Libby from *The Traitors* would be a great Cal!' Someone get Libby on the phone…

'John of John' by Douglas Stuart is out on 21 May (published by Picador). □







CHARACTER STUDY
FROM TOP: DOUGLAS STUART AT THE 2025 BOOKER PRIZE CEREMONY; STEPHEN LIBBY AT THE BRIT AWARDS EARLIER THIS YEAR; JACK EDWARDS, DUA LIPA AND STUART AT THE HAY FESTIVAL

PHOTOGRAPHS: DESIREE ADAMS, GETTY IMAGES, BILLIE CHARITY/HAY FESTIVAL


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The SET

The downtown Chanel express rolled into a disused New York subway station, bringing 80 models with it. 'I wanted to create the kind of happy chaos we see every morning when we go to work,' said Matthieu Blazy.





The LOOKS

Every model embodied a different character – some headed to the office in sharply tailored, printed suits; another stepped into the evening in a fabulously feathered trouser-skirt hybrid.

THE SHOW

Coco CRUSHING

Métiers d'art is an annual show that highlights the craftsmanship of Chanel's ateliers – a love letter to creativity. Matthieu Blazy presented his first for the house in New York back in December, and you'll have seen these clothes on celebrities already (Harry Styles in a leopard-print jacket; Teyana Taylor in an 'I Love NY' sequined T-shirt). Landing in stores next month, Blazy's playful and flamboyant collection offers a new blueprint for modern dressing, one full of spirit and attitude. *Avril Mair*







The CELEBS

PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE, COURTESY OF CHANEL



THE IT-GIRL FAVOURITE: JUDE

There are few stylish celebs who haven't been spotted in a Jude pump – everyone from Alexa Chung and Dua Lipa to Tracee Ellis Ross and Chloë Sevigny is a fan of the buzzy Paris-based label, which was launched by friends Jurgita Dileviciute and Denitsa Bumbarova in 2024. Known for simple silhouettes with a fashion twist, Jude has fast become a firm go-to for all occasions. Cult buys include the Date mule and the Fame pump – if you know, you know.





Mules, £370, **JUDE**



Sandals, £340, **JUDE**

THE MEMO

Step it UP

Elevate your footwear game with four cult shoe names to know now

WORDS BY TAMISON O'CONNOR



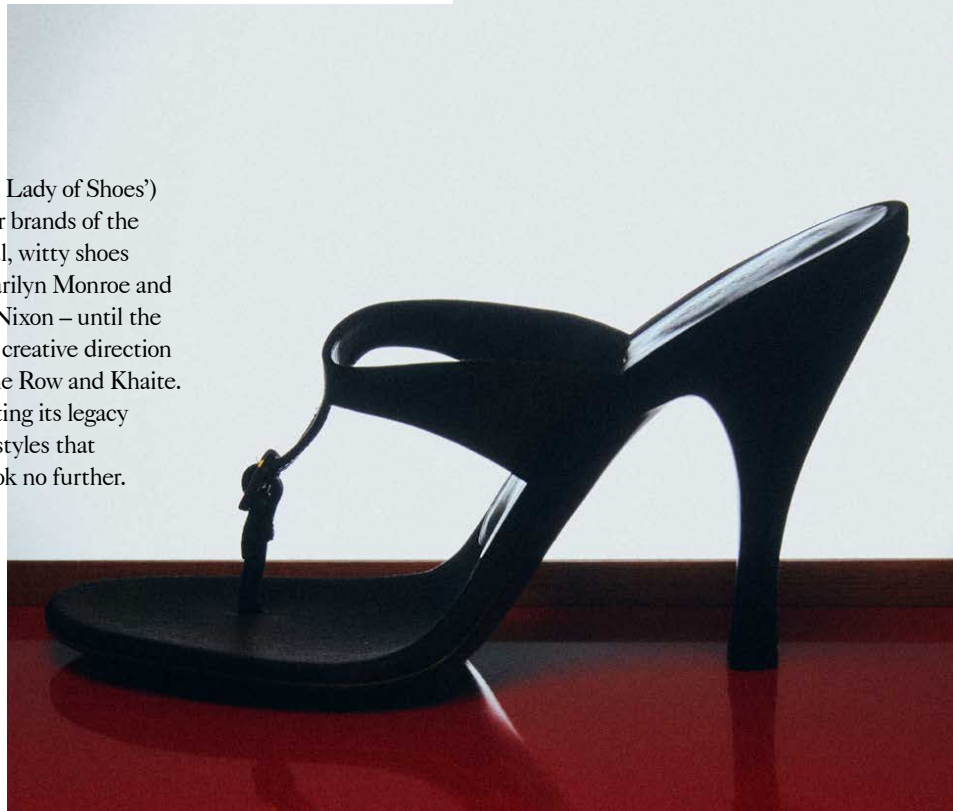
Boots, £1,240, **HERBERT LEVINE** at **MYTHERESA**

THE HERITAGE REBOOT: HERBERT LEVINE

In 1948, Beth Levine (known colloquially as 'The First Lady of Shoes') launched one of the most influential American footwear brands of the 20th century with her husband Herbert, crafting playful, witty shoes loved by Hollywood stars such as Marlene Dietrich, Marilyn Monroe and Cher – as well as First Ladies Jackie Kennedy and Pat Nixon – until the brand closed in 1975. Now, it has relaunched under the creative direction of Trevor Houston, who has worked at Marc Jacobs, The Row and Khaite. He has perfectly captured the spirit of the brand, updating its legacy for the modern fashion lover. For conversation-starting styles that strike the perfect balance of fantasy and wearability, look no further.



Loafers, £1,210, **HERBERT LEVINE** at **MYTHERESA**







Heels, price on request, **CHRISTEN**





THE INDUSTRY INSIDER'S GO-TO: CHRISTEN

When Nina Christen launched her brand in 2024, she was the most famous shoe designer you'd never heard of. The quiet mastermind behind some of the most talked-about luxury footwear from the past decade, the Chilean-Swiss designer's CV reads like a hit list of fashion's hottest names, from Phoebe Philo-era Celine and Bottega Veneta to Loewe, The Row and, most recently, Jonathan Anderson's Dior. Her own brand infuses sleek, wearable silhouettes with a distinctly cool sensibility, making her shoes timeless investment pieces.

Sandals, £455, **NOMASEI**





Lace-ups, £510, **NOMASEI**



THE ONE TO TAKE YOU FROM DAY TO NIGHT: NOMASEI

Marine Braquet and Paule Tenaillon met while they were working at Chloé. With 30 years' experience at luxury's biggest houses between them – Braquet at Louis Vuitton and Dior; and Tenaillon at Chanel, Jil Sander, Jimmy Choo and Givenchy (she also spent five years designing tango shoes in Buenos Aires) – they know a thing or two about making heels you can actually dance in. Their brand Nomasei champions ethical production, and its original forms and flawless craftsmanship should see you through to the early hours.



PHOTOGRAPHS: BILAL EL KADHI, GETTY IMAGES



IF YOU TRY ONE THING...

Talk TO *the* HAND

Gloves make a confident return for summer. No longer just a symbol of mid-century glamour, as the runway and the red carpet demonstrate, they're the easy style update that will enhance any outfit's cool credentials. Sure, they look great with a ballgown, but for 2026, they have just as much appeal when paired with a floral dress (see Simone Rocha's sequined take) – perfect for turning up the heat at a laid-back barbecue.

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES, IMAXTREE







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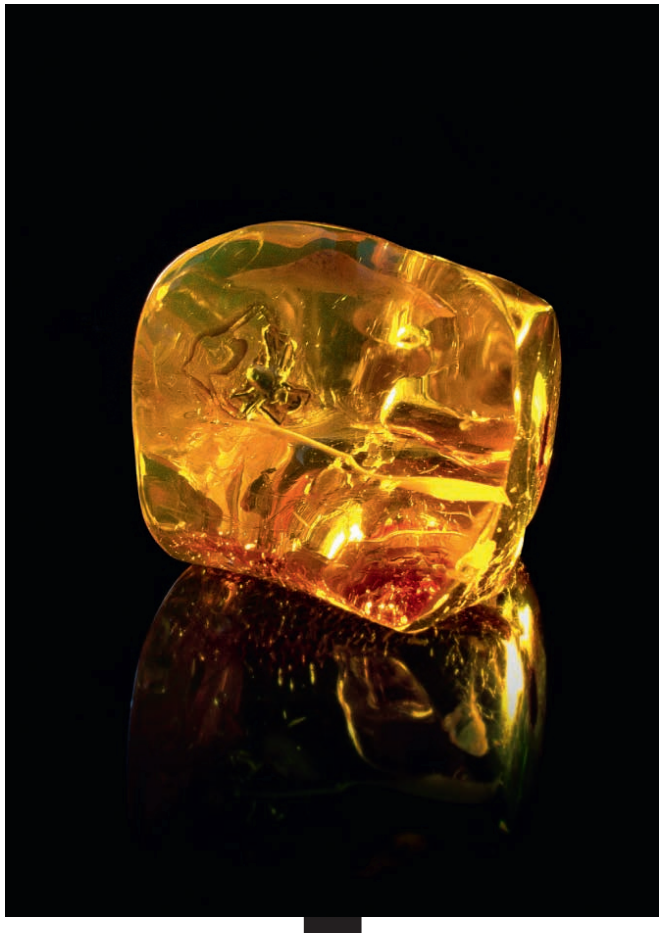


The

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Night-time closes in. Heady scents fill the air. Warm spices and woody frankincense, softened with sweet vanilla. Ambrée fragrances revel in luxury and inspire indulgence. A silk wrap around cool shoulders, that soon slips to reveal yet more l a y e r s.



Explore the families at fragrancefoundation.org.uk

Fragrance lasts

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ELLE

STYLE + SHOP

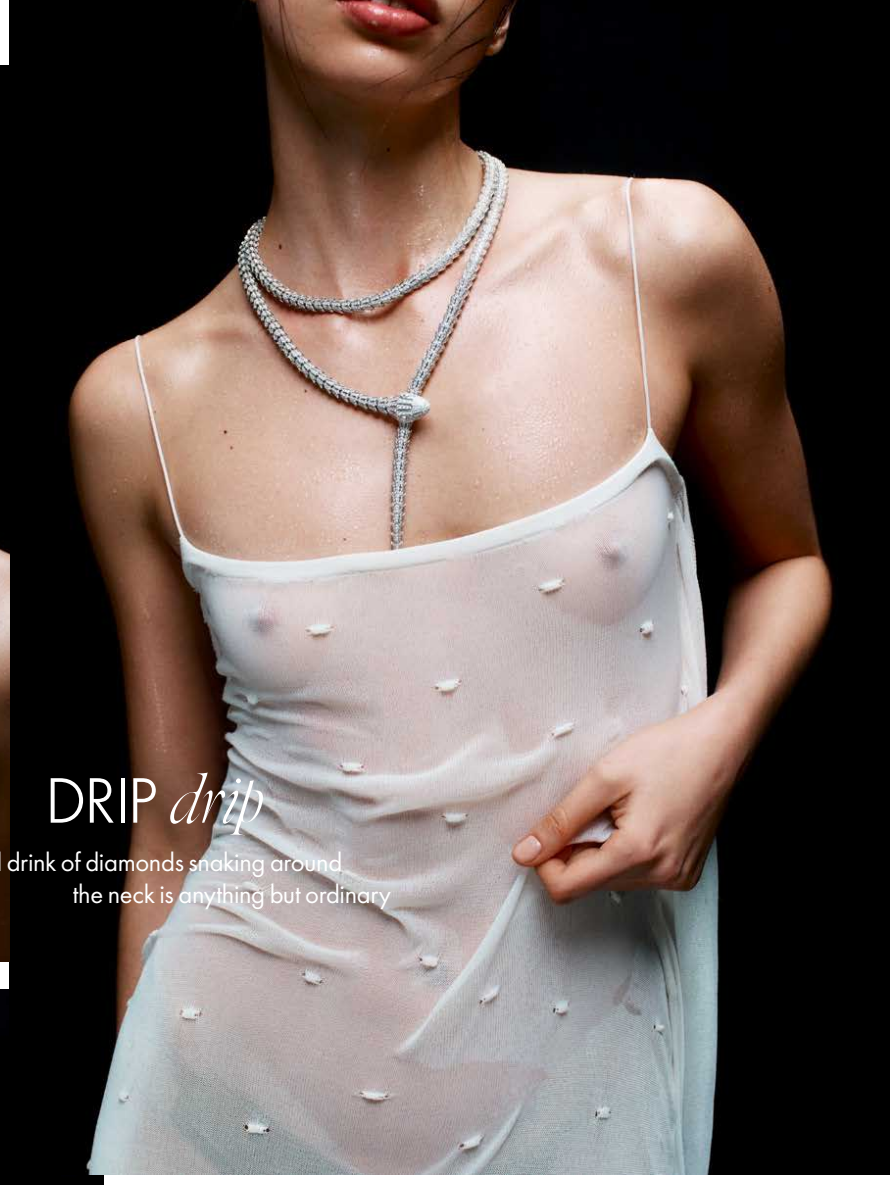
CHARM *offensive*

THIS SUMMER IS ALL ABOUT DRESSING WITH EASE AND PERSONALITY. MIX IN ELEVATED JEWELLERY WITH PLAYFUL DENIM PIECES, AND REMEMBER – THE JOY IS IN THE DETAIL

Pink gold and diamond earrings, £2,210, **KISMET BY MILKA**.
Pink gold and diamond ring, £11,100, **DIOR JOAILLERIE**. Bodysuit, £925, **STELLA McCARTNEY**

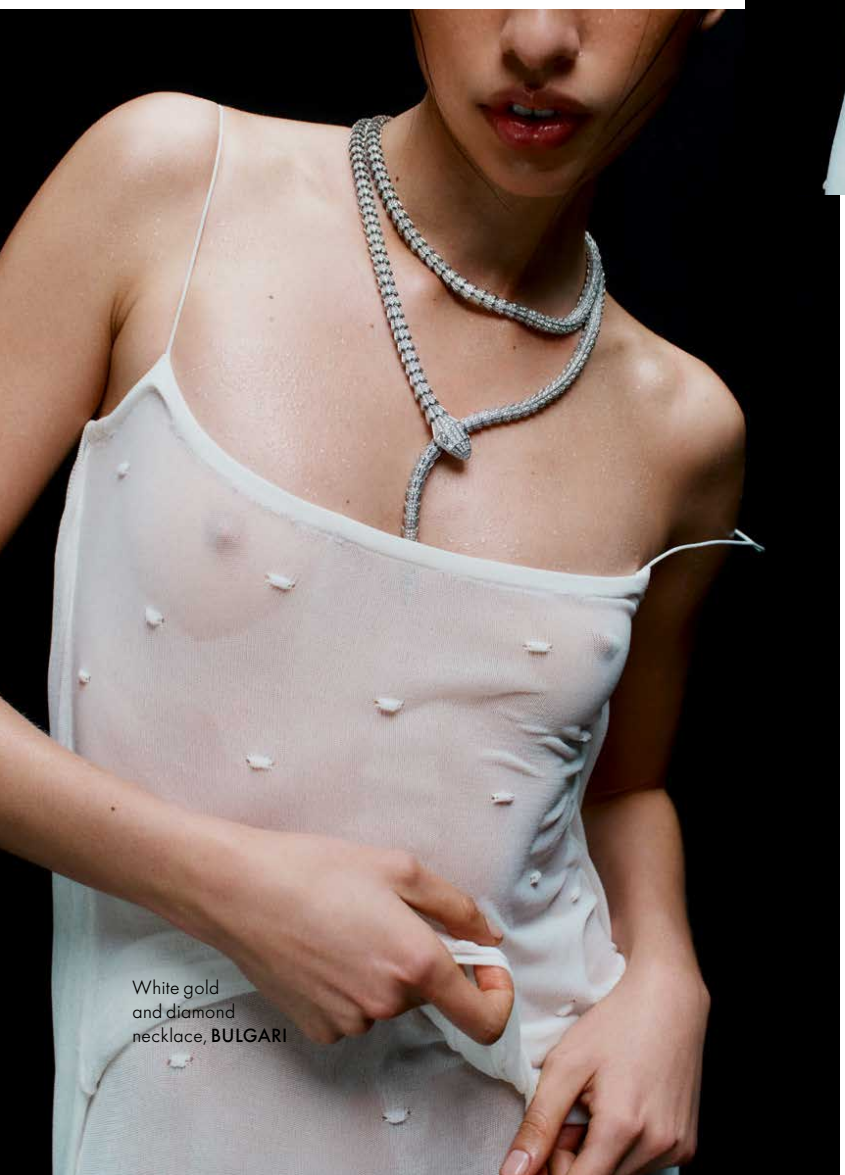
PHOTOGRAPH: JACK GRANGE. STYLING: HOLLY GORST



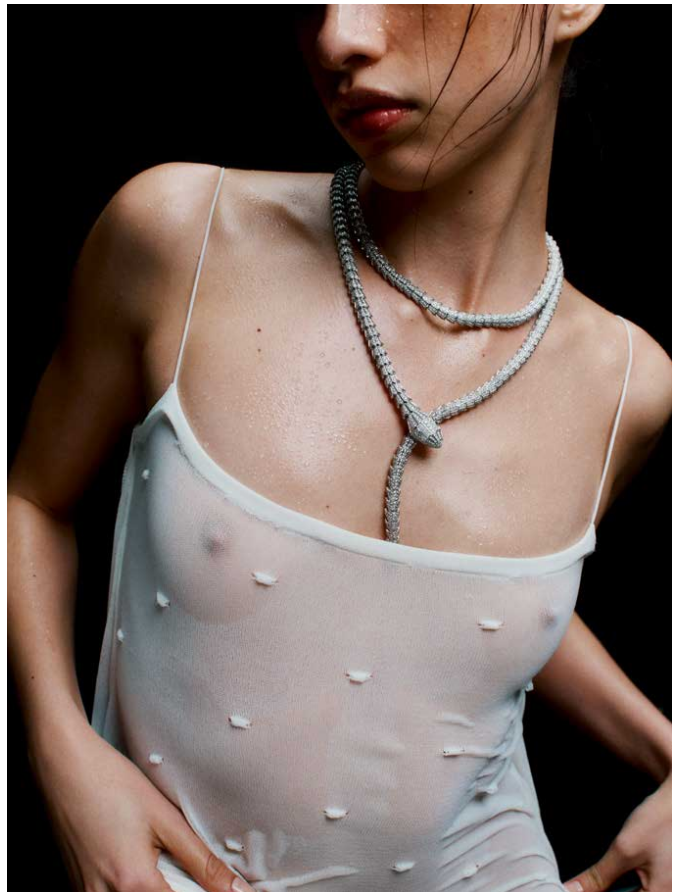


DRIP *drip*

A tall drink of diamonds snaking around the neck is anything but ordinary



White gold and diamond necklace, **BULGARI**



All pieces throughout, price on request, except where stated. White gold, peridot, black lacquer and diamond earring and matching bracelet, both **CARTIER**



THE EDIT

Magnificent DETAILS

DOUBLE DOWN ON YOUR DIAMOND INTAKE AND MIX YOUR METALS – THIS SEASON'S JEWELLERY WILL MAKE YOU GLOW

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACK GRANGE STYLED BY HOLLY GORST

THIS PAGE: TOP AND SKIRT, BOTH CELINE. OPPOSITE: DRESS, £830, JACQUEMUS



Rose gold and diamond ear cuff, **CHAUMET**. Gold and diamond ring (left), £10,500, and matching ring, £9,700, both **CHANEL FINE JEWELLERY**

WITH *feeling*

Hard metals and soft fabrics quietly complement one another

TOP: BOTTEGA VENETA

GO *for gold*

When it comes to bangles, the bigger the better. Repeat wear with joyful abandon



Gold cuff,
TIFFANY & CO



White gold and diamond bracelet, **GRAFF**. White gold and diamond ring, **DE BEERS**

PROUD *pairings*

Match rings and bracelets for harmonious symmetry

White gold and diamond earrings, **GRAFF**. White gold and diamond necklace, **VAN CLEEF & ARPELS**

RAZZLE *dazzle*

Layers of shining jewels are a serotonin-boosting luxury



THIS PAGE: DRESS, £730, TOTEME. OPPOSITE: DRESS, £2,430, CHLOÉ



GET *drenched*

With new elaborate styles, pearls now offer a captivating contemporary pairing to diamonds

White gold and diamond earring, **VAN CLEEF & ARPELS**. White gold, pearl and diamond ring, **TASAKI**

AFTER *glow*

Diamonds may be celebrated for their eternal appeal, but now style them in a contemporary way with these modern drop earrings



White gold and diamond earring, **CHOPARD**. White gold and diamond rings, from £3,900, both **DIOR JOAILLERIE**

HAIR: Natalie Shafii, using Oribe. **MAKE-UP:** Faye Bluff at Agency of Substance, using Byredo. **NAILS:** Ami Streets, using Dior Manicure Collection, Le Baume and Dior Vernis. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT:** Nina Gahrén Williamson. **MODEL:** Eliza Rutson Pang at Premier Model Management

THIS PAGE: DRESS, £6,950, LOEWE. OPPOSITE: TOP, TOTEME



Top, £59, **HOLLAND COOPER**. Jeans, £270, **HERNO**. Shirt, £210, **LEVI'S**. White gold and diamond earrings, price on request, **TIFFANY & CO**

LAID-*back*

Keep the vibe low-key with blue jeans and stripes



THE EDIT

MATCH *made in* DENIM

A CANADIAN TUXEDO IS ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA. TRY A DARK-WASH TWO-PIECE STYLED WITH LAYERED VESTS FOR A LOOK THAT IS EQUAL MEASURES CONFIDENT AND COOL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEIR LAIRD STYLED BY GRACE CLARKE

Jacket, £495, and shorts, £455, both **ISABEL MARANT**. Top, £16, **NEXT**



Jacket, £345, **POLO RALPH LAUREN**. Top, £30, **GUESS**. Jeans, £49.99, **MANGO**. Steel watch, £3,790, **HERMÈS**

TWISTED *fantasy*

Contemporary brands are looking at denim through a fresh lens. Criss-cross waistbands, embellishments and frayed hems are the subtle details keeping old reliables on the front foot

Styling tip

Less is more. Keep your off-duty look simple with a fine knit or T-shirt, then throw on your favourite jewellery



Jacket, £2,155, and jeans, £1,080, both **LORO PIANA**. White gold and diamond necklace, £4,200, **GUCCI**

1 Shirt, £215, **MAX MARA**
2 Necklace, £55, **KARL LAGERFELD** **3** Bag, £135, **GUESS** **4** Flip-flops, £670, **THE ROW** **5** Shirt, £620, **TOTEME** **6** Jeans, £320, **AGOLDE** at **NET-A-PORTER** **7** Shorts, £520, **MIU MIU** **8** Cardigan, £1,790, **PRADA** **9** Glasses, £310, **CHLOÉ** at **MYTHERESA** **10** Trainers, £170, **ALOHAS** **11** Jacket, £255, **MARC CAIN** **12** Top, £22, **ARKET** **13** Bracelet, £80, **GIOVANNI RASPINI** **14** Jeans, £725, **LOEWE X PAULA'S IBIZA**

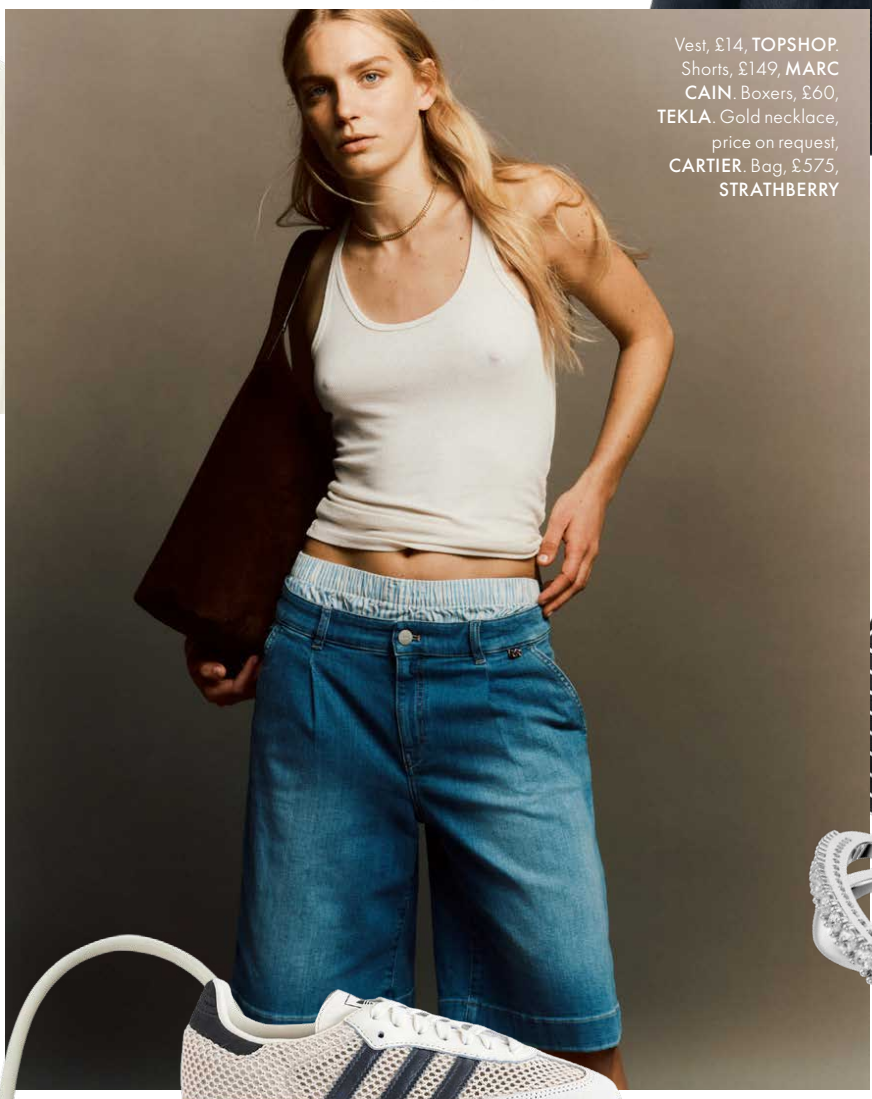






Styling tip

Tank tops and jorts are sartorial soul mates. You can't go wrong with this classic pairing



Vest, £14, **TOPSHOP**. Shorts, £149, **MARC CAIN**. Boxers, £60, **TEKLA**. Gold necklace, price on request, **CARTIER**. Bag, £575, **STRATHBERRY**









1 Boxers, £70, **WITH NOTHING UNDERNEATH**
2 Sandals, £26, **NEXT**
3 Earrings, £55, **PANDORA** **4** Top, £335, **HERNO** **5** Jacket, £59.99, **MANGO**
6 Jeans, £120, **LEVI'S**
7 Top, £12.99, **H&M**
8 Ring, £99, **SWAROVSKI**
9 Shorts, £270, **MOTHER** at **SELFRIDGES**
10 Trainers, £94.99, **ADIDAS** **11** Bag, £845, **POLO RALPH LAUREN**
12 Vest, £19, **COS** **13** Top, £28, **MARKS & SPENCER**



DOUBLE *trouble*

Denim is tougher together. Pair like with like for twice the fun

Jacket, £70, **LEE JEANS**. Top, £175, **ISABEL MARANT**. Jeans, £1,150, **CELINE**. **HAIR**: Ami Fujita, using Oribe. **MAKE-UP**: Martha Inoue, using Chanel Les Beiges Collection and No 1 de Chanel Body Serum-In-Mist. **NAILS**: Sasha Goddard at Caren, using Dior Manicure Collection, Le Baume and Dior Vernis. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT**: Lauryn Doherty. **MODEL**: Molly Solomon at Elite Model Management

DESCRIPTION A body lotion with 42% oil. INDICATION Significantly increases skin moisturisation. PRESENTATION White fluid. FORMULATION Lotion with 42% occlusive ingredients and 14% humectants. INGREDIENTS Aqua, Dimethicone, Isopropyl Palmitate, Ethylhexyl Cocoate, Isododecane, Isopropyl Myristate, Urea, Polyglyceryl-2 Dipolyhydroxystearate, Glycerin, Pentylene Glycol, Dicaprylyl Carbonate, Polyglyceryl-3 Diisostearate, Sodium Lactate, Dipentaerythrityl Hexacaprylate / Hexacaprate, Gluconolactone, Rosa Canina Fruit Oil, Simmondsia Chinensis Seed Oil, Calendula Officinalis Extract, Butyrospermum Parkii Oil, Helianthus Annuus Seed Oil, Glycine Soja Oil, Isostearyl Isostearate, Bisabolol, Octyldodecyl PCA, Retinyl Palmitate, Tocopheryl Acetate, Linoleic Acid, Linolenic Acid, Tocopherol, Sodium PCA, Sodium Hyaluronate, Lactic Acid, Stearalkonium Hectorite, Propylene Carbonate. DRY SKIN CLINICAL TRIAL Trial centre: Complife Italia S.r.l, Italy. Objective: A clinical evaluation to test the efficacy of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion in improving skin moisturisation. Sample: Subjects: 30 healthy female participants with Fitzpatrick skin types II-V and clinically showing dry / very dry skin at the level of the outer lower legs. Test site: test product applied to an outer, lower leg of all subjects. Age of participants: 25–65. Methodology: Split body, evaluator-blinded, randomised and controlled clinical-instrumental study. Participants washed their legs with soap to induce dryness over a 7-day period. Baseline clinical and instrumental evaluations were taken. Bio-Oil® Body Lotion was applied twice daily for 28 days to the assigned lower lateral leg, the opposite leg remained untreated. Clinical assessments and instrumental evaluations were conducted on days 1, 2, 3, 7, 14, 21 and 28. The control untreated site was also evaluated at all time points. Subjects were clinically graded for dryness (on a scale from 0–5) by a trained visual evaluator. Quantitative measurement of skin hydration was by Corneometer. Quantitative measurement of transepidermal water loss (TEWL) as an indicator of barrier function, was by Tewameter. Additional self assessment questionnaires were completed on days 8 and 14. Result: Compared to the untreated area, treatment with Bio-Oil® Body Lotion resulted in a statistically significant improvement in clinical grading of dryness, Tewameter and Corneometer measurements, from as early as day 1, and at all time points. For clinical grading of dryness, statistically significant improvements were evident in 96.7% of participants from day 14 onwards, a most double the improvement noted at day 1. After 28 days of use, 100% of participants showed a significant increase in skin moisturisation, with the assessment almost 4 times that at day 1. Similarly, after 28 days of use 100% of participants showed a significant decrease in TEWL, with the assessment the improvement more than double that at day 1. These findings are supported by the results of the self assessment questionnaires. DRY SKIN USER TRIAL Trial centre: Ayton Global Research, United Kingdom. Objective: To assess the performance of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion as a daily moisturiser. Sample: Subjects: 119 female participants in good health. Age of participants: 25–65. Methodology: A 2 week, single treatment, in-home user trial. Participants were instructed to apply product twice daily, morning and evening. Massage into skin until fully absorbed. Three short questionnaires were completed: the first after initial application, the second after 12 hours, and the third after 2 weeks of using the product. Result: Application: 95% of participants agreed that 'the product is lighter than any moisturiser they have used before'. 94% of participants agreed that 'the product spreads more easily than any moisturiser they have used before'. Absorption: 82% of participants agreed that 'the product absorbs more easily than any moisturiser they have used before'. 75% of participants agreed that the product absorbs faster than any moisturiser they have used before'. 74% of participants agreed that 'the product leaves no greasy residue after application'. 83% of participants agreed that 'after applying the product they were able to get dressed immediately'. Hydration: 93% of participants agreed that 'the product leaves skin feeling immediately moisturised'. 92% of the participants agreed that 'after applying the product the skin feels smooth and silky'. 92% participants agreed that 'their skin felt moisturised the entire day' and 91% agreed that 'the skin feels smooth and silky the entire day'. 92% of participants agreed that 'their skin looks better than it did at the beginning of the 2 week period'. Overall, 78% of participants agreed that 'the product is better than any moisturiser they have used before'. SENSITIVE SKIN TEST Trial centre: Complife Italia S.r.l, Italy. Objective: To assess the potential of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion to cause skin irritation. Sample: Subjects: 25 participants, 3 male and 22 female, with sensitive skin according to lactic acid stinging test. Age of participants: 18–70. Methodology: Controlled study. Two areas were evaluated: area to which a negative control was applied (demineralised water) and an area to which Bio-Oil® Body Lotion was applied. Test products were applied to the back region of participants, in contact with the skin surface, for a period of 48 hours using a Finn Chamber®. Skin reactions were evaluated under the supervision of a dermatologist, to assess primary skin irritation at 15 minutes, 1 hour and 24 hours after patch removal. Skin reactions were rated on a scale from 0–4 (with 0 being no erythema, oedema, or other types of skin irritation, and 4 being severe erythema and oedema, indicating dark red appearance and extended swelling beyond the application area). Result: The skin tolerability of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion was deemed 'non-irritating'. NON-COMEDOGENIC TEST Trial centre: Complife Italia S.r.l, Italy. Objective: To assess the comedogenic potential of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion. Sample: Subjects: 20 participants, 14 female and 6 male of varying ethnicities with acne prone skin. Age of participants: 18–65. Methodology: Controlled study. The product was applied on a disk of filter paper to the upper back region of participants. Patches were left in place for 48 hours, removed and applied again. A total of 12 patches were applied for 4 consecutive weeks. Three areas were evaluated: comparative negative control (demineralised water), the test product (Bio-Oil® Body Lotion) and a positive control (lanolin alcohol, a known comedogenic substance). Skin reactions were clinically evaluated under the supervision of a dermatologist, 15 minutes after the removal of each patch. Results: The presence of comedones before and after each product application. Result: Bio-Oil® Body Lotion was found to be non-comedogenic. The area to which Bio-Oil® Body Lotion was applied showed no significant difference to the negative control area. The product is gentle to skin. VISCOSITY STUDY Trial centre: Union Swiss, South Africa. Objective: An internal study to assess the viscosity of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion compared to similar moisturising products. Sample: Comparison of Bio-Oil® Body Lotion to 13 moisturising products manufactured by 10 global brands with an established history in moisturisation. Methodology: Dynamic viscosity was read using a Bohlin Gemini Nano Rheometer, using spindle CC 39, speed 200 rpm at 20°C, shear rate 158. Result: Bio-Oil® Body Lotion was found to have a 7.5 times lower dynamic viscosity than the average of the competitor products (94 mPa.s vs 707 mPa.s respectively), and can therefore be described as thinner, more fluid that's quicker to spread and rapidly absorbed. APPLICATION How to apply Bio-Oil® Body Lotion should be massaged in a circular motion on the skin. It is recommended that Bio-Oil® Body Lotion be applied twice daily, morning and evening. Bio-Oil® Body Lotion is not intended to an open wound or broken skin. It is intended for topical cosmetic application only. Avoid contact with eyes. If contact occurs rinse thoroughly with water. Keep out of reach of children. Contains Vitamin A. Considerations Bio-Oil® Body Lotion is an emulsion in which the water and oil are very lightly bound together. So, if left standing some of the oil may rise to the surface of the product forming a thin layer. By gently shaking the product before use, this layer disperses back into the product. This separation can take anywhere from three days to three weeks and is dependent on factors such as temperature, how gently the bottle has been shaken. The mere act of using the product daily, turning the bottle some degrees in your hand is enough to ensure that this oil layer does not form. If an oil layer has formed and the product has been left standing for a long time, the mixture may flow from the bottle. This is not a consumer safety risk. How long to use: Bio-Oil® Body Lotion has been performed over a four week period, allowing the performance of the product to be assessed over time. Whilst studies show a significant improvement in the appearance of the skin after as little as 24 hours and that the improvement is maintained for the duration of the 2 week study, Bio-Oil® Body Lotion may however be used on an ongoing basis for its moisturising and skin-nourishing properties, making it a perfect daily skincare routine. Use in conjunction with a skincare routine. For maximum absorption Bio-Oil® Body Lotion should be applied to clean skin. If applying a sun protection lotion or other cream only do so once Bio-Oil® Body Lotion has been completely absorbed into the skin. For all over body use apply Bio-Oil® Body Lotion after showering or bathing. Use in pregnancy: Bio-Oil®





Vela Blossom bag, £2,205, and dress, £1,341, both **ETRO**

THE PIECE

SOFT *touch*

Summer months call for supple textures in neutral palettes. Etro's Vela Blossom bag exudes an effortless sophistication that is best paired with bold prints. Crafted in a V-shaped silhouette and go-anywhere size, it's all you need to see you through the season in style.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KEIR LAIRD
STYLING BY GRACE CLARKE

WORDS: LENA DE CASPARIS. STYLIST'S ASSISTANT: LAURYN DOHERTY



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ELLE

BEAUTY + WELLNESS

Bright HORIZONS

THE 2026 ELLE FUTURE OF BEAUTY AWARDS ARE BIGGER, BETTER AND BOLDER THAN EVER, WITH TRAILBLAZING WINNERS AND A NEW COHORT OF JUDGES, INCLUDING DAME PAT McGRATH AND THE DESIGNERS OF CULT BRAND CHOPOVA LOWENA. PLUS: ALL THE HIGH-TECH TOOLS WE RELY ON FOR GLOWING SKIN AND IMPROVED WELLBEING

PHOTOGRAPH: GASPAR J RUIZ LINDBERG (CHLOE SS26)

ELLE
FUTURE OF
BEAUTY
WINNERS
2026



THE FUTURE OF BEAUTY AWARDS

THESE ARE THE LAUNCHES RAISING THE BEAUTY BAR FOR A BRIGHT NEW ERA

ARTWORKS BY LUCY JACKSON

SKIN

INNOVATIVE TEXTURES AND CLINICALLY PROVEN INGREDIENTS FOR RADIANT SKIN



BEST TOOL

Shark FacialPro Glow At-Home Hydro-Powered Facial System, £299.99

A clever device that decongests, exfoliates, depuffs and rehydrates.



BEST SPF

Tatcha The Milky Sunscreen SPF50, £49

Encapsulated ectoin and vitamin E help the skin repair sun damage and protect against further harm.



BEST RICH MOISTURISER

Charlotte Tilbury Charlotte's Magic Cream, £54

The classic is now powered by a blend of 100 peptides to maximise hydration.



BEST FOR FINE LINES

No7 Prime Forever Serum, £37.95

Part of a preservation range for thirtysomethings, this serum reduces oxidative stress by seven times.



BEST EYE TREATMENT

L'Oréal Paris Revitalift Eye Bag Instant Eraser, £29.99

Temporarily tightens and smooths the under eyes when used over make-up.



BEST HYDRATING SERUM

Dua by Augustinus Bader Supercharged Glow Complex, £65

Moisturises and improves resilience against environmental stressors.



BEST CLEANSER

Dr Althea Pure Grinding Cleansing Balm, £19

Using minimal ingredients, this is designed to thoroughly cleanse the most sensitive skin.



BEST FOR SENSITIVE SKIN

SkinCeuticals Advanced RGN-6, £160

Designed for post-lasered complexions, this cream restores the skin barrier while optimising your treatment.



BEST RETINOL SERUM

AlumierMD Intelliret 0.3+ Serum, £95

Botanical boosters supercharge retinol's regenerative benefits while peptides and niacinamide strengthen the skin.



BEST OIL

Shiseido Ultimune Power Infusing Oil, £42

This lightweight, fast-absorbing oil for hair, skin and body is brimming with soothing ectoin and camellia extract.



BEST CLARIFYING SERUM

Medik8 Niacinamide Peptides, £49

Crystalide peptide boosts luminosity, zinc prevents breakouts and N-acetyl glucosomine dials up the glow.



BEST FOR RETINOL BEGINNERS

The Inkey List Starter Retinol Serum, £12

Squalane and glycerin keep irritation at bay for sensitive and rosacea-prone skin.



BEST PLUMPING MOISTURISER

Lancôme Rénergie Collagen+ Lift-Xtend, £85

A trio of bounce-giving collagen fractions, collagen peptides and copper tripeptides.



BEST TONER

Mediheal PDRN Lifting Pad, £22

Enriched with firming PDRN, re-balancing niacinamide and low-molecular-weight collagen. ▷

HAIR

GAME-CHANGING FORMULAS THAT REPAIR AND REVIVE EVERY SINGLE STRAND



BEST FOR BLONDES

K18 TripleBright Oxidation Defence Purple Shampoo, £39

Strengthens and repairs damaged hair while removing unwanted brassy tones.



BEST SCALP CARE

Dyson Amino Leave-In Scalp Bubble Treatment, £46

Eleven amino acids, niacinamide and caffeine target hair loss and excess oil.





BEST FOR DAMAGED HAIR

Olaplex No3 Plus Complete Repair Treatment, £32

This pre-shampoo treatment repairs molecular bonds in just three minutes.



BEST FOR CURLS

Oribe Eternal Curls Priming Lotion, £42

A nourishing cream for curls and coils that detangles, delivers moisture and protects against heat damage.



BEST HAIRDRYER

GHD Speed Ionic Hairdryer, £299

An ultra-fast ionic hairdryer powered by high-pressure airflow of up to 176km per hour that doesn't damage hair.



BEST SHAMPOO

Hello Klean Full Cover Anti-Thinning Hard Water Shampoo, £22

This cleanser removes follicle-clogging minerals and hard-water build-up.



BEST FOR PROTECTIVE STYLES

Cécred Scalp Refreshing Spray, £35

Honey, peppermint and ceramides provide instant relief to itchy scalps and a rinse-free cleanse.



BEST HAIR MASK

Living Proof Moisture Rescue Mask, £36

Lipids replenish lost moisture, restore shine and strengthen brittle strands for softer hair that lasts.



MAKE-UP

LIGHTWEIGHT FINISHES AND PUNCHY COLOURS TO ENLIVEN EVERY COMPLEXION



BEST LIP STAIN

Violette_Fr Lip Nectar, £30

This oil-in-water texture goes on like a gloss, then sets to leave a comfortable wash of colour with a lived-in look.



BEST LIPSTICK

Chanel Rouge Coco Lipstick, £43

A luminous wash of pigmented colour that promises to care for your lips.



BEST CORRECTOR

MAC Studio Fix 24HR Colour Corrector, £18

Colour-correcting hues that balance hyperpigmentation and dark circles.



BEST LIP LINER

Pat McGrath Labs Lip Sculpt + Shade Contour Duo, £30

A sleek pencil-and-crayon combo for a perfectly defined statement lip.



BEST FOR BROWS

Sacheu Brow & Freckle Stay-N, £14

A long-wearing double-sided pen to create fullness and volume for fine brows and enhance natural freckles.



BEST MASCARA

Rabanne Eyephoria XXXL Mascara, £29

Delivers dramatic, volumised results while improving the condition of your lashes through castor seed and olive oil.



BEST CONCEALER

Dolce & Gabbana Everlast Concealer, £33

With 30 shades to suit all complexions, this crease-proof, caffeine-infused formula disguises redness and dark circles.



BEST BRONZER

Dior Forever Skin Bronze, £50

A creamy bronzing balm that imparts believable, sun-kissed warmth and mimics the look of a natural tan.



BEST LUMINISER

Dcypher Custom Glow Booster, £29

Made to match your exact skin tone, this formula can be used alone as a tint or under foundation for extra glow.



BEST POWDER BLUSH

Prada Touch Blush, £42

This silky cream-to-powder texture imparts diffused colour that lasts impressively well.



BEST LIGHTWEIGHT FOUNDATION

Clarins Double Serum Foundation, £49

Dual chambers offer a daily dose of 14 skincare actives to refine and smooth. ▷

BODY

EVERYDAY GROOMING REACHES NEW HEIGHTS WITH CLEVER TECH AND SENSORY FORMULAS



BEST ECO-CONSCIOUS

Voshbon Freeze-Dried Body Wash, £29.99

This powder uses less water to produce and is lighter to transport. It's filled with skin-kind probiotics, too.



BEST NAIL REPAIR

Essie Break Fix Liquid Nail Patch, £14.99

An instant, liquid-to-solid repair kit for broken nails that lasts up to five days.



BEST SUPPLEMENT

Vida Glow Liquid Collagen Skin + Energy, £39

Collagen peptides, antioxidants and vitamin C deliver radiant skin.



BEST DENTAL CARE

Oral B iO10 Eclipse Gold Electric Toothbrush, £300

Pressure and time sensors stop you second-guessing your dental hygiene.



BEST BODY CLEANSER

39BC Oil Body Cleanser, £39

Opulent fragrances and a decadent, oil-to-milk formula elevate daily showers. Feel good after every cleanse.

PRO PICKS

INDISPENSABLE MUST-HAVES THAT THE EXPERTS RELY ON



EMILY WOOD, MAKE-UP ARTIST

Fara Homidi Essential Eye Compact, £92

'The cream but matte finish melts into skin and builds and diffuses seamlessly.'



VIOLETTE SERRAT, MAKE-UP ARTIST

BioEffect EGF Power Serum, £169

'This is the serum I reach for when I want to focus on repair and regeneration.'



MICHELLE HUMPHREY, MANICURIST

Joonbyrd Confetti Sky Hand Treatment, £50

'High-performance ingredients in joyful packaging with a sensorial formula.'



PAT McGRATH, MAKE-UP ARTIST

Lyma Laser Pro, £4,995

'I use this for two minutes a day and my skin is firmer and more radiant.'



BERNICIA BOATENG, MAKE-UP ARTIST

Estée Lauder Double Wear Stay-In-Place Makeup, £39.50

'Coverage that enhances natural radiance.'



CHRISELLE LIM, CREATIVE DIRECTOR AT PHLUR

K18 Airwash Dry Shampoo, £48

'I always use this on the go for a refresh, especially when I'm travelling.'



CHOPOVA LOWENA, FASHION DESIGNERS

Ouai Hair Oil, £28

'Keeps hair shiny and healthy through styling, and it smells incredible!' □

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CRÈME GLOSS

8/10 WOMEN AGREE*

GLOSSIER HAIR COLOUR THAN EVER BEFORE.

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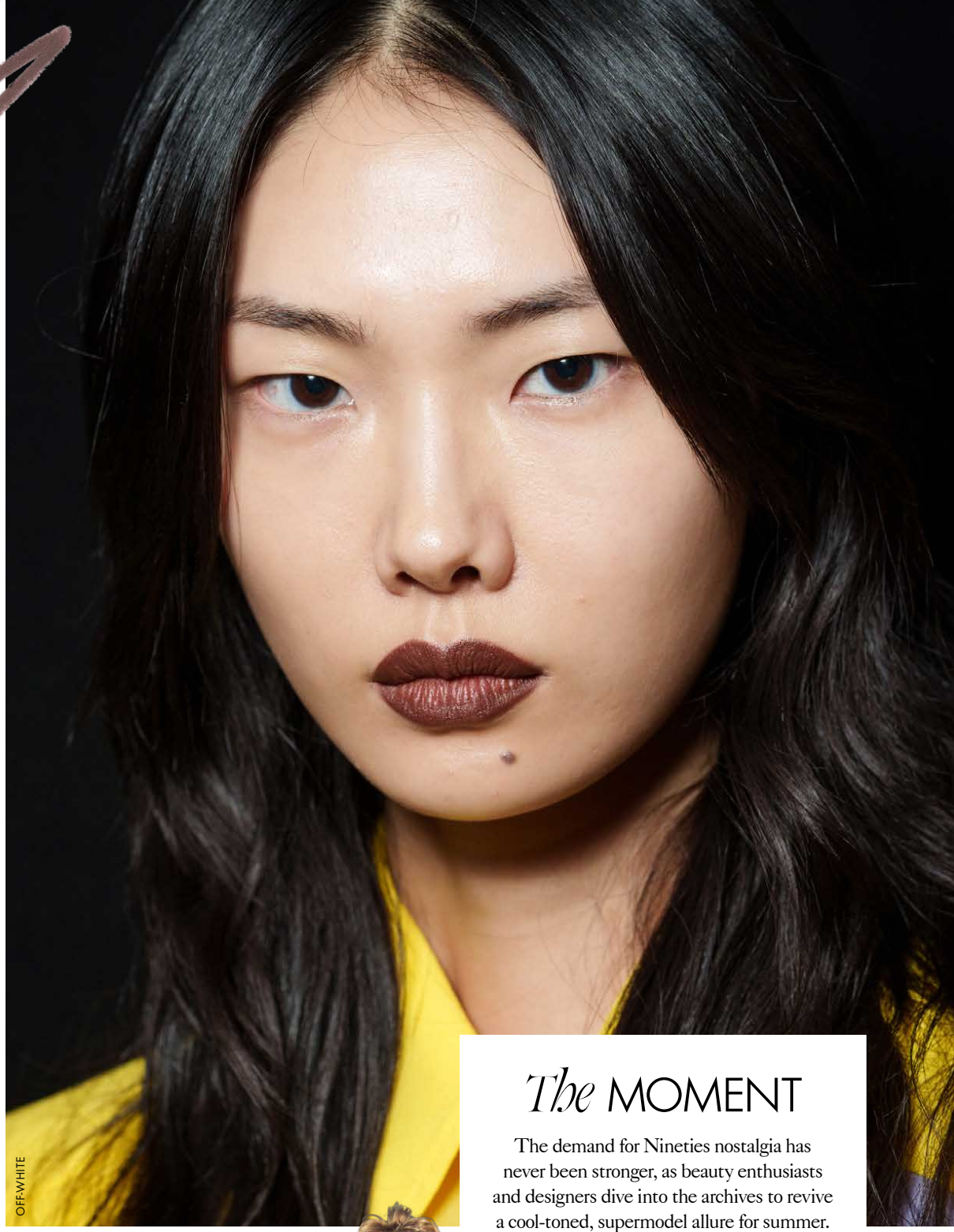


ON OFFER NOW AT Boots

*83% OF 398 WOMEN AGREE. **VERIFY AT WWW.LOREAL-PARIS.CO.UK/CCG1

Radar

WORDS BY KATIE WITHINGTON



OFF-WHITE

The MOMENT

The demand for Nineties nostalgia has never been stronger, as beauty enthusiasts and designers dive into the archives to revive a cool-toned, supermodel allure for summer. Off-White SS26 captures the moment, with nutty brown lips and matte, rustic hues nodding to grainy red-carpet shots from the decade. Think Lauryn Hill, Aaliyah and Winona Ryder. Revisit iconic shades such as MAC's Chestnut Lip Pencil and Paramount Lipstick, favoured by leading faces of the time. Skip dewy finishes in favour of powdery complexions with shadowy contour, and don't forget metallic balms and blue mascara.



DREW BARRYMORE



LAURYN HILL



MAC Lip Pencil in Chestnut, £20, **MAC**

Sorbet SHADES

The new nude nail is sheer, milky and soft, like creamy chiffon draped over perfectly primed cuticles. Consider a Ukrainian or Japanese manicure for attention to detail, and opt for OPI's I'm A Bubble Bunny or Westmoreland Cosmetics' Vanilla Gloss 2 for a wash of flattering colour.





1 2 3

TAKE *note*

Tea is having a moment. Japanese-inspired Kida Kyo brings creamy-milk tea to life with its new Dulcet No 6 Parfum, a comforting blend of sweet brown sugar and custard mochi. Elsewhere, Bulgari's invigorating Italian citrus, fresh ginger and black-tea scent, originally created for the amenities in the brand's hotels, is now available as a perfume. For fans of something more herbal, Molton Brown's Tea Ceremony offers an earthy centre with nuanced notes of matcha and green-tea leaves.

1 Eau Parfumée Au Thé Vert, £174 for 150ml, **BULGARI** **2** Dulcet No 6 Parfum, £125 for 50ml, **KIDA KYO** **3** Tea Ceremony Eau de Parfum, £140 for 100ml, **MOLTON BROWN**

The TIP *book*

LAISSEZ-HAIR



Take cues from undone Parisian styles and add a texture spray as your final step. Regardless of your cut, it will add a cool naturalness. Larry King Ride Or Die Texture Mist, £25.

PATCH WORK

Transdermal patches are the wellness sphere's new gold dust as brands harness medical technology to target period symptoms, stress and fatigue. We recommend The What Supp Co or Ross J Barr for best results.

THE REFORMATION



Due to ingredients such as talc being banned by the EU by June 2027, many of your best-loved products are getting an update, like Estée Lauder's Double Wear Stay-In-Place Makeup, £39.50.

CURLY GIRL METHOD 2.0

Inspired by skincare layering, moisture stacking hydrates hair fibres while maintaining the integrity of curly, coily and wavy textures. Apply products from lightest to heaviest to achieve peak hydration.

PEN PALS



Muji's made-in-Japan essentials are transcending stationery and stepping into skincare. Expect simple staples with ceramides, hyaluronic acid and rice extract: the perfect elevated basics for everyday. Muji Skincare, from £5.95.

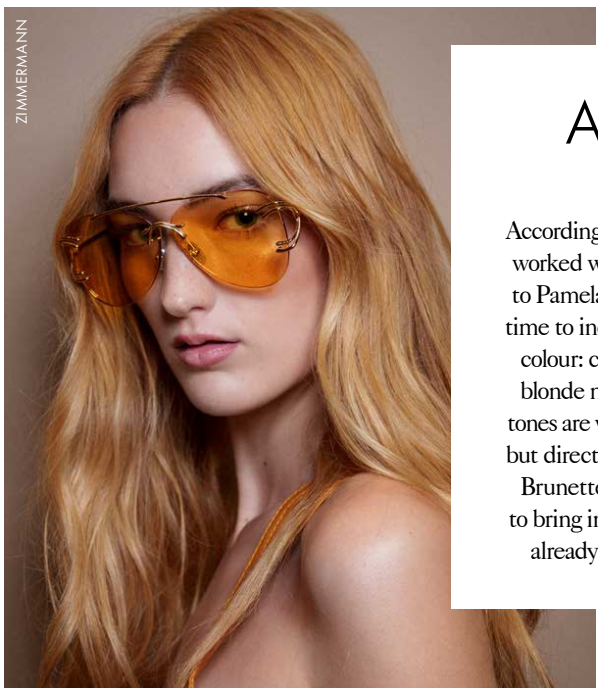
ONE *to* WATCH

PDRN (polydeoxyribonucleotide, for those who like a tongue-twister) has become one of Korean skincare's most coveted ingredients. Whether used alongside peptides to boost elasticity or featuring in a viral glass-skin overnight mask, the DNA fragment, often derived from salmon (although there are vegan alternatives), is popular for its regenerative benefits. Set to be the breakout ingredient of the year.



1 2 3

1 Pore Firming Serum: Red Bean PDRN + Peptide, £15, **BEAUTY OF JOSEON** **2** PDRN Pink Glutathione Serum Mist, £23, **MEDICUBE** **3** Hydrating PDRN Serum, £8, **BOOTS**



ASK *the* PRO

TOM SMITH

According to hairstylist Tom Smith, who has worked with everyone from Margot Robbie to Pamela Anderson, summer is the perfect time to incorporate fruity glimmers into your colour: cue apricot blonde. 'It's strawberry blonde meets soft copper,' he says. 'Peach tones are warm and luminous, close to blonde but directional enough to feel a bit different.' Brunettes should ask for a micro-balayage to bring in a warm apricot shimmer; if you're already blonde, opt for an all-over toner.

PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE, GETTY IMAGES

THE SEARCH FOR A BRAIN HEALTHY

LONGEVITY IS NOW A MAJOR WELLNESS TREND, BUT A VITAL PIECE OF THE PUZZLE IS DEMANDING MORE ATTENTION. *HANNAH NATHANSON* INVESTIGATES WHY BRAIN HEALTH IS THE THINKING WOMAN'S LATEST OBSESSION

IF DR SABINE DONNAI, AN AUTHORITY in longevity, could choose an animal she'd most like her brain to resemble, it would be a cheetah 'when it's just about to jump on its prey. It's both super-focused and calm at the same time', she tells me from her London clinic Viavi, which she founded 17 years ago, long before people started talking about longevity. Unfortunately, for most of us, we're training our brains to be unfocused and on edge.

'We're seeing brains in a hypervigilant state all the time,' says Dr Donnai, who has an increasing number of women booking into the clinic for the Viavi Cortex 360, a four-hour assessment that includes an MRI and numerous blood tests to look into the health of the brain. 'Brains are becoming what I call "fake ADHD", because we constantly flick from one thing to another; they become very needy, wanting stimulation all the time.' According to Dr Donnai, our environment – not just digital habits, but exposure to toxins, poor sleep and sugar-rich diets – is physically changing our brains: 'If we look at brain maps from 17 years ago and now, they look completely different.'

Indeed, ever since 'brain rot' became part of the vernacular in 2024, when it was named the Oxford Word of the Year, people have been able to put a name to the feeling of a lack of concentration and focus, mainly

ARTWORK: LUCY JACKSON

due to increased screen time and consumption of 'unchallenging' online content.

With the rise of cognitive decline in increasingly younger women and skyrocketing rates of Alzheimer's (it's now the biggest killer in the UK; between 1990 and 2021, the global prevalence of dementia among people under 65 increased by 211%), brain health has never been more important. And while women are genetically more likely to suffer from cognitive decline, they are also typically more attuned to changes in their brain throughout their lives. For Free Mags Check sastatus.com After having each of my two children, I experienced a brain fog that made expressing myself, or carrying out typically straightforward tasks, feel like wading through treacle. When I tell Dr Donnai that I felt unproductive during this post-partum period, in which I spent hours sitting on the couch breastfeeding, she explains this might actually have been good for my cognition, because achieving a calmer state for your brain is something she recommends for patients who might be doing everything else correctly except for fully resting or recharging.

As longevity dominates the wellness scene, awareness around brain health has exploded. This is a big change from when Dr Donnai first founded Viavi and wrote about the brain as the 'forgotten organ', because it was unusual for health assessments to include any kind of brain analysis. But as she puts it: 'If there's one organ I want to keep healthy as I start ageing, surely it's my brain. What's the point of avoiding a heart attack if I go demented? That doesn't make sense to me.' The brain is also primed for survival – 'it retains the capacity to change throughout life' – which means caring for it, as you would your body more generally, makes even more sense.

The good news is that protecting your brain is more straightforward than people might assume, especially against a context of elaborate wellness routines and biohacking extremes. A recent 20-year study made headlines earlier this year because it showed that a 'relatively moderate' amount of specific 'speed training' exercises (which involved computerised tasks designed to improve the speed and accuracy of how we process visual information) can lower the risk of a dementia diagnosis by 25%. The findings were significant because its participants came from a randomised control trial that was highly representative of the population, with approximately 25% coming from minority backgrounds and 75% women.

For neuroscientist Nicole Vignola, the author of *Rewire: Break the Cycle, Alter Your Thoughts and Create Lasting Change*, one of the key things when it comes to encouraging brain health is pushing against the idea of achieving a meticulous or elaborate regime. In her new book *Mental Currency,* she shares the Mental Currency Method (MCM): a simple morning routine that encourages people to 'Mute' the noise from their phones; 'Create' your reality, setting intentions for how you want your day to look through journalling or meditation; and 'Move', in order to prime the brain for neuroplasticity. Vignole says it's 'like putting on the sat-nav for your day'.

Movement, in particular, is just as important for the brain as it is the body, even if it's 10 minutes of stretching in the morning. 'It increases something called BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), essentially a little molecule that helps the brain create new synapses,' says Vignole. 'Think of it as fertiliser for your brain, getting it ready for change.' While the benefits of weight training for women are becoming more well-known, Vignole explains that there's a direct line of communication from the muscle to the brain, the muscle-brain axis, just like the gut-brain axis that has become better understood in recent years. Under tension and relaxation, the muscles release myokines, muscle-derived proteins that cross the blood-brain barrier and communicate with the brain positively and can actually alter thought patterns: 'Have you ever thought you look ugly, and then you go and lift and come home and you're like, "I was being dramatic, I'm actually really beautiful"? That's because of a molecule called irisin, which binds to the limbic system in the brain to slow down the communication of negative self-referential thinking.'

Alongside movement and restricted screen time, nutrients such as folate (found in leafy vegetables and pulses) and collagen (in bone broth or seaweed) help support brain health. Dr Donnai also suggests doing things the brain doesn't expect: in the morning, she stands on one leg while brushing her teeth with her non-dominant hand. 'They're silly things, but they make a massive difference to your brain, because you actually have to think about it. It could be juggling, learning a new language or playing table tennis – they're very good for your brain because you're just trying to combine several things at the same time,' she says, also stressing the importance of oral hygiene. 'Alzheimer's increases significantly if you have gum disease, because of chronic inflammation. I always say, "Floss for your brain."'

When it comes to brain rot, there are new AI-powered apps that can help limit endless scrolling. BeFreed uses AI to analyse your interests and generate personalised 'mini-podcasts' with the aim of teaching you something new, to replace a doomscroll with something more productive. Then there's Opal, an app that blocks usage but also recognises when you're deep in a mindless scroll and prompts you to take a breathing break. New on the scene is Gen-Z favourite NeuroRest: Digital Balance, which aims to 'redefine rest' by tracking screen time and prompting users to actively take a break and reflect, rather than feel guilty about digital habits. And just as there was a recent craze to find out your 'biological age' from body scans at places like Neko, the Cortex 360 at Viavi will tell you the age of your brain.

Given that brain changes can occur 10 to 15 years before the first symptoms of decline, a greater awareness around brain health – and the chance to do something about it – is key to future-proofing our brains. As Dr Donnai says: 'Our brain is all about wanting to survive. You just need to point it in the right direction.' □

'MOVEMENT *can* SLOW DOWN *negative* THINKING'

The editors on... BEST BUYS

These are at the top of our wishlists, as chosen by the ELLE team





PHOTOGRAPH: FERNANDO GOMEZ/TRUNK ARCHIVE



1 Theragun Relief, £129, **THERABODY**
2 Sleep Mask, £29.99, **NODPOD**
3 Nurosym, £599, **NUROSYM**
4 Earbuds, £238.99, **QUIETON**



Katie Withington

STRESS AND SLEEP

From air-styling hair tools to fancy SAD lamps, beauty gadgets have always featured in my routine. But it wasn't until this year's futuristic wave of wellness tools that I truly began to pay attention. I have a 'buy-now, pay-later' approach to wellbeing, meaning that I tend to hold tension in my body, neglect my sleep schedule and let stress take over, hoping I will recuperate later. Fortunately, I've found that the Theragun Relief gun eases tight knots from long office days, while Nurosym stimulates the vagus nerve to help regulate my nervous system. My sleep has also improved dramatically, thanks to a soothing combination of QuietOn 3.1 noise-cancelling earbuds and the NodPod weighted sleep mask. ▷

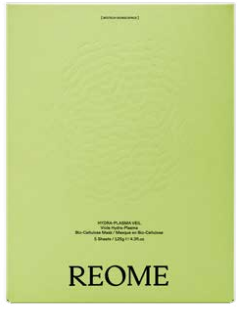


Katy Young SKIN FIRMING

As a (professional) skincare obsessive, I pile on at least three serums a day to brighten, repair and protect my face. But when it comes to 'firming', skincare doesn't quite cut it if you want to see a lift by the end of the week. It's the reason most beauty editors rely on their Ziip, a nifty little radiofrequency and microcurrent gadget that links to an app for five-to-10-minute facials – which absolutely do sculpt (if you don't believe me, check out the founder Melanie Simon and her celebrity disciples). I use it three times a week for tightening around the jawline. I'm so trusting of the Nasa scientist behind it that I've also invested in the Nira Pro 3 laser. This non-fractional, non-ablative laser gently heats the deepest layers to encourage collagen stimulation over time – by which point I hope skincare will have upped its game.



1



3



2



4

1 Ziip Halo 2.0, £379.99, **ZIIP**
2 Le Lift Flash Eye, £86 for 10, **CHANEL**
3 Hydra-Plasma Veil, £98 for 5, **REOME**
4 Pro 3 Laser, £633, **NIRA**



Medina Azaldin HAIR STYLING

I keep my daily regime relatively streamlined, which means speed and efficacy are of the essence. Achieving a polished finish for my fine, mid-length hair has always been tricky as I am neither patient nor ambidextrous, but recent advancements in styling tools mean that I can now cheat a glossy blow-dry in less than 10 minutes. Shark SilkiPro is a hairdryer-straightener hybrid that can be used to detangle and dry wet hair while simultaneously creating a sleek, high-shine finish with minimal risk of damage to the hair. For voluminous waves, the clever Style Secret Air by Babyliss is fool-proof; simply feed a section of hair through the barrel and the auto-curl technology instantly transforms it into a curl. Easy, breezy, bouncy.

1 Style Secret Air, £129, **BABYLISS**
2 SilkiPro, £249.99, **SHARK**
3 Abundant Blowout All-over Volumizing Spray, £29, **AVEDA**





Amelia Bell FITNESS

I have always exercised for my mind. Running is my therapy, and infrared Pilates at Yours Studio in London is my reset. But what's transformed my relationship with fitness is learning to listen to my body. My Oura Ring helps with just that. It tracks HRV (Heart Rate Variability) – the variation in time between each heartbeat – and if it's below baseline, it signals that the body needs rest, not another intense workout. For recovery, I'm a convert to the HigherDose PEMF Mat, which sends low-level frequencies through the body to calm the nervous system and ease inflammation. Just 20 minutes leaves me feeling restored. For post-run aches, Therabody's WaveDuo is my new go-to, fusing foam rolling with targeted vibration therapy to release muscle tension. My biggest advice on fitness tech? You don't need both a ring and a watch – one recovery tool that works in sync with your body is plenty. □

1 WaveDuo, £99, **THERABODY**
2 Infrared PEMF Mat, £1,299, **HIGHERDOSE**
3 Oura Ring 4, £349, **OURA**



PHOTOGRAPHS: FERNANDO GOMEZ/TRUNK ARCHIVE



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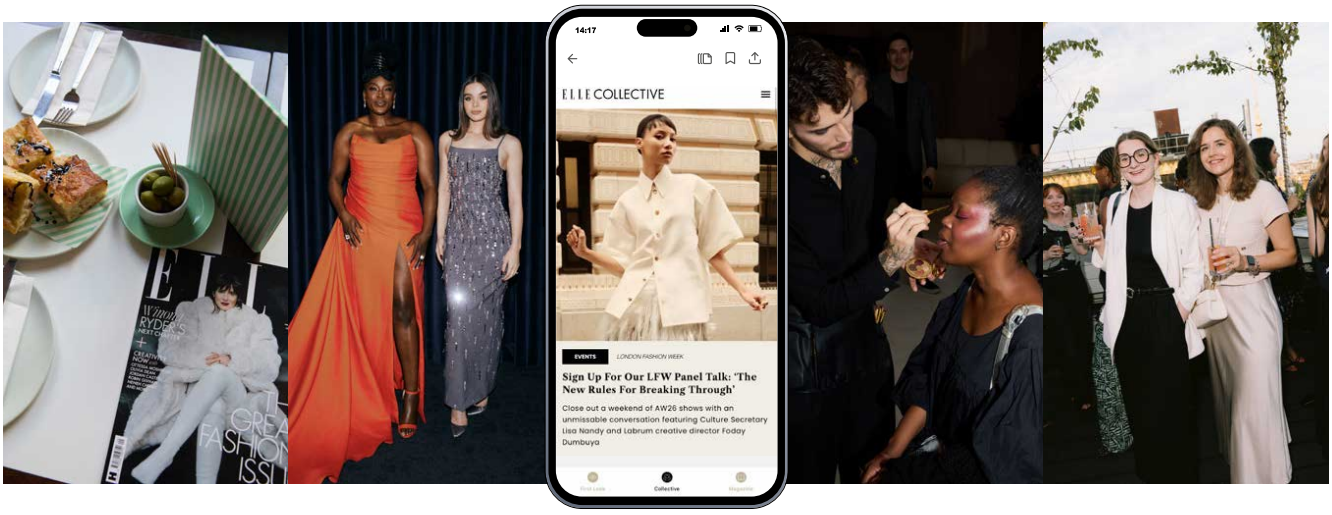
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KENYA HUNT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF







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FASHION + READS

ELLE®

DOJA CAT IS A MASTER OF REINVENTION. AS THIS MONTH'S COVER STAR PREPARES FOR HER SELL-OUT UK TOUR, SHE SITS DOWN WITH KACION MAYERS TO TALK ABOUT HER REALITY VERSUS THE MYTHS THAT SURROUND HER. PLUS, WE EXAMINE WHY PERSONAL STYLE MATTERS MORE THAN EVER, UNCOVER THE LATEST HOTSPOTS THAT PEOPLE ARE MIGRATING TO, AND REVEAL ALL THE FASHION LOOKS TO ESCAPE IN



Jacket, £1,380, **DAVID KOMA.** Rings, £119 each, both **SWAROVSKI**

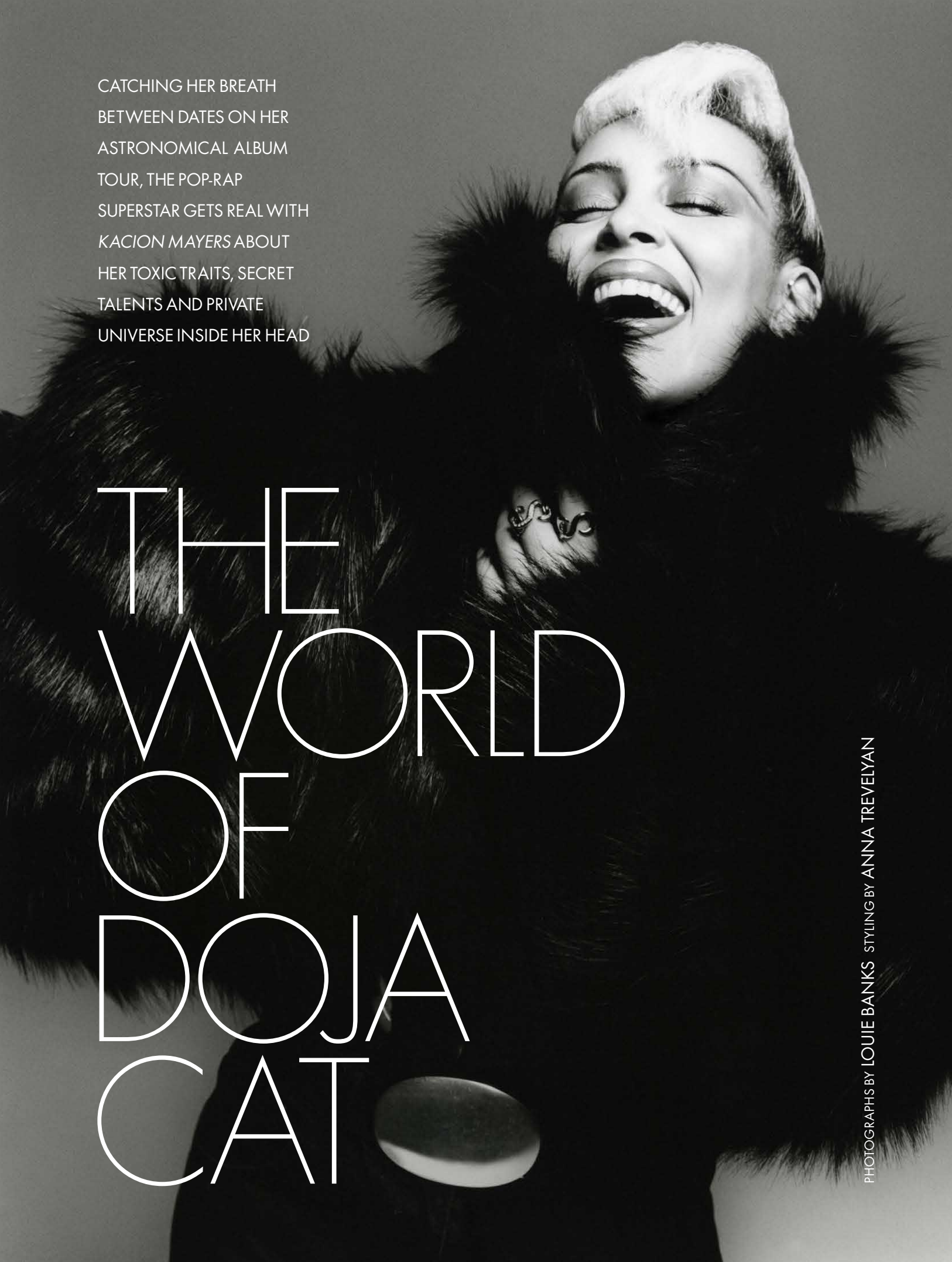
PHOTOGRAPH: LOUIE BANKS. STYLING: ANNA TREVELYAN



Harness top, £9,500, and skirt, £9,000, both **HERMĒS**. Mixed-metal and crystal earrings, price on request, and ring, £119, both **SWAROVSKI**. Other earrings (worn throughout), Doja's own.
OPPOSITE jacket, £1,380, and trousers, £990, both **DAVID KOMA**. Ring (left), £119, and ring, £280, both **SWAROVSKI**. Belt, around £130, **B-LOW THE BELT**







CATCHING HER BREATH BETWEEN DATES ON HER ASTRONOMICAL ALBUM TOUR, THE POP-RAP SUPERSTAR GETS REAL WITH *KACION MAYERS* ABOUT HER TOXIC TRAITS, SECRET TALENTS AND PRIVATE UNIVERSE INSIDE HER HEAD

THE WORLD OF DOJA CAT

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LOUIE BANKS STYLING BY ANNA TREVELYAN

A DAY

on tour with Doja Cat begins, against all reasonable assumptions, quietly. Amala Dlamini (known by her friends as Ami) rolls over at a civilised hour, showers, pulls on her pyjamas and heads to the venue. Soundcheck is negotiable. Vocal lessons are not. She'll settle into her greenroom, light a vanilla-cupcake candle and have her glam team workshop a look. Then, it's time for wardrobe. 'I mean, that's the really fun part for me personally,' she notes. Her call time, by this point, is approaching with some urgency.

On *Tour Ma Vie*, the world tour accompanying her fifth studio album *Vie*, she spends a sizeable portion of her time on stage doing the absolute most. She raps her ass off. Shouts, stomps, swings and sings around the stage without missing a note or a beat. At one point, she lies flat on her back, singing into a microphone hanging from the hook of a heel raised above her head. There's a burlesque-inspired floor-work segment closing out fan-favourite 'Wet Vagina', a flexible display so erotic that one Manila audience member captioned their TikTok with: 'The floor after nine months', followed by the pregnant-woman Emoji. My personal pick: when she stole a sign from a fan reading 'F*ck costume changes', which she brandished gleefully to the crowd. She ate that. No, literally – scrunching it into a ball and popping it in her mouth.

In a pop landscape where the costume change has become a competitive sport, Doja has opted out. One look per night. Which sounds like the easier proposition, until you register that, across 64 dates, that's 64 distinct looks, hair and make-up included. 'I just really put my all into each look every night,' she says. 'I like to think about the hair and the make-up, marry it together, be poetic and meaningful, do something personal to each location.' She has a system: tights that look like trousers depending on how you layer them, bodysuits as a canvas, scarves become chokers, bras layered into oblivion. 'Tights change everything. We've sewn earrings into hats, sewn earrings into bras, sewn earrings onto my cooch cooch,' she says, with the calm of someone itemising a grocery list.

The intention is total immersion. She wants to build a world so complete that she ceases to exist outside of it, topped off with backup singers and a band dressed to match, absorbed in 1980s eclecticism. 'It's almost like when you watch a movie from the perspective of the protagonist and you feel like them. I want the audience to feel immersed in every emotion, every gag, every move – everything.'

Doja is dialling in from Calabasas, California, on a sunny afternoon. She's make-up free, with her mini 'fro in natural curls, and tucked into a grey wraparound cardigan. She's flanked by Axel, one of two cats: green-eyed, pitch-black, sporting a pink bow that one suspects began life as a scrap from that cut-and-paste wardrobe. Axel, one day on from being neutered, is marking the occasion by licking Doja's ear, grazing her cheek with his oversized cone and scrapping with his sibling Ray. Three weeks after completing the Asian, Australian, South African and South American leg of *Tour Ma Vie*, she is taking 'a little bit of a break here' before the Met Gala, which, at the time of writing, she's attending with Saint Laurent. 'I really do love their clothes,' she says. 'And then, after the Met, we go to Europe.' It's delivered with the quiet acceptance of someone aware that breaks are, for her, a theoretical construct.

Calm, where it exists, is maintained through her skincare routine. She gives me a brief recap of what she brought back from South Korea, with schoolgirl levels of excitement. 'Skincare has been a really good way to realign with myself and have a personal life and personal routine,' she says. 'Skincare makes me almost feel like a baby again.' When she was a little girl, Doja spent five years in New York with her maternal grandmother before moving to California to be with her mother Deborah Sawyer, a clothing designer, graphic designer and painter. Her father, Dumisani Dlamini, separated from Sawyer in the 1990s. He's a jazz dancer and performer from Durban, South Africa, who is best known for his role as Crocodile in the *Sarafina!* movie, starring Whoopi Goldberg. Most interestingly of all, Doja lived, for several formative years, with her mother and brother at Sai Anantam Ashram in Agoura Hills – a Hindu commune led by jazz legend Alice Coltrane – where she learned Indian classical dance and practised Hinduism, traces of which surface in the video for 'So High', the first song she ever wrote and released.

As we dive into conversation, Doja shows just how prone she is to an endearing tangent. And a good candle. I mention ▷



Jacket, £2,521, and trousers, £861, both **GIVENCHY BY SARAH BURTON**. Mixed-metal and crystal earrings, price on request, **SWAROVSKI**



Bra, £300, and briefs (just seen), £120, both **LUIS DE JAVIER**. Trousers, price on request, **DSQUARED2**. Mixed-metal and crystal earrings, price on request, ring (left), £119, and ring, £280, all **SWAROVSKI**. Belt, around £120, **B-LOW THE BELT**





Shirt, £6,400, and skirt, £3,990, both **SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO**. Mixed-metal and crystal earrings, price on request, **SWAROVSKI**

‘I’M GOING TO DO WHATEVER I WANT’

John Galliano’s collaboration with Diptyque, which evokes oak pews and an old cathedral. ‘I would love to smell that,’ she says. ‘Let me open up a tab.’ Her desktop, one imagines, looks much like her mind: tabs multiplying, each a loose thread of curiosity.

Doja Cat builds worlds. Grounded and ethereal at once, disparate in ways, yet threaded through with recurring obsessions. When I raise pop culture’s habit of parcelling artists into eras, she turns it over with genuine curiosity, uncertain of her own answer. ‘Artists who use mediums like paint and sculpture – when they repeat a pattern or an image but in a different colour – I think that’s an interesting way to think about the different ways musicians express themselves.’ She is not, to be clear, interested in repeating herself: ‘I move off of emotion and I try to turn that emotion into a story.’ For Doja, an era is less an aesthetic exercise and more a record of someone in the ongoing process of becoming.

The *Amala*-album era, 2018, was tongue-in-cheek lyrics and a viral hit filmed against green-screened sheets on her laptop’s Photo Booth app. ‘Mooo!’ has now amassed more than 144 million YouTube views and 157 million Spotify streams, for a song about being a cow. It taught her that she loved music, and irrefutably proved that she was a marketable artist at the age of 22. *Hot Pink*, 2019, went double platinum and top 10 on the *Billboard* 200, with ‘Say So’ remixed with Nicki Minaj her first number one on the Hot 100. It taught her she could build the world she now inhabits. *Planet Her*, 2021, the biggest R&B album in the US that year, debuting at number two on the *Billboard* 200, taught her something unexpected. That she could sing! Surely not? ‘Well, I did not think that I could sing that well. But I think *Planet Her* also taught me I am a lyricist. That my fans are here to stay and that they do love me.’ *Scarlet*, 2023, confirmed what was by then becoming apparent: that she could sing, rap and write, rather brilliantly, all at once.

I tell her *Scarlet* felt like it came from a place of vengeance – a jaded response to online haters calling her everything from a sell-out to a Satanist. She doesn’t disagree. ‘It was so appropriate for that time in my life and the state of my mind. There’s always a way to take a mood and an aesthetic and flip it, expand it, make it different, make it interesting in a new way.’ Where others might leave the darkness behind, Doja found new things to do with it.

Her latest album, by contrast, is an ode to the Eighties and all its discarded bits. Think Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, Gary Numan, Nina Hagen, Grace Jones and a new-wave spin on Janet Jackson. Collide all of that with some cock rock, a knowing dash of pastiche holding it together, and you get something akin to *Vie*. ‘I embraced the things that were less popular about the Eighties,’ she says. ‘*Scarlet* was something else compared to *Vie*, and I think *Vie* is a reminder that I can go back, or I can do what I want without having to remain in the state of *Scarlet*.’

To realise it, she enlisted Jack Antonoff as lead producer. On paper, this partnership raised some eyebrows, due to his polished brand of pop and her coming off the back of an anti-pop album. In practice, it raised the ceiling. He had an ear not just for what needed enhancement, but for what was missing entirely: giving her sound a shape it hadn’t previously taken. ‘I hadn’t worked with instruments on any of my projects before this,’ she says. ‘I’d worked only with beats. So, to have him put those instruments on these beats… it gave me a new love for music. It allowed me to see myself, see my work, in a different way.’

Another instrument in her arsenal is humour. She scoffs, indiscriminately, at her enemies, herself and, occasionally, her fans. Is she serious or is she trolling? Is this a joke or am I the joke? ‘When you’re a lyricist, you have to have a sense of humour that goes beyond, in some form. Nicki Minaj, Drake, Jay-Z, Kendrick Lamar, Lil Wayne, these people are not comedians, but they are. They could write a stand-up set if they wanted to, but music is much more fun. What is a rapper without a punchline? It’s all about irony. I learnt that from Jay-Z. I watched an interview where he said irony is incredibly important when it comes to hip-hop and rap.’

There is a whiff of the chronically unserious about her lyrics. Some songs incorporate gloriously silly ad-libs and references – ‘Bobs on me like Dylan, blondes on me like Hilton’, she sings in ‘Rules’, alluding to her penchant for wigs – while others are one big wink and nudge timed to a beat. Take ‘Agora Hills’. I ask her to hear me out, at which point she leans in with a mischievous grin, vape clasped. I suggest it sounds like what King Kylie (Kylie Jenner’s rap persona) might release if Doja Cat were her ghostwriter.

She smiles, nods. ‘I love that. That’s a very smart way to think of it. It’s all about that girl’s girl attitude. It’s very feminine; it’s the part of us that is unapologetic. I wanted to touch on that because the song is unapologetic. I want to show off the man that I’m with, and I don’t really care what other people think of our relationship. I don’t care about their opinions. I’m going to do whatever I want. That’s what that was.’

The songs that didn’t make *Vie* may surface in a deluxe edition, or perhaps simply an EP. ‘They’re under my arm right now,’ she says. What would they sound like? ‘It almost feels like *Planet Her*; but it’s in the Eighties and it’s not in the Eighties,’ she starts. ‘Electronic and synthy and wavy and dreamlike and sensuous and textural,’ she settles on. ‘Lots of thin noises with metallic and watery, bubbly droplets. Tongue in cheek, as always, and sexual. I love to write in that realm.’ ▷





THIS PAGE AND OPPOSITE shirt, £2,250, and gloves, £795, both **BALENCIAGA**. Ear cuff, £119, and mixed-metal and crystal necklace, price on request, both **SWAROVSKI**



Harness top, £9,500, and skirt, £9,000, both **HERMĒS**. Mixed-metal and crystal earrings, price on request, **SWAROVSKI**. **HAIR:** J Stay Ready at Chris Aaron Management. **MAKE-UP:** Ivan Núñez at Forward Artists, using MAC Cosmetics. **NAILS:** Saccia Livingston. **SET DESIGN:** Frosty's at New School Represents. **TAILORING:** Susie Kourinian. **PRODUCTION:** Viewfinders. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANTS:** Hadya Tuofiq, Damien Lloyd and Frankie Benkovic

‘I AM TOUGH, BUT I’M NOT THAT TOUGH. IT IS A MASK’

An off-duty day in the life of Doja Cat begins in the foetal position on the sofa, candles burning on countless surfaces in ‘every damn scent you can think of’. By the afternoon, she is poolside with a drink that matches her bikini, furniture rearranged for the thousandth time. She has too many objects and the reorganising is, she explains, effectively endless. Then her Stairmaster – ‘which I love more than anyone knows’ – gets its moment.

Fortnite Blitz Royale might claim the rest of her time. She live-streams on Twitch as ‘Dojacattington’, and owns a *Fortnite* skin called ‘Mother of Thorns’, which feels, somehow, exactly right. She has never designed her own game – though, when I ask, she doesn’t hesitate: something in the vein of *The Sims* but enhanced, with real designers and real spaces. ‘I’m more interested in building a reality and building a world,’ she says. This, from a woman constructing entire universes on stage, on record and apparently on the sofa on a Thursday afternoon, tracks entirely.

An off-the-cuff remark becomes a national headline. A live-stream appearance becomes content before any genuine interaction can be had. And yet, despite a string of viral social-media posts and all the scrutiny and backlash that comes with it, she hasn’t retreated entirely. In fact, she’s remarkably still out there. There’s the TikTok about possibly having lipedema; the defence of Madonna against a comments section of age-shaming, delivered with characteristic precision (‘Is it because you feel threatened by an older woman who can do her job forever?’); the dry rant about the algorithm’s relentless peddling of body-horror beauty treatments; and that Timothée Chalamet critique, which she later admitted to using as ‘leverage’ for ‘clicks, likes, approval’. The noise, she has concluded, is navigable. ‘As long as I can have meaningful discussions and meaningful moments with fans – or not fans, just people – that is important. I look past [the noise].’

Now, entering her thirties, she is reflective. The darkness she numbed her way through – including the outbursts, the drinking and the self-medication – hasn’t entirely lifted, but it is accompanied by light. She can step outside of herself and observe the person she is from a distance. ‘I have an explanation, not an excuse, for the way that I act in certain situations,’ she says. ‘I pathologise myself constantly. But I do want to hold onto that wonder of who I am and why I do the things I do.’

Her self-awareness is sharp, disarming and vulnerable. She has been in therapy for eight years. Recently, she revealed her Borderline Personality Disorder diagnosis to her fanbase in the way she does most things: via an unfiltered TikTok, dropped without ceremony into the feed. ‘I’ve been much more introspective,’ she explains. She has abandonment issues rooted in her estrangement from her father. These play out, she explains, in the details of her daily life. ‘If I have a boyfriend and he leaves just to run errands, my brain thinks he’s breaking up with me. And this is because my dad left me when I was little.’ Her hypothetical boyfriend goes to get croissants. He has to feed his cat. He needs to vacuum. ‘But my brain does not believe that. I have to scrape against it and teach myself that that’s not happening to me. I’m safe.’ She wants to lead with more grace, to resist the snap reflex, especially online, where the feeling of being threatened arrives quickly, the urge to retaliate even quicker. ‘There are little things I do to make people think I don’t care, or that I don’t feel anything. I do those things on purpose to feel tough. And I am tough. But I’m not that tough. It is a mask.’

We end the call with an impromptu tour of her artwork. The painting framing her head like a halo is her grandmother’s. ‘She’s ridiculous. Like, one of the greatest painters I’ve ever seen.’ Doja gets up to show me more: canvas after canvas of colourful dreamscapes, surrealist takes on very real and personal moments rendered in a way that makes the familiar feel slightly suspended. Among them, large-scale abstracts that are her own work – although most of her pieces are in storage. The one she shows me has a primitive figure set against a psychedelic backdrop, bold and unresolved with intent: somewhere between Basquiat and Dalí. She has just been to see the American artist Rashid Johnson, she tells me. ‘I met him in person and he’s just brilliant and he’s so, so sweet. He showed some work that I was very inspired by. He’s incredible.’

I joke that, after the deluxe, perhaps we should expect paintings. How does she find the time? ‘I demand time from my team. They’ve helped me to find pockets between the really busy moments.’ After this, we might not hear from Doja Cat for some time. ‘I think I want to take three years off. I want to just do whatever. I might do another mural. I’m going to furnish this whole upper area of my house because there’s literally nothing in here and there’s been nothing in here for four years or five. So, that’s bizarre,’ she begins, sliding off into another one of her tangents. ‘Whatever’, in this instance, undoubtedly meaning something that isn’t too quiet.

Before that, it’s time for the second leg of her tour. The UK dates are imminent. ‘One of my favourite places to perform is London. I feel like that’s a really good crowd and people know how to engage and enjoy. Nobody feels self-conscious and it just seems to be a really enthusiastic crowd,’ she tells me. ‘I feel positive about what’s to come.’ And with that, Axel reclaims her lap. It’s time to sign off, candles burning somewhere off-screen and those tabs continuing to multiply. □



Jacket, £6,450, and skirt, £3,700, both **LOUIS VUITTON**. Boots, around £735, **PARIS TEXAS**



Jacket, £285, and shirt, £185, both **POLO RALPH LAUREN**. Trousers and necklace, both price on request, **ISABEL MARANT**. Hat, price on request, **JESSIE WESTERN**. Belt, stylist's own

GO WEST

BRING THE REBELLIOUS ENERGY OF COWBOY COUNTRY TO THE URBAN SPRAWL WITH WELL-WORN DENIM, HARDY LEATHER AND RODEO-READY ACCESSORIES

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARC DE GROOT STYLING BY ANNE-MARIE CURTIS



Blazer, £1,995, shirt, £795, and skirt, £1,295, all **ERDEM**. Hat, price on request, **JESSIE WESTERN**. Boots, £490, **LILI CURIA**



Jacket, price on request, **JESSIE WESTERN**. Shirt, £115, **WITH NOTHING UNDERNEATH**



Shirt, £2,050, and trousers, £1,290, both **PRADA**. Sunglasses, £650, **GUCCI**. Belt, £660, **SONIA PETROFF**. Boots, £180, **ARIAT**



Top, £5,825, and trousers, £6,725, both **LORO PIANA**. Sunglasses, £515, **VALENTINO GARAVANI**. Boots (just seen), £490, **LILI CURIA**



Shirt with tie, £3,270, and skirt, around £3,205, both **GUCCI**. Belt, price on request, **JESSIE WESTERN**. Boots, £180, **ARIAT**



Blazer, £2,190, harness, £690, and trousers, £1,100, all **McQUEEN**



Jacket, shirt and skirt, all price on request, **DIOR.** Boots, £490, **LILI CURIA**



Top, £1,650, jacket, £1,270, and trousers, £2,630, all **CHLOÉ**. Earrings and rings, all price on request, **JESSIE WESTERN**. Bracelet, £145, **PEBBLE LONDON**. Hat, stylist's own



Jacket and trousers, both price on request, **CELINE**. Shirt, £130, **WITH NOTHING UNDERNEATH**. Necklaces, from £201, **MISHO**. Belt, £92, **VILLAGE LEATHERS**



Coat, price on request, jumper, £2,420, and skirt (just seen), £7,000, all **CHANEL**. Hat, price on request, **JESSIE WESTERN**. **HAIR AND MAKE-UP:** Irena Ruben. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT:** Olivia Sandford-Wilson. **MODEL:** Qun Ye at Next. **PRODUCTION:** Abe Dijkman at Sandra Witman Agency



Top, £2,160, and trousers, £3,350, both **LOUIS VUITTON**. White gold and diamond earrings, price on request, **BULGARI**. **OPPOSITE** Jumper, £3,300, trousers, £2,550, and belt, £1,570, all **LOUIS VUITTON**. White gold and diamond ring set, price on request, **BULGARI**







PHOTOGRAPHS BY NIALL HODSON STYLING BY HOLLY GORST



CIAO BELLA

SHE STEALS EVERY SCENE IN THE DISNEY+ ADAPTATION OF JILLY COOPER'S HORNY AND HOPEFUL 1980S ROMP *RIVALS*. NOW, AS IT RETURNS FOR A SECOND SEASON, BREAKOUT BELLA MACLEAN TELLS *NICOLA FAHEY* SHE'S ONLY JUST GETTING STARTED

WE'RE SHOOTING BELLA MACLEAN IN a sprawling greenhouse in Richmond. It's late spring and the weather is sunshine one minute, rain the next, followed by a sudden rattle of hailstones on the glass overhead. Maclean, dressed in a sheer Louis Vuitton dress, is unfazed. She's stone-cold sober but has the verve of someone one drink ahead – playful, giggly, occasionally laughing to the brink of tears, then snapping back to total professionalism without dropping a frame. There's a sense that if a typhoon hit the set next, Maclean would remain focused on getting the job done.

You'll know and love Maclean from the Disney+ runaway hit *Rivals*, in which she plays Taggie, the overlooked daughter of moody, principled journalist Declan O'Hara, with wide-eyed sincerity. In person, Maclean has a wry glint in her eyes; she's unshowy in a way that tends to mark a certain kind of British breakout. Florence Pugh springs to mind – not just in attitude, but in the lack of ego. The feeling that, even as the work scales up, the person stays real. 'I spent so much time laughing on this job that, in the first season, I was worried I'd be fired,' says Maclean, post-shoot, now wearing a black and red Adidas tracksuit and bucket hat, leaning into our shared fries. 'Taggie is so serious and earnest – she's wonderful to play – but I also have Alex Hassell and Katherine Parkinson and Danny Dyer, who all love making me break [character]. When you're on the cusp of laughing all the time, there's an energy that's so fizzy – everyone's chemistry is so strong.'

It's this magnetism that really sets *Rivals* alight, turning it into one of the most talked-about shows on both sides of the Atlantic, earning critical acclaim and a rapid recommission for a second series that will jump from eight to 12 episodes, dropping in two parts. There's also the built-in nostalgia of Jilly Cooper's scandal-soaked 'Rutshire Chronicles', on which the series is based. The Disney+ version doesn't soften the 1980s escapades for a modern audience, but rather leans into its vulgar excess, from casual sexism and snobbery to unchecked power and sexual politics, all played out in a glossy, high-camp world that feels both exhilarating and uncomfortably true to the era.

Season two gets straight to it. Within 10 minutes of the first episode, we're at a pool party at Freddie Jones' (Dyer) mansion – a sea of gold chains, hairy chests and matching moustaches, topped off with a full-frontal moment as polo players Sebbie and Dobbie jump into the water naked. '*Rivals* is back, baby,' Maclean says, laughing, when I bring up the scene. 'The boys were new this season – talk about courage. They came in with such a great sense of humour and just went for it. Weirdly, it was a great way to get to know them! There are so many intimacy co-ordinators and everything was properly blocked off,' she says, addding that, when it comes to shooting the show's attention-grabbing sex scenes, sets are structured and respectful. 'There's always someone there making sure everyone feels comfortable and safe. It's taken very seriously.'

The opening sets the tone for the season, which takes place a year on in 1987. Back in the Cotswolds, Tony Baddingham (David Tennant) is alive – bruised, bandaged and rattled, his memory loss raising more suspicion than sympathy. His rivalry with lothario Rupert Campbell-Black, now the target of a smear campaign while he runs in the general election, reignites as media companies Corinium and Ventura circle each other again. There's even a cameo from Pam St Clement, aka Pat Butcher. And at the centre of it all is Taggie. The last time we saw her was *that* kiss, the cliffhanger after eight will-they-won't-they episodes in the first season, which landed just as Rupert appeared to have moved on. In season two, we'll see his ex-wife Helen Gordon (Hayley Atwell) return with her new husband Malise Gordon (Rupert Everett). She brings his children back into the picture, who take a shine to Taggie, complicating things even further.

'It's definitely not over and it's going to be very tumultuous. This season is about Taggie becoming a woman. She's growing into herself, finding confidence, realising how wonderful she is, that she has something to bring to the table. I didn't want to make her a wallflower who just gets trampled on. It's a real coming-of-age story,' says Maclean, aware of how her portrayal might come across to viewers. 'I want young girls who don't know who they are and are struggling with a sense of self, but feel deeply about the world, to know that, even if they're gentle, fragile flowers, there's strength in that,' she says. 'Taggie is so beaten down by life at the time, but there are just pockets of fierceness. There's strength in vulnerability.'

Maclean spent 10 months filming the second season in Bristol, renting a flat in Clifton Village overlooking the city. Long days on set bled into evenings together, with cast nights out at Bristol pubs. Many co-stars became a support system. 'One of the nicest things about this job is you end up with friends across completely different ages and backgrounds who you would never normally meet. Alex is 45 – he's some random bloke I met two years ago and is now my bezzie mate!' ▷

'THIS SEASON IS ABOUT TAGGIE BECOMING A WOMAN'



Dress, £5,600, **LOUIS VUITTON**



Jacket, £6,450, and skirt, £4,050, both **LOUIS VUITTON** White gold and diamond ring set, price on request, **BULGARI. HAIR:** Chad Maxwell at A-Frame Agency. **MAKE-UP:** Sara Hill at The Wall Group. **NAILS:** Ami Streets at The Wall Group, using Kure Bazaar. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT:** Nina Gahrén Williamson

‘YOU WOULD TALK TO JILLY COOPER AND END UP WITH A GLASS OF WINE IN YOUR HAND’

Danny Dyer, the East End actor who is so perfectly cast as jocular businessman Freddie Jones, took on the role of a protective big brother for Maclean. ‘If I have something like a broken heart, Danny is the person I call. There was an incident that happened and I called him up and he was like, “All right, where is he!” He gives advice but it’s not even that. He has my back so much and I have his. Danny makes everyone feel like the most special person.’

Shooting the show was a magical time. But, she reflects, ‘it was also such a tumultuous year’. Towards the end of it came the loss of Jilly Cooper. When she died on 5 October 2025, aged 88, the cast were filming in Bristol and producers travelled from London to deliver the news in person before it became public. ‘It was really heartbreaking – it’s still unbearable,’ says Maclean, struggling to speak. ‘Even though she was the oldest on set [the author had a cameo in the first series], you felt like she was going to last forever. She was like a fairy godmother. She made everyone feel safe and reminded us how lucky we were to be there.’ Cooper also provided some authentic Rutshire hospitality: ‘You’d have a conversation with her and somehow end up with a glass of wine in your hand. She’d make you feel so confident. You’d think, “You know what, I think I’m going to become a supermodel – I’m so incredible.” And then you’d go to the loo, and see your red-wine-stained lips, and make-up halfway down your face.’ Now, the show feels even more important to her legacy. ‘We’re strongly staying true to what she wrote, honouring her and making it the best show ever. In the most wonderful way, it’s like it’s ramped up a bit. There is a sense of duty.’

While it might seem like Maclean arrived suddenly on our screens, she has been laying the groundwork for years. Born in New York to British parents, with older twin sisters, she moved to East Sussex aged 10 before going to a prestigious all-girls boarding school in Kent, which, she says, gave her independence early. Already an aspiring actor, she managed to convince the school to let her spend weekends in London, splitting her time between going out and drama classes. Acting stuck, and she later graduated from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 2020.

Her first professional role came a year later, in *Spring Awakening* at the Almeida Theatre. A part in *Silent Witness* followed, then a turn in the final series of Netflix’s *Sex Education*, a show that became a launchpad for British talent. The year after, she made her National Theatre debut in *London Tide*. Her next move takes her to film, with a lead role in Ray Panthaki’s directorial debut *In Starland*, an indie drama set in small-town America, where she plays one of a group of young artists who up-end the life of a drifting older man.

Now, she can’t get enough of the industry. She wakes up at 6am most mornings to watch a film before work – recent favourites have been *Hamnet*, *Sentimental Value*, *Sorry, Baby*, *Winter Boy*, *Petite Maman* and *Nickel Boys*. ‘I’m quite a sensitive person, so if I watch something intense in the evening, I need time afterwards to process it. If I watch it in the morning, I’ve got the whole day to sit with it. I remember watching *Hamnet* after I lost my granny and thinking Jessie Buckley’s performance was helping me grieve. Somehow, you see yourself in these characters. You understand more about life and humanity.’

As well as seeing a therapist, Maclean is partial to a psychic visit: ‘I’ll try anything. Put “psy” in front of it, you name it. I love it.’ She has become increasingly self-aware as an actor. ‘The more I know about myself – my dark parts and my light parts, the things I’m ashamed of – the more depth I have.’ She’s clear on boundaries, too, and keeps her distance from social media. ‘I’m such a private person. I like holding things back – a bit of mystery. If people know everything about me, they’ll start seeing me on camera and not the character.’

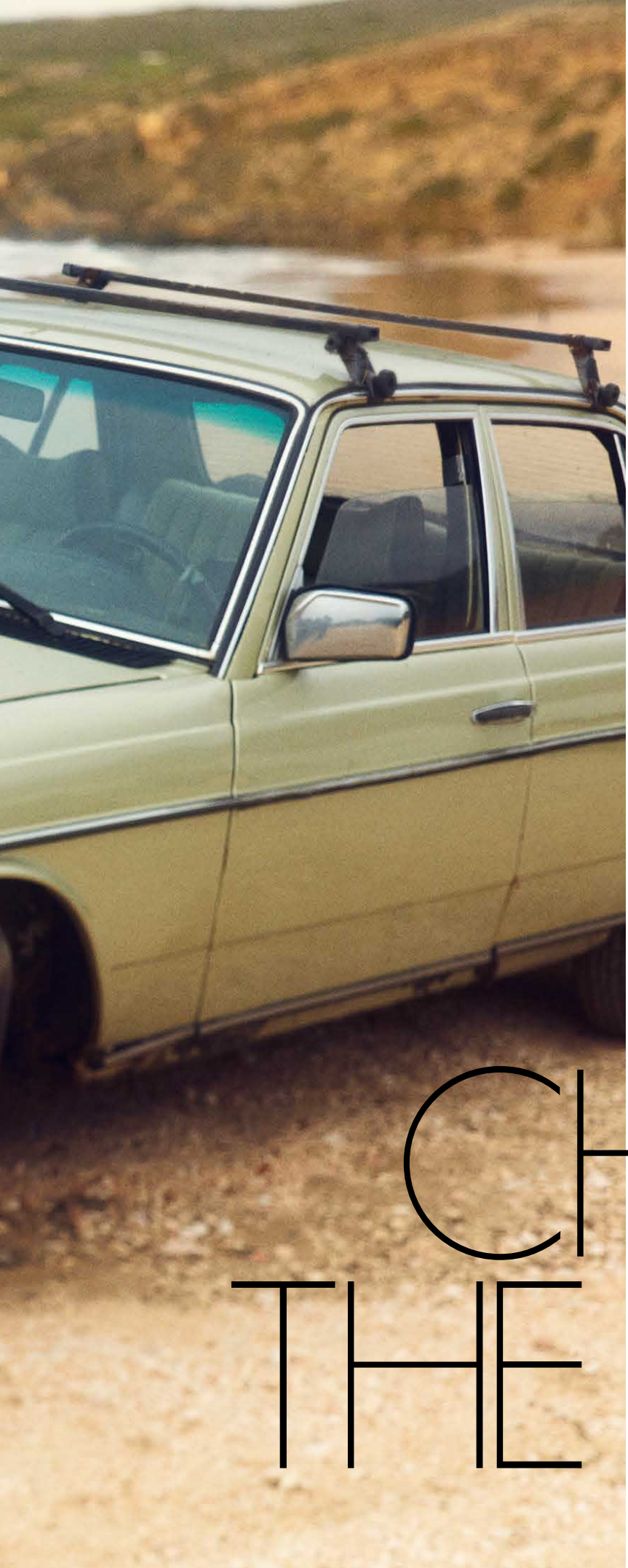
Despite being relatively new on the acting scene, Maclean was one of the first to be cast in *Rivals*; her chemistry with Hassell was immediate. In the show, the age gap between Taggie and 37-year-old Rupert has been reworked, with Taggie aged up from 18 to 20, though it’s still one of the show’s most talked-about elements. ‘Jilly was so wonderful about that – she knew it wasn’t the same Taggie as in the books; it’s her through a 21st-century gaze. I was so worried about what people would think, but Gen Z seemed to love it. My girlfriends send me these funny videos of me and Rupert on TikTok.’ Maclean sees it as more of a soul connection. ‘Taggie is wise beyond her years – she sees him for all his faults and believes he can change, and he really sees her. That’s what’s painful. There’s so much going against them, but there’s a pureness to their love.’

That’s the thing about *Rivals*. For the millions watching – and unpacking in living rooms, group chats, TikTok edits, office debriefs – it isn’t just nostalgia. It’s permission to feel things deeply, to want things, to fall in love with people you probably shouldn’t. And to believe, against your better judgement, that it might still work out. Taggie is the one flying the flag highest – but it seems Bella isn’t immune to it, either. ‘Honestly, the real me is probably hopelessly the same,’ she says. ‘Despite everything, she can’t help but love him.’ □

‘Rivals’ season two is out May 15 on Disney+



Dress and trainers, both price on request, sunglasses, £400, all **MIU MIU**



PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER GEHRKE
STYLING BY ELISSA CASTELBOU

THIS SEASON, CHANNEL A LAID-BACK MOOD IN STANDOUT LOOKS MADE FOR LANGUOROUS SUMMER DAYS, WITH BABYDOLL DRESSES, RETRO PATTERNS, BREEZY FABRICS AND BOLD COLOURS

CHASE THE SUN



Dress, £3,400,
and loafers, £690,
both **CELINE**



Jacket, £3,950, **LOUIS VUITTON.** Hat, price on request, **VERONICA MARUCCI CHAPEAUX.** Earrings, around £425, **MARC DELOCHE**



Playsuit, scarf (worn as hat) and flats, all price on request, **GIAMBATTISTA VALLI.** Sunglasses, £400, **MIU MIU.** Bag, £2,750, **DIOR**



Dress, £3,450, **CHLOE**. Sunglasses, around £340, **AUDE HEROUARD**. Earrings, price on request, **TÉTIER BIJOUX**



Dress, price on request, and heels, £1,200, both **LOEWE**



Top, £3,600, and skirt, £5,500, both **HERMÈS.** Hat, price on request, **SUGRI**



Top, from a selection, **ATELIER SOVEN.**
Skirt, scrunchie, earrings, tights, bag and shoes, all price on request, **PATOU**



Shirt, £1,100, top (worn underneath), £640, shorts, £510, sunglasses and bag, both price on request, gloves, £1,720, and flats, £910, all **PRADA**. **HAIR AND MAKE-UP**: Julia Kraemer. **LOCATION**: Villa 48, Aljezur. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT**: Alexandra Lefèvre. **PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT**: Jacopo Peloso. **MODEL**: Mirte Rooze at Elite Paris. **FASHION DIRECTOR**: Alexandra Bernard (ELLE International). **PRODUCER**: Yannick Selva (ELLE International)


392162
FLORENCE
FINAL DESTINATION
FLR
FLIGHT NUMBER
European bottoms, rich in culture
B-39-21-02

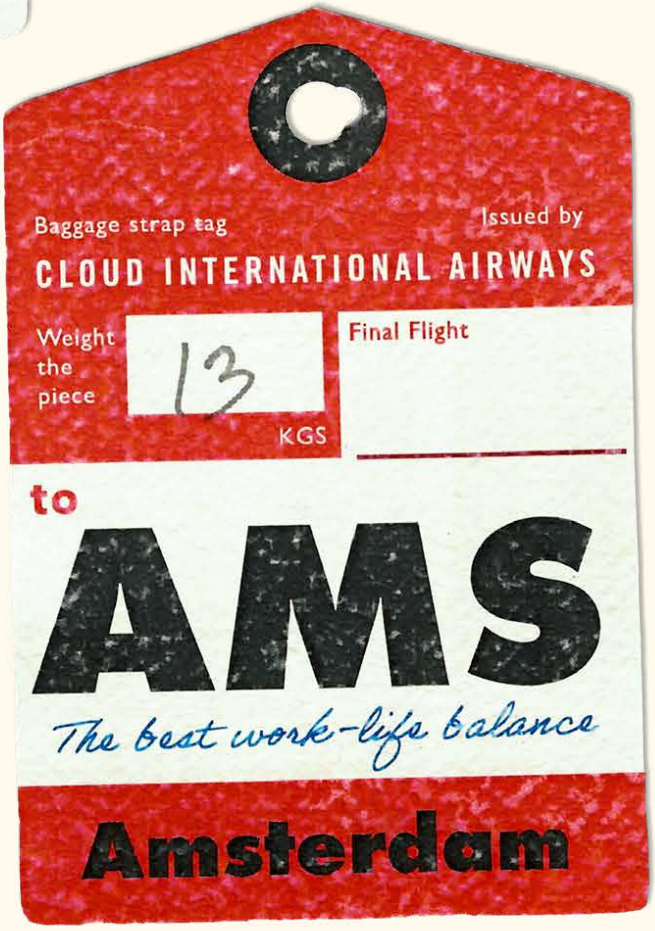

BAGGAGE (STRAP) TAG
INDIVIDUAL WEIGHT
KGS.
ORIGINAL FLIGHT
TO:
BKK
TRANSFER AT
FLIGHT NO.
Digital hotspot, sun all year
WORLDAIR
WA 83-68-42


BAGGAGE STRAP TAG
To KIN
Pure escapism, good vibe
TRAVEL WORLD AIRWAYS
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WORLD AIRWAYS
To JAMAICA
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MEL
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IC Nº 541730
World Airlines


LOP
LOMBOK
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Surf, sea and co-working
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A metropolis like no other
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CLOUD INTERNATIONAL AIRWAYS
Weight the piece
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KGS
Final Flight
to
AMS
The best work-life balance
Amsterdam


MRS
Marseille
Creative crowd on the Med

A LIFE ELSEWHERE

IN A WORLD FILLED WITH CONFLICTS AND AI-DRIVEN UNCERTAINTY, RECORD NUMBERS OF WOMEN ARE TAKING THE IDEA OF ESCAPE QUITE LITERALLY – NO LONGER DAYDREAMING ABOUT LIFE IN A NEW COUNTRY, BUT PURSUING IT. *OLIVE POMETSEY* REPORTS ON THE JOYS AND COMPLICATIONS THEY FACE ON THE OTHER SIDE

ARTWORK BY MIA JUNGREIS

MY SKIN IS MAKE-UP-FREE AND SLIGHTLY SUNBURNT. MY HAIR IS wild and faintly bleached by the UV rays. Beneath my feet, hot sand has replaced London's pavements as I man a beach bar in Jamaica, cracking open coconuts for punters. No, wait – I'm in Ibiza, taking a stroll on my lunch break from the new wellness retreat I've somehow opened. Sometimes, in my daydreams, there's no beach at all: I'm a full-time raver in Berlin; reclusive novelist in Florence; rich and happily unemployed person on a permanent gap year. The one consistency is that life is always simpler. Oh, and I am always somewhere other than London.

Who hasn't daydreamed about packing it all in, leaving the 9-to-5 behind and seeking a sunnier, stress-free life abroad? Perhaps you took a weekend trip to Marseille and thought, 'I could live here.' Maybe you binged *The White Lotus* and, glossing over the eat-the-rich plot, imagined how fabulous your life would be if you moved to Thailand. The fantasy might be fleeting, pushed to the back of the mind by life's daily to-do list but, for many people, moving abroad is creeping onto that list as a genuine task – no longer a 'What if?' but rather a 'When?'

In the year leading up to June 2025, more than 600,000 people left the UK, following a year-on-year rise in emigration post-pandemic, across British nationals and foreign residents. Not quite a mass exodus just yet but, with nearly three quarters of 18- to 30-year-olds saying they'd consider uprooting to another country, we could soon face one. Don't want to commit to a permanent move? Join the 90,000 people in the UK who take career breaks each year – a 'grown-up gap year' to provide temporary relief from the grind. Is it any wonder, when many face bleak realities tied up with a cost-of-living crisis, an impossible job market and depressing news headlines from around the world?

When she touched down in Melbourne in February, communications manager Faye Shepherd* had already spent two years joking about moving to Australia – a punchline to lift the mood whenever dinner-party chat veered towards inflation or the dearth of jobs. But, eventually, life in the UK turned the joke into a plan.

'It feels relentless to be trying in a system that feels set up to fail,' Shepherd says. Her career had become a string of fixed-term contracts. In 2025, she applied to 17 jobs and didn't get one. The final straw came last November, when her workplace offered her a new contract that was ▷

*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED. PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES

effectively a demotion, with an £18,000 pay cut. Almost immediately, she began planning her escape. 'I haven't come here to pursue a career or anything,' she says. 'I've come to feel like I have a different life.'

This isn't a uniquely British inclination. The world is in flux and, increasingly, people want to move with it. A public-opinion survey from Gallup shows that, worldwide, the number of adults aspiring to build better lives overseas has hit an all-time high: 900 million people, all yearning for change. That cohort includes people in the global south, historically more associated with migration. But the desire to leave is spreading to the US and Canada, too. We're living through a period of unprecedented global restlessness. Everyone wants to believe that, somewhere, the grass might genuinely be greener.

When President Trump was re-elected in 2024, 25-year-old Claudette Devereux knew she had to leave America. 'It wasn't even a question,' she says from her new home in Buenos Aires, as of early February. An aspiring international human-rights lawyer, she'd worked on the Kamala Harris campaign alongside an internship at Microsoft, before landing a job at American Express in New York. The warning signs of a dramatically shifting political landscape began to flash brighter and faster. She realised that, if she stayed in Houston in Texas, she could be denied birth control based on a pharmacist's religious beliefs. She watched panicked friends try to find parents who'd been deported by ICE.

'America is a very politically divided place right now,' says Devereux. 'I wouldn't ever be friends with a Trumper – it's a dangerous position to put myself in.' Beyond politics, the American Dream wasn't living up to its promise of freedom and social mobility, either. Even though Devereux went straight into a six-figure job out of university, the personal cost of the rat race quickly revealed itself. 'It was hyper-competitive. Everyone was seen to be working all the time. I was looking around like, "Is this sustainable for me for the next 20 years? Can I see myself building a family?" Corporate America is just a soul-sucking place.'

Wherever you are in the world, wherever you want to move, there's a hidden paradox within the current urge to migrate. If so many countries are driving people to consider leaving, is there really anywhere that can provide the kind of lifestyle that colours our fantasies? 'Escape can only ever be a temporary measure,' says Karen O'Reilly, a sociology professor at Loughborough University, explaining a concept she outlined in her first academic book on emigration *The British on the Costa Del Sol*. 'As soon as you settle and put down roots somewhere else, and you have to pay the mortgage and your taxes, and you have illnesses and children – the minute those things happen, you're no longer escaping.'

But it's inaccurate to say that everyone who emigrates is chasing a life outside the corporate grind – many are simply seeking safety. As of June 2025, more than one in every 70 people on the planet had been forcibly displaced from their homes – escaping, in the most literal sense, war, persecution and human-rights violations. It's usually these people who are reduced to political puppets by far-right ideologues, used to rile up the public with talk of 'small boats' and plans for mass deportations.

'There is a deep irony to it, isn't there?' says O'Reilly. 'Countries work hard to get the people they want, who don't cost them too much money or bring in money. If migrants work hard, pay their taxes and leave, that suits them. But they just don't want anyone to cost them money and, also, they're always pandering to the racism of the people in the country.' She describes a 'subtle ranking' system that shields the 'good' immigrants from being treated like their less affluent counterparts, particularly when they're afforded the luxury of being labelled an 'expat'. 'They're all migrants. Why are we distinguishing between them? There's a lot of power, racism and class distinction in that. It's a post-colonial kind of ranking of places and people.'

That social hierarchy becomes even more visible in moments of crisis. Just look at Dubai, where, earlier this year, Western immigrants quickly fled back home when it became a target in the Iran-US/Israel war. Of the migrants who made up more than 90% of the city's population, those left behind were mostly low-income migrants from India, Nepal and Pakistan – people who, at the bottom rung of the immigrant hierarchy, don't have the luxury of escape.

> 'I HAVEN'T COME HERE TO PURSUE A CAREER. I'VE COME TO FEEL LIKE I HAVE A DIFFERENT LIFE'

There is also the question of expat-driven gentrification. Last year, Vincenzo Latronico's hit novel *Perfection*, which revealed the shallow existence of digital nomads in Berlin, made readers feel uncomfortable for how close it was to the truth. Right now, it's estimated that there are 165,000 British people working abroad as digital nomads, incentivised by special visas offered by countries such as Portugal, Thailand and Indonesia. Even those who aren't armed with a laptop are arriving in large numbers. When Shepherd turned up to a trial shift for a part-time job in a Melbourne coffee shop, out of six candidates, two were English, two were Scottish, one was German and only one was an Australian. And while many of these destinations rely on tourism, more long-term immigration has a direct impact on the local community, as wealthy newcomers drive up the cost of living and push locals out of neighbourhoods they once called home.

Journalist Jennie Rhodes has lived in Spain for 16 years, predominantly in the Costa del Sol area, home to one of the biggest communities of British migrants in Europe. She's witnessed this shift firsthand. 'In recent years, there's been an explosion of people coming to live here and house prices have gone up exponentially,' she says. 'Local people on local wages cannot afford to rent or buy properties here.' Rhodes writes for the Spanish newspaper *Sur*; working on the English-language edition designed to 'connect communities and make sure people are informed correctly about Spanish laws, changes and regulations'. If anyone knows how to integrate meaningfully and avoid the Brits-abroad trope, it's her. 'Nowadays, it's very easy,' she says. The key is to do your research. 'Get onto forums and social media, find language-exchange groups. If you move to a little village, learn about the festivities and customs of the place.'

> 'PEOPLE MOVING AROUND GETS US OUT OF OUR OWN CULTURAL STAGNATION'

When Shepherd first moved to Melbourne, she used apps such as Bumble to set up friend dates and meet new people in the area, and quickly joined a boxing gym to find locals with similar interests. Devereux has already joined a language-exchange group and keeps her mind open to chance encounters. 'People will meet me like, "Hey, I'm having an *asado* (barbecue); why don't you stop by?" or "I'm going to the gym – want to join?"' she says. 'It's so friendly and community-oriented here. I've felt so welcome.' This is especially reassuring for her as a Black woman. 'People were telling me, "Argentina's incredibly racist. Why would you go there out of all places?" When I first got here, I was hyper-scanning for racism. I had to force myself out of that mindset.' In fact, thanks to the country's community of Gambian and Senegalese immigrants, she's managed to connect with her heritage in ways that corporate America didn't facilitate.

And isn't that the whole point? If you're searching for a better life, the best way to build it is through community. That's exactly how culture and creativity thrive. In fashion, the global movement of people has gifted us Grace Wales Bonner's Caribbean-inspired collections and Chopova Lowena's rebellious blend of traditional Bulgarian dress and British punk. In music, the UK's melting pot has birthed some of the world's most beloved genres, from lovers rock to drum 'n' bass. As Olivia Dean said in her Grammys acceptance speech: 'I'm up here as a granddaughter of an immigrant. I'm a product of bravery, and I think those people deserve to be celebrated.'

There may be no perfect way to emigrate, no far-flung paradise that will permanently shield you from the stresses of existing. But there will always be people to help you find meaning outside of the grind, to remind you what's important when life throws another curveball, to push towards progress. 'People moving around gets us out of our own cultural stagnation,' says O'Reilly. 'It brings different ways of thinking about life, different perspectives. Why would you not want that?' □

THE ONE-WAY TICKET

Where to escape to in 2026



AMSTERDAM

Just a 90-minute flight from the UK, Amsterdam has a softer approach to work-life balance. Close your laptop at half five, cycle home along the canal, then catch up with friends at creative hotspot Café de Pels.

LOMBOK

Looking for a location (mostly) untouched by influencer gentrification? Bali's lesser-known neighbour delivers the same picture-perfect beaches without the crowds – a haven for surfers and digital nomads alike.





MONTREAL

A lower cost of living with all the luxuries of metropolitan life make this city so popular. The real draw is the nature across the region of Quebec – perfect for weekend hikes or skiing mini-breaks in the Laurentian Mountains.

BUENOS AIRES

Argentina's capital boasts historic architecture and diverse communities. Even more attractive to would-be immigrants is the pathway to citizenship, which only requires two years of legal residency.





CAPE TOWN

With Table Mountain on your doorstep, Cape Town has natural and cultural delights in equal measure. The time zone also makes it a no-brainer for British digital nomads – just an hour ahead in the summer.

PHOTOGRAPHS: RIFAD LAFIR, DARREN BUDIMAN, BENJAMIN BOWKER/UNSPLASH, GETTY IMAGES

changing the NARRATIVE

IN 2025, THE JAMAICAN-BORN RACHEL SCOTT BECAME THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN TO BE APPOINTED TO A LUXURY AMERICAN FASHION HOUSE – JOINING A LEGION OF DESIGNERS TAKING ON NEW ROLES AT THE HELM OF BIG BRANDS. SHE SITS DOWN WITH *TAMISON O'CONNOR* TO TALK ABOUT THE GREAT LUXURY RESET AND WHAT IT MEANS TO WORK IN FASHION RIGHT NOW

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIFFANY NICHOLSON



RACHEL SCOTT PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE PROENZA SCHOULER STUDIO IN NEW YORK



ABOVE: VALENTINE WEARING PROENZA SCHOULER SS26. OPPOSITE: LOOKS FROM PROENZA SCHOULER'S AW26, RACHEL SCOTT'S DEBUT COLLECTION



BACK IN SEPTEMBER 2024, RACHEL SCOTT WAS HAVING A FULL-ON fashion disaster. It was the eve of her New York Fashion Week presentation for Diotima, the brand she started from her flat in Brooklyn, New York, in 2021. She was set to present shoes for the first time, developing the designs in Italy to showcase alongside her new collection – but the countdown to showtime was on, and the shoes were nowhere to be seen: UPS had lost the package.

At the time, Diotima was fast-emerging as the next big thing in New York. The previous year, Scott had been shortlisted as a finalist for the LVMH Prize and was crowned the Emerging Designer of the Year at the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) Awards. Now, she was up for the Designer of the Year prize – almost unheard of for a three-year-old brand. The pressure was on, with all eyes watching closely.

Desperate, Scott reached out to everyone she knew who might have a connection she could leverage, including the then CEO of Proenza Schouler Kay Hong, whom she met through the CFDA's fashion-fund mentorship programme the previous year. Hong and her team instantly jumped into action, pulling any strings they could to support, while the brand's founders Lazaro Hernandez and Jack McCollough offered up their footwear archive to Scott in case her shoes didn't arrive in time. Scott was touched – she'd never met the duo before, and it was an interaction that stayed with her, she tells me over Zoom from her studio in lower Manhattan. Little did she know that it would be the start of a very close relationship with Proenza Schouler: in January 2025, Hernandez and McCollough stepped down from the label they founded in 2002, heading for Paris to take over the reins at Loewe; that September, they chose Scott as their successor. (In case you were wondering, the shoes arrived just in the nick of time. 'At, like, 7am,' says Scott, laughing. 'I think the Proenza team helped us getting those shoes, honestly.')

> 'I WAS *always* AROUND *clothes*. IT'S SUCH A *huge* PART OF *Jamaican* CULTURE'

Her ascent is an important one for the fashion industry. At the time of Scott's appointment to Proenza Schouler, Diotima had already enjoyed a stratospheric rise and was profitable (a not-insignificant achievement for such a young label, particularly given the current economic backdrop). Her new job, meanwhile, came amid a flurry of creative-director announcements at established brands, part of an unprecedented reset in luxury fashion. But few of those vacant positions went to women. Fewer still were given to women of colour (just two, to be precise: Scott, and Grace Wales Bonner at Hermès menswear). Now, Scott is helping to redefine who gets to shape what the industry looks like today.

Diverse representation in fashion feels more urgent than ever, particularly in the United States, which, under President Trump, has seen reactionary policy transform the broader landscape both at home and abroad. Scott, a queer Black woman who first arrived in America from Jamaica in the 2000s, is well aware of the shift in the political climate. 'We are in a very conservative moment. The global rightward turn is terrifying,' she says. 'America is really difficult. It's difficult being an immigrant. It's difficult being a woman. It's difficult being queer.' But fashion can be a powerful tool, she says. It's one of the things that attracted her to a career path as a designer in the first place. 'I'm constantly on this journey of decentering where we place value, because we need to place value where it's due, and not just because of a legacy.'

Scott grew up in Kingston, Jamaica, raised by her furniture-designer father and flight-attendant mother, who also ran a fashion boutique in town, where Scott had a summer job after she turned 12. Her mother travelled extensively and would bring back international magazines for Scott to devour.

'I was always around clothes,' she says. 'In Jamaica, style is so important. It's such a huge part of the culture, alongside music and nightlife.' Scott spent her teenage years planning looks for the parties she'd go to. 'We didn't have shops and malls in the way you would in the UK or in the States. Either you travelled and bought things, or you would make pieces. So I started making my own clothes.'

Scott knew she wanted to do something creative and to explore the world. Aged 18, she headed to upstate New York, where she ▷

MODEL: VALENTINE AT AMR AGENCY. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE



> ‘I FELT *this need* TO STOP EVERYTHING *and start* OVER *in a more* MEANINGFUL WAY’

had secured a scholarship to study French and fine art at Colgate University, scratching her fashion itch with summer programmes at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York and Central Saint Martins in London. After graduation, she enrolled in a year-long programme at Istituto Marangoni in Milan, before landing a job at the Italian fashion house Costume National. ‘That was where everything started,’ she says. ‘It was my first experience, but also where I really got an education.’

Following a short detour in Jamaica prompted by an expired visa, Scott found herself back in New York City, with stints at J Mendel, the Olsen twins’ now-defunct brand Elizabeth and James, and Rachel Comey, where she spent almost nine years. For a long time, Scott had thought about starting her own label, but felt she just wasn’t prepared. ‘I knew I wanted to do something that was somehow related to home, which could contribute to the idea of Caribbean culture. But I didn’t feel ready in terms of my point of view and what I wanted to say. I also believed I needed training and experience.’ Then the pandemic came and everything shifted.

‘When you work in fashion, you work all the time. It kind of absorbs your life. It’s difficult to get perspective outside of your everyday,’ she explains. The enforced pause gave her that much-needed period of separation. ‘I had this moment of reflection when I was like, “Well, what am I doing? Why am I doing it? What does it mean for me?” I was in my late thirties, and I could continue on this path forever, unless I made the decision to do something else. Not that I didn’t like my job – I just didn’t feel fulfilled on a spiritual level. I felt this need to stop everything and start over in a way that felt more meaningful for me.’

With that, Diotima was born, connecting the dots between clothes, culture and creativity while blending the historical, the political and the autobiographical. ‘It’s an extremely personal brand,’ Scott says. ‘It’s very emotional, it’s quite reactive and it’s very subversive.’

Diotima quickly catapulted Scott into the spotlight. Her distinctive take on Caribbean style and focus on craftsmanship captured the attention of prominent women in the New York art world – Guggenheim curator Ashley James, artist Simone Leigh and photographer Ming Smith were among the brand’s early champions. At Fashion Week, Scott quickly emerged as one of the fastest-rising stars, with a design language that felt fresh and desirable. It was ‘rooted in the idea of modern femininity as a form of quiet strength, where empowerment is expressed through ease, clarity and intelligence,’ says Tiffany Hsu, chief buying officer at Mytheresa. ‘What makes Scott truly unique is her ability to translate emotional nuance into precise, wearable design without ever overcomplicating the message.’

Steven Kolb, the CEO of the CFDA, says Scott’s cultural perspective comes across in her designs in a way that feels both modern and grounded. ‘Proenza Schouler choosing her is straightforward: she’s smart, disciplined and brings a clear point of view. She understands how to evolve a brand without losing what makes it special. That combination is exactly what Proenza needs for its next chapter.’

Scott has a clear vision for her take on Proenza Schouler, which was on display during her debut autumn/winter 2026 show for the brand this February. She says she spent a lot of time thinking about who the Proenza woman was when the label was first established. ‘Proenza Schouler is a very important New York brand. But I think when [Hernandez and McCollough] started, it was a very different New York. There was this uptown-downtown dichotomy, which I don’t think really exists anymore,’ she says. ‘What is truly New York right now is that it’s a very global place. It can feel very “New York” and very international at the same time. To recapture New York in this more international sense will be really interesting.’

Her perspective as a female designer will also contribute to a different sensibility. ‘Proenza is a very sharp and precise brand, but I think there’s a complexity that I have access to,’ she says. ‘I can think about a bit more intimacy within the world, which is exciting. It’s always an interplay between sharpness and ease, some hardness and some softness. Hopefully, what I’m bringing is a sense of imperfection or undoneness.’ □

HAIR: RIN PIPER HERSCHLEB AT TRACEY MATTINGLY. MAKE-UP (RACHEL SCOTT): DEANNA MELLUSO AT FORWARD ARTISTS. MAKE-UP (VALENTINE): RIE OMOTO AT ALTERED. ON-SITE PRODUCTION: GIGI GULDAS. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE



OPPOSITE: LOOKS AND DETAILS FROM PROENZA SCHOULER AW26



KEEP IT PERSONAL

With internet algorithms and commercial campaigns increasingly dictating what people choose to wear, a truly distinct look is becoming harder to come by. Here, five fashion lovers explore what individual style means to them

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OTTO MASTERS AS TOLD TO TAMISON O'CONNOR



KAI-ISAIAH JAMAL

MODEL, POET AND VISIBILITY ACTIVIST

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED CLOTHES AND FASHION, BUT I HAD A difficult relationship with my body within that, and it has pushed me to look at clothes, and the ways in which I put them on, in a very different way. I couldn't wear a skirt for a long time, because it would make me feel dysphoric, so I found ways to wear a skirt unconventionally. I have a Junya Watanabe ripped-denim skirt that I often wear over a pair of trousers, almost like a textual layer. I enjoy the freedom that you can sculpt with clothes.

So many people think I have this insane wardrobe, which is hilarious. Working in fashion comes with a certain privilege – I get to live in so many other people's wardrobes. Recently, Haider Ackermann lent me a Tom Ford look for my birthday, which was this very *Playboy*-esque, ostrich-printed silk robe with matching silk pants. There is just something about wearing Haider Ackermann's Tom Ford that makes you feel inherently very sexy and innately confident.

My clothes are a true representation of how I feel in myself and in my body and my gender. It is often about having various characters or versions of myself, and my wardrobe is a huge reflection of that. It's quite eclectic, and teeters from sometimes looking like a teenage boy's wardrobe to having the odd Tom Ford shirt in there, or an Alexander McQueen vintage jacket.

I am such a lover of culture, art, film and music, and have so many reference points. I'll watch something like *The Florida Project* and I will be obsessed – not necessarily with what people are wearing, but by the colours that are in the film. Then, I'll go down a rabbit hole, looking for certain shades of Ralph Lauren polos. But I'm also inspired by anyone who's constantly pushed against the norm. I often return to someone like a Dennis Rodman or Prince. Busta Rhymes is also a huge reference. These were men who were unafraid of perceptions of their masculinity, and were so free and unbound by the societal pressures of what a man looks like.

I do think that good personal style comes from knowing yourself. It comes from knowing your body, and from dressing yourself comfortably as well. We've got to this place of lots of homogenised ideas of fashion. I often talk about the height of Tumblr, and how at that time being different and being daring was what made you cool. I do feel sometimes that what we deem cool or fashionable or stylish now is often about looking like somebody else, or looking like a cluster of people. I also think we're afraid of making mistakes with fashion; I guess that's because imagery lives for so much longer now. I want to see some more fashion mishaps – they always end up being iconic in 20 years.

My favourite sub-genre of reference is a celebrity on their way to an airport – especially so many of the great NBA players like Allen Iverson, Kobe Bryant and Michael Jordan. I really love an airport 'fit. It's a bit flashy, because you know that paps are going to be there, but they're also very comfortable. The airport 'fit has definitely been on the moodboard for a while. ▷

ELFIE REIGATE

MODEL

I LIKE TO THINK CLOTHES AND FASHION ARE ABOUT IDENTITY and expression, but I'm not sure how true that is for me. My style changes every day; if I'm in a really good mood, or if I want the day to go a certain way, I'll dress for it. I think, for me, it's a mood barometer. I always think of it as a bit like dress up and cosplaying; every day is a different look.

Most days, it's probably a really comfy tracksuit bottom and a nice T-shirt. But I quite like a different outfit in the evening if I've got a different plan. Even if I'm in town, I'll just change into a skirt or something for dinner or the pub. I love things that I can fold up and then unfurl out of a backpack in the city. I flip between liking really androgynous pieces and outfits, and then liking super-girly looks – I think it's quite fun to experiment with that.

I quite like things that are a bit strange or that I haven't seen before. One of my favourite pieces, which I've had forever – it was my mum's [the model Rosemary Ferguson], I stole it from her – is an old Vivienne Westwood Red Label structured cropped top. It's got a very weird kind of architectural silhouette that pokes out in the wrong place. When you look at it, it doesn't even look like a T-shirt, and then you put it on and it's strange and interesting.

I actually shop primarily in my mum and sisters' wardrobes. We have quite a civilised rotation going on. It's far more interesting than buying something new, and is significantly cheaper, too, which is a bonus. I also quite like Vinted and Depop, because it feels a bit more luck of the draw. You can find some really beautiful things but, when it arrives, it might be completely different to what you thought it was going to be, and there's something quite fun about that. Sometimes I'll buy a vintage T-shirt and it will still smell of someone else's perfume, which probably sounds a bit gross, but I like that it's lived a whole life before I've worn it.

One of the first really special pieces I bought was a Vivienne Westwood skirt that kind of matched the top from my mum. They worked so well together, almost like a co-ord, but one was made in the 1990s and one was from from the new collection. I love everything Vivienne Westwood stands for. Another thing I always come back to, as well, is a tracksuit from Aries. It's a matching co-ord, quite loud with bright colours and faux fur, so when you wear it, you almost look a bit 'yeti' – it's for when I'm in a good mood.



‘I LOVE TO FIND A BEAUTIFUL PIECE IN AN ANTIQUE SHOP AND TO REVIVE IT AND REINTERPRET IT’



MOUCHETTE BELL

STYLIST AND MODEL

I HAVE LOTS OF DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES when it comes to clothes. I can feel very chic one day and then just be very bohemian another. I’ve never followed trends religiously – originality is very important to me. I’m more somebody who likes to create something. I like to mix in a bit of irreverence as well. And I like to be brave. Sometimes I prefer the lining of a jacket to the actual outside of it, so I’ll wear it inside out.

Until the age of about 10, I lived in Ireland on the outskirts of Dublin; I was brought up Catholic but am now Buddhist. My first experience of the power of clothes was my Holy Communion. I had a white broderie-anglaise dress. It was the first time I wore a tiara and a veil, and I had a primrose-yellow coat. I just remember feeling incredible, and at the time it really influenced me. So when people like Alexander McQueen came along, I was like, yes! I had a wonderful stepmother who was an artist, and I used to stay with her every weekend. She was a hippie bohemian and really taught me how to mix clothing; she introduced me to vintage, which I love. Back in the day, we’d go to all the jumble sales and, to this day, I love to find a beautiful piece in an antique shop and to revive it, refresh it and reinterpret it. I still find it difficult to pass a charity shop without going in.

I have a terrible fear of being put in a box, because I would be as happy in a Saint Laurent jacket as I would be in jeans and a fringe top. One of my favourite pieces is a fringed buckskin jacket that I bought vintage in America at least 25 years ago. Another favourite is my Saint Laurent suit – it’s in black velvet with taffeta puff sleeves, and I’ll wear the jacket with jeans. I have a three-piece Paul Smith suit that I love; it’s very boyish. But then I also have a wraparound, dark-navy-blue Yohji Yamamoto kilt that I bought in the Nineties. I’d wear that with a white shirt or, if it’s winter, a navy sweater.

As a younger person, I wasn’t always confident. I found that clothes gave me a boost: the way I could put clothes on my body – like a painting almost – helped my confidence. I’ve had the good fortune of seeing many fashion shows, because I was a fashion editor for several years, and I was exposed to a lot of very talented people, from photographers to designers and editors. I could never overerestimate the value of that. And I learnt a lot from make-up artists and hairdressers, too. I was like a sponge: I absorbed it all and used it. I never had a lot of money, especially in the very early days, so I figured out how to make something bland into something amazing by adding accessories or by mixing it up with something else. I’m not a snob about brands, either. In recent years, I’ve become much more aware of things that are ethically sourced. I think sometimes it is good to just buy a good piece because it’ll last you forever. ▷



CANDICE BRATHWAITE

AUTHOR AND PRESENTER

I'VE LOVED CLOTHES SINCE I WAS A KID, AND THAT CAME FROM my grandparents, who came over in the Windrush. They were very set on dressing in a certain way in order to be employed: I can't change my race; I can't yet change my class; but I can be 'the most spiffy', as my grandad would say. There was just something in his brain that said, "How you present yourself will make the world of difference." And I've taken that throughout my entire life.

I worked out last year that I was using clothes as a defence mechanism – perhaps using outfits to create confidence and conversation, and I just don't feel I have to do that anymore. But that doesn't mean I love clothes any less. Lately, I've been embracing darker tones, which allows me to play with shape and texture. My favourite pants are these Issey Miyake barrel trousers that were so expensive, and I went back and forth about whether to buy them for months. But I've not taken them off since I bought them. I wear them out, I wear them to work, I wear them to events, I wear them in the house. Do I still wear an Oscar de la Renta ostrich-feather cape? Absolutely. But that's more for a red-carpet moment, rather than in my day-to-day.

> 'I'M NOT BOTHERED WITH TERMS LIKE FLATTERING OR TRENDING. I DRESS FOR ME'

I'm still a risk-taker and not bothered with terms like flattering or trending – I've got no interest in that. Where I am with my personal style now is: it has to carry me through the decades. I'm not getting dressed to be on the best-dressed list or someone's Pinterest board. I dress for me. I really, really enjoy fashion. I have this amazing Bottega Veneta skirt that reminds me of those Marie Antoinette skirts, very fitted at the waist, and then it has almost like a hula hoop inside. I wear that to go to the doctor!

I'm an intentional, and very patient, shopper. I am also a walking Bicester Village advert. I only live 35 minutes away from it, so if I wake up and see a gap in my diary, I'm going to Bicester. Otherwise, it's the rental market. My clothes are up for rent, and I hire clothes myself, especially because I get invited to a lot of one-off events where you want to wear a look that would otherwise just sit in your wardrobe for three years. If I'm invited to a red-carpet event, I go to rental first.

I'm always conscious of including Black designers in my intake. When I'm thinking red carpet, if I'm going to spend my money, the first place I look is Christopher John Rogers. His clothes have never let me down. When it comes to accessories, I have an American-taxi clutch that people are obsessed with. You can't fit anything in there except a credit card and dreams – she's ridiculous, but it's the impact.

NELLIE EDEN

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

I'D DESCRIBE MY PERSONAL STYLE AS TWISTED GIRLISHNESS. IT'S a bashed-up bag with a gingham babydoll dress. Or my open-toe suede Miu Miu gladiator boots with a puffball skirt and a cropped cardi. It's pretty girly, but it's always subversive.

I'm now five and a half months pregnant and am enjoying my body changing. I think my style has more to do with London than it does with any particular friend or brand. Coming up as a teenager and working at fashion magazines gave me so much pleasure in getting dressed every day for work. Living in Dalston as a graduate and shopping the car-boot sales religiously changed my style. And also clubbing. I was obsessed with what I'd wear to work and what I'd wear out on a Friday night. Then those two things started to converge. I was rubbing shoulders with lots of young designers, and I was really keen to support them – we were all mates anyway. I remember Mimi Wade and Caitlin Price and Nasir Mazhar were all coming up under the Fashion East umbrella, and I was hanging out with all of them and buying all of their clothes. Those three designers have nothing in common in terms of style, but somehow I was just enjoying finding a way of wearing it all.

Martine Rose is a brand I've been buying for easily 15 years; Marques ' Almeida was another big brand for me when I was in my early twenties. Topshop was such a big deal, too. I still have the Christopher Kane and JW Anderson collab pieces. That was such an exciting time to be a fashion girl in London.

When I was earning more money in my late twenties and feeling more liberated to shop, I started getting into designer clothes. Japanese designers are great for me, because I'm 5ft 3in. I discovered brands like Comme Des Garçons, Yohji Yamamoto, and I have maybe 40 or 50 archival Prada and Miu Miu pieces.

I'll wear really traditional jewellery from Grays Antiques with a Junya Watanabe parachute skirt from Dover Street Market, some Tabis and a tank top I've bought from a 15-year-old on Depop. That kind of summarises my approach to shopping. □



HAIR: ZATEESHA BARBOUR AT LMC WORLDWIDE, USING BED HEAD. MAKE-UP: TERRI CAPON, USING HOURGLASS SKINCARE & COSMETICS. SET DESIGN: LEE FLUDE AT AGENCY 41. FASHION ASSISTANT: GLORIA MADENGE



A LASTING LEGACY

THE VISIONARY CURATOR KOYO KOUOH WILL MAKE HISTORY AT THIS YEAR'S VENICE BIENNALE – A YEAR AFTER HER DEATH

WORDS BY ALEXIS OKEOWO

Koyo Kouoh, photographed in 2024

WHEN THE ARTIST WANGECHI MUTU FIRST SAW THE LATE curator and thinker Koyo Kouoh in person, Kouoh was on a bridge in Venice. It was a sunny day, and she was wearing a striking jacket that looked as if it was made from *shuka*, the traditional red-and-blue cloth worn by the Maasai people in East Africa. 'I remember seeing this person's energy in this gorgeous red jacket. It was just so elegant,' Mutu says. A friend introduced them on that bridge; it was during the 2015 Biennale, when artists from Africa and the diaspora, Europe, the US and other countries converged on the festival's national pavilions.

Almost a decade later, at the height of her career, Kouoh herself was chosen to be the curator of the 2026 Venice Biennale. She began work on the show in October 2024, shaping the main exhibition, titled *In Minor Keys*, with a focus on quiet and reflection. But mere months later, she was diagnosed with cancer, and she died in May 2025 at the age of 57. Now, as the Biennale approaches, the organisers have ensured that Kouoh's vision, and her dynamic legacy in the art world, will still infuse the festival.

Kouoh was the first African woman to curate the Venice Biennale. The 111 artists, collectives and organisations Kouoh chose for *In Minor Keys* came from places as far-flung as Nairobi, New Orleans, Kingston, New Delhi, Beirut and Bangkok, and many were her longtime collaborators. 'It's really a family gathering,' says Fatima Bintou Rassoul Sy, a curator and the director of programmes at Raw Material Company, a cultural organisation that Kouoh founded in Dakar, Senegal. 'The artists she has chosen are really about people and practices that have been ignored by the global art market for a very long time.'

Kouoh was always on the move. She was born in Douala, Cameroon; spent some of her youth in Zurich, Switzerland, where she studied business administration; and then moved to Dakar in her twenties with her son Djibril. She also eventually shared a home with her husband Philippe Mall in Basel and became executive director and chief curator of the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Mocaa) in Cape Town in 2019. After starting Raw Material Company in 2008, Kouoh became known for championing the building of art institutions and supporting women artists in Africa. 'She was a deeply dedicated and brilliant person. She was erudite,' Mutu says, adding: 'She wanted to build art communities so that artists could support others.' As Kouoh's profile rose in Europe, she advocated for the inclusion of African and diaspora artists. 'She knew that her visibility was rare in this upper echelon of the art industry,' says Thomas Girst, an art historian and global head of cultural engagement at the BMW Group. 'It takes more energy and passion to make your voice heard. The things she stood for were not as established as they are now.'

Mutu agrees: 'She loved Africa. She didn't lean on Europe as the blueprint. She was very clear that we have the ingredients, we have the recipes and we have the capabilities – and we are ready to do this work.' She credits Kouoh with taking Zeitz Mocaa, the largest museum dedicated to contemporary art from Africa, from a museum that had a reputation for not engaging with local artisans and Black communities to a well-regarded institution. Many view Kouoh's acclaimed show 'When We See Us: A Century of Black Figuration in Painting' as a highlight of her career; the exhibit featured 120 artists and celebrated the beauty of the African gaze.

Touria El Glaoui worked with Kouoh on starting 1-54, the global contemporary-African-art fair, almost 14 years ago, and says that Kouoh didn't want to teach people the basics of contemporary African art, but rather to 'shift the centre of gravity of contemporary art so that Africa was at the centre', El Glaoui says. Her friends tell me how much fun it was to be around Kouoh. 'We had parties, we danced, we drank,' Ghanaian artist Godfried Donkor says, laughing. 'She loved to cook and would host massive dinners.' At her house in Basel, Kouoh often hosted friends from Italy, Spain, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal and Morocco. 'She was exactly what I was looking for – [someone] to celebrate life with, to have deep, meaningful discussions with, to have a smoke with, to have a drink with, to roll your eyes with when it comes to the international art circus,' Girst says.

Nigerian artist Otobong Nkanga describes Kouoh as straightforward and someone who knew what she wanted. 'You either liked her or you didn't, and she didn't really care,' Nkanga tells me. 'She cared about artists.' Nkanga felt supported to be free whenever she worked with Kouoh on an exhibition. Laetitia Catoir, a senior director at the gallery Thaddaeus Ropac, says: 'She opened the doors for younger people, but she really also brought in an entire generation of artists who were working for a long time on the African continent and finally got recognised.'

As both the opening of the Biennale and the one-year anniversary of Kouoh's death approach this May, her friends and collaborators expect a celebratory mood in Venice. As Donkor says: 'The spirit of Koyo will be everywhere.'

The Venice Biennale runs until 22 November 2026





ART AND SOUL
LEFT: *KANA KAKWA* BY THE KENYAN PAINTER KALOKI NYAMAI. ABOVE: AMERICAN SCULPTOR NICK CAVE'S *AMALGAM (PLOT)*, A BRONZE REPRESENTATION OF RACIAL VIOLENCE

PORTRAIT: MIRJAM KLUKA; *AMALGAM (PLOT)* (2024) BY NICK CAVE, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, JACK SHAINMAN GALLERY AND DAN BRADICA STUDIO. *KANA KAKWA* (2026) BY KALOKI NYAMAI, COURTESY OF GALERIE BARBARA THUMM



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BEST EURO ESCAPE

HÔTEL DU COUVENT, NICE

Following a decade-long restoration, this 17th-century convent is now one of the world's best for slow living: an ethos that encompasses its design, dining and vibe. The 88-room property unites history, great French food and wellness innovations, with terraced gardens, farm-supplied restaurants, Roman Baths and even a dedicated on-site herbalist. Pack The Row gladiator sandals and linen shorts for the chicest stay in France.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

CORINTHIA, ROME

In the heart of the Eternal City, this new hotel has been given pride of place on Piazza del Parlamento. Just a brief walk from the Pantheon and the Spanish Steps, this 60-room, marble-adorned landmark blends culturally rich Italian history, architectural opulence and a modern menu offering the finest pasta. Housed in an old bank, the hotel repurposes the former underground vault into a neoclassical spa.

BEST HAUTE HOLIDAY

SON ERMITÀ & BINIDUFÀ, MENORCA

These sophisticated sister hotels take serene travel to new heights. Covering 800 hectares of rural landscape, the neighbouring estates create the ultimate city escape, complete with the soft whistling of birds and a crisp mountain breeze. Both properties are filled with character and nature-inspired finishes. Guests can choose between Binidufà, which sits in a palm-lined valley, and Son Ermità, perched on the edge of a coastal scene amid vast green farmland. Go here if you want to switch off.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

CASA BONAVITA, MALTA

Malta has been having a moment ever since this restored 18th-century palazzo opened in the spring as a resplendent 17-room boutique hotel, featuring a Mediterranean restaurant, two swimming pools and a spa with a hammam. Filled with Sicilian marble, Murano-glass chandeliers and hand-painted wallpapers, it's the apex of luxurious getaways.





BEST FOR A HIDDEN HIDEAWAY

AMAN ROSA ALPINA, THE DOLOMITES

Snow-dusted peaks in the winter and vivid meadows in the summer are the breathtaking backdrop to Aman's latest opening, located in the quaint village of San Cassiano. For adventurers who would rather not compromise on a touch of grandeur, Rosa Alpina offers access to world-class snow sports and restorative woodland trails alike – though, with its soothing interiors and meticulous attention to detail, you will be hard-pressed to leave the hotel at all.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

THE QUIST, HEREFORDSHIRE

Hidden in the hills on the border of Wales and England, this treehouse offers two generous bedrooms, open-air bathing in a wood-fired hot tub and a glossy Smeg fridge stocked with supplies. Don't expect Wi-Fi (this place is off-grid), but there are forest hikes and canoes on the River Wye to keep you plenty entertained.

BEST FOR LUXURY

ORIENT EXPRESS VENEZIA, VENICE

Set on a confluence of canals in charming Cannaregio, this new hotel in a renovated 15th-century palace has glamour at every turn. With leafy, shaded inner courtyards and a marble terrazzo, it's the ultimate aperitivo spot, with fine dining led by Michelin-starred chef Heinz Beck. Many of the 47 rooms have Renaissance frescoes, gold leafing, carved wooden beams and beds adorned with draped canopies. A once-in-a-lifetime stay.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

PARADISUS BY MELIÃ, BALI

If wellness retreats have secured a prime spot on your 2026 bucket list, consider a jaunt to the lush shores of Nusa Dua. Whether you are seeking a slow and tranquil tropical escape or an energised adventure with the whole family, the destination's generous range of facilities covers every base, from heart-racing waterslides to serene adults-only restaurants.





BEST UK CITY BREAK

THE NEWMAN, LONDON

London's hottest new opening is an art deco spectacle in the middle of Fitzrovia. Set up by lifestyle-focused brand Kinsfolk & Co, every detail of this 81-room hotel is curated, with earthy paint tones, wood finishes and corridors lined with black and white photographs from past and present. Don't leave without a visit to the speakeasy bar or the sauna on the roof.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

THE HOXTON, EDINBURGH

Set across 11 Georgian townhouses, this vibrant destination offers a refuge in Scotland's capital. Expect bold colour palettes and quirky interiors with a modern edge. For those seeking a more spacious, private stay, one of its new three-bedroom apartments offers the ideal choice for a home-from-home city sojourn. ▷

WORDS: LENA DE CASPARIS. PHOTOGRAPHS: JONATHAN MALONEY FOR WHAT THE FOX STUDIO, ALEX MOLING/AMAN ROSA ALPINA, DAVIDE PELLEGRINI, HELEN CATHCART/THE NEWMAN



BEST LONG-HAUL CITY BREAK
SOHO HOUSE, TOKYO
The group's first Japan opening is set across four floors, featuring 42 bedrooms, a club space, a wellness studio, event rooms, a rooftop pool and a terrace with views across Aoyama. It's a celebration of Japanese crafts – look out for the pool tiled with Tajimi ceramics, kimono-fabric bed cushions and washi paper used as wallcoverings – blended with Soho House's signature style. Don't miss the artwork created by local artist Toru Otani.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION
BULGARI HOTEL, SHANGHAI
If unwavering glamour is your goal, consider a visit to the banks of Suzhou Creek, where China's second Bulgari destination towers over the city. It brings a touch of Italian finesse to the busy riverside: Roman baths in its 2,000-square-metre spa and fitness centre, the Niko Romito restaurant, which celebrates the rich heritage of the country's cuisine, and a lush garden exterior for a romantic dolce vita getaway. A strong fusion of cultures has never felt more sophisticated.



BEST FOR SEA VIEWS
LUURA CLIFF, PAROS
Perched atop sunny cliffs over the Aegean Sea, this secluded, adults-only hideaway is ideal for finding quiet moments amid aquamarine waves, cobbled streets and a salty breeze. Allow your curiosity to take over here, choosing between a sailboat trip to hidden bays, windsurfing across clear waters and immersing yourself in local ceramics workshops. Or, for those seeking a truly peaceful rest, dive into its world of Mediterranean wellness with a curated treatment beside the sunlit pool.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION
ZANNIER ÎLE DE BENDOR, CÔTE D'AZUR
Mix the best of Riviera elegance with laid-back Provençal magic at this swish, private-island resort. It has something for everyone – whether you're looking for idle beach days with a book or action-packed rounds of pickleball on the court. There are 93 thoughtfully designed rooms and a sprawling holistic spa with a 30-metre pool, all surrounded by dazzling ocean vistas.

BEST UK STAY

THE OWLETS, YORK

Looking for the ultimate family hideaway? Tucked away in the North York Moors National Park, The Tawny hotel's recently launched The Owlets – five cottages with a shared heated swimming pool, private alfresco dining with barbecues and fun garden games – has it all. Find the perfect balance of solitude and style, and visit the nearby Michelin-starred Black Swan, run by chef Tommy Banks.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

THE WILD DUCK, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

This newly restored 16th-century inn, set among the rolling hills of the Cotswolds, is replete with low-beamed ceilings, roaring fires, aged wooden floors and a menu of Scotch eggs and Gruyère toasties. The 19 rooms feature antique treasures, extra-large beds and vintage tubs; slip into a hot bath and switch your phone to 'do not disturb'.





BEST FOR ADVENTURE

SANDRINGHAM PRIVATE GAME RESERVE, SOUTH AFRICA

Set to open its doors in 2026, this former hunting ground has undergone an ambitious rehabilitation and rewilding project, emerging as one of the most highly anticipated eco-tourism destinations in the world. The 4,500-hectare conservation project in South Africa's Limpopo province has breathed new life into the local terrain, driving sustainability and wildlife protection against a backdrop of Drakensberg mountain views.



SPECIAL RECOGNITION

ANDBEYOND SANDIBE UNDER CANVAS, BOTSWANA

Immerse yourself in wildlife at this intimate 1920s-style mobile safari experience in the Okavango Delta, a Unesco World Heritage Site. The camp, which sleeps six guests, is inspired by the golden age of safari, but provides super-king beds, double showers and fast Wi-Fi. Enjoy daily game drives and walking expeditions to see lions, leopards, cheetahs, elephants, giraffes and hippos.

Meet THE JURY

The panel of experts behind our Travel Awards share their best-kept-secret escapes



ALEXIA TAMER
FOUNDER OF AMIGO TRAVEL APP

'BURGUNDY IS ONE OF FRANCE'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS WINE REGIONS, BUT IT'S IN THE MIDST OF A CREATIVE RENAISSANCE. THE FOOD SCENE HOLDS ITS OWN, WITH PASSION-PROJECT COFFEE ROASTERS IN HILLTOP TOWNS, WINE BARS FROM PARISIANS WHO'VE TRADED THE CITY FOR A SLOWER PACE AND FAMILY-RUN INSTITUTIONS WITH GLOBAL INSPIRATION. HOTELIERS HAVE CAUGHT ON, OPENING BOUTIQUE HOTELS FOR UNIQUE STAYS.'



JENNY SOUTHAN
FOUNDER OF TRAVEL-TREND FORECASTING AGENCY GLOBETRENDER

'OPENED BY FOUR FRIENDS IN APRIL 2026, SIBBJÄNS IS A REGENERATIVE FARM STAY ON SWEDEN'S GOTLAND ISLAND, BLENDING RUSTIC DESIGN WITH SEASONAL, FARM-TO-TABLE DINING. THE HOTEL OFFERS 22 ROOMS (EACH NAMED AFTER IMPORTANT WOMEN IN THE FOUNDERS' FAMILIES), NATURE-LED WELLNESS AND EXPERIENCES INCLUDING FISHING, HORSE RIDING AND KITE SURFING.'



ROSSELLA BEAUGIË
CO-FOUNDER OF THE THINKING TRAVELLER

'I HAVE LONG LOVED SARDINIA AS A HOLIDAY DESTINATION, NOT JUST FOR ITS OLD-SCHOOL GLAMOUR AND CRYSTAL WATERS, BUT FOR THE ISLAND'S CHARACTERFUL TOWNS RICH IN HISTORY AND ART. ITS NATURAL CONTRASTS ARE EXTRAORDINARY – FROM RUGGED MOUNTAIN RANGES TO SCULPTURAL COASTLINES. WE RECOMMEND SEVERAL VILLAS, INCLUDING SALINEDDA SIX IN THE NORTH AND LIA IN THE SOUTH.'



YOLANDA EDWARDS
FOUNDER OF *YOLO JOURNAL*

'LAKE COMO HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BELOVED DESTINATION, BUT WITH A FLURRY OF HOTEL OPENINGS, IT'S REALLY GETTING THE LIMELIGHT IT DESERVES. WHEN PASSALACQUA OPENED IN 2022, IT BECAME A BUCKET-LIST HOTEL, WHICH ALSO MEANT EVERYONE STARTED TALKING ABOUT THE LAKE. IT WON'T BE THE LATEST NEWCOMER FOR LONG: THE LAKE COMO EDITION JUST OPENED; RAFFLES AND THE RITZ-CARLTON ARE BOTH COMING SOON.' □

PHOTOGRAPHS: EDVINAS BRUZAS/SOHO HOUSE, CHRIS TERRY, JAKE EASTHAM/WILD DUCK, STEVIE MANN, KATIE KALMYKOVA/UNSPLASH, ZANNIER HOTELS


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THE LAUNCH

Summer days OF DECO

Louis Vuitton has turned back time, reviving designs by 1920s collaborator Pierre Legrain, a leading figure in early-20th-century decoration, illustration and cabinet-making. The sculptural, art deco-inspired collection comes with graphic-print fabrics and includes this Riviera Chilienne deck chair. Originally created in 1925, it's now recrafted in walnut and leather, with the house's emblematic signature integrated into the mother-of-pearl motif on each side of its headrest. Lounging in the sun has never looked so stylish.

LINES OF BEAUTY
Right: Riviera Chilienne deck chair. Above right, from top: Nuits de Paris plaid throw; Metropolis doll's chair, all price on request, **LOUIS VUITTON**



PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF LOUIS VUITTON

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*UK's No1 women's supplement brand. Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage Value & Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 04/10/25. To verify contact Vitabiotics Ltd, 1 Apsley Way, London, NW2 7HF. Wellbeing of Women is a registered charity. England & Wales: 239281. Scotland: SC042856

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WELLBEING OF WOMEN

VITABIOTICS

INTERIORS

Gardeners' WORLD

Summer is finally here, so it's time to upgrade your garden – or little sliver of balcony – with some furniture future classics. We suggest taking inspiration from Jonathan Anderson's viral invitation for his AW26 Dior show – a Tuileries chair the shade of freshly cut grass. There has never been a better time to go green.

EDIT BY GRACE CLARKE

ALAÏA SS26

1 Tealight holders, £35 for two, **VOI COLLECTIVE** **2** Blanket, £85, **ARKET** **3** Cushion cover, £9.99, **H&M** **4** Stool, £365, **POLSPOTTEN** at **MYTHERESA** **5** Candlestick, £27, **YOD & CO** **6** Watering can, £65, **SOWVITAL** **7** Portable lamp, £155, **&TRADITION** at **SELFRIDGES** **8** Candle, £25, **PADDYWAX** **9** Grinder, £58, **ADDISON ROSS** **10** Napkins, £42 for four, **ROSIE DALIA** **11** Chair, £79, **JOHN LEWIS** **12** Plates, £265, **DOLCE & GABBANA CASA**

WORDS: LENA DE CASPARIS. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE

FASHION EDIT







THE K JEWELRY – ELEGANCE, MADE DAILY

Daily fine jewellery, created to accompany a life in motion. The K Jewelry designs refined silhouettes that transcend occasion, poised yet powerful, understated yet unmistakable. Each creation speaks to love in its widest sense: self-love, self-creation and the quiet commitment to evolve. Worn not for display but for meaning, these pieces become part of a woman's rhythm, composed, courageous and assured.

At its core, The K Jewelry is about becoming. Style forms a personal signature, elegance becomes a discipline, and jewellery marks moments of growth. For those seeking something truly their own, bespoke creations offer exclusivity at its purest, intimate, distinctive and impossible to replicate.

"Daily fine jewellery, made to last."

Explore further at **www.thekjewelry.com** and follow **@thek_jewelry**. Bespoke inquiries and orders are welcomed via Instagram DM or WhatsApp **+852 9249 8992.**

JEWELLERY WITH NOTHING TO HIDE



La Maison Couture is an award-winning online destination for sustainable fine jewellery, celebrating craftsmanship, design and integrity. Curating a considered edit of independent designers from around the world, it showcases distinctive pieces that balance exceptional artistry with full transparency, from recycled precious metals to responsibly sourced gemstones.

From accessible everyday pieces to future heirlooms, discover Skydiamond's diamonds created from the elements, Basak Baykal's handcrafted designs from Istanbul's Grand Bazaar, and Considered Jewellery's recycled silver collections - modern luxury, consciously designed.

Shop Jewellery With Nothing To Hide

Receive 10% off your next order with code **LMCELLE10**

www.lamaisoncouture.com

LOU JEWELLERY



Born in London, LOU London Jewellery brings a quiet confidence to modern fine jewellery. Founded by Mariia D., whose family has worked in the craft for three decades, the brand blends inherited expertise with a contemporary eye. Sculptural rings, heritage pendants and refined everyday pieces are crafted in fine precious recycled metals and set with chosen gemstones. Produced in small runs and finished by hand, each design balances understated elegance with personal meaning. Designed to be worn daily and treasured for years, LOU London Jewellery also offers bespoke commissions, creating pieces around the wearer's story.

Discover the collection online at www.loujewellery.uk

FASHION EDIT







EFFORTLESS. ENDURING. ENTIRELY YOU

Jewellery that feels effortless, yet stays with you.

Founded in Sweden, ZELLI OF SWEDEN is a refined jewellery house rooted in simplicity, emotion, and timeless design. Each piece is created to move beyond trends and become part of your everyday – personal, meaningful, and made to last.

At its heart, ZAZA&LILI expresses a refined, feminine sensibility through delicate, luminous pieces designed to feel like a second skin. Named after the founder's daughters, Kenza and Ellin, the collection reflects an elevated femininity: confident, understated, and quietly bold. Alongside it, MÄN explores a more minimal, masculine expression – defined by clean lines and effortless presence.

Together, they form a universe where jewellery is not just worn, but felt – an extension of self.

Discover the collections at zaza-lili.com and jewel-byman.com
Enjoy 20% off with your exclusive code: ELLE20

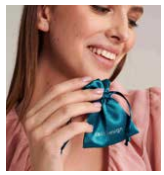
MÄN

ZAZA&LILI

KOSS DESIGN: EFFORTLESS ELEGANCE FOR EVERYDAY WEAR

Founded in 2019, Koss Design is a jewelry brand known for its elegant, boho-chic bracelets crafted with authentic Japanese Miyuki beads. Each design balances color, craftsmanship, and comfort, created to feel like a second skin on the wrist. Handmade using premium materials, including a robust elastic sourced from Korea, every bracelet is designed to retain its perfectly round shape over time. Loved by over 100,000 women worldwide, Koss Design celebrates self-expression and everyday sophistication through jewelry that adapts seamlessly to modern life.

Discover the collection at **kossdesign.com**





MINIMALIST PIECES DESIGNED TO BE LIVED IN

Kali & Sun is a Montreal-based jewelry brand founded by designer Melinda Recine. Known for its dainty, minimalist aesthetic, each piece is made to be lived in—layered, and worn daily.

Crafted from high-quality gold-filled materials, Kali & Sun creates delicate yet durable staples that embody understated luxury for the modern woman.



Save 20% off your first order with ELLE20 at www.kaliandsun.com
Instagram: @kaliandsun

FASHION EDIT



ANNAMARIA THOMAS: HIGH FASHION WITH A HIGHER PURPOSE

Annamaria Thomas of Miami, Oklahoma, is a premier model and entrepreneur who captivated the Autumn/Winter 2026 season in an Alonso Maximo signature gown. The red, crystal-embellished design—with a sculpted bodice and sweeping train—reinforced her status as a standout runway presence.

She is the founder of The SAFE Project where she leads a nonprofit dedicated to preventing child abuse and exploitation, earning national recognition for her impact beyond fashion and pageantry.







FASHION CREDITS: MODEL Annamaria Thomas @annamariathomas_official | DESIGNER Alonso Maximo @alonsomaximodesign | IMAGES Ram Eagle Photoworks @ram.eagle | HMUA Toba Studio NYC @tobastudionyc | EVENT HiTechMODA Productions @hitechmoda Pam Privette @psprivette for NEW YORK FASHION WEEK AW26



NONCHI CASHMERE

Designer Famke and her grandmother transform the world's rarest 14-micron cashmere into GOTS-certified garments. A family legacy of the purest cashmere, designed to soften with time and last for generations.

Scan to discover Nonchi.

BTUCK BEACHWEAR BĒ UNIQUE | BE CONFIDENT | BE HAPPY | BE YOU

Founded by Paula Nina and developed in close collaboration with her daughters, BTUCK is a family-run beachwear label for women who move with confidence and embody effortless elegance.

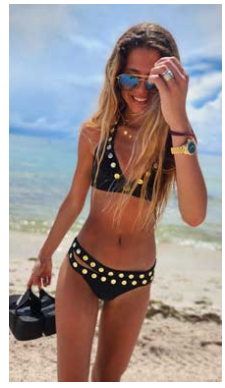
Clean lines. Sculpted fits.
Refined details.

Crafted in Portugal from premium, sustainable materials, each piece is a statement - Unique and unforgettable.

BTUCK is timeless, modern and unapologetically luxurious.

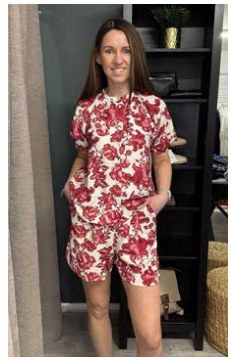
At its heart, the brand strives to inspire the most beautiful thing on beach - a woman's smile.

www.btuckbeachwear.com



FASHION EDIT

TEN YEARS OF EFFORTLESS STYLE: INDIE'S ATTIC



Celebrating 10 years in business, Indie's Attic is a proudly independent womenswear boutique built with passion, resilience, and a deep understanding of modern women's lives. Founded by a single mum as a small pop-up, the brand has grown organically into a thriving store, now with seven successful years on the high street alongside a busy online shop.



At its heart, Indie's Attic is about making style effortless. Carefully curated collections feature premium Danish brands such as ICHI, BYoung and Rino & Pelle, paired with beautifully crafted Spanish footwear from Carmela. Each piece is chosen with versatility in mind - easy-to-wear styles that can be dressed up or down, designed to fit seamlessly into busy, everyday life.

With a loyal and ever-growing customer base, the boutique has become a go-to destination for women who want to feel confident without overthinking their wardrobe. The focus is simple: flattering fits, wearable trends, and timeless staples that truly work.

More than just a shop, Indie's Attic is a small business with a big heart - built on community, connection, and a genuine love for helping women feel their best.

Elevate your everyday.

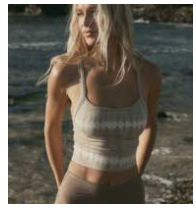
Scan the QR code to visit the website and enjoy 15% off your first order. Elle readers, use code ELLE15.

A SCENT THAT CHANGES LIVES



MAURIE AND EVE





Maurie and Eve is a lifestyle brand shaped by authenticity, connection, and timeless design.

Founded by Kelly Davies-Green, the brand began with pieces sewn on her grandmother's machine - an enduring symbol of care and craftsmanship that continues to inform its essence today.

Rooted in comfort and confidence, for every age and every stage, each collection is guided by nature, travel, and a sense of home, with a focus on how it feels to be worn.

Seasonless pieces to wear, to return to, and to live in, again and again.

www.maurieandeve.com | Instagram @maurieandeve

FASHION EDIT

THE PROPER SHOPPER

Your Wishlist, Delivered

In a world where luxury is defined by exclusivity, nothing is more frustrating than knowing exactly what you want, only to find it's unavailable. The sold-out handbag, the waitlisted watch, the impossible-to-find runway piece. For discerning clients, time is valuable, and the hunt can quickly become exhausting, and ultimately unsuccessful.

That's where we come in.

Based in London, our luxury personal shopping service specialises in sourcing the unobtainable. Through an extensive global network of trusted boutiques, private collectors, and industry insiders, we secure rare and highly coveted items that others simply can't access. Whether it's a limited-edition release, a discontinued piece, or something perpetually out of stock, we turn "impossible" into delivered.



Our clients don't chase availability, we bring it to them. With absolute discretion, efficiency, and a deep understanding of the luxury landscape, we remove the frustration from the process and replace it with certainty.



If it's on your wish list, consider it found.

For private enquiries and sourcing requests:
www.thepropershopper.com | @the_proper_shopper

THE 80S NEVER LEFT THE BUILDING





How BombFace channels decade-defining symbolism into the streets of now

BombFace is built on cultural expression through artistic belief, where the spirit of the 80s lives on, not as nostalgia, but as evolution. Bold, unfiltered, and electric, the brand reimagines iconic symbolism into modern streetwear with a powerful message: Be You. Be Great.

At the intersection of identity and artistry, BombFace proves style isn't borrowed, it's personal, shaped by what you bring to it.

Discover more at www.06bombface.com or follow on instagram @bombface.co & YouTube @bombfaceco to explore the movement.

STUDIO ARCAYA

Studio Arcaya was founded by Eliza Arcaya and her daughter Camila with one intention in mind, premium basics with the perfect fit. No trends. No sales. Precisely cut jeans, timeless button-down shirts, jumpsuits with impeccable tailoring amongst other essentials. Designed for women of all ages, uncompromising on quality or fit.

Out of their Lisbon atelier, each piece is handcrafted by skilled seamstresses from local European fabrics, at an accessible price point. Cool, comfortable, polished, and easy to wear for any occasion or for the next decade.

studioarcaya.com | @studioarcaya





BEAUTY EDIT

THE QUIET REVOLUTION IN AESTHETICS



Tala Skin and Medical Aesthetics reflects a more considered direction in modern beauty, where regeneration is prioritised over reinvention. Medically led and grounded in evidence based practice, the clinic specialises in treatments designed to strengthen skin health at a cellular level, supporting collagen, elasticity, and long term vitality while preserving what makes each face recognisably its own.

Tala Skin's approach centres on refinement rather than transformation. Signature offerings include medical grade facials, biostimulator injectables, microneedling combined with PRP and growth factors, exosomes, and anti wrinkle treatments, all curated to restore skin quality and enhance natural features with a subtle, confident finish.



For clients who value privacy and ease, Tala Skin also offers medically led treatments in the comfort of home, bringing expert care directly to those who prefer a more discreet experience, without compromising clinical standards. Each plan is tailored with precision, taking into account skin biology, lifestyle, and desired outcomes.

With a loyal following that includes sports professionals, journalists, television presenters, and models, Tala Skin has become a trusted destination for intelligent regenerative aesthetics.

Central London Instagram: **@TalaSkin_UK**
Website: **talaskin.co.uk** WhatsApp: **07709009390**

AMETHYST BEAUTY AESTHETICS - THE ART OF SUBTLE PERFECTION



In a world where beauty trends come and go, true elegance remains timeless. In a beautiful part of Somerset, Amethyst Beauty Aesthetics, specialises in refined, results-driven treatments designed to enhance, never overpower, your natural features.

Led by an award-winning advanced aesthetics practitioner, each treatment is delivered with precision and an artistic eye. From softly sculpted lips to advanced skin rejuvenation, every result is bespoke. Our philosophy is simple: luxury lies in subtlety. We create radiant, balanced results tailored to you.

For those who expect more than just results, but an experience. Amethyst Beauty Aesthetics. Where science, artistry, and luxury converge.

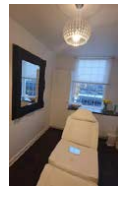
New client offer: 20% off your first treatment
amethystaestheticsbeauty.com

AESTHETICS BY DR TARA – ELEVATED, BESPOKE AESTHETICS

Situated in the heart of Brentwood, Essex, indulge in the art of refined enhancement at Aesthetics by Dr Tara, a doctor led clinic where luxury meets medical expertise. Known for delivering impeccably natural results, Dr Tara specialises in subtle, bespoke treatments designed to enhance, not alter, your unique beauty. Every consultation is discreet, personalised and grounded in clinical excellence and safety, ensuring a premium experience from start to finish.



This is Medical Aesthetics, redefined: sophisticated, understated and entirely tailored to you.



Enjoy an exclusive £50 saving on your first treatment for Elle readers, use code ELLE50

Visit: **www.aestheticsbydrtara.co.uk**
Experience confidence, perfected.

ESSENTIALS EDIT

MEDICAL TATTOOING: A CAREER THAT CHANGES LIVES



Medical tattooing is one of the most impactful areas of advanced aesthetics. Using medical-grade pigments, practitioners can restore the appearance of areola after breast surgery, camouflage surgical scars, and correct uneven skin tones including pigmentation caused by injury or illness.

The impact goes beyond appearance, it helps clients rebuild confidence. At the Medical Tattoo Academy, renowned practitioner Ophelia King teaches these specialist techniques through hands-on, accredited training.

For treatment: **https://kskin1.co.uk/** For Training : Medical Tattoo Training | PMU Training | Worcestershire & Birmingham, UK

HOW WELL DO YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR BRAIN?





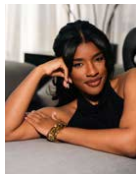
Sukh Randhawa helps people understand their brain in a way most never have. Using One Brain X, an AI-powered, NASA-backed platform, she measures brain function in real time, revealing patterns linked to stress, focus, energy, and emotional regulation.

A neuroscience-led performance coach and co-founder of One Hype Wellness, Sukh combines brain mapping with neurofeedback to move beyond guesswork. For those feeling stuck, struggling with focus or emotional balance, or seeking better sleep, sharper thinking, or higher performance, this offers true insight into how your mind works, and how to train it.

Train your brain with intention.
Harness the power of your brain with Sukh and One Brain X
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Find out more: one-hype.com/one-brain-mapping-device

ELEVATED SKINCARE, EXPERTLY DELIVERED





JaSanne is a New York licensed esthetician and founder of Ja Jolie Skin Studio, located in the heart of Manhattan.

Inside her treatment room, she focuses on results-driven treatments and personalized client experience. With years of hands-on expertise, she has built a reputation for transformative skin health, intentional skin prep, and elevated self-care, serving over 100 clients with 5-star reviews.

Beyond the treatment room, this sought-after facialist has trained 50+ esthetics professionals, bringing fresh leadership to the industry and empowering others to excel in skincare.

Step into radiant, results-driven skin.

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www.jajolieskin.com | @jajolieskin

WEDDING HAIR WOES?

For those of us with obvious ears, wedding hairdos can cause anxiety and fear, so feeling free to wear our hair up in any style we fancy can be life-changing!



Otostick ear correctors are invisible, comfortable, and really easy to use, so we can just focus on enjoying the occasion, not worrying about how 'they' look. We can feel more confident about our appearance on the "special" day, or any other day for that matter.

The product reviews are great too, find them today at **Otostick.com** or Amazon - £18.75 for 8 correctors.

DESIGNER of the YEAR

DAN KALLOS

Detail, Discipline, and the Mantle 2020 Way: In Conversation with Dan Kallos



Dan Kallos
Founder of Mantle 2020
Designer - United Kingdom
IG: mntl.2020



Listening to Dan Kallos speak, one is immediately struck by his quiet precision-a calm, deliberate presence that never asks for attention, yet commands it nonetheless. It is the same understated assurance he imagines in the wearer of Mantle 2020, and the same discipline that led him to spend four years refining his vision before releasing a single piece. Today, Kallos speaks about his journey as Mantle features at London Fashion Week, marking a new chapter for the brand.

Born in London and now based in Glasgow, Kallos' design language is deeply shaped by place and memory. His studio shelves are lined with books by and about Virgil Abloh, whose influence runs subtly through Mantle 2020's early designs.

"He's one of my heroes," Kallos says. The organza jacket that launched the label, now emblematic of its identity-only found its signature red-pink hue after Kallos burned a message into the fabric as a tribute to Abloh. "That was when I knew the jacket had to be that colour."

Mantle 2020 is a collection informed by personal history, but guided by a clear philosophy of what fashion should be: concise, intentional capsules made up of pieces that speak to one another through colour, form, or finely tuned detail. "Nothing loud, but always considered-from fit to hardware-and made entirely in the UK," Kallos explains.

With a background spanning merchandising, styling, and PR, he has woven every strand of his experience into Mantle 2020. Here, he reflects on his design process, his quiet signatures, and what lies ahead.

Your pieces strike a balance between practicality and poetry. Where does a design usually begin for you?

DK: "Fabric is always my starting point. Once I feel the right fabric, I know exactly what the piece will become. I love taking classic silhouettes and using materials that aren't typically associated with them. The track set from the Art Dealer collection, for example, uses an interlocking cotton and cashmere blend-something unexpected for that shape."

Is there a detail people often overlook, but that feels especially important to you?

DK: "The Cobrax popper buttons at the ankle of the tailored trousers. They're in all three collections. Once we got that detail right, I knew it was a Mantle 2020 signature."

If you could dress any character, who naturally belongs in the Mantle world?

DK: "The Mandalorian. He has a quiet confidence-he always does what needs to be done. He also has a uniform and armour that he can't take off. I like the idea that once someone finds their Mantle 2020 uniform, they won't want to take it off either."

What's currently on your studio mood board?

DK: "Builders and construction workers. I've always loved workwear, but I want to reinterpret it through a luxury lens. There are also a lot of womenswear references-shapes, fabrics, silhouettes. I'm constantly inspired by womenswear."

What's next for Mantle 2020?

DK: "The Art Dealer collection launches this year, and I'm planning my first pop-up store in Glasgow. I'm excited to create a physical space that truly represents Mantle 2020-and myself."

As Mantle 2020 continues to evolve, Kallos remains resolutely focused on intention over excess. In a fashion landscape increasingly driven by noise and immediacy, his work stands apart for its restraint-its belief that strength lies in precision, and that a uniform, once found, can become a quiet form of armour. Mantle 2020 is not about chasing moments, but about building a language over time-one carefully chosen fabric, detail, and decision at a time.















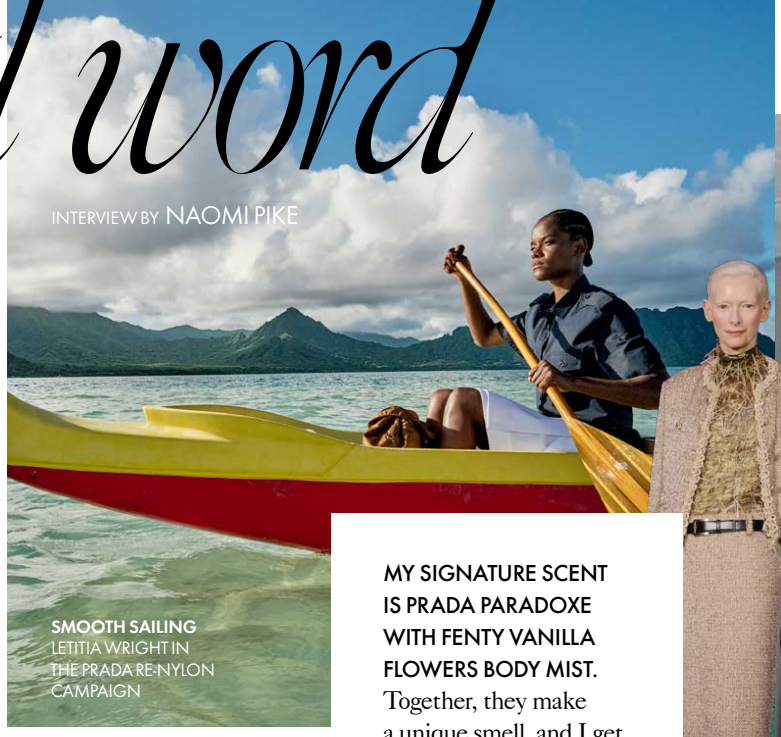
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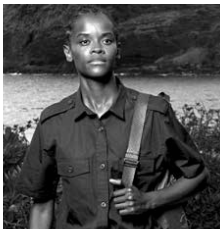
Tastemaker: LETITIA WRIGHT

The Bafta-winning actor reveals her favourite ways to recharge, from cryotherapy to getaways in the Maldives

INTERVIEW BY NAOMI PIKE



SMOOTH SAILING LETITIA WRIGHT IN THE PRADA RE-NYLON CAMPAIGN



I HATED CRYOTHERAPY AT FIRST, BUT I NOW DO IT CONSTANTLY. I have a Monk cold bath; it's a gruelling experience.

THE WORK ETHICS OF MY PEERS INSPIRE ME MOST. Daniel Kaluuya, Damson Idris and Malachi Kirby have been my big brothers for a long time. Having them around helps to motivate me.

I'VE COME TO REALISE HOW IMPORTANT EXFOLIATION IS. Tata Harper Regenerating Cleanser is my go-to.

THE MALDIVES HAS MY HEART. I've now been three times, but my first solo trip was my favourite. I used that time to reflect and realign myself.

I LOVE MY BROWN PRADA RE-NYLON BACKPACK. Inside, I'll always have my journal, a book, Sonos headphones, my current script and keys.

TILDA SWINTON HAS ONE OF THE BEST WARDROBES. She's elegant but always fly!

MY SIGNATURE SCENT IS PRADA PARADOXE WITH FENTY VANILLA FLOWERS BODY MIST. Together, they make a unique smell, and I get stopped a lot by people asking what it is.

SIDNEY POITIER'S ACTING CAREER IS SO ADMIRABLE, ESPECIALLY HOW INTEGRAL HE WAS TO CHANGE. I recently watched a documentary about his life – he broke down so many doors.

MY FAVOURITE LOOK I'VE WORN WAS FOR THE *BLACK PANTHER: WAKANDA FOREVER* LONDON PREMIERE. It's great to have a team who understands you, while being an ambassador for a brand as timeless as Prada. My stylist Shiona calls me 'Prada Princess'.

MAKING MY DEBUT ON THE OLIVIER STAGE AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE THIS AUGUST WILL BE A PROUD MOMENT, AS IT HAS BEEN MY DREAM FOR A LONG TIME. *The Story* is provocative and unapologetic.

Letitia Wright is the face of the new Prada Re-Nylon campaign. Her new play 'The Story' is on at the National Theatre from 27 August to 24 October.



ICONIC INSPIRATIONS FROM TOP: SIDNEY POITIER; TILDA SWINTON; A PRADA RE-NYLON BACKPACK; LETITIA WRIGHT IN PRADA AT THE *BLACK PANTHER: WAKANDA FOREVER* PREMIERE; TATA HARPER REGENERATING CLEANSER; THE MALDIVES; PRADA PARADOXE

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